

Is My Cultural Assimilation Not Enough for Winning?

Survey Experimental Evidence from South Korea's Young Generation

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Overview

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Introduction

Introduction (1/3)

● Immigration as the New Norm

- Increased immigration from the Global South to the Global North
- The emergence of new immigrant populations can provoke negative perceptions in origin societies (Gessler, T., Tóth, G., & Wachs, J, 2022; Brown, H. E., 2013)
- Immigration identified as a significant contributor to social challenges (Meuleman, B., Davidov, E., & Billiet, J., 2009; Erez, E., 2017)

● Representation of Immigration in Political Science

- Democratic nations must uphold and represent societal diversity (Bloemraad & Schönwälder, 2013)
- Certain countries implement mandatory quotas to ensure demographic representation (e.g., New Zealand—Maori Quota, South Korea—Female Quota in Proportional Representation)

However, the influx of immigrants presents unique challenges distinct

Introduction (2/3)

• Underrepresentation in Democratic Systems

- Minorities, particularly immigrant groups, often face underrepresentation in contemporary societies (Bloemraad, 2013; Fisher et al., 2015)
- This underrepresentation raises significant concerns regarding the expression of immigrant interests:
 - Impact on policymaking processes (Butler & Broockman, 2011; Grose, 2011; Mansbridge, 1999)
 - Potential to exacerbate social conflicts (Bleich et al., 2010; Dancygier, 2010)

Introduction(3/3)

However, there are some cases that are chosen by society despite a shared migration background



Figure: Barack Obama



Figure: Rishi Sunak



Figure: Alberto Fujimori



Figure: Antonio Costa

How can they be selected?

Literature Review 1: Acceptance of Immigration

- **Main Factor 1: Perception of Immigrants**

- Immigrants' countries of origin influence acceptance in the U.S. and Europe (Lee & Fiske, 2006; Dustmann & Preston, 2007; Hainmueller & Hangartner, 2011; Brader, Valentino & Suhay, 2008)
- Racial or ethnic identity (Carmines & Stimson, 1980) and skin tone (Kinder & Kam, 2009) significantly affect attitudes

- **Main Factor 2: Cultural Assimilation**

- English fluency as a key determinant of assimilation in the U.S. (Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010; Hopkins, 2011; Newman, Hartman & Taber, 2012)

- **Main Factor 3: Economic Impact**

- Perception of immigrants as competitors in the labor market (Scheve & Slaughter, 2001)
- Concerns regarding taxation and public expenditure (Hanson, Scheve & Slaughter, 2007; Facchini & Mayda, 2009)

Ethnocentrism studies emphasize **cultural factors** over economic considerations (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2012).

Literature Review 2: Supporting Politicians

- **Main Factor 1: Policy**

- Rational choice theory highlights the critical role of policies in shaping candidate selection (Downs, 1957)

- **Main Factor 2: Party Identification**

- Party identification serves as a fundamental determinant of candidate preferences (Campbell et al., 1960)

- **Integrated Perspective**

- Both policy preferences and party identification are commonly analyzed together to understand voter behavior (Miller & Shanks, 1996; Adams et al., 2005; Lewis-Beck et al., 2008)

This study emphasizes candidate-specific characteristics, particularly **policy**, over broader frameworks like party identification

Immigrant-Origin Candidates

• Challenges in Researching Politicians of Immigrant Origin

- Limited availability of studies (Valentino & Suhay, 2008)
- Structural disadvantages within political systems (Kinder & Kam, 2009)
- Impact of unfamiliar names on candidate perception (Portmann & Stojanović, 2019)

This presentation emphasizes [cultural assimilation](#) as the central theme.

Research Question & Gap

- **Can Cultural Assimilation Overcome Ethnic Limitations Within Ethnocentrism?**
 - Limited understanding of the role of politicians' personal characteristics, particularly the influence of cultural assimilation
 - Existing studies predominantly focus on Western contexts with diverse immigrant populations, such as Germany, the USA, and the UK

This study aims to investigate these dynamics within the context of **South Korean society**, with a particular focus on the **young generation**.

Why South Korea?

- **South Korea exemplifies the significance of cultural assimilation in contemporary societies**
 - Historically, South Korea maintained exclusivity toward foreigners (Kim, 2009; Lee, 2009), but recent shifts highlight greater inclusivity
 - Immigrants now represent **5.2% of the total population** (Ministry of Justice, 2024)
 - Since 2010, notable immigrant-origin politicians have emerged, including Jasmin Lee (19th, 21st National Assembly) and Yohan Lim (22nd National Assembly)
 - South Korea has a unique group of immigrants: “North Korean defectors”
 - Internationally classified as refugees, defectors are recognized as Koreans within South Korea (Four defectors from the 19th, 21st, and 22nd National Assembly)
 - Despite this legal recognition, public perceptions of North Korean defectors align closely with those of immigrants

Thus, in countries where diversification is less advanced, **ethnicity** and the **political participation** of immigrants exist at an early stage of development

Why Focus on the Young Generation?

- **The Young Generation in South Korea Provides Unique Insights into Cultural Assimilation**

- This cohort (born between 1980 and 2005) grew up alongside second-generation immigrants and immigrant communities
- In terms of policy, it is practical to inquire about "youth policies," which benefit everyone, "gender equality policies," which benefit half of the target population, and "immigration policies," which may be less directly relevant to the interviewees.
- Their interactions with immigrant groups offer a distinct perspective on societal attitudes toward cultural assimilation

These dynamics merit examination with a focus on **ethnicity** and **generational shifts**

Research Method

Research Method: Conjoint Experimental Approach

• Application of the Conjoint Experimental Method

- Originally utilized in marketing research (e.g., Green, Krieger, & Wind, 2001; Raghavarao, Wiley, & Chitturi, 2011)
- Through its application by Hainmueller (2010, 2014), the method has gained prominence in political science for analyzing public perceptions and causal relationships
- The conjoint experimental method is particularly suitable for this study as it enables the analysis of preferences for candidates or groups by isolating causal factors among multiple variables

• Role of Average Marginal Component Effect (AMCE)

- The conjoint experimental method identifies critical attributes influencing individual preferences
- AMCE quantifies the average effect of each attribute, providing insights into relative importance
- This study investigates the interplay between cultural assimilation and policy factors to predict expected probabilities

Theorem1

Theorem (Average Marginal Component Effect(AMCE))

$$AMCE = \mathbb{E}[Y|X = x] - \mathbb{E}[Y|X = x']$$

Theorem2

Theorem (Total of Average Marginal Component Effect(AMCE))

$$\begin{aligned}
 \bar{\pi}_I(t_1, t_0, \mathbf{p}(t)) &\equiv \mathbb{E} [Y_i(t_1, T_{ijk[-l]}, T_{i[-j]k}) - Y_i(t_0, T_{ijk[-l]}, T_{i[-j]k}) \mid (T_{ijk[-l]}, T_{i[-j]k}) \in \tilde{\mathcal{T}}] \\
 &= \sum_{(t,t) \in \tilde{\mathcal{T}}} \mathbb{E} [Y_i(t_1, t, t) - Y_i(t_0, t, t) \mid (T_{ijk[-l]}, T_{i[-j]k}) \in \tilde{\mathcal{T}}] \\
 &\quad \times p(T_{ijk[-l]} = t, T_{i[-j]k} = t \mid (T_{ijk[-l]}, T_{i[-j]k}) \in \tilde{\mathcal{T}}),
 \end{aligned}$$

- i= each respondent, k= choice tasks, p=population of interest, J= possibility of alternative, L= number of attributes, T=set

Data, Survey Attributes, Actual Survey Questionnaire Sample

Data

- **Used survey for this research**

- Sample Size: $N=1,800$ (Male: 932, Female:868)
- Age: 20 44
- Survey date: 11/29 12/5(7Days) in 2024
- Repetition count: 5
- Total Case: $1,800(\text{Sample Size}) \times 5(\text{Repetition}) \times 2(\text{Visualized Candidates})=18,000$ cases

Attributes	Values
Control Variable	
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male
Candidate's Value	
Specialized & Main interest policy for improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigration policy • Young generation policy • Female policy
Immigration Background	
Parent's Nationality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Japan • China • Uzbekistan • Vietnam • United States of America • North Korean defector (Same Ethnic)
Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddhism • Catholic or Protestant • Mormonism • Islamic
Cultural Assimilation	
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluent Korean - without accent • Intermediate Korean - with accent • Limited Korean - broken grammar
Living Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born and grew up in South Korea • Born abroad and grew up in South Korea • Born and grew up abroad, but immigrated 20 years ago • Born and grew up abroad, but immigrated 5 years ago

Example: Actual survey questionnaire sample

- Following is the group of candidates with immigrant backgrounds who are ultimately nominated as parliamentary candidates by the party you support. Please review the characteristics of these candidates and then respond to the following questions.

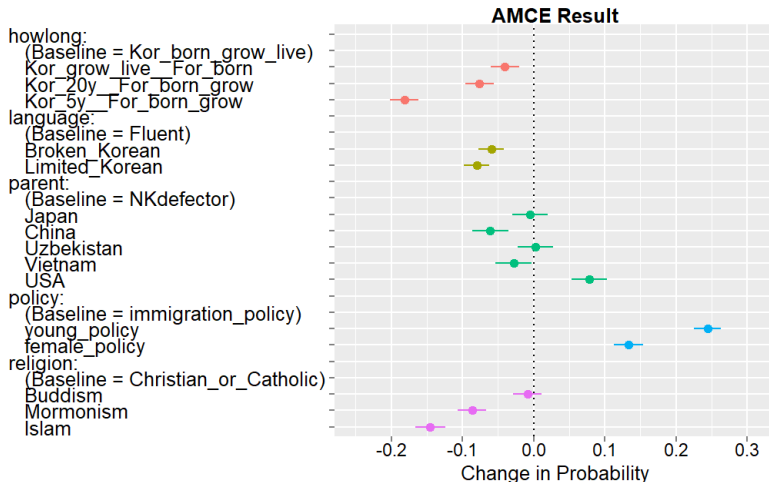
	Candidate A	Candidate B
Gender	Male	Male
Specialized and main interest policy for improve	Immigration Policy	Young Generation Policy
Immigration Background	USA	North Korean defector
Religion	Catholic or Protestant	Buddism
Language	Fluent Korean	Limited Korean
Living period in Korea	Born and grew up in South Korea	Born and grew up abroad, but immigrated 20 years ago

Table: Sample of Actual Survey Questionnaire

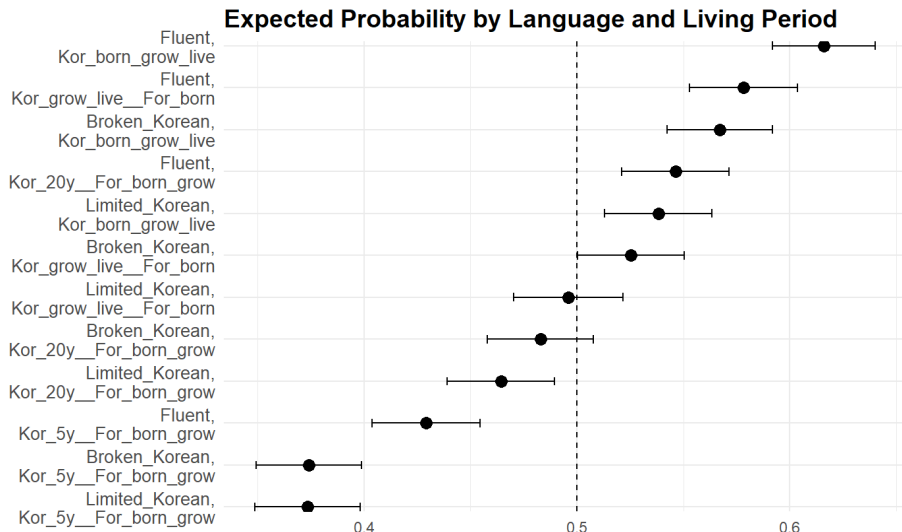
- Which candidate would you prefer to be the final nominee for the parliamentary election in South Korea?
 - Candidate A
 - Candidate B

Result: Main Finding

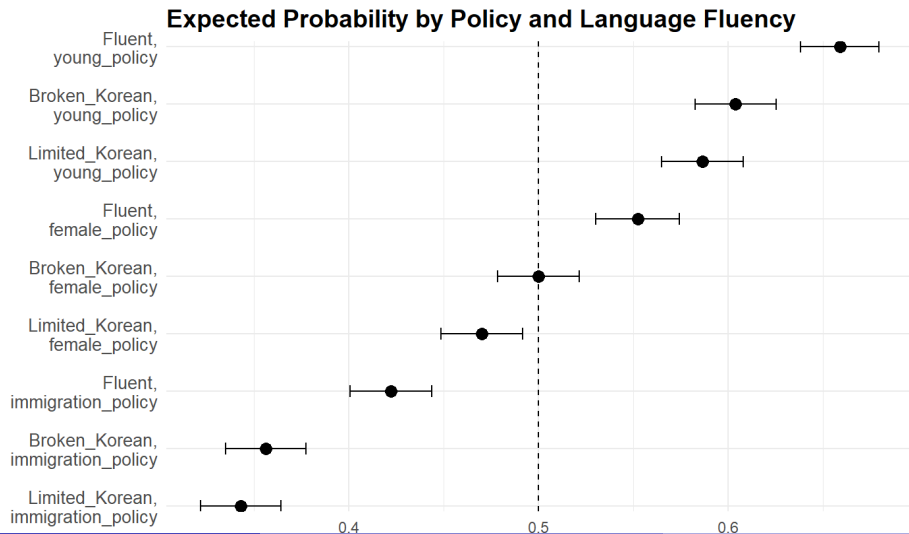
Result: Average Marginal Component Effect (AMCE)



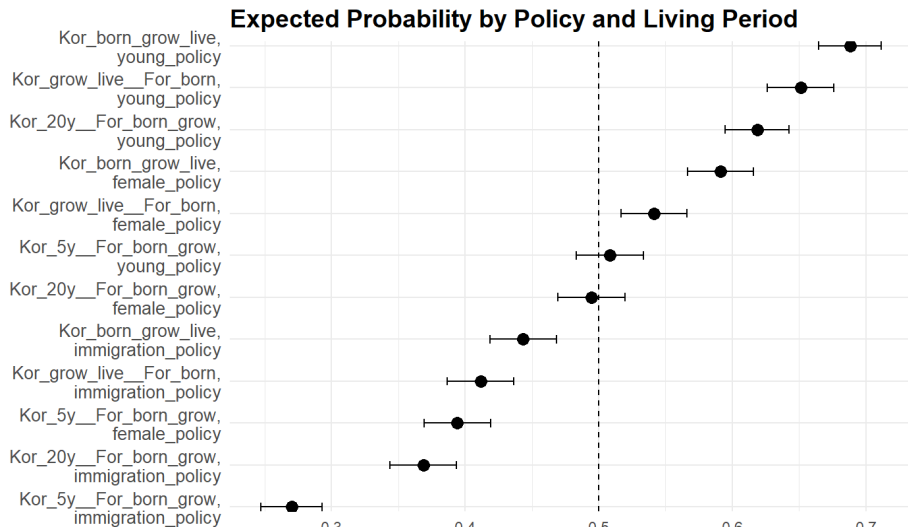
Result: Expected Probability1: Language Fluency & Living Period



Result: Expected Probability2: Language Fluency & Policy



Result: Expected Probability3: Living Period & Policy



Conclusion and Future Study

Conclusion

- **Cultural assimilation is recognized as a critical determinant for immigrants, comparable in significance to other influential variables**
 - Factors such as length of residence and language proficiency play pivotal roles in shaping perceptions and outcomes
 - Confirmed that language proficiency and residence period are more significant factors than ethnic preferences([North Korean defectors](#))
 - The emphasis on cultural assimilation among younger generations provides key insights for party decision-makers in evaluating future candidates
- **Policy dimensions interact with cultural assimilation to influence perceptions**
 - Factors such as living period and language proficiency clearly have the potential to offset their own interest policy.
 - The perception of candidates is strongly influenced by the interaction of personal attributes with targeted policies

Future Studies

- **Future Studies:**

- Observing other age groups with limited exposure to immigrants
- Investigating whether similar phenomena can be observed in other countries to assess the potential for generalization
- Examining scenarios where immigrant profiles become more complex and assuming one-on-one competition with native South Koreans without any immigrant background
- Studies on whether consistent results can be obtained when evaluated using various methodologies (e.g., Downsian framework, Political-Demography approach, Analytic Hierarchy Process)

The End