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**Master's Thesis of Political Science**

# **How do immigrants become politically active in a host country?**

**Evidence from North Korean Refugees' Social  
Network in South Korea**

**이민자들의 사회적 연결망과 정치참여  
:남한 내 북한이탈주민의 사례를 바탕으로**

**August 2023**

**Graduate School of Social Science  
Seoul National University  
Political Science Major**

**Jung Mun Park**

# **How do immigrants become politically active in a host country?**

**Evidence from North Korean Refugees' Social Network in South Korea**

**Thesis Advisor Kim, Euiyoung**

**Submitting a master's thesis of  
Political Science**

**July 2023**

**Graduate School of Social Science  
Seoul National University  
Political Science Major**

**Jung Mun Park**

**Confirming the master's thesis written by  
Jung Mun Park  
July 2023**

Chair	Won ho Park (Seal)
Vice Chair	Euiyoung Kim (Seal)
Examiner	Jung Chul Lee (Seal)

# Abstract

How and why do immigrants participate in the politics of their host society? This research attempts to answer this question through a case study of North Korean refugees in South Korea.

While North Korean refugees and South Koreans share the same ethnicity and culture, they differ in their past exposure to political systems. This demonstrates the effects of the political system on the political resocialization of immigrants in a new society while ruling out ethnic and linguistic barriers as confounding factors.

I have conducted surveys and semi-structured interviews with 107 North Korean Refugees. Using the data collected, I apply a mixed-method approach to observe factors, especially social networks from a host society, influencing the political participation of immigrants and to explain the mechanisms behind the process by which they become involved.

The findings show that North Korean Refugees' experiences in South Korea influence their political participation in South Korea more than their exposure to political experiences in North Korea. While the involvement of social networks in South Korea increases both electoral and non-electoral participation, some factors only influence either electoral or non-electoral participation. For instance, the duration of residency in South Korea only affects electoral participation, and the experience of studying in South Korea

positively correlates with participating non-electoral participation. Using interview data, I also explored diverse pathways of how North Koreans with different social network types participate in politics.

These findings highlight the significance of extending the case of North Korean Refugees to the existing immigrants' integration literature and explain what can be next after the naturalization of immigrants around the globe.

**Keywords:** North Korean Refugees, Immigration integration, Political Participation, Political Attitude, Immigration Studies

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# **Chapter 1. Introduction**

## **1.1. Research Background**

How and why do immigrants participate in the politics of their host societies? This research attempts to answer this question through a case study of North Korean refugees in South Korea.

Political integration, the process of migrants being incorporated into the political community, is largely understudied yet holds great importance as part of a more comprehensive understanding of immigrants' integration levels into their host societies (Morales 2007). Unlike the fields of education, health, and employment which discuss structural adaptation by migrants, political integration focuses on migrants' part in the civic life of the host society (Dollmann 2021; Kalter 2016). Immigrants, who typically move voluntarily to a new society, are eager to shape and stabilize their new life through any possible opportunities given to them. Therefore, facilitating structural integration is mostly the work of the host society.

However, the scenario differs regarding the political integration of immigrants. Migrants' active participation and a "willingness to take part in civic life" are involved (Dollmann 2021; Tillie 2004). Factoring in immigrants' activeness, the political integration of immigrants is a final and indispensable pillar of immigrant integration.

Despite the importance of political integration, the political dimension of immigrant integration is considered the “weakest area of integration” studies among social scientists and pundits (Index 2020; Paul 2022). There exist limited phenomena to observe in the first place. Immigrants’ lack of legal rights hinders their electoral participation and has spillover effects on their general participation and engagement in a host society (Hainmueller 2015). Systemic barriers such as cultural differences and language barriers further aggravate immigrants’ political isolation (Cho 1999; Rooij 2011).

The case of North Korean refugees in South Korea provides a unique circumstance for overcoming the limitations of studying political integration. After the Korean War, South Korea and North Korea were divided and formed two different governments. With 70 years of division, North and South Korea have formed two societies that share a language and traditional culture yet have conflicting political systems: democracy in the South and communism in the North. During the period of division, approximately 33,000 North Korean Refugees escaped from North Korea to South Korea. Interestingly, North Korean refugees are guaranteed to obtain citizenship in South Korea almost immediately after receiving social adaptation education from the South Korean government.<sup>①</sup>

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<sup>①</sup> Legal right to citizenship is granted to North Korean refugees according to North Korean refugees protection and Support Act Article 1: “The purpose of this Act is

Due to this unique setting, North Korean refugees in South Korea feel a sense of foreignness and the struggle of immigrants, even with citizenship and similar cultural background and language. These conditions of North Korean refugees allow this research to rule out linguistic barriers and the matter of naturalization as confounding factors and to focus on how immigrants from a different political structure form political behaviors in a host country.<sup>②</sup>

I argue with this case study of North Korean refugees in South Korea that immigrants' level of political participation is affected by the social networks they form in their host country rather than their exposure to the different political structures in their home country.

## 1.2. Purpose of Research

Based on the literature on immigrants' political resocialization, this paper takes a theoretical approach of resistance theory in the case of North

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to provide such matters relating to protection and support as are necessary to help North Korean residents escaping from the area north of the Military Demarcation Line and desiring protection from the Republic of Korea, as quickly as possible to adapt themselves to, and settle down in, all spheres of their life, including political, economic, and social spheres.”

<sup>②</sup> In the literature on the political participation of immigrants, immigrant samples are mostly limited to naturalized immigrants. This poses the potential problem of data bias. In many countries, the naturalization process is a complicated process by which those who apply for citizenship are often more engaged, more fluent in the language, and better informed from the beginning. As naturalization is not randomly assigned, the process of obtaining citizenship has several confounding characteristics which include language proficiency (Hainmuller 2015).

Korean Refugees.

With structural and systematic difficulties such as naturalization and linguistic barriers ruled out, this study of North Korean refugees can focus on the impact of their past political experiences with political participation in their host country. Accordingly, this research argues that the social connections these immigrants built in South Korea have a stronger impact on their political participation than their past exposure to the political experience and socioeconomic factors from North Korea and South Korea. Furthermore, I analyze the effects of the characteristics of their social networks on their political participation.

This research makes three contributions. First, I provide the case of North Korean refugees as an extension to the existing political integration literature. Previously, under the political notion that South Korea and North Korea are one country under a single constitution, North Korean studies scholars were reluctant to identify North Korean refugees as immigrants. Difficulties in utilizing data related to North Korea due to the sensitive nature of South-North Korean relations made it even more challenging to include this data in a case study of immigration studies. However, North Korean refugees are opposed by some South Koreans and are exposed to biases, similar to a visible ethnic minority group in South Korea (Kim 2022). North Koreans face challenges with social isolation and experience a high

threshold in socioeconomic adjustment into a new society, similar to other immigrants. Extending North Korean refugee studies as an aspect of general integration studies provides insight into the political impact of pre-migratory political experiences without a significant effect of language or cultural barriers. A previous compilation of integration policy literature can also be valuable when discussing North Korean literature.

Second, the research suggests what may be next after the naturalization of immigrants. Many researchers focus on the impact of naturalization on political integration. The case of North Koreans shows that immigrants are still inactive in politics even after pursuing citizenship. Many countries attempt to secure legal status for “resident aliens” and grant them the right to vote, mainly in local elections (Pedora 2014; Earnest 2015; Bekaj 2018). What pushes them to be incorporated further into their host society politics after naturalization is an important question. Explaining the effects of North Korean refugees’ social networks, as defined by composition, on political participation can function as preliminary work for those who explore new aspects of immigration studies.

Third, I offer a comprehensive understanding of the social networks of North Korean refugees by using quantitative and qualitative methods. The measurement of social networks is underestimated in a traditional survey questionnaire because respondents often overlook their social connections

as a mundane concept in their everyday lives. Therefore, I use a complementary design to analyze the effects of social networks on political participation quantitatively and qualitatively. With an overarching correlation proposed by survey data, I review in-depth interview data from North Korean refugees on why and how certain social networks that form in a host country incentivizes people to participate more in politics.

## **Chapter 2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Identifying North Korean Refugees: Refugees, Immigrants, and Citizens**

The identity of North Korean Refugees is multifaceted with unique circumstances and conditions. Legally, North Korean Refugees are considered citizens of the Republic of Korea. Article 3 of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea, often regarded as a provision for the basis of Korea's unification, states that "the territory of the Republic of Korea shall consist of the Korean peninsula and its adjacent islands". By defining the territory of the Republic of Korea, this clause also defines the national identity of the people who live in Korea. As the term "its adjacent islands" refer to the nation's indigenous territory since the nation named itself "Daehan Minkuk", it implies the inclusion of North Korea as part of Korea (Heo 2016). This naturally leads to granting rights to North Korean Refugees in South

Korea.<sup>③</sup> Under North Korean refugees protection and support act article 1, “ The purpose of this Act is to provide such matters relating to protection and support as are necessary to help North Korean residents escaping from the area north of the Military Demarcation Line and desiring protection from the Republic of Korea, as quickly as possible to adapt themselves to, and settle down in, all spheres of their life, including political, economic, social and cultural spheres.”, North Korean refugees hold legal rights and receives protection from the law just like a citizen in South Korea.

Since North Korean Refugees hold characteristics of refugees who flee from political and economic pressure, there were cases that North Korean Refugees were accepted as refugees in the international context. The identification of refugees relies on the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, but whether North Korean Refugees can be granted rights as refugee differ based on the country

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<sup>③</sup> In the constitution of the Republic of Korea, two articles hold different implications regarding the legal status of North Korea. Article 3, “The territory of the Republic of Korea shall consist of the Korean peninsula and its adjacent islands,” implies the sovereignty of the Republic of Korea to be extended to the regions of North Korea. However, Article 4, “The Republic of Korea shall seek unification and shall formulate and carry out a policy of peaceful unification based on the basic free and democratic order.” implies that North Korea can be recognized as a ruling group with the ability to act as a nation. Article 4 does not mean the Republic of Korea approves of North Korea as a sovereign nation, but it does show that the article recognizes it as a separate ruling entity (Lee 2009). Due to the contrasting implication of Articles 3 and 4, there have been various attempts to identify the legal relationship between the two articles. This relationship can be further understood by other papers on the legal status of North Korea (Lee 2009; Lee 1992).

(UNHCR). However, more countries, including the United States, Canada, and Australia, that once accepted North Korean Refugees as refugees are not accepting North Korean Refugees as asylum seekers due to their citizenship in South Korea since 2011 (Wolman 2013). Regardless of the potential dispute in recognizing North Korean Refugees as refugees, North Korean Refugees are not regarded as refugees in South Korea with their legal status.

North Korean Refugees' socioeconomic status and challenging circumstances share similarities with immigrants in South Korea. North Korean Refugees face difficulties in integrating into the system and society of South Korea. They often face indifference with hostile attitudes from South Koreans (Kwon 2011). Discriminatory acts of South Koreans are not only observed in studies that rely on self-reports from North Koreans but also in experimental studies directly measuring the biases of South Koreans (Jeon 2000; Yoon 2001; Kim 2022). They also face socioeconomic challenges as other marginalized ethnic minorities, such as Korean Chinese, and Indonesian migrant workers (Moon 2002; Kim 2022).

## 2.2 Limitations in the North Korean Refugees Study

Resistance theory, exposure theory, and transferability theory are three theories that are useful in understanding the political resocialization of immigrants. Unlike the academic focus on exposure theory and transferability theory in refugees or immigrant studies, most of the North



Korean refugee literature revolves around resistance theory. Resistance theory claims that immigrants' or refugees' attitudes, norms, beliefs, and tendencies formed by experiences in their origin country will make them resistant to changes in their political identity, even after they move to a host country (Hyman 1959; White et al., 2008). Because the political environment is set differently in the origin and host countries, past understandings will make internalizing new political norms difficult (White et al., 2008). Exposure theory argues that due to the fundamental differences in the political cultures between the home country and the host country, refugees enter their host country in a state of "tabula rasa." Therefore, it is the matter of political exposure in the host country that determines their political resocialization and integration (Wong 2000). Transferability theory argues that experience from early socialization will help refugees to adjust to political resocialization. Transferability theory does not negate either resistance theory or exposure theory. It focuses on the conditions that make the transition easier, including but not limited to the age at which refugees arrive in their host country and the similarities between their origin country and host country (Bilodeau et al 2010; Just and Anderson 2012). Many empirical cases negate the likelihood of the applicability of resistance theory. While numerous researchers (including White, who first defined these theories) testify to the validity of exposure theory and transferability theory,

most of the literature on the political resocialization of North Korean refugees place heavy emphasis on the influence of their time in North Korea rather than focusing on the new experience in South Korea (Jennings & Niemi 1968; Niemi and Hepburn 1995; White et al. 2008). For instance, Hyun (2013) claims that North Korean refugees' interpretations of politics are largely based on their political ideology and political attitude already set in North Korea. This is in line with the resistance theory. Hyun further provides empirical analyses of North Korean refugees' political attitudes and participation. She divides variables from North Korea, variables from a third country, and variables from South Korea to observe the effect of the variables on political attitudes and participation in South Korea (Hyun 2013). Though she provides rather extensive research, she neglects possible political resocialization factors in South Korea by limiting the variables to socioeconomic factors in South Korea and heavily focusing on experiences and ideology as shaped in North Korea. She focuses too much on the specific nature of North Korean Refugees that she fails to connect her observation to academic discussions taking place in the context of migrant studies. Other than the socioeconomic factors of North Korean refugees in South Korea, the effects of media and the decisions of conservative political parties have been posited as other variables that affect the political participation of North Korean refugees (Hwang 2012; Lee 2012; Shin 2019).

Earlier work on North Korean refugees' social ties can be summarized in two ways. First, it focuses on social connections among North Koreans. From self-motivated organization activities to local governance entities, current studies mainly focus on the dynamics within North Korean refugee organizations or between these organizations and the government (Kim 2014; Jung 2015; Shin 2016). Literature that focuses on North Korean Refugees' in-group social ties helps to understand the effect of close-knitted in-group ties, but it fails to make a comparison with those who also form out-group ties with natives (South Koreans).

A second focus has been on how their identity in North Korea influences their social connections in South Korea. These studies reinforce the theory of resistance by describing how the experiences in North Korea manifest in a way that leads to limited and fragmented social connections in South Korea (Kim 2006; Lee 2010; Kim 2014; You 2015). One of the notable studies of North Korean refugees' social networks is by Youm (2011). He utilized grounded theory to analyze types of social networks among North Korean immigrants. By identifying the causal condition as the escape from North Korea, the central phenomenon as the removal of social support, intervening conditions as exposure to diverse social networks, and strategies as forming social networks, he provided four types of social networks for North Korean refugees (family only, South Korean only, North

Korean refugees only, and South Koreans and North Koreans). Though this analysis provides a useful tool by which to understand North Korean refugees' social networks, it does not explain the effects of these social networks (Youm 2011).

## 2.3 Political Participation of Immigrants

The definition and scope of political participation have varied over the years. The most traditional one in the field is a definition by Verba, Scholzman, and Brady that states political participation as an “activity that is intended to or has the consequence of affecting, either directly or indirectly, government action”(Verba 1995). Ultimately, political participation includes “rates of electoral participation and modes of civic engagement based on variation in individual resources, such as time, civil skills and social capital” (Verba 1995). To specify “activity” that is intended to affect government action either directly or indirectly, scholars provided different sets of classification in political participation. Though there are some contentions on what to include or what not to, much literature agrees upon the distinction between “legal”, “formal” or “conventional” forms of political participation, and “unconventional” or “informal” forms of political actions (Deth 2001). Following Verba and Nie’s classification, voting, participation in the election campaign, and citizen-initiated contacts can be “conventional” forms of po

political participation, and cooperative movement can be “direct” forms of participation (Verba 1987). From the perspective of refugee studies, it is the opportunity to study “new population groups” with “a new source of measurable variation in the population” (Cho 1999).

On that note, factors that influence the political participation of immigrants are very context-specific. From the experience of a home country, the duration of stay in a home country, countries of origin to measure prior political knowledge and experience, and socioeconomic factors (age, education level, income level) from a home country are the variables that correlate with political participation (Bilodeau 2010; Just and Anderson 2012). From the exposure in a host country, institutional factors such as citizenship and effective governmental resettlement program, the function of facilitators such as language proficiency and use of media, duration of stay in a host country, a high participation rate of natives, socioeconomic factors in a host country are significant variables that have been proven to be correlated with political participation (Wong 2000; Tijana 2012).

## 2.4 Social Network of Immigrants as an explanatory variable.

The social connections of immigrants represent a core domain of integration (Ager 2008). To help understand the importance of the social connections of immigrants, Hobfoll (2014) provides the economic

explanation of ‘resource conservation’ (Hobfoll 2014). He argues that refugees feel depleted in a host country as their preexisting sets of abilities - work skills and/or qualifications - may not match the necessities of their host countries. To recover from this depletion, refugees attempt to mobilize social resources such as social connections easily reachable by them, utilizing them for maximum benefit (Strang 2021). If this is the case, what types of social connections do refugees form? Numerous studies of this subject draw on Putnam’s social capital constructs to explain different types of social connections, including social bonds (connections with family and co-ethnic connections, and co-national connections) and social bridges (connections between refugees and host communities) (Putnam 2000). The literature on economic integration by refugees often utilizes Granovetter’s concept of interpersonal ties. Granovetter distinguishes weak and strong ties based on a “combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding) and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie” (Granovetter 1973). He also holds that the weakly tied are “those who are more likely to move in circles different from our own and will thus have access to information different from that which we receive” (Granovetter 1973). In refugee studies, ties from a home country are often identified as “social bonds” or “strong ties,” and sporadic contacts from a host country that are important for mobility opportunities are termed

“social bridges” or “weak ties.” “Strong ties” provide a sense of belonging to people from the same home country. However, there is an “over-reliance on dense, strong ties largely made up of family members and co-ethnics, [which] may limit network reach and resources” and “result in a downward leveling among migrant groups” (Portes 1998; Kelly and Lusi 2006; Anthias 2007). On the other hand, weak ties facilitate long-term social and economic benefits, such as employment opportunities (Woolcock 1998).

However, recent studies of refugees have challenged the simplistic dichotomy between strong, intra-ethnic, bonding ties and weak, inter-ethnic, bridging ties. These researchers claim that there are “strong ties” that fulfill the purpose of “bridging” and “weak ties” that perform a role of “bonding” based on the specific characteristics of the ties (Ryan 2011; Greene 2019). Ryan (2016) attempted to rearrange “weak ties” and “strong ties” considering the purposes of “bonding” and “bridging.” He further specified ties based on characteristics such as the direction and contents of ties. The direction of ties can be classified as horizontal ties - ties of people with similar social positions, and vertical ties - ties of people with different positions in a social hierarchy (Ryan 2011). The contents of ties determine the flow of useful resources provided by different forms of ties. In other words, the focus is on how direct and useful information is with regard to finding an advantage (Ryan 2016). In refugee studies, social connections

have been emphasized in relation to diverse aspects of refugees' lives. They play a role in refugees' lives by providing better jobs, increasing social mobility, and offering emotional support (Strang 2021). Researchers have consistently found evidence that "for immigrants, ties to natives are associated with better labor market outcomes, such as employment, occupational status, and earnings" (Aguilera 2002; Lancee 2010).

## **Chapter 3. Research Design**

### **3.1 Data and Methods**

#### **Data**

This research utilizes self-collected data through "Survey on Political Interest and Political Participation of North Korean Refugees" and in-depth interviews, carried out in 6 cities (Seoul, Daegu, Busan, Chuncheon, Gunsan and Iksan) in South Korea between November 2022 to February 2023.<sup>④</sup> The data consists of a stratified sample of 107 North Korean Refugees for both survey and interview.

Due to the sensitive nature of North Korean Refugees' personal information, I could not access the full list of North Korean Refugees for the

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<sup>④</sup> This data was collected with a research grant from Seoul National University 10-10 Initiative under the project of "Global Political Issues and Database Development" ; IRB No. 2210/001-009



complete randomization. To mitigate the inherent limitation, I randomly selected samples in the proportion to the general population for each stratum from the list of anonymized contacts I had.

In the process of sample collection, the respondents were selected based on three stratifications (Table 1, 1.1): Sex, Age, and Area of Residence.<sup>⑤</sup> Out of my 107 samples, 18.7% are male and 81.3% are female. This reflects the significant disparity between male and female North Korean Refugees in South Korea (22.8% and 74.8% respectively).

<b>Table 1. Demographics (Sex, Age)</b>			
		<b>Sample Frequency</b>	<b>Sample Percent</b>
<b>Sex</b>	Male	20	18.7
	Female	87	81.3
<b>Age</b>	20s	21	19.6
	30s	31	29.0
	40s	22	20.6
	50s or above	33	30.8

※ Based on North Korean Refugees' demographics as registered by the Ministry of Unification in May of 2021, Males account for 22.8% and females account for 74.8% (excluding those who are less than 20). Those who are in their 20s account for 12.2%, those in their 30s 18.4%, those in their 40s 23.4% and those who are 50 or above 32.4%.

Regarding the age group, in the sample here 19.6% are in their 20s,

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<sup>⑤</sup> The proportion of males and Females is greatly unbalanced in the case of North Korean Refugees. In the 2021 Settlement Survey of North Korean Refugees by the South Korean government, there are only 7,157 (24%) males, and 22,723 (76%) females reported among 29,880 North Korean Refugees (Hana Foundation 2022). To reflect the gap in the population, my sample proportion was selected similarly to the gender composition of general population. For age group, I excluded North Korean Refugees who are under 18 years old as they have limited opportunities to participate in politics both formally and informally.

29.0% are in their 30s, 20.6% are in their 40s, and 30.8% are 50 or older. Compared to the general population proportion reported by the Ministry of Unification, those who are in their 20s, 40s, and 50s are similarly represented (12.2%, 23.4%, and 32.4%, respectively), but I have a slightly higher representation percentage for those who are in their 30s (about 11% higher).

<b>Table 1.1. Demographics</b>				
<b>Area of Residence</b>			<b>Sample Frequency</b>	<b>Sample Percent</b>
	<b>Metropolitan areas</b>	Seoul	45	42.1%
		Gyeonggi-do	23	21.5%
		Incheon	8	7.5%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>71.0%</b>
	<b>Non- Metropolitan areas</b>	GyeongSang-do	14	13.1%
		Jeolla-do	6	5.6%
		Chungcheong-do	11	10.3%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29.0%</b>

※ Based on North Korean Refugees' demographics registered in the Ministry of Unification in May 2021, those who reside in metropolitan areas account for 64.6% while those who live in non-metropolitan areas amount to 35.4%. There is no reporting of percentages for specific regions.

Besides sociological factors such as sex and age, the area of residence is the major stratification I attempt to emphasize on. The area of residence is mainly divided into Metropolitan areas (Seoul-si, Incheon-si, Gyeonggi-do), and non-Metropolitan areas (GyeongSang-do, Jeolla-do, and Chungcheong-do).<sup>⑥</sup> My sample consisted of 71.0% of those who reside in Metropolitan

<sup>⑥</sup> This division is significant for two reasons. First, as North Korean Refugees are assigned to adaptation centers in each region, their formation of social networks can be influenced the area to which they are allocated. For example, adaptation centers in metropolitan areas host fewer gathering events, meaning that fewer

areas such as Seoul, Gyeonggi-do, and Incheon, and 29% of those who live in Non-Metropolitan areas such as Gyeongsang-do, Jeolla-do, and Chungcheong-do. It is a fair representation of the general population of 64.6% and 35.4% respectively. Additionally, I attempted to include a partial population of all major provinces that have a sizable number of North Korean Refugees for a better representation. However, compared to other provinces, there is a smaller sample collected from Jeolla-do because there are individuals whose residential locations differ from their registered locations.

The survey was conducted in two parts: questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The questionnaires included 31 questions about socioeconomic factors in both the home country and host country, political attitudes such as political interest, electoral participation, non-electoral participation, and political efficacy (Internal/External), as well as questions on group level and individual level of social networks. Then all 107 participants had a semi-structured one-on-one interview with a researcher who asked open-ended questions regarding their social network and political participation. The

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connections are initiated by the center. However, centers in non-metropolitan areas tend to create a more close-knit atmosphere, which may affect the types of social networks created. Second, South Korea reports high regionalism, and where one lives may sway the data pertaining to party identification, party loyalty, and political attitudes.

researcher was identical for all participants.<sup>⑦</sup>

## Method

This paper implements a “concurrent triangulation design” in a mixed method approach to observe factors, especially social networks from a host society, that influence immigrants’ political participation and explain the mechanisms behind the process (Creswell 2006; Creswell 2003; Onwuegbuzie 2007). Concurrent triangulation design involves the concurrent collection of quantitative and qualitative data and separate analysis of data sets (Creswell 2006). As this design aims to accurately define relationships among variables with the utilization of both types of data sets, it will minimize the “decontextualization” of the quantitative approach and “difficulties in assessing associations between observations” from the qualitative approach (Castro 2011; Viruel-Fuentes 2007; Kirk & Miller 1986). A social network of immigrants is a multifaceted concept based on many contextual factors such as socioeconomic contexts from both the home and host countries (Yeon 2011). Therefore, the social network’s characteristic requires quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Moreover, the survey’s small sample size due to the limitations of recruiting large-size

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<sup>⑦</sup> Before and after the survey, the researcher had conducted a professional interview with a person who worked for several North Korean refugees’ adaptation programs for overall feedback regarding the observations.

North Korean Refugees as an individual research study can be mitigated by using both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

## 3.2 Hypotheses

Through quantitative analysis, this paper would like to answer the following question: How do North Korean Refugees participate in the politics of South Korea when exposed to different extent of social experiences and networks in South Korea.

Hypothesis 1 is to observe the effect of pre-migratory political experience and host society experience. After observing the correlation between North Korean Refugees' experiences and their political participation in a host society, I test hypotheses 2 and 3 to test the correlation between the composition of social networks and their level of electoral and non-electoral participation. For hypotheses 2-1, and 3-1, I test the correlation between the characteristics of social networks and their level of electoral and non-electoral participation. Finally, for hypothesis 4, I observe the effect of early exposure to natives on immigrants' political

participation.

Figure 1. Hypotheses

<b>Hypothesis on the effect of host society experience</b>
<b>Hypothesis 1:</b> The level of political participation of North Korean Refugees in South Korea is significantly more influenced by their experiences in South Korea than their political experiences in North Korea.
<b>**Hypotheses on electoral participation</b>
<b>Hypothesis 2:</b> North Korean Refugees who engage more with social networks consisting of South Koreans exhibit a higher level of electoral participation.
<b>Hypothesis 2-1:</b> There is a positive correlation between the duration of residency in South Korea and the level of electoral participation.
<b>**Hypotheses on non-electoral participation</b>
<b>Hypothesis 3:</b> There is no significant correlation between North Korean Refugees' level of engagement with South Koreans and the level of their non-electoral participation.
<b>Hypothesis 3-1:</b> North Korean Refugees who have experiences in politically motivated groups (such as NGOs, Political Parties, or Labor Unions) exhibit a higher level of non-electoral participation compared to those who do not.
<b>Hypothesis on early exposure</b>
<b>Hypothesis 4:</b> North Korean Refugees who have early exposure to South Koreans during their settlement exhibit a higher level of political participation.

After observing the correlations among factors in South Korea that impact North Korean refugees' political participation, this paper will also explore how and why the immigrants' experiences in South Korea, especially in social networks, influence their decisions to participate in politics. This paper will answer the following question by investigating interview data.

Qualitative Hypothesis
How do the types of social networks North Korean Refugees form in South Korea impact their political interest and political participation?

## **Chapter 4. Identifying factors influencing North Korean refugees' political participation in South Korea**

In this section, I provide descriptive evidence on the relationship between political participation and social network. In doing so, I check whether the relationship varies across different forms of participation and networks. I also control for various experiences in both North and South Korea that may affect political participation.

### **4.1 Description of variables**

#### *Political Participation*

There are two sets of variables for measuring political participation:

those related to electoral participation and those related to non-electoral participation. To measure electoral participation, I use a variable that tracks participation in the seven elections since 2014. Respondents were asked to report whether they participated in each election from 2014 to 2022. These include local elections in 2014, 2018, and 2022, general elections in 2016, and 2022, and presidential elections in 2017 and 2022. I use “electoral participation” to record each immigrant’s cumulative participation in these elections.

For non-electoral participation, I use a variable based on self-reported participation in ten types of political activities. The following question was used: “These are political activities people can participate in. If you have participated in each of these activities, please answer.” The ten activities are as follows: sharing or retweeting on the internet about election-related content; participating in a debate on politics or elections via SNS; signed an internet poll, petition, or other collective action via the internet; participating in a candidate selection process in a political party or party-organized events; donating to a candidate fund; contacting a politician; participating in a boycott, petition, or strike; participating in a public demonstration or protest; participating in meetings discussing local issues; or participating at the local government level at conferences discussing community issues. These activities were summed to create the



“non-electoral participation” variable. Activities are further grouped as internet-based activities, collective-action-based activities, and communal-issue-based activities and recoded as a dummy variable.

### *Social Network*

There are two types of networks used in this analysis: one for “group networks” and the other for “individual networks.” To generate the variable on “group networks,” the respondents were asked to record their membership in various types of groups. The question was as follows: “Please select all groups you are involved in. Please answer yes if you are (1) currently a member and an active participant, (2) currently a member but not an active participant, (3) were involved, (4) not involved, or (5) have not been involved but have a close friend who is involved.” As shown in Table 3, there are ten groups: a religion group, North Korean association, NGO, political party, labor union, cultural association, friend group, school group, work group, and family group. The resulting scores were recoded as a dummy variable and were summed to capture the “group level of the social network” (Table 2).

<b>Table 2. Social Network (Group Types)</b>					
<b>Variables</b>	<b>Answers</b>	<b>Sample Frequency</b>		<b>Sample Percentage</b>	
		Belonged	Not Belonged	Belonged	Not Belonged
<b>Group Network by Types</b>	Religion group	63	44	58.9	41.1
	North Korean Association	51	56	47.7	52.3
	NGO	14	93	13.1	86.9
	Political Party	4	103	3.7	96.3
	Labor Union	4	103	3.7	96.3
	Cultural Association	9	98	8.4	91.6
	Friend group	33	74	30.8	69.2
	School group	33	74	30.8	69.2
	Work group	23	84	21.5	78.5
	Family group	46	61	43.0	57.0

To create a variable on “individual networks”, I used the following question: “Please answer the following questions for three people with whom you communicate the most”. The questions included characteristics that explain the people they interact with the most, which have not been used for this research. However, we summed the numbers of people individuals reported to assess the number of individuals with whom they are intimate. This is measured as the “individual level of the social network” (Table 2.1).

<b>Table 2.1. Social Network (Total Number)</b>			
<b>Variables</b>	<b>Answers</b>	<b>Sample Frequency</b>	<b>Sample Percentage</b>
<b>Number of Group Network</b>	0	10	9.3
	1~2	50	46.7
	3~4	33	30.8
	5~6	11	10.3
	7	3	2.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Number of Individual Network</b>	0	4	3.7
	1	28	26.2
	2	12	11.2
	3	63	58.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>

Several sets of control variables are significant in my research. The first set is “experiences in North Korea.” I chose three variables that can capture North Korean refugees’ pre-migratory experiences in politics: membership in the Rodong Party (a political elite group in North Korea), the concept of ‘sung-boon’ (social class determined by birth), and their residential location in North Korea.<sup>⑧</sup> For the residential location, I recoded this as a dummy variable regarding residency in Pyongyang.<sup>⑨</sup> As shown in

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<sup>⑧</sup> The Rodong Party (労働黨), or the “Labor Party” is the leading party that has held significant power in all aspects since the establishment of the North Korean government. Membership in the Rodong Party indicates that a person was included in an exclusive political group and was very close to the communist government (Lee n.d.);

North Koreans’ birth sung-boon (social class given by birth) impacts their career path and future plans. Individuals in the Haek-sim class are leaders, officials, and bureaucrats who have demonstrated their loyalty to the communist government for generations. Birth sung-boon is mainly divided to three strata: the Haek-sim class (major class), the Gi-bon class (ordinary class), and the Jukdae class (hostile class) (Ministry of Unification n.d.)

<sup>⑨</sup> Pyongyang and other area of North Korea have a considerable discrepancy in the level of economic development. Because many political elites reside in Pyongyang and individuals need permission to reside in Pyongyang, those who lived in Pyongyang had significantly more opportunities to participate in the communist system or at least know more people who are part of the communist government.

Table 3, approximately 12% of the individuals were a member of the Rodong Party, 13% were in a major class, and 6% were from Pyongyang. According to the sample distribution, there are similar percentages of major and hostile classes, with the majority of the population being in the ordinary class, which is consistent with North Korean demographics (Ministry of Unification n.d.).

<b>Table 3. North Korea Variables</b>			
<b>Variables</b>	<b>Answers</b>	<b>Sample Frequency</b>	<b>Sample Percentage</b>
<b>Rodong Party Membership</b>	Yes	13	12.2
	No	94	87.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Social Class</b>	Major Class	13	12.5
	Ordinary Class	64	61.5
	Hostile Class	15	14.4
	Others	12	11.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Final Residential Location</b>	Pyongyang	6	5.6
	Gangwon-do	2	1.9
	South Hwanghae-do	0	0
	North Hwanghae-do	0	0
	South Pyeongan-do	0	0
	North Pyeongan-do	2	1.9
	Jagang-do	1	1.0
	Yanggang-do	40	37.3
	South Hamgyeong-do	4	3.7
	North Hamgyeong-do	42	39.2
	Kaesong	2	1.9
	Nampo	3	2.8
	Rason	5	4.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>

The second set is entitled “Experiences in South Korea.” As shown in Table 3.1, the duration of residence in South Korea, the objective economic status, and whether one received or currently receives an

education in South Korea are included. The residence duration has proven to be one of the key elements to consider when measuring immigrants' exposure to a host country in various studies (Eggert 2010; Waldinger 2016; Okundaye 2021). For objective economic status in South Korea, I used the measurement of the monthly personal income as reported by individual North Korean refugees.

<b>Table 3.1. South Korea Variables</b>			
<b>Variables</b>	<b>Answers</b>	<b>Sample Frequency</b>	<b>Sample Percentage</b>
<b>Duration of Residence in South Korea</b>	1~5 years	41	38.3
	6~10 years	39	36.4
	11~15 years	15	14.0
	16~20 years	8	7.4
	Above 20 years	4	3.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Objective Economic Status (Monthly Personal Income)</b> *Unit: Ten Thousand won	Below 100	46	46.0
	100~199	25	25.0
	200~299	20	20.0
	300~399	6	6.0
	400~499	1	1.0
	Above 1000	2	2.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Received Education in SK?</b>	Yes	60	57.1
	No	45	42.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100</b>

### *Estimation*

To test the empirical hypotheses, I use OLS regression models, with some variables in a log-linear format (Stock and Watson, 2020). To measure the dependent variable of “political participation,” this study runs two separate regressions for electoral and non-electoral participation. For

electoral participation, I use log-linear regressions to interpret the effects of percentage changes in voting counts, whereas I use simple linear regressions for non-electoral participation due to the lack of observations for non-electoral participation.<sup>⑩</sup>

The equation to be estimated for testing electoral participation is as follows:

$$\log(Y_i) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i + \sigma W_i + \gamma Z_i + \varepsilon_i$$

The equation for testing non-electoral participation is as follows:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i + \sigma W_i + \gamma Z_i + \varepsilon_i,$$

where  $Y_i$  is a measure that denotes both electoral participation and non-electoral participation,  $X_i$  is a matrix of variables pertaining to experiences in South Korea,  $W_i$  is a matrix of variables regarding political experiences in North Korea,  $\gamma Z_i$  is a network variable, and  $\varepsilon_i$  is an error term.<sup>⑪</sup>

## Results

For the first set of regressions, I find a positive association between specific variables within the matrix of South Korean variables and political participation (see Table 4). Note that none of the variables that consist of North Korean variables, in this case membership in the Rodong Party, social class, economic status, or residence in Pyongyang, showed statistical

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<sup>⑩</sup> Non-electoral participation generally requires a higher level of commitment compared to voting. As a result, observations of non-electoral participation, including within immigrant populations, are typically lower.

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significance with regard to electoral or non-electoral participation. Variables that capture the political exposure of North Korean refugees in North Korea do not show a statistical significance among various assessments. This aligns with and further develops Okundaye's finding that regime effects on pro-migratory socialization have no discernible effect on willingness to vote in an election in the host country (Okundaye 2022). Looking at models (2) and (3), residence duration in South Korea has a strong positive correlation with electoral participation, which is statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ). However, how long one has lived in South Korea accounts for an increase of approximately .07 points in non-electoral participation in the lower panel model (2), but once I include both North Korean variables and South Korean variables in the regression, residence duration in South Korea does not show a statistical significance in non-electoral participation (see Panel B model 3).

**Table 4.** *Regression results on hypothesis 1*

Panel A	DV: Electoral Participation		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
<b>North Korean Variables</b>			
Rodong Party	-.10(.23)		.16(.24)
Social Class			
2	-.26(.21)		-.13(.29)
3	-.17(.28)		-.04(.31)
4	-.35(.23)		-.06(.33)
Economic Status	-.14(.11)		-.09(.11)
Pyongyang	-.12(.32)		-.14(.27)
<b>South Korean Variables</b>			
Residence Duration		.06(.01)***	.06(.01)***
Economic Status (Obj)			
2		.30(.12)*	.27(.14)
3		-.07(.15)	-.03(.16)
4		.14(.17)	.14(.19)
5		.48(.09)***	.48(.17)**
Education in SK		-.21(.11)	-.20(.12)
<b>Cons</b>	1.68(.30)***	.78(.11)***	1.01(.43)*
Panel B	DV: Non-Electoral Participation		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
<b>North Korean Variables</b>			
Rodong Party	-.46(.52)		-.46(.62)
Social Class			
2	-1.00(.67)		-.83(.88)
3	-.84(.71)		-.88(.94)
4	-1.80(.69)**		-1.56(.94)
Economic Status	-.27(.20)		-.14(.25)
Pyongyang	-.24(.57)		-.18(.66)
<b>South Korean Variables</b>			
Residence Duration		.07(.03)**	.05(.03)
Economic Status (Obj)			
2		.34(.35)	.37(.36)
3		-.05(.29)	-.09(.33)
4		.08(.67)	.17(.70)
5		.65(.21)***	1.33(.30)***
Education in SK		.58(.25)*	.59(.28)*
<b>Cons</b>	2.39(.84)**	-.1(.27)	1.18(1.19)

**Note:** Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Electoral Participation is a logarithm scale. \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$



Another variable that shows significance only with non-electoral participation is whether one has received an education in South Korea. Comparing Panel A models (2) and (3) and Panel B models (2) and (3), the education variable is negatively correlated with electoral participation, with no statistical significance, but it presents an increase of about .6 points for non-electoral participation ( $p < .05$ ). Another interesting observation is a strong positive correlation between a high economic status in South Korea and both electoral and non-electoral participation ( $p < .001$ ).

**Table 5.** *Regression results on hypothesis 2,3*

	DV: Electoral Participation	DV: Non-Electoral Participation (1)	DV: Non-Electoral Participation (2)
<b>Network Variables</b>			
# of group network	.07(.03)*		.06(.09)
# of group network (South Koreans)	-.06(.05)		.11(.18)
# of individual network	.05(.08)	.40(.20)*	.34(.21)
# of individual network (South Koreans)	.27(.11)*	.20(.30)	.12(.29)
<b>South Korean Variables</b>			
Residence Duration	.05(.01)***	.04(.03)	.03(.03)
Economic Status (Obj)			
2	.37(.14)**	.63(.37)	.60(.38)
3	.07(.16)	.08(.27)	.09(.27)
4	.29(.19)	.14(.65)	.08(.76)
5	.48(.18)**	1.23(.40)***	1.20(.42)**
Education in SK	-.18(.12)	.81(.31)**	.76(.31)*
<b>Cons</b>	.40(.23)	-1.06(.48)*	-1.08(.48)*

**Note:** Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Electoral Participation is a logarithm scale. \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

For the second set of regressions, I find that the number of group networks in which one is included is positively correlated with electoral participation but not with non-electoral participation (see Table 5). Also, the regression shows that when a North Korean refugee has one more South Korean whom he or she interacts the most with, there is a 27 percent increase in their electoral participation ( $p < 0.05$ ). However, with regard to non-electoral participation, the network does not appear to present a strong effect. As shown in model (1), the number of individuals with which North Korean refugees interact shows a .4 point increase in non-electoral participation ( $p < .05$ ), but this is only observed when group network variables are not included. Once they are included along with individual network variables (model 2), there is no statistical significance between network variables and non-electoral participation.

Consistent with the first set of regressions, residence duration in South Korea shows a strong statistical significance with electoral participation only ( $p < .001$ ), and education in South Korea presents a positive correlation only with non-electoral participation ( $p < .01$  and  $p < .05$  respectively in model 1 and 2).

One of the interesting findings from additional regressions is related to whether a North Korean refugee joins a politically motivated

social network group such as an NGO, labor union, or political party; doing so does not show a statistical significance with the level of non-electoral participation.

For a deeper analysis, I grouped activities involving non-electoral participation with similar characteristics. Activities such as signing an internet poll, petition, or other collective action via the internet; donating to a candidate fund; participating in the candidate selection process of a political party or party-organized event; participating in a boycott, petition, or strike; and participating in a public demonstration or protest are grouped as “collective-action-based participation.”

In the group of non-electoral participation activities, such as internet-based participation, communal-issue-based participation, and collective-action-based participation, collective-action-based participation shows the strongest link to whether one received an education in South Korea. Thus, for the final regression, I created an interaction term with whether one received an education in South Korea and whether they also received the most help from North Koreans or South Koreans in their early settlement (See Table 6). Along with my hypothesis, the final regression shows that when one receives the most help from South Koreans and also receives an education in South Korea, they show higher participation by approximately .33 points in collective-action-based participation ( $p < 0.001$ ).

The additional regressions verify that if those who received help from South Koreans continue to interact with them and receive an education in South Korea, there is an increase in collective-action-based non-electoral participation ( $p < 0.01$ ).

**Table 6. Regression results on hypothesis 4**

		DV: Collective Action based Participation
<b>Education in SK x NK</b>		
<b>Early Settlement</b>		
0	1	.00(.13)
1	0	.33(.14)***
1	1	.05(.34)
<b>North Korean Variables</b>		
Rodong Party		-.12(.15)
Social Class		
	2	-.11(.16)
	3	.19(.21)
	4	-.22(.22)
Economic Status		-.08(.08)
Pyongyang		.29(.25)
<b>South Korean Variables</b>		
Residence Duration		.02(.01)
Economic Status (Obj)		
	2	.09(.13)
	3	.01(.13)
	4	-.13(.27)
	5	1.06(.15)***
<b>Cons</b>		.19(.25)

**Note:** Robust standard errors are in parentheses.  
 \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

## 4.2 Discussions

The findings above are aligned with the exposure theory in the political resocialization literature. My statistical analysis demonstrates that the political participation of North Korean refugees is influenced by experiences in South Korea rather than political exposure in North Korea

(H1). With a further analysis, this finding can be added to the literature that rejects regime effects on pre-migratory socialization, regardless of whether the immigrants are from a democracy or a repressive regime (Okundaye 2022). This study only includes North Korean refugees with no variance in regime types but still indicates that regime type does not explain their political participation in their host country.

Second, these empirical findings show that the number of social network groups in which individuals are included impacts their electoral participation but not their non-electoral participation. This can be explained by group effects, in which people vote according to the action of the nearest groups in which they are included. The South Koreans' ratio in these groups has not influenced their voting behaviors. However, whether they interact the most with South Koreans positively influences their participation in voting (H2). For non-electoral participation, I observed a marginal effect of individual social networks. People tend to participate in non-electoral activities when interacting with more individuals. However, the effect of individual social networks on non-electoral participation was minimal, as there was no statistical significance when I included variables that measure group social networks (H3). This shows that the influence of such networks is minimal in high-cost political activities besides voting.

In addition to network variables, there are other variables that only

affect either electoral participation or non-electoral participation. For example, the duration of residency in South Korea influences only the electoral participation of North Korean refugees (H2-1). This result suggests that participation in an election can be increased once immigrants are familiar with the host society's political structure. This aligns with other studies that emphasize years of residency in a host society as a major variable that increases electoral participation<sup>12</sup>. However, the duration of residency does not affect non-electoral participation. Instead, whether one receives an education in South Korea positively impacts his or her participation in non-electoral activities. For non-electoral participation requiring a stronger commitment, a simple increase in residency does not lead to participation. As North Korean refugees receive further education in South Korea, they know more about how and where to participate. Considering that most immigrants are reluctant to speak up in their host society because they may feel "stupid" and "ignorant," this result shows that exposure to the education system of their host society can positively increase their non-electoral participation.

One striking result that refutes a common prejudice is that North

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<sup>12</sup> Many researchers claim that the duration immigrants reside in a host country has a strong effect on how they participate in politics. Though there is some contention with regard to setting a precise duration of stay, most studies agree that if immigrants reside in a host country for a long time, they show political behaviors that are nearly identical to those of existing citizens (White et al. 2008; Wong 2000; Wong et al. 2011).

Korean refugees who are part of politically motivated groups (NGOs, political parties or labor unions) do not necessarily show a higher level of non-electoral participation (H3-1). This opposes the prevalent narrative in South Korea that some highly politicized North Koreans participate in various non-electoral activities, especially boycotts and public demonstrations.

Lastly, North Korean refugees who have received help from South Koreans early in their resettling tend to participate more in non-electoral activities with relatively low thresholds, such as collective-action-based participation (H4). This effect is also present for North Korean refugees who still communicate with the South Koreans from whom they received help early in their resettling. This implies that early exposure to people from the host society can be an important factor affecting immigrants' interest and participation in diverse political activities, not merely elections. This possibly tackles the alarming issue of the geographical isolation of immigrants. Finally, it also posits that the impact of individual-level networks can be observed in the case of low-cost non-electoral participation.

In sum, the social networks North Korean refugees create in South Korea affect their political participation. This effect is greater on their electoral participation than on their non-electoral participation. When North Korean refugees are involved in more groups, they tend to participate

more in voting. The behaviors of involved group members can be transferred to immigrants in the form of voting behaviors, but it does have a spillover effect on non-electoral participation. The number of individuals they often interact with influences the degree to which North Korean refugees participate in non-electoral activities, but this only has a limited impact. Rather, whether they received an education in South Korea matters more, as non-electoral activities require commitment and knowledge of specific interests (Eggert 2010). However, the networks they form early in their resettling influence their participation in low-cost non-electoral activities, such as collective-action-based activities. Individuals who received significant aid from South Koreans when settling in South Korea are more likely to engage in political activities.

## **5. Effects of different types of social networks on political participation by North Korean refugees**

### **5.1 Types of Social Networks of North Korean Refugees**

The first half of this paper presents a positive correlation between social networks and political participation by North Korean refugees. However, explaining how North Korean refugees decide to participate in politics through the influence of their social connections is limited, leading to the question of how social networks influence the political participation of North Korean refugees.



I analyzed interview data from 107 North Korean refugees and identified four types of social networks that they form: family only, North Koreans only, South Koreans only, South Koreans and North Koreans (see Table 7). The categories were determined by analyzing the responses to questions about which groups of people the respondents interact with more frequently: South Koreans or North Koreans.

**Table 7.** *Distributions in types of social network formed by North Korean Refugees*

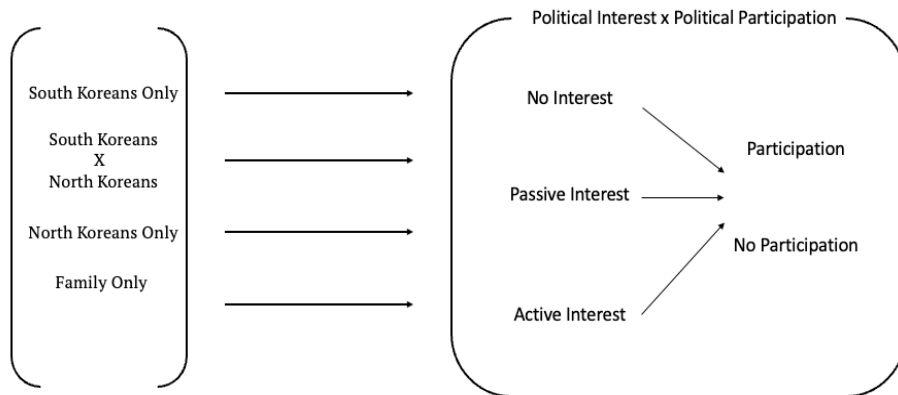
<b>Types of Social Network Formed</b>	Family only	2	
	North Koreans only	11	
	South Koreans only	19	
	South Koreans +North Koreans	South Koreans Weighed	40
		North Koreans Weighed	35
	<b>Total</b>	107	

To be specific, those who only interact with their family from North Korea are categorized as being in the “family only” category. Though this can be considered as being in the North Koreans only category, I created a separate category because these refugees show very different behavior patterns in their political participation. For the category of South Koreans and North Koreans, refugees are further divided into South-Korean weighted and North-Korean weighted. South-Korean weighted applies to those with

few distant North Korean friends and mostly South Koreans in their network. Likewise, North-Korean weighted applies to those who mainly have North Korean friends and few South Korean friends from work or school. This classification was also utilized by Youm (2011) in his examination of the social networking processes of North Korean refugees based on grounded theory.

To describe the different pathways associated with each type of social network leading to their political interest and participation in politics, this study introduces a model as a tool for this analysis (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2.** *A Model explaining the political interest and political participation differed by social network types.*



## 5.2 Analysis

### 1) Network of Family only

There are not many cases of North Korean refugees only communicating with their family members in South Korea. However,

distinguishing this category from a network of only North Koreans appears to be necessary. For those who only participate with their family members, adjusting to South Korea means nothing more than earning more money to sustain their households. DL brought all of her children when she escaped North Korea. She focuses on making an economic adjustment rather than social inclusion in South Korea.

“Honestly, I am not interested in anything. We came here because we did not want to starve. Here we eat well and we do things as we want. Frankly, I wish nothing more than now”

-DL (40, F)

There are only two cases for this category, but the interview indicates that North Korean refugees who only interact with their family members do not aspire to be integrated into the host society but rather to maintain the status quo. Therefore, North Korean Refugees who only hold family network is the type with the most exclusivity, isolated from the host society. Accordingly, they show low political interest and low political participation.

## 2) Network of North Koreans only

Some North Korean refugees only make connections with other North Koreans for two reasons: emotional comfort and fear of not knowing. Like other immigrants, many North Korean refugees build “strong ties” among themselves. The desire to stay with those with similar backgrounds

and interests is further strengthened when it is merged with the fear of not knowing (Granovetter 1995). This is observed in the case of SJ:

“I just hang out with people around me. I know some people go out and meet people from South Koreans but not me. I was always like that since I was in North Korea. I am introverted. I work alone and come home. I spend time with North Koreans around the neighborhood during the weekends.” - SJ (50, F)

Even with a similar language and culture, North Korean refugees can be unfamiliar with their new political and social systems. People who only interact with other North Koreans rather focus on day-to-day life rather than expanding their comfort zone.

One interesting feature of this type is that the groups share a significant political interest. SW also spends most of her time with North Koreans in South Korea and presents a very firm stance on her party support.

“Everyone talks about politics during the election season. ‘We all support 000. He speaks so well, and he is very charismatic.’ I prefer someone who interacts with citizens. That is how it was in North Korea as well.”

- SW (50, F)

Including SW, those who communicate only with North Korean refugees tend to have a strong interest in politics, but their interest is not transferred to actual participation. Out of the eleven individuals identified as having a network solely composed of North Koreans, nine have not shown

any involvement in politics. For them, politics is rather a conversation topic of every day rather than an expression of personal interest in societal matters. Furthermore, as these individuals only communicate among themselves, their experience in North Korea appears to affect their views on politics as well.

### 3) Network of South Koreans only

Those who only interact with South Koreans intentionally choose to interact with South Koreans. Reasons vary from active resentment toward North Korea to avoiding North Korean refugees in South Korea for a better adaptation. JL actively seeks not to communicate with North Korean refugees. She has negative experiences with North Korean refugees in South Korea because she experienced how rumors spread rapidly among people from North Korea. She believed communicating with North Koreans would not help to adapt to South Korea.

“I don’t like meeting anyone. Yes, not meeting North Koreans can help me adapt better. With North Koreans, we naturally only speak about North Korea... Before, I used to meet with people from the North a lot. Meeting people from different parts of North Korea, you see that things get complicated very soon. They spread words. I actively search for a job and look for South Koreans to communicate. Also, I have a different accent from North Korean Refugees. I am not like others. I am from Pyongyang.”

– JL (40, F)

Including JL, those who only communicate with South Koreans provide the following reasons for only interacting with South Koreans. First is resentment towards the North Korean political system. Second is the fear that words will spread faster among North Koreans because they know each other through networks. They also believe that competition is occurring among North Korean refugees and that they are not truly happy with each other's success. Some fear that this may harm their family members in North Korea. This finding is interesting because unlike previous literature that focuses on the positive aspect of in group ties of immigrants, it presents a potential drawback of close-knitted ties among North Korean Refugees.

The third reason is related to better adaptation to South Korea with more information about jobs, opportunities, and language use. The fourth reason is a sense of differentiation in that they are different from other North Korean refugees. In this case, their social status or location of residency in North Korea matters the most. If they are from an upper social class or have lived in Pyongyang, they tend to separate themselves from rest of the North Korean Refugee communities in South Korea.

North Korean refugees who only interact with South Koreans have strong willpower to adjust to South Korean society. This introduces them to social networks in South Korea that mostly consist of South Koreans. EK was also introduced to all South Korean church groups by a person from an

adaptation facility when she expressed a high willingness to adjust to South Korea.

“Once North Koreans come to South Korea, everyone is suffering due to the economic hardship. However, we have to live here. We need to know how things are going in South Korea. Then many people around me recommended to go church.” - EK (50, F)

North Korean refugees who intentionally seclude themselves only in South Korean networks tend to be more influenced by the network regarding their political participation. Hence, they often show a mismatch between their level of political interest and actual political participation. HJ has a limited interest in political matters but still participates in voting because the people around her do so.

“I don’t know politics. Things are different here and there (North Korea). Maybe I will be more interested later, but not now [...] I vote all the time. In Korea, they say it is my free will to vote or not, but it is not true. People think you are uncivilized if you do not vote. So I go with my church friends to vote. Other political activities are too demanding, and I am busy.” – HJ (50, F)

This shows that some North Koreans who only interact with South Koreans participate in voting and possibly other non-electoral activities with low commitment as part of a group activity with South Koreans.

In contrast, some North Koreans in South Korean-only groups tend

to hide their political interest on purpose. In the case of JK, he actively puts effort into not discussing any issues regarding politics.

“I just say it first. Let’s not talk politics. I don’t want situations to get awkward.” – JK (20, M)

Like JK, several respondents stated that they are not interested in politics and yet have a considerable amount of political knowledge and clear standards for understanding politics. These respondents had areas of interest such as economics and diplomacy and viewpoints on current politicians, yet they claim they are not interested in politics and do not participate. It is possible that these respondents have internalized biases and prejudices in South Korea which may prevent them from openly sharing their political interests and further participating in politics.

#### 4) Network of South Koreans and North Koreans

The most well-balanced form of network is one with both South Koreans and North Koreans. However, there is some variation in this category as some maintain strong relationships with North Koreans and have formal relationships with South Koreans, and vice versa. Note that some of those who have a South-Korean-weighted network behave similarly to those who only communicate with South Koreans and identically to those who have a North-Korean-weighted network. Those who communicate with North Koreans and South Koreans relatively equally (self-claimed) are



groups of people with numerous political interests and high political participation. In the case of JW, he actively participates in various groups and even hosts a study group among North Koreans and South Koreans.

“Everyone around me knows that I am from North Korea. [...] For me, I still interact with lots of North Koreans and I meet many North Koreans in church. However there are people, especially those in 20s who want to erase their past. They just act as if they want to live like South Koreans. They are not interested in the matters of North Korea at all. I don’t think it is right.” – JW (20, M)

Among those who reported having a balanced network with North Koreans and South Koreans, there are several individuals, including JW, who consider themselves as "bridges" or "representatives" of North Koreans. This explains why these individuals show active participation in all sorts of political activities, ranging from voting to being part of a NGO.

A noticeable observation within this group is that individuals who show strong interest in politics and participate frequently may not necessarily embrace democratic values. There are individuals who rebuke how South Koreans criticize presidents and certain political agendas, particularly in relation to controversial topics like gender. They hope for less conflict between politicians with different ideologies and faster progress for society. As acceptance of democratic values is one of the factors of political integration, the relationship between accepting democratic values and

political participation can be further studied in the future.

## **Chapter 6. Conclusion**

This study adds an explanation of immigrants' political participation to the existing scholarship. With research questions focusing on how and why immigrants participate in the politics of their host society, I conducted mixed-method research, more specifically using a concurrent triangulation design, to provide a full picture of how immigrants decide to participate or not participate in the politics of a host society.

Under the traditional discussion of resistance theory and exposure theory, this study provides statistical and qualitative evidence of the impact of experience in a host society. At least for political participation, refugees' exposure to different political structures in the past has less impact than their new experiences in their host society in the context of North Korean refugees in South Korea.

As claimed in the literature, the duration of residency is a key factor in determining the political participation of immigrants. However, this study further proves that the duration of residency is only relevant as regards electoral participation. Given the specific nature of North Korean refugees, this study was able to distinguish the electoral participation from the non-electoral participation of North Korean refugees and explore factors that influence each type of participation, finding that the duration of residency

only affects electoral participation and that whether they received an education in South Korea only affects non-electoral participation.

Furthermore, through a qualitative analysis, this paper defines how the different forms of social networks result in different pathways regarding the formation of their political interest and affecting their political participation. Key findings related to this process are that there are North Korean refugees who have enough interest but decide not to participate or have no interest but ultimately decide to participate as they are influenced by their networks.

There can be some controversy about whether the case of North Korea has external validity. However, with the recent rise of policies that promote naturalization in Europe, this study holds meaning as preliminary work that explores this issue beyond naturalization.

The issue of immigrants is often considered political. However, regardless of one's political opinion regarding the influx of immigrants, we live in a global society with a growing number of immigrants. With more immigrants, the importance of understanding their (non) behaviors in the social and political arena is emphasized. This study will help clarify the process of political integration and will help to define the most proactive forms of integration by immigrants.

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# Appendix: Survey Questionnaires

## 북한이탈주민의 정치적 관심과 정치참여에 관한 조사

### I. 기초문항

#### 전문 01. 응답자 성별

(1)남자 (2) 여자

#### 전문 02. 선생님의 출생연월은 무엇입니까?

(0000년 00월)

#### 전문 03. 응답자 출생지역

(1)평양 (2) 강원도 (3) 황해남도 (4) 황해북도 (5) 평안남도 (6) 평안북도 (7) 자강도 (8) 량강도 (9) 함경남도 (10) 함경북도 (11) 개성 (12) 남포 (13) 라선

#### 전문 04. 응답자 북한 최종 거주지역

(1)평양 (2) 강원도 (3) 황해남도 (4) 황해북도 (5) 평안남도 (6) 평안북도 (7) 자강도 (8) 량강도 (9) 함경남도 (10) 함경북도 (11) 개성 (12) 남포 (13) 라선

#### 전문 05. 선생님의 북한에서의 최종 학력은 어떻게 되십니까?

(1)유치원 (2) 소학교 (3) 초급중학교 (4) 중학교 (고등중학교, 고급중학교) (5) 전문학교 (6) 대학교(7) 대학원 (8) 학교 다닌 적 없음

#### 전문 06. 한국에 들어오셔서 거친 교육과정에 대한 질문입니다.

##### 1) 선생님은 한국에서 교육과정을 거치셨습니까?

(1) 예 (2) 아니오

##### 2) 선생님은 검정고시를 통해 과정을 이수한 바 있습니까?

(1) 예 (2) 아니오

##### 3) 선생님의 한국에서의 최종 학력은 무엇입니까?

(1) 중학교 졸업 (2) 고등학교 졸업 (3) 대학교 졸업 (4) 대학원 (석사, 박사) 졸업 (5) 학교 졸업한 적 없음

#### 전문 07. 선생님께서는 북한에서 노동당원이셨습니까?

(1)네 (2) 아니오

#### 전문 08. 선생님의 북한에서의 직업은 무엇입니까?

(1)유급 당일군, 행정일군 (2) 군인 (3) 노동자, 봉사원 (4) 사무원 (5) 교원, 연구사

(6) 농장원(협동농장/ 국영농장) (7) 해외파견 일군 (8) 기사(농업, 공업 광업 기사)  
(9) 의사, 약사 (10) 사법검찰, 보위안전원 (11) 문화예술 체육인 (12) 장사 (13) 주  
부 (14) 학생 (15) 기타

**선문 09. 북한에서의 성분은 무엇이었습니까?**

(1)핵심계층 (2) 기본계층 (3) 적대계층 (4) 기타

**선문 10. 북한에서의 경제적 생활 수준은 어떠하셨습니다?**

(1)상 (2) 중 (3) 하

**선문 11. 다음 중 탈북을 결심하게 된 주된 이유를 중요한 순서로 2가지만 적어주세요.**

**\*여러 번 탈북하신 경우 최초 탈북하셨을때를 기준으로 응답해주시기 바랍니다.**

[1순위:     ] [2순위:     ]

1)경제적 이유 2) 정치적 이유 3) 남한에 가족이 있어서 4) 한국 사회, 문화에 대한  
동경이 있어서 5) 기타

**선문 12. 남한 이외 지역에서 거주하신 적이 있습니까? (예를 들어 중국, 러시아, 베  
트남 등)**

**거주하셨다면, 얼마나 오랜 기간 동안 거주하셨는지 모든 경우를 다 서술해 주세요.  
3개월 이상인 경우에만 작성해 주세요.**

- 1) 국가:            , 기간: 00년 00개월 00일
- 2) 국가:            , 기간: 00년 00개월 00일
- 3) 국가:            , 기간: 00년 00개월 00일

**선문 13. 남한에 입국한 시점이 언제입니까? 만약 두번이상 탈북하신 경우 입국하  
신 시점을 모두 답변해주세요.**

첫번째 탈북: (0000년 00월)

두번째 탈북: (0000년 00월)

세번째 탈북: (0000년 00월)

**선문 14. 배정받으신 하나센터의 위치는 어디십니까?**

(1) 강원남부 (2) 강원북부 (3) 경기남부 (4) 경기동부 (5) 경기북부 (6) 경기서북부  
(7) 경기서부  
(8) 경기중부 (9) 경남 (10) 경북 (11) 광주 (12) 대구 (13) 대전 (14) 부산 (15) 서  
울남부 (16) 서울동부 (17) 서울서부 (18) 울산 (19) 인천 (20) 전남 (21) 전북 (22)  
제주 (23) 충남 (24) 충북

**선문 15. 남한 정착 후 거주하신 경험이 있는 지역을 모두 골라주세요**

(1) 서울 (2) 부산 (3) 대구 (4) 인천 (5) 광주 (6) 대전 (7) 울산 (8) 경기 (9) 강원  
(10) 충북

(11) 충남 (12) 전북 (13) 전남 (14) 경북 (15) 경남 (16) 제주 (17) 세종

**선문 16. 지금 거주 중인 곳은 어디입니까?**

(1)서울 (2) 부산 (3) 대구 (4) 인천 (5) 광주 (6) 대전 (7) 울산 (8) 경기 (9) 강원 (10) 충북 (11) 충남 (12) 전북 (13) 전남 (14) 경북 (15) 경남 (16) 제주 (17) 세종

**선문 17. 현재 남한에서 선생님의 사회경제적 지위(소득, 직업, 교육, 재산 등을 고려)는 어느 정도라고 생각하십니까?**

(1)상층 (2) 중상층 (3) 중간층 (4) 중하층 (5) 하층

**선문 18. 실례지만, 선생님의 월평균 개인소득 및 총 가구소득은 얼마입니까?**

\*개인소득은 개인의 근로소득, 사업소득, 재산소득 및 이전소득 등의 합계입니다.  
가구소득은 전 가구원의 근로소득, 사업소득, 재산소득 및 이전소득 등의 합계입니다.

- 1) 개인소득 : [       ]  
2) 가구소득: [       ]

(1)100만원 미만 (2) 100~199만원 (3) 200~299만원 (4) 300~399만원 (5) 400~499만원 (6) 500~599만원 (7) 600~699만원 이상 (8) 700~799만원 (9) 800~899만원 (10) 900~999만원 (11) 1,000만원 이상

**선문 19. 현재 선생님께서는 주로 어디에서 살고 있습니까?**

(1) 본인 소유 집 (2) 하나원에서 배정받은 집 또는 임대 아파트 (3) 타인 소유 집 ( 전, 월세 ) (4) 무연고 시설, 그룹홈, 쉼터 등 (주택 미배정자) (5) 기숙사, 고시원, 하숙집 (6) 일정한 거주지 없이 (여관 등 ) 자주 옮겨 다님 (7) 친척 또는 친구집에서 함께 살고 있음 (8) 기타 (내용:\_\_\_\_\_)

**선문 20. 선생님께서 직업적으로 하시는 일은 무엇입니까?**

(1)학생 (2) 농업/임업/어업 (3) 자영업 (4) 판매/영업/서비스직 (5) 생산/기능/노무직 (6) 사무/기술/전문직 (7) 실업/무직 (8) 기타

**선문 21. 선생님께서는 평소 1주일 동안 총 몇 시간 일하십니까?**

(1)24시간 이하 (2) 25시간~35시간 (3) 36시간~46시간 (4) 47시간 이상

**선문 22. 현재 종사하시는 직업(사업체)을 구하기 위해 정보를 알아볼 때, 어떤 경로로 구하셨습니까?**

(1) 남북하나재단과 하나센터(전문상담사) (2) 고용노동부 고용센터(워크넷, 고용복지플러스센터 등) (3) 시청, 군청, 구청의 일자리 센터 (4) 민간 취업알선기관 ( 알바천국, 잡코리아, 직업소개소 등 ) (5) 대중매체 (인터넷 검색, TV, 신문, 잡지, 광고 등) (6) 학교, 학원 추천 (7) 북한에서 만난 북한이탈주민 친척, 친구, 동료 (8) 남한에서 만난 북한이탈주민 친척, 친구, 동료 (9) 남한 친척, 친구, 동료 (10) 제 3국 친구, 동료

## II. 정치에 대한 관심도 및 정치참여

01. 선생님께서는 정치에 얼마나 관심이 있으십니까?

(1) 매우 많다 (2) 조금 있다 (3) 별로 없다 (4) 전혀 없다

02. 다음 질문을 ○, x로 답변해주시시오.

1) 대통령은 직접선거로 뽑는다	(1) ○	(2) x
2) 대한민국은 입법부, 행정부, 사법부의 삼권 분립이 헌법에 명시되어 있다.	(1) ○	(2) x
3) 지방선거는 시장, 도지사, 시군구 의원등을 뽑는 선거이고 총선은 국회의원을 뽑는 선거이다.	(1) ○	(2) x
4) 비례대표제를 통해서 지역구 선거에 출마하지 않아도 국회의원이 될 수 있다.	(1) ○	(2) x

03. 선생님은 집회에 참여하신 적 있으십니까?

(1) 예 (2) 아니오

3-1. 참여하셨다면, 어떤 성격의 집회에 참여하셨습니다?

(1) 정치 관련 이슈 (2) 경제 관련 이슈 (3) 노동권 관련 이슈 (4) 사회 관련 이슈

3-2. 참여하셨다면, 지난 일년 간 몇 회 참석하셨습니다?

(1) 참여한적 없다 (2) 1~5회 (3) 6~10회 (4) 11회 이상

04. 선생님께서는 ‘투표’에 반드시 참여해야 한다고 생각하십니까?

(1) 반드시 참여해야 한다 (2) 가능하면 참여하는 것이 좋다 (3) 상황이 어려우면 안 할 수도 있다 (4) 참여하지 않아도 된다.

05. 만약 선생님께서 ‘투표’에 참여하지 못하셨다면 가장 큰 이유는 무엇입니까?

(1) 투표에 참여하는 방법을 몰라서 (2) 투표 장소가 멀어서 (3) 경제적 활동으로 인해 시간이 부족해서 (4) 관심이 없어서 (5) 투표를 해도 상황에 큰 차이가 없을 것이라 생각해서 (6) 지지하는 당 혹은 정치인이 없어서

06. 선생님께서는 다음의 선거에 참여하셨습니다? 아래의 각 항목에 모두 응답해주시시오.

6회 지방선거 (2014년 6월 14일)	(1) 참여했다	(2) 참여하지 않았다.
20대 국회의원 선거 (2016년 4월 13일)	(1) 참여했다	(2) 참여하지 않았다.
19대 대통령 선거 (2017년 5월 9일)	(1) 참여했다	(2) 참여하지 않았다.
7회 지방선거 (2018년 6월 13일)	(1) 참여했다	(2) 참여하지 않았다.
21대 국회의원 선거 (2020년 4월)	(1) 참여했다	(2) 참여하지 않았다.



15일)		
20대 대통령 선거 (2022년 3월 9일)	(1) 참여했다	(2) 참여하지 않았다.
8회 지방선거 (2022년 6월 1일)	(1) 참여했다	(2) 참여하지 않았다.

06-1. 2014 년 지방선거에 대한 질문입니다.

1) 투표하셨다면, 선생님은 어떤 정당을 투표하셨습니까?

- (1) 새정치민주연합 (현재 더불어민주당 전신) (2) 새누리당 (현재 국민의힘 전신)  
(3) 통합진보당 (4) 노동당 (5) 정의당 (6) 기타

06-2. 2016 년 국회의원 선거에 대한 질문입니다.

1) 투표하셨다면, 선생님은 어떤 정당을 투표하셨습니까?

- (1) 더불어민주당 (2) 새누리당 (현재 국민의힘 전신) (3) 국민의당 (4) 정의당 (5) 기타

2) 투표하셨다면, 선생님의 선택에 가장 크게 영향을 준 요인은 무엇입니까?

- (1)국방력 강화 (2) 경제성장 (3) 인권보호 (4) 복지확대 (5) 정책 이외의 요인  
( )

06-3. 2017년 대통령 선거에 대한 질문입니다.

1) 투표하셨다면, 선생님은 어떤 정당을 투표하셨습니까?

- (1) 더불어민주당 (2) 자유한국당 (현재 국민의힘 전신) (3) 국민의당 (4) 바른정당  
(5) 정의당 (6) 새누리당 (7) 기타

2) 투표하셨다면, 선생님의 선택에 가장 크게 영향을 준 요인은 무엇입니까?

- (1)국방력 강화 (2) 경제성장 (3) 인권보호 (4) 복지확대 (5) 정책 이외의 요인  
( )

06-4. 2018년 지방선거에 대한 질문입니다.

1) 투표하셨다면, 선생님은 어떤 정당을 투표하셨습니까?

- (1) 더불어민주당 (2) 자유한국당 (현재 국민의힘 전신) (3) 민주평화당 (4) 정의당  
(5) 바른미래당 (6) 민중당 (7) 기타

06-5. 2020년 국회의원 선거에 대한 질문입니다.

1) 투표하셨다면, 선생님은 어떤 정당을 투표하셨습니까?

- (1) 더불어민주당 (2) 미래통합당 (현재 국민의힘 전신) (3) 정의당 (4) 국민의당 (5) 열린민주당 (6)기타

2) 투표하셨다면, 선생님의 선택에 가장 크게 영향을 준 요인은 무엇입니까?

- (1)국방력 강화 (2) 경제성장 (3) 인권보호 (4) 복지확대 (5) 정책 이외의 요인  
( )

06-6. 2022년 대통령 선거에 대한 질문입니다.

1) 투표하셨다면, 선생님은 어떤 정당을 투표하셨습니다?

(1) 더불어민주당 (2) 국민의힘 (3) 정의당 (4) 기타

2) 투표하셨다면, 선생님의 선택에 가장 크게 영향을 준 요인은 무엇입니까?

(1) 국방력 강화 (2) 경제성장 (3) 인권보호 (4) 복지확대 (5) 정책 이외의 요인  
( )

06-7. 2022년 지방 선거에 대한 질문입니다.

1) 투표하셨다면, 선생님은 어떤 정당을 투표하셨습니다?

(1) 더불어민주당 (2) 국민의힘 (3) 정의당 (4) 진보당 (5) 기타

2) 투표하셨다면, 선생님의 선택에 가장 크게 영향을 준 요인은 무엇입니까?

(1) 국방력 강화 (2) 경제성장 (3) 인권보호 (4) 복지확대 (5) 정책 이외의 요인  
( )

3) 투표하셨다면, 시장, 도지사 후보로는 어떤 정당의 후보를 투표하셨습니다?

(1) 더불어민주당 (2) 국민의힘 (3) 정의당 (4) 진보당 (5) 기타

4) 투표하셨다면, 구청장 후보로는 어떤 정당의 후보를 투표하셨습니다?

(1) 더불어민주당 (2) 국민의힘 (3) 정의당 (4) 진보당 (5) 기타

07. 선생님께서는 투표시 다음중 어떤 요인의 영향을 가장 많이 받으십니까?

(1) 정당 자체에 대한 지지 (2) 후보에 대한 지지 (3) 정책 및 정강에 대한 지지  
(4) 주변인의 영향 (5) 기타

08. 선생님의 투표에 영향을 미칠 수 있는 주변인에 대한 설문입니다. 선생님의 투표에 영향을 주신분들이 있다면, 어떤 분들입니까?

1) 가족의 추천이다.

(1) 맞다 (2) 아니다.

1-1) 해당 가족은 북한이탈주민입니까?

(1) 맞다 (2) 아니다.

2) 친구의 추천이다.

(1) 맞다 (2) 아니다

2-1) 해당 친구는 북한이탈주민입니까?

(1) 맞다 (2) 아니다.

3) 학교 또는 일에서 만난 사람의 추천

(1) 맞다 (2) 아니다

3-1) 해당 지인은 북한이탈주민 입니까?

(1) 맞다 (2) 아니다.

4) 취미 생활에서 만난 사람의 추천

(1) 맞다 (2) 아니다

4-1) 해당 지인은 북한이탈주민 입니까?

(1) 맞다 (2) 아니다.

09. 다음은 일반시민들이 정치에 관련하여 참여할 수 있는 활동들입니다. 이 중 선생님께서 최근 1년간 직접 경험한 것이 있다면 말씀해주십시오.

1) 선거와 관련된 글, 사진, 동영상, 오디오 등을 인터넷으로 공유하거나 SNS로 리트윗한 경험이 있다.	(1)예	(2)아니오	(1-1) 1년 내 참여 횟수 ( ) 번
2) 블로그, 게시판, SNS 등을 통해 선거나 정치에 대한 토론에 참여한 적이 있다.	(1)예	(2)아니오	(1-1) 1년 내 참여 횟수 ( ) 번
3) 인터넷에서 실시되는 여론조사나 투표, 서명운동, 기타 집단행동 (온라인 리본/배너 달기, 추모, 관련 글 올리기 등)에 참여한 적 있다.	(1)예	(2)아니오	(1-1) 1년 내 참여 횟수 ( ) 번
4) 정당 행사나 정당의 후보자 경선 과정에 직접 참여하거나 모바일 투표에 참여한 적이 있다.	(1)예	(2)아니오	(1-1) 1년 내 참여 횟수 ( ) 번
5) 후보자 펀드나 선거비용모금에 참여하거나 기부한 적이 있다	(1)예	(2)아니오	(1-1) 1년 내 참여 횟수 ( ) 번
6) 민원을 넣거나 구의원, 시의원, 혹은 국회의원과 접촉한 적이 있다.	(1)예	(2)아니오	(1-1) 1년 내 참여 횟수 ( ) 번
7) 청원, 불매운동, 파업, 보이콧, 파업동조에 참가한 적이 있다.	(1)예	(2)아니오	(1-1) 1년 내 참여 횟수
8) 집회나 시위에 참가한 적이 있다.	(1)예	(2)아니오	(1-1) 1년 내 참여 횟수 ( ) 번
9) 본인이 거주하는 동네의 문제에 대해 논의하는 회의, 미팅에 참석한 적이 있다.	(1)예	(2)아니오	(1-1) 1년 내 참여 횟수 ( ) 번

10) 주민자치회와 같이 동네의 문제에 대해 논의하고 해결책을 찾는 시, 구 단위의 자치회에 참석한 적이 있다.	(1)예	(2)아니오	(1-1) 1년 내 참여 횟수 (        ) 번
11) 공청회 등 공적 회의에 초대받는다면 참가할 의사가 있다.	(1)예	(2)아니오	

10. 투표 외 정치참여를 한 가장 큰 이유를 두가지를 골라주세요 (한가지만 선택하셔도 됩니다)

- 1) 투표로는 정치적 의견 표출에 한계가 있다고 느껴서
- 2) 지인들이 모두 활발하게 참여하기 때문에
- 3) 참여에 따른 금전적 이익이 있어서
- 4) 민주시민의 의무라고 생각하기 때문에

1차 이유:

2차 이유:

11. 다음의 문항에 답변해주시기 바랍니다.

1) 나는 국가에 당면한 중요한 정치 사안에 대해 꽤 잘 이해하고 있다고 느낀다.	1) 매우 그렇다	2) 그렇다	3) 그렇지 않다	4)매우 그렇지 않다
2) 대부분의 한국 사람은 정치나 행정에 대해 나보다 잘 알고 있다	1) 매우 그렇다	2) 그렇다	3) 그렇지 않다	4)매우 그렇지 않다
3) 나 같은 사람들은 정부가 하는 일에 대해 어떤 영향도 주기 어렵다	1) 매우 그렇다	2) 그렇다	3) 그렇지 않다	4)매우 그렇지 않다
4) 정부는 나 같은 사람들의 의견에 관심이 없다	1) 매우 그렇다	2) 그렇다	3) 그렇지 않다	4)매우 그렇지 않다
5) 내가 어려움이 생기면 정부가 도와줄 것이라고 생각한다.	1) 매우 그렇다	2) 그렇다	3) 그렇지 않다	4)매우 그렇지 않다
6) 내가 어려움이 생기면 모르는 사람이라도 주변 사람이 도와줄 것이라고 생각한다.	1) 매우 그렇다	2) 그렇다	3) 그렇지 않다	4)매우 그렇지 않다

### III. 사회적 연결망

12. 선생님께서 속해 있는 관계를 모두 골라주세요. 소속되어 있다면 어느정도 적극적으로 활동하는지를, 소속되어 있지 않다면 과거에는 소속되었던 적이 있는지 말씀하여 주십시오

	소속 되어 적극적으로 활동 한다.	소속되어 있으 나 활동은 안한다	과거에 소속된 적 있다.	소속된 적 없다.	소속된 적은 없지만 친한 친구가 소속되어 있다.
1. 종교모임 - 1달 ( ) 회	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2. 탈북모임 - 1달 ( ) 회	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
3. 비정치적 시민 단체 - 1달 ( ) 회	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
4. 정치사회단체 (정당) - 1달 ( ) 회	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
5. 직업 조합 (노 조, 사업자 단체) - 1달 ( ) 회	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
6. 문화단체 (스포 츠, 레저) - 1달 ( ) 회	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
7. 친목 모임 - 1달 ( ) 회	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
8. 학교 내 모임 - 1달 ( ) 회	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
9. 직장 내 소모 임 - 1달 ( ) 회	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
10. 가족 및 친인 척 모임 - 1달 ( ) 회	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
11. 기타 ( ) - 1달 ( ) 회	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

13. 위에서 소속되어 있다고 언급한 모임들의 총 인원수와 북한 이탈주민 수는 어떻게 구성되어 있습니까?

	총 인원수	북한이탈주민 수
1. 종교모임		
2. 탈북모임		
3. 비정치적 시민단체		
4. 정치사회단체 (정당)		
5. 직업 조합 (노조, 사업자 단체)		
6. 문화단체 (스포츠, 레저)		
7. 친목 모임		
8. 학교 내 모임		
9. 직장 내 소모임		
10. 가족 및 친인척 모임		
11. 기타 ( )		

14. 위에서 소속되어 있다고 언급한 모임들 중 선생님께서 개인적인 이야기를 하기에 가장 편한 모임 세가지를 말씀해주세요.

1순위 ( ) 2순위 ( ) 3순위 ( )

15. 위에서 소속되어 있다고 언급한 모임들 중 정착 초기(정착 1년 내외)에 생성 혹은 가입한 모임이 있으십니까? 있으시다면 모두 골라주세요

1) 종교모임 2) 탈북모임 3) 비정치적 시민단체 4) 정치사회단체 (정당) 5) 직업 조합 (노조, 사업자 단체) 6) 문화단체 (스포츠, 레저) 7) 친목모임 8) 학교 내 모임 9) 직장 내 소모임 10) 기타 ( )

16. 위에서 소속되어 있다고 언급한 모임들 중 가장 큰 도움을 받은 모임은 무엇입니까? 두번째, 세번째로 큰 도움을 받았던 연결망은 무엇이었습니까?

1순위 ( ) 2순위 ( ) 3순위 ( )

16-1. 위에서 답변하신 모임들을 통해 어떤 도움을 받으셨습니까?

1) 스트레스 해소 2) 사회적 소속감 3) 직업 소개 4) 국가 지원 프로그램 소개  
5) 금전적 지원

17. 다음 중 선생님의 남한 정착 초기에 가장 큰 도움을 준 사람을 선택해주세요.

- 1) 북한에서부터 알았던 북한이탈주민
- 2) 탈북 경로에서 알게 된 북한이탈주민
- 3) 탈북 경로에서 알게 된 남한 사람
- 4) 남한에서 알게 된 북한이탈주민
- 5) 남한에서 알게 된 남한 사람

17-1. 위에 선택한 사람과 현재 교류하고 계시나요? 교류하신다면, 얼마나 자주 교류하고 계십니까?

- 1) 예 (예시- 1달 3회정도. )  
2) 아니오

17-2. 위에 선택한 사람이 현재 선생님께서 가장 자주 교류하는 사람 세명에 포함되나요?

- 1)예  
2)아니오

18. 선생님께서 가장 자주 교류하는 사람 세명에 대해 묻고자 합니다.  
(자주 교류하시는 분 3명에 대해 답변해주시길 바랍니다)

이분은 북한이탈주민이신가요?	1)예 2) 아니오
만약 이분이 북한이탈주민이라면, 남한에 정착한지 얼마나 되셨나요?	1) 1년 이내 2) 5년 이내 3) 8년 이내 4) 10년 이상
이분을 알게 된 곳은 어디인가요?	1) 대한민국(남한) 2) 북한 3) 제3지역
이분의 나이는 어떻게 되십니까?	( ) 세
이분은 어떤 경로로 만나게 된 관계인가요?	1) 종교단체 2) 탈북단체 3) 시민단체 4) 친목단체 5) 문화단체 6) 직업조합 7) 학교 8) 직장 9) 지인소개 10) 온라인 커뮤니티 11) 각종 정착지원 기관 (하나원,하나센터 등) 12)가족
이분을 통해 가장 크게 도움을 받은 부분은 무엇입니까? 모두 골라주세요	1) 스트레스 해소 2) 사회적 소속감 3) 직업 소개 4) 국가 지원 프로그램 5) 금전적 지원
이분은 정치적 참여에 얼마나 활발하십니까?	1) 많이 2) 보통 3) 보통이하
이분은 어떤 종류의 정치적 참여를 하십니까? 모두 골라주세요	1) 투표만 한다 2) 시민단체 및 자치 단체 참여 3) 정당참여 4) 인터넷 참여 5) 집회 및 시위 참여

19. 이번 대통령 선거 및 지방선거에서 후보자에 대한 선생님의 평가에 영향을 준 매체 및 사람을 선택해 주십시오.

	뉴스 (신문, TV)	SNS	종교모 임 통해 만남 사람	탈북모 임 통해 만남 사람	시민단 체 통해 만남 사람	정치사 회단체 통해 만남 사 람	직업 조합 통해 만남 사람	문화단 체 통해 만남 사람	친목 모임 통해 만남 사람	학교 통해 만남 사람	직장 통해 만남 사람	온라인 으로 만남 사람	기타 ( )
제일 큰 영향													
두번째 영향													
세번째 영향													

19-1. 제일 큰 영향을 받은 대상이 사람이라면,

- 그 분은 북한이탈주민인가요? 1) 예 2) 아니오
- 남한에서 만난 북한이탈주민인가요? 1) 예 2) 아니오
- 이분이 선생님의 평가에 가장 큰 영향력을 미친 이유는 무엇입니까? 1) 정치적 지식이 가장 많아서 2) 가장 친해서 3) 가장 자주 만나서 4) 도움을 많이 주어서 5) 일을 같이 해서

19-2. 두번째 영향을 받은 대상이 사람이라면,

- 그 분은 북한이탈주민인가요? 1) 예 2) 아니오
- 남한에서 만난 북한이탈주민인가요? 1) 예 2) 아니오
- 이분이 선생님의 평가에 가장 큰 영향력을 미친 이유는 무엇입니까? 1) 정치적 지식이 가장 많아서 2) 가장 친해서 3) 가장 자주 만나서 4) 도움을 많이 주어서 5) 일을 같이 해서

19-3. 세번째 영향을 받은 대상이 사람이라면,

- 그 분은 북한이탈주민인가요? 1) 예 2) 아니오
- 남한에서 만난 북한이탈주민인가요? 1) 예 2) 아니오
- 이분이 선생님의 평가에 가장 큰 영향력을 미친 이유는 무엇입니까? 1) 정치적 지식이 가장 많아서 2) 가장 친해서 3) 가장 자주 만나서 4) 도움을 많이 주어서 5) 일을 같이 해서



## 국문 초록

본 연구는 한국 내 북한이탈주민의 정치 참여 사례를 실증적으로 조사함으로써 이민자들의 이주국 내 정치 참여에 영향을 미치는 요인을 규명하고자 하는 목적을 지닌다.

남한 국민과 북한이탈주민은 한민족이라는 민족 정체성과 문화를 공유하지만, 각각 민주주의와 공산주의라는 상반된 정치 체계를 경험하였다. 기존의 이민자 연구에서는 인종적, 언어적, 그리고 문화적 차이를 이민자 적응 및 통합에 핵심적인 변수로 설정하지만, 한국 내 북한이탈주민의 사례에서는 이러한 변수들이 자연적으로 통제된다는 특수성이 발견된다. 따라서, 본 연구는 북한이탈주민의 사례를 통해 본국에서의 정치에 대한 경험이 이주국에서의 정치참여에 미치는 영향을 확인하고자 하였다.

본 연구는 107명의 북한이탈주민을 대상으로 한 설문조사와 반구조화 된 심층면담을 함께 활용한 혼합적 연구 방법론을 사용하였다.

본 연구의 결과에 따르면 북한이탈주민에게는 북한에서의 정치 참여 경험보다 남한에서의 정치 참여 경험이 정치 참여에 더 큰 영향을 미친다. 이 결과는 본국에서의 경험을 강조하는 저항이론보다 이주국에서의 경험의 중요성을 강조하는 노출이론에 근거한다. 더 나아가, 본 연구는 통계적 분석을 통해 북한이탈주민이 남한에서 맺는 다양한 사회적 연결망의 성격에 따라 북한이탈주민의 선거적 참여와 비선거적 참여 정도의 차이가 있음을 밝혀내었고, 심층면담 자료를 분석함으로써 사회적 연결망의 특성에 따라 다양하게 발견되는 정치 참여의 양상을 설명했다.

북한이탈주민을 대상으로 하는 연구의 대다수는 한국 내 북한이탈주민을 별도의 특수한 사례로 제시한다. 하지만 이 연구는 북한이탈주민의 사례가 이주 전 본국의 정치에 대한 노출 경험이 이주국에서의 정치 참여에 미치는 영향과 시민권 획득 이후 이민자들의 선거적·비선거적 정치참여의 양상을 확인할 수 있다는 점에서 이민자 연구에 시사하는 바가 크다고 주장하는 바이다.