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What Cultural Identity Do You Have? Korean Diasporic Community and News Consumption

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Abstract

Digital diaspora, a new type of diaspora prompted by the expansion of communication technology, plays a central and integral role in providing immigrants with alternative spaces for changing the traditional sense of belonging. National consciousness becomes essential to formulating one's cultural identity in globalization. It is, in particular, critical for people of diaspora because their place of living differs from that of origin. Drawing on an analysis of one of the largest online Korean diaspora communities in the United States ([www. MissyUSA.com](http://www.MissyUSA.com)), this research explores how digital diaspora members shape their cultural identity between their homeland and host country. This study illustrates how they respond to the news of two countries and intends to determine how their news consumption patterns reflect the diaspora members' cultural identity. While diaspora members mainly consume Korean media and communicate in Korean, they sustain a more positive attitude toward the U.S. than Korea. This study demonstrates that digital diasporic members' cultural identity cannot be fixed or inclined toward a specific country. Rather, it tends to vacillate between the two nations with which they identify and enhance a sense of belongingness within their diasporic community.

Contributor Note

Hojeong Lee is a doctoral candidate in the Klein College of Media and Communication at Temple University. Her dissertation and other research projects have included the following field of study: digital media, cultural studies, global communication, identity studies, and digital humanities. Her dissertation, entitled *A journey of discovering diasporic identity: Korean diaspora, digital media, and identity*, explores the interplay among communication technology, Korean diasporic communities, and their cultural identity construction process. She is currently researching how online discussion and discourse have originated, and how they have motivated social offline movements.

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Introduction

Diaspora provides a vantage point for examining whether the binding force of a national identity, deeply rooted in a territory, and its accompanying culture still play a visible role in the globalized world. People of diaspora experience globalization every day: they encounter and negotiate two different cultures and identities – those of their homeland and the host country. Immigrants may feel estranged because they oftentimes do not expect to be fully accepted by the host society (Safran, 1991). Nor do they attempt to go back to their homeland either, as 'their integration into the mainstream of receiver societies [progresses]' (Morawska, 2011: 1039). The development of digital technology and communication has contributed to reshaping preexisting forms of diaspora. It has helped immigrants access their homeland's media directly. It has further made interactions with other diasporic members more convenient and prompt. They can obtain news of the host country more easily using their online ethnic media. These changes become social forces to influence the diasporic community and its members' identity. To grasp how their identity has been constructed and re-shaped, it is necessary to understand what media contents people of the current diaspora consume, and how they interact with one another based on their media consumption within their diasporic community.

Digital diaspora

With the advent of the Internet, immigrants start to connect with people in their homeland directly and instantly.

Such direct communication encourages members of diaspora to strengthen their sense of belonging to the homeland. Just as print media have played a key role in constructing a national identity in modern society (Anderson 1983), digital media have become influential in constructing the national consciousness of migrants in the globalization. Digital diaspora refers to this new type of diaspora, spurred by the expansion of new technology. It is 'the distinct online network that diasporic people use to re-create identities, share opportunities, spread their culture, [and] influence homeland and host-land policy' (Alonso and Oiarzabal, 2010: 11). Digital diaspora has provided an alternative space to change people's traditional sense of belonging. A number of scholars have focused on how digital diaspora has helped immigrant community members communicate with one another and understand the political issues related to their host and home countries (Lee 2013; Wenjing 2005; Siddiquee and Kagan 2006; Morley and Robins 1995; Srinivasan 2006; Tsagarousianou 2004). Some researchers have argued that digital diaspora has even empowered diasporic communities in a political context (Mitra 2005; Ginsburg et al. 2002). Ding (2007/2008) pointed out that digital diaspora has provided immigrants with opportunities to influence politics, including foreign policies in the motherland, and even the motherland's national image-building. Several studies exist on how the identity of diaspora has been constructed, based on digital diaspora. Melkote and Liu (2000) claimed that digital diaspora has enhanced the cultural values of the Chinese diaspora and has created a sense of integration among their diasporic community. This digital diaspora has united the Chinese





diasporic community and has facilitated communication among immigrants (Wenjing 2005); moreover, it has helped Chinese immigrants create an image of China as a stronger version than as an actual one (Chan 2005). These immigrants are indeed 'between the structural force fields of both home and host social systems, and as a result they are in a position not only to question, even to subvert, much of their previous authenticities, authorities, identities, and cultural practices' (Naficy, 1993: 7). Pre-established social links through space (Giddens 1990) no longer work, and a new sense of identity needs to be constructed on the basis of a virtual space. In this light, digital diaspora plays a crucial role in providing a new form of space for diasporic community members.

Digital media and the identity of diaspora

The identity of diaspora is closely linked to relationships between the homeland and the host country. The position of the motherland in the global community can be influential as to whether immigrants' experience of ethnicity in their host country is enhanced or limited (Tsuda 2001; Carstens 2003). The role of media is essential in this process of recognition. Alonso and Oiarzabal (2010) noted that great changes occurred in the migration experience after the advent and development of the Internet and digital communication media. While immigration has represented a complete rupture from the motherland previously, networked (digital) media have enabled immigrants to connect to the motherland (Castles and Davidson 2000; Mitra 1997). Indeed, media technologies have helped people not only how to

communicate, but also how to construct their social environment (Meyrowitz 1985). The anonymity inherent in digital communication has even helped immigrants with semi-legal or illegal status to be embraced within the community (Reips 2002). These technologies have also changed '[the] overall model of the communication circuit, the range of discourses at the disposal of the audiences, and the foundations of communication as social and cultural phenomena' (Morley, 1995: 300-302). The Internet and online environment have made it easier for people of diasporic communities to connect with one other, both in their motherland and host country. Also, immigrants' choices among various media contents of their homeland and the host country are critical. The consumption of news media, for instance, can have significant impacts on immigrants in the process of their identity formation because news media reflect a type of reality. It introduces and reproduces for its audiences a specific way of understanding and perceiving the world (Berglez and Olausson 2011). As a result, media consumption becomes a social practice that demonstrates immigrants' social integration (Christiansen 2004). Immigrants' news choice can be implicative in showing how they perceive their motherland, host land, and themselves. Several studies involving analysis of the news consumption patterns of immigrants have found that immigrants are more likely to watch homeland or ethnic media. Such media let immigrants concentrate on news about their homeland more than that of the host country (Lin and Song 2006; Seo and Moon 2013) and help people strengthen their ethnic identity (Lee 2004), in that it helps them directly access their





homeland. However, immigrants' host country news consumption and the particular topics of the motherland news that interest them have been rarely discussed in previous research.

To understand the identity of diaspora from a study of daily activities, such as news media consumption, not only the origins of the news they read, but also the contents of the news need to be analyzed. Afterwards, one can finally demonstrate how digital technology enables people of diasporic communities narrate and articulate their identity. This research explores how digital diaspora members respond to the news of two countries, their homeland and host country, and intends to determine how their news consumption patterns reflect the diaspora members' cultural identity. Drawing on discourse analysis, this study will address the following questions: 1) What country and topics of news are diaspora members interested in? ; 2) How do they respond to each news story? ; and 3) How do they narrate their cultural identities with their news consumption?

Research method and research material

Texts contain discourses that consist of 'ongoing negotiation or struggle over meaning and common sense' (Fürsich, 2009: 247). The discourses represent how their users signify the world and construct meanings (Fairclough 1992). To understand these discourses, not only texts, but also 'a link in a chain of texts, reacting to, drawing in, and transforming other texts' (Wetherell et al. 2001:233) need to be studied. Discourse analysis, therefore, can provide an opportunity to glean the meanings and cultural practices of a society. In this regard, this

study undertakes discourse analysis to analyze the postings of one of the largest online Korean diaspora communities in the United States (*www.MissyUSA.com*). Korean people started to immigrate to the United States in the early 1900s. Since the U.S. Immigration Act of 1965, there has been a major increase in the number of Korean immigrants. Given its long history and large size, the Korean immigrant community in the United States serves as a good example for understanding the current diaspora. There are some online Korean diasporic communities in the United States, such as *HeyKorean.com* and various web pages created by Korean ethnic media companies. Most of the online communities are based in major cities, so their users in the region can share information. Buy-and-sell advertisements, such as those on *Craigslist.com*, are primarily the main contents in such online communities. It is difficult for the users to interact with one another or share any sense of belonging in this kind of online community. There are more interactive online communities for Korean immigrants: *Mizvill.com* and *MissyUSA.com*. Both of these online communities for Korean female immigrants aim toward active interactions among their members; thus, advertisements and job postings are not the main contents in these communities. In particular, *MissyUSA.com* has the largest number of members. Initiated as a small cybercafé in 1999 by a group of women who were the wives of Korean international students in the U.S., this website became an independent online community with its own server and domain name in 2002. Currently, it is a website that has received an estimated





1,700,000 visits per month on average.¹ It has become a very interactive online community 'not only among female Korean immigrants but also for Korean immigrants in general because part of the site can be accessed by non-members' (Lee, 2013: 475). Thus, I chose *MissyUSA.com* as an ideal example to determine what topics interest and create robust discussion in the current Korean diaspora.

The contents and directories of the online community cover a variety of matters concerning the lives and needs of immigrants. There are several sub-boards to share information about daily life, laws, recipes, education, and entertainment. Many of these sub-boards are anonymous. Such anonymity encourages people to freely share their thoughts and feelings, and seek information and advice from other members without the risk of revealing their private lives. Among these anonymous sub-boards, this research focuses only on one sub-board, called 'hot issues, society, and politics'. It is a virtual place where its members post various political news articles and social issues that they think are interesting, and others respond to them in threads. The postings of this sub-board often discuss the local and political news of Korea, the U.S. and a few other countries. Given an analysis of this sub-board, I expect to understand what kinds of social and political issues particularly interest the participants.

I collected every post on this sub-board for six months from 1st December 2015 to 31st May 2016. Given that the 2016 U.S. Presidential election is approaching, and several important political events,

¹ Missyusa.com traffic was estimated by <http://www.trafficestimate.com/missyusa.com>

such as the filibuster and national assembly election happened in Korea, the past six months is ideal timing to examine which country's issues have interested Korean diaspora members. Members often posted entire or parts of news article of specific topics and add their opinions about the issues. There were 13,507 postings uploaded on the sub-board during this six-month period. Only postings that had been read at least more than 2,500 times were selected for the analysis². Among a total of 3,449 selected postings, about 58% involved Korea-related news and 32% involved U.S.-related news. Given the analysis of these postings, this research aims to understand which topics and which country's news interest the diaspora members more, and how they narrate each subject. It attempts to elucidate the diaspora members' news consumption patterns, and furthermore, how they negotiate their diasporic identity between their motherland and host country.

Findings

1. Korea-related news postings

As table 1 (following page) shows, the community members read more Korean news than U.S. news or world news. There were a total of 1,991 postings on the board discussing local, social, and political issues in Korea. In particular, they engaged more in local news than political news.

² The number each posting has been read varies. Most of the postings have been read about 1,112 times on average, so I considered that postings with more than 2,500 views dealt with popular topics that have interested the members.



Topic of the posting		Number	(%)
Korea-related News	Local News	1,172	57.7%
	Political News	819	
U.S.-related News	Local News	533	31.6%
	Political News	172	
	Korean Immigrants' Community-Related News	386	
World News	Local News	145	10.7%
	Political News	222	
		3449	100%

Table 1: Percentages of postings depending on topics

Topics		Number	(%)	
Local News	Crime/ Incident Reports	Incidents	305	59.5%
		Domestic violence	58	
		Elder/child abuse	226	
		Sex offenses	108	
	Social issues		130	11.1%
	Economics	Business news	98	18.7%
		Gossip about conglomerate families	121	
	Hot issues in Korean media		93	7.9%
Other topics (i.e., religion)		33	2.8%	
Total		1,172	100%	

Table 2: Popular topics in Korea-related news postings (local news)

Topic		Number	(%)
Political News	Critiques	142	17.3%
	News Reports	63	7.7%
	Filibuster	100	12.2%
	Politicians	189	23.1%
	National Assembly Election	176	21.5%
	Sewo/ Ferry Disaster	74	9%
	Agreement with Japanese Government on 'Comfort Women'	31	3.9%
	Diaspora	3	0.3%
	News Reports by International Media	24	2.9%
	U.S.-Related News	17	2.1%
Total		819	100%

Table 3: Popular topics in Korea-related news postings (political news)



Among the various topics, people focused on crime and incident reports. They tended to pay attention to several crimes that were highlighted in the Korean media due to their brutality. In a series of postings, members explained what had happened, how shocking the crimes were, and sometimes compared these cases to similar ones that had previously occurred in the U.S. Besides these sensational crime reports, they focused on cases of domestic violence, child/elder abuse, and sexual offenses. Also, economic news seemed to be one of their interests. Approximately 19 percent of their Korean local news postings dealt with business and industry news in Korea. However, the content of these postings tells a different story. A significant portion of related postings (69%) did not mention Korean economics, but rather gossip of Korean conglomerate families, such as their divorces and affairs. Other issues that had been aired on Korean media or religious news also drew the community members' attention.

Given the analysis of their Korean local news postings, the topics they care about are often connected to the members' realm of daily interests. They could easily feel involved in social concerns such as family issues, crime and incidents, and gossip that they could relate to via the media, even if they were not currently living in Korea. For instance, although Buddhists are in the majority in Korea (Korea Gallup 2014), all of the religious news that the community members had posted on the sub-board was about Christianity. Religion, in particular, Christianity, has played a critical role in Korean immigrants' lives (Min and Jang 2015). Indeed, the members' skewed religious news preference in reading Korean news

proves that they tend to access only selected news topics. Moreover, their Korean news consumption patterns do not indicate that Korean immigrants have interest only in Korean society, or only in the U.S. society. Rather, it shows what their interests in their daily lives in the U.S. are. Forty-one percent of Korean news postings discussed Korean politics. In particular, the National Assembly election of 13th April and a record-breaking South Korea filibuster in February were highlighted on the sub-board. There were rich discussions on these two political events. People posted news reports of their diverse political perspectives, criticized or supported politicians' speeches, comments, and moves. Community members indicated a negative stance on the current Korean government and ruling party, the *Saenuri* party, in most of their related postings. However, there was a lack of discussion regarding the politicians' election pledges or their practicality in depth. Rather, they tended to focus on events or news reports that they could watch in real time. The media exposure helped immigrants maintain their interest in several social issues in Korea. This explains why the filibuster speeches on anti-terrorist legislation and the national assembly election were such popular topics on the sub-board. People could watch the ongoing situation on online, and a large number of threads about each issue were posted in a relatively short time. The relationship between Korea and the U.S. is one of the participants' major concerns. They have paid attention to how the Korean media report U.S. political news, how the Korean media report U.S. responses to political events in Korea, and how Korean society understands the Korean diaspora in the U.S.



2. U.S.-related news postings

There were a total of 1,091 postings related to U.S. news. The portion of U.S. news-related postings was less than that of Korean news, but what is noteworthy here is that the characteristics and topics of the postings were quite different from Korean news-related postings. Various social issues and serious incidents in the U.S. were the main subjects of the immigrants' virtual community. Their interests were not limited to serious crime reports, such as the San Bernardino attack in 2015 and other gun violence, but also other social issues across the country, such as the *Zika* Virus and the gorilla-shooting incident at the Cincinnati Zoo. Moreover, these stories were closely associated with information that might influence their daily lives. While one of the popular topics in Korean economic news involved gossip about Korean conglomerates, here they often discussed and shared information about currency fluctuations, exchange rates, interest rates, and gas prices, as well. In a similar vein, large numbers of postings of U.S. news dealt with specific social issues, such as insurance policies, *Obamacare*, taxation, and gun control laws. U.S. immigration laws and regulations are another major concern. Likewise, a great deal of practical information has been provided on this message board. Such information shows that participants have keenly paid attention to any news that could directly influence their everyday lives.

Moreover, 42.1% of the U.S. news postings focused on issues related to the Korean community. Urban planning, including Korea towns, incidents and crimes happening in Korea towns or involving Korean immigrants also easily

caught their attention. Participants tended to respond more promptly to these issues than other matters in the U.S. when a Korean community-related crime was reported. Community members tended to share detailed information about these events in order to prevent further damage to the community. For instance, a news report posting about a pastor's sexual offenses in Los Angeles provided the preacher's name, his picture, his church's name, and some other business his family operated. Similarly, heartwarming stories and self-made success stories of Korean immigrants received prompt responses from their acquaintances with additional related stories.

What is interesting in the U.S. news-related postings is that 18.5% of such postings discussed issues introduced in the Korean media. There are several news magazine programs in Korea, such as *60 Minutes* in the U.S. *The Its Know* is one of the most popular current affairs show in Korea, with a high viewer rate. During the past six months, several episodes of the show dealt with topics or people related to the Korean community in the U.S. (20th February, 12th March, 19th March, 28th May). When each of these episodes aired, there were huge discussions and responses about the show on the sub-board. Some postings involved sharing information about the person that the show featured; other postings were follow-ups after the show. There were even some postings that urged people to take action for resolving the televised crimes by themselves. Such evidence demonstrates that many Korean immigrants are watching Korean TV shows regularly, and the U.S.-related topics of the often show a link connecting Korean issues to their lives in the U.S.

		Topics	Number	(%)
Local News	U.S. Society	Immigration Laws	37	4%
		Information Seeking	94	10.2%
		Crime/Incident Reports	236	25.7%
		Social Issues	87	9.4%
		Economics	79	8.6%
	Korean Immigrant Community	Korea Town	39	4.3%
		Crimes/Incidents in the Korean Community	159	17.3%
		Issues in Korean Media	170	18.5%
		Successful Immigrant Stories	18	2%
Total			919	100%

Table 4: Popular topics in U.S.-related news postings (local news)

		Topics	Number	(%)
Political News	Overall Politics	Critiques	4	2.2%
		Neutral	2	1.1%
		Positive	8	4.7%
		Reports	12	7%
	Presidential election 2016	Candidates and Their Campaigns, Each possible Outcome	134	78%
	Issues Related to Korea	South Korea and Japan's Agreement on 'Comfort Women'	12	7%
	Total			172

Table 5: Popular topics in U.S. related-news postings (political news)

Topic	Number	(%)
Tidbits	145	39.5%
Issues and Politics	169	46%
Korean Diaspora in Other Countries	22	6%
Issues on North Korea	31	8.5%
Total	367	100%

Table 6: Popular topics in World news postings



The number of U.S. political news-related postings was relatively less than that of others. Mostly, community participants tended to show a positive attitude toward the Obama Administration and its performance. Compared to 20 percent of the Korean political postings that disapproved of the Park Administration in Korea, these community members were likely to be amicable to the U.S. government and its politics. One major political issue they discussed in great detail was the upcoming U.S. Presidential election. Many of their postings were detailed and analytical: not only each candidate and election pledge, but also all kinds of related information about each candidate were their concerns. They also considered any possible outcomes of the election that might influence their immigrant community, racial issues in the U.S., and U.S.-South Korea relations. Besides the Presidential election, the Korean and Japanese governments' agreement on 'comfort women' issue was another topic with a significant number of postings. After the agreement had been made on 28th December 2015, there was an angry backlash from citizens in Korea. Korean immigrants in particular paid attention to how the U.S. government responded to this event while planning a rally in Manhattan to denounce it. The analysis of both local and political news in the U.S. showed that Korean immigrants' interests are mostly limited to specific information related to their daily lives, even though they still maintain interest in the U.S. society, in general.

3. World news posting

The community members paid attention to world news less often than other news. Whereas most of the overseas

news they talked about involved tidbits, there were specific topics in which the immigrants showed particular interest. Some examples included important world issues, such as the terror attacks in Europe, the *Zika* virus, and earthquakes across the world. Their concerns emphasized not just the events, but whether each topic affects the U.S. and/or Korea. In this sense, issues about North Korea and the Korean diaspora in other countries were their main concerns regarding world news postings. These analyses indicate that the main interests of Korean immigrants always concentrate on issues related to Korea and the U.S. that may affect their daily lives, no matter which countries' news or topics they discuss.

Discussion and conclusion

i. Focused topics vary, depending on the countries

There are several things we can conclude, based on the analysis above. In reading both Korean and U.S. news, they have often discussed issues of severe crime, education, poverty, and the family. News postings with images drew more attention than other postings. If community members could watch the event in real time via digital media, more viewership and related threads ensued. This, indeed, is part of the reason that they paid particular attention to sensational crimes that happened in Korea. They could witness the crimes on television news programs or the Internet; they felt more directly involved in these cases, even though they did not live in Korea. In fact, they were very responsive and expressed their opinions fervently.

- More than 80 % of child abuse cases happen within their





houses (posting 44197, 1st December 2015).

- It is about who the Mil-yang sexual crime perpetrators are (posting 49303, 27th February 2016).
- Pyung-Taek child abuse case (posting 50421, 12th March 2016).

Part of the reason for the community members' anger and interest in these crimes is that most members are females with their own families. The safety of family members, children's education, and well-being issues are all significant concerns for them. So these members cannot ignore these relevant cases, no matter where they happen. In a similar vein, information about living in the U.S. is another of their main concerns. Immigration policies, health care information, and other germane information are critical for them to sustain a settled life in the U.S. As a result, Korean immigrants pay attention to different kinds of news, depending on its origin. Whereas they emphasize information-seeking while reading U.S. local news, their interest in Korean local news is often provocative and sensational rather than informative and practical.

ii. Relations between the U.S. and Korea matter

The members of Korean diaspora concentrate their attention on U.S. and Korea-related topics. Not only do the topics include Korean news reports about U.S. events and vice-versa, but also how the two countries perceive mutual relations between them is a key concern. They posted and shared any related

news reports, from miscellaneous to diplomatic events.

- Ambassador Mark Lippert held a Korean style birthday party for his son (posting No. 46468, 15th January 2016).
- What President Obama said to President Park (posting No. 56299, 16th May 2016).
- Korean media reported San Bernardino attack (posting No. 44230, 2nd December 2015).
- The black swan event affects not only the U.S. but also Korea (posting No. 44570, 10th December 2015).

There were also postings that discussed how the U.S. media and those of other countries evaluated ongoing social issues in Korea, or how they thought about the Korean political situation, citing the international press.

- Many international media concern the current Korean situation (posting No. 44357, 4th December 2015).
- How U.S. audiences responded to a Korean film, Spirits' homecoming (posting No. 47419, 1st February 2016).

The immigrants attempted to understand the relationship between Korea and the U.S., and how the U.S. evaluated Korea from diverse perspectives. However, their attitudes toward the two countries were entirely different. They often tended to keep their distance from the issues or the country when discussing Korean society and politics.

- I am not sure which party will win in the upcoming Presidential election in Korea, but the winner will be in trouble anyway because





- of the current mess (posting No. 51933, 31st March 2016).
- I bet that Korean people must be really embarrassed right now (posting No. 55359, 2nd May 2016).
- I am sure that Korean media never report this (posting No. 55718, 6th May 2016).

Community members indicate their negative stance toward the Park Administration and showed strong interest in the National Assembly election of April 2015. However, their critiques and interest are often found to be cursory and on the spot. Many of the community members do not have the right to vote in Korea anymore. Even if they still have the right, their current lives are rooted in the U.S., not in Korea. So their responses to the social and political issues in Korea are lukewarm in many cases.

On the contrary, they showed quite positive attitudes toward the Obama Administration and its performance. They also actively sought Presidential election information and analyzed each candidate's pledges.

- Did you see Obama's tears during the gun speech? (posting No. 45946, 5th January 2016).
- Increased insurance benefit since the *Obamacare* has been initiated (posting No. 49940, 6th March 2016).
- Taxation will be changed in this way if the candidate is elected (posting No. 52262, 5th April 2016).
- What do you expect to come after this Presidential campaign? (posting No. 48513, 20th February 2016)

- Will the result affect Korea and our community? (posting No. 50263, 10th March 2016).

They particularly paid attention to discussing any possible outcomes that might affect the Korean community in the U.S. after the election. They often shared their worries and expectations on the sub-board. Indeed, their contradictory attitudes toward their homeland and the U.S. reflect their status between the two nations. Even though many of the community members continuously claim that they have the right to vote in the U.S. as citizens, many postings showed that they still feel insecure about the status of the Korean immigrant community in the U.S. They are aware that the changing relations between the U.S. and Korea may impact their community, as well as their daily lives in the host country. In this sense, the most important topic in reading the world news dealt with issues about North Korea and how other countries reacted to them.

iii. Ongoing dependence on Korean media and language

Many postings with a large number of threads dealt with issues that aired in the Korean media. Many members of the community got to know specific topics via Korean media and responded to them in various ways. For instance, there was a news report that said many girls in low-income families had difficulty in buying sanitary napkins because of the high price in Korea.

- There is a website that we can send girls of the low-income group in Korea sanitary napkins (posting No. 57191, 30th May 2016).





Within a day, instructions on how to buy and send sanitary napkins to girls from low-income groups were posted on the sub-board, and many threads were created. If the issues were linked to the Korean community in the U.S., the responses tended to be more prompt and aggressive. After a news magazine, *The Its Show*, reported a sexual offense case between Korean immigrants in the U.S., 103 related postings were shared in three days. Later, they even tried to send a petition to the U.S. White House to reinvestigate the case. Likewise, immigrants accessed issues more vigorously if they were directly linked to the Korean community. These series of postings and responses show that many of the immigrants watched the Korean media regularly, and they also assumed that other Korean immigrants did the same.

Furthermore, not only each post, but also news articles posted on the sub-board are written in Korean. Even when community members posted local news in the U.S., many of them mentioned Korean ethnic media. This indicates that the community members mostly communicate with each other in Korean. As the analysis above demonstrates, even though Korean immigrants tend to sustain a more positive attitude toward U.S. society than that of Korea, they are still more attached to Korean language and Korean media than English and U.S. media. Many postings discussing issues on Korean media assumed that other members had watched the same episode and were familiar with the issues. However, U.S. media were rarely mentioned, except when they talked about the U.S. Presidential campaign. Thus, dependency on Korean language and Korean media was not comparable

with that of English language and the U.S. media.

Diasporic members' cultural identity is difficult to define with one country. They are fully included neither in their motherland, nor in their host land. Hall (1993) indicated that a unified cultural identity is no longer possible in the context of globalization. Rather, there are now multiple identities with 'several interlocking histories and cultures, belonging at the same time to several homes' (Hall, 1993: 362). Cultural adaptation from the host country is now added to the tradition and collective identity of the motherland in the diasporic community. The identity of diaspora, thus, encompasses 'cultures of hybridity' (Hall, 1994: 403) between the motherland and the host country.

This analysis of Korean immigrants' news consumption patterns supports that diasporic members' cultural identity is not fixed or inclined in a given country. Rather, it floats between the two nations. Their interests and perceptions on specific topics are influenced not by their cultural identities, but by various needs based on their daily lives. While immigrants prefer to communicate in Korean and are familiar with Korean sentiment, they agree with and support the U.S. system and culture more than that of Korea. This study demonstrates that Korean immigrants are in the process of negotiating their stances between the two different cultures continuously. In this process, the online community presents itself as an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983), where Korean immigrants develop and refine their identity of diaspora: it may be settled in neither of the two countries, but only in their Korean community in U.S. society. They create a unique 'we-



ness' and enhance a sense of belongingness within this transnational social space.

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