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# Community Forces, Social Capital, and Educational Achievement: The Case of Supplementary Education in the Chinese and Korean Immigrant Communities

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Extraordinary Asian American educational achievement has often been credited to a common cultural influence of Confucianism that emphasizes education, family honor, discipline, and respect for authority. Min Zhou and Susan Kim argue that immigration selectivity, higher than average levels of pre-migration and post-migration socioeconomic status, and ethnic social structures interact to create unique patterns of adaptation and social environments conducive to educational achievement. This article seeks to unpack the ethnic effect through a comparative analysis of the ethnic system of supplementary education that has developed in two immigrant communities — Chinese and Korean — in the United States. The study suggests that the cultural attributes of a group interact substantially with structural factors, particularly tangible ethnic social structures on which community forces are sustained and social capital is formed. The authors conclude that "culture" is not static and requires structural support to constantly adapt to new situations.

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The extraordinary educational achievement of the children of Asian immigrants has attracted a great deal of media and scholarly attention. The 2000 U.S. Census shows that about one-third of Asian Americans are U.S.-born and that 50 percent of U.S.-born Asian Americans between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-four have at least a bachelor's degree — a rate more than twenty percentage points higher than non-Hispanic Whites (Xie & Goyette, 2004). What is more striking is that 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. For example, Asian Americans comprise roughly 12 percent of California's population but make up over one-third of the undergraduates at the University of California campuses at Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Irvine (University of California–Berkeley, 2004; University of California–Irvine, 2004; University of California–Los Angeles, 2002). The nation's leading universities have also reported a dramatic increase in enrollment of Asian Americans, who made up 28 percent of the undergraduates at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 25 percent at Stanford, 19 percent at Harvard, and 17 percent at Yale (GoldSea, 2005). These statistics are powerful and indisputable, but they mask persistent intragroup differences, for example, Chinese and Koreans enroll in colleges at higher rates than Cambodians and Hmong (Kang, 1996; Reeves & Bennett, 2004; Zhou & Xiong, 2005).

Past studies have consistently found that ethnicity has varied effects on the educational outcomes of immigrant children. Asians fare significantly better than Whites in school outcomes such as grade point average, while Blacks and Hispanics fare significantly worse (Portes & MacLeod, 1996; Steinberg, 1996). Social scientists have attempted to explain these significant intergroup differences by developing statistical models to quantitatively measure the effects of "culture" while controlling for "structure"; in so doing, they have come up with measures that are ingenious though not fully convincing (Portes & Macleod, 1996; Sue & Okazaki, 1990). For example, the exceptional educational achievement of Asian Americans has often been attributed either to Confucianism, which places a high value on education (the cultural argument), or to immigration selectivity, which disproportionately favors students from urban middle-class backgrounds (the structural argument). In the end, however, social scientists have had to measure culture by proxies or simply by an ethnicity dummy variable, but to keep the exact meaning of ethnicity in a black box.

In this article we seek to explain the effect of ethnicity on educational outcomes through a comparative analysis of the ethnic systems of supplementary education in the Chinese and Korean immigrant communities in the United States. We trace the development of ethnic language schools and other private ethnic afterschool institutions to illustrate how ethnicity can create an advantageous social environment conducive to education. Our argument is that ethnicity cannot be simplified into a proxy for culture because it encompasses not only values and behavioral patterns, but also group-specific social structures that may be contingent upon circumstances prior to and after immigration. We use the case of the ethnic system of supplementary education to illustrate how these social structures matter, presented in four main parts. First, we review the existing literature that addresses the culture versus structure debate on educational achievement, which serves as a theoretical framework for analysis. Second, we offer a focused discussion on how contemporary Asian immigration affects the development of the

ethnic system of supplementary education in the Chinese and Korean immigrant communities in the United States, with a focus on the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area. Third, we analyze how ethnic language schools and other ethnic afterschool institutions function to create an ethnic social environment conducive to academic achievement, drawing on the conceptions of community forces and social capital. Finally, we highlight lessons drawn from the Chinese and Korean experiences for immigrant children's education and discuss policy implications.

**What Accounts for Educational Success of Asian Immigrant Children: "Culture" or "Structure"?**

Why does ethnicity have opposite effects on the same outcome measures for different groups? Specifically, why does being Asian — Chinese or Korean — have a significant advantage for educational achievement, but being Black or Latino, a distinct disadvantage, holding constant other key socioeconomic and contextual factors? The cultural argument emphasizes the effects of an ethnic group's traits, qualities, characteristics, or behavioral patterns with which the group is either inherently endowed or which it develops in the process of immigrant adaptation (Fukuyama, 1993; Sowell, 1981; Steinberg, 1996). Based on the primordial view of the cultural argument, different ethnic groups possess identifiable characteristics, that encompass cultural values, practices, and types of social networks; these characteristics were formed in the homeland and transplanted with minor modifications by immigrants in the new land, where they were transmitted and perpetuated from generation to generation (Fukuyama, 1993). According to this view, the cultural inventory that facilitates success includes high achievement value and orientation, industriousness, perseverance, future orientation, and ability to postpone immediate gratification for later rewards. Thomas Sowell (1981) calls this "whole constellation of values, attitudes, skills and contacts" human capital and believes that group differences in IQ tests and scholastic achievement represent real differences in cultural assets with which a group is endowed (p. 282). Francis Fukuyama (1993) and Yongsook Lee (1991) argue further that, just as some aspects of immigrant cultural patterns may continue in a state of uneasy coexistence with the requirements of the host country, other aspects of immigrant cultural patterns may "fit" the requirements of life there.

The emergent view of the cultural argument, in contrast, posits that cultural traits and related behavioral patterns are not intrinsic to a group but can exert an independent effect on social mobility once transmitted from the first generation and reconstructed in subsequent generations through interaction with the structural conditions of the host society. For example, Oscar Lewis (1966) maintains that urban ghettos gave rise to a particular way of living constrained by poverty, which in turn generated particular value systems that encourage fatalism, a lack of spiritual concerns and aspirations, and a present orientation fostering the desire for instant gratification, authoritarianism within the family, and male superiority. Poor families rely on these values and behaviors as a means of coping with poverty, and gradually absorb them. As a result, the urban poor establish a stable and persistent way of life and pass it on from generation to generation. Other scholars argue that marginal or oppositional social identity arises thereafter to reinforce the racial "otherness" and an ingrained racial stigma, inhibiting those marginalized or identified as "other" to realize their full potential (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Loury, 2003). Also, the low achievement of Black, Hispanic, and Native American children has been attributed to

"deficiencies" in the home or cultural skills necessary for school success (Coleman et al., 1966; Glazer & Moynihan, 1970).

Following similar reasoning, the contemporary public debate on the urban underclass also stresses the devastating effect of a "deficient" culture. In this view, an underclass culture that has arisen from residential segregation, social exclusion, and extreme poverty nurtures values that are at odds with those of mainstream society in regard to work, money, education, home, and family life. These values in turn give rise to a set of self-defeating behavioral problems, such as labor-force nonparticipation, out-of-wedlock births, welfare dependency, school failure, drug addiction, and chronic lawlessness (Wilson, 1996). Poor native and immigrant minority children growing up in such disruptive social environments are likely to develop an oppositional collective social identity that entails a willful refusal of mainstream norms and values relating to social mobility (Fordham, 1996; Kohl, 1994). The assumption is that certain minority groups lack the necessary cultural criteria to push their members ahead. These cultural arguments can be dangerous because they tend to blame the victims for their position in the lower socioeconomic strata of society.

The structural argument, on the other hand, considers ethnicity a key determinant for social mobility but assigns different meanings to it. The structural explanation for intergroup differences in educational and mobility outcomes emphasizes the role of broader social structural factors, including a group's position in the class *and* racial stratification systems, labor market conditions, and residential patterns in the host society. These factors interact with individual socioeconomic characteristics and ethnic social structures to define the meaning of success, prescribe strategies for status attainment, and ultimately determine a group's chance of success. According to the structural argument, cultural values and behavior patterns can be conducive to upward social mobility only when they interact with a wider set of structural factors, including a relatively advantageous class status with which a particular group arrived and a favorable structure of opportunity in the host society that the group encounters. For example, the children of Jewish immigrants fared better academically than their Italian counterparts who arrived in the United States at the same time. In explaining the ethnic differences, scholars holding the structural view argued that high levels of educational attainment among Jewish immigrant children were not simply accounted for by the value Jews placed on education, but by their more advantageous class background — higher literacy, better industrial skills, and greater familiarity with urban living — and also by the fact that they typically immigrated as families with the intention to settle, not to sojourn (Perlmann, 1988; Steinberg, 1981). Furthermore, because of middle-man minority status in the homeland, Jews had already developed a complex array of ethnic institutions and organizations, which allowed them to maintain extensive Jewish networks, synagogues, and other ties to cope with adversity and settlement problems (Goldscheider & Zuckerman, 1984). Upon arrival in the United States, the value Jews traditionally placed on education was activated, redefined, and given new direction when Jewish immigrants saw compelling social and economic rewards associated with educational achievement (Steinberg, 1981). In explaining Asian American educational achievement, Stanley Sue and Sumie Okazaki (1990) advance the notion of relative functionalism, which hypothesizes that the greater the entry barriers into noneducational areas, the more salient education can become as the only means of achieving mobility. They argue that Asian Americans were constrained by the structure of opportunity for upward mobility in areas such as politics, sports, and entertainment. The

experience and perception of blocked mobility in these noneducational areas thus allowed Asian Americans to devote more energy to education and disproportionately succeed in it.

**Interaction between Culture and Structure: An Alternative Framework**

We propose an alternative framework that draws on both cultural and structural arguments to explain the educational achievement of Asian immigrant children. We place our emphasis on the ethnic community, analytically treating it as a particular site in which culture and structure interact. The ethnic community thus is not simply understood as a neighborhood where a particular ethnic group's members and/or businesses concentrate, nor as geographically unbound ethnicity in the abstract. Rather, it contains a common cultural heritage along with a set of shared values, beliefs, behavioral standards, and coping strategies with which group members are generally identified. It also contains social institutions and interpersonal networks that have been established, operated, and maintained by group members. The former is what Ogbu and his associates define as "community forces" and the latter is what we define as ethnic social structures (Fong, 2003; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Ogbu, 1974; Ogbu & Simon, 1998).

According to Ogbu and his associates, community forces are the products of sociocultural adaptation embedded within an ethnic community, which entails specific beliefs, interpretations, and coping strategies that an ethnic group adopts in response to often hostile societal treatment (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Ogbu, 1974; Ogbu & Simon, 1998). Racial minorities can turn their distinctive heritages into a kind of ethnic armor and establish a sense of collective dignity. This strategy enables them to cope psychologically, even in the face of discrimination and exclusion, or to accept and internalize socially imposed inferiority as part of their collective self-definition, and to have an "oppositional outlook" on the dominant group and mainstream institutions, including education (Fong, 2003; Fordham, 1996; Ogbu, 1974; Ogbu & Simon, 1998).

While community forces shape an ethnic group's orientation toward social mobility and promote specific coping strategies and behavioral patterns, they also mediate the process of social capital formation in the community. James Coleman (1990) defines social capital as 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. Alejandro Portes (1998) suggests that "social capital stands for the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of memberships in social networks or other social structures" (p. 4). However, the formation and utility of social capital differs by class and ethnicity. Since community forces dictate the orientation, coping strategies, and corresponding behaviors of different ethnic groups in regard to mobility goals and means of achieving these goals, social capital resources that are generated from the group are likely to facilitate or hinder long-term mobility goals (Fernandez-Kelly, 1995; Fordham, 1996).

We argue that intangible community forces and social capital must be supported by tangible ethnic social structures in order to generate resources for upward social mobility beyond mere survival. Ethnic social structures are manifested in various economic, civic, sociocultural, and religious organizations lodged in an ethnic community, as well as in social networks arising from co-ethnic members' participation in them. Therefore, an examination of specific ethnic social structures, namely ethnic language schools and afterschool establishments that target children

and youth, can provide insight into how community forces are sustained and how social capital is formed within an ethnic social structure, while illustrating how culture and structure interact to create a social environment conducive to educational achievement.

**Data and Methods**

To examine ethnic social structures, we zoom in on Chinese and Korean language schools and other educationally oriented ethnic institutions in two immigrant communities in Los Angeles. Thus, our primary unit of analysis is the institution rather than the individual. Our focus on the Chinese and Koreans comes from two main considerations. First, the children of these two immigrant groups have shown extraordinary educational achievement in the United States in recent years. Second, their achievement has often been attributed to a shared cultural heritage of Confucianism that values education. By exploring the ways ethnic social structures function to promote and support particular values, we can dispel the myth of cultural advantages or disadvantages.

The data on which our comparative analysis is based are drawn from multiple case studies. First, we extract relevant data from our larger qualitative studies of several immigrant communities in Los Angeles — two ethnic enclaves (Chinatown and Koreatown) and two middle-class suburban communities with large Chinese or Korean populations (Monterey Park and Torrance). The current analysis employs our own closed-up field observations in ethnic language schools, private afterschool establishments, churches and community centers, as well as phone or face-to-face interviews with ethnic language school principals, church leaders, private institution owners, and adolescent participants and their parents.[1] Second, we extract relevant data from three other in-depth case studies of specific ethnic language schools and private academic programs in southern California. These three cases include a high school Sunday service and Bible study class at a Korean church in Torrance; a suburban weekend Chinese school in Thousand Oaks; and a Chinese-owned tutoring center in Monterey Park that provides daily afterschool services. We were personally involved at these three sites on weekends for a period of at least three months as researchers and as parents/participants.[2] In all these case studies, we kept extensive field notes and wrote memos documenting significant patterns, themes, and insights that emerged from the fieldwork along with our own interpretations and preliminary conclusions. We took a constant comparative approach to critically reexamine established theories on which our study is based and to illustrate and justify our argument (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Tse, 2001).

In addition, we surveyed the existing literature, newspapers and popular magazines, the Internet, and ethnic business directories to construct a brief history of the development of ethnic language schools and systems of supplementary education in the Chinese and Korean communities in Los Angeles. We also conducted a content analysis of media accounts, newspaper advertisements, and ethnic school curricular material from ethnic newspapers and organizational brochures.[3] Even though the combined data sources are by no means representative and generalizable, we believe that they serve our exploratory purpose well, since we aim primarily to show how cultural factors interact with structural factors to foster unique social environments and create resources conducive to educational achievement.

## Immigration and the Development of the Ethnic System of Supplementary Education

Chinese and Korean immigrants in the United States share certain similar characteristics. Both are phenotypically "Asian," hold a set of longstanding cultural values rooted in Confucianism, and have been known for prioritizing their children's education. However, they are ethnically distinct in important ways. Aside from linguistic and religious differences, they differ in their respective histories of immigration, homeland conditions, premigration socioeconomic backgrounds, and modes of incorporation in the United States. These group-level characteristics may be conceived as important structural factors for ethnic community development. In this section, we examine specific ways these structural factors interact with cultural factors to affect the development of ethnic language schools and ethnic systems of supplementary education.

### *The Chinese Case*

Chinese Americans are the oldest and largest ethnic group of Asian ancestry in the United States. They have endured a long history of migration and settlement that dates back to the late 1840s, including some sixty years of legal exclusion. With the lifting of legal barriers to Chinese immigration after World War II and the enactment of liberal immigration legislation since the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965 (also known as the Hart-Cellar Act), the Chinese American community has increased more than ten-fold: from 237,292 in 1960 to 1,645,472 in 1990, and to nearly 2.9 million (including nearly half a million mixed-race persons) in 2000. Much of this tremendous growth is due to immigration. Between 1961 and 2000, nearly 1.4 million immigrants were admitted to the United States as permanent residents from China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service, 2002). As of 2000, foreign-born Chinese accounted for more than 70 percent of the ethnic Chinese population in the United States, and 70 percent of these arrived in the United States after 1980 (Reeves & Bennett 2004; Xie & Goyette, 2004). The majority of Chinese American children were under eighteen and were coming of age in large numbers at the dawn of the twenty-first century (Zhou, 2004a).

Contemporary Chinese immigrants have come from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, unlike their predecessors who arrived in the nineteenth century, who were mostly uneducated peasants, and the first half of the twentieth century. They have come from a country where growing economic opportunities are reserved for those with either political connections or advanced degrees from the very best universities, which are highly selective and competitive. Many migrate for permanent resettlement, seeking better economic opportunities for themselves and better educational opportunities for their children; they hold a strong belief that they have a better chance in the "promised land." The 2000 U.S. Census data shows that 65 percent of foreign-born Chinese between twenty-five and thirty-four years of age hold a college degree and 91 percent have a high school diploma (Xie & Goyette, 2004). The group shows varied modes of incorporation into U.S. society, with some members seeking professional employment in the mainstream economy. Others start at low-wage work in the secondary labor market of the mainstream economy, which is characteristic of labor-intensive jobs with minimum wages, few fringe benefits, and little chance for upward mobility, or in the ethnic enclave economy hoping to move up gradually. Still others pursue self-employment. These varied modes of incorporation have led to dispersed but concentrated patterns of residential settlement in inner-city Chinatowns, White middle-class suburbs, and Chinese "ethnoburbs" (or ethnic suburbs).[4]

In both traditional Chinatowns and Chinese ethnoburbs, there has been tremendous growth of Chinese businesses, ethnic organizations, and the ethnic-language media, including television, radio, and newspapers (Zhou & Cai, 2002). The largest and most influential newspapers include the New York-based *Chinese Daily News* (formerly *The World Journal*), the U.S. edition of the Hong Kong-based *Sing Tao Daily*, and the New York-based *China Press*. In addition, the distribution of numerous nationally circulated Chinese-language daily newspapers and weekly magazines and locally circulated community papers has mushroomed in cities and suburbs with sizeable ethnic Chinese populations. Chinese-language television, radio, and online media have also been growing rapidly, especially since the early 1990s, with a strong presence in the very cities where the ethnic press has established strongholds (Zhou & Cai, 2002). The Chinese-language media help non-English-speaking immigrants find their way into various systems and institutions in American society and help promote and reinforce the mobility goals of the immigrant community.[5] In the local business and community sections of newspapers, news reports and editorials or columns as well as numerous advertisements inform the reader about business opportunities, the best timing and place to purchase a home, and how to deal with children's problems and educational achievement. For example, *Chinese Daily News* annually publishes a chart of the latest *US News & World Report* ranking of the top twenty-five colleges. In a visit to a Chinatown worker's home, we saw such a chart clipped from the paper and posted on the refrigerator. We also heard Chinese immigrants, who spoke little English, talk about these rankings during the time college applications were due. Winners of various regional and national academic decathlons who were of Chinese ancestry get front-page coverage in the major Chinese dailies, with pictures and extensive reports about their families.

Chinese-language schools have been an integral part of ethnic social structures of the Chinese immigrant community in the United States, and in the Chinese Diaspora worldwide. In the United States, Chinese-language schools date back to the late 1880s, having survived nearly sixty years of legal exclusion and associated adversarial circumstances. Just like other ethnic language schools in German, Scandinavian, Jewish, Greek, and Japanese immigrant communities, Chinese-language schools in much of the pre-World War II era aimed to preserve language and cultural heritage in the second and succeeding generations. Unlike other European ethnic groups, however, who were under pressure to assimilate, the Chinese were legally excluded from the melting pot and their children were deprived of equal educational opportunity. As a result, the Chinese had to establish their own schools to provide education and vocational training for their children (Leung, 1975; Wong, 1988).

The first Chinese school appeared in San Francisco's Chinatown in 1884 to provide a basic education for immigrant young men and the children of immigrants, with the goal of keeping their culture, customs, heritage, and language alive in the United States and of preparing Chinese young people to eventually return to China with their families (Kim, 1992; Wong, 1988; Zhou & Li, 2003). According to prior studies of Chinese-language schools in San Francisco's Chinatown, early schools were financed primarily by tuition ($4 to $5 a month) or donations from family associations, co-ethnic businesses, churches, and temples (Fong, 2003; Lai, 2000; Lai, 2001; Tom, 1941; Wang, 1996). Schools typically had one or two part-time teachers, instruction was in Cantonese, and classes were held daily for three to four hours in the evenings and on Saturday mornings, usually in the basement of a teacher's home or at a family association building. Prior

to World War II, there were about a dozen Chinese language schools in San Francisco's Chinatown, serving nearly 2,000 K-12 children. There were four schools in Los Angeles's Chinatown, and at least one each in New York, San Diego, Chicago, Minneapolis, Washington, D.C., and New Orleans. In the face of Chinese exclusion and racial segregation, Chinese schools aimed to train children to be proficient in Chinese language and culture so they could find work in Chinatown or in China; in these ways, they competed with public schools and inhibited assimilation (Foreman, 1958; Jung, 1972; Ma, 1945; Tom, 1941). In old Chinatowns, there were few other ethnic institutions serving children and youth. Chinese schools prior to World War II were entirely separated from public schools. They were criticized as having competing goals with public education, pulling children in opposing directions, and inhibiting assimilation (Foreman, 1958; Jung, 1972; Ma, 1945; Tom, 1941).

At the present time, however, Chinese-language schools have grown rapidly and have evolved to a much broader range of functions beyond the preservation of ethnic language and culture (Fong, 2003; Leung, 1975). The National Council of Associations of Chinese Language Schools (NCACLS), the largest Chinese school umbrella organization in North America, was founded in 1994, mainly by Taiwanese immigrants with associations in metropolitan areas across the country. At the time it was established, NCACLS counted a total of 643 registered Chinese language schools in the United States, with 5,536 teachers serving 82,675 K–12 students (Fong, 2003; Wang, 1996). As of 2004, two more Chinese school associations joined NCACLS, with member schools covering forty-seven states and enrolling more than 100,000 students.[6] Another large organization is the Chinese School Association in the United States (CSAUS), also founded in 1994, primarily by mainland Chinese immigrants. CSAUS has now evolved into an umbrella organization of more than 300 member schools, covering forty-one states and all major cities and enrolling more than 60,000 students.[7] Most CSAUS member schools are relatively new, coming into existence only after 1990, are located in suburban areas, and operate on weekends and/or after school year round. In contrast, the NCACLS member schools tend to be more diverse, encompassing older Chinese schools located in Chinatowns or newer suburban schools. Overall, older and smaller Chinese schools in inner-city Chinatowns have tended to decline as immigrants become geographically more dispersed, while newer suburban schools have tended to grow exponentially both in size and number. For example, Thousand Oaks Chinese School, founded in an affluent White suburb northwest of Los Angeles, started with just eight students and one teacher in 1975 and has grown into a school of 560 students and fifty teachers in its thirty language classes and twenty enrichment or cultural classes, ranging from SAT preparation for the Chinese subject test, calculation with an abacus, calligraphy, dancing, and ping-pong.[8]

The majority of the contemporary Chinese schools are nondenominational and aim not only to maintain language and culture, but also to serve the educational needs of immigrant children. Suburban Chinese schools usually operate on Saturday mornings or Sunday afternoons, offering two hours of Chinese language classes and one hour of enrichment electives, including fine arts, classic Chinese painting and calligraphy, handcraft, origami, chorus, band, dancing, *weiqi* (a board game called *go* in Japan and *baduk* in Korea), calculation with an abacus, martial arts, ping-pong, tennis, and basketball. Tuition, donations, and fundraising activities are the main sources of the school operating budgets. Tuition varies from school to school. A typical weekend school's tuition is $250 to $450 per child per semester. There are also academic tutoring classes, such as math, English reading comprehension, English composition, and SAT

and SAT Subject Test preparations. Chinese schools located in Chinatowns or Chinese ethnoburbs open on weekday afternoons and on weekends. As more and more suburban Chinese schools spring up, traditional Chinese-language schools in Chinatowns have been under pressure to change in order to be competitive with the suburban Chinese schools. For example, the New York Chinese School run by the Chinatown Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA) is perhaps the largest child- and youth-oriented organization in any inner-city Chinatown. The school annually enrolls about 4,000 children from preschool to twelfth grade, in 137 Chinese language classes and over ten specialty classes, such as band, choir, piano, cello, violin, T'ai chi, ikebana, dancing, and Chinese painting. The Chinese language classes run from 3:00 to 6:30 p.m. daily, after regular school hours. Students usually spend one hour on regular school homework and two hours on Chinese language or other selected specialties. The school also has English classes for immigrant youth and adult immigrant workers (Zhou, 1997).

The development of Chinese schools has also paralleled the development of private institutions targeting children's education since the late 1980s, such as *buxiban and kumon*,[9] early childhood education programs, and college preparatory centers. For example, the *Southern California Chinese Consumer Yellow Pages* listed ninety Chinese schools, 135 academic after-school tutoring establishments, including buxibans, fifty art schools/centers, ninety music/dancing schools, mostly located in Los Angeles's suburban Chinese community in San Gabriel Valley (*California Chinese Consumer Yellow Pages*, 2004). Students enrolled in these afterschool institutions are almost exclusively Chinese from immigrant families of varied socioeconomic backgrounds. Daily programs tend to draw students who live nearby, while weekend programs tend to draw students from both the local community and elsewhere in greater Los Angeles. Driving around the commercial core of Monterey Park, the growing Chinese ethnoburb east of Los Angeles, one can easily see the flashy bilingual signs of these establishments, such as "Little Harvard," "Ivy League School," "Little Ph.D. Early Learning Center" (a preschool), "Stanford-to-Be Prep School," "IQ180," and "Hope Buxiban." Major Chinese-language media, such as the *Chinese Daily News*, *Sing Tao Daily*, and *China Press*, publish weekly editions with educational news and commentaries and have numerous advertisements of these private afterschool institutions (Zhou & Cai, 2002). These child- and youth-oriented institutions have sprung up to join the existing Chinese-language schools to constitute a comprehensive system of supplementary education. The core curricula of these various ethnic institutions are supplementary to, rather than competing with, public school education. Many Chinese youth we interviewed agreed that going to a Chinese school or a Chinese-run buxiban or kumon program had been a common shared experience of being Chinese American, even though they generally disliked the fact that they were made to attend these ethnic institutions by their parents.

*The Korean Case*

The history of Korean immigration to the United States differs from the Chinese, and may be 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. The second wave, from 1950 to 1964, includes 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. The third and the largest wave is the contemporary period of family immigration since 1965, following the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965 (Hurh,

1998; Min, 1995). 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, mostly doctors, nurses, and pharmacists (Kim, 1987).[10] 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 100,000 in 1970 to more than 1.2 million in 2000. In that year, foreign-born Koreans accounted for nearly 80 percent of the ethnic Korean population in the United States and 72 percent of the foreign born arriving in the United States after 1980 (Reeves & Bennett, 2004; Xie & Goyette, 2004). The majority of U.S.-born Korean Americans are still quite young and growing up in immigrant families.

Like their Chinese counterparts, 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, which makes them different from the Chinese. 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 percentage of professionals and managers among immigrant nationalities (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). In addition, the highly selective immigration of Koreans since the 1960s is reflected in 2000 U.S. Census data, which show that 58 percent of foreign-born Koreans between ages 25 and 34 held a college degree, and 97 percent held a high school diploma (Xie & Goyette, 2004). Many post-1965 Korean immigrants came with families and family savings. More importantly, they relied on entrepreneurship as the dominant mode of economic integration into American society. For example, the self-employment rate for Korean Americans aged 16 years of older who were in the labor force was nearly 20% in 2000, twice as high as that for all American workers and the highest of all racial/ethnic minority groups (Center for Korean American and Korean Studies, 2002).

Korean immigrants are more geographically dispersed than the Chinese at the neighborhood level, but they are highly concentrated in just a few large metropolitan areas: Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago. 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. In the areas of high concentration, there has nonetheless been a tremendous growth of Korean businesses, churches, and ethnic media, including television, radio, and newspapers. Two major Korean newspapers are circulated widely in the United States, *Korea Times* and *Central Daily*. Both of these major papers have a weekly section devoted to education. This is one of the primary ways Korean immigrant 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. 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.

A noteworthy aspect of the Korean immigrant community has been the extensive involvement in religion, which is quite different from the Chinese immigrant community. Almost every Korean who immigrated to the Hawaiian Islands between the latter part of the nineteenth century and 1905 eventually came to be identified with the Christian faith, and the majority of contemporary Korean immigrants on U.S. soil are Protestants (Gardner, 1970; Min 1995). It is estimated that nearly 80 percent of Korean Americans in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles attended weekly services (Kim, 1992; Min, 1998). The Korean church is perhaps the single 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 (Min & Kim, 2002). Unlike the Chinese, who have long-standing ethnic enclaves and geographically bound ethnoburbs, 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; Byun, 1990; Kim, 1992).

Korean-language schools are a post-1965 phenomenon, thus having a much shorter history than Chinese language schools. 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. Similar to Chinese schools of the time, Korean schools also offered various afterschool tutoring programs in addition to language and culture classes. By the end of the 1980s, nearly 500 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 (Kim, 1992). 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 (Kim, 1992). This association receives financial support from the Korean government in the form of free textbooks for all the students in the registered schools. By 1990 there were 152 schools in the Los Angeles area alone (Kim, 1992). In 2005, the number of registered Korean language schools in the Los Angeles area has increased to 254. [11]

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 centrality of the church in the immigrant community. In smaller churches, parents volunteer as teachers and classes are taught on Sundays after the service. Larger Korean churches, the "mega-churches," usually have more formal Korean schools that operate on Saturday mornings for three or four hours and offer various academic and recreational programs. For example, Torrance First Presbyterian Church, one of the mega-churches in a Los Angeles suburb, operates the fourth-largest Korean language school in the United States, with approximately 500 K–12 students, 33 teachers, and 14 levels of Korean classes. The students meet every Saturday morning for four hours, and they sometimes stay longer if they are involved in extracurricular activities such as singing in a chorus.

The secular formal Korean-language schools resemble church-affiliated schools in structure. Among the secular formal schools, the Korean Institute of Southern California (KISC) is one of the largest in the United States, with 12 branch schools, 3000 students, and 200 teachers. Like the suburban Chinese language schools, secular Korean-language schools are held on Saturday morning. They offer two hours of Korean language courses and one hour of extracurricular activities, such as Korean folk dance, calligraphy, and martial arts. Korean schools are much more affordable than Chinese schools. The average tuition per semester for Korean school is about $180. It is even less at church-affiliated Korean schools because part of the expense is subsidized by the home church. The principles of the Korean-language schools, both secular and church based, emphasize that Korean schools are affordable for everyone and that a family's economic background should not hinder their children from learning the "mother language."

While Korean-language schools have steadily grown, a wide range of nonprofit and for-profit educational institutions have sprung up and grown rapidly since the 1990s (Bhattacharyya, 2005; Zhou et al., 2000). The most noticeable are *hagwons*, which means study place in Korean. It is 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 kinds 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 supplementary afterschool institutions aiming almost exclusively to prepare students for the highly competitive college entrance examination and to help test-takers who do not score high enough to get into their college of choice to retake the exam with a better score the following year. Because getting into one of the few elite colleges in Korea — Seoul National, Yonsei, and Korea — assume a paramount importance in the life of high school students and their families, hagwons have been institutionalized as part of the education system in Korea (Bhattacharyya, 2005). In 1996, Korean parents spent $25 billion on private education — 50 percent more than the government's education budget. A Korean family today typically spends 15 to 30 percent of its budget on private education (Lartigue, 2000). In Seoul, some of the most expensive real estate is in the Kangnam area, not only because of the high quality K–12 public schools but also because of the high concentration of reputable hagwons in that area. Unlike Korean-language schools, hagwons aim primarily at academic tutoring and may not have a core curriculum for Korean language and culture, similar to the Chinese buxibans. Like the Chinese buxibans, 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 afterschool 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 the teachers are both Korean and non-Korean. They have eye-catching names like "Harvard Review," "Yale Academy," "Smart Academy," "IVY College," and "UC Learning Institute." Even the non-Korean-owned private

supplementary 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 the college of choice. 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. Because hagwons are for-profit businesses, they are much more expensive than Korean-language schools. Monthly tuition can range from $90 to $500, depending on the grade level, subject matter, and weekly or weekend schedules. An intensive SAT summer school program complete with dormitory accommodations costs approximately $2,000. 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 supplementary education for their children.

Over half of the Korean youth that we interviewed have attended a Korean-language school for some time during their primary school years. However, with the availability of the SAT Korean-language subject test, more high school students are taking a renewed interest in improving their competency in Korean. As for hagwons, the majority of Korean youth that we interviewed has attended or was currently attending one or more hagwons. The two most common types of hagwons attended by Korean youth are kumon and SAT preparatory schools. Like their Chinese counterparts, attending hagwons has become a common experience among Korean American youth and one of the defining characteristics of being Korean American.

**Causes and Consequences of the Ethnic System of Supplementary Education**

Increased immigration since the late 1960s has paralleled the formation of a sophisticated system of supplementary education, targeted specifically to children's academic achievement in school, in Chinese and Korean immigrant communities in the United States. This particular system includes nonprofit ethnic language schools and a whole range of for-profit after-school institutions targeting children and youth. This phenomenon of supplementary education is, to our knowledge, unmatched by other contemporary immigrant groups.[12] What are the causes and consequences of this ethnic system of supplementary education? More specifically, how has it come about and what functions does it perform to contribute to educational achievement? In both the Chinese and Korean communities, we find that ethnic language schools and ethnic afterschool institutions have a shared and focused objective: to help U.S.-born or -raised children integrate into mainstream American society by fostering ethnic culture, heritage, and identity, and to provide a wide range of tangible supplementary (rather than competing) services to help children do well in regular schools and ultimately gain admission into prestigious colleges. How this ethnic system of supplementary education comes about has to do with immigration dynamics, namely pre- and post-migration group characteristics.

*The Culture-Structure Interaction*

As we have described, the development of the ethnic system of supplementary education reflects the orientation of contemporary immigration toward permanent settlement by families rather

than individual sojourning. It is important to note that in both the Chinese and Korean cases, such developments are profoundly influenced by group-specific immigration dynamics. Prior to migration, both Chinese and the Koreans lived in a country of origin where education is the single most important means of attaining social mobility; where access to quality education is fiercely competitive (and in the Chinese case, highly restricted); and where families invest a disproportionate amount of their resources in supplementary education in order to improve their children's future life chances. Direct involvement in or exposure to institutionalized supplementary education in the homeland adds to the cultural repertoire with which both middle- and working-class immigrants carry with them when they migrate.

Upon arrival in the United States, immigrants encounter a relatively open education system and abundant educational opportunities on the one hand, and "blocked" mobility on the other. This reality not only reaffirms their belief in education but also fosters a perception of education as the *only* possible means for social mobility (Sue & Okazaki, 1990). Asian immigrants also encounter the "model minority" stereotype frequently imposed on Asian Americans, which on the surface is a positive image but in fact sets Asian Americans apart from other Americans and hold them to higher than average standards (Zhou, 2004b). In this paradoxical situation, the value of education is heightened not merely as a means to enrich the self and honor the family, as Confucianism dictates, but as the most effective means for getting ahead in American society. The value of education and the means for achievement have been accepted by both middle-class and working-class Chinese and Korean immigrants.

While the value these immigrant families place on education is constantly adapting to contextual changes, its actualization always requires material support. American public education is open to all, but easy access does not ensure quality. Nor does it guarantee success. The family's higher socioeconomic status can affect educational success by adding class-based resources, such as financial, social, and cultural capital, along with access to safe neighborhoods, quality schools, and various extracurricular activities. In contrast, low socioeconomic status may subject children to poverty, unsafe neighborhoods, inadequate schools, and disruptive social environments harmful to educational achievement.

For ethnic minority members, however, family socioeconomic status may not be the sole determinant of educational outcomes. The ethnic community can also be a source of support. Chinese and Korean ethnic communities are supported by robust co-ethnic entrepreneurship. Even more importantly, the relatively high premigration socioeconomic status of Chinese and Korean immigrants enables these groups to carry over and revitalize a practice that originated in the homeland. As the demand for education exceeds what public schools can offer, ethnic entrepreneurs provide afterschool programs to their coethnics. 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 admission into prestigious schools. While contemporary ethnic businesses are a mixture of small mom-and-pop retail stores and large, upscale commercial enterprises, we now see small mom-and-pop afterschool establishments and child-care services as well as extensive and costly buxibans, hagwons, and early childhood development centers in the Chinese and Korean communities.

*Intended Objectives: Academic Enrichment and Social Support*

The intended goals of nonprofit language schools are more general. The following randomly selected mission statements are illustrative:

> [We aim] to enrich the quality of life with Chinese heritage for our children; to provide opportunity of learning Chinese language and culture; and to enhance multi-culture understanding and diversity in our communities.
>
> — Berryessa Chinese School[13]

> [We strive] to encourage students to cherish Chinese culture and heritage, foster and enhance friendship among Chinese-American community, and contribute to the mutual understanding and appreciation of Chinese and other cultures.
>
> —Hope Chinese School[14]

> The goal is to teach our children born and raised in the United States Korean culture and language so that they grow up being proud American citizens. The backbone of our teaching is Christian faith. Our main objectives are: (1) to help our children understand the parent generation and retain a harmonious relationship so that they are able to attend church together; (2) to cultivate bilingual skills in our children to enable them to meet the challenges of our global world when they reach adulthood; and (3) to improve our children's ability to comprehend, speak, read, and write in Korean, aiming to attain Korean proficiency at high school level.
>
> — Torrance First Presbyterian Church Korean School[15]

It is interesting to note in the above quotes that learning to appreciate culture and heritage is quite explicit in both Chinese and Korean cases, while keeping Christian faith, becoming "proud American citizens," and cultivating bilingual skills are specifically emphasized in the Korean case. It is also interesting to note that the growth of ethnic language schools in the Chinese and Korean immigrant communities has not led to significant or satisfactory improvements in ethnic-language proficiency in the second generation. For example, more than two-thirds of U.S.-born Chinese and 78 percent of U.S.-born Koreans speak only English at home, as opposed to about 28 percent of U.S.-born Mexicans in Los Angeles (Lopez, 1996). Some ethnic language schools do have excellent language programs that help students earn high school foreign language credits from the formal education system or to excel on the SAT Chinese or Korean language test. However, as they grow up, the children of Chinese and Korean immigrants tend to lose proficiency in their parental mother tongue. By college age, only a small fraction of them can still read and write in Chinese or Korean (Lopez, 1996), and even a large majority of those who have attended ethnic-language schools have become English monolinguals with minimum conversational ability in the ethnic language. Apparently, preserving the parental language is the ideal but not the only goal of language schools. A Chinese school principal we interviewed made it clear:

> These kids are here because their parents sent them. They are usually not very motivated in learning Chinese per se, and we do not push them too hard. Language teaching is only part of our mission. An essential part of our mission is to enlighten these kids about their own cultural heritage, so that they show respect for their parents and feel proud of being Chinese.

The Korean language school principal we interviewed agreed, adding that fostering the ethnic pride would be more important than maintaining the ethnic language. She said,

> We increased the duration of Saturday school from three hours to four hours to add a lunch hour to give students a chance to socialize with fellow schoolmates and become friends. We also wanted to create a sense of community so that students feel comfortable being here and being Korean Americans. In my opinion, this is more important than mastering Korean language.

It is clear from the two principals' comments that the Chinese and Korean schools in the United States are more than just language schools.

Private ethnic afterschool institutions, on the other hand, tend to be highly specialized and have concrete objectives that are often more academically oriented than linguistically oriented. They are also marketed more to the parent than the child. As advertised in ethnic-language media, they make such promises as to "bring out the best in *your* child," "turn *your* child into a well-rounded superstar," and "escort your child into *your* dream school" [emphases added], as well as to "improve your test scores by 100 points" and "open the door to UC admission."

In sum, a combination of nonprofit or church-affiliated ethnic-language schools and private ethnic institutions specializing in academic and extracurricular programs forms a sophisticated system of supplementary education in the Chinese and Korean immigrant communities. 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.

*Unintended Consequences of the Ethnic Systems of Supplementary Education*

The Chinese and Korean systems of supplementary education that we have just described have consequences far beyond children's educational experience, though these effects are often implicit or unintended. The most significant unintended effect for the parents is that many ethnic institutions, especially weekday afterschool institutions in urban ethnic enclaves or ethnoburbs, serve as community centers that meet the social and cultural needs of immigrants while providing child-care and afterschool services for dual-worker families. For Korean parents, social and cultural needs are met on Sundays at immigrant churches. For Chinese parents, and particularly for those who do not reside in Chinatown or Chinese ethnoburbs, needs are often met in newly established ethnic organizations. Chinese schools become an important physical site

where formerly unrelated immigrants come to socialize and rebuild social ties. In contrast to Korean immigrants, the majority of Chinese immigrants are non-Christian and do not worship at a Buddhist temple or other sites on a weekly basis. As we have just discussed, contemporary Chinese immigrants are from diverse origins and backgrounds. Unlike earlier Chinese immigrants, the newer immigrants are not necessarily connected to one another, even among those with the same origin; they are also dispersed in suburbs. Even though many may be structurally assimilated, they still yearn for a community to reconnect with coethnics. Thus, suburban Chinese schools become an important cultural community for contemporary Chinese immigrants. Coethnic ties are rebuilt at local Chinese schools, where immigrants with varied levels of English proficiency and socioeconomic backgrounds come together. Although these ties may not be as strong as those that existed in traditional Chinatowns of the past, they often serve as bridge ties that facilitate the exchange of valuable information and connect immigrants to mainstream society (Zhou et al., 2000). In an interview at a weekend suburban Chinese school, one parent we interviewed compared the suburban school to a church:

> We are nonreligious and don't go to church. So coming to Chinese school weekly is like going to church for us. While our children are in class, we parents don't just go home because we live quite far away. We hang out here and participate in a variety of things that we organize for ourselves, including dancing, fitness exercise, seminars on the stock market, family financial management, and children's college prep. I kind of look forward to going to the Chinese school on Saturdays because that is the only time we can socialize with our own people in our native language. I know some of our older kids don't like it that much. When they complain, I simply tell them, This is not a matter of choice, you must go.

This situation also explains why there is exponential growth of secular formal Chinese-language schools in the suburbs.

For Chinese and Koreans, ethnic-language teaching is balanced with other academic enrichment and recreational/cultural programs. During traditional Chinese holiday seasons, such as Chinese New Year, the Dragon Festival in the spring, and the Mid-Autumn Moon Festival, Chinese schools participate in celebratory parades, evening shows, and other community events, such as sports and choral or dance festivals. Korean school students also learn about and celebrate traditional Korean holidays like Harvest Thanksgiving, Children's Day, and the Korean Parade Festival. Participation in these activities exposes children to their cultural heritage, thereby reaffirming their ethnic identity. Thus, ethnic schools provide a unified cultural environment where the children are surrounded by other Chinese or Koreans and are under pressure to feel and act Chinese or Korean. In addition, Chinese and Korean teachers take on the role of teaching immigrant values. Family values such as filial piety, respect for authority, and hard work are reinforced in the classrooms.

Nonprofit ethnic-language schools also serve as intermediate ground between the immigrant home and American school, helping immigrant parents — especially those who do not speak English well — learn about and navigate the American education system. Through these ethnic

institutions, immigrant parents are indirectly but effectively connected to formal schools and are well-informed about the factors crucial to their children's educational success. 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. Furthermore, ethnic-language schools and immigrant churches foster a sense of civic duty in immigrants who are often criticized for their lack of civic participation. In these nonprofit ethnic institutions, 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. Parents also take the initiative in organizing community events, such as ethnic and American holiday celebrations.

For children, there are multiple unintended consequences of the ethnic system of supplementary education. First, ethnic-language schools and other relevant ethnic institutions offer an alternative space where children can express their feelings of growing up in immigrant Chinese families. A Chinese schoolteacher we interviewed said,

> It is very important to allow youths to express themselves in their own terms without any parental pressures. Chinese parents usually have very high expectations of their children. When children find it difficult to meet these expectations and do not have an outlet for their frustration and anxiety, they tend to become alienated and lost on the streets. But when they are around others who have similar experiences, they are more likely to let out their feelings and come to terms with their current situation.

A Korean student in her sophomore year confided in the interviewer, "I know my parents are a lot more strict than my American [Caucasian] friends. I got a B in my report card, and I had to quit playing in the soccer team, and I love soccer. But I know my Korean friends' parents are the same if not worse." When asked if she ever attended a hagwon she replied, "I've been going to hagwon ever since I can remember, but it's not that bad because I get to see my friends."

Second, these ethnic institutions provide unique opportunities for immigrant children to form different peer networks, giving them more leverage in negotiating parent-child relations at home. In immigrant families, parents are usually more comfortable and less strict with their children when they hang out with coethnic friends. It is because they either know the parents or feel that they can communicate with coethnic parents if things should go wrong. When children are doing things that would cause their parents anxiety, they can use their coethnic friendship network as an effective bargaining chip to avoid conflict. In the case of interracial dating, for example, a Chinese girl may simply tell her mother that she will be studying with so-and-so from Chinese school (whose parents are family friends), while running off with her non-Chinese boyfriend.

Third, these ethnic institutions nurture ethnic identity and pride that may otherwise be rejected by the children because of the pressure to assimilate. In ethnic-language schools and other ethnic school settings, children are exposed to something quite different from what they learn in their formal schools. For example, they read classical folk stories and Confucian sayings about family values, behavioral and moral guidelines, and the importance of schooling. They listen to or sing

ethnic folk songs, which reveal various aspects of their cultural heritage. Such cultural exposure reinforces family values and heightens a sense of ethnic identity, helping children to relate to their parents' or their ancestor's "stuff" without feeling embarrassed. More importantly, being part of this particular ethnic environment helps alleviate bicultural conflicts that are rampant in many immigrant families. Many children we interviewed, especially the older ones, reported that they did not like being made to go to these ethnic institutions and to do extra work, but that they reluctantly did so without rebelling because other coethnic children were doing the same. As Betty Lee Sung (1987) observed in her study of immigrant children in New York City's Chinatown, bicultural conflicts are

> [M]oderated to a large degree because there are other Chinese children around to mitigate the dilemmas that they encounter. When they are among their own, the Chinese ways are better known and better accepted. The Chinese customs and traditions are not denigrated to the degree that they would be if the immigrant child was the only one to face the conflict on his or her own" (p. 126)

However, there are also unintended negative consequences. Tremendous pressure on both children and parents for school achievement can lead to intense intergenerational conflict, rebellious behavior, alienation from the networks that are supposed to assist them, and even withdrawal from formal schools. Alienated children easily fall prey to street gangs and are also vulnerable to suicide. Ironically, pressures and conflicts in a resourceful ethnic environment can also serve to fulfill parental expectations. Children are motivated to learn and do well in school because they believe that education is the only way to escape their parents' control. This motivation, while arising from parental pressure and being reinforced through their participation in the ethnic institutions, often leads to desirable outcomes. A nonprofit program organizer summed it up in these words:

> Well, tremendous pressures create problems for sure. However, you've got to realize that we are not living in an ideal environment. Without these pressures, you would probably see as much adolescent rebellion in the family, but a much *larger* [emphasis in tone] proportions of kids failing. Our goal is to get these kids out into college, and for that, we have been very successful.

It should also be noted that access to the ethnic system of supplementary education is more restricted for working-class families than for middle-class families in both Chinese and Korean immigrant communities. While ethnic-language schools and church-affiliated afterschool programs are affordable to most families, the academic and specialized enrichment programs embedded in these nonprofit institutions are more expensive. Many high-quality private buxibans and hagwons, which rival mainstream institutions such as the Princeton Review and Kaplan, are extremely expensive. However, high demand for afterschool 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.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The article attempts to directly address the ethnic black box, answering the question of whether it is culture or structure that promotes the educational achievement among the children of Chinese and Korean immigrants. Our study suggests that the cultural attributes of a group feed on the structural factors, particularly ethnic social structures that support community forces and social capital. The ethnic systems of supplementary education that we have examined closely clearly indicate that these ethnic systems are not necessarily intrinsic to a specific culture of origin but, rather, are a product of culture-structure interaction. Although the value placed on education is seemingly rooted in Confucianism, it has been constantly shaped and reinforced by the broader and ethnic-specific structural conditions that immigrant have experienced prior to and/or after immigration.

Our study highlights the important effect of the immediate social environment between a child's home and formal school, suggesting that the value of education must be supported by the ethnic community's social structures. Indeed, the ethnic resources and social capital generated by the system of supplementary education have played a crucial role in helping the children of Chinese and Korean immigrants graduate from high school and gain entrance to prestigious colleges in disproportionately large numbers. However, beyond high school, these ethnic resources and social capital may become constraining for the children. For example, many children of Chinese and Korean immigrants concentrate in science and engineering not only because their families want them to do so, but also because their coethnic friends are doing so. After graduating from college, however, they often lack the type of social networks that could facilitate their job placement and occupational mobility. In this respect, there is much room for improvement in the existing ethnic system of supplementary education and further research needed to investigate these possibilities. Moreover, the ethnic system of supplementary education is highly exclusive of noncoethnic members. For example, Latino families are largely excluded from getting into various afterschool institutions run by Koreans in Los Angeles's Koreatown, not only because of their low socioeconomic status but also because of the language and cultural barriers that block access to Korean social networks. Although Korean and Latino families share the same neighborhood in Koreatown, they are exposed to two entirely different social environments (Zhou et al., 2000).

The Chinese and Korean cases are unique, due to immigration selectivity, premigration socioeconomic status, the strength of an existing ethnic community, and host society's reception. Although based on cases studies only in the Chinese and Korean immigrant communities in Los Angeles, our study sheds light on how variations in the immediate social environments in which immigrant children grow up may account for intergroup differences in educational outcomes. What lessons can be drawn from the unique Chinese and Korean experiences? The Chinese and Korean cases that we have illustrated here suggest that cultural values and behavioral patterns require structural support. Local social structures must be strengthened in order to sustain community forces that value education and facilitate the formation of social capital conducive to education. It is clear from this study that the ethnic church, ethnic entrepreneurship, ethnic media, and other ethnic institutions backed by high immigrant selectivity among Chinese and Korean immigrants play a crucial role in circulating valuable education-related information to immigrant families.

A key policy implication of this study suggests that public schools alone may not be sufficient to ensure immigrant children's educational success, and that a wider range of afterschool services are badly needed, particularly in low-income urban communities (Gordon et al., 2003). The challenge that underprivileged immigrant and native minority parents face is two-fold: how to obtain information about children's education beyond public school, and how to muster or access tangible resources conducive to educational achievement. One step would be to strengthen existing community-based nonprofits and churches in disadvantaged neighborhoods and help fund these organizations so that are capable of providing afterschool academic and enrichment programs, such as SAT preparation, tutoring, and recreational programs. Korean Youth and Community Center (KYCC), a nonprofit organization in Koreatown Los Angeles, is a good example. KYCC's programs are modeled after hagwons but classes are free. Further, this nonprofit is not ethnically exclusive; since the majority of Koreatown residents are Latinos, many of the students taking part in KYCC's afterschool programs are children of Latino immigrants. More nonprofit agencies like KYCC are needed in our immigrant and non-immigrant communities that lack the resources of middle-class Chinese and Korean communities. Many local churches already have the infrastructure for providing afterschool programs, and publicly funded after-school programs may generate needed services for families regardless of religious affiliation. Another step may be to promote ethnic entrepreneurship in afterschool education in the form of small business loans for prospective entrepreneurs and vouchers for low-income immigrant families. However, the viability of private businesses that can be modeled after Chinese and Korean buxibans or hagwons in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods lacking other coethnic businesses and social institutions remain a subject for further investigation.

**Notes**

1. Data on Koreatown and Chinatown were extracted from a comparative qualitative study conducted by Min Zhou in 1999-2000. In this study, neighborhood-based ethnic institutions (including nonprofit and for-profit establishments as well as other local organizations) were closely observed, and face-to-face or phone interviews with organization leaders and participants were conducted to examine how social organization at the neighborhood level affects immigrant children's educational aspirations and orientation (Zhou et al., 2000). Data on Monterey Park is from a case study of Chinese-language schools and private afterschool institutions conducted by Min Zhou with the assistance of her students in 2001 and 2002 (Zhou & Li, 2003). Data on Torrance is from Susan Kim's ongoing doctoral dissertation research project, conducted from 2003 to the present, that examines whether involvement and participation in ethnic institutions influence youth's academic performances and educational aspirations.
2. Zhou participated in the Chinese school in Thousand Oaks and the tutoring center in Monterey Park in late spring and summer 2002. Kim participated in the high school ministry, including Sunday service and Friday Bible study, in Torrance from September 2003 to June 2004.
3. The ethnic-language newspapers circulating in the Chinese and Korean immigrant communities heavily advertise academic programs such as SAT schools, language schools, day-care centers, summer camps, and music and art studios. In addition, there

are sections in ethnic-language newspapers that cover education related topics on a weekly basis. Some of the articles in the education sections are translations of what has been published by the *Los Angeles Times* or popular mainstream magazines such as *Newsweek* on such topics as top U.S. colleges, college admissions guidelines, admission rates, and graduation rates. Thus, the content analysis gives us a unique viewpoint of what kind of information has been available to the Chinese and Korean immigrant communities when it comes to education and how ethnic institutions are interacting with individuals involved in them.

4. "Ethnoburbs" refer to the suburban ethnic clusterings of diverse groups where no single ethnic group dominates. Los Angeles's Monterey Park is a typical Chinese ethnoburb with its high concentration of immigrant Chinese and Chinese-owned businesses. See Li (1997) for detail.
5. Three mobility goals of the Chinese immigrant community were explicitly articulated by several Chinese immigrants we interviewed: "to open up your own business, to live in your own home, and to send your children to Ivy League schools" (translated from Chinese to English by Zhou).
6. Retrieved October 18, 2005, from http://www.ncacls.org/ncacls_frm_intro.htm.
7. Retrieved October 18, 2005, from http://www.csaus.org/about.asp. Some of the CSAUS member schools may have dual memberships in the NCACLS.
8. Interview with the principal and a teacher in summer 2002.
9. *Buxiban* means "afterschool tutoring class" in Chinese. These classes aim to tutor students according to various subjects in their regular school curricula. *Kumon* is a supplemental afterschool program aiming to make school-based learning easier, but not to substitute for regular school learning.
10. According to Kim's estimates, about 15,000 Koreans came as students between 1953 and 1980, but only about 10 percent of them returned to Korea. This means 90 percent of them made the United States their home and consequently invited their relatives to join them. In addition, approximately 13,000 Korean doctors, nurses, and pharmacists immigrated to the United States between 1966 and 1979 (Kim, 1987).
11. Personal communication with a Korean School Association of America (KSAA) staff member by Kim, June 2005.
12. In Los Angeles, for example, there were only a couple of private Spanish-language schools that served immigrant children. Neither was owned by Latin American immigrants or had curricula supplementary to public education, based on the authors' own observation as of 2003.
13. Retrieved March 9, 2005, from Berryessa Chinese school website: http://www.bcs-usa.org/.
14. Retrieved on March 9, 2005, from Hope Chinese School website: http://www.hopechineseschool.org/.
15. Quoted from the school brochure, *Korean Language Education Profile*, 2002-2003, and translated from Korean to English by Kim.

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