

HAGWONS AND THEIR SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN GEORGIA'S
GROWING KOREAN IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY

by

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(Under the Direction of Diane Napier)

ABSTRACT

For many years, there have been a growing number of ethnic supplemental education programs in Koreatown, which may positively impact the college attendance and success of Korean children, even those who may not have access to high-quality urban public education and whose parents struggle to survive economically. This study explored the nature of the educational and cultural experiences of Korean American students in supplemental education programs that serve as educational and cultural institutions as well as local equivalents to *hagwons* and are transplanted from the home country of South Korea. Such programs could potentially set Korean American students on a better course of survival and success compared to other minority students while creating extremely successful co-ethnic networks and similar strategies could be used in a variety of communities throughout the United States. Though designed separately, the key aspects of such initiatives create a promising supplemental system that can be useful for other ethnic minorities throughout the country.

INDEX WORDS: South Korea, Education; Supplemental Education, Language Acquisition, Entrance Examinations, Hagwon

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DEDICATION

For my dad, Alfred George Nalty, who has been my inspiration from the beginning. His strength, determination, and wherewithal have provided me with the ability to take on this challenge as well as the tenacity to complete it. This dissertation is dedicated to the man who always had the answers (as far as I knew) but more importantly, was always willing to find out (for me) when he was not sure. He is my hero and my angel. I did it on September 14, 2008 because of you. I dedicate this process to my mother, Merna Nalty, who nurtured me through some of its most trying times with love, patience, strength, and support. I love you both endlessly!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This is a study of the nature of the educational and cultural experiences of Korean American students in supplemental education programs in Georgia that are transplanted from their home country of South Korea to the United States. In this chapter, I provide an introduction to the dissertation by setting the stage for research problems in terms of Korean Americans as immigrants, Korean American student achievements, and the ways in which Korean Americans have established an institutionally complete community in Georgia using education as its foundation. I present a statement of the problem, research questions posed in the study, and the theoretical framework for the study.

Korean Americans are one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in the United States. According to the U.S. Census (2000), there are over one million Korean Americans in the United States. Most have settled in major metropolitan areas such as Los Angeles, New York, New Jersey, Chicago, and most recently Atlanta. The dramatic increase of Korean Americans in southern states is particularly relevant for my study. Over the past decade, the Korean population in Georgia has increased by 88 percent, numbering at approximately 150,000, the second highest rate of increase in the United States ("Georgia: Home," 2006).

The settlement pattern of Korean immigrants can be explained through chain migration. By settling near large Korean communities in which relatives or acquaintances reside, they obtained not only economic information but also supportive social networks, imperative for their

transnational communities (Lim, personal communication, December 12, 2007). Thus, it is their transnational communities and the ethnic networks that have been formed in the Korean immigrant communities in Georgia and elsewhere which have enabled Korean Americans to become one of the most successful and prominent immigrant groups in the United States.

Korean Americans have been one of the largest recent immigrants to participate in ethnic supplemental programs in the United States. The purpose of this ethnographic comparative case study was to explore the nature of the educational and cultural experiences of Korean American students in supplemental education programs, known as *hagwons* in South Korea, as well as the manner in which educational traditions are transplanted from their home country to the United States. In my study, I explored how the cultural attributes of Korean immigrants interact with institutional structures and how *human capital*, *social capital*, and *educational capital* are accumulated within *supplemental education* programs in the Korean immigrant community. These tangible ethnic social structures in which community forces are sustained and social capital is acquired have resulted in an increasingly apparent research interest in Korean American students. As a result of my study, I have gained significant insight into the ways in which these programs enable Korean American students to achieve extraordinary academic success while maintaining ties to their native culture and ethnic identity.

I also explored the connections between Korean American supplemental education programs for students and their experiences in Georgia's public schools. My focus was on the growing Korean American community in Georgia, particularly one supplemental education program in Gwinnett County. However, the issues I explored need to be considered in the broader context of Korean Americans in other U.S. cities, (particularly in New York City and

Los Angeles, the largest Korean American centers) in order to place issues in Georgia in the proper national context.

In the sections to follow, I describe the research problem addressed in my study, the background to the problem, and my design and methodology. I also explain my roles as the researcher, the significance of the study, and offer an overview of the dissertation. Finally, I provide a definition of terms.

The Research Problem

Korean immigrants are in the midst of organizing one of the largest networks of ethnic supplemental programs in Georgia. While similar networks exist in Los Angeles and New York City, this is a relatively recent phenomenon in Georgia. This ethnographic comparative case study explored the nature of the educational and cultural experiences of Korean students as well as Korean American students in supplemental education programs, often known as *hagwons* in South Korea. In this section, I summarize important background information about the research problem addressed in the study. In the discussion to follow, I articulate the specifics of the research problem in order to situate my research study. I also outline the purposes for conducting the study and the significance and rationale of the study. Finally, this section will list the research questions that this study answered, the limitations of the study, and the definitions of key terms.

Statement of the Problem

Relatively little is known about the specific nature and cultural function of the large number of supplemental education programs that Korean immigrants have organized in their communities. There has been some documentation of Korean supplemental education programs functioning in New York City and Los Angeles (Johnston, 2000; Ihlwan, 2000). However, most educational scholars and the public in general are unaware of the Korean supplemental education

programs because details are not widely publicized although they are operating in virtually every Korean American community in the United States. Much of the relevant literature is lacking complete contextual knowledge of the success of Korean American students' success beyond parental involvement and a value of education. Many of these students spend countless hours in supplemental education programs, yet this phenomenon has not been very well documented (Zeng, 1999).

While these programs, which are the foundation of educational success in South Korea, do not yet have an official niche in the South Korean public education system; they certainly are influential to the success of Korean American students. A study of such programs can yield important information for better understanding why Korean immigrants are organizing Korean supplemental education programs similar to the *hagwons* utilized in their home country, what is occurring within these programs, and how these supplemental programs influence their larger immigrant and mainstream communities. The extensive network of Korean supplemental education programs in the United States represents a fascinating source of inquiry for learning more about the educational experiences of Korean American students and how they relate their public school experiences to their experiences within these programs.

Background to the Research Problem

Humans have spread across Earth's surface for the past 7,000 years. This diffusion of human settlement has resulted from migration. However, the flow of migration always involves two-way connections. While people are known for immigrating to a location, it is often forgotten that they have also emigrated from a location. Many immigrant groups are torn between the ties they have to their country of origin and adapting to the culture of their host country. People

decide to migrate because of *push factors* and *pull factors*¹, which often center on economic, cultural, educational, and environmental forces that influence decisions to migrate. Therefore, to migrate, people view their current place of residence so negatively that they feel pushed away and another place so attractive that they feel pulled toward it.

Immigration to the United States

The United States has a special place in the study of international immigration. The world's third largest country is inhabited overwhelmingly by direct descendants of immigrants. About 70 million people have migrated to the United States since 1820, including the 30 million currently alive (Rubenstein, 2005). Oscar Handlin, a prominent historian, once wrote, "I thought to write a history of the immigrants in America, then decided that the immigrants are America" (Hurh, 1998).

Recently, the immigrants coming to America's shores have been more diverse than ever before, arriving from an extremely broad spectrum of countries and encompassing an unprecedented range of linguistic backgrounds, and increasingly of non-European origin (Immigrant Children, 1995). Unlike the earlier waves of immigration in the late 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, that saw an era of mass migration, largely from Europe, post-1965 immigrants have come primarily from Asia and Latin America.

Immigrants have always faced economic resistance, but recent immigrants also face more limited economic opportunity than did earlier waves of immigrants. Today's newcomers are arriving as tighter constraints on government budgets appear to be causing growing numbers of Americans to question the costs of social welfare services, education, health, and other programs for immigrants, particularly illegal immigrants (Immigrant Children, 1995). Nonetheless, the national estimates of growth in the immigrant student population provide an especially

¹ In this dissertation, terms shown in italics are defined on page 17.

compelling glimpse of the future face of America with the number of children of immigrants representing more than 22% of the school age population (Fix and Passel, 1994). The visibility and importance of this young population is heightened due to concentrations of immigrants settling in major metropolitan areas where the impact of these immigrants is increasingly becoming apparent.

While immigrants and their children are forced to deal with the acceptance by American citizens and policy-makers, there are several issues they also face amongst themselves.

Immigrant groups tend to face a period of American adaptation regardless of their “modes of incorporation” (Portes and Rumbault, 1990). Many immigrant groups are torn between the ties they have to their country of origin and adapting to the culture of their host country. As a result, in the late 20th century, many new immigrant settlement spaces in the United States, as well as in other countries, have developed into transnational communities. Bryceson and Vuorela (2002, p.11) suggest the term *frontiering*, which denotes the ways and means that transnational family members use to create familial space and network ties in terrain where community connections may be relatively sparse.

Universal Issues of Immigrant Children in the United States

Within the larger story of immigrants are issues related to children who, lacking voting powers and the ability to choose where they live, have been overlooked. Immigration has brought significant changes in the student population of the United States. One-fifth of all children in this country are immigrants who constitute the fastest growing segment of the child population in the United States, more than tripling the number of immigrant children since 1970 (Rumbaut, 1996). In school districts across the country, the very face of schooling is changing as the arrival of foreign-born and *second-generation* immigrant children challenges educators and

policymakers to adapt to a changing population, one that is highly diverse culturally, racially, and linguistically. The prevailing notion is that immigrant children, regardless of their country of origin, do not adjust well to school and perform poorly academically, draining resources from an already overburdened educational system (Immigrant Children, 1995, p.78). However, assumptions that treat immigrant children as a homogeneous group are far from accurate. In contrast to negative homogeneous assumptions, there is one ethnic group, Asian Americans, who have collectively managed to overcome that stereotype.

Asian American Achievement

Bicultural or multicultural adaptations on the part of immigrants, compared to monocultural adaptations, may help to maximize community resources, mediate against poverty, and ease the transition from one country to another. For example, with an “Asian” culture in mind, scholars have posited that high Asian American achievement may stem from a Confucian ethic and a family orientation, characteristic of East Asian culture (Barringer, Gardner, & Levin, 1993, p.134). In other words, Asians are thought to have a desire for education because East Asian societies made education a prerequisite, at least ideally, for high status positions coupled with obedience to elders and respect for status and strong family support or stability ((Barringer, Gardner, and Levin, 1993, pp.144, 164).

A related argument, one that is not uniquely Asian, is that immigrants, more generally, have higher expectations for their offspring to do well in school. Immigrant parents may immigrate for the express purpose of enhancing their children’s educational opportunities. An increasing pull factor is the educational opportunities available in the United States. Children of immigrants who are immersed in their first-generation *ethnic enclaves* and social networks while maintaining their parents’ values of education and ethnic affiliation are experiencing academic

success and social mobility. Gibson (1988) describes this process as a strategy of accommodation or selective assimilation; a process that led the children of a Punjabi community to learn the skills necessary to be competitive in American society but that rejected assimilation into the cultures of the lower-socioeconomic status (SES) white community in which they resided (Lew, 2004, p.306). Similarly, studies on Southeast Asian refugee students indicate that their academic success was primarily attributed to students' close ties to their first-generation parental ethnic networks and to their ability to resist downward assimilation (Lew, 2004). Despite Asian students' close proximity to poverty-stricken environments and low SES, these studies argue that students achieved academic success as a result of strong ethnic networks and accumulation of social capital (Zhou and Bankston, 1998).

The Immigration Act of 1965 made it possible for a new migration of foreigners after decades of severely restricted immigration into the United States. The result was serious political divisions over how the schools should accommodate the children of this new wave of immigrants. In the period after 1965, second-generation immigrants residing in isolated minority communities without the protection of their parental immigrant networks were more likely to adopt an oppositional cultural frame of reference from their peers in school and communities (Lew, 2004). Particularly, in the West Indian immigrant community in the United States, the adaptation to American society is strongly influenced by contradictory pressures generated by the conflicting demands of holding both a racial identity and an ethnic identity. Jamaicans, the largest segment of the West Indian population, are still in many ways, an invisible minority often seen by others as part of the broader black population. Because the most highly motivated and achievement-oriented Jamaicans are the ones who immigrate and the contrasting views of race

and the negative stereotypes associated with the black race in America, Jamaicans often struggle to find their niche in the United States (Vickerman, 1999).

However, ever since immigration reforms in 1965 led to a great influx of Asian peoples, this ethnic group has enjoyed a reputation as a so-called model minority. A frequent topic of scholarly interest and discussion in the field of education has been the extraordinary educational attainment of the Asian population in the United States. Articles with titles such as “The Triumph of Asian-Americans,” “Why Asian Students Excel,” and “The New Whiz Kids” have appeared in the popular press regarding the phenomenal educational achievements of the Asian population in general or the extraordinary educational achievements of a member of a particular group (Wong, 1990). There have been numerous reasons established to explain this phenomenon. Historically, the discourse regarding the reasons behind the academic excellence of many Asian American students has consistently involved the value placed on education in East Asian countries such as China and Japan. The United States has looked to Japan and China as examples of academic success for years, but South Korea has often been overlooked. However, the fact that immigrants from South Korea have become one of the most *institutionally complete* and visible immigrant ethnic groups in the United States is certainly grounds for academic research.

Korean Immigrants in the United States

As previously mentioned, one of the most important motivations for Korean immigrants to come to the United States was to seek better educational opportunities for their children. This passion for education originally comes from the Confucian emphasis on learning as the best way to attain the wisdom and virtue needed by the ruling class in China. The Chinese examination system, which was adopted in Korea in A.D. 788, provided men of intellectual ability with the

most obvious route to political and financial success until the end of the Yi dynasty in 1905 (Hurh, 1998).

This historical legacy of attaining social mobility through education is deeply rooted in the Korean consciousness. Whether in Korea or in the United States, Korean parents' primary concern is to provide their children with the best education possible. As Min (1995, p.224) notes, "Most Korean immigrants with school-age children seem to decide where to live largely based on the academic quality of public schools in the neighborhood." Koreans' desire to buy houses in affluent suburban areas with good public schools is reflected in the 1990 census; Koreans, along with Indian Americans, show the highest rate of suburban residence among all ethnic groups (Hurh, 1998).

What is more intriguing is that many Korean parents send their children to private institutions after school to prepare for admission to prestigious colleges and universities. This practice of taking after-school lessons is a carryover from Korea, where college entrance examinations are extremely competitive. In Korea, and in the Korean community in the United States, the personal and societal drive to get ahead has parents working incessantly to pay large sums of money to send their children to supplemental education programs, known as *hagwons*. *Hagwons* are cram schools in Korea and supplemental education programs in the United States in which students receive additional lessons to supplement their regular classes and prepare for rigorous national entrance examinations.

Korean Americans: An Institutionally Complete Community in Georgia

Korean Americans are one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in the United States. Although they share many similar cultural characteristics with other Asian Americans, the Korean Americans are unique in terms of their strong ethnic attachment, extensive participation

in Christian churches, heavy involvement in self-employed small businesses, wide geographic dispersion in settlement, and the emergence of the 1.5 generation phenomenon (Hurh, 1998). In the early 1960s, Raymond Breton (1964) coined the term “*institutional completeness*” to indicate the degree to which networks of social organizations dominate an immigrant/ethnic community. Using Breton’s definition, the Korean community, particularly in New York, can be said to be more institutionally complete than any other immigrant or ethnic community in the city and perhaps in any American city (Min, 2000).

Korean immigrants in the United States maintain a high level of attachment to their own ethnic identity. Min (1991) stated that most Korean immigrants speak the Korean language, eat Korean food, and practice Korean customs most of the time. Many are affiliated with at least one organization and are involved in active informal ethnic networks (Min, 2000). Through networks such as churches, business organizations, alumni organizations, and supplemental education programs, most Korean Americans maintain and strengthen social interaction with other Koreans. While better economic opportunities were initially a huge pull factor for middle-class Koreans’ migration to the United States in the early 1900s; today, it is a better opportunity for children’s education that is the major motivation for their United States-bound migration (Min, 2000).

In Georgia, Gwinnett County is quickly developing into Atlanta’s next Koreatown. Since 1990, the Korean population in Georgia has increased over 88%, the second largest increase in the United States (U.S. Census, 2000). As a result, Korean frontier networks in Duluth, Georgia include restaurants, travel agencies, Korean churches, and large supermarkets. Of five large Korean ethnic stores operating in the area, four have opened since November, 2004. At least half of the customers are Korean (Se-moon, 2005). As a result, the Buford Highway Corridor in this

area has been nicknamed, “the greatest concentration of ethnic-owned businesses in the Southeast,” many of them Korean (Se-moon, 2005).

As the Korean immigrant community in the Atlanta area expands and as local schools are impacted, Korean parents are forming frontier networks that include local businesses, community centers, supplemental education program, and activities in churches and other organizations. As a result, the Korean American community is establishing mechanisms for adaptation, survival, and educational success in the Atlanta area as their counterparts did in New York City and Los Angeles.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this ethnographic comparative case study was to explore the nature of the educational and cultural experiences of Korean American students in supplemental education programs that serve as educational and cultural institutions as well as local equivalents to *hagwons* and are transplanted from the home country of South Korea. Specifically, I examined the South Korean educational system, the role and function of a Korean supplemental education program in Georgia, and its relationship to Korean American students’ experiences in their public schooling. The comparative elements in this study include comparing places as described by Manzon (2007), comparing systems, as described by Bray & Kai (2007), and comparing cultures, as described by Mason (2007).

Research Questions

In order to find out more about Korean American supplemental education programs, I conducted research on the after-school and summer programs of one Korean franchise founded in Seoul, South Korea which has been transplanted throughout the United States. As I examined the influence and structure of these programs, my guiding questions for the study included: (1)

What are the general features and characteristics of the South Korean educational system?

(2) What are the general features and characteristics of Korean *hagwons* and Korean American supplemental education programs? (3) What are the characteristics of the teachers, parents, and students of the educational community? (4) What roles do supplemental education programs have in the lives of Korean American students who are enrolled in them? (5) What aspects of Korean heritage influence participation in such programs? (6) What functions do ethnic supplemental education programs perform to contribute to the overall educational achievement of Korean American students? (7) What are the perspectives of Korean American students, parents, and teachers with regards to involvement in supplemental education programs?

Rationale for the Study

It is safe to say that academic development is a result of numerous and complex influences. Among these, scholars recurrently find that a number of familial characteristics exert positive influence on students' educational success across families. Greater parental educational experience, high parental expectations and aspirations, higher per-child parental financial resources, early monitoring and supervision of children's activities, interactive activities like help with homework and reading to children, low family disruption stress, good health and nutrition, quality schooling, and structured after-school environments facilitate academic achievement (Bhattacharyya, 2005). While these factors play a role, it is clear that the ability to succeed academically is heavily dependent on the nature of the education a child receives. The ability to gain admission to college, attend, and succeed there depends largely on the educational institutions to which families have had access before that time.

Thus, I explored how supplemental education programs make a difference in Korean educational experiences. Such programs are a factor that may be involved in the achievement of

Korean children but are not often considered in the scholarly literature regardless of the access many of these students have had to supplemental education. It is believed that more than 80 percent of Korean children in places such as Koreatown in Los Angeles and Little Korea in New York are involved regularly in supplemental education (Bhattacharyya, 2005). For many years, there have been a growing number of ethnic supplemental education programs in Koreatown, which may positively impact the college attendance and success of Korean children, even those who may not have access to high-quality urban public education and whose parents struggle to survive economically. So, why is it important to study this? Such programs could potentially set Korean American students on a better course of survival and success compared to other minority students and similar strategies could be used in a variety of communities throughout the United States.

Personally, I have intense personal rationale for the study and the connections between South Korea and Korean immigrants. I am a teacher in one of few middle schools in the state of Georgia where Korean American students are the largest minority ethnic group, making up about 40% of the school population. Additionally, I spent three weeks in South Korea, as a guest of the Korean Studies Workshop for Teachers, learning about the education system as well as cultural characteristics of the country. As a result of my experience tutoring at a Korean supplemental education program in Georgia and teaching at a Korean summer program for four years, I consider myself an outsider with unusual access to an emic (Geertz, 1983) perspective. I have experienced first hand the push for excellence, the preparation provided outside of the public school system, and the way in which Korean people in one community have pulled together to increase the opportunity for the success of their children. I have watched these parents find ways to create opportunities for educational success and pick up where the public school systems in

their communities leave off. However, I still wondered, as these programs become more popular, what, if any impact, were they having on Korean American students and their educational achievement? In the next section, I provide definitions of terms used throughout this study.

Definitions of Terms

In my study, I employ terminology from the field of immigrant studies, and I use terms defined by Foner et al (2001) and Bryceson and Vuorela (2002) except where otherwise indicated. The following is a list of terms and definitions. Additional terms may be added as needed.

1.5-generation immigrant: Korean immigrants who accompanied their parents to the United States while they were very young and who are generally bilingual.

Human Capital: The knowledge or skills that individual immigrants bring with them, but it can be applied to groups as well.

Educational Capital: term used to refer to the total knowledge base, or reservoir of knowledge, stored by children as obtained through formal and informal academic experiences.

Ethnic enclaves: A neighborhood, district, or suburb which retains some cultural distinction from a larger, surrounding area. These areas are mostly populated by recent immigrants who have voluntarily chosen to cluster together and often include concentrations of businesses and community institutions of a single ethnic group.

Ethnic networks: The manner in which many immigrants depend on one another in order to obtain economic, cultural, and social needs.

First-generation immigrant: An immigrant to the United States who has not been preceded by his or her parents or other family members.

Frontiering: Agency at the interface between two or more contrasting ways of life; denotes the ways and means transnational family members use to create familial space and network ties in terrain where community connections are relatively sparse (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002).

Hagwon: Means “study place” in Korean; supplemental study institutions which operate after-school, on the weekends, or during the summer in the Korean immigrant community and are often used to help students excel in formal school or on highly competitive entrance examinations.

Institutional completeness: Indicates the degree to which networks of social organizations or institutions dominate an immigrant/ethnic community. The community with many formal organizations is said to be more institutionally complete than the one with only a few or none (Breton, 1964).

Korean American: In this study, the term is used to describe Americans of Korean ancestry.

Model minority: The non-Asian stereotypical view of certain Asian American groups as uniquely superior or high-achieving in socioeconomic, academic, and moral characteristics compared to other people of color.

Pull factor: Factors that induce people to move out of their present location.

Push factor: Factors that induce people to move into a new location.

Relative Functionalism: A theory that hypothesizes that the greater the entry barriers into non-educational areas, the more salient education can become as the only means of achieving mobility (Zhou, 2006).

Relativizing: The variety of ways individuals establish, maintain, or curtail relational ties between individuals and communities (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002).

Second-generation immigrant: The U.S.-born child of a first-generation immigrant; as a U.S. citizen, eligible to receive certain benefits on the same basis as citizens.

Social Capital: Closed systems of social networks inherent in the structure of relations between persons and among persons within a social group to promote cooperative behavior and to serve specific needs of its group members (Coleman, 1990).

Supplemental education: Additional exposure to academic curriculum beyond formal schooling. This often includes exposure to family and community-based activities and learning experiences in support of academic development which occurs outside of the school and often in after-school programs (Gordon, 2003).

Transnationalism: The process by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. It is a general term pertaining to many different forms of international movement, exchange, and interrelationships.

Significance of the Study

As we move toward an era of globalization, it is projected that student demographics will continue to change in the United States. It is becoming increasingly inevitable that a dramatic rise in the number of students who speak languages other than English at home will escalate. Despite this forecast, the fields of multicultural education, comparative and international education, and literacy education have not adequately addressed what this will mean for pedagogical research and America's public schools. Although there have been studies done in each of the aforementioned areas, many of them have focused on the majority of language minority students in the United States, Spanish-speaking children.

Unfortunately, due to their smaller numbers, many other minority groups have not received the same attention that has been given to Spanish-speaking students. Thus, some groups

have used self-determination as a means to collectively address their concerns. Korean Americans are a model ethnic group in terms of achieving educational success through the use of co-ethnic networks and through their enhanced educational opportunities in the local equivalents of *hagwons* that are particularly rooted in educational achievement.

Due to the fact that they have become academically successful as a group, they have not been identified as a problem group that needs to be studied. In fact, Asian Americans are one of the least studied ethnic groups in the United States. Though other minority parents may also hold a good education in high esteem, it is hard to find a communal effort in which supplemental educational programs with similar results are the norm and not the exception. Although the recognition of Korean Americans as a distinct and important Asian American group in the United States has been quite recent, they have made significant accomplishments in an extremely short period of time.

Korean supplemental education does increasingly play a significant role in the academic performance of Korean students. While I would generally hypothesize a positive impact on children's academic development and on community development, a more in depth inquiry was certainly needed to document this possible relationship. Since little has been done on Korean *hagwons* in the United States, despite their growth, this was definitely an appropriate time to examine the roles and functions of Korean *hagwons*. In addition, the impact of such programs might be observable at the group level, and may partially explain the forthcoming academic achievement patterns of Korean children in the United States as well as the current patterns, since supplemental schools have been a part of Korean education since the seventies (Bhattacharyya, 2005). Korean American students are among those Asian American groups who,

on average, outperformed or performed equally as well as European Americans on standardized tests and GPAs (Miller, 1995).

Further inquiry into Korean supplemental education and determination of their potential transferability as an educational strategy is increasingly practical. Individual communities may be able to integrate these strategies with their own children, as well as design and adapt these strategies in ways that are unique to their needs. Successful, yet isolated programs already exist in many communities as a result of sheer will, but densely situated programs could have an even stronger impact. If formal and consistent supplemental education programs provide a means for Korean American students to succeed in schools and careers, they might also serve as a model for other immigrant groups who are struggling academically to develop their own culturally responsive supplemental education programs.

Dissertation Overview

In the following chapter, I review the relevant literature to provide the research context for the study. This review of the literature includes a description of the educational system in South Korea and a history of Korean immigration to the United States as it is related to the field of comparative and international education. In addition, I provide an overview of the literature about supplemental education programs in both South Korea and the United States and the influence that the model minority stereotype has had in the Korean American community. I also provide an overview of research on supplemental education programs (or lack of them) in other selected minority communities in the United States.

Following a description of the literature in the previously mentioned areas of research, in Chapter 3, I provide details about the methodology of the study and other aspects of the research process including the theoretical framework, data collection procedures, the setting and the

participants of the study, and the specific methods of analysis I used in the study. In Chapters 4 and 5, I discuss the findings of the study. Finally, in Chapter 6, I discuss the implications of the study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this section, I review literature related to the research problem presented in chapter one. First, I focus on the historical and educational background of South Korea and the effects these experiences have had on Korean culture. Second, supplemental education programs in the United States are highlighted, with specific examples from various ethnic groups as well as particular attention given to the Korean American community. Third, I explore Asian Americans as the model minority and the assumptions associated with this pervasive stereotype. Lastly, I review literature on Korean immigration and Korean Americans as an institutionally complete ethnic group.

Historical Background of South Korea

During its four thousand years of history, South Korea has been the crossroads of international spheres of influence and political interest. Some scholars have focused on the long legacy of education in Korea's history. For well over a thousand years, until colonization by Japan in the early twentieth century, successive kingdoms on the Korean peninsula were able to maintain a society with political independence and cultural distinctions from the surrounding nations. This country has been, and is, one of the catalytic ingredients between the cultures of China and Japan. China, as the largest and most technologically and culturally advanced society in East Asia, exerted the most important outside influence on Korea until modern times (Armstrong, 2001). There have been several instances in which South Korea has experienced

victimization at the hands of larger, more powerful neighbors. In the twentieth century, as the global economy and the increasing societal connectedness increased, Korea became the focus of rural interests between neighboring China, Japan, and Russia as well as the more distant United States. Like many other countries, that interconnectedness of societies would eventually pose common problems for educational systems around the world (Arnove, 2003).

The origin of Korea's history goes back to the "Ancient Chosun," which was a tribal state ruled the northern part of China and the Korean Peninsula from about 100 B.C. to around 43 B.C. (Shin, 1995). After the "Ancient Chosun" period, several kingdoms emerged. The kingdoms were unified by the Silla dynasty, which was replaced by the Koryo dynasty, which ruled the Korean Peninsula with Buddhism as the state religion. The name "Korea" originated from "Koryo." In 1392, the Koryo was supplanted by a new dynasty, the Chosun. In the Chosun period, new inventions such as the Korean alphabet, known as the "hangul," were made (Shin, 1995). However, the heavy reliance of the ruling class on Confucianism as the new sovereign ideology increasingly dominated the intellectual climate and discouraged diversity of thought. This dynasty was forced to open its door to foreign industrial powers in the late nineteenth century. Since then, Korea has undergone a series of hardships and turbulent challenges.

In 1910, Chosun was occupied by the Japanese colonial regime and Korea's cultural pride was severely damaged by this colonization. Though Korea was liberated in 1945, its independence was not guaranteed with the division of the country into north and south by the world superpowers (Gannon, 1985). Arrangements were made for the Soviet Union to accept the surrender of the Japanese in the northern part of Korea and for the United States to do the same in the southern part. Thus, the peninsula was divided along the 38th parallel under the influence of the Soviet Union and the United States. The Korean War followed in 1950, leaving the

country riven and destitute, and ever since the relationship between South and North Korea has remained strained. Korea still has the ultimate mission of reunification and a series of talks continue to be pursued but it is apparent that the events that occurred during this time period have had drastic implications for South Korea.

Historical Development of Education in South Korea

As described by Shin (1995) and Gannon (1985), over the past half-century, South Koreans have transformed their nation from an unprosperous agricultural country ruled by Japan and occupied by the United States into a self-governing industrial power. This transformation has included several national development plans that encompassed industrial development, the expansion of international trade, and most importantly, the fashioning of an educational system that promotes the welfare of the entire population of 43 million. The emphasis that the South Korean people place on education is a principal reason for the nation's rapid development since 1953. But the desire for a good education is related only partly to the economic and social success achieved.

Much of the motivation to become educated arises out of Confucian tradition, which came to ancient Korea from China. In the Confucian ideal, one can achieve a position of leadership only through years of scholarship and by passing numerous examinations. Historically, the examinations were based on the Confucian classics. When the system operated fairly and correctly, outstanding scholars emerged into positions of power, but nepotism and favoritism were the main casualties of the Confucian education and examination model. The tradition of Confucianism led to a high regard for learning and a zeal for education, which some argue has turned into an excessive demand for education today.

The three early kingdoms of Korea—Koguryo, Paekche, and Silla—laid the foundations for the beginnings of formal education, primarily for the upper class, with a curriculum centered in Buddhist Confucianism. The teaching of Confucianism was dominant in traditional schools before the advent of modern style schools in the late 19th century. During the Koryo dynasty and the Chosun period, higher civil officials were selected through a state civil examination system, which tested their proficiency in Chinese classics. The system made the learning of Confucian classics an educational tradition of the elite class. Learning for practical life was accorded a lesser status. In this way, all public and private learning focused on the recitation of Confucian classics until the late nineteenth century (Shin, 1995).

The Yi dynasty, following the Koryo period, marked a time of great intellectual and artistic development that continued into the early 20th century. During the reign of King Sejong (1418-1450), the Hangul alphabet was further developed which allowed the Korean language to be written phonetically and replaced the total dependency on Chinese characters (Gannon, 1985). Hangul, a significant invention, thus made it possible to develop a system for reading and writing easily learned by all levels of Korean society.

Through the influence of Buddhism and Confucian studies and traditions from China, there evolved within the Korean culture: 1) a respect for and obedience to elders and superiors; 2) a tendency to adhere to tradition; 3) an unquestioning attitude towards the authority of the teacher and the presented subject matter; 4) the acceptance of a theoretical rather than an applied approach; 5) the acceptance of an emphasis on rote memorization rather than on inquiry and questioning; and 6) a willingness to endure suffering (Gannon, 1985). These beliefs have been instrumental in shaping the current educational system.

The Development of Contemporary Education in South Korea

In contemporary times, South Korea has identified many scholars because of its distinctive features and the nature of its education. It is far from surprising that education is a national obsession in South Korea. Long hours of study, strict discipline, educational advancement contingent on success in competitive entrance examinations, and a high level of competency among teachers, whose education followed a rigorous and rigorously enforced course of training, have characterized the nation's schooling (Seth, 2002). At the heart of Korean teacher education is curriculum. It is also characterized by cram schools used by students to excel in the classroom and to pass national entrance examinations. Everywhere, there are cram schools, where elementary, middle and high school students study late in the evening and on weekends. English cram schools are becoming increasingly popular especially since college entrance exams often measure (among other things) English proficiency. The global language of English has been taught in Asian countries for years in part because America is the holy playground of free-market capitalism, and if one wants to play, he or she needs to speak English (Thomas, 1992). In other words in South Korea, money talks and it speaks English. It is apparent that the concern for global educational attainment is a pervasive feature of South Korean society.

Nonetheless, this obsession with formal learning has accompanied a remarkable educational transformation of South Korea in the half-century after its liberation from Japan. In 1945, when the thirty-five year Japanese colonial rule in South Korea ended, the majority of adult Koreans were illiterate. Mass primary education had only recently begun, and less than 5 percent of the adult population had more than an elementary school education. There was only one university in Korea, and most of its students were Japanese. Five decades later, virtually all South Koreans were literate, all young people attended primary and middle schools, and 90

percent graduated from high school. There were over 180 colleges and universities and the proportion of college age men and women who enrolled in higher education was greater than in most European nations (Seth, 2002). The quality of education was high as well, at least judging by comparative international tests. These tests usually rate the math and science skills of South Korean primary and secondary students as among the highest in the world.

As a result of such tests, American student achievement has been severely criticized. However, these test results do not illuminate the fact that from upper elementary through high school, most Korean students go to pricey cram schools called *hagwons*. These students receive additional instruction in academic subjects after regular school hours and on weekends, helping students to prepare for entrance exams. Given the time spent in instruction in formal and non-formal schools combined, the typical high school student has accrued almost two more years of schooling than his or her international counterpart. It is comparative dimensions such as these that continue to provide instrumental limitations for the goal of globalization as its people are misinformed (Berliner & Biddle, 1995).

Indeed, since the 1950s South Korea has been on the extreme end of the correlation between the general level of education and the level of economic development, with a higher level of educational attainment than any other nations of comparable per capita income (Seth, 2002). As the country advanced economically into a major industrial power, the general level of educational attainment remained higher than in almost all other nations at a similar level of GNP per capita. The aspirations of millions of rich and poor families for social advancement drove South Korea's educational expansion. South Korean schools continually provide an increasingly literate workforce that has been of enormous value in the nation's economic development. As nations strive to gain economic status, several influences such as political ideology, geography,

and culture have a huge impact. New Zealand and South Korea are excellent examples of cultures that drive educational systems that serve to improve the economy. As discussed in Arnove and Torres, it is clear that economics has a huge influence on globalization and the reorganization of education because it is a worldwide topic.

South Korea's achievements are all the more remarkable in light of its turbulent history. During the period of 1910-1945, there was a Japanese colonial education system, and during this time, Korea's own identity was lost. During the Japanese occupation of Korea, the Japanese developed an industrial, business, and educational infrastructure. Two educational systems were promoted, one for the Japanese and one for the Koreans. The Japanese system was open-ended and allowed for advanced training in science and managerial skills. During the colonial period, the Japanese constructed a special education system for the Korean population, intent on making Koreans into lower-class Japanese citizens. The Korean system was very limited and primarily emphasized basic literacy.

During the latter part of this colonial period, the study of Korean history and language was removed from the educational system. When Japan surrendered at the end of World War II, Korea was left with a work force that lacked experience or training in management, science, and technology (Gannon, 1985). The educational system was predominantly staffed by Japanese at the administrative and supervisory levels. Consequently, when the Japanese occupation ended, Korea had very few trained teachers and administrators, and those who were trained had been brought up in a system of learning that was Japanese in its approach, emphasizing memorization and focusing on final examinations. The legacy of Japanese colonialism is quite evident. Such exam systems in South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan share an East Asian culture that permeates

through such countries. In places such as South Korea, this cultural legacy then influenced the modern formation of education.

Colonization, as elsewhere, left many Koreans with a passionate post-colonial resolve to match or outdo their formal colonial overlords. The very fact that Japan and its former colony have a common cultural root, as noted, has made this colonial legacy especially unique and noteworthy. It gave Koreans confidence in their ability to duplicate Japan's economic and educational success. The colonial vestige of meritocracy, the nationalist bitterness and anger towards the Japanese colonizer, and then desire to outperform it, make a volatile mix that has ironically given postwar education an intriguing twist (Zeng, 1999). The legacy of Japanese education in Korea is profound. Once emancipated from colonialism, the Koreans aspired to the same ideals that Japanese education left behind and have since aimed to outperform the Japanese.

In the immediate post-war period, the first priority of the Korean people was to remove all traces of Japanese colonization. To suggest that this was not completely successful has always been taboo in post-war Korea for the most sensitive political reasons. However, after such a long period of colonial experience, there was no genuinely indigenous system with which to replace the Japanese influence. Hence, as a senior Korean educationalist put it, "After the war, the Korean education system had no clothes to put on, and therefore it had to wear American clothes even if they didn't fit very well" (Goodman, 1989).

This process was largely implemented through the experience of Korean educators in the United States in the immediate post-war period. In fact, the second wave of Korean immigration to the United States, composed mostly of Korean wives of American servicemen, war orphans, refugees, and some professionals, including students, was a direct consequence of the post-

World War II divided occupation of Korea, the Korean War, and the U.S.-Korean military alliance (Hurh, 1998). One of the single most important people in the process was O Ch'on Sok, who graduated from Columbia University and became the first Korean Minister of Education of the post-war era (Goodman, 1989). Like many others, he was significantly influenced by the individualist liberal education philosophy of American, John Dewey.

The fact that some influences nevertheless remained is not surprising; it was naturally difficult to overthrow thirty years of colonial experience immediately, and there was a tendency on the part of teachers to pass on their own educational experience to the next generation.

President Park, the driving force behind creating an education system geared towards economic expansion, was himself a primary school teacher during the period of Japanese rule (Lee, 1978).

Lee suggests that subservience of authority in teacher-pupil relations, teacher control, and lack of sensitivity to individual student needs, and authoritarian educational administration may be some of the legacies of the colonial period. Perhaps one could say that if the clothes were American, then the undergarments were still made in Japan (Goodman, 1989).

Similarly, in historical terms, it is important to emphasize the often-ignored role of Korea as a source and viaduct for much of Japanese culture including Chinese characters in the fourth century A.D., Mahayana Buddhism in the sixth century, and Neo-Confucianism in the sixteenth century. The denial of this role by the Japanese has important political implications (Covell and Covell, 1984). Furthermore, there are important historical and social similarities between Japan and Korea, of which the case of education is most evident from conception to adulthood. Even prior to birth, both societies place an emphasis on pre-natal education (Kim, 1985; Hendry, 1984). Furthermore, since both societies are poor in natural resources, their human populations are their most important assets.

The emergence and widespread acceptance of notions of education's contribution to human capital formation and the economic growth of nations further fueled an interest in comparative education. Comparative education, which traditionally has taken as its subject matter the macro and micro-level forces shaping education systems around the world, is a field ideally situated to study the dynamic interactions between global trends and local responses (Arnové, 2003). More recently, the belief that there is a causal relationship between the "excellence" of a school system, as measured by national standardized examinations and the economic success of a country in global competition has revived the interest in the relationship between education systems and national productivity (Arnové, 2003). The field has certainly undergone a shift from macro focus on the historical role of schooling to a micro focus on the inner workings of schools to understand education's contributions to social mobility, political development, and economic growth.

Therefore, it is no surprise that the intense drive for educational attainment that has characterized South Korean society burst forth in the years immediately following the collapse of the Japanese colonial empire. The sudden fall of four decades of harsh occupation by Japan was followed by the division of the nation by the United States and the USSR and by internal unrest. The emergence of a new state, the Republic of Korea, after a brief three years of U.S. military government came at a time of widespread poverty and internal tensions, and it presented a government with questionable legitimacy and nationalist credentials.

Most tragically, independence was soon followed by the horribly destructive Korean War. For education, the war was an enormous blow that resulted in the destruction of facilities, the loss of personnel, the dispersal of students, and the disruption of everyday routines so that administration often was a desperate affair (Seth, 2002). According to Seth (2002), about 80

percent of all educational facilities were damaged or destroyed. After a slow economic recovery real industrial growth began only in the early 1960s. But educational development proceeded rapidly from 1945 onward and continued uninterrupted, seemingly immune to the nation's political turmoil, economic chaos, and warfare that punctured its history. Regardless of the struggles South Korea has faced in the past, they have accomplished a great deal in terms of government, education, the arts, sciences, as well as diplomacy throughout much of Korean history.

South Korea's educational development has been characterized by other features that are in some way just as striking as its growth. Perhaps, foremost is the pervasive preoccupation with competitive examinations. The entire educational system, which placed pressure on children still in primary school, and is consistently enforced through high school, has focused on entrance examinations required for higher levels of schooling. Both the public and officials have widely criticized examination preparation as the center of learning, which has deep roots in Korean history. Perhaps most interesting is the degree to which this phenomena has come to embrace virtually the entire populace; families from all social or regional groupings make enormous sacrifices and go to great lengths to aid their children in the entrance exams (Seth, 2002). It could be argued that South Korea has become one of the most exam-obsessed cultures in the world.

American Occupation in South Korea

What has become an incredible zeal for success has been strongly influenced by foreign countries. Once the colonial restraints on access were removed, Americans and American educated Koreans introduced new ideas on education and the basic framework of the educational system was debated. The educational reforms carried out under the three-year American occupation, 1945-1948, and the new school system created by the South Korean government

would help set in motion and shape the course of South Korea's mass drive for educational attainment while fueling the intense explosion of cram schools.

Although the United States occupied South Korea for only three years, its impact on education was considerable as it made education a major priority. America had two aims in this area, both stemming from the belief that educational systems determined the character of the state and society they served. One aim was to purge Korean schooling of the fascist, militarist, and totalitarian nature of imperial Japanese education and to Koreanize and democratize it (Seth, 2002).

The second goal was to provide educational opportunity for all young people so that Korea could have the literate population needed to be a prosperous society. The New Education Movement was rooted in the American progressive educational philosophy of John Dewey; thus it emphasized equal opportunity for all and the development of self-reliance and individual responsibility. During the three-year occupation, the U.S. Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK) established committees, which recommended proposals that brought South Korea closer to an American example of education. For example, the government adoption of a 6-3-3-4-ladder system, known as the "American model," was a critical step for South Korea. The Korean public education structure is divided into four parts: six years of primary school, followed by three years of elementary school, three years of middle school, three years of high school, and four years of college or university.

Little, however, was actually done during the occupation to put the ideas of democratic education into practice or to implement proposed reforms. Partly, this was due to the brevity of the U.S. occupation and the wealth of other political and economic problems facing South Korea at the time. In addition, some felt that American education was inappropriate for Korea. It was

developed for a society that was a carnival of races and therefore was not suitable for a racially homogeneous society like Korea (Seth, 2002). Furthermore, American education was devoid of spiritual and moral content. Korean education must “develop the mind and spirit” so that both the individual and society will be democratic and true to Korean identity (Seth, 2002). Nonetheless, the Western impact, especially through the American presence, has been notable in Korea. There was a rapid expansion of enrollments, the implantation of democratization, and some decentralization of education. This change can indeed be described as part of a process of Eurocentric globalization, the sweeping tendency to isomorphism that has ritualized many aspects of education worldwide (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983).

National Entrance Examinations: The Key to Success

While education in both Japan and Korea has tended to be seen as a privilege rather than a right, the massive expansion of both systems in recent years has led to what Dore (1982) has described as the “diploma disease.” Soon after 1945, an intense competition emerged for advancement into prestigious, upper-level institutions by obtaining high scores and secondary school and university entrance examinations. The examination system is central to understanding the dynamics of the Korean educational system. It created a high-pressured, narrowly directed educational system and contributed to the role of education as a fundamental mechanism for social advancement. This system has resulted in the massive growth of unemployed graduates in Korea in the 1980s, which has led to, for example, over 640 college graduates applying for jobs in mail delivery in the spring of 1986 (Korea Herald, April 6, 1986). The expression “four succeeds and five fails,” used today to refer to the maximum number of hours of sleep a successful applicant to Seoul National University can hope to achieve was a popular Japanese saying for applicants to Tokyo University in the 1960s and 1970s (Goodman, 1989).

However, this fascination with examinations that serve as vehicles for selection is not unique to South Korea and has permeated many educational structures across the world. From South Korea to Greece, examinations are a major factor. While this problem puts many countries at “world class” levels academically, it also places a lot of pressure on students, parents, and teachers. In addition, students are learning rote memorization, which is heavily emphasized. For example, the South Korean system places heavy importance on examinations and very little on research, the ability to analyze, or the acceptance of questioning. In fact, it is a system that looks down upon students questioning the authority or knowledge of the teacher.

South Korea’s national preoccupation with entrance examinations has a long, historical tradition behind it. Success in the civil examinations was the ambition of almost every upper-class male in Yi dynasty Korea. The modern school entrance examination system, however, was the creation of the Japanese and was retained with only minor modifications by post-colonial South Korea. The test-taking ordeal for South Korean students began with the middle school entrance exam although examinations were held at both the middle school and high school level.

Educators, journalists, and Ministry of Education officials widely felt that the system was psychologically damaging and put excessive pressure on children and that it led to a situation in which teachers too often saw their role as preparing students for the exams (Seth, 2002). Some schools offered special classes in the evenings or on weekends and collected tuition for them. After-school cram sessions became important sources of supplemental income for both schools and teachers.

However, the social conditions surrounding education made the educational system a very effective institution for political manipulation. Formal schooling in Korea had been controlled by political power. It had taken for granted that education is to be used for the purpose

of national security and national development from the viewpoint of the “haves” (Han, 1974). Since, the political power in independent Korea was concentrated in the hands of political technocrats and entrepreneurs and pro-American scholars; access to opportunities and to decision-making within education was denied to the common people as a whole.

Hence, the current government administration has been described as being obsessed with the division of the educational haves and have-nots, a hangover from the 1980s military regime of President Chun-Doo-Hwan. All privately owned educational enterprises such as tutoring or *hagwons* were banned then with the goal of making a level educational field for all students (Card, 2005). Related to this is an issue focused on educational access and equity. The increasing demand for education, driven by the forces of development and globalization, has meant that education planners and policy-makers have had to make difficult decisions about who gets educated at what levels (Hawkins & Su, 2003). Prior to the ban, accusations were common that rich parents provided their children with extra preparation or with teachers that had taken bribes to teach extra classes thus using students as human capital and not individuals with specific needs. University students often made a lucrative job out of tutoring, sometimes enough to pay their way through school if necessary (Zeng, 1999). Greater competition among educational purveyors is meant to enhance consumer sovereignty, identify commodity forms of education that can be bought and sold, and maximize market principles (Arnové, 2003).

Nonetheless, the way the South Korean Ministry of Education approached education is no different from teachers in the United States who teach to the Criterion Referenced Competency Tests and give practice problems for homework until the test date arrives. In addition, though not as pervasive, the principle of spending money to provide a better education is not just unique to South Korea. The money that parents spend in South Korea on tutors,

private school, and resources is similar to the money parents spend on private schools in America, tutoring such as Sylvan Learning Centers, and preparation courses for the SAT, GRE, or GMAT. Financial capital definitely plays a huge role in access to educational opportunity.

Although some Asian nations, such as South Korea, are known for placing a high value on education and producing high achievement rates, in reality, young people in many regions, especially girls in rural and minority areas, receive only a primary school education in less than adequate schools. Opportunities for special education students are limited and efforts to mainstream children have just begun (Adams & Gottlieb, 1993). Additionally, it was typical for schools in downtown urban areas to be regarded as superior to those in the outlying sections of the city, and their pupils had a greater chance of entering a prestigious university or getting a good job. A lucky few go on to high school and even fewer go on to college. Opportunities for higher education are very limited and entrance to college is controlled by restrictive national examinations (Hawkins & Su, 2003). In fact, in South Korea, parents are shooting for acceptance into one of the so-called “big three” Korean universities. Seoul National University, Korea University, and Yonsei University are collectively nicknamed SKY.

Gaining admission into one of these institutions is considered a South Korean student’s crowning life achievement, but there is not room in these schools for all of the students who do well on the entrance examinations. Not only will successful students have the best academic pedigree in the country, they will also have a strong alumni network that tends to be biased in hiring and mentoring graduates from their alma mater (Card, 2005). In South Korea, the purpose of university and college education is to teach and study the fundamental theories and practical means of application of the various branches of arts and sciences necessary for the progress and

development of the nation and the human race, and thereby foster persons capable of leadership (Hong, 1992).

While education for all is the ultimate goal, it must be literally attainable for all and accomplished both nationally and locally. Given the discrepancies between rural and urban areas in South Korea and the limited space available in Korea's most elite universities, this goal is not teleological in implementation. In practice, we find not the globalization of responsibility for assuring access to education for all the world's learners but rather the localization and internalization of internationally promulgated perspectives on education even where education for all remains frustratingly beyond reach or is not in fact a high priority objective (Samoff, 2003). In 1989, the reforms passed to reduce the obsession with testing and even the educational field was overturned. Ultimately, the government realized that regardless of national ideas that are presented, it is very difficult to implement these ideas at the local level. Local schools cannot be policed at all times so the problem continues to persist. While South Korea continues to battle the previously mentioned issues, one aspect of the Korean educational system has readily made its way to the United States and is increasingly influencing Korean American students.

Supplemental Education Programs in the United States

Many schools in the United States have experienced an influx of immigrant students whose unique cultures and experiences often present a challenge for public schools. Asian students, often labeled as "model minorities," are particularly overlooked as they are stereotyped as overachievers who do not experience academic difficulties. Yet many schools do not recognize the language and cultural barriers that these students encounter in the classroom. Consequently, many Asian immigrant students turn to resources in the outside community for supplemental educational opportunities. A variety of supplemental education programs, such as

enrichment centers and Saturday schools, increasingly fill a gap that some schools inadvertently widen. Some scholars have drawn attention to the issues in these programs, for their education and other benefits.

Supplemental education facilities have become standard within many immigrant communities in the United States, particularly students of East Asian descent. In countries like China, Japan, and South Korea, supplemental educational institutions, known as “cram schools,” are critical to the success of students. While the United States has looked to several East Asian countries for an academic example of success, South Korea has often been overlooked even though the market for these very institutions that have been fueled by the emphasis placed on entrance exams has exploded in recent years. As educators and scholars have examined the overall success of Asian American students, Korean American students have often been overlooked, and few have explored how these supplemental programs frequently provide opportunities for Korean American students to be successful while staying connected to their home culture.

The overwhelming body of research fails to examine the numerous additional factors that contribute to the success of Korean American students beyond the consistently cited parental influence and a culture that has historically held education in high esteem. While it is evident that Koreans value education and are willing to make significant personal sacrifices to ensure that their children are afforded the best available learning opportunities, the Korean enthusiasm for education has had very drastic implications. In a country where competitive education is virtually the gateway to success and high status, South Korean children have little choice but to work hard and parents have little choice but to support this practice. However, with this phenomenon, several implications for academic achievement unfold. In the United States, it

seems as though Korean American students have used their home culture's value of academic excellence, private tutoring, and competitive education to secure some of the most coveted positions and rankings in several American institutions of higher learning. So, how has a Korean tradition increasingly become a critical component of a Korean American student's tool for success?

The idea of supplementary education (Gordon, 1999) is based on the premise that beyond proficiency with the school's formal academic curriculum, high achieving academic success is closely associated with exposure to family and community-based activities and learning experiences outside of school. Gordon defines supplementary education as the formal and informal learning and developmental enrichment opportunities that are provided for students outside of school and beyond the regular school day or year. Supplementary education, as defined above, is not a new phenomenon; in fact, the affluent have purchased its treasures for a long time. This advantage, having become a frontier of commerce, may partially explain the academic achievement gap between white and Asian American students and their African American Hispanic American, and Native American counterparts (Bridglall, 2005).

On some levels, the commerce of supplemental education is not secret or subtle. While there are a number of nonprofit organizations delivering services, they are often subsidized by business interests or their foundations, and increasingly, a growing number of these supplemental education organizations charge fees for access and participation (Bridglall, 2005). These nonprofit organizations have quietly joined the for-profit providers of supplemental education in privatizing supplemental education. The significant dynamic of this phenomenon is that people of color are not in important decision-making positions in either the nonprofit or the for-profit supplementary education fields.

Meanwhile, the revenue produced from a growing number of supplemental education products and services is in the millions. Likewise, the number of personnel employed by such organizations is also on the rise. While it is difficult to report accurate figures (given the lack of data in this area), an estimated \$511 million worth of educational software is purchased annually for home use and Sylvan Learning Centers, as a result of public offering in the late 1990s, is probably a \$200 million organization (Bridglall, 2005). Until recently, supplemental education was not considered in debates about the academic achievement gap. For years achievement gaps have been explained by noting family income and value of education but not by considering what that family income purchases for children. It is clear that compensatory education (Gordon and Wilkerson, 1966) efforts, including Head Start and Title I, are attempts to supplement and supplant local educational initiatives, but most public efforts do not rival what the supplemental education industry makes available to those discerning and networked families that can purchase services. Yet, as providers of supplemental interventions, for-profit programs do benefit from public dollars in direct and indirect ways. For instance, it is partly parental anxiety about the shortcomings of public schools and the desire to prepare their children for higher education and/or meaningful employment that fuel supplemental education.

In an effort to move closer to reality when identifying the factors impacting student achievement in multicultural societies, one critical need is to move beyond the exclusive identification of education with formal schooling and to examine the whole range of educational opportunities available in a multicultural society. There are several types of ethnically focused education programs, sometimes known as ethnic schools, non-formal schools, cram schools, or supplemental education programs. Smaller scale programs such as after-school or weekend

programs also exist. These programs are often created by ethnically conscious civic or religious groups toward the end of supplementing what is available to their community in formal schools.

Supplemental Education Programs across Ethnic Groups

Many minorities have taken several educational matters into their own hands, often using methods of self-determination to gain access to an equal education. Ethnic and religious minorities such as African Americans, Asian Americans, and followers of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam have had to enact self-determination through community-based schooling.

Community-based education is unique because it gives oppressed minorities the opportunity to express and operationalize self-determination. While community-based schooling is still a new idea for mainstream education, it has historically provided a means for minorities to become active participants in shaping their own future through education (Corson, 1999).

Community-based or culturally focused education is one manifestation of the impulse to build community resources and capacity. Research on such efforts usually takes the form of longitudinal history of a single group and its use as educational apparatus to meet its needs (Anderson, 1998). Some researchers also explore the creation of schools on behalf of a group by outsiders, discussing the sometimes mixed motives and the paternalistic mind-set that often inheres to such help (Anderson, 1998). Yet, other research is historical, done with an eye toward comparing ethnic groups or comparing time periods with a group's history (Min, 1999). These studies are rich with detail about structural and institutional change and interaction with groups, and they clearly lay out the chain of historical events in a plausible pattern, but they are also somewhat depersonalized.

Perhaps the most useful research in terms of really understanding the needs of ethnic groups and the educational alternatives created to meet those needs are through those case

studies that focus closely on one or a few particular programs and their efforts to serve that community (Fashola & Cooper, 1999). While this type of research does not give extensiveness of coverage that can be de-contextualized and cross-applied, it does reveal the details of a particular program in the context of its own situation and examines how and why it works as well as who is being served in that situation. An in-depth case study that looks at the history and situation of a program and those involved with it and incorporates that into an examination of the present and possible future of the program and people answers the question of “What can we learn from this case?” in ways that an overview or review simply cannot (Nelson-Brown, 2005). It is within this type of research on supplemental educational programs that there is an apparent research gap that needs to be filled as such programs become increasingly popular amongst religious and ethnic groups.

Muslim Supplemental Programs in the United States

Independent religious education as an alternative to public education has had a long history in certain parts of the United States as well as Canada. Most prominently, Catholics, Jews, Muslims, and Mennonites have long-established alternative institutions to aid in the preservation of their religious identities amidst the wider society (Azmi, 2001). During the 1960s and 1970s, virtually all Muslim children were educated in the public education system. By the 1970s, there emerged considerable frustration with the distorted manner in which both Muslims and Islam were portrayed in the public school curriculum. Religious sectors of the Muslim community have struggled with the full implications of public education on both their group and religious identities.

In response, Muslim teachers in Muslim educational institutions provide instruction of an approved curriculum integrated with instruction of Islamic religious belief and practice, Qur’anic

recitation, and the Arabic language (Azmi, 2001). Classroom structures and teaching methods are patterned after public school education. The schools often adhere to the public education calendar, with minor changes made to accommodate the annual Muslim religious festivals. The impetus to preserve religious identity and community in the midst of a wider secular culture has also led Muslims to look towards independent religious education as an alternative to secular public education. While the vast majority of Muslim families continue to send their children to public schools, the recent development of independent religious institutions in the Muslim community and its surrounding vicinity represents a clear statement that public education is in the process of declining appeal among religiously active sections of the community.

As one of many religious communities to develop an independent and religiously oriented educational framework, the members of the Muslim community continue to struggle for the widespread recognition of their aims. Such recognition may call for educational curriculum, programming, and policy development that accurately reflects the full spectrum of Muslim outlooks on religion, society, and public education, and which proactively seeks to provide reasonable accommodation where needed and where possible. At the very least it calls for an attitude that is respectful of sincerely felt grievances on the part of a religious community that is frequently the target of prejudice and stereotyping. However, this is just one minority group that does not feel that multicultural education as it currently exists can protect the religious identities of their children. Thus, this is only one reason that alternative educational institutions have become a way to address educational institutions with monocultural curricula that do not reflect their diverse school populations.

Although alternative institutions have been used by a variety of religious groups, it is supplemental and non-formal education programs that have become increasingly popular

amongst several racial and ethnic minorities. These programs are often created by ethnically conscious civic or religious groups toward the end of supplementing what is available to their community in the educational landscape, a form of informal or non-formal education (Mahoney, 2001).

Jewish Supplemental Programs in the United States

Gill (1991) argues that the success of Jewish day schools and Afrocentric educational programs have implications for educators who wish to help African American students, who have historically been labeled inferior, achieve positive self-concept development and academic success. The Jewish day school has had a dramatic impact on the Jewish American community and has added a new dimension to the creative survival of American Jewry. With a history that dates back to the mid 1600s, these schools have become the most effective instrument for transmitting Judaic heritage to Jewish youth, counteracting the abrasive effects of cultural assimilation and greatly enriching the lives of American Jews (Gill, 1991, p.567). Against a backdrop of acculturation and deculturation, the Jewish day school movement in the United States has attracted the attention of large segments of the Jewish community (Schiff, 1966).

The growth of this movement has been extraordinary as more than 800 Jewish day schools have been in operation within the United States (Isaacs, 1989). Jewish parents and educators assume that Jewish schools are responsible for transmitting and instilling values, ethics, and moral standards in their students (Joseph, 1987). Therefore, the foundations of Jewish day school education are training in the Torah, the teaching of Judaic religious morals, values, and ethics, and character development. Moral behavior, student achievement, and development of a positive sense of self-worth, and parental involvement are the hallmarks of Jewish curricula (Schnaidman, 1986). Jewish day schools have a record of successful achievement in student

cognition and continuity skills. As measured by standardized tests and performance on competitive scholarship examinations, students attending Jewish day schools perform better than their public school counterparts (Terman, 1975, p.53). Gallagher's (1975) classic study indicates that over 10% of the nation's gifted population may be Jewish, although Jews comprise only 3% of the general population. Thus, some have argued that these students' personal evaluations of themselves are dominant influences in their success or failure in school; especially as they attempt to cope as Jews in a world that is culturally oriented towards gentiles (Gill, 1991, p.569)

African American Supplemental Programs in the United States

While religious self-determination has quite a history in the United States, several racial minorities have also established supplemental education programs with religious foundations. In *Ethnic Schools: A Historical Case Study of Ethnically Focused Supplemental Education Programs*, Jason Nelson-Brown examines the value of ethnically focused supplemental education, with specific emphasis given to one such program known as the Mount Zion Ethnic School. Nelson-Brown attempts to examine one such program in order to provide insights for educators and community members such as on the ways in which supplemental ethnic schools might be integrated within the life of the community as an instrument of support for the education of their youth. As more members of ethnic, religious, or other sociocultural groups become increasingly dissatisfied with the efforts of the public school system, ethnically focused schools or supplemental programs have been one response to that concern (Nelson-Brown, 2005). But what needs do they satisfy that pluralistic schools cannot or will not and how well do these schools or programs address that need?

Mount Zion Ethnic School was conceived in 1977 at Mount Zion Baptist Church in Seattle, Washington. It was a predominantly and historically black church in a city with a

relatively small African-American population. The most obvious need to be met by an ethnic school was that of providing ethnic content, especially in light of the demographic situation of African Americans in the Northwest and the sociocultural situation at the time the ethnic school was founded (Nelson-Brown, 2005). African American families expressed dismay at the unsatisfactory treatment of African Americans in the curricula of formal schooling and sought a place where the gap could be filled. Also, in many ways the ethnic school curriculum was about breaking barriers to expectations and broadening horizons and a sense of possibility.

Mount Zion worked with smaller freedom schools to protest the district's failure to respond to community demands for integration and fair and equitable treatment for African Americans. Career classes brought in speakers from a wide array of professions to bring home the message that these jobs were out there and attainable for students. Academic courses taught them that their history, heritage, and culture were vibrant and vital, regardless of whatever message they may receive elsewhere. For that matter, they themselves received love, care, attention, encouragement, and validation, speaking success into existence for students who often felt marked in a very negative way elsewhere (Nelson-Brown, 2005).

However, the question still remains as to whether or not they are academically important. Are the students who attend really achieving the academic goals previously set forth? While it is important for these programs to benefit students academically, the symbolic value of an ethnic school may be its first and greatest impact. For some schools, it is a prime example of self-determination. Supplemental programs are a concerted effort toward ambition, change, and self-reinforcement, building strength from within to loosen or break shackles imposed from without. Its existence draws the community to it not only for its content but also as a symbol of strength and possibility, increasing the educational capacity of the community and decreasing its

dependence on simply taking what is put in front of them by mainstream society (Nelson-Brown, 2005).

The symbolic value of an ethnic school goes beyond breaking down gate-keeping rationales and controlling images that constrain their ability to participate on equal footing with other communities (Collins, 2000). It penetrates to the level of the individual student, who is empowered to see not only adults from the community standing behind him or her but also the explicit cultural capital that they possess when taking initiative to further their own interests. While ethnic schools definitely serve the aforementioned purposes, the significant academic benefits of such programs have yet to be proven.

Traditional schools in the United States are under careful scrutiny regarding issues of curriculum and discipline and their impact on the achievement and self-concept of several minority students. The disenfranchisement of African American children in public schools in the United States has been persistent, pervasive, and disproportionate (Lomotey, 1990); yet, quality education has always been a priority for African American people (Woodson, 1933). Since the 1700s, African Americans have established their own schools, Independent Black Institutions (IBI), designed to meet the particular needs of their children (Ratteray & Shujaa, 1987).

Most IBIs presently in existence began operating within the past 20 years. They were developed, in part, as a consequence of African American parents' community control concerns and their unsuccessful efforts to have some say in their children's education in the public schools (Lomotey, 1992, p.457). As a result, many African American parents decided that their only solution was to begin their own schools, developed by African Americans for African American children (Weusi, 1973). As African American parents sought a culturally relevant curricula to

shift their children's worldview, they enabled African American students to look at the world with Africa as the center of their perspective.

However, the context in which African-centered education is most often discussed is extremely limited. Many argue that if these children cannot see themselves in the curriculum, they will continue to be disenfranchised. According to Lomotey, independent African-centered schools have a role to play in improving the educational experiences of African American children. He suggests that they have met with much success in their efforts to incorporate an African-centered curriculum, and their success leads to the conclusion that aspects of this curriculum can be incorporated into public schools and other private schools. However, although these institutions may develop a strong African American identity and increase the self-esteem of its students, little is known about the academic effectiveness of such programs on African American students. Perhaps the most useful research in terms of really understanding the needs of ethnic groups and the educational alternatives created to meet those needs is through those case studies that focus closely on one or a few particular programs and their efforts to serve that community (Fashola & Cooper, 1999).

Comparatively, in *Minority Status and Schooling: A Comparative Study of Immigrant and Involuntary Minorities*, John Ogbu explored official and unofficial programs that have been initiated since the 1960s to improve the school performance and discourage dropouts among black and other minority children (Ogbu & Gibson, 1991). There are volunteer programs for tutoring and other forms of assistance, programs to improve community-school relations and to increase the number of minority teachers and staff, to promote school integration and to bring the schools under community control. There are bilingual education programs, compensatory education programs and preschool programs. The effectiveness of some of these programs in

improving the school performance of black children cannot be measured directly with standardized tests, but they are nevertheless, intended to contribute to the overall improvement of the children's performance. Ogbu focuses on compensatory programs in Stockton, California and acknowledges that though such programs may have some positive impact on black students, the programs have not altered the basic patterns of black school performance.

No one will deny that some of these programs have some positive effects on black students. Nevertheless, the programs have not altered the basic patterns of black school performance. Compensatory education at both preschool and school-age levels not only ignores the structural basis of the lower black school performance, but also assumes that the lower school performance is caused by developmental deficits in essential skills that result from inadequate socialization in the family which much be rehabilitated (Bloom, Davis and Hess, 1965). But the rehabilitation strategy does not work well in a system of racial castes. In spite of our wishes and dreams, it is not easy to eliminate an adaptation to a caste-like stratification while the stratification itself and all that it means persist (Ogbu, 1991)

Community-based or culturally focused education is one manifestation of the impulse to build community resources and capacity. Research on such efforts usually takes the form of a longitudinal history of a single group and its use of educational apparatus to meet its needs (Anderson, 1988). Some research is historical, done with an eye toward comparing ethnic groups or comparing time periods within a group's history (Min, 1999). These studies are rich with detail about structural and institutional change and interaction with groups, and although they stop short of naming causes and effects, they clearly lay out the chain of historical events in a plausible pattern. Despite this, they are somewhat depersonalized and fail to place the people of history front and center in their research (Nelson-Brown, 2005).

While studies such as those of Ogbu do not give breadth of coverage that can be decontextualized and cross-applied to other situations as a self-existent model but rather reveals the details of a particular program in the context of its own situation and examines how and why it works or does not work and who is or is not being served in that situation. It can be criticized for being narrowly focused and being too deeply embedded in a specific case to really speak to other situations. However, an in-depth case study that looks at the history and situation of a program and those involved with it and incorporates that into an examination of the present and possible future of the program and people answers the question of “What can we learn from this case?” in ways that an overview or review simply cannot (Nelson-Brown, 2005). Within this literature, supplemental ethnic school programs seem least well covered and have been left for additional researchers to explore.

Supplemental Programs of No Child Left Behind

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 publicized the idea of supplemental education services as one of the school improvement alternatives available to students in low performing schools. NCLB requires districts to offer supplemental educational services to students in schools that are in the second year of school improvement, meaning they have not met the state’s adequate yearly progress (AYP) goals for three consecutive years. NCLB defines supplemental educational services as “additional academic instruction designed to increase the academic achievement of students in low performing schools,” and indicates they must be high quality, research-based, and specifically designed to increase student achievement (U.S Department of Education, 2002, December 12). However, once a school makes AYP, supplemental services are no longer funded for students at those schools. Therefore, these programs only serve as temporary solutions to a long-term problem. Since these supplemental

educational services are new and have no precedent in prior federal legislation, there are several gaps in their implementation.

In addition to the public schools, supplemental service providers may include non-profit, for-profit, and faith-based organizations, charter schools, and public and private colleges and universities (U.S. Department of Education, 2003, August 22). Sylvan Learning Center and Kaplan Educational Centers are supplemental education programs that offer essential skills such as reading, mathematics, writing, SAT and ACT preparation. While Sylvan is taking franchised education in a new direction by setting up centers in public schools, tapping into the \$7 billion in Chapter 1 funds earmarked for students performing below grade level, it does not offer continual opportunities for students to grow, cultural connections, and co-ethnic networks. Although advocacy organizations remain divided over the potential benefits and costs of supplemental services on minority children's learning opportunities and outcomes, if implemented properly, these programs could provide improved learning outcomes for minority students amidst an unyielding bureaucracy. Thus far, research provides little evidence to guide policymakers and advocates who disagree about the benefits of supplemental services.

The Achievement Gap in American Public Schools Among Minority Students

Despite the full-scale ethnic schools, comprehensive schools, and smaller scale programs such as after-school or weekend programs used as methods to triumph over pervasive unequal opportunities in education, there has always been a variation in educational attainment among minority students. By every measure non-Asian minority students, low-income and high-income, are doing more poorly than Caucasian students in school (Thernstrom, 2000). Whether one looks at the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data, SAT scores, grades, or class rank, the picture remains the same. As the report states, "relatively small percentages of Black,

Hispanic, and Native American high school seniors have had scores typical of students who are generally well prepared for college” (Thernstrom, 2000). The least successful groups have on average a much weaker combination of home and school resources (Gordon, 2003). Without demeaning the importance of adequate and appropriate school resources, the importance of access to educational resources that are supplemental to what is available in school is crucial.

A frequent topic of scholarly interest and discussion in the field of education has been the extraordinary educational attainment of the Asian population—the Japanese, Chinese, Filipinos, Koreans, Asian-Indians, and Vietnamese in the U.S. According to the National Task Force on Minority Achievement, it is clear that eliminating the racial gap in levels of academic achievement is one of the nation’s most important educational challenges (Thernstrom, 2000). Regardless of the minority group being discussed, it seems as though little is being done within schools to address this growing issue. Therefore, self-determination has become a critical component of success for many minorities in the United States.

Many members of minority groups have realized that they must take control of their educational destinies. As a result, there are several forms of self-determination that minority groups have used to increase their opportunity within the educational system of the United States. However, some, such as Korean Americans and Japanese Americans, have approached this as a communal goal, not an individual goal. According to Manuelito (2005), self-determination is based on commitment to one’s self, being proactive, persevering, and having individual commitment to communal goals. Thus, it is no surprise that there are several community forces that impact the academic achievement of minorities in the United States. An essential part of community forces, such as cultural models, degree of trust or acquiescence, cultural/language frames of reference, and educational strategies is that they are a collective

phenomena (Ogbu, 1992). Although they may be manifested at an individual level, they are characteristic of the group.

Minorities have increasingly sought out new learning environments in order to address the problems they have historically faced within American schools. All minorities face certain similar barriers in school including inferior curriculum, denigrating treatment, cultural and language barriers, as well as social and economic barriers in the larger society (Ogbu, 1992). Yet, some minorities are more able than others to adjust socially and do well academically in school. Clearly, there is a need for an alternative framework to examine and explain why some minority groups often excel and others consistently struggle. For example, African Americans have disproportionately done poorly when it comes to academic performance while other minorities, such as Asian Americans as a whole, have earned extraordinary educational accomplishments. Numerous explanations have been proposed to account for the variability in school performance of minority students. Explanations have been based on cultural deprivation, biogenetic factors, and class stratifications (Bourdieu, 1967). For example, some argue that black children do less well in school than white children because more blacks than whites come from lower class or “underclass” backgrounds (Bond, 1981).

Explanations of the Achievement Gap in the United States

Some argue that cultural differences, language differences, and voluntary versus involuntary classifications are the explanations behind the variance in educational performance between minorities. Ogbu argues that voluntary minorities have cultural models that lead them to accept uncritically mainstream folk theory and strategies of getting ahead in the United States and to interpret their economic hardships as temporary problems they can and will overcome through education and hard work. Under these circumstances, one finds in voluntary minority

communities an educational climate or orientation that strongly endorses academic successes as a means of getting ahead. Equally important, one also finds culturally sanctioned high and persistent academic efforts within these communities. In contrast, one finds in the communities of involuntary minorities cultural models that make them skeptical that they can get ahead merely through mainstream beliefs and strategies, even though they verbally endorse education as a means of getting ahead. Thus, they attribute their economic and other difficulties to institutionalized discrimination, which in their opinion, will not necessarily be eliminated by hard work and education alone. Under these circumstances, one may find an educational climate or orientation in involuntary minority communities that produces a strong verbal endorsement of schooling as a means of getting ahead, yet very weak culturally sanctioned attitudes, efforts, and persistence supporting individual pursuit of school success (Ogbu, 1992).

Most of the previously mentioned explanations focus on factors inside the school, inside the family, or in the biography/biology of the individual child. In addition, the majority of explanations do not account for the differences in the school adjustment and academic performance among minority groups themselves, groups that are comparable in terms of their socioeconomic and cultural distance from the white middle-class mainstream, but which have higher or lower school performance (Gibson, 1986). From a comparative perspective, these and other explanations of variability in minority school performance are lacking in three ways. First, they ignore the historical and wider societal forces that can encourage or discourage the minorities from striving for school success. Second, they do not consider a group's collective orientation toward schooling and striving for school success as a factor in academic achievement. They assume that school success is a matter of family background and individual ability and

effort. And third, the theories fail to consider the minorities' own notions of the meaning of and the "how-to" of schooling in the context of their own social reality (Gibson and Ogbu, 1991).

Asian Americans: The Model Minority

Great concern has been expressed over the educational achievements of American students in general and of ethnic minority students in particular. In 1984, Skinner wrote an article entitled "The Shame of American Education," which lamented the educational mediocrity of American schools in terms of student achievements, motivational levels, and learning (Sue & Okazaki, 1990). Undeniably, there has been growing concern that Americans are falling behind students from other countries in educational achievements. The problems are particularly apparent in the schooling of ethnic minority students, such as Blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians, who show lower levels of educational attainments, grades, graduation rates, and school persistence (Sue & Okazaki, 1990).

Comparatively, in ethnic minority research, one of the most remarkable phenomena has been the high educational achievements demonstrated by some Asian American groups over the last four decades. Although these students are often subjected to similar discriminatory practices encountered by other ethnic minority groups, in addition to language barriers, their educational attainments have continually increased. No other group has moved so quickly upward in the United States with the possible exception of the Jews (Lee & Rong, 1988). In addition, no other immigrant group has been drawn so largely from the middle and upper classes in their countries of origin. No other large group of migrants has had so great a proportion of highly educated people among them (Lee & Rong, 1988).

Since the authors of popular magazines (e.g., *U.S. News and World Report*, *Time*) in the 1960s began using the term to describe the successes of Chinese Americans, the stereotyping

practice has been a difficult one to erase. The model minority stereotype, “good” and “docile,” has sometimes served to isolate Asians from other minority groups and therefore increased tensions between minority groups (Ro, 2002). Lee (1996) challenged the stereotyping of Asians in America as the model minority. Lee’s interviews with Asian high school students revealed that many of the students readily took up these stereotypes. Lee divided the Asian group into four distinct groups: Korean, Asian, Asian new wave, and Asian American.

Lee also noted that among the Asian groups, Korean students had a strong sense of nationalism and attempted to distance themselves from other Asian groups. For example, they formed a separate Korean Student Association while the rest of the Asian students joined pan-Asian groups. Lee also pointed out the Korean students sought to follow in the footsteps of “White American behavior” because they tended to view Americans as white. Park (1997) suggested that Korea’s history of being economically dependent on the United States probably has influenced its people’s dual desires to maintain their nationalism and, at the same time, become American.

Lee (1996) asserted that school officials, consciously or unconsciously, have singled out Asian students and used them as models to measure the achievements of other minority groups. In the high school that Lee described, Asians and Whites were placed in the gifted programs, while African American students were placed in the regular classrooms. According to Lee, the Asian students were viewed as “insiders” while African American students were viewed as “outsiders.” This division eventually led to racial tension between the two minority groups. Hence, several have argued that the model minority stereotype should be critically examined instead of being internalized by Asian students.

Although there is growing interest in Asian American achievements, research findings have not been able to shed much light on the significant factors that account for their achievement levels. Sue and Okazaki (1990) argue that this fact is caused in part by the lack of research on the phenomenon and by the failure to clearly devise adequate or critical tests. Historically, extraordinary educational achievement has often been credited to a common cultural influence of Confucianism that emphasizes education, family honor, discipline, and respect for authority.

Many of the theories that have been presented do not adequately explain the achievement levels of Asian Americans. For example, it is well documented that educational achievements of individuals are directly related to the social class of parents. Young Asian Americans, not only the children of foreign-born physicians, scientists, and engineers, but also those of uneducated, low-skilled, and poor immigrants and refugees, have repeatedly shown up as high school valedictorians and academic decathlon winners, and have enrolled in prestigious colleges and universities in disproportionately large numbers (Zhou and Kim, 2006). The theory that perhaps Asian Americans are advantaged in terms of socioeconomic standing and can afford to provide their children with special resources and opportunities was initially disproved in a report by Arbeiter (1984). In his report on college bound seniors, the median parental income of Asian Americans was lower than that of whites, \$25,400 and \$32,900, respectively although the educational attainments of the parents were comparable. Yet, Asian Americans were found to have higher high school grades and SAT scores than did whites.

In trying to explain the educational success of Asian Americans, the tendency has been to compare and contrast genetic and cultural explanations. Because the evidence does not support a genetic interpretation, many have simply assumed that Asian cultural values, beliefs, and

practices are responsible for their academic achievements. In addition, Sue and Okazaki suggest that the effects of culture have been confounded with the consequences of our society. Although culture is certainly an important factor in achievements, education has been functional for upward mobility, especially when participation in other arenas, such as sports, entertainment, and politics, has been difficult.

Additionally, in the search for factors that influence achievement levels, single explanations cannot adequately account for the observed performance patterns. Thus, Sue and Okazaki argue that research on heredity, culture, child-rearing practices, educational experiences, and personality, among other topics, has yielded interesting but inconclusive results. Finally, explanations for Asian American achievements must incorporate what Sue and Okazaki (1990) call relative functionalism. Although cultural explanations for Asian American achievement is a result of Asian cultural values that extol the virtues of education, or of cultural practices that maximize skills in gaining education, the concept of relative functionalism also considers the problems of achieving in non-educational types of endeavors—those that are not a clear and direct outcome of educational performance (Sue & Okazaki, 1990). Perceived limitations in mobility in these endeavors increase the relative value or function of education as a means of achieving success. This is particularly true of the Korean American community.

The Immigration of Koreans: An Institutionally Complete Ethnic Group in the United States

The history of Korean immigration to the United States has often been divided into three distinct phases. First is the period of immigration from 1903 to 1949, during which approximately 7,200 Koreans arrived in the Hawaiian islands as laborers. About 40 percent of these predominantly male laborers were Christians (Choy, 1979, p.77). Many chose to cross the Pacific for religious freedom as well as for better economic life. The second wave, from 1950 to

1964, included primarily young Korean women married to American servicemen, Korean War orphans adopted by American families, and a small number of elite students and professional workers (Min, 2001). The third and largest wave is the contemporary period of family immigration since 1965, following the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965 (Hurh, 1998). The generous family reunification category of this act largely benefited the relatives of three groups of Koreans: wives of American servicemen, Korean students who stayed to find work in the United States after the completion of their education, and professional workers (Kim, 1987).

In general, the Korean population in the United States was negligible before 1970. However, between 1961 and 2000, more than 800,000 immigrants from Korea were admitted to the United States as permanent residents (USCIS, 2002). As a result, the ethnic Korean population grew more than tenfold in just three decades, from less than one hundred thousand in 1970 to more than 1.2 million in 2000. Korean immigrants have come from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. However, it is the migration of largely urban, well-educated, and professional immigrants that make up the foundation of contemporary Korean immigration.

Initially, in the late 1960s and 1970s, most Koreans arrived using occupational preferences. Two factors made this possible. First, an expanding medical industry in the New York-New Jersey area at that time and a demand for health care professionals attracted many Korean as well as many Asian Indian and Filipino medical professionals to the city (Kim, 1981). Korean and other Asian medical professionals filled vacancies in the periphery specialties such as family practice and radiology and in low-income minority neighborhoods that were not attractive to native born whites (Kim, 1981, p.155). Second, many Korean foreign students who studied at major east coast universities moved to New York to find professional /managerial jobs or to start small businesses. Many Koreans started businesses after earning master's degrees in

the humanities or social sciences because the degrees did not help them to find professional or managerial jobs (Min, 2001). More than 40 percent of the Korean immigrants who entered the United States during the 1980s were professionals and managers prior to immigration, one of the highest percentages of professionals and managers among immigrant nationalities (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996).

The earlier Korean occupational immigrants and students admitted to the United States created a chain that has perpetuated the family-based migration of Koreans. However, Koreans who were admitted on the basis of family reunification since the 1980s represent a lower class and more diverse occupational backgrounds than the earlier professional and student immigrants. This downward trend in Korean immigrants' class background has been further accelerated by changes in South Korea. South Korea's economic conditions have significantly improved over the last twenty years. Koreans experienced a growth in per capita income from \$843 in 1977 to \$2,199 in 1987, and then to \$9,200 in 1995 (Min, 2001). Moreover, social and political insecurity, which pushed many middle-class Koreans to the United States in the 1970s and the early 1980s, had been substantially reduced. South Korea had a popular election in 1987, putting an end to the sixteen-year military dictatorship. The breakdown of the Cold War between Western countries and Eastern European Communist countries also reduced tensions between North and South Korea (Min, 2001).

The significant improvements in economic, social, and political conditions, along with the increasing publicity of Korean immigrants' adjustment difficulties in the United States, have reduced the influx of Korean immigrants in certain areas during recent years. The number of annual Korean immigrants, which peaked in 1987 with 36,000, has gradually declined, reaching the lowest point in 1994 (Min, 2001). Better economic opportunities are no longer a pull factor

for middle-class Koreans' migration to the United States; instead, "a better opportunity for children's education" is the major motivation for their United States-bound migration (Min, 2001).

In the United States as well as around the world, immigrant populations have expanded in both urban and rural communities (Kim, 2001). Asian ethnic groups, with their distinctive physical and cultural differences, seem to encounter adjustment problems different from those of European ethnic groups. Handlin (1959) clearly demonstrated in *The Newcomers* that blacks have been hampered by color and Puerto Ricans by ignorance of the English language. Early Asian immigrants, however, have had both disadvantages; they were both unable to speak English and physically distinctive from European immigrant groups. Their struggle to learn English was often complicated by discrimination based on their physical appearance as well as the fact that the dominant group does not easily eliminate this type of prejudice because physical characteristics are so visible and invite assumptions (Kim, 2001). Wong (1995) asserted that no matter how similar to white in values, aspirations, mannerisms or actions, they will always be perceived as different. This has important implications in terms of physical and cultural differences and their effects on Korean Americans.

Whether Asian Americans were not encouraged to or were not willing to assimilate to the dominant group, it is clear that their immigration history starts with different standards and treatments. A small number of Korean students, political exiles, merchants, and immigrant laborers began to arrive on American shores in 1888. Korean immigrants later created Koreatowns throughout urban cities of the United States. These ethnic communities enabled new immigrants to maintain their previous lifestyles in a new environment without sudden cultural

adjustment. Many new Korean immigrants settled in a Korean community and sometimes started their businesses within or around a Koreatown (Kim, 2001).

Several researchers have identified constraints, challenges, and stressors during the immigration process that may increase the need to preserve ethnic identity among immigrants. The challenges include economic survival, social discrimination, cultural conflict, competition, and the erosion of identity. Black, Mendenhall, and Oddou (1991) argued that the uncertainty, ambiguity, and loss of control caused by international relocation are expected to relate negatively to cross-cultural adjustment. In other words, these factors may lead immigrants to a strong attachment to their ethnic identity as a matter of self-protection. It is not a surprise to observe that first generation immigrants, regardless of their ethnicity, often demonstrate stronger ethnic attachment to their traditional culture and society than do their descendants (Hurh & Kim, 1984). Hurh (1977) suggested the value of establishing strong ethnic communities in the dominant majority country. He observed that America is a nation of immigrants where race is still the most powerful factor in limiting structural integration. He suggested that Korean immigrants need a sense of belonging (community), recognition (identity), and common origin and destiny (ethnicity).

Characteristics of Korean American Immigrants

Korean Americans are one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in the United States. Although they share many similar cultural characteristics with other Asian Americans, the Korean Americans are unique in terms of their strong ethnic attachment, extensive participation in Christian churches, heavy involvement in self-employed small businesses, wide geographic dispersion in settlement, and the emergence of the 1.5 generation phenomenon (Hurh, 1998). In the early 1960s, Raymond Breton (1964) coined the term “institutional completeness” to indicate

the degree to which networks of social organizations dominate an immigrant/ethnic community. Using Breton's definition, the Korean community, particularly in New York, can be said to be one of the more institutionally complete than any other immigrant or ethnic community in the city and perhaps in any American city (Min, 2000).

Korean immigrants in the United States maintain a high level of attachment to their own ethnic identity. Min (1991) stated that most Korean immigrants speak the Korean language, eat Korean food, and practice Korean customs most of the time. Many are affiliated with at least one organization and are involved in active informal ethnic networks (Min, 2000). Through networks such as churches, business organizations, alumni organizations, and supplemental education programs, most Korean Americans maintain and strengthen social interaction with other Koreans. While better economic opportunities were initially a huge pull factor for middle-class Koreans' migration to the United States in the early 1900s; today, it is a better opportunity for children's education that is the major motivation for their United States-bound migration (Min, 2000). Korean immigrants are highly concentrated in large metropolitan areas such as Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago. In comparison to other Asian American communities, Korean Americans have been noted for their entrepreneurial success and economic mobility as a result of strong co-ethnic networks. However, the recent arrival and unique settlement pattern of Korean immigrants means that the clustering of the Korean population and of Korean-owned businesses in any given locale is relatively new. It is widely known that Korean immigrants in the United States are concentrated in several types of labor-intensive small business. Although other groups have had high self-employment rates, due to the fact that many Koreans play a middle-man minority role distributing products made by large corporations to low-income minority

customers, no other immigrant group active in small business has attracted as much media attention as Koreans (Min, 2001)

In the areas where there are high concentrations of Korean immigrants, small business are just one characteristic of this ethnic minority group. These areas are characterized by a tremendous growth of Korean businesses, churches, and ethnic media, including television, radio, and newspapers. The Korean church is perhaps the most important ethnic institution anchoring this ethnic community. It serves multiple functions, including meeting religious and spiritual needs, offering socio-psychological support, economic assistance, and educational resources for immigrants and their families. Korean ethnic communities have been more characteristic of an intricate network of churches, clubs, alumni associations, professional associations, ethnic businesses, and ethnic-language media that transcend geographic boundaries (Bhattacharyya, 2005). In Breton's view, "The community with many formal organizations is said to be more institutionally complete than the one with only a few or none" (Breton, 1964, p.28). Therefore, formal ethnic networks are a significant aspect of Korean American communities that make them institutionally complete.

Min (2001) argues that assimilation and ethnic attachment are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Members of a group can achieve a high level of assimilation while preserving their cultural traditions and social networks, as is clear from the mode of adaptation of Jewish Americans. However, in the Korean immigrant community, the factors that contribute to ethnic attachment also hinder assimilation into American society. Koreans' monolingual background, along with the extensive development of their ethnic media, segregation in their own religious congregations, and their economic segregation, isolate them from larger society (Min, 2001). Ironically, the one area in which this isolation has not had a negative influence is education.

Korean Americans and Supplemental Education Programs

Korean parents have attempted to ensure academic success for their children by providing them with important structural and educational resources. Many Korean parents have actively intervened in their children's schooling and adopted several strategies to ensure their success. Korean parents have consistently used their kinship and co-ethnic networks at church, work, and communities to reinforce the values of education, bilingual skills, and ethnic ties (Lew, 2006). They have also used co-ethnic networks to gain important schooling information necessary for navigating the public school system.

Two major Korean newspapers are circulated widely in the United States, *Korea Times* and *Central Daily*. Both of these major newspapers have a weekly section devoted to education. This is one of the primary ways that Korean parents learn about the American education system, average SAT scores of local high schools, rankings of top American colleges, college admission requirements and strategies, how to finance children's college education, and parenting strategies in general (Zhou & Kim, 2006). The articles are usually written by Korean American educators, counselors, social workers, and financial planners. In addition, education-related articles published in mainstream newspapers or weekly periodicals such as *Time* or *Newsweek* are translated and published in the Korean newspaper the very next day.

The ethnic newspaper is also where education-related advertisements are found. A typical education section has advertisements for SAT schools, Korean-language schools, day care and preschools, college-preparatory summer camp, and Ivy League campus tours operated by Korean immigrant tour companies (Zhou & Kim, 2006). Since sending their children to tuition-based after-school academies, located primarily in Korean ethnic enclaves, is a popular tool used among Korean American families, the importance of structural resources has a significant

relationship to school achievement. For one of the most institutionally complete Asian minority groups, this strategy is one tool of success that has been overlooked in terms of factors that contribute to Korean American students' academic success.

For Korean American students, the use of supplemental education programs transplanted from their home culture has increasingly become a part of life. In their home country of South Korea, students continue to rank extremely high on standardized tests, making them one of the countries that the United States continues to watch as an academic example. However, it is a nationally competitive entrance exam that is actually the centerpiece of the entire educational system. As a result, many Korean students attend special expensive cram schools after their regular classes where they study and prepare for such examinations.

In Dragon Gate: Competitive Examinations and Their Consequences, by Kangmin Zeng, a detailed study of the university examination systems and the role of cram schools in South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan is examined. Zeng astutely notes, "The history of exams is a history of an institution, a system. On the other hand, this system is not an empty shell, but a structural order governing human behavior and consciousness" (Zeng, 1999). The cram industry has been a billion-dollar industry, yet it has not been well documented or updated. Because of the lack of scholarship, we are very much kept in the dark in terms of what has really been going on in that ever-expanding world. Zeng attempts to broaden the knowledge gap within this phenomenon by exploring the manifestation of these programs.

According to Lew (2006), Korean parents often used the Korean education system as a point of reference in educating their children in the United States. For instance, in Korea it is common for, if not expected of, students to attend *hagwons* as early as kindergarten. As in the United States, these private, tuition-based programs provide additional tutoring to help children

excel in school and prepare for competitive high school and college entrance exams. However, these private after-school academies, both in Korea and the United States, usually emphasize rote memorization, test-taking skills, and cram methods specifically geared toward improving test scores. As profit-generating business designed primarily to improve standardized test scores, these programs rarely provide enriching curriculum for cognitive development based on progressive teaching methods and pedagogy (Lew, 2006, p.41).

According to a recent survey conducted in Korea, it is estimated that an overwhelming 83.1% of elementary schools students, 75.3% of middle schools students, and 56.4% of high school students attend hagwon after school, and it is estimated that families spent 13.64 trillion won (\$22.5 billion) on private tutoring in 2003 (“Public Education Crisis,” 2003). A survey published by a state-run education research institute highlighted the problem associated with this trend, which includes staggering financial burdens on families, as well as parents’ lack of confidence in the public education system, which they claim is failing them (Lew, 2006). It is reported that parents are putting pressure on the government to reform its public school system so it is less dependent on these private profit-seeking enterprises. Meanwhile, the number of private hagwon academies has been rapidly increasing throughout the country, as students are expected to put in longer hours studying and parents are expected to shoulder greater financial burden, often starting as soon as their children reach kindergarten (“Public Education Crisis,” 2003).

The literature about South Korea regarding education does point out that there is in South Korea, among other East Asian nations, a culture of valuing education and sometimes even an obsession with education (Khang, 2001). However, it does not explore how that cultural phenomenon has been transplanted in the United States. The Korean parents’ inclination to use

the Korean education system as a point of reference to educate their children in the United States illustrates the significance of their pre- and post-immigration social status (Hirschman & Wong, 1986; Portes & Rumbault, 1996, 2001). On the one hand, this tendency reflects a pattern of amassing cultural capital derived from their status as college-educated professionals in Korea (Lew, 2006). On the other hand, this tendency reflects their relatively low status as U.S. immigrants. With the exception of a few parents who attended graduate school in the United States, they often had little understanding of the workings and logistics of high school curricula or of the U.S. college admission process, and they were at a disadvantage in directly assisting their children with schoolwork, college counseling, and career opportunities outside of their ethnic economy (Lew, 2006, p.41).

As a result, Korean-language schools are a post-1965 phenomenon. They initially emerged in the 1970s as weekend schools intended to maintain the Korean language and culture, enhance ethnic cultural identity, and facilitate children's selective assimilation (Zhou and Kim, 2006). Korean schools also offered various after-school tutoring programs in addition to language and culture classes. By the end of the 1980s, nearly five hundred Korean-language schools were registered in the Korean School Association of America (KSAA), as well as numerous semiformal Korean-language schools run by small groups of concerned parents or by small churches (Zhou & Kim, 2006). Governed by a board of trustees, the KSAA is in charge of policymaking, budgeting, fundraising, recruiting school principals and teachers, and sponsoring an annual conference (Zhou & Kim, 2006, p.9). This association receives financial support from the Korean government in the form of free textbooks for all the students in the registered schools (Kim, 1992).

Most Korean-language schools are nonprofit, and there are three main types: church affiliated, secular formal schools, and secular informal schools. More than three-quarters of the schools registered in the KSAA are church affiliated, highlighting the central role of the church in this immigrant community. In smaller churches, parents volunteer as teachers and classes are taught on Sundays after service (Nalty, personal communication, 2006). Larger Korean churches usually have more formal Korean schools that operate on Saturday mornings for three or four hours and offer various academic and recreational programs. The average tuition per semester for Korean school is about \$180 (Zhou & Kim, 2006, p.9). It is even less at church-affiliated Korean schools because part of the expense is subsidized by the home church in support of the idea that a family's socioeconomic background should not hinder their children from learning the "mother language" (Zhou & Kim, 2006).

Nonprofit ethnic-language schools also serve as intermediate ground between the immigrant home and the American school, helping immigrant parents—especially those who do not speak English well—learn about and navigate the American education system (Zhou & Kim, 2006, p.13). Through these ethnic institutions, immigrant parents are indirectly but effectively connected to formal schools and well-informed about the factors crucial to their children's educational success. Many parents volunteer their time for tasks ranging from decision-making, to fundraising, and to serve as teaching assistants, event organizers, cooks, chauffeurs, security guards, and janitors (Zhou & Kim, 2006). Parents also take the initiative in organizing community events, such as ethnic and American holiday celebrations. In this sense, social capital arising from participation in ethnic-language schools, immigrant churches, and other ethnic institutions is extremely valuable in promoting academic achievement.

Although Korean-language schools have steadily grown, a wide range of nonprofit and for-profit educational institutions have also sprung up and grown rapidly since the 1990s (Bhattacharyya, 2005). The most noticeable are *hagwons*, where students study in small groups, between ten and twenty, with an instructor who specializes in a particular subject. In Korea, there are many different types of hagwons. For younger students, hagwon is a place to get additional help to excel in school. The most popular hagwon subjects are English and math. For high school students, hagwons are supplemental after-school institutions aiming almost exclusively to prepare students for the highly competitive college entrance examination and to help test-takers who did not score high enough to get into their college of choice to retake the exam with a better score the following year (Nalty, personal communication, 2006).

Due to the fact that gaining admission to one of the few elite colleges in Korea—Seoul National, Korea, and Yonsei (SKY),—assumes paramount importance in the life of high school students and their families, hagwons have been unofficially institutionalized as part of the education system in Korea (Bhattacharyya, 2005). In Seoul, some of the most expensive real estate is in the Kangman area, not only because of the high quality of K-12 public schools, but also because of the high concentration of reputable hagwons in that area (Zhou & Kim, 2006).

Unlike Korean-language schools, hagwons aim primarily at academic tutoring and may not have a core curriculum for Korean language and culture. Hagwons in the United States are mostly private businesses established and operated by Korean immigrant entrepreneurs to meet an ethnic-specific demand carried over from Korea. In 2004, the *Korean Business Directory* of greater Los Angeles listed 209 private hagwons or academic tutoring establishments. Thirty-six of them offer just SAT-intensive preparatory courses for high school students, while the rest offer basic subjects such as math and English for younger students plus the SAT, PSAT, SSAT,

and AP for the older students. In addition to hagwons, the directory lists a large number of private after-school establishments, including 116 art and music schools operated by Koreans and 145 Tae Kwon Do studios. These enrichment programs not only aim to help provide high school students with well-rounded portfolios to support their college applications, but also offer instruction for preschool, elementary, and middle school students.

The majority of hagwons are owned by Koreans, but teachers are both Korean and non-Korean. They have eye-catching names like “Harvard Review,” “Yale Academy,” “Ivy College,” and “UC Learning Institute” (Dunn, 1995). Even the non-Korean owned private supplemental schools such as Prep Center and Princeton Review have branches set up in or near Koreatown and in ethnoburbs with large Korean populations. They are advertised in Korean newspapers with promises of helping students excel in school, score high on standardized tests, assist in the college application process, and get into their college of choice. However, these centers do not offer the ethnic ties that many Korean families seek. Most students enroll at a very young age and receive help in order to get into magnet programs, honors classes, and advanced placement courses in their public schools or districts. These efforts are made from an early age to increase a child’s chances of getting into highly competitive colleges.

While ethnic-language schools and church affiliated after-school programs are affordable to most families, the academic and specialized enrichment programs embedded in these nonprofit institutions are more expensive. Because hagwons are for-profit businesses, they are much more expensive than Korean-language schools. Many high-quality private hagwons, which rival mainstream institutions such as the Princeton Review and Kaplan, are extremely expensive. Monthly tuition can range from \$90 to \$500, depending on the grade level, subject matter, and

weekly or weekend schedules while an intensive SAT summer school programs complete with dormitory accommodations costs approximately \$2000 (Zhou & Kim, 2006).

Despite the costly tuition of hagwons, Korean and non-Korean hagwon entrepreneurs are well aware that Korean families are willing to make sacrifices in order to pay for this supplemental education for their children. High demand for after-school services from immigrant parents with higher than average socioeconomic status and high rates of self-employment in the immigrant community stimulate new business opportunities for prospective co-ethnic entrepreneurs aiming at serving working-class immigrant families (Zhou & Kim, 2006, p.15). This phenomenon of supplemental education is to my knowledge, unmatched by any other contemporary immigrant group. Thus, attending hagwons has become a common experience among Korean American youth and one of the defining characteristics of being Korean American.

While it is evident that Koreans value education and are willing to make significant personal sacrifices to ensure that their children are afforded the best available learning opportunities, the Korean enthusiasm for education has very drastic implications. In a country where competitive education is virtually the gateway to success and high status, South Korean children have little choice but to work hard and parents have little choice but to support this habit. It has been estimated that the typical Korean family spends between 15 and 30 percent of their household budget on private education. But they continue to pay because they feel that if they don't send their kids to private school, they are not doing their best for their kids (C. Kim, personal communication, 2006). Of course the kids are the ones attending the schools, but at what social and emotional cost? They spend a significant amount of time in the classroom, attending cram school Monday through Friday, plus Saturday morning. Koreans tell their kids:

“Sleep five hours a night and fail; sleep four hours and pass” (Lee, 2006). It is no surprise that the suicide rate in South Korea increases every year around exam time (C. Kim, personal communication, 2006). Despite the disadvantages, Korean students continue to attend and parents continue to pay. Therefore, what they are learning seems to be worth the sacrifice.

While this may serve as a controversial phenomenon in South Korea, Korean American students have historically reaped the benefits of their native culture and excelled in American classrooms (Sue and Okazaki, 1990). As many countries define success through numbers and rankings, it is very clear that Korean American children generally score well on standardized tests (Sue and Okazaki, 1990). But, how have Korean American families that come to America with language barriers and different cultural values that are more often than not, rarely taken into account in the public school system affected? Few have examined the role of supplemental education programs such as tutoring, Saturday schools, and Korean enrichment centers that have been transplanted from South Korea in regards to the success of Korean American students.

In an attempt to address the relationship between South Korean education and Korean American programs, more research has begun to appear regarding after-school programs in the Korean-American community. In *L.A.'s Koreatown, a Relentless Focus on Schooling*, Robert Johnston depicts the incredible focus on private after-school programs and the endless need for more schooling in one Los Angeles Korean community (Johnston, 2000). However, he fails to explore why the need for these programs is continuously growing or where they arose in the first place. One article, *Crazy for Cramming in South Korea*, by Moon Ihlwan, sheds some light on this phenomenon and implies that this growing trend is a practice that has been imported from Korea. He suggests that in South Korea, students rely on tutors and other supplemental education to win highly competitive spots in college (Ihlwan, 2000).

As the demand for education in the United States exceeds what public schools can offer, ethnic entrepreneurs continue to provide after-school programs to their co-ethnics (Zhou & Kim, 2006). Also, because of the higher standards imposed on Asian American children as a model minority, parents increasingly turn to these ethnic institutions in the hope of giving their children an extra boost in the race for admissions into prestigious schools. As it seems these programs are becoming a national phenomenon in Korean communities in the United States, the disparity and lack of research regarding the influence of such programs has yet to be adequately explored. Despite diversity in form, governance, and curricula, these ethnic institutions, nonprofit and for-profit alike, offer services to immigrant families that are directly relevant to children's formal public education. These ethnic institutions not only offer academic and enrichment programs, but also serve as the locus of social support and control, network building, and social capital formation. However, the benefits and solidarity of co-ethnic networks notwithstanding, there are still major gaps in literature that need to be addressed. Asian Americans remain the least studied ethnic group in the United States and the model minority stereotype continues to persist.

Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed various factors that influence education in South Korea, Korean immigration to the United States, and Korean American participation in supplemental education programs. I also reviewed literature on the historical foundations of education in South Korea and its influence on the culture and education of Korean American students as it has been described in the literature. In the next chapter, I discuss the methodological design used in obtaining a clearer understanding of the nature of the educational and cultural experiences of Korean students in *hagwons* that serve as educational and cultural institutions as well as

supplemental education programs used by Korean American students, which are local equivalents to *hagwons* and are transplanted from the home country of South Korea.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I describe the methodology and design that I utilized to conduct the study. I describe the problem and purpose of this study as well as the research questions used to guide this study and my theoretical perspective. I explain the data collection and management procedures, data analysis procedures, and my roles as the researcher, issues of bias, and limitations of the study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this ethnographic comparative case study was to explore the nature of the educational and cultural experiences of Korean American students in supplemental education programs that serve as educational and cultural institutions as well as local equivalents to *hagwons* that are transplanted from the home country of South Korea. Specifically, I examined the role and functions of a Korean *hagwon* in Georgia and its relationship to Korean American students' experiences in their public schooling.

Statement of the Problem

Relatively little is known about the specific nature and cultural function of the large number of *hagwons* that Korean immigrants have organized in their communities. Most educational scholars and the public in general are unaware of the Korean *hagwons* because details are not widely publicized although they are operating in virtually every Korean American community in the United States. Much of the relevant literature is thin on in-depth contextual

details of Korean American students' success beyond parental involvement and a value of education. Many of these students spend countless hours in supplemental education programs, yet this phenomenon has not been very well documented (Zeng, 1999).

While these programs, which are the foundation of educational success in South Korea, do not yet have acceptance in the public education system within South Korea, they certainly are influential to the success of Korean American students in the United States. A study of such programs can yield important information for better understanding why Korean immigrants are organizing supplemental education programs, what is occurring within these programs, and how these supplemental programs influence the larger immigrant community and perhaps also the mainstream communities. The extensive network of Korean supplemental programs in the United States represents a fascinating source of inquiry for learning more about the educational experiences of Korean American students within formal educational settings and more importantly, by shedding light on the possible influences beyond those on public schools.

Research Questions

In order to find out more about Korean supplemental programs, I conducted research on the after-school and summer programs of one Korean franchise founded in Seoul, South Korea that has been transplanted throughout the United States. As I examined the influence and structure of the program, my guiding questions for the study were as follows: (1) What are the general features and characteristics of the South Korean educational system? (2) What are the general features and characteristics of Korean *hagwons* and Korean American supplemental education programs? (3) What are the characteristics of the teachers, parents, and students of the educational community? (4) What roles do supplemental education programs have in the lives of Korean American students who are enrolled in them? (5) What aspects of Korean heritage

influence participation in such programs? (6) What functions do ethnic supplemental education programs perform to contribute to the overall educational achievement of Korean American students? (7) What are the perspectives of Korean American students, parents, and teachers with regards to involvement in supplemental education programs? These questions provided the initial framework for my research (see Appendix A) along with data sources and methods of analysis. I used this framework to check and recheck myself as I proceeded with the study.

Research Design

This study was designed as a qualitative ethnographic comparative case study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002). In deciding to undertake a qualitative research study, I needed Strauss & Corbin's (1990) rationale that qualitative methods can be used to better understand a phenomenon about which little is yet known. The ability of qualitative data to describe more fully a phenomenon is an important consideration not only from the researcher's perspective but also from the reader's perspective. Qualitative research reports often offer details and insights that allow both participants and readers the opportunity to experience a new or wider perspective. I also used an emergent design in order to ensure that the study was flexible and open-ended. I conducted this study in the supplemental education classrooms of a Korean program in metro-Atlanta. The study design also contained comparative elements which included the comparison of places, systems, and cultures as outlined in Figure 3.1.

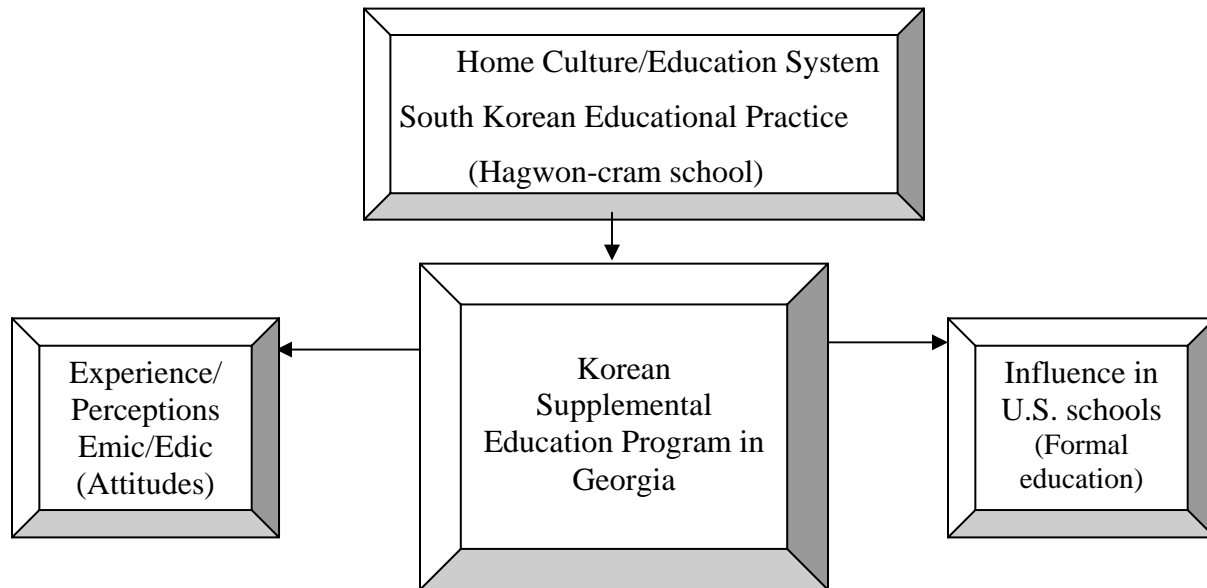


Figure 3.1-Diagram of the Study

Theoretical Perspective

Merriam (1998) stated that a qualitative research design helps researchers to understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible. Merriam continued that the primary criterion that guides qualitative research is the view that reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds (Merriam, 1998, p.6). In this inquiry, I sought to explore the nature of the educational and cultural experiences of Korean American students in supplemental education programs, the local equivalents to *hagwons* in South Korea, which are transplanted from their home country of South Korea. These students' perceptions were formed from their home culture and language, their community, and their social interactions, connections, and interpretations of their world.

Meaning is an idea that I have come to recognize as having different interpretations for different people as a result of the various life experiences and subjectivities that they represent. Constructionism claims that human beings construct meaning as they engage with the world they

are interpreting (Crotty, 1998, p.43). Therefore, constructionism is the view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context (Crotty, 1998). Seeing my data through the lens of constructionism allowed me to understand my subjects' views of reality.

I used constructionism as the epistemology and symbolic interactionism as the theoretical perspective (Crotty, 1998) to provide the framework and lens through which to observe and interpret how Korean Americans use supplemental education programs to construct meaning. Supporting the idea that learning and meanings are culturally constructed, I used this perspective to interpret and observe how supplemental education programs influence Korean American students. Additionally, I interpreted the interactions within- and in the vicinity of-supplemental education facilities to observe the ways in which collections of knowledge become shared, altered, and constructed. In doing so, I was able to link the experiences within this Korean supplemental program to South Korean culture and education in formal schools.

Symbolic Interactionism

In planning my study, I selected symbolic interactionism as the theoretical perspective that best suits my research interest. Symbolic interactionism is linked to a philosophy of interpretivism. Interpretive approaches in social research are closely related to a theoretical tradition called symbolic interactionism, which rests on three premises (Blumer, 1969). The first is that humans act toward things based on the meanings those things have for them. For example, a European American may look at a supplemental education program as an option for enrichment without a particular purpose. But someone from South Korea might look at that same program as

their only means to success. This is a prime example of how each of us interacts with such institutions based on the meanings they have for us.

In fact, the belief in education and supplemental education programs as a means for social mobility is deeply rooted in the Korean consciousness, resonating with Korean immigrant families' passion for education. Research shows the majority of Korean American youth tend to make their academic and occupational choices based on social prestige and economic rewards (Hurh, 1998). Education is not an isolated entity; it functions as a cultural practice encompassing "values about what is natural, mature, morally right, or aesthetically pleasing" (Miller & Goodnow, 1995). Through education, the value system of a particular society is transmitted to, shared with, and reconstructed by the next generation.

The second premise is that the meanings of things arise out of social interaction and the third premise is that meanings are created and changed through a process of interpretation (Esterberg, 2002). I observed how these three premises have unfolded when students interact in a supplemental education program. A student's discourse and culture shapes perceptions and meanings for things, which are subsequently used to construct knowledge. From this point of view, investigating the symbolic meaning of education embedded in Korean culture offered me an effective tool for capturing the core values in Korean immigrants' expectations for their children's education. Thus, the meaning of education, particularly the meaning of supplemental education programs, has been constructed by the larger context in Korean society. My study shed light on how this process occurred.

The use of this perspective gave me a lens through which to understand the educational culture of South Korea as transmitted through supplemental education programs in the United States. Symbolic interactionism is a theoretical perspective that deals directly with issues such as

language, communication, interrelationships, and community (Crotty, 1998). It enabled me to immerse myself in a culture outside of my own and experience different values, philosophies, and viewpoints. However, I recognize that my own subjectivities played a role as I sought to get a glimpse inside the worlds of my participants. I noted the point made by Geertz (1973) that researchers never truly capture the viewpoints of others as the writings of researchers are always interpretations of what they think their research subjects are doing, but their insights are always limited.

Comparative Dimensions in the Study

Historically, the research in the field of comparative and international education has been characterized by three principal dimensions: scientific, pragmatic, and international/global understanding (Arnove & Torres, 2003). My study fit both the pragmatic and international dimensions as it included the process involved in the study and transfer of educational practices among countries known as lending and borrowing (Altbach, 1998) as well as how forces from areas of the world previously considered distant and remote impose upon individual lives in the United States. Therefore, cross-cultural comparisons are of great importance. Comparative, cross cultural research can help provide tools for understanding and uncovering meaningful relationships from complex educational realities by striving for both conceptual and linguistic equivalence, and emphasizing the situatedness in time and space of particular social phenomena (McNess, 2004, p.326). These dimensions were to become evident in my study.

Information on the South Korean education system, *hagwons*, and the cultural context of schooling come from three sources in my study, as follows. First, I reported features and visuals that I obtained from the literature and from policy or program documents. Second, informants provided information to me during interviews and interactions. Third, my experiential

knowledge from my time tutoring in the Atlanta program, as well as from my visit to South Korea in 2006, provided added insight and information pertinent to my study. These different sources of information and insight enabled me to develop the comparative dimensions of the study.

However, to truly understand the culture of an ethnic group, an ethnographic component is necessary. Perhaps the most common expression of cultural identity in modernity is found in what is widely understood as national culture. According to Hall (1994), for whom a national culture is a discourse, “it is a way of constructing meanings which influences and organizes both our actions and our conception of ourselves (p.292).” National identity, according to Anderson (1983), is no more than an “imagined community”. However, before comparative education researchers undertake comparisons across cultures, they should consider the ways in which the discourse of national culture is represented, but also the power of those representations to win national allegiance and to define cultural identity (Mason, 2007, p.174). I hope that my study addressed the need for more research in which the origins of specific phenomena (supplemental education programs) in similarly situated places, as well as transplanted phenomena, are explored using an individual case of an educational institution and program with its own unique cultural context.

Methodology

Research and evaluation should be built on the foundation of a “paradigm of choices” rather than become the handmaiden of any single and inevitably narrow disciplinary or methodological paradigm (Patton, 2002). Though the term design implies a very specific blueprint, the design needs to remain sufficiently flexible to permit the exploration of whatever the phenomenon under study offers for inquiry. In keeping with these recommendations, there

were several areas related to the components in the design of my study including ethnography, case study, and comparative perspective.

Ethnography

Ethnography, the primary method of anthropology, is the earliest distinct tradition of qualitative inquiry. Thus, the notion of culture is a central concern in ethnography.

Culture is that collection of behavior patterns and beliefs that constitutes standards for deciding what is, standards for deciding what can be, standards for deciding how to go about doing it (Patton, 2002). Ethnographic inquiry takes as its central and guiding assumption that any human group of people interacting together for a period of time will evolve a culture (Patton, 2002). Thus, the challenge for ethnographers is to gain insight into the lives of particular people within particular settings, to understand social behavior in context and based on lived experience (Esterberg, 2002).

Nonetheless, substantial overlaps, rather than clear boundaries, have developed between ethnography and other forms of fieldwork. Due to the fact that my experiences were focused in one community, but impart the historical perspective of another; an ethnographic comparative case study of Korean supplemental education programs was appropriate. While I chose to study the educational culture of one ethnic group as described as the foundational question of this perspective, I recognize that a case study methodology approach (deMarrais & Lapan, 2004) offered the opportunity to illuminate meaning and understanding relative to the study's research questions regarding supplemental education programs. This research was defined and bound as an ethnographic comparative case study because it intertwined three approaches in order to design a study that focused on the influence of culture within specific cases for an in-depth study and comparison.

Case Study

Case study research can involve the close examination of people, topics, issues, or programs. According to Hayes (cited in deMarrais & Lapan, 2004), “Case studies are unlike ethnographies in that they seek to answer focused questions by producing in-depth descriptions and interpretations over a relatively short period of time, perhaps a few weeks to a year.” In addition, case studies investigate contemporary cases for purposes of illumination and understanding. In some instances, case studies are used to provide information for decision making or to discover causal links in settings where cause-and-effect relationships are complicated and not readily known, such as school reform or a particular government policy (Yin, 1994). Furthermore, an instrumental case study is used to provide insight into an issue or to redraw a generalization. The case is of secondary interest, it plays a supportive role, and it facilitates one’s understanding of something else. The case still is looked at in depth, its contexts scrutinized, its ordinary activities detailed, but all because this helps the researcher to pursue the external interest as described by Stake (2000). Though some cases may be seen as typical, the choice of a particular case is made to advance understanding of a wider interest. My study of a particular case was conceived along these lines.

The use of case study as a form of reporting the inquiry of qualitative research was essential to this investigation. Merriam (1998) explained case study design as a qualitative tool to “gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved. My case study design allowed for the “face-to-face” exploration of perceptions and experiences as they were

cultivated during verbal and written discourse and during the exchange of ideas with the participants.

Additionally, generalization is not a goal in case studies because discovering the uniqueness of each case is the main purpose. The problem with generalizations is that they do not apply to particulars (Guba and Lincoln, 1981). Case study researchers examine each case expecting to uncover new and unusual interactions, events, explanations, interpretations, and cause-and-effect connections. Case study research often leaves the determination of meaning and worth to the consumer or audience who may construct their own naturalistic generalizations by drawing on the information in the case study (Stake, 1995). Hence, in my study generalization was not a goal although I did draw conclusions that could be insightful to other cases and situations.

Guba and Lincoln (1981) emphasized appreciation of and attention to context as a natural limit to naturalistic generalizations. It is virtually impossible to imagine any human behavior that is not heavily mediated by the context in which it occurs. They proposed substituting the concepts “transferability” and “fittingness” for generalization when dealing with qualitative findings. In addition, Cronbach and Associates (1980) offered a middle ground and suggested instead that designs balance depth and breadth, realism and control so as to permit reasonable “extrapolation”. Unlike the usual meaning of the term generalization, an extrapolation clearly connotes that one has gone beyond the narrow confines of the data to think about other applications of the findings. Extrapolations are modest speculations on the likely applicability of findings to other situations under similar, but not identical, conditions (Patton, 2002). Given the nature of my study, extrapolation provided a logical alternative to generalizability.

Comparative Dimensions in the Study

The study design also contained comparative elements in the following ways. I compared places, as described by Manzoni (2007) in the sense that I investigated experiences in the supplemental programs in comparison to the experiences for students in their regular school settings. Secondly, I compared systems, as described by Bray & Kai (2007), in that Korean supplemental education programs are infused with features imported from the South Korean educational system to the local context and to these programs. Thirdly, I compared cultures, as described by Mason (2007), in that my study compared experiences related to Korean culture in the immigrant community alongside mainstream American culture as outlined in Figure 3.1.

Setting

The dramatic increase of the Korean American population in southern states is particularly relevant for my study as context against which to consider the settings of my study. Over the past decade, the Korean population in Georgia has increased by 88 percent, numbering at approximately 150,000, the second highest rate of increase in the United States (“Georgia: Home,” 2006). The initial components of my research came from contacts I made on my trip to Seoul, South Korea in 2006. During this trip, I visited cultural exhibitions, religious sites, and one of the best schools in the country (Minjok Academy). I had significant conversations with my hosts at the academy as well as several of the shrines and temples I visited. These experiences provided insights that informed my study with some context, and with insights that were useful to verify information I obtained during my fieldwork in Georgia.

As seen in table 3.1, the Korean population in Georgia has for the past decade increased by 88 percent. This is the highest rate of increase in the United States, even higher than New Jersey, which has traditionally been the state most preferred by Korean immigrants.

Table 3.1. Korean Population Change by Top Fifteen States of Increase, 1990-2000

State	% Change	State	% Change
Georgia	88.18%	Virginia	50.11%
Nevada	75.06%	Arkansas	49.47%
North Carolina	73.39%	Massachusetts	47.90%
New Jersey	69.56%	Colorado	44.59%
Tennessee	64.04%	Texas	43.42%
Washington	57.86%	Oregon	42.90%
Arizona	55.60%	South Carolina	42.22%
Florida	54.30%	District of Columbia	144.59%

Sources: Korean American Coalition-Census Information Center in partnership with the Center for Korean American and Korean Studies, California State University, Los Angeles

The size of the Korean community in Atlanta has grown very rapidly since the late 1980s (see Table 3.1). Table 3.2 shows the traits of Koreans in Georgia as relatively well-educated, middle income, and variously employed. Recent Korean immigrants have come to Los Angeles, New York, or Chicago, where Korean communities have been established for a long time, to assimilate or be absorbed into an already existing social structure in Korean communities. However, unlike Korean immigrants in the other large cities, Korean immigrants in Atlanta have had to establish a new community because the Atlanta Korean community was quite small and expanded rapidly only recently, as a consequence of the migration of Korean immigrants from other cities in the West where Koreans do not tend to have as strong an ethnic networking infrastructure as the Chinese and Japanese (Yu, 2002). Atlanta is seen as a good place to start a business, with a growing economy, friendly business environment, and low start up costs

compared to other major metropolitan areas thus bringing large numbers of Korean immigrants to the Greater Atlanta area.

Table 3.2: Demographics and Economic Characteristics of Koreans in Georgia (%)

Total Number of Koreans (N)	14,432	Class of Worker	
Foreign-born (in Korea)	80.9	Private Wage and salary workers	72.2
Age (Under 18 yrs)	26.8	Local government	1.3
Age (18-39 yrs)	44.9	State government	2.7
Age (40-59 yrs)	23.8	Federal government	3.9
Age (60-74 yrs)	3.7	Self-employed	16.9
Age (75 yrs and over)	0.7	Industry	
Educational Attainment		Agriculture	0.3
Less than 5 th Grade	4.1	Mining	0.0
5 th to 12 th grade (no diploma)	15.8	Construction	2.4
High School	31.7	Manufacturing	13.8
Some college or associate degree	21.0	Transportation	2.4
Bachelor's Degree	15.8	Communication	0.7
Graduate or professional degree	8.2	Wholesale Trade	4.2
Income in 2000		Retail Trade	40.0
Less than \$10,000	14.6	Service Industry	26.0
\$10,000 to \$24,999	30.2	Professional Services	16.0
\$25,000 to \$ 49,999	34.1	Public administration	1.9
\$50,000 to \$99,999	16.4		
\$100,000 or more	4.7		

Yoo, J. (2001). *Korean Immigrant Entrepreneurs*. New York: Garland Publishing.

The majority of my fieldwork took place at a Korean supplemental education program in a suburb of Northeast Georgia as well as at a local Korean church campus in the same community, a typical staple in many Korean immigrant communities. The site of the program at which I conducted my research is a part of a chain that began in South Korea in 1977. The Atlanta branch of the franchise was founded in 2001. It is located in a business plaza comprised of several buildings, many of which are Korean businesses. This particular supplemental education program is located in a two-story brick building and comprises the entire second floor of one of five buildings. There are four classrooms, which each include one student table and four to six chairs. Each classroom has whiteboards on the walls for teachers to use during classroom instruction. The directors' office is in the front of the building across from the bookroom where the textbooks and ancillary classroom materials are stored. In the back of the building, there is a waiting room for parents equipped with a television and a computer. The entire center is carpeted and the walls are decorated with student work and student recognition. This description gives a better perspective of the environment in which the students learn and provides a visual that is relevant to the study.

The summer program took place on a huge Korean church campus (see Photos A, B, C, D, and E) equipped with an education center that is home to over 20 classrooms, an auditorium, two cafeterias, a chapel, a computer room, as well as an outdoor playground. Each classroom is equipped with a chalkboard or whiteboard for the teachers to use. All materials were stored in a storage room on the second floor near the director's temporary office for the summer. The church is less than five years old and is equipped with contemporary technology for teachers to utilize. This church campus is surrounded by other Korean businesses (see Photos F, G) including grocery stores, several supplemental education programs, and a few restaurants. I

became quite familiar with the community due to my role as an educator and my geographical residence. I had the privilege of working at this site for four years prior to my research. Thus, the issue of gaining access was nonexistent because I had already established a relationship with the program and the director was quite welcoming regarding my research. As a result, I had both access and opportunity to make this site the focus of my research. However, I decided to set boundaries on the study by focusing on one setting to get an in-depth picture of this supplemental education program.

Photo A. JAE Campus Directory



Photo B. JAE Education Building



Photo C. Education Building Directory



Photo D.
JAE Kindergarten Computer Class

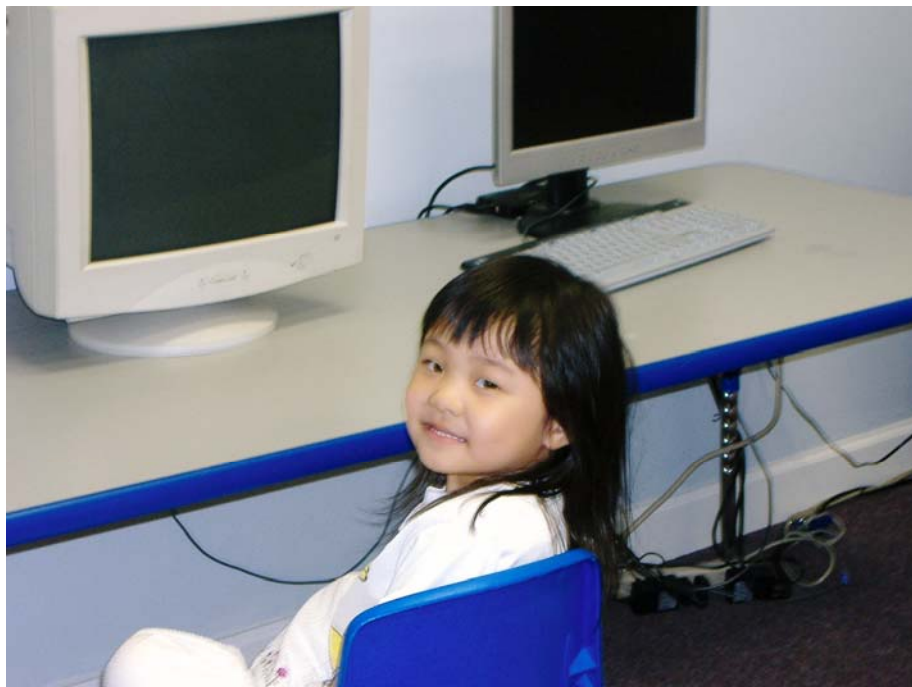


Photo E. JAE Computer Room



Photo F. Duluth Community Shopping Center



Photo G. Sugarloaf Shopping Center



Participant Sampling

Patton (2002) states, “the logic and power of purposeful samples lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth” (p.169). Merriam (1998) states, “purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 61). Therefore, my participant selection was purposefully focused on Korean students and parents who were participating in supplemental education programs in Georgia to build an enriching case for comprehensive study.

The majority of the participants were volunteers who fit the appropriate demographic characteristics in order to achieve strong quality assurance. The first step in selecting my participants was that I attend the informational meeting for the parents and students who were

enrolled in the JAE program. I was given the opportunity to discuss my research, explain my study, and ask for their assistance. I provided the director, the teachers, and the parents with a handout describing the research and explained why their experiences and opinions were valuable to the study. The director and the teachers were very receptive to the study; however, the parents were initially quite reluctant about potentially participating in my study.

In order to address the reluctance of parents, the critical participants (known as key informants) with whom I had established previous relationships, such as the director and faculty and staff of the JAE program, were particularly important as they referred other participants to me. This is known as snowball sampling or chain referral sampling in which the researcher begins with an initial interviewee –often a key informant. Then the researcher asks for referrals to others who might be appropriate to interview (Esterberg, 2002, p.93). Once I had a sizeable pool of parents to choose from, those who were willing to participate in the research were asked to sign a consent form. Once I obtained the participants' consent, I shared additional information via a personal meeting, clarifying the purpose of the research and research procedures, and how the data would be used. This process helped me to build rapport and trust between the participants and myself and enabled the participants to have a basic understanding of the whole research process.

The next step of my selection process for students involved my visiting the classrooms of the students who had volunteered at the information meeting, in order to provide a summary of my research proposal for the students. Students who were still interested in participating then met with me the next morning before classes where I explained the study to them in greater detail. Each student received an assent form to read and sign (see Appendix B). The student assent form explained the guidelines for their participation. Additionally, each student was given

a consent form to be signed by a parent or guardian (see Appendix C). I communicated with parents or guardians through telephone to clarify the extent to which their children would participate in the study. From all the volunteers, the final number of research participants included two administrators, two staff persons, eight teachers, six parents, and eight students.

Data Management Procedures

Since data analysis in qualitative research is an ongoing process (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984), I began with the biographical information that was collected from each participant. To manage data efficiently and systematically throughout the research process, I made a profile table that contained, for each parent and student participant, a pseudonym, age, years in the United States, educational background, county of residence, and occupation (see Chapter 4, Table 1). This provided me with easy access for any given purpose during data analysis and interpretation. I also used notebooks which contained information related to interview schedules as well as my journal which contained reflections and initial analysis from interviews I sorted. Transcripts, field notes, interview guides, and signed consent forms from each interview session by participant, placed them in individual files, and secured them in my house. I stored interview recordings and transcripts on computer disks. These were the procedures I articulated in my IRB application. I analyzed these questionnaires by coding all responses which were then placed into subordinate, superordinate, and outlier groups. Throughout this process, I was forced to expand and collapse categories as necessary to provide accurate representation of the data.

Data Sources

Data sources for this study included scholarly literature, curriculum and policy documents, participant observation and field notes, in-depth interviews with five sets of informants, archival records, student artifacts, and photographs. Each of these sources was

designed to elicit and obtain relevant information for the study. The scholarly literature provided background information for the context of the study. The curriculum and policy documents, as well as archival records, provided detailed descriptions of the academic program of study and procedures of the program. Participant observation and field notes documented and guided my interpretations of participant experiences. The interviews were used to capture the essence of participant experiences. Student artifacts and photographs provided visual insights into the values and experiences of the participants.

Data Collection Procedures

To capture the true essence of this study, I used a variety of data collection procedures which included a questionnaire, interviews, field notes, documents, student artifacts, photos, and a journal. Data collection and analysis often occurred simultaneously during the research process. However, the data collection process in the field extended from May through September of 2007. I kept all of the information collected confidential as described in my IRB application. I also used initials and pseudonyms to protect the identity of the informants.

Initial phases of my study focused on literature reviews and set-up of arrangements for the fieldwork. These methods will provide a variety of data sources from which to analyze, interpret, and draw conclusions. Initially, I began the fieldwork in May of 2007 with a formal questionnaire in order to gain basic biographical information about the participants. The participants returned the questionnaire to me within a week, and I used their responses to begin to organize the data. During the summer of 2007, I analyzed the curriculum and the textbooks for each course that was taught during the program. I made observational field notes each time I visited the students' classrooms. I also examined archival records of student achievement including test scores and report cards throughout the summer and fall of 2007. At the end of the

program, each student submitted written artifacts from their classes. I also took several photographs in order to capture important moments, events, and context. In the following section, I describe each of the data collection types.

Participant Questionnaire

I asked each participant was asked to complete a brief preliminary questionnaire (see Appendix D) which included biographical questions, educational background questions, and occupational questions. The questionnaire provided personal background information for me to use as a conversational beginning to many of the interviews. However, the opportunity to share personal and educational background information helped to establish a rapport that enabled participants to become comfortable with the interview process and to provide a less formal environment.

Interviews

The interviews, as raw data, were thoroughly read for review and analysis. Significant statements were extracted from interview transcriptions through coding. After significant statements were extracted, clusters of themes were then organized from the aggregate data. In addition, the frequency of codes and themes cited during interviews was tabulated.

Each of the interviews varied in length depending on how much detail the participant was willing to share, as well as the circumstances of the interview. I conducted extensive ethnographic interviews ranging from 30 to 90 minutes with key informants; I conducted shorter focused interviews with others associated with various elements of the program including parents, staff, and teachers. I used an interview guide (see Appendix E) that lists the questions or issues that I explored during the course of the interviews.

The interviews were semi-structured and conversational, in form allowing interviewees to express their opinions and ideas in their own words while allowing me to follow their lead. My semi-structured interviews allowed me to explore, probe, and ask questions that elucidated and illuminated that particular subject. Thus, I remained free to build a conversation within a particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversational style but with the focus on a particular subject that had been predetermined, as recommended by Patton (2002). Participants were invited to converse openly. The interview protocol consisted of five main questions and several subquestions to give participants “something to push off against” or to “discuss phenomena that do not come readily to mind or speech” (Patton, 2002). For instance, I encouraged them to elaborate on their experience with specific events or incidents. Each interview question dealt with one or more research questions. All interviews were over a period of six months, from May through September of 2007.

I conducted all of the interviews in empty classrooms in the Korean church where the summer program was conducted or at the Korean supplemental program office building. Most of the participants were familiar with these locations which provided a convenient meeting place for us created a comfortable environment for the interviews. On one occasion, when I was recording an interview, staff came in to prepare for lunch and the background noise made for a difficult interview. However, my participant did not seem to be bothered by the noise.

I conducted follow-up interviews to gain more information and to further probe responses that I needed to have clarified. Although the numbers and the amount of time for face to face interviews varied, each participant provided at least 30 minutes of information, which culminated in over 12 hours of audiotaping. I shared interpretations of the interview data with participants to establish trustworthiness (Patton, 2002). To follow up on some specific questions

that emerged during the data analysis process, I also conducted telephone interviews when needed. I often took notes during interviews as to capture specific statements and physical expressions.

Field Notes

Taylor & Bogdan (1998) argued that there are two limitations of interviews: (a) people say and do different things in different situations, and (b) interviews lack the context necessary to understand the perspectives of participants. Taylor and Bogdan argued that observation can be an effective remedy addressing the limitations of interviews. Patton (1990) stated that the purpose of observational data is to describe the setting that is observed, the activities that take place, the people who are engaged in such activities, and the meanings of what is observed from the perspectives of the people observed. Observation can also provide the researcher opportunities to learn things that participants are either unconscious of or unwilling to discuss.

I took observational field notes each time I visited the students' classrooms. I wrote my observational notes in a continuous format, including dated reflections of the entire process. According to Bogdan & Biklen (1992), field notes are written out from notes taken on site immediately after each observation or interview. My field notes also included my ideas and reflections regarding what I had seen, heard, and experienced. Therefore, I took detailed field notes at the sites and then elaborated later, adding more details and reflections.

Journal

I wrote memos in my journal to help me shape my thoughts about the emerging analysis and to help me keep records of my progress. They were quite useful in helping me to keep track of what I had already done including codes or categories I had already rejected and why. In addition, I kept memos to myself as I reread interviews. I chose to keep a journal to write down

thoughts and feelings that did not immediately relate to field notes and those I did not yet know where to place. For example, since I was not a part of this ethnic community, I had additional realizations and observer comments to myself in relation to issues such as race and stereotypes, justice and injustice, and class and equity. I paid attention to things that were said in regards to African Americans even when it was not directly relevant to the purpose of my research because it influenced my role as a researcher. When I came home, I used my journal to debrief on those experiences and to write reflections to myself on critical elements, or lack of them, during interviews and site visits.

Documents

I collected a series of school documents to triangulate data for this study. Like observation, documents can provide a context of the problem being investigated (Merriam, 1998). Bogdan and Biklen (1992) stated that there are two types of documents: official and personal. They elaborated that official documents are written forms of communication produced by an organization and personal documents are the first person materials that reveal people's actions, experiences, and beliefs. I collected official documents to provide background information about the history of the program and its various school structures and processes. The collected official documents included rules and procedures (see Appendix G), classroom visitation schedules (see Appendix H), faculty background data, job descriptions, program policies (see Appendix I), report cards (see Appendix J), and lesson plans (see Appendix K). I also collected personal reflections from the students. I labeled documents recognized as primary or secondary sources. I also recorded visual artifacts of the physical environment such as bulletin boards and hallway decorations.

Visual Data

My visual data included visual records of observations, maps (see Appendix L), illustrations, and photographs (see Appendix M) that I took with the permission of appropriate authorities within the supplemental education program. My photographs served multiple purposes during the study. As an analytical tool, they augmented my field notes by providing vivid documentation of settings and by triggering my memory of specific settings, events, and individuals during analysis. I use photographs to illustrate settings and relationships between settings and the events that took place there. The visuals also provided illustration enrichment to my study.

Data Analysis Procedures

My data analysis involved the process of finding and determining meaning in the information that was collected from the participants through transcribed and coded data sources from the participant questionnaire, curriculum and policy documents, participant observation and field notes, in-depth interviews, archival records, student artifacts, and photographs. It has been reported that making sense out of data involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read. It is the process of making meaning (Merriam, 1998, p.178). With the continuous and reciprocal process of data collection and analysis, I decided to stop data collection when I found that no new categories emerged out of analysis. As a result, I was confident in the research that had been accomplished thus far. My activities of analysis followed the sequence shown in Figure 3.2.

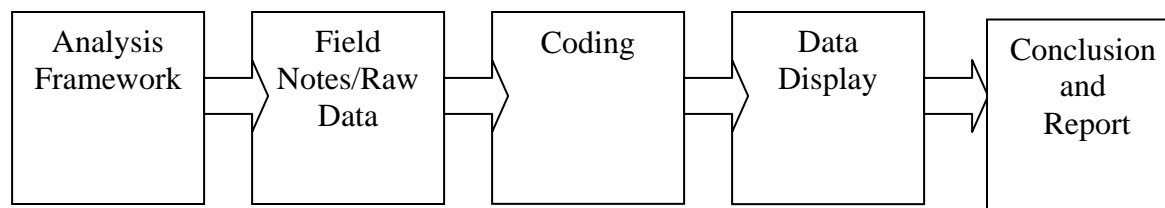


Figure 3.2. Prestructured Case Analysis Sequence (Adapted from Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 85)

Triangulation

Once I gathered all of the data, I employed several methods to analyze the information, utilizing triangulation. The logic of triangulation is based on the premise that no single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival explanations. Denzin (1978) has identified four basic types of triangulation including data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, and methodological triangulation. I used data and methodological forms of triangulation in my study. Data triangulation encouraged me to collect data from multiple sources while corroborating the same fact or phenomenon as I examined. For instance, I could verify findings from interviews of different informants. When one has really triangulated the data, the facts of the case study have been supported by more than a single source of evidence (Yin, 1982). Methodological triangulation allowed me to use a variety of methods including peer review and debriefing and member checks.

I used peer debriefing and member checks provided multiple methods of confirming the research findings. Peer debriefing is a process of communicating with peers to provide an external check on the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Peer review involves asking colleagues to scan some of the raw data and to assess whether the findings are plausible based on the data (Merriam, 1998). My peer reviewer was a colleague and fellow researcher who recently completed her doctorate at the University of Georgia. I gave her the opportunity to critique my initial analysis and perceptions of the data as I explained themes that emerged as I coded the

transcripts and then composed a second draft which included the responses of the participants. Furthermore, peer debriefing helped me to check my biases and to clarify the interpretations of my study.

Because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality, multiple methods of data collection and analysis provide more credibility. Therefore, combinations of interviewing, observation, and document analysis are expected in much fieldwork. Often, studies that use only one method are more vulnerable to errors linked to that particular method than studies that use multiple methods in which different types of data provide cross-data consistency checks (Patton, 2002). Triangulating different data sources of information by examining evidence from various sources allowed to build a coherent justification for themes in the sense of achieving what Yin (2003) called convergence of evidence as shown in Figure 3.3.

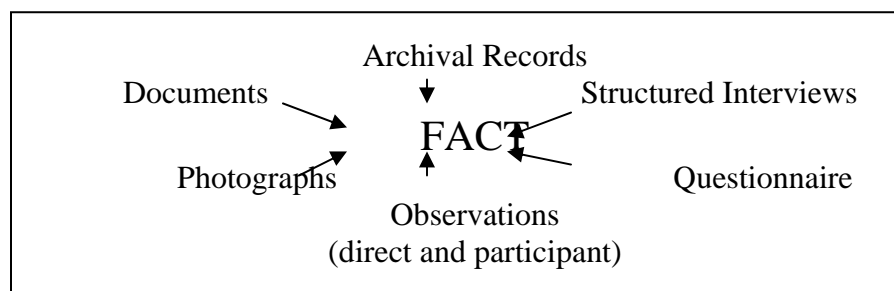


Figure 3.3 Convergence of Evidence (Adapted from Yin, 2003, p.100)

Constant Comparative Method

I applied the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) for data analysis. The purpose of constant comparative analysis is to systematically generate a “theory” from explicit coding and analytic procedures. The basic strategy of the method is to constantly compare data from one participant or source to another and from one time to the next. In this study, the constant comparison method in the data analysis ensured compliance with the criteria of fit, work, and relevance. Using line-by-line open coding and member checking, I made sure

that incidents, properties, and categories were developed directly from the data. The identification of a core category and its relationship with other categories further increased the practical applicability of the findings of this study. I first analyzed the data within each individual set of data and then compared themes with each subsequent set of data. For this study, I first employed “within data set” analysis and then “cross-case” analysis. Accordingly, the codes and categories generated for each data set were revealed as a result of considering each subsequent case.

Coding

According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), the researcher should start by coding each incident in the data into as many categories as possible at this stage. Incidents are small units of data that tell what is happening in the research setting. The interviews were recorded on audiotape. Following is the specific description of my data analysis process adapted from Taylor and Bogdan (1984). Pseudonyms or initials for each participant were used to provide anonymity and protect privacy. After finishing each interview, I then began to transcribe the tapes (see Appendix F). During the immersion stage, I read and reread interviews in order to begin to use open coding to code and label broad ideas as they emerged. Initial codes came from a start list that I developed using obvious components in my conceptual/analytical framework depicted in Figure 3.1 (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 57). In the labeling of codes and categories, I either constructed analytical labels or used the words of participants to represent subordinate codes and categories (see Table 3.3).

I then read through the completed transcripts again to get to know the data thoroughly prior to engaging in intensive analysis. I used microscopic coding as I read the transcripts, line-by-line and word-for-word, underlining and coding in the margins. I looked for patterns in the

data by comparing individual interviews and constructing typologies. During this process, I wrote general thoughts, ideas, themes, and questions. I used structural coding to identify connections between different components such as program policy, events, and interactions. This was done while writing analytical memos to myself regarding the emergent patterns and codes designated by various colors of highlighters and index cards to mark quotations that had relevance to the research questions of the study. The observer comments and reflective notes I took during interviews and observations, as a matter of procedure, helped me add to or elaborate upon the patterns I was finding. When necessary, I expanded upon information from interviews as I compared and contrasted new data with previous data.

Through informal content analysis, I coded information about the program in archived records and documents comparing them to other data to create a matrix for organizing themes and categories as they arose. My analysis consisted of overview, structural, microscopic, and open coding in a triangulation process used to describe the themes and categories that arise regarding Korean supplemental programs in the broader context of an institutionally complete Korean ethnic group in one metro-Atlanta community. While looking for tentatively emerging themes, patterns, and clusters in the data, I paid attention to vocabulary, recurring topics, meanings, perceptions, feelings, and stories. The constant comparative method helped me construct subcategories when starting to read the first interview transcript or the first set of field notes (Merriam, 1998). After engaging in some preliminary data analysis, I categorized all themes, concepts, and clusters identified and developed during the initial analysis. After I derived a number of subordinate coding categories (see Table 3.3), I went over the category structure again to combine or eliminate overlapping categories. I then assigned a number or letter to each coding category to use in the data analysis process. During this process, I listened to

several audiotapes as needed to identify meanings and expressions revealed by tones and pitches of voices.

Table 3.3 Preliminary List of Subordinate Codes

Cited 25 times or more	Cited 10-24 times	Cited less than 10 times
Identity (I)	Money (M)	Model Minority (MM)
Exclusion (EX)	Honor (H)	Social Capital (SC)
Language Acquisition (LA)	Loyalty (L)	Human Capital (HC)
Competition (CM)	Assimilation (AS)	Race Relations (RR)

I started more intensive data analysis by coding with the assigned numbers or letters to all transcripts, field notes, documents, and other materials. I used colored markers were used to visually distinguish assigned categories, which were later sorted out by classifying each category into the emerging subordinate and superordinate groups. While coding the data, I refined the coding categories by adding, expanding, collapsing, and redefining as necessary to accommodate the data. Some data were coded in multiple categories, depending on the richness and inclusive meanings of the data. For example, verbiage related to identity was used by numerous participants in a variety of context. I manually sorted and assembled all the data by category. I then went over the remaining data that were excluded from the analysis to confirm their irrelevance to other categories and to create new categories to accommodate these data appropriately. The refined categories of themes and concepts, systematically sorted, helped explain and interpret the data.

I dealt with the challenge of convergence (Guba, 1978) in an attempt to figure out what things fit together after constantly comparing interviews, observations, and documents, searching for recurring regularities, such as the value of English and competition, which I had begun to hear on numerous occasions during interviews, and fleshing out extensions based on connections among different ideas. Finally, the creative synthesis phase enabled me to organize and construct as I “lived with the data” (Patton, 2002) in order to construct meaning. Sorting the data helped me to triangulate the meanings associated with each category and the meanings generated within and across the individual cases. This process enabled me to know when I had reached saturation in my data collection. For example, upon completing my last two interviews, the same themes emerged as almost identical responses were given to interview questions.

In paying special attention to cultural meanings implied in the research data, I depended on stories and direct quotations from interview data provided by the participants for data analysis, I further employed an interpretivist approach to look for “culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world” (Crotty, 1998, p.67) of Korean American students in supplemental education programs in Georgia. In my findings, I offer many of these quotes for illustrations

After the data analysis process, I had determined several codes and patterns that had emerged throughout the process. Upon further analysis I was able to distinguish between subordinate and superordinate categories. After the preliminary codes had been derived from the data, it was obvious that I had reached the level of data saturation (see Table 3.3). However, I later discovered that these codes would eventually fall under the following larger superordinate categories including academic rigor, social interactions, parental involvement, child-care, Korean American identity and culture, access to mainstream opportunities, English-Language

acquisition, socioeconomic status, and sacrifice, which are explained in further detail in Chapter 4. I then added these codes to the list of subordinate codes. These are the general definitions I developed, based on the emergence of these categories in my data. Each of these categories is briefly explained below:

- **Academic rigor:** Explains the ways in which the Korean immigrant community has made a consistent push for demanding educational study as a practical means for attaining excellence.
- **Social Interaction:** For many of the students involved in supplemental education programs, it provides an opportunity for them to make friends and interact with peers who are of a similar background.
- **Parental Involvement:** Korean parents are not only involved in the education of the children, in many instances they are the directors of their children's educational careers.
- **Enlightened-Child Care:** Academically focused and enriching after-school and summer school care provided for children while parents work. While these programs cost parents money, they also see them as an educational investment for their children as well as a basic child-care service provided within the community.
- **Identity and Culture:** The supplemental programs provide a place where bilingual and bicultural institutional agents provide an important cultural and linguistic bridge for first-generation immigrant parents and their second or 1.5-generation children. It helps them to maneuver their double-consciousness in terms of being Korean and being Korean-American as they are forced to construct multiple identities.
- **Access to Mainstream Opportunity:** Supplemental programs often provide access to mainstream institutional agents and paths that most minorities need to be successful, but

are often blocked. Supplemental programs provide job opportunities, academic competition, and community support.

- English Language Acquisition: Both parents and students understand that acquiring fluent acquisition of the English language is vital to their success in the schoolwork and their careers.
- Socioeconomic Status: The establishment of a closed, intergenerational network of first-generation Korean parents and their children helps reinforce economic mobility of its community members because money is being circulated within the Korean community (Portes & Zhou, 1993).
- Sacrifice: Korean parents and students surrender their family structure, financial means, and time in order to ensure that every educational opportunity is available and utilized.

All of these categories became integral to the findings of the study and they were of great assistance in my decision regarding how to present the case.

Credibility

Lincoln and Guba (1985) defined credibility as the extent to which observations are credible representations of the phenomenon under study. I ascertained credibility through member checking and peer debriefing. Member checking is taking data, findings, and interpretations back to the participants for their confirmation and comment (Merriam, 1998). Member checking would occur after the transcriptions of the interviews were completed. I invited the participants to meet with me and had them review their transcribed interviews to ensure the accuracy and clarity of their thoughts and words. Peer debriefing occurred during regular e-mail communication and meetings with my colleague, a fellow researcher and teacher who completed her doctorate at the University of Georgia, about my study after my initial

transcription and analysis. Triangulation of the data occurred across time using repeated rounds engagement with the participants and multiple data sources. These events enabled me to create a more thorough analysis. Thoroughness also contributed to the validity of my study by ensuring that I was closely involved with all components of the investigation and that I had invested sufficient time in the field and with the data.

Transferability

Transferability is defined as the ability of the readers to understand the context of the study from a detailed description so they can determine if the findings fit their context and can therefore be transferable to other situations (Merriam, 1998). Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings. From a qualitative perspective, transferability is primarily the responsibility of the one doing the generalizing. As the qualitative researcher, I strove for transferability by doing a thorough job of describing the research context and the assumptions that were central to the research (Merriam, 1998). Thick description provided a great deal of detail to the participants in my data collection process, the data sources, the data coding, the data analysis, the data management, and the data reporting in my study.

It is virtually impossible to imagine any human behavior that is not heavily mediated by the context in which it occurs. Guba and Lincoln (1981) proposed substituting the concepts “transferability” and “fittingness” for generalization when dealing with qualitative findings. In addition, Cronbach and Associates (1980) offered a middle ground and suggested instead that designs balance depth and breadth, realism and control so as to permit reasonable “extrapolation”. Unlike the usual meaning of the term generalization, an extrapolation clearly connotes that one has gone beyond the narrow confines of the data to think about other

applications of the findings. Extrapolations are modest speculations on the likely applicability of findings to other situations under similar, but not identical, conditions (Patton, 2002). Given the nature of my study, extrapolation provided a logical alternative to generalizability.

Roles of the Researcher, Biases, and Limitations

As part of the qualitative tradition, the roles and functions of the researcher are subject to careful scrutiny and evaluation. Given that participant interviews provided the bulk of the data, in retrospect, I served as the primary instrument for data collection (Merriam, 1998). As a participant observer, I was allowed into some parts of the lives of the participants by the nature of the interviewing process and classroom observations. I also participated in several of the program activities. With their permission, I participated in some of the participants' thoughts, beliefs, experiences, and personal and cultural histories as they recalled and reflected on their perceptions of supplemental education programs in the Korean American community. As such, my perspectives, assumptions, biases, and skills were integral to the construction of this qualitative research project and are presented here as part of the overall research design.

Some wonder why, as an African American woman, I would choose to do research on Korean American immigrants instead of my own African American counterparts. Several people questioned my choice and did not understand why I would choose not to do research that uplifted my own people. The answer has an interesting history rooted in both the history between African Americans and Korean Americans and my experiences as an educator in a school with one of the largest Korean student populations in the state of Georgia. I have had three years of experience tutoring at the Korean supplemental and teaching at the Korean program where I conducted my research. Therefore, I consider myself an outsider with unusual access to an emic (Geertz, 1983) perspective.

I have found through both my personal experiences and my research, that Korean Americans in the ethnic community I studied have been forced to become self-sufficient, adopting an attitude of self-determination that has enabled them to become one of the most institutionally complete ethnic immigrant groups in Georgia. Their drive is the same meticulous drive to succeed, covet their own, and support one another, despite the doors that have been closed to them that once embodied African Americans. Though I never gave it significant thought before Korean Americans inundated my academic pursuits, I have come to realize that they have mastered the art of entrepreneurship, ironically selling products that are often staples of the African American community in which I was raised. More importantly, at the root of their success is the emphasis they place on education, an emphasis that I know extremely well.

Although I am a member of the African American community, I think it is important to look beyond my own racial and ethnic group to examine the entrepreneurial success and academic success of a group from which much can be learned. After all, most Korean immigrant entrepreneurs tend to enter into two economic niches: the enclave economy catering to Korean customers and the non-enclave economy catering mainly to inner city African American customers and some middle class white customers (Yoo, 1998). As the youngest child of Jamaican immigrants, I am well aware of the doors that are often closed to immigrants with language barriers and limited social capital. My parents instilled a value of education in me throughout my life based on the struggles they experiences as immigrants in this country. . I will never forget the day my father told me, “you already have two strikes against you in this world, you are a girl and you are black, so you need to be twice as good as everyone else.” Education, and in particular, literacy, was an early and important symbol of freedom for the African American community after Reconstruction (Anderson, 1998). Unfortunately, the drive for

education today is not what it once was in too many African American households, but for many Korean immigrant parents, it has been deemed the only way for their children to have an opportunity at a good life in this country. Hence, I recognize that I have a bias in a sympathetic or favorable view of Korean Americans and that this was something I had to try to control in my study.

As one who embraces a critical viewpoint of the American education system, I recognize my natural bias is in support of the individual rather than the system. I also assume the existence of prevailing codes that privilege some groups while oppressing others (Merriam, 1998). My research, therefore, was conceived and conducted in an effort to put forth the informants' authentic voices and experiences in comparison to any presumptive conventions, widely held stereotypes about Koreans, or erroneous perceptions regarding Asians as a whole. Many African American scholars have produced important work in fields outside of their own. It is largely unknown to most white American scholars, and to Americans in general, that blacks have a rich history of research and teaching in Asian studies. Several blacks have examined facets of Asian culture as early as the 1930s, including Berry Armstrong Claytor, Martin Luther King Jr, and Reginald Kearney (Fikes, 2002). As the United States becomes increasingly global, I have not doubt that this trend will continue and I am proud to make a contribution.

My role as a researcher has taken the form of an outsider with a unique inside perspective given my background work with Korean American students and the time I have spent interacting with students in South Korea. Despite the rapport I had developed with some participants in previous years, I recognize that I am an outsider in the Korean American community at large. I do not see this as a liability because I had the opportunity to do my research through a new lens and recognize aspects of Korean American culture and education that may otherwise have

remained hidden within this community. I feel as though I had the opportunity to shed light on a phenomenon that could be utilized in whole or in part by other ethnic groups. Most importantly, as an African American, I would like to see a renewed interest in self-determination and informal support networks within my own community that I have read about in African American history books and that I have witnessed through my experiences tutoring in their program and through my research study.

As the principal instrument of data collection, analysis, and interpretation it was important for me to always be aware of biases, both my own and those of my informants. The research process was not merely a neutral transaction of knowledge between my participants and me. My study unfolded as “an interactive process shaped by (my) personal history, biography, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity, and those of the people in the setting” as described by Denzin & Lincoln (1998, p. 4). I am aware that my personal biases, although unintentional, might have influenced the research process.

Since this research was conducted with only one supplemental education program; this limits the generalization of the findings to other programs serving Korean American students or other ethnic groups. The case study design was also a limitation of this study. As noted previously, although it was an opportunity to obtain an in-depth, detailed look at Korean American supplemental education programs as a single case it is not generalizable to an entire population of Korean American students.

Being an African American studying members of a different community certainly influenced this study. My presence sometimes seemed to interrupt normal practices. As an outsider in the Korean community, I was not always able to extrapolate cultural overtones exchanged between participants for further meaning. For example, sometimes after an interview,

participants seemed to debrief in Korean, which I do not speak. It is entirely possible that I may not have had access to pertinent data in those moments. So, while my study was not completely analysis of the program from within, my findings did shed light on the comparative aspects of supplemental programs versus regular school experiences. In addition, as a classroom teacher, I focused intently on the school context. In hindsight, I would have liked to experience more of the home and community discourse. Finally, though my study does not allow me to demonstrate specific evidence that these supplemental programs produce greater success or performance in the students' regular schooling, they are clearly significant both within and beyond the Korean immigrant community.

Ethical Considerations

My diligence, integrity, and ethical standards were essential for the quality of this research process. The participants who volunteered for this study allowed me to enter into their lives for a brief period of time. It was important to assign anonymity to the participants so that they were able to maintain their own lives without any apprehension. Therefore, In order to protect the privacy of the participant and key informants, I used pseudonyms and initials.

In this research investigation, I portrayed each participant as accurately as possible and in an ethically responsible manner while conforming to research standards and the guidelines of this study. I often reciprocated for the time and openness of the informants by helping to clean up at the end of the day.

Summary

In this chapter, I reviewed the methodology I used in executing this research project. I offered a detailed discussion of the theoretical framework, methodology, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures that guided the design and interpretation of findings of

this study. As the researcher, I was privileged to access a unique aspect of Korean culture. The qualitative nature of the study involved presenting the experiences, perspectives, and actions of these individuals honestly, with respect, and with rigor. In the next two chapters I present my findings in the case, illuminating the emergent themes of the study and my interpretations of the findings.

CHAPTER 4

SOUTH KOREA: HOME COUNTRY EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

In this ethnographic comparative case study, I explored the nature of the educational and cultural experiences of Korean American students in supplemental education programs, known as *hagwons* in South Korea. I also explored the manner in which traditions are transplanted from their home country of Korea to the United States. During the course of the study, I also came to examine how human capital, social capital, and educational capital are accumulated within supplemental education programs in the Korean immigrant community. The emergent design of my study allowed for dimensions of this type to surface.

In the following two chapters, I present the findings of my research. In this chapter, I describe the general features and characteristics of the South Korean educational system, answering research questions 1, 2, and 5. Then, in Chapter 5, I discuss the expansion of the education sector in South Korea to include *hagwons*, as well as the transplanting of similar supplemental education programs in Georgia's growing immigrant community. I identify and analyze factors that appeared to impact the growth and function of such programs and I analyze and describe the perspectives of Korean American students, parents, faculty, and community members with regards to involvement in supplemental education programs. By doing so, I answer research questions 3, 4, 5, and 6 by extrapolating critical comparative elements in the research.

South Korea's Education System

In this section I provide background information about the modern Korean educational system. I continue by describing the setting of one of the best schools in South Korea, including: the natural and cultural surroundings, the political climate, and the institutional context within which the school developed. Addressing my first research question (see Appendix A), I describe the key features of the school, and I trace the development of the school chronologically from its inception in 1996 to its current status in 2007. I also describe the competitive pressures that fuel schools such as this.

The findings and insights came from my survey of the scholarly research as well as documents I obtained in South Korea and from my experiences in South Korea during my 2006 visit when I was offered perspectives on education by my hosts. During my fieldwork, added information emerged during my interviews and site visits, as indicated in the text to follow. What emerged in my data was a series of accounts by the informants of their value and belief in the program and secondarily, by comparison, their views of many aspects of the students' regular schooling experiences. The general features of the Korean education system, presented here, are reported here, except for where otherwise indicated.

The Korean public education structure is divided into three parts; six years of primary school, followed by three years of middle school, and then three years of high school. In 1996, only about five percent of Korea's high schools were coeducational. The proportion of coeducational schools has increased by almost ten percent. However, classes in many co-educational high schools are still divided along gender lines. The curriculum is standardized so now both boys and girls study technology and domestic science.

The primary curriculum consists of nine principal subjects: moral education, Korean language, social studies, mathematics, science, physical education, music, fine arts, and practical arts. English-language instruction now begins in the third grade, so that children can start learning English in a relaxed atmosphere through conversational exchange, rather than through rote learning of grammatical rules as is still the practice in many middle and high schools. The major objectives, as stated in a 1996 background report by the Ministry of Education, are “to improve basic abilities, skills, and attitudes to develop language ability and civic morality needed to live in society; to increase the spirit of cooperation; to foster basic arithmetic skills and scientific observation skills; and to promote the understanding of healthy life and the harmonious development of body and mind” (Korea Ministry of Education, 2000). The Seventh Annual Curriculum, which began implementation in March 2000, kept these basic goals but updated many elements to reflect changes in Korean society.

Upon completion of primary school, students advance to middle school, which comprises grades seven through nine. Korea borrowed the middle school idea from the United States, although other features of Korean education are very different to those in American education. The curriculum consists of 12 basic or required subjects, electives, and extracurricular activities. While elementary school instructors teach all subjects, middle school teachers, like their colleagues in the United States, are content specialists. High schools are divided into academic and vocational schools. In 1995, some 62 percent of students were enrolled in academic high schools and 38 percent in vocational schools. A small number attended specialized high schools concentrating in: science, the arts, foreign languages, and other specialized fields.

Ironically, all students advance through middle and high school regardless of grades in school. It is not until the end of high school that students must pass a high school entrance exam unless they are attending private high schools. Only private high schools require formal entrance examinations which often cover Mathematics, English, Science, Korean, and Social Studies. If students do poorly, they cannot get into the top private high schools, but they can still attend public high schools. It is intriguing to know that students work so hard despite the fact that grades in middle school do not matter because most students are assigned to public high schools in their district. During my visit to South Korea in 2006, I asked a Korean student why students try so hard in school if their grades do not affect their advancement to the next grade level. She responded, "Students try so hard because this is expected from their parents ever since their elementary education. Trying is in their blood." On many occasions, students made it clear that working hard in school is not optional; it is expected from their family members. Such attitudes towards children are reinforced by Korea's perennial concerns over familial honor and personal face. Many parents want to show off their children. They want to say, "My son is the best performer in his class" or "He will go to Harvard." The child begins to understand that what is important is not only his education, but also that he is a status symbol for his parents.

The educational system of present-day South Korea does not simply reflect a practical need to train an efficient work force, since it also must respond to students' and parents' demands to provide upward mobility through education. But it cannot be seen simply as the means by which autonomous individuals seek upward mobility through the acquisition of cultural capital either, since Koreans tend to define themselves in relation to the group including family, lineage, and nation to which they belong (Kim, 2006). Students know that South Korea's

educational institutions have, in fact, been created as an integral part of a national project to strengthen and develop the country for national survival (Sorensen, 1994).

Hence, the aims of education at the high school level are stated “to foster each student’s personality and ability needed to preserve and strengthen the backbone of the nation; to develop students’ knowledge and skills to prepare them for jobs needed in society; to promote each student’s autonomy, emotional development, and critical thinking abilities to be brought to bear in and out of the school; and to improve physical strength and foster a sound mind” (Korean Ministry of Education, 2000). One sees the significant difference between South Korea and the United States in their considerations of education and its purposes.

The School Calendar

The Korean school calendar has two semesters, the first extending from March through July and the second from September through February. There are summer and winter breaks, but 10 optional half days at the beginning and end of each break which are attended by practically all students, reduce each of these biennial vacations to the remaining ten days. A typical day finds high schoolers studying before school begins at about 8:00 am. Classes run for 50 minutes each, with a morning break and a 50-minute lunch period. The afternoon session resumes at about 1:00pm, and classes continue until about 4:00 or 4:30, followed by the activity of cleaning the classroom. Students may then take a short dinner break at home, or they may eat at school. Students return to the school library to study or attend hagwon or tutoring sessions until between 10:00pm and midnight. They return home where they may have a snack, listen to music, or watch television before going to bed. Elementary and middle school students have similar but less somewhat less rigorous days with shorter hours and more recreational activities.

The rigors of the school day, and the expectation that students also clean their classrooms, underscore the vast differences between school realities in Korea and the United States.

Education: A Means to an End

In a society where education is the most reliable way for upward mobility, students compete with one another to gain entrance to favorable universities. Since the 19th century, Korea has witnessed through a series of social upheavals, the fall of the rigid social structure of the traditional society that valued social class and family background and the subsequent rise of the achievement-oriented social structure. Education has become the most reliable and certain way for elevating one's social status. Obtaining the right educational background has become the shortest path for individual success. People increasingly pursue university diplomas, preferably from one of the three prestigious universities in the country (Card, 2005). Such development has made competition among students inevitable. Hence, the desire to enter prestigious universities is manifested through competition for academic achievement that starts from primary school level.

Aggregate indicators for Korean education are quite impressive, especially for a developing country that used to be counted among the lowest in international comparison. South Korean students have recently achieved the highest mean scores in science and math in the International Assessment of Educational Progress (IAEP) administered by the Educational Testing Service to 13 year-olds in 19 countries (Sorenson, 2004). In 2002, nine years of schooling up to lower secondary education was mandatory and free. High school education, for students in grades 10 through 12 after six years of elementary education and three years of middle schools, is almost universal with modest tuitions. The proportion of high school graduates who advance to either 4-year universities or 2-year technical colleges exceeds 70 percent, among the highest in the world (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). In a survey of

middle and high school seniors, 78.7 percent of the respondents answered that going to college is a practical necessity (Sorenson, 1994, p.22). There is evidence that these attitudes reflect reality. Only those with a college education are recruited for management positions and only those attending SKY universities will be employed by the best companies (Sorenson, 1994, p.22).

The system at the high school level and above is designed to sort students by achievement. The best jobs go to graduates of the most prestigious Seoul-based universities who have come through the best public academic schools, with fewer job prospects for regional university graduates, vocational high school graduates, academic high school graduates who have not gone on to college, and school dropouts who are confined to unskilled occupations (Seth, 2002). This being the case, it is not surprising that average academic achievement in South Korea appears to very high in comparison to other OECD countries.

Government and Education

From early on, the government was committed to a vigorous supply of school facilities and teaching personnel. However, education has always played a gate-keeping role in the maintenance of higher social status. Initially, the government banned Parent Teacher Associations in the 1960s, as they had become organizations that influential parents used to control teachers and schools through extra payments to schools. Then, in 1968, the government took control of middle and high school enrollment processes for both public and private schools, establishing a computerized system to randomize enrollment in all South Korean secondary schools (Robinson, 1994). In 1974, the Ministry of Education banned in-school extra classes (*poch'ung*) that were paid for by parents and that had extended the school day from 6 to 10

hours. In 1980, parents were even prohibited from hiring outside tutors or sending their children to after-school academies or extra classes, although the government later rescinded this after a decade. The penalties for breaking these laws were quite severe and included loss of employment. The overall goal was to create a more level field of educational opportunity (Robinson, 1994).

Apart from the gradually improving quality of schools, perhaps a major factor stimulating the demand for more schooling on the part of parents was the government-enforced standardization of the educational curriculum and the schools. Not only public, but also private schools are mandated to follow the unified national curriculum, up to grade 12. Because private schools are limited in their tuition-charging ability, and because they receive less state support than public schools, they generally have large classes and are less well equipped. They thus function as second-best overflow institutions for those students unable to be accommodated in the public schools rather than as elite institutions for the well-heeled students as they are in the United States.

In both public and private schools, the unified curriculum is taught using either designated or certified textbooks, accompanied by thick volumes of teachers' guides. At the level of middle and high schools, student tuition and teacher compensation are virtually even throughout the country (Seth, 2005). One can easily imagine many problems that are to be inevitably engendered by the consequent lack of diversity within this centralized system. Still, standardization was presumably instrumental in assuaging parental concerns arising from asymmetric information on school quality (Robinson, 1994). At the same time, it was believed that standardized classes in standardized schools should cost less to provide.

Uniform and centralized policies over curriculum and teachers' qualifications have also made Korean schools extremely indistinguishable from each other. Instruction is to be provided according to unified national curriculum, based on either designated or certified textbooks and dictated by dense quantities of teachers' guidelines. Teachers in public schools are all public employees of the national government with uniform salary schedules and required qualifications. Private school teachers should also meet the same qualifications required by the government and are also guaranteed with the equivalent salary schedules and other benefits by the government. Even after 1981, when most educational administration over schools was devolved to local governments, the top-down and hands-on administration by the bureaucracy over schools remained.

Low quality in some of South Korea's schools is a significant driving factor, if not the most important factor, for the mushrooming rise of private hagwons. Thus, Bakers' (2001) research supports the view that institutional features in student's learning environments are among the key driving factors for the demand for the shadow education, and not just high-stakes tests and academic achievement incentives. In addition, the mushrooming of private hagwons is a natural market response to underprovided and overregulated formal schooling in Korea. Thus, the thriving and expanding industry of hagwons, first allowed in the 1970s, already constitute a major conduit for education alongside formal schooling.

Minjok: An Exceptional Academy

In South Korea, there are signs that the most traditional institutions are beginning to question their old ways. To almost every Korean parent, Minjok is the shining apex of education, the Mt. Everest of the country's schooling. A three-hour drive east of Seoul, Minjok is a private school that derives its eminence from results. "Minjok" means "the Korean people, our people."

Upon my visit to Korea in 2006, I had the opportunity to visit this school and talk with several students who explained Minjok as being exceptionally unique because its goal is to educate students to be global leaders with a strong connection to the Korean heritage and pride in their Korean background. This overview of Minjok, its history and programs, is information I obtained as a result of informal conversations with Minjok students who served as hosts during my trip, as well as scholarly literature.

The academy was established in 1996 as Korea's first national private boarding school for gifted students. Korean Minjok Leadership Academy, or KMLA, is a private high school located in the countryside of Gangwon-do, South Korea at an altitude of 600 meters. It is a boarding school, and primarily due to the school's high academic reputation, high-quality faculty and facility compared to other S. Korean high schools, and very small number of students admitted, admission into KMLA is very competitive.

The academy was founded by Myung-jai Choi, the owner of Pasteur Milk. Mr. Choi decided to establish the academy after his trip around the world because he thought that Korea also needed a great school to educate the gifted youths to be future leaders. After its establishment, the academy endured many hardships. Most of all, financial crisis affected by economic collapse of Pasteur Milk Foundation seriously threatened the school's existence. However, with efforts of the teachers, parents, and students, the school would overcome the crisis to become one of the most famous high schools in Korea.

After deciding to create a school that would produce international figures, Mr. Choi received the government permission to establish the school in 1993. The first headmaster and the faculty were signed in on March 1, 1995, and the school received its first students a year later on the same date. At the time, the construction of the school had not been completed, and the

students would study in the partly constructed buildings. The gymnasium was completed in December, 1996, and the Dasan Hall (one of the two main school buildings) was completed nearly a year later. In 1998, the school's education policy of Teaching-Discussion-Writing was institutionalized, the first elections for the Student Council were held, and the Minjok Herald was first published. In 1999, the graduation for the first wave was held, the International Program was added, and the 12-floor dormitory was built. In 2002, the founder Choi Myung Jae was appointed as the 4th headmaster.

According to one of the hosts, all of KMLA students are either in the Minjok class (domestic field) or the Ivy class (international field) although not many students choose to go to Ivy leagues despite acceptances (considering the percentage of people admitted to Ivy leagues and colleges at ivy-league level, it is one of the best compared to other high schools), and in 2002, for the first time, the school admitted more International Program students than domestic field students. Currently, the number of Minjok students and International students are approximately equal for incoming students. Starting from 2008, KMLA plans to select students without classifying them into either Minjok class or Ivy class.

In the beginning years of KMLA, the school admitted very small numbers of students (about 20 to 30 each year), but starting from 2003 it began to increase the number. In 2004, the school admitted 150 students and is expected to continue admitting 150 students each class. Though the largest number of KMLA students comes from Seoul and Gyeonggi-do, students come from all over the country, as far as Jeju. Starting from 2008, half of students will be selected proportional to the population of their respective areas. Three overseas students are admitted separately every year as well, giving more diversity to the student body (Minjok Herald, 2006). According to the students I talked with, the cost of yearly attendance is about the

equivalent of \$15,000. Financial aid is limited, and most of financial aid is merit-based to some extent. The school in turn spends more than the equivalent of \$30,000 per student per year. For the first few years after KMLA was founded, students attended the school for free. However, with the bankruptcy of Pasteur Milk in the late 90s, this no longer became possible. The school had to increase the tuition gradually to the current level.

In 2003, the school held its first Mathematics Competition and the current headmaster Lee Don Hee was appointed in August. In 2004, the school established the Individual Research (IR) program and was certified as a SAT and PSAT testing center. Also, in 2006, KMLA was selected by the U.S. College Board as a World Best School in the Advanced Placement Program, particularly for the four subjects of AP Calculus BC, AP Microeconomics, AP Macroeconomics, and AP Physics B. In 2007, for seven subjects: AP Calculus BC, AP Chemistry, AP Microeconomics, AP Macroeconomics, AP Physics B, AP Physics C: Mechanics, and AP Statistics. This information clearly indicates the strong influence of the United States-Korean ties, the global influence of the American system, and the direction taken by the elite of Korean educational institutions.

Most students go on to Yonsei University, Seoul National University, and the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology which are some of the most desirable tertiary education establishments in the country. If not these schools, many go on to medical school and if they want to study abroad, they often matriculate to Ivy League schools or their equivalents. Recently, American Ivy League schools have increasingly traveled to KMLA to recruit students. KMLA has many unique characteristics and policies that separate it from other Korean schools which include support for the teachers' individual academic research, realized by incorporation of the classrooms and teachers' offices and laboratories, the English Only Policy, which requires

every student and teacher to use English during the school hours, except in Korean language and Korean history classes, individual Research hours granted within the regular curricula, practical application of education for the gifted, daily physical training in forms of Taekwondo and Kumdo, classes and clubs for Korean traditional music and arts, including Samul Nori, Daegum, and Gayageum, and a system of individual college counseling for each field and major.

In the following tables, one sees the American influence of or on Korean education (see Table 4.1 and 4.2).

Table 4.1. Alumni at Overseas Universities, *Minjok Herald*, 2007.

University	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Cornell University	1	0	1	1	1	1	4	4	8	21
Duke University	0	0	1	0	1	3	1	4	6	16
Stanford University	0	0	1	2	2	1	0	1	7	14
Northwestern University	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	5	10	16
University of Pennsylvania	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	3	6	12
Princeton University	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	1	6	12
Brown University	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	5	6	12
University of Chicago	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	2	4	10
California Institute of Technology	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	6	10
Harvard University	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	4	9
Yale University	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	2	4	9
Carnegie Mellon University	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	5	10
University of California, Berkeley	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	6	11

Massachusetts Institute of Technology	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	3	8
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Table 4.2. Alumni at Korean Universities, *Minjok Herald*, 2007.

University	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Yonsei University	0	2	2	6	4	25	14	6	15	23	97
Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology	4	8	7	6	10	9	7	2	5	9	67
Seoul National University	0	2	3	6	5	4	5	6	8	6	45
Korea University	0	3	0	1	6	7	3	3	4	5	32
Pohang University of Science and Technology	0	0	0	1	7	3	2	1	1	0	15
Ewha Woman's University	0	0	0	0	2	3	3	0	0	2	10
Kyunghee University	0	0	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	7
Sungkyunkwan University	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3	0	0	7

Entrance to Minjok

Every October, hundreds of students take the entrance exam for KMLA. At the end the month, about one hundred and fifty students are accepted and congratulated. In 2006, KMLA selected one-hundred fifty-five new students for 2007, sixty-four as Minjok students, and ninety-one as International students. These students were busily preparing

to become the 12th wave students of KMLA. However, the entrance examination is just one aspect of entrance into the academy. There are four components of the first round of applications to get into Minjok. First, middle school students must be in the top three to five percent of their grade for at least one semester. Second, each student must take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) exam, scoring a 240 for the Minjok Field and 260 for the International Field. Third, students participate in a mathematics competition held by Minjok. Fourth, students must write an essay explaining why they want to attend KMLA, what they plan to study, and what their future goals are. Students who pass the first rounds of applications come to KMLA to take the Entrance Exams on various subjects including Science, Math, History, plus an English Essay component. After this common exam, the student chooses one subject, his or her specialty, and takes the subject test in an interview form with a KMLA teacher.

Academic Programs of the Academy

There are largely two academic fields in the academy: Minjok Field and International Field. Minjok Field has a curriculum mostly for the students who wish to continue their university years in Korea. International Field, once called IVY Field, has a curriculum for the students who wish to study abroad or to study in international colleges in Korea (Minjok Guide, 2006). The co-educational school for grades 10-12 combines world-class academic studies with reverence for Korea's 4,400 years of history, culture, and tradition. KMLA graduates are expected to go on to top Korean and world universities and to future world leadership in a variety of fields.

Regardless of the fields, there are various courses offered for the students. According to the hosts I talked with, the academy students can choose the courses they want among many different courses that range from average-level to advanced-level. Especially in the case of

International Field students, more than 10 Advanced Placement (AP) courses are open, so that they can specialize in the studies of their own interests. Besides the AP courses, the academy also offers in-depth classes for the students who have special interests in the field of natural sciences. In 2001, the school was certified as an Educational Testing Service Advanced Placement test center and designated as an experimental independent private school by the South Korea government. Thus, granting KMLA more freedom in school management than normally accorded to heavily regulated South Korean private high schools.

In addition, the academy stresses individual development. Therefore, it offers students individual research time for eight hours per week and also offers two hours for project studies. Students use this time efficiently according to their own plans and interests; students participate in extracurricular activities such as club activities and volunteer work, writing research papers, and taking a rest. According to several students, taking a rest is considered an extracurricular activity.

National Identity

The academy seeks to help students prepare for world leadership by first strengthening their sense of national identity. Students wear *hanbok*, (traditional Korean clothing) in order to emphasize the students' identity as Korean. They also practice Korean archery, *kumdo* (Korean sword-fighting), and *taekwondo* (martial art). Freshmen in the academy are required to participate in trainings for taekwondo or kumdo for 30 minutes everyday. Also, all students are required to take traditional music class for one hour every week and learn to play Korean traditional musical instruments. They learn to play traditional musical instruments like the twelve-stringed *kayagum* or the bamboo flute. They join in *samulnori*, based on traditional folk

music and performed by groups playing four percussion instruments, and *daechuita*, royal processional music.

In order to achieve patriotism among the students, the school is trying its best to help the students in their understanding Korean traditional culture. The academy students build upon strong Korean social and family values as they develop their creativity, intelligence, and knowledge. Hence, in addition to the required courses, students also participate in national ceremonies every Monday, hold traditional ceremonies, and even go on fieldtrips to museums, temples, Mount. Pakdu, and Mount. Keumkang. By experiencing traditional culture, the students can realize their identity as Korean. By having a thorough understanding of and love for their own history and culture, academy students are better prepared to meet the challenges facing Korea without losing their sense of national identity. These components focusing on national identity are important to remember when contemplating the Korean programs' features in Atlanta.

The English Only Policy

From its very beginning, the academy has had an English Only Policy (EOP). The school's famous English Only Policy (see Photograph H, I, and J) was established in January, 1997, and in March, it was expanded to all areas of the school except a few non-English classes. This policy mandates teachers to lecture in English and students to use English in almost all occasions from 8:00am to 6:30pm. Signs are posted on campus to remind students of the English Only Policy (see photographs in Appendix M). This policy was created by the founder to enhance the student's language skills, so that they can be well prepared to be leaders in a global society. If a student violates the English only policy, EOP helpers for the day report him or her to the appropriate person in charge of the policy. During my visit in 2006, I observed two students

who had violated the policy completing the EOP essay assignment. If one EOP violation record exceeds three times a year, he or she is sent to the student court (the court run by Honor Committee in the academy) and receives penalty points. Still, one can be exempted from the records if they write a good EOP essay. This is a true testament to the value placed on the acquisition of the English language, which is also a feature of the supplemental education program found in Atlanta.

Photo H. English Only Policy Banner-KMLA School



Photograph I. English Only Policy-Cafeteria



Photograph J. English Only Policy-Korean Hagwon



The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

As the academy strives to create global leaders, English has become increasingly important, moving beyond the walls of the academy. Students throughout South Korea go to English *hagwons* to prepare for the TOEFL exam in the hopes of gaining opportunities in South Korean schools as well as American schools. Access to the TOEFL exam is increasingly in high demand in South Korea. With demand for the test far outreaching available slots, and scalpers demanding exorbitant prices, desperate South Koreans have been searching for possible test sites from Japan and Southeast Asia to Australia. With South Koreans making up one of the largest foreign student communities in the United States, about 93,000 in 2006, according to the U.S. Immigration authorities; it is hardly surprising that demand for the test would be high. American

colleges and graduate schools typically require foreign students to submit TOEFL scores with their applications (Herald Tribune, 2007). As a result, travel agencies have begun offering “TOEFL tours” that include test preparation courses, a guaranteed test slot and sometimes even a bit of tourism on the side. One student’s test preparation school estimates about 500 Koreans a month travel to other countries to take the test (L. Kim, personal communication, June 7, 2007).

In recent years, TOEFL scores have also become a necessity even for South Koreans with no intention of leaving the country. Many people, from teenagers applying to selective secondary schools to adults applying for jobs, must submit TOEFL scores. Strong English language acquisition has become a basic criterion across the country. Thus, it is no surprise that the number of people taking the test in South Korea has jumped from 50,311 in 2001 to about 130,00 in 2006, according to Educational Testing Service, the Princeton, New Jersey-based company that administers the test (International Herald, Tribune, May 14, 2007). The Education Testing Service web site recorded 32 million hits in one day from South Korea when it opened online registration for the July test; available seats were taken within moments (International Herald, Tribune, May 14, 2007). It is this disparity between supply and demand that sends so many South Koreans abroad. The importance of English is another salient feature of Korean education, significant for students who do not leave the country as well as for students who emigrate. This feature is also important with regard to features of the supplemental education program in Atlanta, where I conducted my study. In the following section, I present a portrait of one Korean student whose experience reflects many key features of Korean education. I had the opportunity to converse with Yoon during my visit in 2006.

The Case of Yoon

Yoon is a senior at Minjok with hopes of going on to Harvard University in the United States. Yoon spent six years in the United States with relatives which she says helped her tremendously. I asked her if all students spend time outside of Korea before entering Minjok. She answered, “not all, but most do. If they don’t speak English well because they lived in Korea all their lives, they have a hard time with the entrance interviews, English textbooks and courses, as well as the EOP Policy” (Y.J. Lee, personal communication, July, 2006). Yoon had to readjust to the academic rigor of Korea upon her return to the country. When she was in the United States, she was taking Algebra which she found to be quite easy. However, upon her acceptance to Minjok, she was enrolled in Calculus. She explains that, “the six year gap was too much for me at first. But to catch up, I studied double the time and the amount of my peers. Peer tutoring also helped me a lot.” Yoon also had difficulty fitting in with some of her peers. She says, “I wasn’t accepted at first because of my American or Western attitude, but as time passed, I became more Koreanized, I fit in within 6 months.”

Yoon’s Daily Schedule

Yoon described her daily schedule to me. Each day, Yoon rises at 6:30am for morning exercises, which all students participate in on a daily basis. Classes begin at 9:30am each day and continue through lunch at approximately 12:30pm. At 1:30pm students resume classes until 5:30pm. They then return to their dorm rooms for self study from 7:00pm until 11:00pm. Each dorm has dorm mothers who monitor the students from 7:00pm to 11:00pm through cameras that are installed in each student’s room. The cameras are only on during self-study time so that students can receive wake-up calls or knocks on the door from dorm mothers if they fall asleep during self study time. All lights in the rooms go out at 2:00am. I asked Yoon if it was common

for students to study until 2:00am. She responded, “I don’t, but many of my friends do. They buy flashlights and study under their sheets until four or five in the morning. They want to be the best” (Y. J. Lee, personal communication, July 31, 2007). After contacting her again, I asked Yoon how she felt about the rigor or difficulty of her school. She answered, “the rigor is very challenging, sometimes very discouraging and stressful, but I enjoy the challenge. I think most students enjoy this challenge, being forced to extend their limits and boundaries daily.” I asked Yoon to describe her experiences in Korean schools versus American schools. She replied, “The major difference is that Korean schools are more rigorous and students try harder but American schools are more demographically diverse and produce less homogeneous students.” She explained, “for most students who have gone abroad, school in Korea is hell (sic) because it is so, so, so competitive. The students have to study, study, study, to survive. If you’re not the top, then you can’t command respect from your teachers and peers.” (Y.J. Lee, personal communication, July, 31, 2007).

Implications of Korean Education System

Schools such as KMLA in South Korea help outsiders better understand the phenomenon of private tutoring in *hagwons* that has become increasingly prevalent in South Korea. While South Korea’s less advantaged appear to have the same opportunity to pass entrance examinations as the nation’s more privileged students, equal opportunity to education is a goal that 30 years of educational reform has yet to achieve. These reforms have had consequences for students, parents, teachers, and school administrators. For students, they equalized access to public and private education in the K-12 system, although wealth and socioeconomic status continue to determine the ability to utilize private after-school education (*hagwons*) and even access to public school teachers (Seth, 2002).

For parents, these reforms have cut direct contact with teachers, reduced the formal influence of parents on the school, and have forced parents to find other means to relieve their anxieties for the educational achievement of their children. In the 1970s and currently, parents have chosen to sooth these anxieties by lining up top notch tutors, typically teachers and college students, or by placing their children at an after-school institute despite the high costs. In a country of about 40 million with a college population of about one million, 500,000 students fail annually to gain college admission (Robinson, 1994). This competition often begins during preschool and continues building until it reaches crisis proportions for high school seniors.

The fierce competition and high expectations to which students are subjected are additional features of the home country educational and cultural reality for Korean immigrants. Here, the comparative dimensions of my study is clearly evident in that these insights are necessary context for understanding what Korean immigrants imported when they settled in places such as Atlanta.

Characteristics and Features of Korean Hagwons

Over 70 percent of Korean parents send their children to private lessons in hagwons for about seven hours a week. Successive education authorities have tried to slow down the fever for private lessons in vain. Instead, the hagwon market has grown tremendously over the last ten years. In a practical sense, private lessons at hagwons can be effective for preparing students to earn higher scores on the achievement tests made up of multiple choice questions. The College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT), the most important college entrance test in the country, is administered as an external examination by the government. The test dominates schools, which lack the right to evaluate students, when only the multiple choice tests requiring one correct

answer are overused both in and out of school (Zeng, 1999). Hence, students can indeed benefit from the repetitive drills aimed at such tests provided through hagwons.

In Korea, private lessons refer to individual and group lessons provided to students by private tutors or in private for-profit institutes, known as *hagwons*. Before the educational opportunity for basic education at primary and secondary school levels was universalized in Korea, students competed with one another to progress to schooling at higher levels. Under such circumstances, extra studying via private lessons did help students to compete on entrance examinations. When students relied on private lessons, either for a better grasp of school instruction, or for gaining advantage on entrance examination, which has increasingly become prevalent in Korea, the financial burden imposed upon the household becomes quite sizable. At the same time, when students relied on private lessons for covering school subjects, it is likely that they concentrated less on school instruction. Therefore, expansion of private lessons has remained a serious concern in Korean society, and the government has continued to seek the policy to suppress such expansion.

The total expense for private lessons amounts to \$13 billion as of 2003, which has risen up from the figure for year 2001 by \$2 billion and is 54.8 percent of the 2003 budget of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (\$25 billion dollars) (Korean Educational Development Institute, 2003). The rate of the students who take private lessons is 83.1 percent for primary school, 75.3 percent for middle school, 56.4 percent for academic high school, and 19.2 percent for vocational high school; and the rate by different regions is 75.8 percent in Seoul, 74.0 percent in metropolitan regions, 74.2 percent in cities, and 62.1 percent in rural towns (Korean Educational Development Institute, 2003). In aggregate, 72.6 percent of all

Korean students take private lessons in *hagwons*. The following table shows average weekly hours of private lessons by school level.

Table 4.3 Average Weekly Hours of Private Lessons by Different School Levels

School Levels	Average Weekly hours or private lessons
Kindergarten	4.90
Primary school	7.20
Middle school	7.80
High School (Academic track)	6.30
High School (Vocational track)	7.09
Total	6.08

Source: Korean Educational Development Institute (2003). *Policy proposal against private lesson with focus on the reinforcement of public education*

Table 4.4. Changes in the Rate of the Students Who Participate in Private Lessons (Percent)

School Level	1980	1990	2000	2003
Primary school	12.9	22.3	73.5	83.1
Middle school	20.3	31.0	50.7	75.3
High school	26.2	12.6	39.8	56.4

Source: Korean Educational Development Institute (2003).

Expansion of private lessons themselves can be construed as increased investment in education since this reflects the high educational desire of Korean society. However, the excessive reliance on private lessons has numerous negative effects. Since private lessons are given under the premise that school instruction alone is insufficient, they tend to undermine the public's trust in school instruction (Korean Educational Development Institute, 2003). According to the hosts during my visit to South Korea, the suppliers of private lessons tend to be kind to

students and offer focused assistance to them compared with school teachers, so that private lessons implicitly facilitate the public's distrust toward formal school education. Students who rely much on private lessons tend not to focus on school instruction, which in turn discourages school teachers who tend to neglect the quality of their instruction; hence a vicious cycle is generated.

As a result, private lessons in hagwons often impede the development of students' whole person. Private lessons emphasize repeated learning of school's curricular contents, thereby stripping students of leisurely hours; thus the students have difficulty in making friends, enjoying sports, and having hands-on experiences in home and local communities (Korean Educational Development Institute, 2003). Consequently, harmonious growth of the mind and body of students is greatly impeded.

Excessive spending on education has become an anomaly in economic activities in South Korea. Korean parents spend about \$300 per month on the average for private lessons for one child, which takes up about 13 percent of the average household income (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (2001). Increase in the expense for hagwons tends to reduce household income and further, exerts negative influences upon the nation's economic growth. Hagwons also cause unequal opportunity for education. Hagwons tend to exacerbate inequality in the opportunity for learning among different strata and different regions. Children from low-income strata and the students in remote regions are in a far more disadvantageous situation than the children from middle class families and the students in metropolitan region, respectively, in terms of access to diverse private lesson services. The emergence of the high-income middle class families that prefer choice of quality education is expanding. The new global family, which enjoys economic leverage to send off children to any place in the world that offers high quality

education has emerged following economic growth (Korean Educational Development Institute, 2003). Members of such families are ready to send their children abroad once they are not content with the schooling provided in their country.

Hagwons have increased due to a combination of factors. There are largely four contexts in need of consideration. First, external high stake examination stresses result rather than the process of learning. The high stake examination required for university admission is being administered by the State, and students are attracted to private lessons, which prepare them efficiently to take the examination. The most important criterion behind determining a student's admittance to university is not his or her school record, but the score on the College Scholastic Ability Test. The test is administered by Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation and is *de facto* under the state supervision (Kwak, 2006). The test given annually on a single day consists of paper and pencil, multiple choice questions, and nearly all the youths who completed high school education apply to it. Since a student's future is largely determined by the results of that test, all of the learning efforts of students are concentrated in the means to acquire high scores on the test. To acquire high scores on the test, students do their best to absorb as much knowledge and information as possible and further, they intend to practice various tactics to breach into the intent of the test constructor (Y. Kim, personal communication, July 2007). The test is inevitably competitive and thus, students out of their desire to gain relative advantage on the test seek additional learning opportunities beyond formal schooling. Riding on such desire, numerous hagwons allure students to the realm of private lessons. Repetitive and focused learning can be effective for preparing oneself for multiple choice tests that demand one correct answer (J. Kim, personal communication, July 2007).

According to several students I talked with, in Korea, students are often taught material in school that is different from what is tested on the exam that will most likely determine their futures. Too often, what the students are taught in school is not necessarily on the test so they go to after school programs for an additional four hours after regular school to get supplemental material. This is no different from the United States where students are supposed to learn the material they need to do well on the SAT throughout their educational career. Instead, those who are able take supplemental classes with programs such as Sylvan, Huntington, or Princeton Review in order to prepare.

However, even the critics concede the system has merits; out of 30 nations, including the United States and the 25 countries of the European Nation, South Korea came first in problem-solving, second in reading and third in science, according to the Program for International Student Assessment, which tracks student performance worldwide (Kwak, 2006). Many believe cram schools are necessary because they fill the gap in public schooling and offer something students desperately need and want...to be the best. Nonetheless, the government is considering redistricting schools to level the playing field and control soaring real estate prices in neighborhoods with good public schools (Seth, 2005). They are also considering cracking down on unregistered hagwons and tutors who charge exorbitant prices because they can. Although parents are often willing to pay such large amounts of money, it is the students who truly pay the price.

Cram schools, known as *hagwon*, have a tumultuous history in South Korea. Before 1980, cram study took three basic forms: 1) paying one's regular school teacher to hold after-hour classes 2) attending a separate cram school in the evening taught by well educated persons, especially the regular teacher, and 3) hiring a private tutor. The most common and available

tutors were students at major universities, who have proven their merit by making it through the entrance process. Such tutoring by university students was extremely lucrative; sometimes even enough to earn one's way through school (Zeng, 1999).

However, following the passing of the government imposed Prohibition Policy of Private Tutoring in 1980, which constituted one of the most severe measures for normalizing schooling whole decade, cramming in order to get into college was a crime. The prohibition forbade elementary, middle, and high school teachers from doing tutoring. It also made private academies return fees after August 1, 1980 to those students who were currently enrolled in school (Sorensen, 1994). It was only after 1989 that prohibition of cram practices were alleviated and the ban on cramming was lifted, resulting in a rapid increase of the cram industry. Today, in fact, for an untrained observer to find the indicative mark that prohibition has left is not that easy.

In Seoul, academic tutoring companies, or *hagwon*, generally have their own educational buildings. These multi-storey learning centers can be extremely tall and impressive but are sparsely scattered throughout the city. They also keep a moderate profile. Big *hagwon* posters are visible in the subway trains and buses, which provide parents with a convenient sketch map of their branch campuses. Unlike in Japan, however, outdoor commercials for *hagwon* are short in detail, and information is only obtainable at the *hagwon* office (Zeng, 1999). Korean cram schools are very cautious in projecting their profile in the market. The prohibition policy still mirrors a justified ideology, and its alleviation has been a grudging concession on the part of the regime. Even after a long decade of prohibition, the *hagwon* as an institutionalized extracurricular education has yet to step out of the dark shadow of illegitimacy.

In South Korea, Shinsol-dong is the one particular area in which cram businesses are found. In this area, a variety of hagwon buildings stand tall along both sides of its main road. Academic *hagwon* are less impressive and distinguishable in this cohabitation as very few of their signs show their specialty. The signboards in Seoul have only a phone number in large type and advertisements are minimal (C. Kim, personal communication, 2007). At the entrance to the *hagwon*, one or two senior male desk clerks relentlessly guard the narrow passage in the lobby as students pile through (Zeng, 1999). Cram schools generally look stately outside, but their interior seems to be dilapidated and badly needs a new coat of paint or some repairs. Power conservation makes many classrooms dimly lit and almost eerie (Zeng, 1999). Kangmin Zeng described his experience when visiting a *hagwon* as follows:

There was an administrative area at the entrance, where information pamphlets were on display for free distribution. Yet, unlike *juku*, which had a free flow in and out, this *hagwon* was like a secured fortress. Access to the classrooms inside was made narrow by a desk or a turnpike, and was guarded by one or two watchmen. They were generally senior males, stern-faced and vigilant. Their pretentious air and impatience suggested that their chief duty was to safeguard against and scare away the unwanted, although they were also supposed to give away information. The attitude of the loyal “gendarmes” reflected a cautious self-consciousness of the cram business in Korea.... This was especially notable in Korea as a result of the more stringent government policies of control and regulation.

I often wondered, what it is that students are doing within the walls of these cram schools? Students begin to pour into *hagwons* around 6pm. Many Korean *hagwons* have large class sizes in comparison to formal schools, which average approximately 40 students. Cram school classes can range from approximately 60 to 80 students. Large classes are manageable

because there are no questions and answers, and the teaching, very much like religious speech, is a one-way dissemination of knowledge. In addition, computer technology radically reduced the amount of labor used for the grading, correcting, and commenting on test papers (Zeng, 1999).

According to Zeng, once class had begun, instead of satellite transmission of simultaneous lectures, the screen showed a pre-recorded lecture of advanced algebra from videotape. About nine students sat randomly at their discretion. One male student in his late twenties was following the class attentively. The rest were all girls. One was washing down her sandwich with chocolate milk and others were murmuring merrily to one another. Others were gazing motionlessly at the television. Neither the teacher nor the assistant was around. However, this is not the norm.

Cram schools are virtually dependent on the expertise of teachers who excel at putting theory into practice. It is beyond any shadow of doubt therefore, that classes are teacher-controlled and lecture-centered. Students often take courses such as General Mathematics, Analytic Geometry and Numbers, Seminar on Differential and Integral (Kwak, 1991). In addition, they may take courses on Japanese, as well as English. Regardless of the course, the delivery remains the same. Ironically, cram school lectures are not designed to make knowledge digestible so that it can be crammed into students' brains. The lecture is intended to help students to crack difficulties in problem solving, whether it is in English reading, classic Chinese, math, or physics (C. Kim, personal communication, July 12, 2006). Zeng also discusses principles that are referred to for organizing and rationalizing this effort and making it structured. In consequence, a course generally starts with a mini-lecture on the concept to be covered. This is done with the help of examples written on the chalkboard. Then, the instructor will switch to the main part of his pedagogy. He presents, analyzes, explains, and then proceeds to solve the

problems step by step, one after another. These problems are either selected from the mock tests given earlier or based on the home assignment that students should have prepared (Zeng, 1999).

In class, students were seldom asked to pose questions or to respond. In all the classes that Zeng attended, with or without prior arrangement, it was apparent that, at the instructor's wish, the class proceeded as smoothly as silk. Teaching was a one-way free flow of knowledge. The pace of academic progress was well maintained, and the teaching plan was accomplished to the letter, which might well be a source of envy for American teachers. Not a single student asked the teacher to repeat or elucidate, even in places where Zeng was certain that the students were confused. There was minimal student-teacher interaction.

According to one student I spoke with during my fieldwork in Atlanta, many hagwons in South Korea are very straightforward. She said, "You come, you learn, you memorize, and it's basically self-learning."

She further explained:

The one I went to was a big place, big classroom with 100 to 200 kids and there is one instructor with a microphone. And you know he would be instructing about how you would solve a math problem and then you would be fast writing down the notes and then when you go home you would look over it. Then you take the standardized exam and you have to get a good score. I think a lot of families move here because they don't like the education system in Korea and they want something else for their children (Park, personal communication, June, 6, 2007).

Most Koreans acknowledge that public education is not good enough for their child to achieve academic success. A survey in 2004 reported that South Korea had the most crowded classrooms out of all Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, with classes averaging at 37.1 students in middle schools, compared to the OECD average of 23.7 (Card, 2005). The result of the perceived shortcomings of the public school system created a mass market for private education that takes the form of tutoring, "cram

schools” and coaching classes that are designed with the ultimate goal of maximizing the highest possible College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT). JL, a parent of one JAE student, explained:

A lot of the times that I hear complaints from schools is that the school education can not catch up with the hagwon education, you know because students who go to hagwon learn all of this way before the normal, regular school education, so the students who don't go to hagwon will be in disadvantage because they won't be covering the materials that they should cover (Luo, personal communication, August 12, 2007).

Acceptance at one of the top three Korean universities is considered a South Korean student's crowning life achievement. Not only will successful students have the best academic pedigree in the country, they will also have a strong alumni network that tends to be biased in hiring and mentoring graduates from their alma mater. Even their currency as a marriage partner increases. As a result, parents start their children on the educational track early on in an assortment of pre-school that offer numerous early childhood learning programs. It has been estimated that the typical Korean family spends between 15 and 30 percent of their household budget on private education. But they continue to pay because they feel that if they do not send their kids to private school, they are not doing their best for their kids. Of course the kids are the ones attending the schools, but at what social and emotional cost? They spend a significant amount of time in the classroom, attending cram school Monday through Friday, plus Saturday morning. JL explained:

Some students may go everyday, some two days a week or three days a week, some just on weekends. For me, I went on the weekends and during the week days I had a tutor, a private tutor come in. There are a lot of private tutors, like underground private tutors and people would pay a lot of money for a good tutor.

Koreans tell their kids: “Sleep five hours a night and fail; sleep four hours and pass” (Lee, 2006). It is not uncommon for Korean students to spend 6 or 7 hours at hagwons after school learning things that were going to be on the test. It is no surprise that the suicide rate

increases every year around exam time. Despite the disadvantages, Korean students continue to attend and parents continue to pay.

Today, even the students who do not attend hagwons regularly spend quality time studying. According to JL, the schools often provide study time for students after regular school hours. JL explained:

I've heard different things about kids staying at hagwons until 11:00 or midnight. But there are also different things in the Korean public schools where you study on your own time and basically everybody has to stay unless you have an excuse. If you have a class or outside extracurricular activities, or athletics, then you go. Besides that, everybody has to stay and especially for the seniors and upcoming seniors. And the teachers would keep the students in school at least until 10:00 at night. So, basically children in my time, I had to take my own lunch but now they have a cafeteria and the school provides lunch for them., but I had to have two so one for lunch and one for dinner. And there are other kids who would go into other institutes full of desks, with like cubicles, and the students would go in there and stay there until like 1:00 or 2:00am to study. A lot of times there are a lot of families in your house and you just don't have a quiet place to study so they are in our home area within walking distance so you could walk home when you finish. We would walk home in groups so I had the most fun then because of the relationships I built; you know the relationships I was able to build with my friends from attending study time in a very unique environment.

In the following section, I present a second portrait of another Korean student whose experience elucidates many key aspects of Korean education. I had the opportunity to converse with Dae about his experience in a Korean *hagwon* before he moved to the United States during my fieldwork in metro-Atlanta.

The Case of Dae

Dae used to leave his home in Seoul at dawn most days and does not return until after midnight. Preparing for college entrance exams, the 18-year old South Korean spends 10 hours at school. Then comes the cramming: Dae's five tutors teach him everything from English to math and science. For his parents, it is a pricey regimen. His school tuition is just \$1,300 a year, but his tutors cost an additional \$36,000. Add in his sister's tutors, and education costs his parents

roughly half their income. I asked the mother if she felt it was worth it. She responded, “We know we’re paying too much, but their lives will be decided by the universities they go to.” Dae and his family recently moved to Gwinnett County to pursue financial and academic opportunities. Dae’s case is yet another example of the financial sacrifice Korean families seem to be willing to make for education and opportunity.

In this chapter, I presented information and findings related to schooling in South Korea as well as information I obtained during my 2006 visit regarding specific educational practices. From this emerged a series of descriptions regarding many aspects of schooling in South Korea and in Korean *hagwons* as the backdrop for my field research. In the following chapter, I present my case of my fieldwork conducted in one Korean American supplemental education program in metro-Atlanta.

CHAPTER 5

A KOREAN SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM IN GEORGIA

In this chapter, I present the findings of my fieldwork conducted at one supplemental education program in metro-Atlanta. I present findings on the key aspects of the school including characteristics of the school, the curriculum, the participants, and perceptions of the participants in relation to my research questions.

JAE Supplemental Education Program

In 1977, twenty researchers in Korea embarked on an educational project, driven by the belief that all children have the unlimited potential to become successful. After three decades, one organization has spread globally to Canada, Australia, and the United States. This program is a part of a franchise with sites in places such as California, Atlanta, and New York. The root of this pursuit has been the implementation of the Self-Learning Education System, a self-paced program designed to help students acquire a mastery of concepts and skills on their own. One of the JAE programs was the focus of my field study.

Organizational Affiliation

The JAE program is one branch of a network of schools found around the world, but it is the only one located in Georgia. However, there are over 20 branches throughout the United States. After three decades, the organization has spread globally, with offices now in the United States, Canada, China, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. Today, nearly 10,000 JAE participants contribute to this effort through its subsidiaries. Since its inception, JAE has been

promoting the importance of providing a quality educational environment for enhancing the lives, not only of children, but also of adults, of all people at all stages of life. The organization has been providing products through computer software, publishing, printing, and distribution. In addition to supplemental, collegiate, and adult education, JAE has also extended its services to include broadcasting and childcare. JAE continues to be a leader in the education industry, making large investments in research and development and improving upon its products and services. Moreover, they are expanding to develop in the areas of online learning and training programs for the general public. In this way, JAE continues to advance its efforts to meet the ever increasing needs of people at a time of rapid growth in information and technology.

Characteristics of the School

The second research question of my study was: “What are the general features and characteristics of Korean *hagwons* and Korean American supplemental education programs?” To answer this question, I examined numerous variables including the purpose of the program, organizational affiliation, years in existence, number of teachers and students, days and hours of instruction, grade levels taught, and financial support. The data I report came from my interviews with the director, faculty, and staff, and documents provided by the program.

Purpose of the Program

The program’s roots are embedded in the self-learning philosophy that anyone can change, given the proper education. Based on the unlimited potential and spontaneous nature of the individual, the program renders an ambience where the student can autonomously learn, with the view to bring up independent, creative and talented individuals (JAE Policy Manual, 2000). In other words, the program rears creative, talented people that can solve problems

independently by offering a self-learning atmosphere that increases interests and confidence in the student through the study materials in accordance with one's level of ability.

The mission of the program is to support facilities and help changes in behavior by providing a high quality self-learning system so that all individuals, ranging from children to adults, can enjoy a better life. The self-learning system is created based on three educational theories. First, the Talent Education Theory which theorizes that all children are born with unlimited potential and talent is not inherent. Second, the Programmed Instruction Theory theorizes that children can achieve success in learning when provided with specified aims, sufficient practices, and appropriate reinforcement. Third, the Master Learning Theory theorizes that the degree of learning can be calculated by using the time needed in learning and time actually spent on learning (JAE Mission Statement, 2001, p.3).

The program's vision is to become an overall educational and cultural organization that provides a high quality self-learning system. There are three components that unite to formulate the self-learning environment, hence aiding the voluntary learning of the students: a) academic advisors who provide learning incentives by helping students gain interest and confidence based on faith in the individuals' infinite potential b) Scientific Evaluation System and Programmed Self-Learning Materials c) and parents that give confidence to their children by means of praise and encouragement (JAE Policy Manual, 2000).

In order to embody the self-learning philosophy, the program emphasizes "a better life through better education" by placing importance on mankind, customers, and action (JAE Policy Manual, 2000). Thus, the program will provide a high quality self-learning system that solves problems and improves the quality of life of all individuals. As a result, revenue and profit will be created and in turn contribute prosperity to the students, shareholders, and the community.

Number of Students and Teachers

During the school year, the program often employs between eight and 10 teachers. However, during the summer the program employs between 20 and 25 teachers. During the period of data collection, the number of students enrolled ranged from 150 to 210 students. However, there were 215 students registered for the summer program in 2007. According to the director, enrollment has increased each year due to the program's affiliation with the Korean Community Presbyterian Church (KCPC), which houses the supplemental summer program on its campus. Parents are attracted to the program because it also provides social opportunities for the Korean adults in the community. Furthermore, parents are attracted to church-related programs in which the children have classes while parents attend church services. The director also explained that enrollment is increasing due to the results of grade improvements when the students are in public school (Field notes, July 26, 2007).

Photo J. JAE Students in the Classroom



Days and Hours of Instruction

The school-year program operates from August through May. It has fall and spring semesters and breaks that coincide with the breaks of the public school system in Gwinnett County. The program holds classes Monday through Friday from 4:30pm to 6:30pm. The program also offers SAT classes and ESOL classes on Saturday mornings from 9:00am through 12:00pm. During the summer, the program offered classes from June through August. The summer program began at 9:00am and ended at 3:30pm on Monday through Thursday. On Fridays, the students were given the opportunity to go on field trips to a variety of locations (T.Kim, personal communication, August 12, 2007).

Grade Levels Taught and Student Placement

The JAE program offers classes for students from Pre-K through 12th grade. Students are placed in classes with students of similar age or grade level. When a class has more students than has been allotted, the class may be divided into two classes. For example, there may be two 7th grade reading classes.

Upon enrollment, each student takes a diagnostic test before being placed in a class. JAE's computerized diagnostic system is able to pinpoint a student's strengths and weaknesses by analyzing his or her answers to the test. It determines the optimal starting point of study and prescribes an individualized study program to combat each of the student's weak areas (JAE Enrollment Packet, 2000). The computer analysis evaluates without bias on the student's age or grade. Instead, the prescribed study program is designed to address each student's particular needs.

The exam itself is comprised of three types of questions: 1) those based on the previous grade of the student, 2) those based on the current grade, and 3) those based on the next grade.

Each question within these categories targets a specific study objective. For instance, the diagnostic test in math covers objectives in the areas of numbers, order of operations, geometry, measurement, and relation and function. The diagnostic test in English, on the other hand, focuses on: categories in phonics, reading comprehension, grammar, writing, vocabulary, and verbal reasoning (JL, personal communication, June 4, 2007). The researcher observed several students who were given the test upon enrollment.

The students are regularly monitored to ensure progress and focus on the tasks at hand. The interim evaluation test assesses the student's mastery of the weekly study objectives. Once the test has been passed, a student may move on to the next set of learning objectives (Field notes, June 15, 2007). A monthly Progress Counseling Report based on this test is also produced. It informs how well the student has achieved the targeted objectives. The report serves both as a source of praise and encouragement for the student as well as an assessment tool for the academic advisors at JAE (Field notes, July 2, 2007).

Finally, students take a re-evaluation test. The test is taken when a student completes the prescriptive study program. It determines if the student needs further study on a particular concept or if he/she may progress to the next level. If further study is required, a supplemental workbook is given to the student to focus on the specific areas which are still confusing (JL, personal communication, June 4, 2007). With a Re-evaluation test at the end of each study program, it is difficult for a student to advance to the next level without eliminating the weak areas of the current level.

Understanding the underlying principles of any subject precedes technical skill. It is no surprise, for instance, that mathematical ability requires mastery of the fundamental concepts, not simply good calculation skills. Moreover, proficiency in a language combines strong

foundations in grammar, reading and writing, not simply the ability to speak in that language (JAE Curriculum Guide, 2001). With this in mind, JAE has developed an innovative study programs to supplement the education of students from kindergarten-10th grade. Founded on the self-learning system, the program helps students develop a knowledge base that maintains a balance between theoretical and practical skills. Through the help of JAE students are challenged to target their weak areas and to master concepts and skills, one step at a time.

General Curriculum

The emphasis of such programs is on Mathematics, English, and Reading that offers individualized study programs for students from Pre-K to 10th grade. Teachers are also available to work with students in other content areas such as science and social studies when needed. These classes are almost always taught by certified teachers from the community. However, none of the academic content teachers are of Korean descent. Thus, it is clear that the programs wants students to be engulfed in the curriculum of American education and to be taught by teachers who are experienced with the educational standards and practices of Georgia's public schools.

Mathematics

Mathematics can be one of the most difficult subjects students must learn, as concepts continuously build upon one another and new skills must constantly be integrated. When some of these are lacking, the students' overall mathematical ability is affected. Without bias on the grade or age of the students, JAE Math helps them target their weak areas. The students can then re-integrate these concepts and skills into the overall learning hierarchy in mathematics (JL, personal communication, June 4, 2007).

There are currently 322 weekly workbooks in the JAE Math series. They are divided into 12 levels which cover 2,017 specific learning objectives (JAE Curriculum Guide, 2001). The workbooks introduce these objectives, one at a time, starting with the recognition of figures and the concept of numbers. They gradually progress to operations (addition, subtraction, and division) and proportions (fractions, decimals, and percentages). The higher levels deal with more advanced mathematics, such as geometry and algebra. Based on the results of the diagnostic test that is taken, an individualized study program based on these workbooks is devised for each student (JL, personal communication, June 4, 2007).

Concepts are carefully laid out in a simple, straightforward format. Explanations and examples introduce each section. Different expressions of the same concept are also discussed, often times with illustrations and graphs. For example, proportions can be expressed in the form of fractions, decimals, and percentages. In this way, students can easily visualize and conceptualize the topics at hand. A firm grasp of the relationships between mathematical concepts is developed. Moreover, each objective is integrated into the next level, so that previously introduced concepts are reinforced (JAE Curriculum Guide, 2001).

English

There is often the misconception that the ability to speak English is equated with the ability to communicate effectively in this language. Yet, conversational English differs greatly from formal English. In addition, the highly irregular nature of its morphology often causes confusion among non-native and native speakers alike. JAE English however, makes English easier to grasp, with workbooks broken down into eight levels in 198 weekly workbooks (JAE Curriculum Guide, 2001).

A study program is created for each student, through an individualized schedule of selected workbooks. Each schedule is devised to maintain a balance between learning the mechanics of the language and effective communication in English. Each concept is dealt with one at a time and reinforced concurrently in reading and writing exercises. The exercises are clear and straight-forward, prefaced each time with concise explanations and helpful examples. A variety of creative and fun exercises is also accompanied by colorful illustrations, designed to maintain the interest of students.

JAE English also boasts an emphasis on reading comprehension and analytical skills. There are passages on a wide range of subjects, with questions to test and improve one's comprehension. In addition, there are exercises which deal with the structure and analysis of a text, in terms of such concepts of alliteration and the use of similes (JAE Curriculum Guide, 2001). In this way, students build a strong foundation in English from the very beginning of the program. In turn, they are able to develop the confidence and skills necessary for the effective reading and writing as well an appreciation for the language.

Reading

The JAE reading curriculum is dominated by basal readers, which have traditionally dominated reading instruction, emphasizing discrete components of reading such as phonics, in which students learn to read by sounding out letters in order to form words (JAE Curriculum Guide, 2007). Students of JAE read relevant literature in order to make reading an integrative experience. The literature is often synonymous with the literature being used at each grade level in the Gwinnett County Public school system (CD, personal communication, June 2, 2007).

Financial Support

The primary source of income of JAE is student tuition. In addition to the tuition, the school also generates income by selling school supplies and materials to the students. Parents also pay a fee when the students participate in field trips through the program. These fees are usually used to pay for transportation and other miscellaneous expenses. On average, students are charged between \$750 and \$1200 per semester, which does not include additional expenses. The director offers a lower fee for parents who enroll additional children from the same family. Much of the budget supports teachers' salaries. Most teachers are paid \$20 per hour. However, since the program has a sliding salary scale, teachers who have worked longer at the school receive higher pay than new teachers in an attempt to provide consistency and decrease teacher attrition. The next largest budget items are supplies for the program, which include snacks, student materials, and textbooks. Clearly, there is great emphasis on recruiting and compensating the best teachers while ensuring that the needs of the students are met.

JAE Summer Enrichment Program

In this section I report my findings and analysis from the data collected at the Korean Summer Enrichment Program during the summer of 2007. I present my findings in regards to research questions three through seven on each of the key features of the school including characteristics of the curriculum, characteristics of the participants, and perspectives of the participants. In addition to the courses provided during the academic school year, many Korean supplemental programs also offer summer programs in which students take advanced curriculum courses in preparation for the upcoming school year.

Characteristics of the Curriculum

In the morning, students are offered math, English, and social studies on the grade level they will enter into the following school year. Several students are also enrolled in ESOL classes to improve their acquisition of the English language. They learn an entire curriculum in two months so that going to formal school is somewhat of a review for many of these students. In the afternoon, students have the opportunity to take additional classes such as computer literacy, piano, or Korean.

Textbooks and Materials

The program uses a variety of textbooks and workbooks from publishers such as Prentice Hall, Glencoe, and McGraw-Hill. Each grade level is assigned three to four books for each subject area as well as additional workbooks and ancillary materials where applicable. For example, eighth grade language arts students receive spelling workbooks and a novel in addition to the Prentice Hall textbook used in the course.

The Closing Ceremony

On the last day of the program, all of the parents are encouraged to attend the closing ceremony at which certificates, awards, and prizes are distributed to the students. Each class is assembled in the auditorium to participate in the ceremony. Every student receives a certificate of completion which is signed by their homeroom teacher. Other awards are given which include: perfect attendance, hardest working, most motivated, and class leader. Students also receive awards from their elective courses such as the technology award or music award. The teachers prepare the list of awards recipients and short speeches for each award that is given. The administration makes the award certificates and delivers them to the homeroom teachers the morning of the closing ceremony (Field notes, July, 31, 2007).

However, the most prestigious awards are the most points awards. The students with the most points, which include attendance points, homework points, and test points for each week of the program, are given special prizes. Third place is given a certificate and a gift card to a store. Second place is given a certificate and a mini DVD player. First place is given a certificate and a MP3 player. All three top winners also get to enjoy a limousine ride (TK, personal communication, August 5, 2007). Students are not informed in advance about the awards ceremony. However, due to the fact that the majority of the students have been attending for several years, many of them are aware of this rewards system. Thus, it is an extrinsic motivational tool for the students to work hard throughout the summer and attend classes daily. I observed:

Parents piled into the auditorium to watch as the children received rewards for their hard work during the summer. The pride in the room was overwhelming as hundreds of Korean parents and relatives took pictures and recorded the students as they accepted their awards and prizes (Field notes, July 31, 2007).

Following the ceremony, the students, parents, and teachers have a barbecue. There are rides, food, and games provided for the students and parents and teachers have the opportunity to come together in a social atmosphere. During this time, many of the teachers receive individual offers to tutor students one on one. This event is the culmination of all of the hard work that the students have done over the summer. This ceremony is an opportunity for parents to share in what the students have achieved throughout the summer. It also serves to provide a sense of pride for the families of the students who achieve top honors. In addition, at the end of the summer program, the students are given the opportunity to travel to Washington D.C. to learn about our government and visit the White House. The students spend one week traveling around the city, visiting a variety of historical sites, and attending educational events. Teachers and staff are often asked to chaperone the trip. Through this experience, I believe the program attempts to

provide the students with authentic learning opportunities as well as traditional academic experiences

Characteristics of the Teachers, Parents, and Students

The third research question of my study was: “What are the characteristics of the teachers, parents, and students of the educational community?” The variables for which data was collected for this question will be described at the beginning of the section on each group of participants.

Teachers

The following variables were used to investigate the characteristics of teachers at JAE: gender, ethnicity, education level, previous teaching experience, and current county of employment. The following is a summary of the responses to the teacher questionnaire by the 25 teachers who worked with the summer program. In order to obtain more detailed information and to corroborate the results of the questionnaire, I interviewed teachers individually. The age of the teachers ranged from 25 to 55 years old. Four of the teachers were men, and 21 were women. With regard to ethnicity, five of the teachers were Korean, 12 were Caucasian, four were African American, one was African, and three were Middle Eastern. All of the teachers had at least a bachelor’s degree. In addition, seven of the teachers had a master’s degree and two were doctoral students. According to the director, all of the teachers had at least three years of teaching experience. Although, three years of teaching experience were not required to be hired, the director expressed a preference of those who were tenured teachers in the United States.

Table 4.5 Teacher Demographics

<u>Pseudonym</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>Education Level</u>	<u>Teaching Experience.</u>	<u>County of Employment</u>
SS	F	Caucasian	B.A	5	Gwinnett

VB	F	Caucasian	B.A	3	Gwinnett
CD	F	Caucasian	B.A	3	<u>Gwinnett</u>
SL	F	Caucasian	M.Ed	5	Fulton
SI	F	<u>Indian</u>	<u>B.A</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
PJ	M	<u>Caucasian</u>	<u>M.Ed</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
BD	M	<u>African American</u>	<u>B.A</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
SH	M	<u>African American</u>	<u>Specialist</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>Atlanta</u>
MM	F	<u>Caucasian</u>	<u>B.A</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
SR	F	<u>Indian</u>	<u>B.A</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
JD	F	<u>Caucasian</u>	<u>B.A</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
SM	F	<u>African American</u>	<u>M.A</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
PO	F	<u>Caucasian</u>	<u>M.Ed</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
TH	F	<u>African American</u>	<u>Doctoral Student</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
SA	F	<u>Caucasian</u>	<u>B.A</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
JC	F	<u>Indian</u>	<u>B.A</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>Fulton</u>
HC	F	<u>Caucasian</u>	<u>B.A</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
WM	F	<u>African</u>	<u>B.A</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
EL	F	<u>Korean</u>	<u>B.A</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
TG	M	<u>Caucasian</u>	<u>B.A</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
SH	F	<u>Korean</u>	<u>B.A</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
DP	F	<u>Korean</u>	<u>M.Ed</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
JK	F	<u>Korean</u>	<u>B.A</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
LL	F	<u>Caucasian</u>	<u>B.A</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>Fulton</u>

<u>KJ</u>	F	<u>Korean</u>	<u>B.A</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>Gwinnett</u>
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Administrators

There are four administrators working with the JAE program including: the director of the program, the assistant director of the SAT program, the teacher assistant, and the administrative assistant. Each administrator completed a questionnaire with responses about the after school and summer program. In order to obtain research information and to corroborate the results of the questionnaire, I interviewed the administrators individually.

Table 4.6 Administrator Demographics

<u>Pseudonym</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>Education Level</u>	<u>Teaching Experience.</u>	<u>County of Employment</u>
TK (Director)	M	Korean	B.A	5	Gwinnett
JL (SAT Coordinator)	F	Korean	B.A	1	Gwinnett
TG (Assistant to Teachers)	M	Caucasian	B.A	1	Gwinnett
WM (Administrative Assistant)	F	Kenyan	B.A	2	Gwinnett

Parents

The following variables were used to investigate the characteristics of parents with children enrolled at JAE: gender, ethnicity, length of time in the United States, education level, occupation, and language(s) spoken (see Appendix D for the questionnaire). The following is a summary of the results of 30 questionnaires completed by parents. In order to obtain more detailed information and to corroborate the results of the questionnaire, six of the parents were interviewed individually. All the parents who responded to the questionnaire were born in Korea, and therefore would be regarded as first generation Korean Americans. The length of residence

in the United States ranged from 10 years to three months. In order to determine the parents' socioeconomic status, data were collected on their educational and occupational background. Parents were asked to indicate the highest academic degree that they and their spouses had obtained. The results appear in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Educational Background of Parents

	High school diploma	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	Doctoral degree
Father (n=6)	6	6	6	3
Mother (n=24)	24	24	14	0
Total (n=30)	30	30	20	3

The table shows that 100% of the parents who participated obtained at least a bachelor's degree and that the academic attainment of the fathers was somewhat higher than that of the mothers. Despite their high level of educational attainment, parents of children in JAE are struggling to establish themselves economically in the United States. In interviews I conducted with parents, teachers, and the director, I learned that in many families, both spouses are required to work, some spouses have to work at night, and many parents are underemployed. Korean parents have a difficult time capitalizing on their educational backgrounds, leaving them few options but entrepreneurial ventures.

Since all of the parents were born in Korea, and almost all of them came to the United States after 20 years of age, it is not surprising that the first language of all the parents at JAE was Korean and that most parents continue to rely on Korean as their primary language. However, almost all of the parents that I interviewed felt fluent in both English and Korean. According to the questionnaires, more than 75 percent of Korean parents communicate to some

extent in Korean. These findings suggest that the lives of most Korean parents of children in JAE are closely tied to the Korean community. This point is further strengthened by the fact that approximately two thirds of the parents reported in the questionnaire that more than 80 percent of their friends are Korean.

As mentioned in chapter 2, most Korean immigrants enter entrepreneurship because of limited opportunities in the labor market and/or insufficient language and non-transferable skills or education. In addition, in contrast to what some have predicted, family networks of Korean immigrants do not seem to provide more advantageous means to pursue business establishment. That is, despite the expectation on network theory and chain-migrants are in a more advantageous position for economic pursuits such as entrepreneurship, they do not show an advantageous status in pursuit of business establishment. Instead, it seems that higher educational background appears to be more influential for business establishments, often stemming from the importance of education in South Korea. For example, when Korean immigrants move to the United States, they re-establish the networks formed at SKY universities in South Korea (Park, personal communication, July 27, 2007).

Church in the Korean Immigrant Community

In addition to the role of educational background, Korean immigrants tend to create a variety of organizations in Korean communities. As noted by Foner (2001), the most numerous associations are churches and school alumni groups. There are a fairly large number of Korean churches, when considered in terms of the population of Korean immigrants in Atlanta. In addition, considering that about 72% of the interviewees responded that they attend church regularly, Korean church seems to be the most common place to meet other community members due to the large number of Korean involved in churches.

However, what makes church membership important is not only the large number of participants, but also the resources generated through church. The percentage of participants indicates that churches are the most open place to the community members for social network establishment after immigration. Furthermore, a large portion of business-related resources are generated at church, such as obtaining business information. Churches in the Korean community seem to be not only places for religious ceremony, but also for carrying out secular business by establishing connections among individuals in the co-ethnic community. Thus, it was no surprise that the JAE summer program was annually held at a popular Korean church in Gwinnett County.

More importantly, a large proportion of Korean immigrants have had employment experiences at Korean-owned businesses established by church members and acquired skills for business operation at those businesses. Some entrepreneurs obtained skills required for running businesses from fellow Koreans with whom they became acquainted at churches after immigration (Hurh, 1998). The employment is not particularly related to making money, but rather to gaining information and skills for their future businesses. As one parent mentioned:

One of my church members was in this type of business. I worked at his store for a while to learn skills and information related to this type of business. I worked until I became confident enough to operate one of my own. I go to church to meet people and make friends. I also join some associations for the same purpose. I can avoid loneliness on foreign soil by meeting Korean friends. Furthermore, I cannot separate church and business. I can pray for my business at church. At the same time, meeting friends ultimately benefits my business later, because all my friends become customers for my business (Hurh, 1998).

One of the teachers expressed how the program had grown through its affiliation with the church. She explains:

I think that in the Korean community, I think it gets around when you hear about programs and that is how the parents often find out about it. We have been having the summer programs at a Korean church for a few years now and I think a lot of the people

who go to the church with the director and his family hear about it through that venue. And he gets a lot of interest from the church. And so I think it is helpful that he lives in the community and his kids go to the schools and it just sort of all connects and results in a lot of business (Hurh, 1998).

However, some interviewees were reluctant to reveal the connection between business interests and their church attendance. Despite their remarks or hesitancy to admit business interests in church, it has become a well-known secret that churches are one of the most common and open grounds for potential businessmen or for those wanting to gain access to information (Hurh, 1998). Since trust in the community is important for gaining further resources such as capital, labor, or information about schools, the social relationships in church help to create the personal trust that ultimately facilitates business resource mobilization.

Students are quite aware of the benefits of the ethnic communities that many of their parents participate in. One of the students I interviewed, SK, was born in Korea and came to the United States at the age of 6. He described how his parents maintain a close relationship with the Korean ethnic community and explains that family friends often act as a surrogate family since many of her extended family live in other states or are still in Korea. I asked SK about the kind of Korean community activities that his parents are involved in, if any. He responded:

My dad is involved in church...my parents look for basically bonding and just being like a family because we don't really have family here...well, we do but they are in New York and not near the area, so my parents look to their friends to be sort of an extended family (SK, Interview, June 15, 2007).

SK explained that his parents attend Korean church not only for religious purposes but out of their desire to educate and instill in him the Korean language and culture. The church at which this program is held is also active in promoting adoption of South Korean orphans. SK attends the same Korean church as his parents and explains the importance of learning the Korean language so that he can better communicate with his parents:

They go to Korean church because they don't speak very good English...well, in my church there is different youth groups. There's a Korean youth group and an English youth group, and it was my choice to go to Korean. Since I am Korean, I think it is better that you learn to speak Korean and could speak it with parents and friends and stuff, so to enforce that, I kind of went to the Korean youth group (SK, Interview, June 15, 2007)

Photo K. Adoptive Efforts at Church



Several students explained that because of language and cultural barriers, their Korean parents seek other Korean ethnic community members for social support. They also described how Korean community network helps their parents generate job opportunities and economic support. They witness the benefits that their parents gain from ethnic networks and business associations. Such sentiments were echoed by LK, an 11th grade student, who was born in the United States as she stated:

My parents' closest friends are all Korean, because they don't speak English and their friends are friends of other friends from Korea...that's how all foreign friends gain friends when they come to America. My dad works for Koreans and my mom works for Koreans...my dad works for a grocery store and my mom works at a nail salon seven days a week (LK, Interview, June 21, 2007).

LK's family was not alone. Among the students interviewed, 52.4% of their fathers owned their own family businesses, while an additional 7.1% worked for another Korean business owner. An overwhelming 40% of Korean mothers in the sample also worked with their husbands in running a family business. Therefore, students described how their parents were associated with the Korean ethnic community not only for social support but also for economic gain. According to the 2000 census, Gwinnett County consists of the largest number of Korean immigrants residing in Georgia. Thus, it is no surprise that there are hundreds of Korean businesses throughout Gwinnett County which include restaurants, law offices, and service businesses, and educational facilities.

From the point of view of the students, their parents gained economic advantages by being embedded in a Korean ethnic community. They witnessed how their parents, because of their language barrier, were either working for other Koreans or running their own family business. The students accepted first-generation ties to ethnic community as a viable source of economic and social support. In this respect, the importance of a closed, functional

intergenerational ethnic community was reinforced. This became increasingly significant as I interviewed parents and students who viewed education as a means to move beyond this closed community which had, in large part, fueled their self-determination and economic success.

Alumni Associations in the Korean Immigrant Community

Another type of association displayed in the Korean immigrant community is that of alumni associations. Alumni associations provide social networks with different characteristics from those of churches. The alumni associations are based on the schools from which Korean immigrants graduated in Korea, thereby revealing their socio-economic background. The importance in this tendency is that considering the strong solidarity among university alumni in Korea, the solidarity may well be extended to America. In Korean community newspapers, one of the most frequently advertised announcements concerns regular meetings of various university alumni associations. As a result, those with college educational backgrounds have a stronger foundation for social network establishment. Through the strong solidarity, college graduates have an advantageous situation to develop trust and relationships in a relatively shorter period, which eventually provides resources for business establishments. One parent mentioned the following about benefits for participation in alumni associations:

I started my business after spending one year in a language program at a university located in New York. Since I owned my own companies in Korea, I intended without a doubt to operate my own business after immigration. I also brought enough money to start a business, for I immigrated as an investment immigrant. While I was in New York, one of the senior alumni members from my university introduced me to another senior graduate, who works in a distribution office of a large kitchen furniture company in Korea. The senior in the distribution office was taking the responsibility of distribution in America. So, I import kitchen furniture from Korea through him and install it for newly constructed apartment complexes by contracting with American constructors (TL, Interview, July 22, 2007).

As this parent mentioned, college graduates utilize alumni associations as another source to establish social networks, which many cases, are fundamental for business establishments. As

a result, a higher educational background provides more ways of establishing social networks, and enables the immigrants to be active in the establishment of social networks. In turn, the active involvement and variety of social networks indicate more access to the resources necessary for business establishment.

In addition, the educational level not only influences the establishment of social networks in alumni associations, but it also influences all other associations and organizations in the community. For instance, among those involved in churches, relationships tend to develop along the line of educational background, and business information also tends to be circulated on the basis of background. Therefore, educational background is closely related to social network establishment, which in turn influences resource mobilization. As interviews seem to reveal, the extensive trust and bonds established through alumni associations are beneficial only for those with higher levels of education and exclude non-college graduates. Thus, these parents are the same ones who enforce the need for a high level of education. While Korean parents are working diligently to establish businesses and social networks rooted in the Korean community, their children are often enrolled in academic environments within the Atlanta Korean ethnic enclave.

Besides reinforcing the importance of learning Korean language, many parents placed emphasis on achieving academically. As student DL explained, many Korean parents compare each other's children's academic success and ability to speak Korean. The students who achieve academically while being able to speak Korean are those who are most revered among the parents first-generation community. DL is a 10th grader who was born in Korea and came to the United States at three years old. He explains,

Usually if Korean parents see that you go to a good college, one parent would say, "oh my child goes to Harvard" and the other parent would say, "oh, my child goes to NYU and they know how to speak Korean"...It's like they compare people's children (DL, Interview, July 12, 2007).

First-generation Korean parents gain not only economic support from their ethnic communities but also the social support in teaching their children the importance of Korean language and the value of education. By being embedded in these ethnic communities, social norms of education and Korean language are mediated to students themselves. This society has emerged and developed over time, in large part, because parents feel that they must pass on the core values of their culture to following generations. In this Korean community, families are faced with this task followed by supplemental educational programs as perhaps the most important and obvious means through which their children learn social norms, values, and beliefs.

Students

One of the main consequences of having a closed functional ethnic community is the perpetuation of certain cultural expectations including an emphasis on the value of education for Korean American students. I obtained data on the following variables: ethnicity and generation, age, number of years of Korean school attendance, language maintenance, cultural maintenance, and academic achievement. The following is a summary of the responses to the questionnaire completed by 50 students enrolled in JAE (See Appendix D). In order to obtain more detailed information and to corroborate the results of the questionnaire, eight of the students were interviewed individually. These were used to describe the roles of supplemental education programs in the lives of Korean American students who are enrolled in them.

Student Demographics

All of the children of parents who responded to the questionnaire were of Korean ethnicity because the ethnicity of the parents was determined to be Korean. When asked where they were born, 51 percent of the students reported that they were born in Korea, indicating that

they were first generation Korean Americans. Among them, 64 percent came to the United States when they were four years old or younger, 30 percent came between the ages of five and ten, and nine percent came after they were eleven years old. The students ranged in age from four to 17. The largest number of students was in the five to ten year-old age group, therefore making the kindergarten to fourth grade levels the largest classes in the school. Table 4.8 presents the number of years the students have attended JAE which was obtained from the student questionnaire. Slightly less than two-thirds of the students have attended JAE fewer than three years.

Table 4.8 Student Years of Attendance in JAE Program

	1 year or less	2-3 years	4-5 years	6 years or more
Number of Students (n=50)	19.7%	29.6%	35.2%	15.5%

I collected data to assess the degree of the students' identification with Korean culture. Like their parents, the students reported that eating Korean food is a daily activity practiced by a large majority (81%) of the students. More than half of the students (58%) also indicate that they participate in Korean community activities through various organizations such as the church. However, in general, the students participate in Korean cultural activities at a lower rate than their parents.

As described earlier, the first-generation parents and adults in the ethnic community stress the importance of education. From the perspectives of the students offered in their interviews, they understand and accept education as a viable and practical means to achieve economic and social mobility. All of the students interviewed reported that they have grade point averages of 3.5 or higher. Since their parents are mostly associated with entrepreneurial

businesses and are working long hours, the students view education as a practical means of achieving economic mobility and gaining social opportunities that their immigrant parents are not privy to. As a result, over 85% of Korean American students attend supplemental education programs.

Role of Supplemental Education Programs in the Korean Immigrant Community

In the following discussion, I present my findings according to the categories of data that became themes in my study. In my study, The JAE supplemental education program provided a context for examining the educational and cultural experiences of Korea American students as they are transplanted from the home culture of South Korea. JAE supplemental education programs serve parents with a much-needed sense of support and form a reliable system where other adults can perform parenting roles in a way that is not culturally unfamiliar or insensitive to parents and their needs. It is in many senses, the essence of a village raising a child. Ultimately, programs such as JAE help to thicken thin resources for both immigrant and post immigrant-generation parents. According to one working mother, who is second generation and sends her two children to JAE, the program offers many benefits, as follows. The program is conveniently located in the neighborhood near work or home; provide “home-cooked Korean meals and snacks, not poor quality American junk food, and have lots of activities.” (PK, Interview, July 16, 2007). She also said, “The school building is not fancy, but adequate and makes up for that in other ways. For example, they are strict on timing of activities and meals.” She also found Korean programs more flexible than American schools since they have longer hours than American schools.

According to this parent and other parents I interviewed, it appeared that many parents believed their children learned better in these environments and were generally pleased with the

content. It seemed as though they wanted their children to be engulfed in an academic environment for as many hours of the day as possible. At JAE, they had the ability to request additional work for their children while in regular schools, there was significantly less communication between these Korean parents and teachers due to their lack of understanding of the American educational system. However, at JAE, these parents were comfortable with the program and constantly involved in the program.

Enlightened Child Care

As an economically wealthy community, Gwinnett County's Koreatown houses a fairly healthy urban economy built around supplemental education. Many members of the Korean population in Gwinnett County have drawn on whatever human, cultural, and economic capital they can to meet a demand for enlightened child care. The community has produced more than one hundred local area programs which serve thousands of Korean children.

Supplemental education is not only economically viable, it also appears to promote itself by increasing employment among Koreans and by ensuring that Korean wealth is circulated among Koreans, not to mention the human capital and social support it builds by fostering child development and intra-ethnic community ties. One 11th grade student explained,

After I finish the program and get a good score on my SAT, I don't know, I'll still be here and probably work here 'cause I know the owner, I'm good friends with his kids. I might not be a student, but I would be helping teach or something (UK, Interview, July 27, 2007).

This student seemed to look forward to working within the program despite attaining the academic goals needed to move into other mainstream opportunities. However, whether or not this was a case of access or choice remains unclear.

After reading through several Korean directories, such as Chosun, it is clear that members of the Korean community have created a near-parallel school system outside regular

schools. In the Korean directory, there are over 200 listings for Korean schools in Gwinnett County. There were 47 schools that advertised as formal nursery schools and kindergartens, twenty family nursery and preschools, thirty art schools, and ninety-five school institutes. Multiple listings ran the spectrum for preschool through tenth grade, and there was a choice of many supplemental programs that provided child care through the eighth grade.

Therefore, many of the supplemental education programs, including JAE, can be seen as need-driven child-care services in a community where entrepreneurial businesses and long work hours are quite common. JAE offered very parent-friendly schedules and hours as well as extended operating hours. In addition, students are provided with lunch and extracurricular activities in the afternoons for an additional fee. However, besides its fundamental child-care services, JAE has a fundamental scholastic orientation. The director at JAE mentioned simply that they serve two needs at once: day care and homework supervision. Thus, such services set these students apart from fellow students in regular school because they are consistently engaged in an academic learning environment.

Academic Rigor

Program brochures and schedules indicate availability of instruction in a wide variety of areas and a variety of closely supervised activities. As previously mentioned, the Korean developed materials demonstrated a core emphasis on Mathematics and English literacy skills. However, curricular options also include listening and reading comprehension, writing composition, vocabulary building, PSAT, SAT, and social studies (JAE Curriculum Guide, 2001). Afternoon courses included math, language arts, bible study, art, piano, Korean, origami, drama, and physical education (JAE Summer Program Flyer, 2007). All together, a typical day program offered several hours of academic activity, some physical activity, time for lunch, and

usually a field trip on Fridays. There is weekly testing of progress and a math and spelling bee at the end of the summer program.

Many students made it clear that the Korean program was significantly more difficult than their American schools during the traditional school year. CC, one student currently enrolled in the SAT prep course explains his day,

In my class the first thing I do is writing and then we go over grammar, basic things that they look for on the SAT, writing style and that's for an hour and 30 minutes. Next, you have reading comprehension, where we go over vocabulary, reading comprehension strategies and like how to pick out words and to use context clues and things like that just help on the critical reading score. Then we go on a lunch break. And then you have math and they go over basic things that you find on the math section, patterns they use, and example questions (CC, Interview, June 28, 2007).

According to CC, even though he is given a lot of work, he feels like he is always doing something, not just coming to class. He explains why he thinks JAE is more challenging than regular school:

Well, I think this program is a little more challenging, because it's like much more work. *There is block scheduling at regular school, so I don't have much homework to do and have more time for extracurricular, but here like they give you so much homework that sometimes I get angry (laugh).* Because I'll be like doing...I'll be like doing math for like thirty or forty minutes and it's like 26 pages of and I've done what I can and then when you're doing work you keep flipping over to see how much you have left. You get so angry, but then like. If you finish it then you're done with it. It just makes you angry when you're doing it. Yeah, and plus there's like an SAT packet that's ten pages that's for math and then you've got a whole vocabulary packet, like three sections of reading comprehension, and then you got to write an essay and then like some grammar packet. It's like, in total its probably 100 pages a night (CC, Interview, June 28, 2007).

While this is an enormous amount of work for any student, the majority of the Korean students in the program complete their assignments regularly, regardless of the pressure the students sometimes feel. I asked another student how she manages to get it all done. She replied,

Yeah, I do it because I don't want to stay after, because here if you don't do your work they call your parents and make you stay after. That's something that a lot of hagwons don't have. Because a lot of hagwons want to be number one, I guess this one wants it too 'cause you got to make a profit off of it, but like the other ones don't have that same kind

of consideration with like they call your parents make you stay after till you finish. *So most students complete all their homework because they don't want to stay until 4:30 and it like ends at 2:30 so you don't want to stay here an extra two hours when you've already been here since 9:30 in the morning* (CC, Interview, June 28, 2007).

Quotes such as these provide evidence for the codes and categories, such as academic rigor and sacrifice that emerged from the data. The students are placed on a fast-paced curricular program that provides them with an advantage during the traditional school year. SK, a high school senior, describes his middle school experience with the program:

Well, regular school is more laid back, because, actually I mean even though hagwon doesn't count, regular school has less assignments. They try to keep you less stressful, but here it's the summer and you got to get smarter and they just dominate you with assignments. Like in middle school years, they used to teach me the entire textbook in one summer. They would teach me the math I would learn in the up coming year so that helped me get ahead of some other students. That's what it helped me with (SK, Interview, August 3, 2007).

Another student explains that the program prepares her for the future. She explained that her parents sent her to the program so it could be easier for to be successful if she attended the program. She explained,

I come here so it is easy for me when I go to eighth grade because I am learning eighth grade stuff now. *It like, prepares me for the future since I'm learning. So, like every year I come here and learn what I am going to learn at school...so...so it's going to like carry on through high school and stuff. Plus, it keeps me busy; I guess 'cause it's kind of boring to just stay at home for three months...so it's to use my time wisely.*

The academic rigor is clear in the points made by these students. However, their comments are also indicative of the pressure placed on the students. Not only do they work extremely hard during a period that most students consider to be time off from school, but they seem to also realize the academic benefits that come from that hard work. As a result, the educational beliefs of the parents have been passed on to the children who now believe that they can achieve upward mobility through education if they work hard.

Social Interaction

One student explains that there are other benefits besides the educational aspect at JAE. He said, “I guess socially with your friends. You see people who become your friends everyday and instead of staying home and watching television, you improve your social aspect.” He explains that it is easier to be more comfortable at JAE than in regular school because everyone is more like him. SK says,

It’s more comfortable for me to open up and act myself here than when I’m at school I’m more like, let me just do my thing and leave me alone. I have more friends here so of course I’m going to talk more and be louder. But at school, it’s just not worth the effort to umm...be social, so it’s just like I don’t care and I want to be quiet (SK, Interview, June 10, 2007).

Another student echoed the sentiment when he said, “It’s not so bad coming here, my friends are here and stuff and I want to catch up and I want to kind of learn stuff too, so I’m not like uneducated” (TF, Interview, June 15, 2007).

Within this supplemental education program, interaction among the individuals involved is pivotal. According to this student, the interaction that takes place among the students and teachers is an additional benefit of attending the program, while increasing her educational achievement. While many believe that the social development of Korean American students are limited due to attending programs such as these, several of these students argue that they enjoy being in this environment with friends while they learn. Ironically, a few of them mentioned that they would rather be at JAE for the summer than home alone for the majority of the day. Thus, JAE provides social interaction and activities with their peers during a time when those opportunities would normally be limited.

Parental Involvement

Korean parents are very involved in their children's education and they want them to have the best chance to be successful as well as the most opportunity which tends to fuel the unmet need of supplemental education programs. The students explained the purpose of the program as "basically catering to what Korean parents want, which is better education and more opportunity for their kids." As I interviewed parents, it was obvious that they recognized the barriers they faced in comparison to American parents. Thus, they were willing to make extreme sacrifices for the education of their children. I asked several of the students about the role of their parents in their educational experiences. OL explained:

Yea...well academics and achievement, that's stressed a lot, like I kind of see that as a different value system, like Korean parents always are like get a "A" and then like my American friends' parents are like just try as hard as you can. *So, it's like there's a difference, like they want you to succeed and American parents are just like whatever you do as long as its your best...so it puts a bunch of pressure on you* (OL, Interview, June 10, 2007).

Another student stated that her parents expect her to succeed, not just pass. They expect her to exceed beyond the regular class so she can go on to college and have a good future. She said, "My parents want me to be like the head of the class." The students are keenly aware of the expectations that their parents have for them and do not want to disappoint them. One student described his parents' expectations and why he feels pressured to work hard:

They want me to go some where nice; they want me to succeed, especially since my dad worked so hard, like he was born two years after the Korean War. We didn't have anything. Like his own father had to eat like bark soup everyday, and like my dad, he didn't get anything because they lived on a farm and his parents were poor anyway, so like they need kids to work on the farm right, so my dad was like I need an education, so he would walk five or six miles to school everyday, ever since he was like two years old, like he'd walk that far just to get education. And when he went to high school he had to work to pay the high school fee, because high school is not free. And all his dad gave him was a bag of rice because that's all he could give him and then even with something like that he earned...through all that he had like top score...like he graduated from a really good college and he got top. Like you could take an entry exam to companies...he got the

top scores out of like, near like 10,000 applicants...like he got the highest score on the test and got a really nice position...and he could have been happy with that but he didn't, he just left and then he took my mom to Korea, I mean to America and then he went to UGA and got a law degree and now he's like set. *He had to work so hard for it though, so I have to respect that and succeed.*

He continued to explain why his father moved here:

There's more opportunity, there's more offers, more job, more space, more chance to have your own...like in Korea even if you might be the biggest genius...like people who go to Yale...there's people who are in Korea who are like jobless and smarter than these people because they are so small so much more competition. Like, it's like intensified. It's like if Georgia was a home country and then all the Ivy League schools were in the same place and...they could afford...*and there's no other where they could get applicants from except from Georgia, so like the competition is like insane, 'cause everybody there's trying real hard.* There's a huge majority who try really hard and then unlike here, they give you class rankings...so like they like judge you by where you are ranked at...so like 1-20 you are smart and the rest they think are stupid in terms of career.

Another student, the son of the director of the program, gave a different perspective:

My parents expect me to have straight "A's", so it's a great expectation. It's unnecessary and gives you no life. Well, I mean, if you only study then you won't have time for friends or anything so, I think just study accordingly and if you get good grades, good and if you get bad grades, not that good, but whatever comes out. *I don't really think hagwons are necessary.* It just helps you get on track but really it's all about the person's work ethic and if you don't have that then the hagwon is just a waste of time. The only thing is it forces you to be in an academic environment. I guess that is why people go here. My parents don't want me to rot, this makes sure that my brain does not rot during the summer and helps me stay on track. But at least, I guess it is better than in Korea where we have to go like forever, all the time. Here, everyone goes maybe once in their lifetime (SK, Interview, June 12, 2007).

This student provided a different perspective about his involvement in hagwons and his parents' expectations. Obviously, not all students believe that these programs are the way to success. However, he did admit that it does have some benefits and is a preferred choice when compared to what he would face if attending school in South Korea.

Korean American Identity and Culture

Although the program embodied the basics of education, it also appeared to capitalize on Korean culture and demonstrate multicultural education. School features seemed to

accommodate and accept U.S. tests as performance measures and yet retain Korean influences, or at least the imagery of Koreaness. The program offers both English and Korean. Students learn about Korean history and world history, while experiencing Korean food and traditions. The noticeable presence of cultural imagery played a seemingly integral role in the success and existence of these schools. Images of Korean authenticity, perhaps real but also mythic elements, were intertwined with images of Asian achievement and Korean success (Bhattacharyya, 2005). Asian achievement and Korean success, and ethnic authenticity were invoked as the backdrop for these programs, and as a reason for choosing programs like JAE over “American” schools.

Although most students identified themselves as Korean American, they illustrated some very interesting social constructs with regards to their identity. It is evident that many of the students have been influenced by living in the United States. Nonetheless, they battle with a triple consciousness between their Korean, American, and Korean American identities. One senior student explained why he is truly Korean and then American,

I think I am Korean, then American, because that's how it's put in the word and that's how I think of it. Because I look at myself in the mirror I look at what I'm eating, look at my culture, I look at my ancestors, they are Korean, they're not American. I mean like that's what's going to be more important to me, my identity, 'cause like this whole thing about the mixing pot you can also see it is a culture killer, 'cause like people like, I'm seeing a lot of my peers they don't want to learn Korean. They hate everything about their culture. They just throw it away and try to be as American as they can, wearing Abercrombie & Fitch, not speaking Korean, hanging out with just white kids, hating all Korean, hating people who speak Korean. It's ridiculous, it gets to such like a high degree, I'm not going to lie, I kind of was like that a little bit but then I was like this is stupid, there's no point because I am Korean. Like, I'm not going to wake up in the morning and suddenly be a white American or a black American, it's like I'm Korean. You go to be proud of what you have because our culture is like two thousand, more than two thousand and Americas only been around for like two hundred, so that's nothing. Like, their culture hasn't even developed yet, like you can't compare the two 'cause there is so much difference. I mean I'm proud of being an American, but I am Korean first (CC, Interview, June 28, 2007).

Many parents enroll their children in Korean supplemental program specifically to encourage them to internalize their Korean culture and reinforce their acquisition of the Korean language. Such programs help parents to provide an opportunity to hold on to their Korean culture by being around others who are of the same culture. These parents have tremendous pride in their culture and want their children to experience it even if they live in the United States.

Contrasting education in Korea to the education in the United States, the school director spoke at length about the early age at which students learn in Korea, saying how early students learned double-digit multiplication and so forth in Korea. He spoke with pride of Korea's high national rank in test performance. He said that despite Korea's status as a small country, Korea was trying to develop, and that informs parents' drive and emphasis on education. He also said, compared to Korea, so many colleges in America are less competitive; this is viewed by parents as an opportunity for their children. One of the students agrees, explaining:

Our high schools are much, much harder than college. So, a lot of people drop out of high school and the people that go to college just like coast because they don't give you much work in college because they like...if you have top scores in high school and you get into college that means you are done and don't have to do much. It's like getting your college education in high school sometimes. It's very stressful (CC, Interview, June 28, 2007).

For that reason, the director said, "students in Korea have no free time, only study time; the goal is to get to college." (CC, Interview, June 28, 2007). Thus, in the United States, over 80 percent of Korean parents send their children to after-school or summer programs since both parents work 80 to 90 percent of the time. He believed the achievement and performance of those in after-school and summer programs surpassed that of others who did not attend after-school programs.

Similarly, a JAE administrator said, "In Korea all children begin school by age five, and kindergarten is for three to five-year olds where they learn to read and count. But here, you don't

have to go to school until you are six. It is drilled into children from young ages that Korean students know they must do well or else disgrace the family---not to do well would be unacceptable.” (TK, Interview, August 7, 2007). As mentioned by Card (2005), the sense that educational achievement is honorable and integral to a Korean child’s development and the sense that after-school programs promote educational achievement seem to permeate the after-school environment and parental thought in the community. It is not merely thought that participation in after-school programs may provide an advantage, but that nonparticipation in after-school or summer programs is a disadvantage. Through widely accessible educational beliefs and reinforcing school structures, pressure on Korean parents and children to consume educational services has been generated within the Korean immigrant community in Gwinnett County in a similar manner found in South Korea. These responses illustrate both the themes of academic rigor and pervasive aspects of Korean identity and culture.

I observed aspects of Korean in meetings and in interactions between individuals within the culture, viewed through school artifacts, and gleaned through conversations with students, teachers, parents, and administrators. Several artifacts within the physical appearance of the program indicated the importance of education within the building. For example, along the walls throughout the building, pictures of Korean American children reading, writing, worshiping, and doing community service together hang alongside one another. Given that the student population of JAE is predominantly Korean American, this aspect of the program sent a message to students about significant, positive, accomplishments of other Korean Americans throughout the program. Also, student work was prominently displayed in the hallways. This was another way to promote students with support and validation about their work. While regular schools often display student work, the images of students actually doing such work is not as common. I observed the

way in which students reacted to seeing themselves or their classmates working on the wall as well as examples of their finished products. Korean supplemental education programs play a huge role in helping children maintain their heritage and culture in a variety of ways.

Photo K. Korean JAE Cultural Exhibition



Photo L. Korean Cultural Dance



English Language Acquisition and Access to Mainstream Opportunities

The global language of English has been taught in Asian countries for years in part because America is the holy playground of free-market capitalism, and if one wants to play, he or she needs to speak English (Thomas, 1992). As mentioned in Chapter 4, some Korean schools have English Only Policies. Thus, it is not surprising that English hagwon schools are increasingly popular in South Korea, especially since college entrance exams often measure (among other things) English proficiency. Thus, ethnic supplemental programs that offer English courses also serve as intermediate ground between the immigrant home and the American school, helping immigrant parents—especially those who do not speak English well—learn about and navigate the American education system (Zhou & Kim, 2006, p.13). CC explained the phenomenon during his interview:

When I was at the K2 center, they had people who just came from Korea and were enrolling. *Like a week, two weeks when they came from Korea, they could barely speak English, but they could understand it because in Korea they got like hagwons where you can learn English and so they have gone for that and they know how to read and understand it but they can't speak it so well.* So, I can like go there and get a side job to translate for them and stuff. There's a huge amount and then there's other people who can't speak English at all (CC, Interview, June 28, 2007).

CC explained why so many Korean students will come to the United States to learn

English as opposed to learning it in South Korea. He explained,

Even though it is expensive here, it is cheaper than in Korea. Those are really high down there...and people who come from America get paid premium like good money just to teach English, so, if like I went there once before and like I got paid a whole bunch just for teaching English. It's like here you can work at McDonalds for like minimum wage or I can go to Korea over the summer and make like three thousand dollars easily. And not even working that long. Like, if *you are a Korean from America and you can speak both languages there's lot of bonuses like for example if I went to college somewhere here and I go back to Korea, I'd have a ton of job offers* (CC, Interview, June 28, 2007).

The English language has symbolic status that many Korean American families strive to achieve. Thus, programs such as this one provide an avenue for Korean American students to be immersed in the English language while having the freedom to maintain their heritage language at the same time. An environment that fosters acceptance of their heritage language while exposing them to the dominant language that English is seems to be priceless, at least for these families. Again, the comparative element between practices in South Korea and Korean American supplemental programs are evident.

Socioeconomic Status

Supplemental education programs are becoming increasingly expensive. Many Korean parents bring significant amounts of savings with them from Korea. Believing that money and children's academic success are the standards by which many Korean immigrants measure success, it is no surprise that they immediately put that money to work for their children in the United States. They therefore begin to participate in a potentially rewarding mainstream society. Thus, the socioeconomic status of those who are participating in such programs is very important to transplanting their aspects of the home culture into the adopted equivalent. According to one teacher, his observations have led him to believe the majority of students who attend the program are upper middle class. The teacher, SH, said:

Judging by how they dress, judging by their appearance, the cars that their parents drive whenever they come and pick them up. I would say they are upper middle class to upper class. In fact, one of my kids in 7th grade came in and he was wearing one of his father's college t-shirts and it was Harvard, so you know (SH, Interview, August 1, 2007).

Here, it is clear that these parents have the means and the capital to require, drive, and utilize such programs. As students and parents continue to utilize such programs, parents are spending thousands of dollars to provide their children with additional educational opportunities. The

students explained the ways in which existing programs are taking advantage of the unmet need in their community. CC explained:

There are very expensive ones. Like there is one next to the library. That place is ridiculous. Like it's not even that good and they have like insane prices, I don't know like prices most parents would not be able to afford, but this area is like kind of rich. You've got more affluent Koreans here so they can afford to charge that much sometimes. So, and then there's also a lot of Korean parents, even though they might not be making much money the work like basically nearly the whole day to pay for things like this (CC, Interview, June 28, 2007).

According to observations and interviews, Korean parents seem to believe that education is the key to social mobility. The students who attend JAE supplemental education program are a perfect example of the strong ties between educational achievement and socioeconomic status. Their parents can afford to send them to an environment that enriches their learning beyond regular school hours and encourages them to compete for educational and economic success. This easily sets these students apart from other students by providing them with additional instructional time, early access to the regular curriculum, and a comfortable environment in which to learn amongst their peers.

Sacrifice

Many of the stakeholders of JAE discussed the sacrifices that were made in order for these children to have as much educational opportunity as possible. From leaving their home countries to the financial burdens that many families face, the overarching belief is that it is all worth it. One teacher, CH, explained:

I hear some of the kids talk about, maybe one parent, like the father staying back in Korea and the mother comes over here with the family for their education. And I've had Korean kids that I taught in regular public school over the years that have done the same thing. *With one parent staying in one place and the other one would come with the children for their education. So, I know that they do that sort of thing because it's just so important to them* (CH, Interview, July 24, 2007).

Another teacher, SH, explained what she learned while tutoring one of the students:

One thing I did learn a lot through her experiences is like, let's just say her parents were strict, in that she went to school and then as soon as she left school, her nanny would pack something and her dad would pick her up, so her dad would give her food that she would eat on her way to the program. Once she got to the program, she'd stay there until about 7:30. She gets home at 8:00 and she would have to do her homework, so she never got to see television and then she said she hates it. *What she would do was she would like if she went straight to her room and did her homework, and her family would be asleep by the time she was finished. So, she said, she never told her mom this, but what she did was, say yes she's done with her homework, spend time, watch television with her mom, her dad, and her brother. But then she would set her alarm to wake up at like 2:00am, so she could finish her homework, just so she could have time with them* (SH, Interview, August 2, 2007).

These are just a few examples of the sacrifices that Korean parents will make for their children. One student's parents had made the ultimate sacrifice. Her parent's had sent her to the United States to live with an adoptive family. She has been in the United States for over a year. According to this student, "A growing number of Korean parents are sending their children to the United States to be adopted by American couples. They spend tens of thousands of dollars for their kids to be adopted by an American family." According to one parent, she has no choice. She said:

I wanted to send my third grade daughter to the United States because I think the U.S. school system is better than the one in Korea. My daughter often came home late after studying extra hours at hagwon in Seoul. When I see my daughter who is always tired from school, I really want her to get an American education. *The only thing that works for the situation is to find someone who can adopt my daughter, and I'll pay all expenses for the future* (Parent, Interview, June 2, 2007).

Seeking better opportunities and the prestige of an American education for their children, some South Korean parents seem to have accepted handing over their children to virtual strangers as a worthwhile sacrifice. This may very well be the most significant form of sacrifice that has become prevalent in many Korean families. Throughout my fieldwork, I witnessed numerous examples of sacrifice in the name of educational opportunity, including separated families,

tireless hours of work, financial burdens, and decreased social time. However, none speak to the lengths in which these Korean parents are willing to go by sending their children to America to live with foreign families, all in the name of access to better education. It is through many of these conversations that the initial subordinate codes emerged and gave life to the superordinate categories that would shape the findings of the study.

The Perspectives of Students, Teachers and Korean American Parents Involved in Supplemental Education Programs in Gwinnett County

While not an economically wealthy community according to the aforementioned statistics, this community appears to house a fairly healthy urban economy built around supplemental education. Some members of the Korean population in this community have drawn on whatever human, cultural, and economic capital they can to meet a demand for enlightened child care and high academic achievement for their children. Reading the transcripts in order to gain an overall sense of the data resulted in several important ideas.

Students

The majority of students who attend the JAE program came ready to learn. According to observations and field notes, they genuinely seem to enjoy learning and the social atmosphere that JAE provides. However, they are children and they complain about homework and tests in the same way that most children do. At the end of the summer, the students were asked to turn in a written response on an open-ended survey explaining how they felt about their summer at JAE. Overwhelmingly, the responses were positive.

The first student, MJ, was sent by her parents to the United States to live with relatives so she could attend the program. She shared:

This summer is special to me. I had to adapt to a new environment in America. It was not easy for me but I think I did it. We had a lot of homework and test everyday but now

I have many friends including younger kids. I can't forget this summer (MJ, Interview, August 1, 2007).

MK said, "This summer is special. At JAE I learned English and Social Study. Now my English is better than before. It was a fun time." EC responded, "What I liked the most about JAE is learning about stuff I will see in my school year. It was fun and the teachers were nice. They were good teachers and I learned a lot." RK responded, "I got a new IPOD because I got the highest points in my class. I love JAE."

HP expressed:

This summer I actually had something to do all summer long. At least I know some stuff about 7th grade. I also liked the food and field trips. The fun times were my computer class and my martial arts class. Thanks for the knowledge (HP, Interview, August 2, 2007).

DP responded:

My experience at JAE was okay. I guess I learned a lot here and I think it will help me a lot in the future. Not only did I learn a lot, but I also had fun here. I got to meet some new friends and old friends. The teachers were really nice to me and they really helped me when I didn't understand some stuff. I enjoyed being one of the students here and I hope I can come here next time. JAE will probably make me be ahead than the others in my school class this new school year. JAE was a great experience for me. I'm glad my mom sent me here this year (DP, Interview, August 1, 2007).

Some students seemed to enjoy the extracurricular activities provided by the program more than any other aspect. AK, who has attended JAE for the last five years responded, "JAE is cool. I like it but we should have PE everyday. I like it but there is too much homework. I want to play. I want to stay home and play computer games. But, I really like JAE too." MA responded, "JAE was ok. The bad part was tests, quizzes, and homework. The good part was that we had PE and Art. I got to know some people and I also liked our last trip to six flags." HJ said, "During the summer, JAE was fun. First, it was scary but once I got to know people, it wasn't

anymore. The best was Fridays when we went on field trips. I also got to meet great new teachers.”

While each student had a unique response to how they felt about their time at JAE, the majority of the feedback was positive. For the most part, they seem to enjoy the enrichment they obtain, the confidence they gain in their skills, and the balance they derive between their academic and social needs. More importantly, several of the students described the program as fun, as though they enjoyed learning. That realization is very important for this study because it certainly sets these students apart from many students who view anything educational as boring and mundane.

Parents

The majority of parents I interviewed expressed that they had left Korea because jobs had become scarce in Korea for people that are highly qualified and have good degrees from SKY universities. They reported that although they left, they regularly engaged in a variety of activities associated with Korean culture such as: shopping at Korean stores, eating Korean food, reading Korean books, newspapers, and magazines, and watching Korean television and movies. Parents’ continued interest in cultural activities helps explain the importance that they attach to their children’s participation in Korean supplemental education programs and the desire they have for their children to understand their Korean heritage. Supporting the Korean supplemental program is part of a general interest that the parents maintain in activities that are distinctively Korean. They rely on the program to transmit their attachment to Korean culture to their children.

However, for Korean parents, the program is also a bridge between the Korean community and the public schools in the United States. In parents’ views, the comparative

elements in my study emerge clearly as a crucial component. Many of the parents I interviewed were not familiar with the American school system and depended on such programs to fill that gap, given their lack of proficiency in English. Less than 50% of the parents interviewed reported that both they and their spouse could speak English fluently. Intergenerational differences in English and Korean proficiency significantly affect parent-child interaction in Korean families. In many instances, second-generation Korean children who speak English fluently take on a parental role in infiltrating the American public school system that they know while their parents depend on them for information and explanations of what is happening at school. Without a common language for communication, misunderstandings and conflicts can occur between parents and children. Thus, part of the parents' interest in sending their children to Korean supplemental programs may be linked to a desire to continue to speak with their children in Korean and to ensure that their children hold on to their Korean identity while immersing them in an a formal, structured environment that enables them to improve their English language acquisition.

The parents had only positive things to say about the public schools. One parent explained:

I don't have any bad feeling about the schools because it's a school and in Korean culture if it's a school and if you're the teacher, then we are supposed to listen to you. So, not much of the questioning is this public school system working right or not. *It's more like you have to work hard and it's because you didn't work hard, it's not the system that's wrong, it's the individual student who is not doing fine. I think that is still the mindset of a lot people.* So, the parents are not as involved here because the environment is very different from Korea because in Korea the parents are very involved. So, we depend on programs like this to keep our kids working hard (Parent, Interview, July 16, 2007).

The importance of contextual factors in influencing parental relationships has been revealed in the previous discussion. The difficulties parents perceived in the processes of facilitating academic success revealed value tensions between Korean parents and their children. First,

mothers were very much influenced by their present individualistic and their remembered collectivistic contexts as they encouraged their children to have high achievements in school. Often, they were continuously struggling with their competing desires in the simultaneous adjustment processes for themselves and their children becoming an American and remaining a Korean.

Korean American parents explained their specific context of value priorities and tensions by describing their perspectives of the different meanings of academic success as integration or achievement, and the various strategies of facilitating academic success as integration or achievement, and the relevant strategies of facilitating academic success in the relevant settings of school and family. In school settings, the parents believed that American teachers and parents use the strategy of acceptance through encouragement. Korean mothers preferred the strategies of advancement through competition, envy, jealousy, diligence, and endurance. Therefore they instilled this in their children and searched for institutions that fostered such behavior. In many instances, they looked for programs that were in alignment with the goals of academic success they desire for their children.

In my brief experiences with them, issues of gender and race did not emerge. These parents never mentioned any differences among or between their male or female children although gender preferences towards men are rampant in South Korea. While their children may encounter other races in regular schools with which the students have access, they are often limited by their lack of interaction beyond their closed ethnic communities. I believe these interviews illustrate the previously mentioned limited involvement of Korean parents with other adults outside of their ethnicity. These parents I spoke with also failed to mention the model minority stereotype that has often been linked to their image throughout society. However, it left

me wondering what, if any, experiences they have had with other races and how that influenced their perceptions regarding mainstream society.

Administrators

There are four administrators working with the JAE program including the director of the program, the assistant director of the SAT program, the teacher assistant, and the administrative assistant. In this section, I present the perspectives of administrators who work at the supplemental education program where the research was conducted. The administrators shared their perspectives regarding their role in the program, the purpose of the program, and the involvement of the Korean American community in such programs. The administrators commented on their relationships with teachers connected to the program as well as the strengths and weaknesses of such programs.

Teacher Roles

The director of the program, TK, explained the role of the teacher as invaluable. However, he also compared the value of the teachers in Korea as opposed to the United States. He explained, “Most teachers are respected highly in Korea. Koreans have a saying that goes you cannot step on a teachers’ shadow.” (TK, Interview, August 6, 2007) This means teachers are so honorable, most are not worthy to even walk on their shadows. Teachers are so respected that students must obey them at all times. He continued to explain, “All 1st generation parents are aware of this, they believe teachers in Korea are perfect people. That is why they get lots of benefits. It is the hardest and most important job in Korea.” However, according to the director, even though parents tell their children, once they are immersed in American schools it is not the same. He said, “2nd generation Korean children change with respect to teachers here.” He was

very disappointed with teachers here when he hears about scandals between teachers and students. He explained:

I am very disappointed, even though teachers here are certified; they are not necessarily good teachers. They don't care about the kids, it is just a paycheck. It is not like that in my country. Kids follow voice and attitude. Teachers should be good example, good role models. As an educator, you should have knowledge and emotion. You have to love children. Here, it is only a job to them.

This quote is comparatively insightful about the perspectives this Korean parent has about the difference between teachers in South Korea and teachers in the United States. As previously mentioned, in South Korea, teaching and education is one of the most esteemed careers anyone can have. In the United States, the outlook and reputation of teachers has been consistently declining. This was particularly personal for me as a classroom teacher. However, during my visit to South Korea, I was treated as if I were a celebrity simply because I was an American educator. However, at home, I often feel disrespected and let down by the way society views and treats teachers, including myself.

JL, the SAT Program director, explained the importance of hiring teachers who care. She said:

...And the teachers are very much interested about this program and how students are so willing to come to summer school and you know be in the program that has a very, very packed amount of information, that is given a lot of homework throughout the summer....At first they're very worried about how are the students going to handle this and they're very concerned. However, now they are really getting what this program is about and trying to do that (JL, Interview, June 5, 2007).

JL continued:

I do see some teachers who have built...their relationship from very early on and staying on for a long time....The teachers who work here are English speaking teachers, who are certified teachers from local schools. So, it's basically like just a normal I guess American school (JL, Interview, June 5, 2007).

TG, the assistant to teachers, said:

The strength of the program is that we actually have Gwinnett County public school teachers. You know that you actually have the school teachers here to teach the classes as

opposed to just tutors or just other individuals who aren't maybe trained teachers or who haven't had the experience before of classroom settings (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

TG explained:

In a program like this, because it's almost a cram school, to where they just need to know things, like factual learning for seven weeks straight. It's almost impossible to have that ideal teacher to where the teacher's learning with the kids, you know that type of facilitator as much as it is expected to have that teacher who teaches things, you know a teacher who instructs, tells you this is what you need to know. I was more in the front of the class telling them what they needed to know as opposed to let's all learn together. Part of that is because of the time restraints. We have to cover so much in such a little amount of time. But also the material we have is a book and a workbook for some classes and that's it. So, with what we are given, we can only do so much (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

He summarized by saying:

It usually transpires into more lecture-based learning and things like that. And I think that's what the parents expect and that the administrators expect here. That's how it has to be for the program to work in a sense. It can't be so much, let's try to learn this one thing really well as opposed to let's graze over these topics so that when next year you see them they won't be completely new and then you can get in depth and have fun with your teachers with it (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

Given the structure of the program, the role of the teacher is significantly different from regular public schools. The teachers within the program are there to facilitate learning and are required to cover an enormous amount of information in a very short time, thus making the classroom quite teacher-centered. They often lecture and then provide students with practice time to review what they learned. Many of the teachers do not have access to resources (unless they bring them from their public schools) that would assist them in developing contemporary, innovative strategies. Students are often expected to self-learn once the material has been presented to them. In public schools, teachers are encouraged to provide hands-on learning, arrange cooperative groups, and engage the students in the lesson. It is clear that the teaching strategies and the role of the teacher is quite different within this program compared to regular schools.

Structure and Classroom Decorum

While many teachers were in support of the structure of the program, others had contradicting opinions. I asked the administrative assistant, WM, about the structure of the program. She responded:

For the program that is the JAE part, the curriculum has already been given to the teacher, there may not play such a huge big role in the teaching part, but just being able to assist and guide the students through their self-learning. The ESOL part of it, the teacher really does have to use a lot of initiative in contributing to what the students need to learn. And I would say that creativity on the part of the teacher is really a plus and I think it's really needed for ESOL. We offer classes from 9am to 8:00 pm so our ESOL teachers have to stay creative (WM, Interview, July 10, 2007).

As for the students, she responded:

I would say the program is really structured for the students and there is not much room on their part to be able to be flexible in order to do this, this is what they need to do. It is really a set standard and the standard, I would say is quite high and they are really expected to reach it. So, the work, especially what they are given, especially homework is a lot so they are really having a lot on their plate (WM, Interview, July 10, 2007).

As for the administration, WM responded:

I guess the administration really ties the band together, you know, of everything that happens here. I sometimes do help with making the reading packets readable and put some questions on there and I guess that really basically is it and also help the teachers a lot, you know because...do what they need to do, if it's setting up a curriculum, helping them with the books, referring them to some books that are formally used because that's the administrative part (WM, Interview, July 10, 2007).

TG had a different perspective. He said:

The number one weakness, I guess, at least from working behind the scenes is just the administrative take on things. On how, you know, administration may not always, you know, it may not always parallel what the students need or what the teachers need. *You know, so sometimes what the administrator needs seem to come first and then everything else comes second. So, sometimes it may seem all about money. And then I see how the teachers struggle so sometimes I question the organization.* You know, like how is the organization set up in such a way to where the teachers are like scavenging for materials or not having what they need to have in order to help the students, because if the students are supposedly the most important, you know thing that we're trying to help, then everything should be aimed towards that (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

This informant acknowledged a critical point regarding the fact that JAE is a business. It is the way that many of these stakeholders make a living, in some cases because it is one of the few options open to them upon immigrating to the United States.

He further elaborated:

It just seems that sometimes the organization sometimes communication between administration, you know and particular my boss and the teachers sometimes isn't where it should be. And me being the middle man and sometimes left in this in between, to where I don't know what to tell the teachers and I don't know what to say to my boss when he asks why are the teachers upset. I just tell him to talk to the teachers and find out why they are upset (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

TG explained the conversation he had with other teachers about respect from students:

Socially speaking, the kids here are a little more disrespectful towards authority than I would have expected. Me and several teachers have had this conversation and we are thinking are all kids this age like this. I asked some of the middle school teachers and they were saying maybe because, you know some of the families are little more strict and so the kids try to act out and maybe they're a little more spoiled and so their not usually having to answer to authority, you know things like that. The generation is changing, how kids conduct themselves, you know the new technologies, globalized forces coming in, and they are affecting the kids differently these days than when I was a kid (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

Based on my personal observations, the students who were fairly new to the United States were very well-behaved in comparison to students who had been attending JAE for years (Field notes, July 18, 2007).

Each of these responses provides insight into the way that the program is run and how the administrators and teachers relate to one another. There is evidence of a discrepancy between the flexible structure of the program and the rigidity that some teachers are used to in public schools. I found the contradictions among teachers, in regards to structure, fascinating. According to interviews and observations, many of the perspectives of the teachers regarding social interaction and sacrifice were based on their prior experiences with students in the public schools at which they worked. Due to the different experiences of each teacher, their perspective of structure

varied from one teacher to another. However, based on my personal observations, the programs is much more loosely structured than any public school I have worked in. In some regards, I think this is a result of the cultural differences between the director of the program and the teachers and staff that he hires.

Value of Education

The value of education is pivotal to the success of a program such as JAE. That value is present throughout numerous aspects of the program including parent sacrifice, student dedication, and teacher expectations. WM explained:

I don't think there is much flexibility in the culture. I also do think that the parents do dictate quite a bit on what the students need to learn. Not exactly the curriculum, but the intensity of it. I think that parents contribute; they do expect a higher standard for them. Even the students who do not speak English very well, and despite sometimes the teachers may not complain here and there because the student can not understand...the parents do expect the student to be there and you know, try and catch up come May. So, I do think that kind of culture, I don't know what to call that part of that culture, but just that seriousness, I think it that intense, or oh valuing the education so highly (WM, Interview, July 10, 2007).

JL explained:

You would see a lot of families with their mothers and their children and the father back home in Korea, this is kirogi. He was earning the money to support his family but his family is here...and the children and the mother is here just to support the children, you would see a lot of that. So, they are moving away from the Korean education system to the American education system. But then it's funny because they still want their children to excel and go to a good school, go to an Ivy League school. They don't care about scholarships; they just want them to go to a good school (JL, Interview, June 5, 2007).

What is clear is that these families definitely pay a price for the educational opportunities they are provided in the United States. Even though they may escape from the relentlessly competitive Korean school system, they are forced to deal with the repercussions, including fractured families. Regardless of how far away from their home country they move, the culture that embodies educational zeal seems to always follow them. While pressure, competition, and

lack of opportunity are often push factors for leaving South Korea, these parents have brought those factors with them as they increasingly support these supplemental programs by enrolling their children.

Academic Rigor

In recent years, a number of sources have portrayed Korean Americans as extraordinary academic achievers without a solid context as to the reasons behind their achievement (Hurh, 1998; Sue and Okazaki, 1990). The administrators of the program describe the academic expectations of the program.

The director, TK, explained:

We come from Korea with lots of expectations, ready to compete. We know knowledge is power. As a parent, I let them study hard. Study hard. It is so hard to regain knowledge once you lose it. Education leads to a better life. *In Korea, they study continuously; this is a goof life, a better life for 2nd generation. In Korea, some hagwon starts at 10:00pm. If you don't finish your work, you stay. This is better life* (TK, Interview, August 7, 2007).

I asked WM to explain the dynamics of the curriculum. She responded:

They do have a very good, strong curriculum. I think there are two parts to it, the JAE curriculum for the after school program which has already been set by the headquarters of the home office that they have. Then, there is the summer program. When the kids do come in after school they are given those packets to do after they take the math test to place them, they do those packets for an hour every day. There are also reading packets that they do with some chosen novel which they are given according to grade level. There is a special reading packet made of questions pulled from the book, you know written by someone here. And that really does help the students; we know that the student can comprehend what it is they are reading. So, that's one very special unique thing about that and it's pretty intense. One book generally they need to finish within three weeks. And they can either write essays and they are tested every time (WM, Interview, July 10, 2007).

TG said:

The stuff we cover in the summer is just...we are just grazing over the top of it. You know, we're not getting in depth with some of this stuff. We have to cover two or three lessons a day. And so you're not, you know the students aren't going to get the full, in depth knowledge of what they are covering, but at least they'll have seen it before the next year, so they will have a head start (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

In regards to how hard the students work during the program, he said:

For the most part, Korean Americans work hard, not to throw out a generalization, at least the ones that I know work really hard, partly because their parents make them work hard, which I see reinforced here. They have goals they want to accomplish (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

The older the students get, the more they realize how much more difficult education would be in Korea. They start to see the program as a better option and often prefer it to the alternative (which some parents use as a threat if they do not do well). They may not learn everything for the upcoming year, but they are introduced to a wealth of information that puts them at an advantage on the first day of regular school. In addition, according to observations, much of the achievement comes with conservative doses of praise, which are only handed out to the most deserving students. Across the board, doing well is what these parents expect so there is no need for additional praise when their children simply do what they are supposed to.

Purpose

According to policy and mission statement documents, the purpose of JAE to maximize the student's potential, improve academic achievement, and build confidence in each student by using self-learning methods. However, after extensive interviews with the students, parents, teachers, and administrators, the purpose of JAE is multifaceted. The answers were often dependent upon which stakeholder was responding to the question. The answers ranged from opportunity, language maintenance, and competition to child-care and continuity. First, I spoke with the person who managed the Gwinnett franchise of the program. I asked the director to explain why he started this program. He responded:

I can't get more better job than this. This is my limitation due to my language barrier. I took all of my savings from Korea and I invested a lot of money. Many other programs here do fun stuff, camp stuff, but we focus on study. I know what Korean people want focus to be. Many parents are working hard here for a better life. They have blue collar

jobs like laundries or liquor stores. They can't be lawyers either due to language barrier. But they work hard. They work from 7am to 9pm every day because 60% to 70% are self-employed. I wake up at 4am and then go to work from 9am to 7pm. I know parents need to find something for their kids to do. Over 60% of the kids come back each year. Even my kids went to this program every year (TK, Interview, August 7, 2007).

This quote is directly tied to the categories of access to mainstream opportunity and English language acquisition. The director of this program is a prime of example of how these programs arise out of lack of access and a community that is trying to fill its own needs.

JL agreed:

If parents come from Korea they may have a high education in Korea but when they...in the process of immigrating to this country they might have a job that doesn't really seem like a highly educated or high end job. It could be the language barriers but it is different here too because you need different skills to do things here than in Korea (JL, Interview, June 5, 2007).

This quote is evidence of the lack of access to mainstream opportunities regardless of education background.

JL continued:

Another thing is they work most of the time. They don't have a good system in place at their homes to take care of the children. You know just leaving them, they would do computers or they would watch TV or hang out with their friends. So, they would rather have them come to an environment where adults are present (JL, Interview, June 5, 2007).

Here, it is clear that enlightened child-care is a crucial and basic purpose of JAE both from the perspective of the teachers and the parents.

The director also explained what his children learned from the program. He said:

My children learned confidence in studying. The focus is not on Korean, the focus is academic learning. They got in the habit to study. They learn a routine. If they have knowledge, they can ask for help, but if they don't know anything, you can't ask (TK, Interview, August 7, 2007).

JL explained:

Korean parents are afraid about...the language barrier, they can not do or provide all they could do. *If they were in a Korean environment they would have, but now they can't. So, I think it's one of the in between kind of role between the school and the home.* When I was doing the after school program here...there would be instances where I would contact the teachers at schools myself because the parents, you know would have a hard time so you know, it's like a median kind of thing (JL, Interview, June 5, 2007).

TG said:

When I found out that programs like this existed in the United States, I wasn't necessarily shocked. I have a bunch of Korean friends who would tell me about staying at private until 10 or 11:00, you know just learning English or Math. I kind of smiled and was like that's good money. There's good money because a lot of Korean parents, you know are coming directly from Korea and they have either done these schools themselves, you know when they were kids, it was just part of the culture. So coming over here and having Korean individuals start up these programs, it almost seems...it's taking part of Korea and bringing it over here. It's like culture-transferring boundaries (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

WM said:

The students do gain a lot because of the intensity of the program. They do get an upper hand, I believe once they get back to school. They get it because compared to other people who may not necessarily, not even go to an after school program. Most other after school programs do not have an intense, you know, structured academic, you know program like this one (WM, Interview, July 10, 2007).

She explained, "I think there is safety here, more security because they know the culture and they can be able to speak to others who are of the same culture and believe we are all drawn to our kind" (WM, Interview, July 10, 2007). She seemed to believe they felt more comfortable being surrounded by people who shared their experiences and culture, as if to say there was more safety in numbers.

TG said:

He has found that the kids are not necessarily learning more, as in expanding what they already know as much as it is trying to hit home what they already know. So, their writing improves, not necessarily because they are learning new things but because they are getting more practice with it. So, it's like learning a foreign language and if you have the summer to forget it, then when you start up again next semester it's not going to be as

good. So, it's trying to make sure that they don't forget what they have already learned (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

TG said:

The program is very influential in the community and especially with this church. Thousands of Korean people come here so they all know the program. There are several of these programs around here, like C2 Learning which is more of a tutoring based service, but nothing as full-fledged as this. It seems to grow each year. It's not really introducing all these new people, it more of making the bond stronger throughout the community (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007). .

JL concluded:

The SAT program is mainly focused on students getting their strategies and you know a way to increase their score. My goal as the coordinator is not just to increase their scores...but to set them up, you know. So like early in the stage and early in high school, you're like a freshman, we set them up to read books and how to study with vocabulary. So, I'm setting them up so they can be on their own, can study on their own and become an adult. In the meantime you get a good score on the SATs. I think the director of the program is to have the high achievement on the SAT and we have done that. I'm not really fully into those programs that just are set on, like memorize, memorize, memorize and then get your goals and then that's it. No, I want this to be like a long term thing where kids can take this experience and...learn the skills and then use it when they go on to college and they are by themselves. So, that's the kind of mind set I have when I'm developing the program (JL, Interview, June 5, 2007).

The purpose of JAE is uniquely different depending on who you ask. However, one thing is clear, many view JAE as an opportunity for upward mobility through rigorous academics and opportunities for mainstream access through acquisition of the English language. For the director, who has sent both of his children through the program, it was a way to make a living when other doors were closed to him and a child-care facility where he could bring his children while he was working. For most, it seems to be a place that feels like home, where they can connect to other Korean people.

Identity, Culture, and Diversity

All of the administrators were able to discuss the role that identity, culture and diversity played in the JAE program. I asked the teacher assistant, TG, to explain the role of Korean culture in the program. He responded:

From the Korean food that they serve three out of the four days for lunch to the fact that two head administrators are both Korean, the kids are all Korean and the parents are all Korean, except for maybe one or two families are not. But for the most part, these kids, they all speak Korean and I've seen a lot of them speak Korean to each other (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

He explained:

It's interesting to watch how, you know, the Korean culture that is within these four walls. It's almost as if they're taking Korea...they're putting it into these four walls and trying to replicate in a sense, at least the material needs to adhere to American culture, almost. Cause what we need to teach is English and things you need to learn in American public schools, but how it is done is in a very Korean way. For example, just a small thing I noticed was that the teachers are the ones that move around, rather than the students. In Korea, and much of Asia, that's how it happens. The students stay in their room all day and the teachers come to them, the homeroom and everything. But, in American, that's not how it is. In America, the teacher stays in the room and the students go from room to room. They're not replicating the structure of how a school works in America, they're replicating Korean structure (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

This is another example of the Korean heritage inherent throughout the program. Although the school is clearly using an American curriculum, their methods are intentionally Korean. This is evident in both the structure and the courses offered by the program. The administrative assistant, WM, discussed her experiences while working with the program. She explained:

It's been an interesting experience being able to meet another culture in America. They are very cordial; they are very, very, polite. I have seen not being of a Korean culture and working in the office, when a Korean comes in and there is another Korean who is not even sitting at an office desk they will automatically be drawn toward the Korean and not me. So, they hardly speak to me and I guess that's recognizing their culture more...or either because they are feeling insecure because of their limited language. However, it has taken me quite some time to be able to win their trust and I had to take the first step, you know, either by learning one or two Korean words for them to be comfortable. But in general, it's really been a wonderful experience to meet the parents (WM, Interview, July 10, 2007).

She further explained, “I do see that the mothers are the majority of the ones that bring the students or are concerned, while the majority of the fathers are the ones who work. I’ve seen in that part of the culture, that it’s the mothers who are the ones who are educationally oriented.”

WM also explained the differences she recognized between the Korean parents and students. She said:

With the students I have seen a lot of...of course there’s a lot of mixed circumstance happening here and then some of them...have come straight from Korea. There really has been, of course again a communication barrier between this too, but the students, I have seen them been torn between, you know, being more individualistic and at the same time embracing their kind of culture being so communal like their parents (WM, Interview, July 10, 2007).

TG also gave some insight into the issues of identity that are faced within this community:

He said:

Having to go into the Korean community sometimes to do shopping, just seeing parents, I see how sometimes how unwilling people will be to negotiate their culture. Like how unwilling people will be to negotiate their culture. Like how unwilling...you know they are negotiating Korean culture with American culture, how they want to be more Korean than they do American. If they think that they interact with American culture or negotiate too much they lose something that’s Korea. I also saw it going to Emory, how there is a rift between Korean American and Korean International student. Korean International students thought that Korean American students had lost something Korean (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

He further elaborated:

With Korean culture, you sometimes have grandparents living with them and very influential in the students’ lives. You know if you have that tie back to the mainland, to Korea, it’s sometimes hard for the students to understand what it means to be American while still understanding what it means to be Korean. So, they speak Korean at home and they have to go out into the real world, or...into the schools and speak English (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

In addition, the director of the JAE ESOL program provided some insight into the ESOL department of the program as well. All instruction was done in English, except for the Korean language class. She explained, “In ESOL, you get to teach English as a second language and that’s really diverse from the young ones in kindergarten to adult programs. So, that department

is still flexible depending on the needs of the student.” She elaborated, “We go from pictured English/Korean dictionaries to pronunciation and communication practice.”

The administrative assistant explained the value of the language maintenance she has seen:

I know if you come from another culture it is so hard to teach your children how to speak your language especially if you are in this country. The Koreans have maintained a lot of that because of their community and I would recommend that the cultures do so because it (the language) often disappears (WM, Interview, July 10, 2007).

TG explained:

I’ve learned that Korean parents are very influential in their children’s lives. I’ve learned that parents...sometimes are the directors...of their children’s lives....Seeing the parents and the children interact. I say wow that is not like home. *That’s not like my mom and dad where they kind of just said, “Okay do what you think is best and go with it.” You know they had influence over me, but not to the degree these parents do* (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

I asked him to give me an example and he responded:

I know one student in particular who is in 7th grade, in which I asked him about his weekend one week. And he was like, it was bad. *My mom found out we were doing Algebra and so she gave me all this new stuff on Algebra that I have to study over the weekend.* And in class, he’s a bright kid but he sometimes goofs off and doesn’t listen that much. You know, I can see that the reason why is because at home...his parents are so strict. It’s so controlled that when he comes to school it’s like he can just...you know a big breath of ...a sign of release almost. But at home it seems that his parents, his mom in particular is very strict on what he has to do (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

TG asked the student what time he went to bed and he responded, “Around 2am.” He explained he was playing on the computer and he was studying too. He told him that his mom will just find me a new book that I should study and I will have to study it.

TG explained:

Even in middle school, these kids are studying like crazy. *You know, in Korea it would be...it’s expected...in most of Asia. It’s expected that they would do that and that they would have private tutors and everything. But, in the United States, middle school kids, at least when I was a kid, that wasn’t the norm. You know we would play, we would do our homework and then we would go play...In high school we would stay up a little bit later. In middle school you’re supposed to be playing and having fun, going over to your*

friend's house. But that's not what I am seeing in this case. *For some of these kids, this program is their social interaction* (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

The last sentence of this quote is very telling. Many of the students who attend this program work very hard at home as well. Thus, interacting with their peers while at JAE is sometimes, the only "free time" they get. TG described, "They learn important social lessons too. You know, how to integrate together, especially the younger kids who maybe haven't had much experience in the classroom setting" (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

He explained the impact of the cultural push:

I can see sometimes in their school work, too, in the 7th and 8th graders I see how...elevated the writing is and I was impressed that some of the girls, at least academically from the private work that I've see, they're just amazing. It's astounding how advanced that they are, you know as compared to some of the other kids in their own class (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

JL concluded:

The whole program is Korean culture. And because Korean culture, the way I see it, comes from a mind set that you have to work hard, you have to achieve what you can, school is very important, education is very important in your life and getting a good job and a good job meaning, you know becoming like lawyer or doctor and any of those things. And that is very...set in very early on and even within students who have been here all their lives, you know, have never been to Korea but because of their parents and you know their grandparents and that family influence, it just seeps in. I think that has a lot to do with it and you would see a lot of younger children be very, very motivated to come here and be very proud that they are here, they're a part of this school. So, I think Korean culture has a lot to do with it (JL, Interview, June 5, 2007).

It seems that Korean parents are very interested in helping their children to develop and maintain an appreciation for Korean language even though they have left their homeland. They have established and supported programs that have numerous elements of their home country's culture and educational patterns. Because Koreans regard their heritage as valuable, they the program becomes a tool for inculcating an appreciation of the things they deem to represent being Korean, such as a zest for education. However, there is a down side. Unlike their parents

who are first generation, their children do have to interact with other ethnicities any may be less successful in their interactions with other groups of students outside of their ethnic community.

Administrator-Parent Relationships

JL said, “The director is a Korean man. I guess he kind of becomes like the medium between the parents and the teachers.”

JL said:

The mothers are always there and they always want to be involved to see how the children are doing and this program has a unique way of telling. There is a unique system to show the progress of students and there is a pre and post test and all that good stuff. We would talk about like what levels the students were in and then you know, mothers would always be interested in hearing about their children and their learning and that they are doing (JL, Interview, June 5, 2007).

TG said:

If one student’s parents are complaining about not enough homework or about, you know the pace or the difficulty level of the class, then we shouldn’t change the entire class, we should change that student. You know we have been doing that more and more lately if that happens, but in the beginning...we try to change the entire class level because one parent was complaining which doesn’t seem all that logical (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

Programs such as these serve as intermediate ground between the immigrant home and the American school, helping immigrant parents to maneuver the American education system. Many parents feel as though they have more authority within these programs because they are more comfortable with the culture of the program. They interact with the director and make their needs known in a variety of know. Also, because many of these parents volunteer in a variety of ways with the program, they are constantly involved the education of their children. It seems as though the director does all he can to keep the parents happy which presents some issues with the teachers. However, that is a problem also faced in regular schools as administrators attempt to cater to parents.

Teachers

In this section, I address research question seven by presenting the perspectives of teachers who work at the JAE supplemental education program. The teachers shared their perspectives regarding their role in the program, the purpose of the program, and the involvement of the Korean American community in such programs. I asked the teachers why they teach at the program as well as about the strengths and weaknesses of such programs.

Administrators and teachers are professionals whom the community entrusts with creating classroom practices and school cultures where their students can learn. They often have a huge influence on whether schools actually become academically rigorous and culturally relevant learning communities. Koreans have a popular expression that illustrates the authority they entrust to educators, “Teachers are the parents at school.” In many ways, this belief is engrained in Korean children at a very young age. This tendency may be rooted in traditional Korean cultural values which define the parent-teacher relationship as one in which parents defer to teacher’s judgment and authority. Thus, the respect for teachers in South Korea is definitely instilled in Korean American students who participate in such programs within the United States. As a result, I asked the administrators and teachers were asked to share their perspectives regarding their role in the program, their relationships with students, and the functions of such programs in the Korean American community. While the experiences of the teachers have been varied, there are certainly themes that emerged throughout the research process.

Teacher Roles

According to the interviews that I conducted, the teachers felt they were both leaders and facilitators in their students’ learning. One teacher described her role based on the focus of the course. CH explained:

It's a combination; it depends on what we're doing. We have four different things that we rotate doing in Language Arts. We are reading a novel and for both classes I'm reading it with them, out loud and we are explaining as we go along. We have reading comprehension, which is pretty much self done by them, once I give an introduction. I give them some time to read, read a short story, and answer some questions, so they really have to do that on their own. We have grammar, which I do a lot of explanation on that before we start and then they start working on that on their own. And spelling, which really helps them work with vocabulary and words and language, and I explain each of the little units and they work on that on their own. So, it's a combination (CH, Interview, July 29, 2007).

Another teacher, SH, describes his experience:

Well, before I took the job, I looked on the website and I looked up the JAE learning strategy. And their strategy is one in which my role is one what would be defined as more of a facilitator than a leader, but I find that a lot of the things that we are talking about and a lot of the areas that we go in terms of our conversations that I am probably more so a leader in that capacity, but always conscious of the fact that the goal here is to try to strengthen their self learning abilities, their abilities to self-guide. So, in Social Studies we cover a host of topics and a host of things that would support a student developing those skills to be able to ah...to be able to teach themselves as well as be taught (SH, Interview, July 23, 2007).

However, according to documents on the self-learning system, upon which JAE was founded, the entire program was created based on three self-learning theories. These theories include (1) Talent Education Theory: All Children are born with unlimited potential and talent is not inherent (2) Programmed Instruction Theory: Children can achieve success in learning when provided with specified aims, sufficient practices, and appropriate reinforcement (3) Mastery Learning Theory: The degree of learning can be calculated by using time actually spent in learning and time needed in learning. Each of these theories has been implemented throughout the JAE program as a way to encourage students to be self-learners. Here, in comparison to realities in many public school settings, the overt attention to self-learning is expected and seems to have a unique impact.

Structure and Classroom Decorum

Teachers expressed that there were both strengths and weaknesses of the program for them. They had varying opinions regarding discipline, often dependent upon the grade levels they taught. One teacher said, “I have had not problems with discipline, overall the kids are pretty good. Especially, given that it is the summer. Also, I think if I did the administration would take care of it. However, other teachers overwhelmingly discussed the lack of structure and rules as a concern even though the children were well behaved for the most part. One teacher, SH, explained:

I would say that...any time you're like coming into a new culture, a new cultural setting that you're going to have difficulties and we did have the difficulty of getting use to each other, getting use to what it was that I was requiring of them just in terms of classroom decorum, you know, speaking without raising your hand, or acknowledging that when the teacher is speaking you don't speak. Those, those kind of things would sum up the negative aspect of it, but those are things you would face in any classroom setting, especially coming into on in which the culture you are not very familiar with (SH, Interview, July 23, 2007).

He further the way he had to adapt to having students who were not proficient in English in the classroom. He explained:

The students will help each other and translate for the students who are new to the United States. I had to be let in on that...They had to bring me in on that and let me know. Oh, this is why you are talking while I am talking, because you're you know interpreting actually...for your classmate. Once I understood, I thought that was really nice and I wasn't upset (SH, Interview, July 23, 2007).

Another teacher explained,

In every class I have had, which is six classes, I've had at least a couple of kids that are having difficulty with the language, there's a language barrier. And any kinds of assignments I give are very difficult for them to do on their own. And any test I give, which is once a week as required by JAE, they usually do poorly on because they don't understand the questions. There is an ESOL class, but these kids do speak English, just limited English. In other words, they are ahead of the ESOL students but not at the level of the other students in my classes but they have been mainstreamed in order to force them to learn the English language faster. Also, the Korean parents do not like the

negative connotation associated with ESOL, they do not like their kids being in that class so they pressure them to get out (LL, Interview, July 2, 2007).

Not all teachers agreed with the perspectives of the previous teachers, in fact some teachers completed contradicted one another. Other teachers disagreed and felt there were a few minimal discipline problems. One teacher explained, “It was not so much discipline, but lack of self-discipline. The ability to obey different rules such as not talking whenever you feel like it (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).” According to the teachers, this was more of an issue with the older students. He further explained, “While it does not say you have a good kid or a bad kid, the disturbance that is continuing to happen needs to be figured out and we did not always know the chain of command to deal with that” (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007). Due to the fact that I interviewed teachers across grade levels, many of the teachers who experienced behavior problems taught upper grades which is common both within this program and in regular schools.

Another described that there is no question that this community values and appreciates teachers. Nonetheless, there are components of the program that are not very structured in terms of teacher needs and expectations. TG said:

Sometimes I think it is a little disorganized and I think that’s been a concern. It’s many times kind of laid back about things, like sometimes things won’t get done when you really want them to, but you just can’t let that get to you. You just go and don’t worry about it. But the disorganization is definitely a concern (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

PO further elaborated on the organization of the program. She said:

There are lots of curriculums and the director just gives it to you with textbooks. Textbooks are his thing. He has a lot of curriculums and we’ll do things and it just seems way too easy. So, I’ll move up to the next level where my thing is, I don’t always feel like I am teaching them a whole lot, like they already know it. And I don’t know if that is because the director isn’t giving me the proper materials or the materials are just being recycled because most of these kids come here every year. But quite a few times, I have heard we already read this. So, I don’t know if I’m just helping them retain it, refreshing their memory, or what (PO, Interview, July 18, 2007).

PJ explained the loose structure of the program as he has experienced it. He said:

It is a low stress environment. It's pretty loosely structured, which some people find they don't care for that much. Evidently, he has only had one other person come back from last year, which is surprising to me. So people, I guess find it too loosely structured, more like a summer camp than a summer academic program (PJ, Interview, July 7, 2008).

He further elaborated:

I think something that turns off some teachers is the lack of structure. You know it's really loose and the leadership here does leave something to be wanted. He doesn't make it black and white about what is expected. So, there's some confusion there, ongoing confusion for teachers throughout the summer. To me, it's never a serious problem, you know. But I think, if there was more structure and it was more clearly defined exactly what you were suppose to do, how the kids were supposed to be handled, encourage more people (teaching) to come from year to year and stay (PJ, Interview, July 7, 2008).

Another teacher explained how the composition of the elective course she taught made it very difficult. She explained:

It's kind of hard sometimes in this class because, like for instance on Monday, I have 18 students in my art class. I have two 8th graders, I have five 7th graders, four 6th graders, like five kindergartners, and I mean, I'll just really be like how the heck am I supposed to, with these various ages, how is it possible, because these little ones are like, can you help me...cause kindergartners can't do their own work. So, I'm basically doing it for them. But my Tuesday and Thursday electives are not that bad (SR, Interview, June 27, 2007).

The teachers also expressed concerns adapting to the aspects of the program that were different from their public school teaching situations. One teacher, TJ, explained:

I teach one 8th grade and two 7th grade language arts classes and rotate around. We have a middle school group and we have a Math teacher, a Social Studies teacher, and a Language Arts teacher and we have an hour with each group and so we rotate. And the teachers actually rotate, which is different than regular school where the students rotate. And that's good and bad. I think it's good for the students because they don't have to get up and pack up, but it's a little bit difficult for the teacher because we're not in the same room and we can't really write something permanent on the board. We can't really set up procedures and expectations in our classes the way we normally would because each teacher rotating has their own pet peeves (TJ, Interview, June 30, 2007).

The teachers within the program had to adapt to several aspects that were different from their public school backgrounds. While some teachers had difficulty tailoring their instruction to the various needs of students who had different levels of English language proficiency, most adjusted given time. In addition, most of the teacher complaints were about protocol issues and lack of direction regarding their roles in the classroom. However, many teachers enjoyed having the freedom to “create” their own curriculum during the summer program, a luxury they didn’t have in their regular schools. However, the frustration that several teachers faced is understandable given that they were coming from educational institutions which are well-oiled machines that have been functioning for quite some time.

Value of Education

According to the teachers, the parents and students have made education a top priority. Teachers expressed the ways in which they witnessed parents express that value. One veteran teacher stated, “The parents and students really value... the education of their kids. They go to great lengths to...pay the extra money for them to go to these extra programs. They value and support teachers, you feel respected by the families.” Another teacher expresses his experiences as a first-year teacher with the program. SH explained:

This is my first year working with the JAE program and I was really, really impressed with how eager these students were for knowledge. They are extremely eager for knowledge. They come into my classroom, you know I teach Social Studies, to the 7th and 8th grades and they come in with already a certain amount of knowledge of the subject and they are eager to share that. These kids are eager in sharing facts and dropping, “Well, did you know” on each other (SH, Interview, July 23, 2007).

Another teacher, TH, explained, “They are smart as a whip. Some are smarter than others, but they are all above average (TH, Interview, June 22, 2007).

The evidence presented here is incredibly important as it relays the importance of the perceptions of the teachers within this program. Many of these teachers share a favorable

perception of the students within this program and it is a perception that they will take with them back to their schools and classrooms. Thus, these teachers are likely to have a positive outlook on future Korean American students who enter their classrooms. As mentioned in Chapter 2, teacher perception can often influence academic achievement and students who embrace self-fulfilling prophecies in both positive and negative ways.

Academic Rigor

The majority of teachers feel that the program is academically challenging for the students in terms of pacing, content, homework, and assessments. PJ, a returning teacher, explained his experiences with academic rigor within the program. He stated:

The only problem I have, and several teachers have expressed this, is that the *learning time is so compressed and we are expected to cover so much material in such a short period of time*. The director initially told me last year that he expected teachers to cover 70% of their text in seven weeks, but I think this year he's trying to get more like 100%. But still that puts them....they are given Gwinnett County textbooks and that still puts them ahead of the game. *You know when they go into their grade in August they are already ahead*. So, it's beneficial regardless.

One teacher explains what he has experienced while teaching. He said:

The kids take the work that they do here very seriously. I had them to do projects and its showing up in their work. I mean I have awesome work....Actually, there are two 7th grade sections and the first section, the first thing they wanted to know was how did the second section do on their work, and you know they are kind of comparative, you know analysis they were going through. *You know there is this whole rival thing, but it's good you know the comparisons they are making, ways to improve their own work* (BD, Interview, July 3, 2007).

One veteran teacher, MM, summarizes, saying:

Usually, they are top students. They work very hard, especially the ones who have language barriers and they work to help each other. When I have had a classroom of students, generally they always seem...those are the kids who always do their homework; you know they always work hard and everything. They always ask questions because they want to do it right. I do think that it is because they value education and their parents value education *because they know it is the key to doing better in life*. And so, in my experience they are usually at the top of the class (MM, Interview, July 26, 2007).

Based on discussions with numerous teachers, the idea of self-fulfilling prophecy became apparent among many of the teachers within the program. Social psychologists have long linked a relationship between educational achievement and teacher expectations (Wong, 1990). According to observations, teachers, through words and actions, let students know what was expected of them and the students often performed according to those expectations. Korean students have long been stereotyped as students who achieve academically (Hurh, 1998). The teachers repeatedly doted on the abilities of these students throughout the research process. The students were expected to achieve and came to think of themselves as bright and capable because they have been, and continue to be, treated as bright and capable students. Thus, it is possible that these students continue to fill the prophecy of their teacher's expectations. Moreover, the elements of time and pressure also emerged repeatedly in their data.

Purpose

The teachers highlighted some interesting perspectives in regards to why the Korean students are enrolled in the JAE program. One teacher, VB, said the following about early exposure:

I think that many of the parents...who come here really want their kids to get ahead and they want them to do above and beyond what regular students do in public schools. And I think that they feel like they do need to do a little bit extra....And some of the things the kids are doing that are going into the 8th grade, 'cause I'm teaching the kids that are going into the 8th grade the 8th grade material, so they are going to be a step ahead of all the other 8th grade students who won't get that until next year. And the spelling book we actually use is the one I use in class. So, all of these kids that are doing that will know everything they need to know, so it will sort of be a repeat for them in many ways. Uhm...also the novels, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, is the one I do every year. So, they'll be reading the novel ahead of time. So, that's...a pretty good thing, it exposes them ahead of time, so maybe if they have trouble with the language, getting it more than once will help them comprehend (VB, Interview, June 16, 2007).

She felt as though they believed that education was going to get them ahead in life so it is worth the time after school and in the summer.

Another teacher, LL, explained:

I think the goal of the program is to keep the kids on top. The parents and the kids themselves want to be the top students of their class. And they want to be the valedictorian and the salutatorian and all that when they graduate. And so they really believe that enrolling their kids in this program is going to put them at the top of the list. And they start when they're really young, you know you start first grade or whatever these kids are, kindergarten is what they are. So, they really believe if they do this every year it's going to pay off (LL, Interview, July 2, 2007).

LL also gave a very telling example when she stated:

I remember when a Caucasian parent came into my room frustrated by the enormous influx of Korean students we had had in our school in Gwinnett. If I can remember his words, he said something like I am so glad that they added the writing component to the SAT, now the Korean kids can't keep taking up all of our kids' spots in college (LL, Interview, July 2, 2007).

Clearly, the preceding quotes are examples of competition among these students and their peers.

It is competition that was instilled in them by their parents, but that they too have taken hold of.

Ultimately, it is about getting as much of an academic advantage as possible. The ability to maintain what they learn during the school year was mentioned several times by a number of teachers. One teacher, SH, described his observations:

You know as a teacher, um...you see students who come in who you have throughout the entire year and you get them to a certain point and over the summer all of it goes away because that, that's not continued and in most homes it's not continued. And so I, I feel like that continued interest in learning things is there, in the minds of their children. I think that's probably the biggest reason why they send their children (SH, Interview, July 23, 2007).

Another teacher, TG, provided another example of sacrifice when he stated:

These kids are sitting in the classroom during summer time, when most other kids aren't and it's not because they have to be or because they are necessarily behind. I think they take away from this kind of what their parents really intended which was that education and learning never leave their minds. I am not so sure they send them here to get ahead of the other kids in the sense that they are getting information here that they would not get in the normal school year, but they are still involved, I think it is an extension of what they've had throughout the school year (TG, Interview, July 17, 2007).

Another teacher discussed how routines are established through this program. PG explained:

The kids are kept in the mindset of school. Because being in this program...knowing that you are going to get up in the morning and that you are going to come back to a classroom where you have homework that you have to turn in, where you've had to read this chapter, and so forth. You know the things that you pay attention to and the things that you take in as a child... You know absorbing all this information around you (PG, Interview, July 22, 2007).

Other teachers agreed with the previously mentioned ideas, but that it was also a sign of elitism in the community. One teacher, SM, explained:

I think they are proud because their child may excel, but it is more like bragging. I mean, like they're going here because I think that over there they are paying like \$46 an hour. I think it is extremely expensive. And so, it was like yeah my child goes there. Just from hear say with the kids, it seems like, oh, the Jones' are doing this so they have to do this. So, you know there is still a little competition even when they are supportive of each other (SM, Interview, July 7, 2008).

Other teachers agreed that the program was a form of enlightened child-care. Parents often have to work and the program serves as an academic environment in which to send their kids during the summer. PO explained:

I really don't see them benefiting greatly from the after school program because after a while of moving ahead, they eventually max out somewhere and have already done all of the materials that are available until they start SAT preparation. I think after a while, it is more of just watching them, child care until mom and dad get off work and the only benefit is if they are allowed to do their homework in a structured and academic environment(PO, Interview, July 18, 2007).

Clearly, there are a few teachers who see limited academic gains from the program. However, they do provide alternative uses for the program including child-care and academic exposure in reflecting on the fact that the program serves multiple purposes in the Korean community, part of the interlocking network of support systems.

Identity, Culture, and Diversity

As previously mentioned, none of the core academic teachers are Korean. Thus, there are a variety of cultures coming together as educators in this learning environment (see Table 4.5).

Teachers expressed the challenges and growing experiences they had during teaching. One teacher expressed his observations regarding the diversity in teaching staff. SH stated:

I get the feeling that I'm part of a vanguard group here, that I am a part of something that hasn't been for a very long time. I get the feeling, you know as an African American male, I feel that I am a part of the diversity effort because what's interesting is that many of the kids...that haven't been here very long in the States, just getting here from Korea and trying to acclimate. I think there are several families who are just getting here. But you do see a lot of those same attributes that you generally that you would generalize or you would, you know...Asian families and Asian communities, as sticking together, but it's really interesting to see how they are broadening their scope by bringing in a diverse teaching staff, no doubt to teach from their area of strength and to expose their children to different teaching methods and styles (SH, Interview, August 1, 2007).

Another teacher shared her hiring experience. TH explained:

Honestly, I always thought of them as being a culture that really stuck to their own. So, when he hired me I felt like during the interview he just really kept focusing on my Ph.D program and so when he hired me the same day, I said I wonder if it is because of the Ph.D. level and it's sad because I did not know it was all Korean before I came to the office. I couldn't help but wonder did I get hired because of my credentials or was it the doctoral degree I was pursuing because he kept mentioning it. I was curious as to how I would be received, but I feel like I was more embraced by them, as opposed to Caucasians who I have had more exposure to (TH, Interview, June 22, 2007).

Another teacher shares his experiences regarding the ability of the student's to adapt to the diversity they were being exposed to. BD explained:

They may have a little trouble in the beginning with adjusting and with situating that in their minds and as a result, you know in their effort to deal with the diversity, I feel like they tend to kind of close off a little bit. You know, you turn inward, toward your own culture, looking for that support you know, looking for what is familiar to you (BD, Interview, July 3, 2007).

I asked the teacher to elaborate in which he responded:

For example, after lunch, during free time we are still responsible for their well being and so forth. Some of them you have to ask two or three times, you know, don't go over

there and don't throw that ball inside. You know, something that I just feel they wouldn't do...if they were asked by a person of authority that they were used to being in authority, you know from a figure that they see, that they've already recognized in their minds carries authority. But you know, I could say the same thing about my children in Harlem that I taught if a "guest" came in. It is just interesting to see how those kinds of things trickle down to children (BD, Interview, July 3, 2007).

However, another teacher, SM, had a different perspective. She said:

Like typical kids, they talked, but it would only take you about one time, could you, you know, calm down some and it's like...I hate to use the word fear and that may not be the best word but it's like...in a sense it's respect but in a way they are just obedient. Like you know, some kids, some cultures are like 'I don't know you' and you could talk until you are blue in the face but it's like what can you do to me. But with these kids, they could meet you that day and they are just, just out of respect, they are really respectful except for one altercation (SM, Interview, July 7, 2008).

I asked her to share the experience in which she responded:

It wasn't so much an altercation, but it puzzled me. I had one student, knew all the hip-hop songs and it surprised me, you know, he knew two-step and everything. I had another kid who said to one of his peers, "Show me how to two-step." This kid always sand hip-hop songs. So, one day he took another kid's headphones and he was like, "*Man, why are you listening to N----- music?*" I said *what did you say and the room just got quiet, I mean completely quiet and I had to take a moment and breath.* I proceeded to ask him what he said again and he didn't say anything. I just didn't expect it because this kid listens to the same music, so how is it when someone else listens to it, it is a problem. But he knew not to say it again, like he wouldn't repeat it. And so, I addressed it with him but that was my wow, did this just happen moment ((SM, Interview, July 7, 2008).

This quote is quite relevant to the impact that such programs can have on the ability of the

students who attend to be culturally conscious beyond their own cultural heritage. Though this

student obviously realized he had said something inappropriate when asked to repeat it,

originally he was very comfortable using the language he chose. Again, the closed ethnic group

that this community has formed could present a potential problem when it comes to interactions

with other groups of students outside of their ethnic community and their ability to assimilate.

Korean Culture

The Korean culture is pervasive and immersed throughout various aspects of the program. One teacher explained, "They do serve Korean food everyday. The kids even get upset

sometimes because on Thursdays, they usually cookout and have hamburgers. They say, oh we don't have Korean today." The Korean culture is also prevalent in other ways. The students take Korean language classes in the afternoon as an elective. Many of the students speak to one another in Korean although they speak to the teachers in English. Thus, they do make an effort to hold on to their language and feel comfortable doing so in the environment fostered by the program. Many students also take Bible classes due to the enormous amount of Koreans in the community who practice Christianity. Another teacher explained how the students helped one another. PJ explained:

Surprisingly, my students who have not been in the United States very long keep up really well and they are beginning to participate just as much. I don't feel though that they are at a total loss because they are surrounded by students that are bilingual. They're...classmates are bilingual so they have that cultural connection and s they still have that umbrella of comfort (PJ, Interview, June 15, 2007).

PO explained:

Their cultural connection is strengthened. If they have problems when they go back to school, the problems will come from that whole cross cultural pollination that they will be subjected to when they get into a more diverse setting of students. Um, that always brings its own issues (PO, Interview, July 18, 2007).

PJ made a very interesting point after having conversations with his students about academics in Korea. He explained:

I've had kids, you know, several times tell me about the academics in Korea compared to here and about the conduct of the kids over there in those schools compared to these kids here. It's really interesting academically. I've had Asian kids in my classes at Gwinnett too. In academics, I mean they are far ahead of us. *They'll come here from Korea being in 5th grade say where I teach and they will already know the stuff that we learn. I mean they learned it in 3rd grade or even earlier. I mean they are doing algebra in 2nd grade somehow. And I think they are far ahead of us, especially in science and math, way out there* (PJ, Interview, June 15, 2007).

Again, this teacher provides an example of academic rigor brought with the students from South Korea. He then explained the differences in behavioral expectations. He stated:

As far as behavior, it's so strict over there even fairly minor things that they do in school, that here would be just like, it's a misdemeanor kind of thing, over there it's a major thing. For example, I had a kid a few years ago, I'll never forget his story. One of the kids in my room was acting up, I don't remember what he was doing, but I asked the Korean boy in my class, I was teaching 4th grade at the time, if this kid was in Korea what would be happening? He said he would be severely punished. I asked for an example. He responded, well, there was this second grade boy who was talking in class when the teacher was instructing and she had already asked him to stop talking and he kept talking. So, she took him to the principal. He got suspended. And he got spanked by his parents, plus he wrote a letter of apology to his class. And when he came back to school he read the letter to the class. But the worst thing was, to me anyway, was that the parents of the friends if the boy told them to have nothing to do with him for the rest of the school year (PJ, Interview, June 15, 2007).

He also explained that some children would get popped on the wrist, thumped on the head, or spanked at the office. He explained that this would often continue through high school. They also have to stand when the teacher enters the room as a symbol of respect. He said, "Most of the Korean kids are good kids and they'll say I do not want to go back to Korea because they know it's harder and it's stricter."

TG explained:

I have learned that they're kids, just like any other kids and they still go through the boy/girl stage and they still talk, but they're just more disciplined, more focused, more respectful and overall as a culture, I would say, I won't say that they are smarter, but they act smarter... They act in a smarter manner, in a more appropriate manner, they behave accordingly and they are just real supportive of each other.

Another teacher, LL, explained:

I think the Koreans believe in a year long program of academics and they have Saturday programs as well throughout the school year. I think it's just a culture thing you know. The Asian culture, you know. American's balk at the idea of even considering that. But I think it's a good idea because they never really loose stuff that they have learned over the summer, like the Americans tend to because it's such a long stretch . (LL, Interview, July 2, 2007).

Another first-year teacher, SH, summarizes, saying:

I think it's really interesting and I'm happy to be received here. And to be able to get this inside you, to get their devotion to education. Their devotion to the things that would make a person succeed, like being sharp, being sharp in your response to things, how you

respond to things, how you see things...Almost all of them always in their views of the world pluralize things, they make it personal. We have to do well or how did we do on our projects. That is a direct linkage to their culture in terms of the nationalism that has been instilled in them (SH, Interview, August 1, 2007).

PJ explains another cultural connection. He stated:

I'm in charge of PE in the mornings. All of the kids come outside on alternate days, one day it will be kindergarten through 4th grade and the next day it will be 5th grade though 8th grade. And they come out there and I'm expected to give them some kind of exercise or play period. I think that Korean culture feels that they need to exercise first in the mornings to get their blood going, their brain engaged and all that and then do the learning, you know (PJ, Interview, June 15, 2007).

He further explained:

It is hard to manage that program because there's such a range of ages, you know at one time. An interesting thing I found out, and again I think it relates to their culture, they are pretty non-aggressive people and even with the children. You know, when you try to plan an aggressive game, they have a hard time doing that. It's interesting. For example, dodgeball is one. At our school, we throw the ball and when it hits you, it hits hard because you are throwing it fast and quick and accurate. But here, you know, they'll just kind of like pitch it to somebody, you know. Sports are just not their forte and we always hear that Koreans have academics, academic programs way up on top of the list. Now, soccer on the other hand they do well at because that's kind of a national, you know game for them. I remember when South Korea was playing we would all go and watch in the morning on several days that they were playing and it was huge (PJ, Interview, June 15, 2007).

He goes on to explain:

I think this has been a unique experience for me and it's really been a motivating factor. I also saw how the programs have their franchises that you can go and get, you know, you can open your own. And so, that's really interesting to me and I'm glad to be this close to the model that I would like to see in our own community (PJ, Interview, June 15, 2007).

Clearly, the Korean culture has influenced the JAE program in numerous ways. While it is the parents' continued interest in cultural connections that provides the opportunities for students to participate in this program, students are directly affected. Supporting and attending this Korean program is one way in which parents transmit their attachment to Korean culture and Korean educational practices to their children.

Parent-Teacher Relationships

For years, the value of parent-teacher communication has been reinforced in school systems across the country. However, with increasingly diverse student populations, this can become quite a challenge. JAE is no different. Many teachers expressed that they had very little verbal communication with parents. One teacher described why they did not have much verbal communication with parents. He stated, “Many of the parents still speak Korean and so sometimes it’s difficult. Some of them will speak to you a little bit, but not lengthy conversations. They seem to be very supportive and inquisitive (BD, Interview, July 3, 2007).” However, they did have weekly written communication and the presence of parents was obvious throughout the program. Parents are required to sign-off on homework forms weekly. They are also encouraged to visit the classrooms, which many do throughout the summer.

One African American veteran teacher explained that the dedication of the parents was obvious and very different from what she had seen in her own public school. SM explained:

One of the strengths of the program is the dedication of the parents which was evident from the first night. Although I’ve not had occasion to really sit down since then with parents, they were very, very involved. They always showed up. They came out to see who was going to be teaching their children. They were very supportive, listening to our bios, listening to our backgrounds, where we came from and so forth. So, I think that their involvement is very key (SM, Interview, July 7, 2008).

Another teacher addressed parental involvement in terms of providing the supplies that were needed by the students. SH said:

When I gave this project for the kids to do, they had to go and they had to get poster boards and markers and all of this stuff to be really creative, not a one of them failed to do that. And so I think that kind of support is really strong (SH, Interview, August 1, 2007).

While the teachers recognize that parents are dedicated to their children’s education, they also recognize that their contact with them is often limited due to language barriers. As a result, that

they often use the director of the program, who is bilingual, to communicate with the teachers.

However, weekly progress reports were made available to all parents through the administration.

Social Interactions

Teachers do not teach on Fridays because the students go on field trips every Friday.

However, some of the teachers do have the opportunity to chaperone those trips if they chose to.

Many of the teachers expressed that such experiences give the students something fun to look forward to at the end of the week after all of their hard work. This gives the students the ability to enjoy being kids. They take field trips to places such as the swimming pool, the movies, and the ice skating rink.

Summary

In my critical analysis of the findings, there were several patterns that emerged throughout the research experience at this supplemental education program regarding the functions of the JAE program. The emerging patterns included academic rigor, enlightened child-care, social interaction, parental involvement, identity and culture, access to mainstream opportunities, English language acquisition, and sacrifice.

In addition, students were taught motivation and responsibility due to the expectations that their parents placed upon them. Homework and testing were often the vehicle by which those expectations were monitored and teacher-parent communication was accessible. They learn responsibility, accountability, and that there is a relationship between their teacher and their parents. They also learn a sense of independence because they do an incredible amount of work on their own. Though the homework can be overwhelming for children so young, it definitely gives the students an advantage in the real world. It certainly prepares the students who attend to

handle a regular educational setting better because they have mastered multiple skills at the learning center.

Another pattern that I noticed was that the students only used critical thinking in the writing assignments. The reading, vocabulary, and spelling mainly focused on rote memorization. While this does improve their reading skills, I feel that this impedes their ability to think critically, analyze, and discuss ideas, which will be a detriment down the road. This is a prime example of a cultural practice that has been transplanted from South Korea to the Korean programs in the United States. Although I have learned through my research, that in many Korean educational settings, students are taught to listen and learn but not necessarily participate. For students living in the United States, this practice can often be considered a problem.

Students normally come ready to learn and are taught by a qualified teacher and then incorporate self-learning when they practice or drill what they have been taught. Courses are incredibly structured and students quickly learn the routine. Korean Enrichment Centers in the United States often face the same criticisms applied to hagwons in South Korea. While many criticize the fact that these students are not allowed to be kids or that these students are overworked and stressed, many Korean American students enjoy spending the summer with other students who share a similar ethnic background; an opportunity they may not have during the formal school year. Additionally, these students have the opportunity to not only retain, but also reinforce previous knowledge during two critical months in which many students lose knowledge taught during the school year.

As a result of my findings, I argue that Korean parents construct cultural capital, social capital, and educational capital (as defined in Chapter 1) in South Korea that they then import and maintain for their children in the United States. All of the categories and codes that have

emerged from my study serve as evidence as to how ethnic Korean immigrant communities function in order to provide opportunities for their children that are not available to them. They use supplemental education programs to maintain Korean identity, provide access to career paths from which they have been excluded by providing a competitive academic edge, and acquiring the English language. Therefore, academic rigor, social interaction, parental involvement, enlightened-child care, identity, access to mainstream opportunity, English language acquisition, socioeconomic status, and sacrifice were evidenced throughout this chapter. In addition, they were interrelated with the information presented in Chapter 4, once again proving that there is a strong link in this transnational community to their Korean heritage. However, the issues of race and gender were not prevalent themes throughout the study.

The parents that have enrolled their students in this program using the money they brought with them as economic capital in order to create social and educational capital within their communities and beyond through their children. However, they have accomplished this all while instilling a loyalty to Korea and Korean culture in their children. While it is obvious that many of the students have assimilated to some extent, there are several poignant examples presented in the study that provide evidence of just how far along Korean Americans have come in creating one of the most successful and institutionally complete communities in Georgia; communities in which the next generation will have hopefully have the ability to transcend their internal success and move further into mainstream culture.

Using my data gathered from the time I spent on site and particularly the interviews I conducted and the background content for the case, I was able to construct a rich account of the program, its features, how it functions, and its value to Korean families. In the final chapter, I will discuss the implications and limitations of this study.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS

In this study, I explored the nature of the educational and cultural experiences of Korean American students in supplemental education programs that serve as educational and cultural institutions as well as local equivalents to *hagwons* that are transplanted from the home country of South Korea. Specifically, I examined the roles and functions of a Korean *hagwon* in Georgia and its relationship to Korean American students' experiences in their public schooling.

In Chapter 1, I provided introductory information about Korean American immigrants and supplemental education programs within their immigrant community. I described the research problem addressed in my study, the background to the problem, and introduced my design and methodology. In Chapter 2, I reviewed the literature concerning the educational system in South Korea, the history of Korean immigration to the United States, and supplemental education programs in both South Korea and the United States. In Chapter 3, I described the design and methodology of the study as I highlighted the methods utilized in throughout the study. In Chapter 4, I presented my findings regarding the general features and characteristics of the South Korean educational system, including Korean hagwons. In Chapter 5, I presented my findings from fieldwork in one supplemental education program in Georgia's growing Korean immigrant community. In this chapter, I summarize and reflect on the findings that emerged from this study and their implications. I address limitations of the study and I suggest directions for future research.

Discussion

Looking back on my study, I gained an understanding of the South Korean educational system, the roles and functions of Korean *hagwons* as they are transplanted as supplemental education programs in Georgia, and their relationship to Korean American students' educational and cultural experiences. There are certainly cultural similarities between South Korean cram schools and Korean supplemental programs in the United States. Competition is prevalent in both because the primary goal of Korean parents in South Korea and the United States is to enable their children to excel in public schools, to get into prestigious colleges and universities, and to secure a profession.

South Korea's educational system has long been highly competitive, but has become more intense in recent years. This is because South Korea has conceived a new college-entrance exam, which will be implemented in 2008 (Lee, 2006). The new admission standards will place more emphasis on grades in the three years of high school and less on nationwide standardized testing, which have traditionally determined which students go to the elite colleges. The change was made mostly to reduce what the government says is a growing education gap in the country: wealthy students go to the best colleges and get the best jobs, keeping the children of poorer families on the social margins. The aim is to reduce the importance of costly tutors and cram schools, partly to help students enjoy a more normal high school life (Lee, 2006). Ironically, already this year at least ten students have committed suicide because of exam pressure or disappointing grades.

Education experts argue that South Korea's public secondary-school system is floundering, while private education is thriving (Seth, 2002). According to critics, the country's

high schools are almost uniformly mediocre; the result of an egalitarian government education policy (Seth, 2002). With the number of elite schools strictly controlled by the government, even the brightest students typically settle for ordinary schools in their neighborhoods, where the curriculum is centered on average students. To make up for mediocrity, zealous parents send their kids to pricey cram schools.

While the South Korean government is trying to reduce cram schools, similar Asian supplemental programs are on the rise in the United States. For children of Asian descent growing up in places such as Los Angeles and New York City, cram schools are a part of life and in many instances they meet more than an academic need. Now, numerous non-Asian parents are enrolling their children in these schools, hoping to see the same academic achievement in their students (Luo, 2003). However, regardless of what ethnic group is using supplemental education programs, it is clear that they are here to stay. Thus, exploring the idea of supplemental ethnic schools may provide insights for educators and community members on the ways in which supplemental ethnic schools might be integrated within the life of the community as an instrument of support for the education of their youth.

In the meantime, Korean Americans have taken their destiny in their own hands. The practice of doing for one's ethnic group by members of that ethnic group has been named a co-ethnic strategy of self-determination. As described in Chapter 2, an inquiry into co-ethnic efforts indicates there are a number of supplemental education efforts organized around religious or ethnic affiliation besides those of Korean origin (Corson, 1999; Gordon, 1999; Bridglall, 2005; Nelson-Brown, 2005). The presence of ethnic initiatives can teach us a numerous lessons. We develop structures, sometimes inadvertently, that can deter self-determination or ignore parents' needs, and then we ask whether groups value education if participation is low or irregular. Even

if groups value education, developing academic abilities depends on what groups can do about it. Historical and economic factors have prevented some from doing something about it, while giving others a distinct advantage.

The ethnic capital that Korean American parents bring with them from South Korea definitely provides them with an advantage. Throughout my study, the similarities between Korean programs and those transplanted to the United States emerged. More importantly, Korean parents maintain strong transnational ties to South Korea. The very growth of Asian communities in the United States, particularly the Korean community in places such as New York and Los Angeles, has created opportunities for entrepreneurs to invest profitably in the United States. Many Korean American businesses are financed by Korean banks established with Korean capital. Though this immigrant population may lack the knowledge of English and credentials needed to seek credit from mainstream institutions, immigrant entrepreneurs have gone to Korea to pool capital for new banks (Smith and Zhou, 1995). Although small by conventional standards, they simultaneously serve the economic interests of the immigrant community and of their overseas investors. Korean parents then take those funds and put them into programs such as supplemental education programs that benefit their children. My interview data illustrated this repeatedly.

In addition to the financial ties to South Korea, there are several features of the Korean education system that are also transplanted through supplemental education programs. From the Korean food served at the program and the Korean language and cultural programs that are taught to the structure of the program that supports the movement of teachers instead of students, it is clear that this program is rooted in Korean identity. As I watched students dedicate enormous amounts of time to their schoolwork, it was evident that their parents, and

subconsciously the students, had brought with them an innate dedication to hard work and excellence.

This program provided a structured environment in which Korean American students were provided with the opportunity to live up to the behavioral standards and expectations of their parents in their academic careers. It also provided an environment that forced them to remain grounded in academic thoughts and practice in the areas of mathematics, language arts, and social studies during the summer when many students lose a lot of the knowledge they gain throughout the school year. I also came to find out that the program provided the students with a social outlet in which they could socialize with other Korean American students, use their own language, and take pride in their cultural traditions without being ridiculed by mainstream students. For many of the students, they embraced the rigorous activity because it was balanced by social interaction and social activities.

There is a dense array of schools that have the capacity to act as a parallel school system and a community scaffolding. For Korean parents who may not be able to personally supervise children after school or during the summer due to employment or other commitments, Korean after-school and summer programs satisfy an important child-care need in dual-worker homes. For parents who may perceive potential difficulties of language, culture, and socioeconomic barriers to being involved in the mainstream education their children receive, Korean after-school programs may provide parents with a sense of familiarity, continuity, and control in fulfilling an educational need for children without extensive demands on the parents' own time. For children, this may facilitate the development of a bicultural or multicultural adaptation, which has been found to enhance intellectual and cognitive development (Portes and Hao, 1998).

Again, my interviewees voiced such sentiments as they attempted to navigate mainstream society and education.

At the very least, Korean after-school and summer programs provide a quiet and safe place to study and learn in an urban environment, enrichment in the arts, math and literacy skills useful on standardized tests, regular physical activity, supervised summer activities that include and promote summer learning, and potentially an academically oriented peer group. For all these reasons, Korean supplemental education's popularity with parents would be understandable. Moreover, it is reasonable to expect that the directionality of the impact of these initiatives on Korean student academic development is on average positive. In my study, I learned how these processes occur in the Korean American community.

Additionally, the voices of the participants of the study were clear as the parents spoke life into their struggles as immigrants in a new country versus the sacrifices they made for the life they wanted for their children. The students recognized all that their parents had given up and they were aware of the benefits of attending such programs even with they did not want to. However, for both, the program represented the opportunity to get ahead and to have a better life than the generation before them. For many of the participants, the programs meant opportunity. The participants greatly enabled me to build this case and truly highlight all that programs such as these have to offer. However, their feedback was not always positive. The students often felt pressure to be the best and make their parents proud. The parents argued that hard as it may be, their children have it much better in the United States than they did in South Korea. As a result, there were definitely instances of tension between the views of parents versus students.

In the following section, I summarize the study's findings with particular focus given to the themes that emerged from the study. Thus, the following discussion around the superordinate themes that emerged in my findings.

Academic rigor: In Chapter 3, I characterized academic rigor is explained as a consistent push for demanding educational study as a practical means for attaining excellence. The parents within this Korean immigrant community have made a push for high academic standards, increased expectations for student academic performance, and consistent learning environments within their community. This supplemental education program has provided a routine and structure that prepares students for the curriculum they will face in regular schools. They have created an ethnic environment conducive to Korean immigrant children's educational achievement. Within the program, students learn responsibility, accountability, and independence due to the enormous amount of work they do on their own. Though the schedule of homework and assessments can be overwhelming for children so young, it certainly prepares the student who attends to handle a regular educational setting better because they have been exposed to a comprehensive curriculum that compliments the requirements of public education by grade level and college preparation.

According to the subjects in my study, the overwhelming purpose of the supplemental education program is to assist Korean immigrant families in their efforts to push their children to excel in Georgia's public schools, to get into prestigious colleges and universities, and to eventually attain well-paying, high-status professions that secure a decent living in the United States. The academic rigor demonstrated in the program provides a means to that end.

Social interactions: In Chapter 3, I described social interactions in terms of the communal experiences and activities that the students experiences within the supplemental

education program. For many of the students involved in supplemental education programs, it provides an opportunity for them to make friends and interact with peers who are of a similar background.

The students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of extracurricular activities such as drama, piano, origami, and sports. Ironically, as many of these programs are being removed from public schools, according to my subjects, they are increasingly offered at these programs. Students are able to interact with their peers in activities that they enjoy on a weekly basis. In addition, they are excited about going on field trips at the end of the week after a long week of hard work.

In addition, the program provides a social environment in which they can be proud of their culture. Within the program, they play Korean games, watch Korean soccer matches, and speak Korean. Thus, they are exposed to something quite different from what they would receive in regular school.

Parental involvement: In Chapter 3, I described parental involvement in terms of the extent to which Korean parents are not only involved in the education of the children, in many instances they are the directors of their children's educational careers. My research illustrated that the strategies adopted by Korean American parents are not only influenced by the socioeconomic backgrounds, as well as access to bilingual and educational resources, but also their aim to retain their home culture.

My research illustrated patterns of parental strategies including class and network orientation, which consistently affect the ways in which Korean parents provide educational support for their children and ultimately help their children bridge the gap between their schooling aspirations and educational opportunity. It is also important to note that despite the

varying strategies used by Korean immigrant parents, they are already at a disadvantage when compared to middle-class non-immigrant parents who are fluent in English and work in the mainstream economy.

Most Korean immigrant parents are limited in English-language skills and knowledge of the U.S school system; factors that have the potential to greatly inhibit their ability to help their children with daily schooling or with college preparation and counseling. I expect that in order to compensate for their limitations, middle-class Korean parents, with their educational backgrounds, socioeconomic resources, and social capital, have resorted to hiring tutors and enrolling their children in supplemental after-school programs in ethnic enclaves where their children are provided the additional educational support they need. As previously mentioned, these private programs provide direct schooling support and college guidance that Korean immigrant parents otherwise may not be able to give to their children directly.

These Korean parents are enthusiastic about sending their children to supplemental education programs, not because they are inherently dissatisfied with American public schools (as is the case in South Korea), but because they believe these programs are instrumental in ensuring that their children meet their parental expectations of academic excellence. In many instances, it seemed as though the programs are so heavily influenced by the parents, that the saying “by the parents, for the parents” has become increasingly popular. Korean parents measure success not merely by their own occupational achievements but by their children’s educational achievements. If a child goes to an Ivy League college, his or her parents feels rewarded and are admired and respected as successful parents. In the Korean community, this has gone to the extent of naming children after Ivy League institutions. On the other hand, if their children are less successful, they lose face. Thus, in many ways, these programs emerge in

response to parents' desires for success. They ultimately produce a community force driving Korean children to attain educational success on their parents' terms.

Korean immigrant parents consider money and prestige the criteria for success. According to my informants, for Korean immigrant parents, prestige is synonymous with the academic achievement of their children. Thus, through my findings further shed light and contributed to the understanding of the relatively high academic achievement of Korean American students and their disproportionate concentration on certain majors in college and in certain professional careers studied by researchers such as Kim (1993).

Enlightened Child-care: In Chapter 3, I explained enlightened child-care in terms of academically focused and enriched after-school and summer school care provided for Korean children while parents work. While these programs cost parents money, they also see them as an educational investment for their children as well as a basic child-care service provided within the community. Due to the entrepreneurial nature of this community, child-care is a concern for many Korean immigrant families. Since both parents may work from dawn to night at businesses, many families are faced with difficulties in the education of their children. For some, the program was a way to keep children under adult supervision during flexible after-school hours and throughout the summer. The education of children includes not only school education, but also education for cultural values.

As documented in Chapter 2, due to the traditional emphasis on higher education, the educational level of Korean children in terms of performance and higher levels of education is higher than that of other ethnic groups. However, as their children grow up to be members of the mainstream society, the Korean immigrant parents encounter a cultural gap with their children in that they find it hard to communicate with them, both because of English skills and different

cultural orientations. Thus, another explanation for the need of supplemental education programs is the role they play in bridging the gap between parents and students.

Korean American Identity and Culture: In Chapter 3, I described this theme in relation to the ways in which supplemental programs provide a place where bilingual and bicultural institutional agents provide an important cultural and linguistic bridge for first-generation Korean immigrant parents and their second or 1.5-generation Korean American children. It helps them to maneuver their double-consciousness in terms of being Korean and being Korean-American as they are forced to construct multiple identities. In addition, there are issues related to second generation Korean Americans and teenage immigrants. There are questions as to how much the second-generation and 1.5 generation attach themselves to Korean ethnic identities, as well as how successfully they blend into the mainstream society. Since, Asian immigrants are in a different situation than European immigrants who have successfully melted into the pot of the mainstream society, the second generation of Asian immigrants merits attention to see how they identify themselves. According to my study, most proudly hold on to their Koreaness although they are American citizens. It became consistently evident that loyalty and patriotism remain strong throughout their experiences

As I expressed in Chapter 4 and 5, there are a number of ways in which the identities of those involved in this study relate back to their Korean roots. The use of critical thinking skills was one area in which this was apparent. While students seem to only use critical thinking skills in writing assignments, the reading, vocabulary, and spelling mainly focused on rote memorization in a similar manner of that used in South Korea. Though this does improve their reading skills, I feel as though this impedes their ability to think critically, analyze, and discuss ideas, which will be a detriment down the road. This is a prime example of a cultural practice

that has been transplanted from South Korea to the Korean programs in the United States.

Although I understand that in many Korean educational settings, students are taught to listen and learn but not necessarily participate. For students living in the United States, this practice can often be considered a problem.

However, the ties to Korean cultural heritage are not always as overt as learning styles or Korean food served for lunch. In many instances, the passing on of Korean heritage is quite subtle. Whether it comes in the form of a student bowing to a teacher out of habit or the way students turn in work with both hands as a symbol of respect, the staples of Korean culture are incessantly present. The program also provided a physical site where formerly unrelated Korean immigrants could rebuild social ties. While the co-ethnic ties may not be as strong as the ones that existed in Korea, they do provide a sense of comfort and unity.

On the other hand, what often determines a child's development is not merely parental ethnic background and socioeconomic characteristics but also the immediate social environment in which the child grows up. For this minority group, their social environment is often ethnically specific, manifested in observable neighborhood-based Korean ethnic institutions and in interpersonal and cultural relations among those who interact in those institutions as described by other researchers such as Kim (1981) and Min (1999).

Access to mainstream opportunities: In Chapter 3, I described this in terms of the ways in which supplemental education programs provide access to mainstream institutional agents and paths that most minorities need to be successful, but are often blocked. According to classical assimilation theories, new immigrants, with little English language proficiency, few marketable or transferable skills, and limited information about their new homeland, tend to cluster in ethnic enclaves upon arrival and rely on co-ethnic networks and social institutions to find housing, jobs,

and their way around. Often, these supplemental programs provide job opportunities, academic competition, and community support. In many instances, they serve as a bridge that connects Korean immigrants to, rather than isolates them from, the mainstream society by making their social life richer and more comfortable. Although Korean immigrants encounter a relatively open education system and abundant educational opportunities on one hand, they often find blocked mobility on the other. This often results in self-determination, ethnic enclaves, and in this case, Korean entrepreneurs that foster a perception in their children of education as the only possible means for social mobility.

Korean supplemental education programs also serve as an intermediate ground between the Korean immigrant family and the American school. By extension, these programs might be seen as vehicles for overcoming exclusion and ostracism, for attaining versions of social justice that these Korean immigrant families deserve. Not only do they help immigrant parents to learn about the American education system, the program facilitates their making the best of the system in serving their children without requiring involvement in formal schools. Through this program, Korean immigrant parents are indirectly but effectively connected to formal schools and are well-informed of the specifics crucial for their children's educational success. The social capital arising from participating in Korean supplemental education programs is extremely valuable in serving this particular goal.

Conversely, according to what I learned in my study, these same institutions can sometimes act as a roadblock inhibiting assimilation and eventually preventing Korean immigrants from moving beyond their enclaves. For some, maintaining a distinctive attachment to an ethnic community or institution can facilitate intergenerational mobility of ethnic group members while for others it inhibits mobility (Foner, 2001). For example, the director of the

supplemental education may one day pass his successful business on to his Korean sons.

However, for others who attended the programs, it may have inhibited their ability to interact in mainstream society.

English-Language Acquisition: In Chapter 3, I described English-Language Acquisition in terms of the value placed on learning in English. Both parents and students understand that acquiring fluent acquisition of the English language is vital to their success in the schoolwork and their careers, both in South Korea and the United States.

The importance of English is another salient feature of Korean education, significant for students who do not leave the country as well as for students who emigrate. The value of attaining and mastering this language is astronomical. Therefore, ethnic supplemental programs that offer English courses also serve as intermediate ground between the immigrant home and the American school, helping immigrant parents—especially those who do not speak English well—learn about and navigate the American education system (Zhou & Kim, 2006, p.13).

For many recent Korean immigrant students, learning English is their only way of leveling the playing field and being academically competitive with their American classmates. Thus, it is one of the most immediate goals that they undertake as they are often enrolled in ESOL classes upon arrival in regular schools. In many instances, their only way out of those classes is through learning English as quickly as possible. Since being an ESOL student is a stigma to both Korean parents and students, acquisition of the English language is crucial to academic success.

Socioeconomic status: In Chapter 3, I described socioeconomic status in terms of how this Korean community established and maintains economic capital. The establishment of a closed, intergenerational network of first-generation Korean parents and their children helps

reinforce economic mobility of its community members because money is being brought from South Korea and circulated within the Korean community (Portes & Zhou, 1993). In order to provide their children with an academic advantage, it is often necessary for these parents to spend their own personal funds, which means they must possess adequate economic and social resources in the first place. Many of these resources, Korean parents have brought with them from South Korea to the United States.

According to my research, many Korean Americans have been able to financially endorse supplemental education programs within their communities because of their entrepreneurial achievements. There has been much debate about the factors that influence certain immigrant groups to demonstrate a propensity for entrepreneurship.

Since a large portion of Korean entrepreneurship is located in the peripheral economy catering to the lower strata of the American population, Korean immigrants work very hard for low economic rewards. Although a large proportion of Korean immigrants have successfully moved away from marginal occupations by establishing businesses, it is questionable whether the business operations provide real economic and social mobility for Korean immigrants, considering their work environments and economic rewards. In addition, if entrepreneurship is truly the only path that disadvantaged minorities can follow to get ahead, it will be valuable to find out whether the ways Korean immigrants take to become entrepreneurs are applicable to other disadvantaged ethnic groups, minorities, or women.

The supplemental education programs that exist in this Korean community are more than just educational institutions. They represent an ethnic institution that is oriented towards social mobility and builds upon social capital. The students who attend this program have the opportunity to secure educational and potentially economic benefits because of their

participation in this ethnic institution that they have demanded and supported in their community. Thus, the program serves as a vehicle for overcoming the disadvantage that immigrant refugees face in trying to build a new life in a new country.

Sacrifice: In Chapter 3, I described sacrifice in terms of what Korean parents and students surrender, including their family structure, financial means, and time in order to ensure that every educational opportunity is available and utilized. Korean immigrant parents believe that academic success is the road to their children's success. According to my informants, they believe that by sending their children to such institutions, they will not face the same cultural and language barriers that faced them. If they are to succeed, they must be smarter than children from other ethnic groups. In order to achieve this goal, they are willing to go to extreme measures.

The theme of sacrifice was sprinkled throughout my study as I found children living away from parents, children and parents sacrificing family time, and enormous amounts of money being spent; all in the name of education and all becoming increasingly normal within this community. Some parents moved to college towns where they desire for their children to attend while others send their children away to live with family members or in some cases strangers. In many instances throughout my fieldwork, the idea that students just need to focus on studying and working hard and the parents will take care of everything else was a resounding sentiment from both the students and their parents.

However, in many instances it was the Korean students who sacrificed their creativity and ability to move beyond the academic and career choices their parents wanted. Sometimes, it was the free time that students gave up. Most often, I found that these students part with their individuality and self-identity as they attempt to make their parents happy and fulfill the life course their parents have for them. Although the students in my study discussed feeling pressure,

none of them discussed any delinquent behaviors or erratic behaviors resulting from the pressure they feel. However, experts on Korean American youths have pointed out that issues such as suicide, gang activity and separation anxiety can arise as a result of the sacrifices these families often make in the name of education (Yu, 1998). However, throughout the study, themes I expected to be crucial such as gender and race did not present themselves as critical categories during the study. It was the data that I collected from my interviews that really flushed out the themes by providing evidence for the superordinate themes that emerged in my study. These themes provided me with a strong foundation which I used to offer my analysis of the data I collected during the research process.

Conclusions

The study of Korean supplemental education in the United States is a new area of inquiry, and there is relatively little in the way of literature on this subject, although ongoing research is emerging (Kim, personal communication, 1999). There are few studies or ethnographies that appropriately evaluate the factors such as relationship of cultural background and academic development; whether cultural traditions and emphasis have a sizeable or unique effect; which cultural traditions seem to matter the most; and effects of supplemental programs on student performance in regular school or on standardized tests. By extension, my study shed light on the students' regular school experiences in comparison to their supplemental education experiences. While ethnicity cannot be simplified into either a structural or a cultural measure, it does encompass values and behavioral patterns that are constantly interacting with structural and community circumstances. Determining the effects of Korean supplemental programs requires more study, of which my research is but one example.

Throughout my study, I documented the educational, social, and economic contributions of supplemental education programs within this Korean immigrant community. My study showed how ethnic supplemental education programs can function not only to promote the value of education and culture, but also to ensure its actualization. However, I did not provide a detailed quantitative correlation between attending supplemental education programs and grades in regular schools. Nevertheless, the sheer number of supplemental education programs that exist and their increasing diversity offer compelling testimony to the high academic engagement of many Korean Americans and the local orientation toward academic success, an intriguing topic for future research.

Supplemental education is a frontier, particularly in low-income communities and it appears to be a new terrain for scholarly inquiry. However, for other minority students, it may even be a solution that represents opportunity. It could provide essential components for lessons and models for other minority communities, immigrant groups, and refugees.

Nonetheless, a critical difference between Korean and American students needs to be noted. In the Korean and Korean American community, supplemental education programs serve primarily enrichment needs for higher achieving college-bound students, whereas other supplemental programs in the United States, such as Kaplan and Sylvan, serve to primarily meet remediation needs of lower achieving students through various Title I programs. Further, Korea and the United States have had very different responses to such programs. Private tutoring in Korea is seen as a threat to public education and has been regulated by the government, whereas private tutoring in the United States is seen as bolstering public education and receives support from the government in the form of grants and additional federal funding. While supplemental education is catching on in other minority communities, it is often in the form of remediation, not

enrichment. In other words, the supplemental education programs supported by the government of the United States attempts to put a band-aid on a wound that has been festering for years.

Private tutoring may very well function as a double-edged sword. On one hand, private tutoring stems from collective needs for providing supplemental education as compensation for limited schooling opportunities and from individual needs for academic remediation. On the other hand, private tutoring often serves high-achieving students for enrichment or college preparation to those who can afford it, which may erode the idea of equal educational opportunities as envisioned by public schooling. The policy versus community challenge is capitalizing on private tutoring as bolstering academic excellence and equity in public education, while counteracting its potential threats to public schools. In this community, this Korean immigrant community has taken responsibility for the academic success of their children and thus provided a significant competitive edge to these Korean American students.

I learned significant knowledge regarding the students' views on the work they did as well as the limited role of the teachers. However, in a wider sense, this program prepares these children to excel in a regular public education classroom that asks awfully little of these students in comparison to what they are required to do within the program. As mentioned in Chapters 4 and 5, the academic expectations both in South Korea and within Korean American supplemental education programs are significantly higher than that of many American schools. Whether through increased amounts of homework and reinforcement, more academic time on task, or constant assessment and feedback, the requirements within this cultural phenomenon are striking.

The parents have established a community within which to prepare their children to be the best academically and have set the stage for them to have successful futures simply by

engaging them in an environment that demands they be responsible for putting forth their best effort. While it is clear that some students and parents do not follow through with the expectations, according to my subjects, they are definitely benefiting from being engulfed in the learning that is taking place within this program. In other words, the students are nevertheless consistently surrounded by education materials and in an academic setting; thus getting the symbolic, cultural, and habitual support they need to succeed whether they complete their homework every night or not.

Implications

The study of Korean supplemental education obviously plays a significant role in the academic performance of Korean students. While I would generally presume that this results in a positive impact on children's academic development and on community development, a more in depth inquiry is certainly needed to ascertain this. In addition, the impact of such programs might be observable at the group level, and may partially explain the forthcoming academic achievement patterns of Korean children in the United States as well as the current patterns, since supplemental schools have been a part of Korean education since the seventies (Bhattacharyya, 2005).

This is increasingly valuable because often, when accounting for Asian American academic achievement, parental involvement and ethnicity are given as important contributing factors (Sue and Okazaki, 1990). Recent studies show that, even after controlling for parental socioeconomic characteristics and family incomes, Asians outperform non-Hispanic whites who, in turn, outperform blacks and Hispanics by a significantly large margin (Li, 2003). Unfortunately, even these factors are often overshadowed by a cultural discourse positioning Asian Americans as a homogeneous model minority. Researchers document the value of

education, the work ethic, and the nuclear family as common explanations for Asian American children's educational achievement. Thus, Asian American achievement has been basically understood to be a result of this group's purportedly inherent cultural values and characteristics.

However, the role of supplemental education, prevalent in Asian communities is consistently overlooked. To leave out the value of supplemental education programs would mean ignoring important social and economic contexts within which to frame all students' academic achievement (Lew, 2006). African American parents, Latino immigrant parents, or Asian immigrant parents all stress the value of education, and the children of these minority groups probably agree that education is imperative in occupational achievement. Yet, only Asian Americans as a group seem to have the upper hand in actualizing that value (Li, 2003). As a result, my research may have some important implications for future education policy and research.

Of course, supplemental education has been proposed and implemented before. Programs have been developed as interventions in order to improve the life chances of those with very limited socioeconomic resources. Chapter 1, Title 1 funds reportedly reach fifty-one thousand schools, including over 75 percent of the elementary schools in the United States, to provide supplemental education services to low-achieving students in poor areas (Kober, 1991). There are not only many programs, but there are reportedly many good programs for urban residents. Schwartz (1996) reports that in most urban communities there are good after-school programs that parents can choose to provide extra learning opportunities but this is not necessarily true of rural areas. Just as the literature on family resources makes frequent reference to certain findings about the characteristics of families that facilitate scholastic achievement, the literature on after-school programs suggest generally that these programs have a positive influence. By some

accounts, there are already many supplemental programs, and many good programs to serve ethnic groups or the poor. However, they are not as in depth, historically rooted, or academically proven as Korean supplemental education programs.

One must have some reservations about the programs described in the scholarly literature and the availability of supplemental education systems. After reviewing the supplemental education efforts mentioned in the literature of both private efforts and Chapter I, Title I efforts, which report both availability of the programs and mostly favorable impacts, several critical observations can be made. According to Bhattacharyya (2005), regarding other non-Chapter 1, after-school, and supplemental efforts, many take place one or two days a week or less, and even as little as a one-half-hour a week, or on a pullout basis, and thus offer insufficient exposure or regularity. Many are optional for children and result in irregular attendance. Many rely on volunteers, and may thus lack continuity of mentoring as well as a diverse or culturally responsive curriculum.

Bhattacharyya (2005) also suggests that many are run by schools, similar to Chapter 1 programs, and may replicate the shortcomings of standard school pedagogy, including teacher fatigue, lack of parental control or input, and little diverse or co-ethnic faculty. Finally, many programs target adolescents and are not maximizing risk prevention or enrichment starting at younger ages. This leaves a gap in the supplemental program system at the elementary school level, which Chapter 1 programs are left to fill. However, Chapter 1 programs are often remedial and potentially stigmatizing rather than enriching in character and have been shown to have fallen short of intended goals over the last thirty years, despite some positive impacts (Borman and D' Agostino, 1995).

Urban areas in general may not have as many options for students of all ages or economic backgrounds or as complete a system of supplemental education as exists in Korean ethnic enclaves. In addition, many urban communities may lack programs that are community based, self-determined, or well-informed by parent's investments and needs (Bhattacharyya, 2005). According to Bhattacharyya, one of the apparent quandaries of Chapter 1, Title I supplemental education is that supplemental education for the poor becomes compensatory education and by definition temporary. In some cases, if students improve to the desired standard, they are no longer eligible to participate, but if the program does not show improvement occurring among students, then it becomes ineligible for funding. However, to truly meet the goal of leaving no child behind, programs such as these are incredibly relevant.

Despite Chapter 1, supplemental education for those who may need it the most may be lacking and limited to compensatory education, as contrasted with programs providing continued enrichment. This also leaves a large gap in supplemental summer programs. This break should increasingly concern scholars and educators since studies have found that loss of knowledge over the summer or during non-school times may be particularly high for students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Morse, 1992). According to my observations, few students of other minority groups who enroll in the program actually complete the entire summer program, alluding to a difference in values regarding education. Furthermore, the availability of summer enrichment programs seems even more limited for less advantages communities or students who are performing poorly academically.

It is known that supplemental education can have a positive impact, particularly if designed in certain ways. As I found in my study, having physical activities, structure, and clear limits, positive interaction with adults and peers, diversity of experience, and an understanding of

what parents and children want from the criteria for successful after-school programs, other researchers have too (Marx, 1989). In addition, reaching the goal of improving preparation of students to attain high achievement in secondary school and beyond depends on beginning at the elementary school level, especially for the educationally disadvantaged (Levin, 1987). Children who have more supervision (Folsom, 1991) and continued and lengthy academic engagement and mentorship show the greatest positive academic results. Seven or more years of supplemental education produce better results than one or two years, and may even be necessary to make a difference for some boys (Fuerst and Fuerst, 1993).

Of course, Korean after-school and summer day-school programs do not always meet all of the recurrently mentioned criteria of successful after-school programs in the scholarly literature. However, overall they form a system that does appear to meet many of the above criteria. Korean supplemental education programs appear to be densely situated, age diverse, exhibit program diversity and curriculum diversity in a structured and developmental manner, and are designed to suit most working parents' schedules and budgets (Bhattacharyya, 2005). They seem to be interested in doing a good job and compete with each other, providing parents with choices that almost always include small classes, engaged students, and energetic teachers. However, the intricacies of events that take place within such institutions have not been well documented. I hope this study begins to fill that gap within this field of research.

However, the influence of the program is by no means uniformly positive. Tremendous pressure are on the children as well as on the parents to achieve which can lead to intense intergenerational conflict, rebellious behavior, alienation from the networks that are supposed to assist them, and even withdrawal from regular schools. While the program is open to any student who desires to attend, there are very few other ethnicities found within the program.

As a society, we have not been tolerant or supportive of the efforts of various ethnic groups to create their own schools or embrace cultural traditions, particularly the more these initiatives are situated in public space. Historically, there has been an outcry over the use of public moneys for developing African American male academies as well as the case in which Southeast Asians studying together as a group came into conflict with the library they used because the other patrons disliked listening to their discussions even though the students argued this method was a cultural tradition (Bhattacharyya, 2005). Even private programs have come under siege. In Los Angeles, the Korean schools have been threatened with state-enacted shutdown. Rather than create barriers to initiatives that seem ethnic or different, perhaps we should support the broader development of co-ethnic initiatives.

Implications for the Theoretical Perspective

During my field research, I conducted numerous interviews and follow-up interviews with all participants, observed classes at the program daily, and collected a series of school documents. Thus, the study draws upon data from participant observation, background surveys, document analysis, and open-ended interviews. I applied a series of strategies to ensure the credibility of the findings of this study. The most important credibility enhancing strategy was the use of data triangulation using multiple sources and methodological triangulation using multiple methods of confirming findings.

Within this study, two perspectives were used to understand the nature of the educational and cultural experiences of Korean American students in supplemental education programs that serve as educational and cultural institutions as well as local equivalents to *hagwons* and are transplanted from the home country of South Korea. Looking back on my research, I invoked the perspective of symbolic interactionism, hoping it would provide me with a lens from which to

view issues such as language, communication, identity, interrelationships, and community (Crotty, 1998). This proved to be true as I gathered individual perspectives of self-identity, group identity, and development by observing the informants in their social interactions. However, the most telling aspect of using social interaction was the finding of coordinated action (Couch, 1992) throughout the interview responses. It seemed as if the existence of shared pasts and a shared heritage often permeated the responses of the informants and contributed to their alignment of meaning within the actions they had taken to ensure educational excellence.

While this perspective provided particular assistance and was a constant thread throughout the study, it was actually a phenomenological perspective that allowed me to capture the essence of the students' experiences as I sought to understand this phenomenon. The phenomenological approach, primarily used to capture practical matters from the perspective of those being studied, allowed me to see the supplemental education program as the students saw it. In many instances, what emerged in my data was a series of accounts by the informants of their value of the program and what it meant to them. In many ways, guided by the words of the participants themselves, the study shed light on the role and function of a Korean supplemental education program in Georgia and its relationship to Korean American students' experiences in their public schooling. In conjunction, both symbolic interactionism and phenomenology enabled me to find and develop meaning by observing critical interactions and explaining significant statements given during the fieldwork.

Comparative elements were woven in throughout my study. In several instances, the influences of borrowing aspects of education were clear between the United States and South Korea. Additionally, by comparison, the informants delved into their views of many aspects of the student's regular schooling experiences in Georgia's schools, often in relation to experiences

in the South Korean education system. As a result, the comparative elements of the study, including comparing places as described by Manzon (2007), comparing systems, as described by Bray & Kai (2007), and comparing cultures, as described by Mason (2007) were pivotal ingredients in the study that helped to explain the educational components that Korean immigrants have transplanted from South Korea to the United States. In this emergent design, the information on the South Korean educational system served as a backdrop for my case, built during my field data collection.

Limitations to the Study

I recognize some limitations of the study that I proposed to undertake. First, I was operating as an African American female studying members of a different racial and ethnic community. My study was initially influenced by the fact that I am an outsider conducting research within the Korean American community as well as my historical knowledge of the relationship between African Americans and Korean Americans and how I may be perceived as the researcher.

Second, the consequences of Korean immigrants' commercial activities in African American neighborhoods should be further studied, since a large proportion of Korean businesses are located near African American neighborhoods, and the neighborhoods are antagonistic to Korean merchants. Although there have been studies done after the Los Angeles riots that suggest that the hostility is induced by a mutual misunderstanding of cultures, more studies should be done for a better understanding between the groups to reduce further conflicts and animosity while enriching research done between different ethnic groups as described by Foner (2001 and Min (1999).

As a classroom teacher, I recognize that my preparatory research as a non-Korean has been inundated by the idea of the remarkable success of Asian Americans and the label of the “model minority.” As a result, I intentionally attempted to look beyond this label and thus acknowledge the challenges the participants face within these institutions as well. As an educator, the curriculum, instruction, and the structure within the Korean American supplemental program was critical for insight regarding the academic experience of the participants. However, I recognize that there is more to these programs than academics and those components need to be given substantial attention as well. I went into the research having acknowledged my biases and subjectivities.

Second, although observed students during the Korean American after-school and summer supplemental program, I recognize that I did not have additional access to the Korean *hagwons* in South Korea beyond my limited interaction at one *hagwon* and a few formal schools during my visit to South Korea. Due to the fact that access to such institutions are incredibly limited and research regarding the intricacies of this phenomenon have not been substantially documented, there is a lack of scholarship in terms of what transpires within the walls of these Korean institutions. Thus, I relied on the contacts I established in Korea to present a more intimate portrait of the intricacies of education in South Korea.

Third, I focused on one *hagwon* in Georgia in Gwinnett County for my data collection and one Korean supplemental education program is only one component of the larger Korean community. Therefore, another limitation of the study is that my findings from one case would not be generalized to other contexts or to all Korean American communities and programs in other parts of the United States, but I can identify extrapolations (Patton, 2002) applicable to

other situations under similar, but not identical, conditions. Given the nature of my study, extrapolation provided a logical alternative to generalizability.

Though I expected to find links to the home country of Korean Americans and a consistency of educational endeavors, I was quite surprised by what did not emerge in the case. While gender is a major issue in South Korea, it never came up in my field research. In addition, race was mentioned in limited fashion in a few interviews but was not a major theme that emerged in the study. I recognize that the emergent design of the study allowed me to gain insight throughout the research process, but I recognize that I cannot generalize to other contexts or other immigrant groups. However, I do feel as though my insights and what I have learned is valuable as future research is conducted.

Recommendations for Future Research

Further inquiry into Korean supplemental education and determination of their potential transferability as an educational strategy is increasingly practical. Individual communities may be able to integrate these strategies with their own, as well as design and adapt these strategies in ways that are unique to their needs. Successful, yet isolated programs already exist in many communities as a result of sheer will, but densely situated programs could have an even stronger impact.

I hope my study has shed light on why so many communities are turning to outside educational resources. The time has come for educators to examine the elements of the whole educational process, including acceptance of diversity, that are so strongly valued in ethnic and cultural communities that they are willing to invest their time, money, and effort in making sure those needs are met. A diverse community of learners has become the rule instead of the exception. Therefore, it is apparent that if the needs of the students who have traditionally been

labeled as minorities are not met, the majority of them are taking it upon themselves to create, endorse, and utilize supplemental education programs in order to ensure that the children of their communities have an opportunity to succeed.

Given that increasing numbers of Asian American parents in today's schools are first-generation immigrants with limited English proficiency and knowledge of the U.S. education system, it is imperative that schools reach out to parents and provide appropriate resources. It is critical for schools to provide adequate bilingual assistance and translated materials so that immigrant parents are equipped with resources that enable them to be actively involved in schools. If many parents are not fluent in English, many students may have stronger language skills than their immigrant parents. As a result, they may depend on their children to interpret for them and help them understand school norms and expectations especially if they are not comfortable speaking with monolingual teachers or administrators about their children's schooling. Thus, the bilingual outreach efforts by school staff could be an important aspect of parental involvement for Korean immigrant parents.

Unfortunately, when minority parents do not receive the support they need, they often turn to outside resources. Many Korean immigrant parents find support from other parents who speak their native language. However, in addition to schools, it is nonprofit and community based organizations that arise in transnational communities, which also provide resources for the growing numbers of immigrant parents and children. In the context of the growing number of post-1965 immigrants and their children as well as their settlement in concentrated metropolitan areas, public schools will be faced with a new set of challenges. Education policy and research could benefit from taking into account the needs of these changing schools and the students attending them, especially when those students are forced to navigate their problems without

adequate support and intervention because of the model minority discourse that paints Asian American students as invisible entities who have few, if any, problems in schools.

Determining the effects of Korean after-school programs and summer programs will require further study. Nonetheless, the sheer number of schools and their diversity offer compelling testimony to the high academic engagement of many Korean Americans and the local orientation toward academic success. Supplemental education created themselves may do as much, if not more, for communities. We need to support ethnic group supplemental programs and take down some of the hurdles that stand in their way. Enabling people to open ethnic-owned and operate educational businesses calls for greater direct funding in the form of loans and grants for community development. We should expect academic development for all students, but this must be coupled with the resources that enable all students to value education and help families do something about it. I dare to conclude that this may even be more realistic or efficient than changing a public education system that opposes change at every juncture. Not only could this stand a chance of addressing the needs of diverse families and spilling over to boost local economies, but it could be the difference between the schools we have known in the past and the schools we desire to have in the future. Thus, learning from examples such as the one I studied could be insightful to the way the United States approaches education.

Summary

In retrospect, my study underscored the importance of learning about the internal circumstances and contextual realities within an immigrant community. These need to be studied to fully understand the complexity of such communities and to see past stereotypes such as the “model minority.” In the case of the Korean American community in Atlanta, and likely also in others, the reality included not only successes (owed to programs and a dense support network)

but also negatives such as pressures on students, intergenerational conflicts, and tensions within the community. The interface between the Korean American community and the mainstream society (as well as other minority groups) is a complex one.

The value of qualitative inquiry, such as in my study, is that it allows one to begin investigating this complexity, learning from the experiences and perceptions of insiders. There is a rich story inside the Korean American supplemental program that my study enabled me to learn about. I would be eager to continue this learning process through follow-up research or even long-term study to discern aspects of continuity versus change. I would also be interested in investigating the nature of the relationship between the Korean American programs and Korean American students' performance in regular school, a study that would likely demand a mixed design of ethnographic and also possibly quantitative analysis of performance scores and other data.

The present study does have practical implications for educators working with Korean immigrant families in the United States. Many of the participants expressed their struggle with adjustment processes for themselves and their children of becoming an American and remaining a Korean, which caused difficulties for several families. There is a need for schools to provide immigrant parents and children with opportunities to build their new identity in the United States. A suggestion is that schools could hold meetings for particular groups of ethnic immigrant families, focusing on identity issues. This kind of meeting might benefit both the immigrant families and school educators. School educators could learn the issues that immigrant parents and children face and the cultural characteristics they value. Immigrant families could learn more about American schools, teachers, and broader cultural contexts. They could also

meet other families in the meetings and build networks to support themselves practically and emotionally within regular schools.

In closing, this dissertation research has provided me with greater insight into what schools in general might do to provide students of all backgrounds with the best chances for success. I have also learned much about the importance of parental involvement, structure, and curriculum related to cultural relevance. This learning experience will serve me as I move into the next phase of my career as an educator and scholar.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Research Matrix

Research Questions	Rationale	Data Sources	Analysis Methods
(1) What are the general features and characteristics of the South Korean educational system? (2) What are the general features and characteristics of Korean supplemental education programs? (3) What aspects of Korean heritage influence participation in such programs?	1) To understand the background/foundation from which the local equivalent of “hagwons” originated; 2) Global and comparative context of education.	Scholarly literature In-depth interviews (taped) and field notes (parents, teachers, staff, students) Curriculum/instructional/ policy documents	Informal content analysis Coding (Structural and microscopic) Document analysis Transcribed Interviews Analytical and methodological memos
(4) What roles do supplemental education programs have in the lives of Korean American students who are enrolled in them? (5) What are the characteristics of the teachers, parents, and students of the educational community? (6) What functions do ethnic supplemental education programs perform to contribute to the overall educational achievement of Korean American students?	1) Relevance of supplemental education in the Korean American immigrant community 2) Identify strategies which could potentially be used in other minority communities 3) Korean American achievement in public schools/ cultural empowerment 4) Asian Americans are the least studied minority group in the United States	Curriculum/instructional/ policy documents Participant observation In-depth interviews and field notes (parents, teachers, staff, students) Physical artifacts within program Archival records Photographs Personal research Survey/Questionnaire	Coding (Structural and microscopic) Document analysis Transcribed Interviews Analytical and methodological memos Visual content analysis Triangulation of data sources Analyzing for context/themes/ categories Typologies Peer review Member checks
(7) What are the perspectives of Korean American students, parents, and community members with regards to involvement in supplemental education programs?	1) Need for emic perspectives to understand a growing phenomenon within this community	Open-ended survey Participant Observation In-depth Interviews ESOL documents	Analyzing for context/themes/ categories Analytical and methodological memos Transcribed Interviews Coding (Structural and microscopic)

APPENDIX B

Student Assent Form

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in my research project titled, "***The Role of Hagwons and Their Supplemental Education Programs in Georgia's Growing Korean Immigrant Community.***"

The reason for the study is to explore the nature of the educational and cultural experiences of Korean American students in supplemental education programs in Georgia, as transplanted from the home country of Korean immigrants to the United States. I hope to learn something about Korean American culture and education from this study.

If you decide to be part of this, you will allow me to work with you during class and talk to you about your participation in this program, which will be audio-taped. I will not use your name nor will I identify you in any way in my study. Additionally, I have taken the precaution of giving you a false name so your identity will not be linked to the learning center. The research is not expected to cause any harm or discomfort to you.

You are free to participate or not in this project. Your decision to participate or not in this project will not affect your grades in school. If you want to stop participating in this project for any reason, you are free to do so at any time. You can also choose not to answer questions that you don't want to answer.

If you have any questions or concerns you can always ask me or call my faculty advisor, Dr. Diane Napier, at the following number: 706-542-7399.

Sincerely,

Keisha Nalty

Workforce Ed., Leadership, & Social Foundations, University of Georgia

Phone: 770-904-0785 / E-mail: Kjnalty2@uga.edu

I understand the project described above. My questions have been answered and I agree to participate in this project. I have received a copy of this form.

Signature of the Participant

Date

APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM

I, _____, agree to participate in a research study titled "KOREAN AMERICANS: THE FUNCTION OF HAGWONS AND THEIR SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN GEORGIA'S GROWING KOREAN IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY" conducted by Keisha Nalty from the Department of Workforce Education, Leadership, and Social Foundations at the University of Georgia (627541-810-092-1510)) under the direction of Dr. Diane Brook Napier, Department of Workforce Education, Leadership, and Social Foundations at the University of Georgia (091-706-542-7399 USA). I understand that my participation is voluntary. I can refuse to participate or stop taking part without giving any reason, and without penalty. I can ask to have all of the information about me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

The reason for this study is to explore the nature of the educational and cultural experience of Korean American students in supplemental education programs, as transplanted from the home country of these students to the United States. If I volunteer to take part in this study, I will be asked to do the following things:

- 1) Answer questions about my role in Korean supplemental programs.
- 2) Answer questions about the functions do ethnic supplemental education programs and academic achievement.
- 3) Answer questions about Korean culture and heritage.
- 4) Take part in discussion about the role of the programs in the community and surrounding schools.
- 5) Take part in discussion about the future of the programs, its meaning within the Korean community, and its faculty, staff, administration, and students as groups associated with the school.
- 6) The researcher may ask me to clarify my information or ask follow-up discussion.
- 7) My information will be kept confidential

No risk is expected but if I experience some discomfort or stress during my conversations or interactions with the researcher, I can ask that the interview /conversation/interaction be ended. I understand that I am under no obligation to offer my opinions if this makes me feel uncomfortable in any way. I understand that my interviews will be audio-taped.

No information about me, or provided by me during the research, will be shared with others without my written permission. Anything I say or offer will be kept in the strictest of confidence and my name will not be used in association with the perception or opinion I offer. I understand that the investigator is only interested in the issues as they are seen by me as a member of a group at the program center (teacher, administrator, staff person, student, etc). The investigator will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project.

I understand that I am agreeing by my signature on this form to take part in this research project and understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form for my records.

Keisha J. Nalty _____

Email:
kjalnty2@uga.edu

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

APPENDIX D

Background Survey

Please fill in the blank or circle the answer for the following 1-23 questions.

1. Sex: Male _____ Female: _____
2. Grade Level: _____ Age: _____
3. Where were you born?
 - a. United States (skip to #5) b. Korea c. Other _____
- 3b. How often do you visit Korea?
 - A. Every year b. Every 3 years c. Every 5 years d. Every 10 years e. Never
4. If born in Korea, how old were you when you came to the United States? _____
City of Residence _____
5. Where was your father born? _____ mother? _____
6. How many siblings (brothers and sisters) do you have? _____
7. Are your parents married? _____
8. Are both of your parents currently living with you? _____
9. What is the highest level of education your father has completed?
 - a. Graduate school b. College c. High school d. Elementary school e. Unknown
10. What is the highest level of education your mother has completed?
 - a. Graduate school b. College c. High school d. Elementary school e. Unknown
11. What is your father's current occupation in the United States? _____
12. What is your mother's current occupation? _____
13. What language do you speak at home?
 - a. English only b. Korean only c. Both Korean and English
- 14a. What language(s) do you read and write?
 - a. English only b. Korean only c. Both Korean and English

14b. How often do you speak Korean with.....

	Never	Sometimes	50%	Usually	Always
Parents	()	()		()	() ()
Grandparents	()	()		()	() ()
Sibling	()	()		()	() ()
Students at JEI	()	()		()	() ()
Friends		()	()		() () ()

)

15. How would you describe the level of your involvement with Koreans in school and in the community?

- a. Very active b. Somewhat active c. Not active at all d. unknown

16. Why do you go to JEI? (Check as many as are true)

- a. My parents want me to b. I want to learn Korean c. I want to be with my friends d. I want to learn about Korean culture e. Other:

17. Do you believe it is important to learn Korean language and culture?

- a. Strongly believe b. Believe c. Not sure d. Do not believe e. Strongly not believe

If you believe it is important, why?

If you believe it is not important, why?

18. What would you do with your time if you were not enrolled in JEI?

19. How much of the Korean community activities do you share in common with your parents?

- a. All Korean activities b. Some Korean activities c. No activities d. Unknown

20. Are you eligible for a Free Lunch Program? _____

21. How long have you studied in JEI? _____

22. Are you planning to go to college? _____

23. What is your approximate Grade Point Average? _____

Please submit the form to the researcher. Thank you.

APPENDIX E

Interview Guide

Date: _____ Time: _____

Basic Information: Subject: _____

__Staff __Parent __Student __Faculty

__Gender

__Age

Questions: Students

1. How long have you been at this supplemental education program?
2. **Describe what you do when you are here. Activities? Subjects? What is the purpose of this supplemental education program?**
3. **How is your time spent here different to that in regular schools?**
4. How does your time here help you/not help you in regular school?
5. Why do you attend this program?
6. How long will you attend this program?
7. Do all Korean American children attend such programs? Why or why not?
8. What do you want to do after school?
9. **How do you think this program will help you reach those goals?**
10. **What else do you do here besides schoolwork?**
11. Do you like/dislike your time here? Why?
12. Who are your teachers?
13. **What do you think your teachers think of you as an individual? As a part of this program? What have they done for you?**
14. What do your parents do for a living?
15. Is there anything else you would like to tell me?

Questions: Adults

1. **Can you tell me about your experiences working with the students/parents/staff at this program?**
2. Why have you/your child been enrolled in this program?
3. **Can you tell me about the structure of the program?**
4. What is the purpose of this program?
5. How many years has the program been in existence?
6. How many teachers and students attend the program?
7. How is the program financed?
8. What are the educational and occupational backgrounds of the parents?
9. How much education, teaching experience, and teacher training have the teachers had?

10. Can you describe the role of the students, teachers, director, and parents within the program?

11. What ethnic group makes up the majority of the students in this program?

12. What is your ethnic background?

13. How does Korean culture influence the program, if at all?

14. How effective is the program in retaining Korean culture?

15. What are some of the strengths/benefits of this program? What are some weaknesses/challenges of this program?

16. What, if any, benefit does this program have on the students who are enrolled in this program?

17. What is the relationship between this program and public schools in this community?

18. Do you feel public schools in the area have met your academic needs? Why or why not?

19. What is your perception of Korean American students in regards to academic achievement?

(Items in **bold** are priority questions in this study.)

Research Questions

(1) What are the general features and characteristics of the South Korean educational system?

(2) What are the general features and characteristics of Korean supplemental education programs?

(3) What aspects of Korean heritage influence participation in such programs?

(4) What roles do supplemental education programs have in the lives of Korean American students who are enrolled in them?

(5) What are the characteristics of the teachers, parents, and students of the educational community?

(6) What functions do ethnic supplemental education programs perform to contribute to the overall educational achievement of Korean American students?

(7) What are the attitudes of Korean American students, parents, and community members with regards to involvement in supplemental education programs?

APPENDIX F

Sample Transcript

Interviewee #2 (Teacher)

KN:

Can you tell me a little bit about your experiences working with the students at the learning center?

Interviewee 2:

Well, I worked with the students at the learning center for one summer. I had 2nd grade, 3rd grade, and 4th grade and I taught them math over the summer. My experiences, I was very impressed that all classes were full. I had at least ten students in every one of my classes and they met Monday through Thursday from 8 in the morning until 12 in the afternoon and we drilled math the whole time. Um, they would switch, of course I had like 2nd grade in the morning for an hour, 3rd grade for an hour, then 4th grade for an hour. They would go to Math, Social Studies, and maybe Piano or computer lit until 12. Um, and it was impressive to see the students come ready to learn. You know after you go to school for eight months, these students did not have a summer break; they went to school year-round. Um, though I will admit that maybe not all of them may have been, were extremely excited to be there everyday, but the parents definitely were very excited to have them there and made extreme sacrifices to get them to the center. They had jobs, they had work, and not all the students went to school from 8-3. It was sometimes 8-12 and the parents had to be there to pick them up. Um, the one thing that also impressed me about this

center, lunch was provided completely by the parents and this was a large center, well over a hundred students along with the faculty that parents each day with massive lunches and supply. It was an impressive learning center.

KN:

Why would you say or what would you say is the reason that parents enrolled their kids in this center? What do you think was the motivation in that?

Interviewee 2:

I would say that a, well I would say there was a few motivations behind that. I know that not during the summer, but during the regular school year a few of my colleagues worked with the students especially in reading and language arts; a lot of the younger students reading and language arts. I think one of the motivators there was so that their child would be completely engulfed in English language so that taking tests, listening to the teacher in the classroom, because these students were completely Korean. I don't believe that I met any other nationality other than Korean at the center. Uh, I think, they did not want there to be a language barrier to be what was affecting their child in school. And I would say the second reason, probably the larger reason of the two, was to ensure that their child was a step ahead of everyone else in the classroom when school started. We were doing, for example, in the summertime, if I was teaching 4th grade math that summer, every one of my students in that class was not yet in fourth grade so they were learning the 4th grade curriculum before they walked through the door. And it was a highly enhanced curriculum; in two months we were going to make it through the fourth grade curriculum. That is not to say that some of those students were not in Advanced Math to begin with, they may be, but we definitely were covering the curriculum that they were going to

see the next year. So, it's almost like coming to school was a review for them. They already had the material, which I would say helped numerous kids in school.

KN:

Okay, do you think that or what would you say you learned about Korean culture while you were at the center?

Interviewee 2:

I would say one thing that I was impressed with was the length that the students who, the students who I taught parents would go to to give them that step ahead to give them umm a, jump on the I want to say, the competition. I think they viewed it as, it's interesting here in Georgia now, the parents are really pushing to extend summer break. They say the students don't have enough time off; they don't have enough time to spend with their family. Yet a large percentage of our Korean population, here in the Duluth area, were bringing their students to the learning center. As a matter of fact, I want to say it was the largest enrollment of any learning center in the area and they were there for one reason and one reason only, to get a leg up on the competition. Um, these were 2nd graders, 3rd graders, and the motivation has to be to prepare them for college, to get them ready for college. So, I would say their views upon education and where that can get you may differ a little bit. It could be just the simple fact that now that, we as Americans, expect our children, especially in this area, they are going to college. There is no well, what will happen, maybe they'll get in, they're going. Now what college they're going to, who knows. Where I think with maybe our Korean, some of our Korean families, they are here because their parents are highly educated. They are in uh-top technological fields, medical fields, and so on.

KN: Uh huh

Interviewee 2:

And they know exactly where they want their child to go and they might even know exactly what they want their child to learn when they do go to that college and they see the learning center as a way to start them on that track right now. Ah, though school is very important, they're gonna do whatever it takes on top of that to get them into what they know to be a successful program.

KN:

What would you say was your role at center and then what would you say was the student's role at the center? Was it more teacher oriented you know, lecture, you lead or did the students have some responsibility as well? What can you tell me about that?

Interviewee 2:

Well, as a teacher, I've been teaching for four years. It was completely different from what we do in our classrooms. In the classroom, it is in my classroom, 60 to 65% teacher led and the rest student led. At the learning center, that was not what it was. I was more of a go to answer guy. I would show them the technique in math and then we would drill and the students would work on it. And quite frankly, a lot of the students already knew it. I was just there to go around and check to be sure they were on the right track, but it was wholly, at least 90% student motivated and numerous times I would have parents come to me and ask me what more could their kid be doing outside of the center (surprised tone). And I was quite surprised by that because for an hour we did at least five to six worksheets and they wanted more and they were gonna go home and work more on what we were doing. So, it was heavily student focused. Umm, very few of the students at the center were what I would term unmotivated. There were a few, don't you know, don't take me wrong. There were definitely those kids who were management problems, who were not motivated, did not want to do the work, but they were by far the

minority. The majority of the kids came ready to do the work and they absorbed it and wanted more. It was almost as if they knew why they were there and they knew what they could get from being there. Many of the students had been going to that center for years and I think as they got older they realized, hey I am in these advanced classes not only because I am a hard worker but because I am always infused in this educational world. And that's not to say they were heavily, you know, there were times. Even the center had the afternoon that was set for PE, they had gym, they were playing soccer, they were playing on the playground. Every Friday they had some sort of field trip planned whether they were going swimming or they were gonna go down to the park or they were going to the zoo. Uh, so I think there was that balance though it was still, it was a lot of learning. I know the center holds classes during the school year. So, some of our students, when they get done with school go for another two hours at the center and maybe don't get home until 8 o'clock to do the things that they like to do.

KN:

What would you say or what do you feel are some of the benefits of this program for the students? What do you feel like they are getting out of it and what do the parents think that they are getting out of it? I guess, what is the purpose of the center?

Interviewee 2:

I would say the major purpose of the center is to reduce the knowledge lost over that two-month summer break. Not only do they not lose any of the information because they are using what they learned in the school the previous year all throughout the summer. They are then gaining the extra information that we are teaching them in their, ah, advanced curriculum. Then, maybe they get a week of and they're right back into the school again. And they're, they don't skip a beat. You don't have a chance to uh, not be geared up in the morning when you wake up for school

because for the last two months you have been waking up at the same time getting ready for school. You may be, as you are maturing, learn some new techniques from the teachers at the center; organizational techniques, uh, study techniques, note-taking techniques that you now can use in the regular classroom. I don't think there is any knowledge lost. There's not that um, doldrums of when we get our students back from the summer break, we've got to spend the first two to three weeks going over again (loud) what it means to be organized, what it means to get working on time. Math teachers constantly, maybe even for the first three months have to review last year's math concepts. These students don't need that. They, here is no need for review, they have been learning the whole year through which is why I think public schools going to year round school would be a very interesting avenue.

KN:

Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences at the learning center?

Interviewee 2:

I will admit this, as a teacher, teaching over the summer and then going right back to work the next year, I was burned out from teaching. It took a few weeks for me to really reinvigorate myself and get going and that's my profession and that's my love, so I think there has to be some scaffolding and safety measures involved in the process because if an adult who has chosen the teaching profession is burned out just after one summer working with kids all year, I can only imagine what the kids are feeling with regards to learning and being in a school setting all year-round without that break. So, but I will admit I did not see much burn out with the students, so their parents are definitely doing something right. There is something there, so for now I'll say it's a good thing.

KN: Thank you so much for taking the time out to do this interview. Appreciate it.

Interviewee 2:

You're welcome.

APPENDIX G

JAE Rules and Procedures

A Better Life through Better Education.

2007 Summer Enrichment Program Rules

Classroom Rules

- Always be courteous and respectful for one another's personal space, belongings, etc.
- Students are to listen and follow the instructions of all teachers
- Food, gum, drinks, and any other similar provisions are only allowed in designated areas
- Electronics and other materials that may disturb the classroom are prohibited
- Classrooms are to be quiet at all times
- Be cautious of dangerous areas; do not lean or step on the windows, especially 2nd floor windows
- Classroom door is to be kept open before and after class
- Lights are to be turned off and chairs are to be stacked when leaving the classroom.
- After class there is no returning, so please take all of your belongings
- Please also respect and keep the classroom clean: such as keeping floor, tables, and white board clean

Hallway Rules

- Hallway areas are designed to be quiet – since there are other classrooms in session
- Students are to be walking at all times
- There is no roller skating, running, or any hazardous behavior; roller skate type shoes are not allowed
- Please also respect the church's artwork and materials in the hallways

Community Center Rules

- Students are to listen and follow the instructions of all teachers
- Destructive behavior is not allowed; ie. Hanging on the curtains, chairs, and chair stackers
- Rails, ramps, and the stage are off limits
- Please also respect the servers and the center by cleaning after yourself and your area

Recess / Outdoor Activity Rules

- Safety for the students and teachers is JEI and KCPC's number one priority – so please avoid hazardous areas and prevent dangerous behaviors
- Always be courteous and respectful for one another's personal space, belongings, etc.
- Allow the children to have fun; too much restrictions can lead to rebellious behavior
- Hard balls such as footballs, basketballs, baseballs are to be only used in outdoor designated areas – please also share and respect all equipments
- Please avoid forest/woody areas
- Teachers must be monitoring the classroom at all time; students are to be in teacher's sight of the designated area.
- Safety is First

Recess / Indoor Activity Rules

- Safety for the students and teachers is JEI and KCPC's number one priority – so please avoid hazardous areas and prevent dangerous behaviors
- Allow the children to have fun; too much restrictions can lead to rebellious behavior
- Only soft, low level equipments are used indoor, please respect the facility
- Please also share and respect all equipments
- Railings, stage, ramps, chairs, and other hazardous apparatus are restricted to both teachers and students – these areas are prohibited
- Teachers must be monitoring the classroom at all time
- Safety is First

Teachers please consider the students' safety first, by preventing any hazardous behavior

I have read the following rules and I confirm that I understand it. I will also honor it and accept the consequences if I break the rules.

Student's Name _____

Gr. _____

Student's Signature _____

Date _____

K~12, Math, Language Arts, Reading & Writing, SAT, ESOL

APPENDIX H

Classroom Visitation Schedules

Grade	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
K-2	10:00-12:00		10:00-12:00		*None
3-5		8:00-10:00		8:00-10:00	*None
6-8	9:00-11:00		9:00-11:00		*None
9-10	All	All	All	All	*None
11-12	All	All	All	All	*None

* Field Trips are scheduled on Fridays

APPENDIX I

JAE Program Rules

2006 Summer Enrichment Program Student Rules.

Parking:

- 1) Parents should stay in the car until we open the door to help your child out.
- 2) Children will be seated quietly until all the parents are lined up in the parking area.
- 3) There will be no running or playing on the fences or in the Kids land playground.

Hall ways:

- 1) No rolling shoes are allowed.
- 2) Please do not vandalize any work on the walls.

Bathroom:

- 1) Please use the right amount of toilet tissue to prevent flooding.
- 2) Washing your hands is required to keep our children healthy.

Classrooms:

- 1) Please do not open the windows to prevent breaking them.
- 2) Please do not touch any air conditioning controls.
- 3) One dry erased marker will be given to each teacher.

P.E:

- 1) Please do not kick the ball too high or onto the glass windows.
- 2) Stage is always off limits.
- 3) Keep the ALL doors closed to preserve the air conditioning.

Lunch Time:

- 1) We will be calling parents the day before to help us set up with the lunch.
Our lunch time will be: 12:30 am- 1:20 pm

Thank you for your time and interest.

APPENDIX J

JAE Report Card

Summer School Report Card 1
2002-2003

Last Name	First Name	Homeroom Teacher	Grade

ENGLISH	Teacher: Weakness	MATH	Teacher: Weakness
Strength		Strength	
Comments		Comments	

Academic Grade

Universe	Attendance	Attitude				Test Score				Comp 1	Comp 2	Total
		E	M	S.S	Total	E	M	S.S	Total			
Total Possible Points												
Your Score												
Class Average												

* Comp 1: Math Olympiad Comp 2: Spelling Bee

Learning Center

APPENDIX K

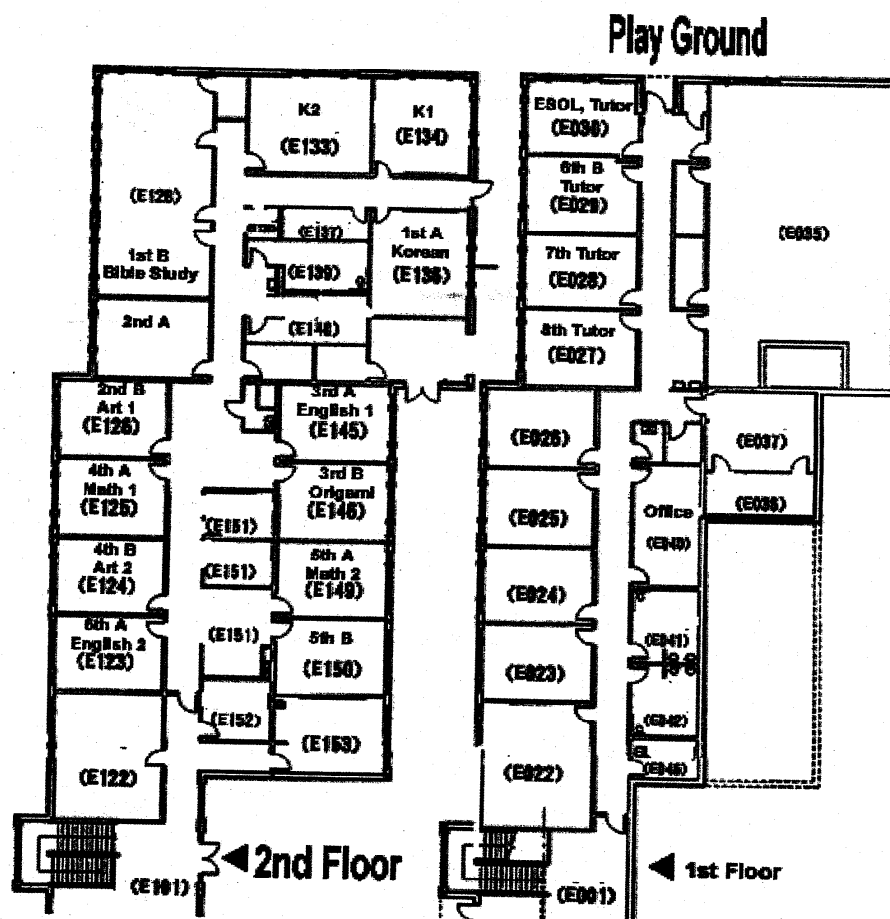
Sample Lesson Plan

Eighth Grade English Lesson Plans
 Teacher
 Summer 2007

June 4 TKAM Chapter 1 Spelling Unit 1 (pp. 0-11)	June 5 TKAM Chapter 2 Reading Selection 1, 2, 3	June 6 TKAM Chapter 3 & do W/S Grammar 1-5	June 7 TKAM Chapter 4 Grammar 6-10 Quiz
June 11 TKAM Chapter 5 Spelling Unit 2 (pp. 16-25)	June 12 TKAM Chapter 6 & do W/S Reading Selection 4, 5, 6	June 13 TKAM Chapter 7 Grammar 11-15	June 14 TKAM Ch. 8 Grammar 16-20 Quiz
June 18 TKAM Ch. 9 & do W/S Spelling Unit 3 (pp. 31-39)	June 19 TKAM Ch. 10 Reading Selection 7, 8, 9	June 20 TKAM Ch. 11 Grammar 21-25	
J u n e 2 5 TKAM Chapter 12 & do W / S Spelling Unit 4 (pp. 4 4 - 5 1)	June 26 TKAM Chapter 13 Reading Selection 10, 11, 12	June 27 TKAM Ch. 14 Grammar 26-30	June 28 TKAM Ch. 15 & do W/S Grammar 31-35 Quiz
July 3 TKAM Ch. 16 Spelling Unit 5 (pp. 56-63)	July 4 TKAM Ch. 17 Reading Selection 13, 14, 15	July 5 TKAM Ch. 18 & do W/S Grammar 36-40	July 6 TKAM Ch. 19, 20 Grammar 41-45 Quiz
July 10 TKAM Ch. 21 & do W/S Spelling Unit 6 (pp. 68-79)	July 11 TKAM Ch. 22 Reading 16, 17, 18	July 12 TKAM Ch. 23 Grammar 46-50	July 13 TKAM Ch. 24, 25 and do W/S Grammar 51-55 Quiz
July 17 TKAM Ch. 26, 27, 28 & do W/S Reading 19, 20, 21	July 18 TKAM Ch. 29,30, 31 Reading 22, 23, 24	July 19 TKAM Test Grammar Test	

APPENDIX L

JAE Building Map



APPENDIX M

Photographs



Duluth Community Shopping Center



JAE Campus Directory



JAE Students



