

Fact Sheet:*Views of Diversity in a Korean Congregation: A Follow-up Study*

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Innovation Funding Project, 2016-2017

Project Description and Goals:

This project builds on a longer study of a migrant congregation that began in Toronto in the 1990s with interviews, observations, and a survey in 1997 and 2007. In 1997 the focus of the interviews was on the transnational relations maintained by the congregation. In 2007, interviews were conducted with second-generation members. In 2017, the interviews focused on issues about religious diversity and the interactions of the congregation with non-Koreans and non-Christians. The survey asked questions to measure religious practices and beliefs, public life and social issues, ethnic identity, and congregational culture. The goal was to collect survey data over three data collection points for comparison purposes, observations, and interviews on three different issues.

Methodology:

The project consisted of mixed methods, specifically, face-to-face interviews, a focus group, congregational survey, and congregational observations.

Student Involvement:

- Carmen Celistini, University of Waterloo
- Zabeen Khamisa, University of Waterloo

Results:

The congregational survey is still being analyzed for findings on religious beliefs and practices, public life and social issues, congregational culture, and ethnic identity. The interviews, face-to-face and focus group, suggest that among the Korean Christians there is some tension with multiculturalism and religious diversity in Canada especially over questions about inclusion and exclusion. However, there does appear to be empathy among the Koreans for some groups like Muslims who were coming to Canada as refugees or experiencing some conflict over immigration, especially in the United States.

Dissemination:

- Paper presented by Wilkinson at the 78th Annual Meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, August 2017, Montreal.