

## 군 장병의 군복무 중 종교변화와 군 선교전략에 대한 혼합연구

### Mixed Methods Research on the Change of Religion Occurring in the Army and Strategy on Military Missions

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#### Abstract

This research was carried out in order to propose a strategy concerning the change of religion that occurs in the military in South Korea. The research was carried out from July of 2014 to March of 2016 over 4 intervals (of 6 months) with 362 Korean soldiers as the subjects. The research period began from when a soldier first arrived at the base as a private first class (PFC) and was carried out with a term of six months ever since for three more periods to observe other rank as well. This was done in order to have an overall understanding on the flow of the military and the changes that occur during the passage of time. There have been researches that were carried out in a more political sense, but researches that have utilized active soldiers as subjects are very few in numbers. Especially, on the topic of how the military missions are to approach the issue of change of religion, the research was poorly done. Therefore, this research has traced down soldiers over a period of two years for the data and analyzed the factors that have caused the change of religion. The research was carried out as a mixed methods research covering the quantity and quality.

As the research result, the majority were soldiers who maintained no-religion or Christianity. A change from non-religious to Christianity or vice-versa was rare. In terms of quantitative research, the important factor in change from no-religion to Christianity

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turned out to be the percentage of Christian soldiers in that respective base and the amount of training being carried out. In terms of qualitative research, the important factor that brought the change from no-religion to Christianity turned out to be the comforting and optimistic environment of the base along with the bonding found in the church. Based on the findings from the above research, a military mission strategy was proposed.

**Key Words** : military mission strategy, change of religion, logistic regression, mixed methods research

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## I . INTRODUCTION

Korean churches chose Military Missions as an important means of young adult ministry. Beginning from the baptism carried out by the Korean Army Training Center to helping the soldiers decide and keep their faith during the time in their allocated bases and finally helping them maintain their faith after they return to society is the method Military Missions have been using in the past. Especially the Strategies used in the Korean Army Training center has been a topic of debate in terms of theological senses (Nam, 2007:65-68; Lee, 2010: 144-146;Kwon, 2011:8-10) and whether group baptism follows the teaching of the Bible is still an ongoing debate. However, this phase in Military Missions is considered as one of the most important steps and is supported by many believers and churches.

After the incoming soldiers receive their baptism at the training center and move on to be posted at various bases, the Military Mission utilizes strategies of various scales. In terms of small scale strategies, it refers to the ministry carried out by the chaplains of that particular base. Their ministry contains of worship services, bible studies, and small groups which can help the soldiers maintain their faith. In terms of large scale strategies, main examples would be events like Vision2020 and

Sunshine Campaign carried out by Korean Military Missions Organization. Vision2020 actively kicked off in 1996 and has been the most important project since “All nation evangelical movement” in 1972 until the “United Military Missions Associations” was found in 1999 (Oh, 2004:128-130).

However, the Vision2020 project failed to meet its expectations. As a countermeasure, project called Sunshine Movement was carried out. Sunshine Movement was started in 2011 under the moto of sharing the love of Jesus like the Good Samaritan to the soldiers in the base in order to prevent accidents and improve the environment.

But researches on how these movements and missions have influenced the soldier's decision on religion have not been studied so far. The Korea Gallup(2015: 10) shows the change in religion in the country but does not show the change of religion that occur in the army nor the influences the military mission have in the military bases. Instead, the missionaries, pastors, and the military mission associations observe and experience the small changes that occur around them providing meaning and potential to the missions.

Kim (2016: 351-354) tracked down the influential factors that alter faith and religion through data collected over the years at national level and have suggested various mission strategies through analyzing the influential factors. The results show that with the faith of soldiers on the concept of Christianity as foundation, strengthening worship services and innovating missions associations that could lead to personal growth in faith and transformation in the army that fits the current generation was suggested. Other studies also show that the impact of military missions on soldiers is required in order to propose more effective strategies.

Due to the specific features of the data, Kim (2016:354-355) could not observe the change of religion among the soldiers. The military missions work with a time limit of 21 months per soldier as Korean soldiers are discharged after completing 21 months of service. With this in mind, respective military bases need to come up with an effective way to keep track of the change of religion.

Therefore, the research was carried out in order to come up with a response

towards the change of religion that occurs in the army using both quantitative and qualitative research approaches.

In terms of quantitative research, data over the past two years on change of religion were collected.

A logistic regression analysis was carried out in order to verify what influences change of religion among the soldiers.

In terms of qualitative research, the reason behind maintenance of same faith was found out through personal interview and the reasons were analyzed.

## **II. Methodology**

The research subjects are in midst of complicated situations and therefore there may be limitations to go through the subjects and the data. Thus, a method based off from quantitative research will be required. With the core factors of the quantitative research along with qualitative research, an equal combination of the two will be designed for the research (Morse & Niehaus, 2012: 10-12).

### **1. Research Subjects**

#### **(1) Quantitative Research Subject**

This research was carried out against 362 soldiers belonging to the First Engineering Brigade who joined the army between July to December of 2014. The research subjects were interviewed and observed a total amount of 3 times in April and October of 2015 and March of 2016. In other words, they were observed during their ranks of PFC, specialist, and sergeant periods which could provide an overall change among the soldiers. The research was limited to only the 1st Engineering Brigade which covers a very minor portion of the Korean Army, but taking into

consideration the difficulty in gathering the information of all the bases in Korea, this research could remain as an important contribution.

## **(2) Qualitative Research Subject**

After the first survey regarding the change in religion or maintaining one's religion, a brief conversation and a personal interview were conducted. Out of the research subjects, 16 of them were interviewed in more depth with 8 of them having changed from no-religion to Christianity and 8 of them having changed from Christianity to no-religion. The following interview was recorded by the researcher for further use in the research.

## **2. Key variables**

### **(1) Dependent variables**

In this research that targets to analyze the influence in change of religion among soldiers, the dependent variable is the change or maintenance of religious status across four different check points. The change in religious status from no-religion to Christianity, Christianity to no-religion, and maintaining one's religious status were all coded as 0 and 1 accordingly. The dependent variable, through this coding, will undergo logistic regression analysis.

### **(2) Independent variables**

Independent variables were divided into 3 large sections. First would be the personal psychological change which includes self-esteem, purpose of life, and despair. The personal psychological variables were checked through the tool introduced in Kwon and Kim (2014: 238-239). Second was the ratio of Christians in the base and also the religion of the commander. Third would be the casual environment of the base in terms of basic training that affects the daily routine of the soldiers. A more detailed explanation is provided in Table 1.

Table 1 Explaining variables

Variables		Solution to variables	
Dependent Variable	no-religion→no-religion	Coded as 0 in analysis 1 and 2	Having stayed non-religious throughout all the ranks.
	no-religion→Christianity	Coded as 1 in analysis 1	Having started as non-religious but changed to Christianity during one of the ranks.
	Christianity→Christianity	Coded as 1 and analysis 2 and as 0 in analysis 3	Having stayed Christian throughout all the ranks.
	Christianity→no-religion	Coded as 1 in analysis 3	Having started as Christian but changed to no-religion during one of the ranks.
Personal psychological variable	Self-esteem	Likert scale on the score of 5 regarding 10 questions on self-esteem	
	Purpose of Life	Likert scale on the score of 5 on 16 questions regarding purpose of life	
	Despair	Likert scale on the score of 5 on the 10 questions regarding despair	
Base religion variable	Ratio of Christians	Ratio of Christians in the base the soldier belongs to Christian = 1, others = 0	
	Religion of the 5Commander		
Base training variable	Platoon sized training	Likert scale on the score of 5 regarding the intensity of training (1=very low, 5= very high)	

3. Data Analysis of quantitative research

In this research, in order to explore the various effects military service has on the selection of religion, logistic regression analysis was utilized. The logistic regression model was carried out three times and in analysis 1 where no-religion was maintained, was given 0 while no-religion to Christian was give 1. In analysis 2, maintaining no religion was given 0 while maintaining Christianity was given 1. In analysis 3, maintaining Christianity was given 0 and the change from Christianity to no-religion was set as 1.

If the logistic regression model was to be displayed as an equation it would look

like the following.

$$\ln\left(\frac{p_i(Y=1)}{1-p_i(Y=1)}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 F_i + \beta_2 S_i + \beta_3 X$$

$p_i(Y_i = 1)$  is the change from no-religion to Christianity in analysis 1, the maintenance of Christianity in analysis 2, and change from Christianity to no-religion in analysis 3.

$1 - p_i(Y_i = 1)$  is the maintenance of no-religion seen in analysis 1 and 2 and the maintenance of Christianity in analysis 3.

F is the vector representing personal psychological variable (self-esteem, purpose of life, depression)

S is the vector representing the state of religion in the base (ratio of Christians in the base, the religion of the commander)

X is the vector representing the casual routine of the base (base training)

With the above analysis, a preview of the primary and secondary strategy of military mission could be provided. In other words, through religious activities in the base, the reasons why one becomes a believer or how one maintains one's faith until the end of service, and the reason how one maintains that faith even in society can be observed.

#### **4. Data Analysis of qualitative research**

##### **(1) Personal Interview**

The researcher carried out in depth interviews with 16 soldiers and the interviews were carried out at a random interval of time in places like church, counselor's room, book cafe etc. The time spent in a single interview was about 30 minutes and was carried out once per person. The questions asked in the interview

included normal army life and reasons behind having or not having a religion and how one maintained that status. The interview was carried out in a very informal manner so the soldiers could talk with a free mind and was a one on one interview. The researcher summarized the interview after every session.

## **(2) Process of analyzing qualitative data**

In order to find out the reasons why the religion changes or is maintained during military service, the following method of analysis was carried out. The analysis that was conducted as member checking, as a whole, had three steps with the first being reading out the various cases in order to clearly summarize the content. Second is the researcher coding and finding out the core key words while forming the data base. While summarizing the data and examples, a situation that was encountered by numerous soldiers were tied up as joint example. Also, as the key words, words such as rest, growth, optimism, comrades, and mission were focused on which represents specific situations or emotions. With the key words, main concepts were set and then the words were dispersed into the matching concepts accordingly. Third, during the process of understanding the data, the researcher's thoughts, interpretation, and opinions were noted.

## **III. Results of Analysis and Interpretation**

### **1. Transition of Change of Religion**

The change of religion among the soldiers during their various rank were observed. The change of religion that was observed beginning from the fall of 2014 to spring of 2016 is displayed in Table 2. Since the research subjects do not represent the entire organization or the nation, there might be miscalculations and

minor faults in the result. However, the data was collected over 2 consecutive years and can provide the basic flow of change. According to a research from 2011, 48.3% had a religion while 51.7% had no religion in the army. This research also shows a similar ratio of religion. Also, in terms of the ratio of religions, leaving out the non-religious, Christianity made up 54.30% while Buddhism had 26.93%, and Catholicism had 17.96%. In this particular research, when the subjects were first asked about their religion, 67.80% were Christians, 15.25% were Buddhist, and 16.95% were Catholic. The reason behind the difference between this research and the nation-wide research (2011) in terms of religion could be due to the different method of research, and as mentioned before, because this research covers only a specific population of the military. Especially, the data used in this research was obtained by the researcher through visiting every base belonging to the 1st Engineering Brigade and the religion was not filled by others but by the subjects themselves.

If the change of religion is observed with the Private as the standard, as the ranks go up, it can be noticed that the number of non-religious soldiers increase. Surprisingly though, during the last several months of the service, as soldiers embark towards time of fulfilling their service, they seem to return to religion (in this case Christianity).

Table 2 The change of religion of research subjects.

Religion (numbers, %)	Private (1st period)	PFC (2nd period)	Corporal (3rd period)	Sergeant (4th period)
Christian	120(33.1)	112(30.9)	110(30.4)	118(32.6)
Buddhist	27(7.5)	23(6.6)	24(6.6)	22(6.1)
Catholic	30(8.3)	32(8.9)	31(8.6)	31(8.6)
No-religion	185(51.1)	194(53.6)	197(54.4)	191(52.7)
Total	362	362	362	362

Table 3 shows how the religion of the Private changed or remained by the time

they turned sergeants personally. The number of non-religious Private who remained non religion was 157 while the number of those who maintained Christianity was 99. Also, the number of PFC's who became Christians from no-religion was 17 while the opposite case had 19.

Table 3 Change of religion

	No-religion→ No-religion	No-religion→ Christian	Christian→ Christian	Christian→ No-religion
Christian	120(33.1)	112(30.9)	110(30.4)	118(32.6)
Buddhist	27(7.5)	23(6.6)	24(6.6)	22(6.1)
Catholic	30(8.3)	32(8.9)	31(8.6)	31(8.6)
No-religion	185(51.1)	194(53.6)	197(54.4)	191(52.7)
Total	362	362	362	5362

Table 4 shows the value of the self-esteem, purpose of life, depression, ratio of religion in the base, the religion of the commander, and the amount of training in the base for the four types of change of religion. In terms of self-esteem, the group that changed from Christianity to no-religion was the highest while the group who maintained their Christian faith had the lowest self-esteem. But this cannot be a reason to assume that every soldier who attends church has a low self-esteem. In terms of meaning of life, those who maintained Christianity and those who changed from Christianity to no-religion had the highest while those who changed from no-religion to Christianity had the lowest. In terms of despair, the group that maintained Christianity had the highest and the group that changed from Christianity to no-religion had the lowest. The percentage or the ratio of Christians in the base obviously was the highest among those who maintained the religion. There were often cases where the commander was a Christian but non converted from no-religion to Christianity during their service. Training intensity was found to be highest among those who changed from Christianity to no-religion.

Table 4 Descriptive statistics by type of religions change

	No-religion→ No-religion		No-religion→ Christian		Christian→ Christian		Christian→ No-religion	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Self-esteem	41.05	6.217	42.06	7.066	40.49	6.280	43.69	5.872
Purpose of life	54.90	11.104	54.38	8.648	55.33	10.736	55.34	13.552
Despair	17.52	7.339	17.13	7.293	19.39	7.551	17.06	6.773
Ratio of Christian	25.57	3.139	24.49	2.581	26.54	3.231	24.58	2.770
Religion of the Commander	.08	.276	.00	.000	.07	.258	.06	.232
Platoon Training	3.96	.913	4.38	.619	3.94	.923	4.44	.619

## 2. Analysis on the change of religion according to quantitative research

In order to explain the change in religion through a person's individuality by analyzing them, three groups were made for comparison and analysis. Analysis 1 was a comparison between group that maintained no-religion and group that changed from no-religion to Christianity, analysis 2 was a comparison between those who maintained no-religion and those who maintained Christianity, and analysis 3 was a comparison between those who maintained Christianity and those who changed from Christianity to no-religion. Analysis 1 is expected to provide a solution in bringing soldiers towards Christianity while analysis 2 is expected to provide the difference between the soldiers who have a religion and who do not. Finally, analysis 3 is likely to show the reason behind why soldiers switch from Christianity to no-religion.

### (1) Analysis 1 : Change from no-religion to Christianity and the causes

Table 5 compared those maintaining no-religion and those who switched from no-religion to Christianity. The influential factors related to this were ratio of Christians in the base and base training. Whenever the ratio of Christians increase

by 1, the likelihood of no-religion switching to Christianity increases by 1.206 times. In other words, if a base increases their Christian ratio, the likelihood for soldiers to switch to Christianity increases as well. On the other hand, the harder the training, the more chances of maintaining no-religion. In other words, the harder the training gets, the likelihood of soldiers switching to Christianity decreases by time 0.807.

In conclusion, Christian ratio in the base increases the percentage of soldiers switching to Christianity while hard training increases the chances of soldiers remaining no-religious.

Table 5 Result of analysis 1 : Influential factors leading to change from no-religion to Christianity

		log odd (no→no vs no→christianity)					
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Exp(B)
Personal Psychological variable	Constant	-1.824	3.723	.240	1	.624	.161
	Self-esteem	.069	.080	.732	1	.392	1.071
	Purpose of life	-.039	.036	1.196	1	.274	.962
	Despair	.019	.051	.145	1	.703	1.019
Base religion variable	Ratio of Christians	.216 *	.110	3.340	1	.048	1.206
Base Training Variable	Platoon Training	-.741†	.402	2.692	1	.090	.807
† p<.1, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001							R <sup>2</sup> =.122

(2) Analysis 2 : Factors that lead to maintaining No-religion and Christianity

Table 6 compared the groups that maintained no-religion and Christianity. The factors that influence this was the despair and ratio of Christians in the base. Whenever despair increases by score of 1, the likeliness of it's belonging to group that maintained Christianity was 1.038 times higher. Also, whenever the ratio of Christians rose by 1, the likeliness of it belonging to the Christian group was 1.105 times higher.

In other words, the higher the despair and anxiety in a soldier, the more likely

they are to seek help and prayer thus maintaining their Christian faith. But to look at it from a rather negative view, it might look better if those who maintained Christianity had low amount of despair, but looking at the longitudinal change, those who maintained Christianity could do so because of their despair which helps them seek and desire religion. Like the earlier factors, the proportion of Christians in the base plays a huge role in helping soldier maintaining Christianity.

As a conclusion, the higher the despair, the higher the chances of maintaining Christianity and the ratio of Christians increases the chances of maintaining Christianity.

Table 6 Result of analysis 2 : Influential factors leading to maintain Christianity.

		log odd (no→no vs christianity→christianity)					
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	p	Exp(B)
Psychological variable	Constant	5.040 *	2.134	5.576	1	.018	.006
	Self-esteem	-.001	.038	.001	1	.977	.999
	Purpose of life	.018	.018	1.020	1	.313	1.018
	Despair	.043†	.026	2.819	1	.093	1.044
Base religion variable	Ratio of Christians	.116 *	.054	4.545	1	.033	1.123
	Religion of the Commander	-.700	.587	1.424	1	.233	.496
Base Training Variable	Platoon Training	-.039	.164	.056	1	.812	.962
† p<.1, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001							R <sup>2</sup> =.157

### (3) Analysis 3 :Factors that lead to change from Christianity to No-religion

Table 7 compared those who maintained Christianity and those who changed from Christianity to no-religion. The influential factors were self-esteem, ratio of Christians in the base, and base training. When the self-esteem increased by 1, the chances of belonging to the group that changed from Christianity to no-religion was 1.127 times higher. When the ratio of Christians in the base increased by 1, the likeliness of belonging to the group that changed from Christianity to no-religion,



### 3. Analysis of change in religion according to qualitative research

In the earlier parts of the research, the change of religion during the military service was keenly looked at. This is like an individual, who had no religion, finding the necessity of a religion during the service and becoming a Christian or a Christian individual, losing the necessity of the religion during the service and deciding to be a non-religious person. In order to find out the reason behind such changes, personal interviews were carried out to figure out the factors that helped them make their decisions.

#### (1) Change from no-religion to Christianity

##### ① Comfort

For the young men in their early 20's, the sudden change in environment and social status brings discomfort and chaos in their minds. In order to find a safe and comforting environment, many attend religious events. The Christian service especially managed to provide a comfort that was never experienced before. Soldier 'A' emphasizes this factor.

"After entering the army, curiosity lead me to church and after being placed in to the brigade, I began liking the church environment, especially because I could keep my guard down and stay relaxed" (Soldier 'A')

"In the Army Training Center, I chose church after attending a few religious events. Though I never went to church back in the society, church to me was fun and comforting" (Soldier 'B')

##### ② Positive mind set

For the soldiers oppressed by the army life, the smallest incidents can lead to a negative emotion. If such negativity continues, it can affect self-esteem and can lead to difficulty in the army where confidence is an important requirement. However,

those with a positive mind find their peace more easily and carry out their service with more confidence and ease.

“During hard times, praying in the church often provides optimism. The reason I began going to church in the army is also because of this very reason” (Soldier ‘C’)

“I went to church from a very young age, but as I grew older, I lived more like an atheist. However, it was not the negative thought of religion not being my cup of tea that sustained me from going to church. In the beginning it was purely because I wanted to rest more. However, when I was highly stressed, going to church made me peaceful and optimistic and that is the reason I continued going” (Soldier ‘D’)

### ③ Bonding

Soldiers can choose a religion on their will, but often are influenced by the environment such as the company around. Especially, an invitation from a fellow soldier, or commander can become an important reason why one decides to attend a church.

“Back in society I had no religion and therefore I had nothing to do during the weekends. However, being in the army, provided me with an opportunity to go to church. The reason was because my fellow soldiers attended church and I liked singing the worship songs” (Soldier ‘E’)

“I started going to church after joining the army. The reason was because my commander recommended it, telling us it would be worthwhile. After attending church, I realized that this was better than spending my weekend in idleness and thus I continued attending church ever since” (Soldier ‘F’)

For soldiers, the bond between each other is very special. This emotion takes place to form a community. This is the reason why bonding plays an important role in helping soldiers attend religious activities. The two soldiers interviewed above prove that.

## (2) Change from Christianity to no-religion

### ① There is no spiritual growth

The reason one continues going to church is being able to fulfill one’s spiritual

goals. In other words, one's faith keeps growing and therefore attending church every week becomes joyful. However, the soldiers attending military churches often stop in the middle because there is no spiritual growth to keep them going.

“When I first arrived at base, I went to church with my superior, however, even when I have been attending church for a while, there was no faith growing in me so I decided to stop attending” (Soldier ‘G’)

“Before entering the army, I attended church because of my parents. However, just like in society, faith did not grow in my time in the army as well. This is the reason I decided to stay non-religious” (Soldier ‘H’)

In order to grow spiritually, one must try in various ways but the church too should be able to provide a spiritual worship and group sessions that can nurture the faith of soldiers. Various programs could be one way to grab the attention of many new comers.

## ② Tasks that continue throughout the weekend

After being placed into a certain base, not all soldiers carry out similar task, there are certain positions that require to stay dedicated even during the weekend. In such situations, the soldiers naturally are unable to attend church and therefore turn to non-religious.

“When I first entered the army, I went to church at the training center and I really liked it, however, after being placed into my current base, I work as the cook and don't have the time to attend church” (Soldier ‘I’)

“During the early days of my service, I was able to attend church without a difficulty, but as my rank went up, I was asked to stand the weekend duty making me unable to attend church at all. I naturally became non-religious” (Soldier ‘J’)

Soldiers serving near the Korean borders, GOP, and DMZ along with those who

are continuously asked to stay on duty during the weekend find it very hard to maintain their faith. Even though churches try their best to make the worship time suitable, it is still a difficult task to cover all the soldiers. Even the ministers fail to pay attention to soldiers who miss out due to duty and therefore they naturally move away from the church.

### ③ Desire to rest

While some come to church seeking for rest, some decide not to come to church because they want to rest. Continuous training during the week makes soldiers want to spend personal time during the weekend and therefore stay in their bunkers to sleep and rest. As this resting habit keeps repeating, attending church on a Sunday morning becomes very difficult.

“When I was a kid, I went to church with my parents, however, beginning from middle school I decided not to go to church. Still, in the army I came back to church but skipping once or twice lead to almost not going and eventually I decided no-religion. The main reason probably is laziness. My desire to rest outweighs the desire to go to church” (Soldier ‘K’)

“When I first entered the army, I put down my religion as Christian because my parents are believers, however, as I began my military life, I decided that I like resting better and stopped going to church” (Soldier ‘L’)

Like seen above, many chose Christianity in the beginning but fall out due to various difficulties in the army. There are certain parts that can be approached with a effective strategy while there are parts that just needs to be accepted. However, just being able to look at the various factors and causes can be a help in setting the strategy towards the right direction.

#### IV. Conclusion

In this research, in order to response to the change in religion occurring in the army, 362 soldiers from the 1st engineering brigade were observed from July of 2014 to March of 2016 over four periods. The research periods were divided starting from when the soldier first arrived at the base to 6 months, covering the various ranks of the soldier. This was done in order to be able to observe the overall flow of the changes.

There have been many researches in the past regarding new military mission strategies, but researches that directly studied the soldiers were not common. Kim(2016) with the longitudinal data provided by KEEP, came up with a military mission strategy suitable to today's society but did not provide a change in religion among the soldiers. Military mission works with a short time span of 21 months and requires an effective strategy capable of handling various situations. For this, the data was collected for 2 years and the factors that caused the changes were analyzed. Especially in this research, quantitative and qualitative researches were combined. As quantitative research, logistic regression analysis was used to figure out what factors influence the change of religion while qualitative research was carried out through personal interviews with soldiers who maintained or changed their religion.

The result of the research is as follows.

First, those who maintained no-religion and Christianity were 157 and 99 respectively which is a high number. On the other hand, the change from no-religion to Christianity and from Christianity to no-religion was 17 and 19 which was comparatively low. The overall number of change in religion might be low, but this provides the number of soldiers open to conversion. There were 157 who decided to stay non-religious while 36 out of 362, roughly 10%, were open to change of religion, meaning that more effort and better strategy could lead to increase in number of change of religion.

Second, the analysis on the reason behind the change of religion is as follows. While comparing the group that maintained no-religion and the group that changed from no-religion to Christianity, the ratio of Christians in the base and the amount of training turned out to have high influences. High ratio of Christians leads to increase in number of no-religion to Christianity while hard training lead to maintaining no religion. Among the group that maintained no religion and Christianity, ratio of Christians and amount of despair turned to have influences. Soldiers with high amount of despair maintained Christianity and the high proportion of Christians in the base lead to the chances of maintaining Christianity. Lastly, in comparing the group that maintained Christianity and those who changed from Christianity to no-religion, self-esteem, ratio of Christians, and the amount of training seemed to have the most influence. High self-esteem and frequent training lead to increase in switch from Christianity to no-religion while high ratio of Christians leads to high maintenance as well.

Third, the influential factor in change of religion observed through qualitative study is as follows. The reason behind the change from no-religion to Christianity was the comfort, optimism, and bonding found through Christianity. While going through a major transition, the soldiers find peace of mind through Christianity and find refuge in it. Along with it, the positive mind set adds in more zeal to life. It was also observed that many attended church with subordinates and superiors, bringing the community together. Military is a community life and likewise, religion seemed to follow the flow of community. Among those who changed from Christianity to no-religion, their reason of change was lack of spiritual growth regardless of attending services, continuous duty throughout the weekend, and the desire to rest during the weekend.

With the following result, the proposed military mission strategy is as follows.

First, for the soldiers still open to change, military mission is a mandatory tool. Although the number of soldiers maintaining no-religion is very high, there are still 10% of soldiers who switch either to Christianity or no-religion and the military

missions should target this 10%. Of course a research that uses the data covering the entire military would be the best at coming up with an over-all strategy and utilizing a single brigade such as this research might face many limitation. However, even this amount of data and research, carried out for 2 years with active soldiers as subjects, can provide a better understanding of the military and the direction needed to be taken than having no data at all. Therefore, with these results, mission strategies need to be designed, aiming the soldiers open to change as fruits to be harvested.

Second, a strategy related to ratio of Christians in a base need to be set in the right direction. In both quantitative and qualitative researches, high ratio of Christians in the base leads to high maintenance of the religion among the soldiers as well. In qualitative research, it was observed that going to church with fellow soldiers lead to continuous attendance. The Sunshine Movement is one of such strategies where a soldier brings positive influences to his fellow soldiers. Utilizing and supporting such strategies can become the most effective strategy in the military where community life is the foundation. If such strategies do succeed, bases with good Christian soldiers can influence their comrades to change as well. On the other hand, bases with low number of Christian soldiers might face difficulties, but even if one individual is capable of carrying out strategies such as the Sunshine Movement, a meaningful result will definitely be produced.

Third, regarding the personal psychological state, a strategy dealing with self-esteem and despair need to be set. In this research, high self-esteem was an obstacle in maintaining faith while despair had positive input in maintaining faith. This can be acknowledged as a feature found in the young soldier's psychological factor while choosing a religion. Many research report a positive relation between psychological state and religion. According to a research by Suh, Chung, and Koo (2005: 1085-1086) on psychological state and spirituality, faith showed negative relation with anxiety, depression, and stress while showed passive relation with self-esteem. According to a research by Donahue and Benson(1995: 155) spirituality

lead to increase in self-esteem and lead to active social life preventing suicide and delinquency. However, in a research that states the negativity of religion (Hunsberger, Alisat, Pancer, & Pratt, 1996: 2015) it stated that religion leads to inability to adapt to society. In other words, like the research mentioned above, in order to escape from inability to adapt to society, soldiers with high self-esteem might choose not to maintain or select Christianity. Individuals with high self-esteem choosing no-religion might be a statement saying they adapt well to the society. Along with this, for individuals seeking for comfort and solution to despair, religious healing and comfort must be provided. Also, if through religious education and services, the emphasis on trusting God instead of raising one's self-esteem is made strong, many more soldiers will choose and maintain Christianity.

Fourth, a strategy to maintain and continuously provide peace and optimism is required. Through qualitative research, it was observed that peace and comfort were one of the main reasons why soldiers chose Christianity. There can be peace found through the worship itself, and there can be peace found through the relationships made at church. Especially in the military, if the warm environment provided by superiors and the relaxing environment between superiors and subordinates are well maintained, then the number of soldiers choosing and maintaining Christianity will increase as well. Also, continuous religious education aiming for growth in optimism among the soldiers can also become a huge influence.

Fifth, a strategy regarding the decrease of Christianity through intensive training needs to be set. Training for soldiers is one of the most important parts of being in the military. Through mock training, the soldiers are prepared for any situation that might bring threat to the country. However, the more intense the training becomes, it becomes more likely that the soldiers chose no-religion in order to rest during the weekend. The desire to rest among the soldiers observed in the qualitative research is related to this factor. Therefore, a military strategy targeting the soldiers tired from their training and desiring a weekend's rest need to be created. The training cannot be stopped or altered and therefore, by making the

weekend services more active or creative, grabbing the interest of the soldiers is required by moving the worship timing for the comfort of the soldiers, preparing a hot meal for them, providing a more relaxing worship environment and so on.

This research has the following limitations. First, to make the results of the research standard, there are shortcomings. The research subjects were not selected from the entire Korean military but from a single brigade representing a single base and single region and therefore cannot represent the military as a whole. However, to carry out a longitudinal study, the data was tracked down for 2 years and therefore, the quality of the research can be said to be high.

Second, there is limitation in analyzing the data obtained from qualitative research. An assistant research is required and a professional's feedback on the interview is required but this research was unable to do so.

Third, for further researches, with this research as the base, more data covering the military need to be collected. Kim (2016:332) discussed about collecting a nation-wide data of soldiers for the purpose of military mission strategy, however, collecting such large data requires large effort and time, but for an overall understanding and for an effective strategy, such procedure is required.

**“This article is neither published nor planned to be published  
in any other journal.”**

**“이 논문은 다른 학술지 또는 간행물에 게재되었거나 게재 신청되지 않았음을 확인함.”**

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## 논문초록

# 군 장병의 군복무 중 종교변화와 군 선교전략에 대한 혼합연구

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임세현 (고든 칼리지)

이 연구는 군대에서 일어나는 종교적 변화에 관한 전략을 제안하기 위해 수행되었다. 이 조사는 2014년 7월부터 2016년 3월까지 362명의 군인을 대상으로 총 4회에 걸쳐 진행되었다. 조사 시점은 병사가 소속 부대로 전입 온 이등병시점과 6개월 단위로 일병, 상병, 병장 시점에 각각 조사하였다. 이를 통해 군 생활 전체적인 흐름에 따라 변화를 볼 수 있도록 자료를 구성하였다. 그 동안 군선교 전략은 시대에 따라 정책적으로 적절히 진행되어왔지만 장병들을 대상으로 한 직접 조사하여 정책을 제시한 전략은 미비하였다. 특히 종교 변화 문제에 어떻게 접근해야하는 지에 관한 연구가 제대로 이루어지지 않았다. 따라서 이 연구는 2년 동안 병사를 추적하여 종교 변화를 일으킨 요인을 분석하였다. 특히 양적 연구와 질적 연구를 포함하는 혼합분석으로 수행되었다.

연구결과, 대다수는 무종교 또는 기독교를 유지하였다. 무종교에서 기독교로 또는 그 반대로 변경하는 것은 적었다. 둘째, 양적 연구에서는 무종교에서 기독교로의 변화에 중요한 요소가 각 부대의 기독교인 비율과 훈련의 양으로 밝혀졌다. 셋째, 질적 연구측면에서, 무종교에서 기독교로의 변화를 가져온 중요한 요인은 교회 내 유대관계와 위안과 긍정적인 마음으로 밝혀졌다.

**주제어 : 군선교전략, 종교변화, 로지스틱 회귀분석, 혼합연구**

