Korean American Institute

Korean American Community Survey

Press Conference & Community Briefing

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WHY THE STUDY MATTERS

- **New National Data:** Presents findings from the largest and most comprehensive national survey on Korean Americans today.
- **Diversity and Change:** Shows how Korean Americans are changing across generations as the community grows more diverse, our population ages, and the U.S.-born generation comes of age.
- **Evolving Needs:** Identifies areas where Korean America is thriving and inequalities persist that we must address.
- **Groundwork for Policy and Advocacy:** Highlights Korean American-specific needs hidden in broader “Asian American” statistics, giving leaders, policymakers, and funders the data to guide advocacy and direct resources where they matter the most.

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ABOUT THE NATIONAL SURVEY

- Funded by the **Korean American Institute** and **Korean American Foundation**, designed and analyzed by research team, and data collected by **BSP Research.**
- Fielded from February 10 to April 1, 2026 with **1,503 adults surveyed** online or by live telephone interviews in English or Korean.
- **Topics include** health and well-being; identity and relationships; gender and family life; work and household finance; and political views and community involvement.
- Final sample includes **1,466 respondents who self-identify as Korean American,** including multiracial respondents and Korean adoptees.
- Results are **weighted to national benchmarks** for age, gender, education, state, nativity, and household income.

How to read the numbers: Percentages are survey estimates. The margin of error is ±2.48 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Smaller subgroups have greater uncertainty, and some gender differences may partly reflect age and generation differences.

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Demographic Portrait of Survey Respondents

Weighted sample · N = 1,466

INTERVIEW LANGUAGE

English	65.3%
Korean	34.7%

AGE

18–29	19.4%
30–39	19.4%
40–49	20.6%
50–59	16.5%
60+	24.2%

GENDER

Women	53.3%
Men	46.4%
Other identities	0.3%

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Heterosexual/straight	94.7%
LGBTQ+	4.0%
Prefer not to disclose	1.3%

MARITAL STATUS

Married/partnership	59.3%
Never married	32.8%
Separated/divorced/widowed	7.9%

HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Mean	3.0

EDUCATION

High school or less	20.5%
Some college/associate	18.9%
Bachelor's	44.4%
Graduate degree	16.1%

REGION

West	41.1%
South	24.6%
Northeast	22.8%
Midwest	11.6%

PLACE OF BIRTH

South Korea	70.5%
United States	27.8%
Other	1.8%

PLACE RAISED

United States	53.1%
South Korea	45.9%
Other	1.0%

GENERATION

1st generation	34.6%
1.5 generation	37.6%
2nd or later	27.8%

IMMIGRATION STATUS

Naturalized citizen	43.0%
U.S.-born citizen	27.8%
Permanent resident	21.4%
Visa holder	6.8%
Other/prefer not to say	1.0%

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

$0–50,000	21.9%
$50,001–100,000	25.1%
$100,001–150,000	21.0%
$150,001–200,000	14.7%
$200,001+	17.3%

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

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ETHNIC IDENTITY AND BELIEFS

Korean Americans believe in hard work but also believe white privilege is a major problem.

- Asked which terms they use to describe themselves, respondents chose “Korean” (47%) and “Korean American” (42%) well ahead of “Asian American” or “American”; only 2% use “person of color.”
- Three in four respondents believe meritocracy is tied to success. However, one in four reported being treated unfairly because of their Korean background in the past year, and six in ten agree that white privilege is a major problem in the United States today.

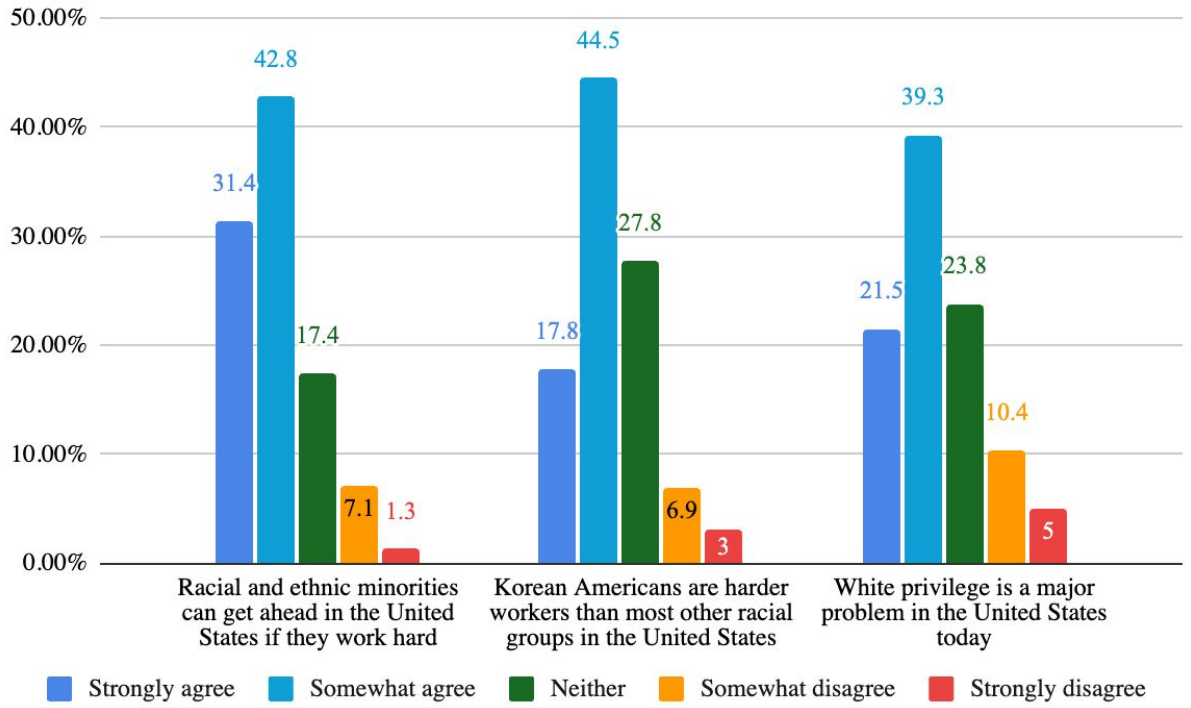

Figure 1. Ethnic Identity (N=1,466)
Note: Respondents could select multiple identity categories. Percentages do not sum to 100%.

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HEALTH AND HEALTHCARE

Korean Americans are reporting poor health conditions and disability in the past month.

- While most respondents rate their overall physical and mental health as “(very) good,” about one in four women and one in five men report their health “fair” or “(very) poor, which is higher than previous estimates for Korean Americans.
- The percentage reporting a disability or chronic health conditions (women: 19.5%, men: 12.2%) is also higher than previous estimates.

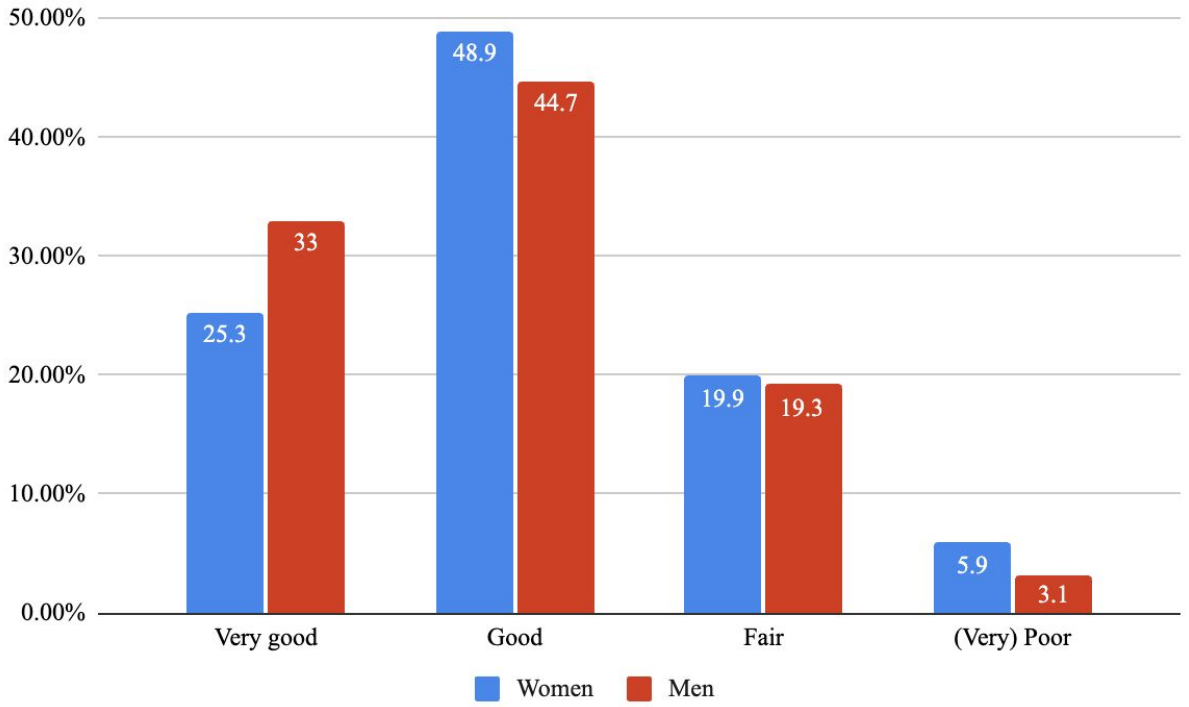

Figure 2. Physical Health in the Past Month by Gender (N=1,461)
Note: The percentage for “very poor” is very small, so it has been combined with “poor.”

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INTERMARRIAGE *BY GENERATION*

Intermarriage varies by generation and gender.

- One quarter of married first-generation respondents have a non-Korean spouse, as compared with two-thirds of the U.S.-born second and later generations.
- Women are somewhat more likely than men to be intermarried: 42.6% of married women have a non-Korean or Korean-plus spouse, compared to 34.3% of married men.
- Intermarriage rates increase with each generation.

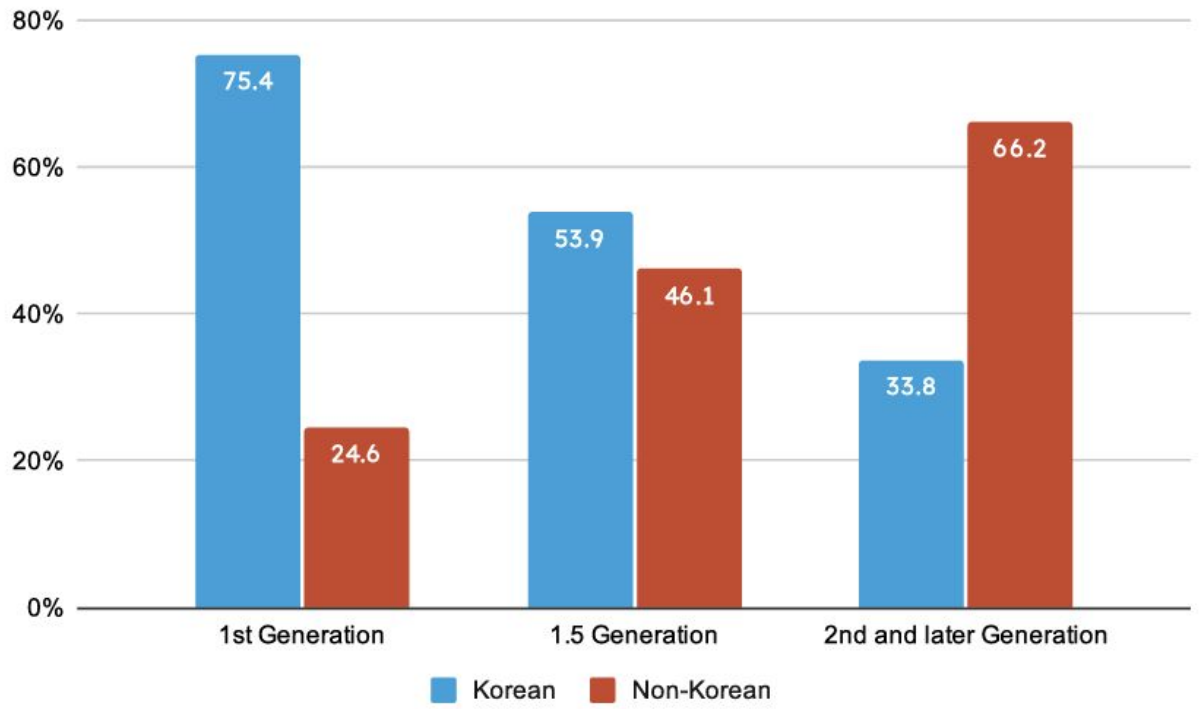

Figure 3. Intermarriage by Generation, married or partnered respondents (N=870).
Note: Non-Korean includes Korean-plus spouses. Differences from the first generation are significant.

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EMPLOYMENT STATUS *BY GENDER*

Employment patterns are tied to gender roles, and generational changes are observed in entrepreneurship.

- Women in the sample are more likely to be out of the labor force, which is tied to caregiving responsibilities, while men are more likely to work for a for-profit private company or business.
- More than two out of five respondents report ties with self or family businesses, but the type of involvement differs across generations. In particular, reports of a parent having started a business are significantly higher among the U.S.-born respondents.

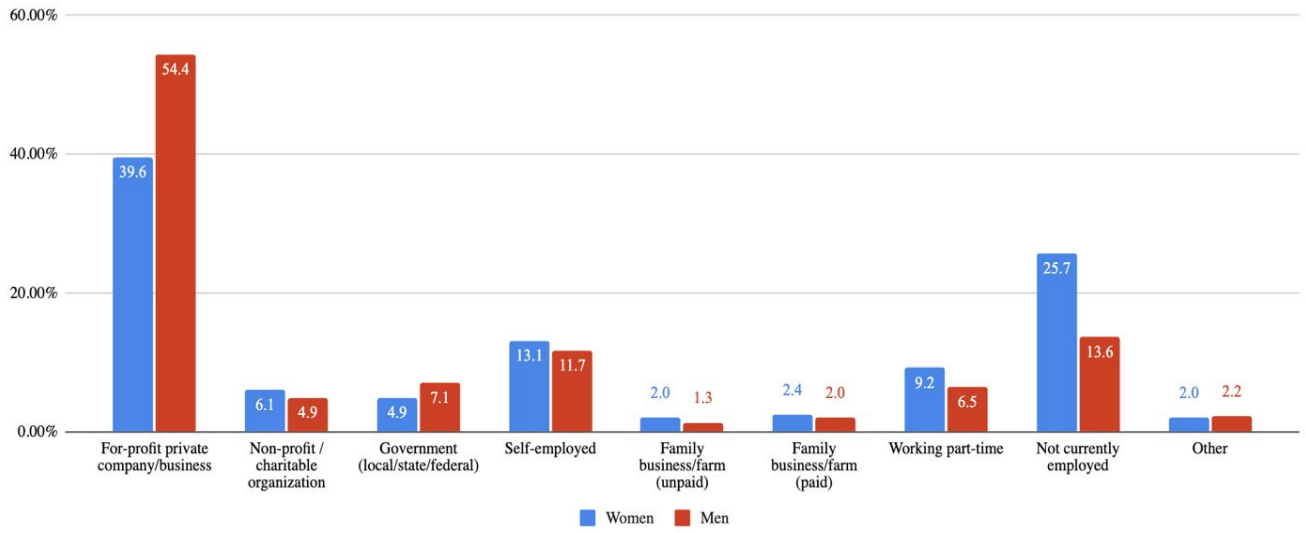

Figure 4. Employment Status by Gender (N=1,461)
Note: Multiple responses are allowed (e.g., working at two jobs), and the total sum presented in the figure may be over 100%; generational differences are shown in comparison to the first generation.

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POLITICAL ATTITUDES

Political attitudes are mostly moderate and evenly divided on both ends of the spectrum.

- When asked to describe their political attitudes about American politics, Korean American respondents were fairly evenly distributed across the spectrum, though more than one-third of all respondents identified as moderate (36.7%).
- The remaining respondents were divided nearly evenly between liberal (31.2%) and conservative (32.1%), with relatively few positioning themselves at either ideological pole.

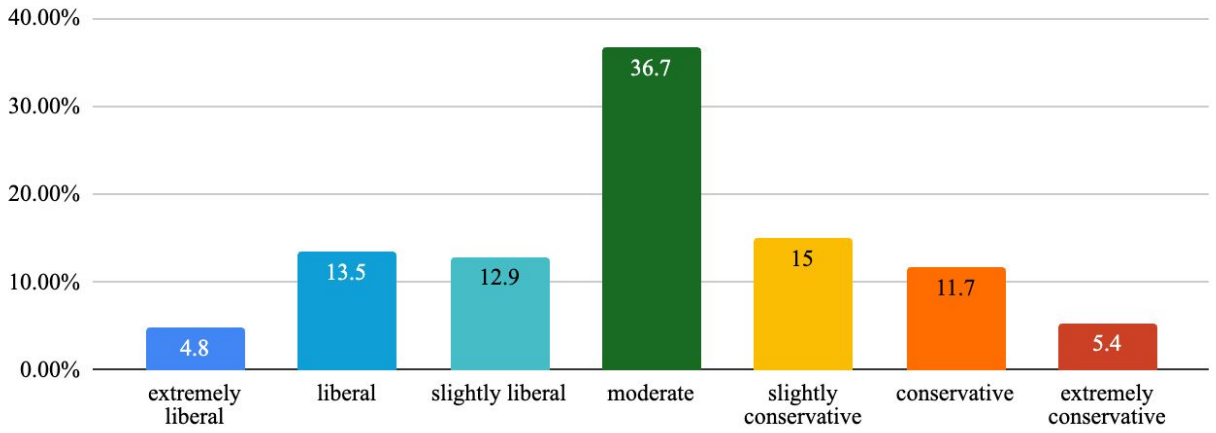

Figure 19. Self-Reported Political Attitudes (N=1,466)

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POLITICAL ATTITUDES BY *EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT*

Moderates shrink as education rises.

- Moderates drop from 43.5% of high school grads to 29.62% among advanced degree holders.
- Ideological differences increase with educational attainment.
- The left-right balance remains even across all education levels.

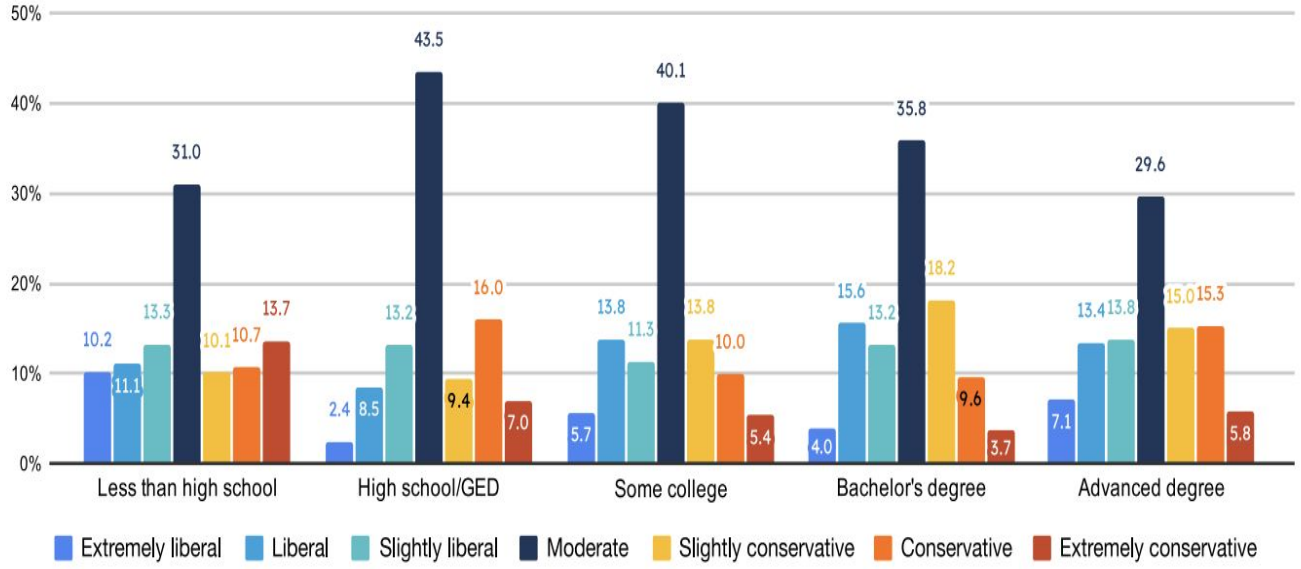

Figure 10. Political Attitudes by Educational Attainments (N=1,466)

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CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Civic engagement vis-a-vis Korean and non-Korean community organizations is lagging.

- We found that 42.4% of Korean Americans do not participate in non-Korean community organizations and 45.7% in Korean community organizations.
- Likewise, 23.3% indicated at least once a month in non-Korean community organizations vs 32.3% in Korean community organizations.

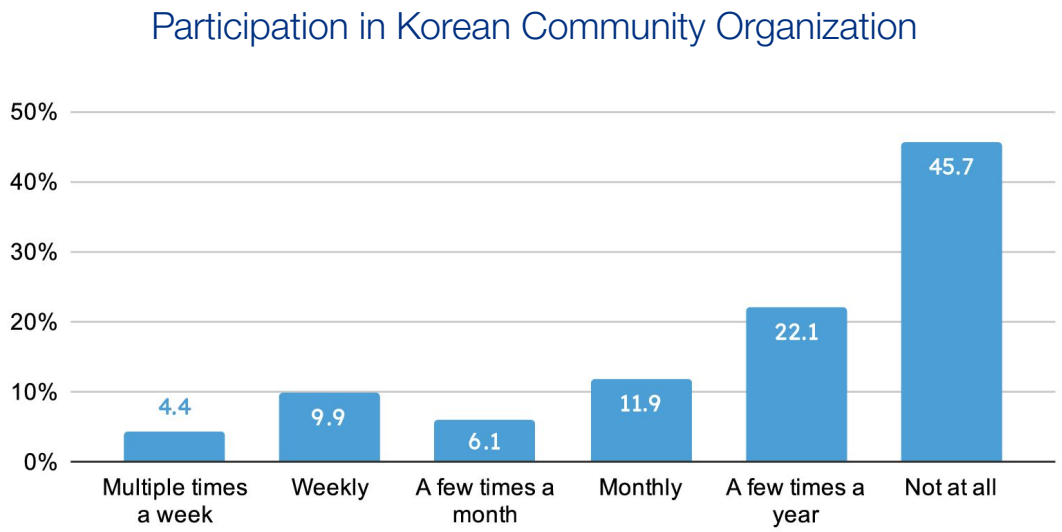

Figure 5. Participation in Non-Korean Community Organization (N=1,466)

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RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY AND PARTICIPATION

Religious affiliation is diverse and participation extends well beyond the religious.

- Protestants are a plurality (42%); Catholics (12%) and Buddhists (10%) follow. One in ten respondents chose the label “spiritual but not religious.”
- Even among those with no religious affiliation, 45% attended at least once a year, suggesting that Korean Americans may still be engaged with church in complex ways that go beyond religiosity.
- Four in ten attenders worship in predominantly Korean congregations and more than a third in racially mixed ones.

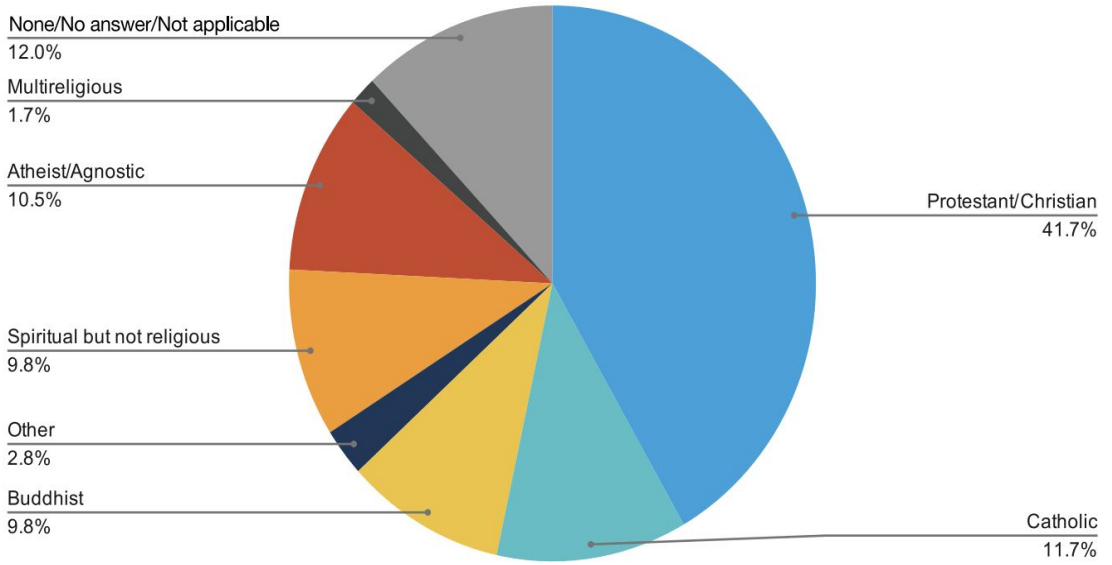

Figure 6. Religious Affiliation Distribution of Korean Americans (N=1,466)

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Thank you

Learn more about the survey

Scan the QR code with your phone camera

KASURVEY@GMAIL.COM