

Social Attitudes to Cross-Border Marriages in Korea and Taiwan

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This article aims to compare attitudes toward cross-border marriages in Korea and Taiwan using data from a unique questionnaire that was administered in both countries in 2007 and 2008. Moreover, this study proposes historical and political analyses alongside the conventional social quality approach, as a means of avoiding decontextualized interpretations of social development. Upon surveying indicators of social cohesion, inclusiveness, and empowerment based on a social quality framework, the results indicate that Taiwanese citizens show a lower level of social inclusiveness toward marriage migrants than Korean citizens show, though the Taiwanese show more social cohesion and empowerment than the latter. Social attitudes toward marriage migrants in the two countries imply that transnational marriages are likely to bring about various forms of social conflict, unless policies can be developed that account for the complex nature of such arrangements.

Keywords: international marriage, Social Quality, comparative analysis, attitudes

Introduction

Globalization has been a prominent phenomenon for many countries since the 1990s, and one of the more significant consequences of globalization is the cross-border movement of capital and labor – though these movements occur in contrasting ways. More specifically, capital generally moves from more developed to less developed countries, while labor moves in opposite direction (DeWaard, Kim, and Raymer 2012; Kim and Cohen 2010). Moreover, there are few legal restrictions on the movement of capital, whereas there are serious barriers for the movement of labor. Though many developed countries are in significant need of migrant workers from less-developed countries because of labor shortages, they are often reluctant to open the labor market. These legal restrictions are largely responsible for the increasing number of undocumented workers in developed countries, which in turn can produce serious levels of social discrimination and cultural exclusion of undocumented workers. Though *the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families* (ICRMW) was initiated in 1990 and officially entered into force in 2003 (Iredale, Piper, and Ancog 2005) as a way of counteracting discrimination against migrant workers, only a few countries have ratified it and no major destination countries have adopted it (Ruhs 2012).

Though the proportion of female labor migrants is not higher than that for their male counterparts, one important gender distinction is that female migrants are more likely to be domestic workers and sex workers. Also, a considerable fraction of female boundary-crossers are illegal immigrants. Taken together, this distinctions suggest that entering the legal labor migration is particularly difficult for females. This migration of women from less- to more-developed countries to do so-called “women’s work” therefore involves sizable human rights problems. Hence, it is often said that females comprise the underside of globalization (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003).

Another important escape route from poverty for women in less-developed countries is cross-border marriage. Though marriage migration occurs at the intersection of various other trends, such as later and fewer marriages, geographic flight from rural areas, and the tendency of hypergamy in industrialized countries, it parallels in numerous ways labor migration. Namely, many marriage migrant females, like labor migrants, want to participate in economic activities in the host country and send remittance to the origin country. Because of this strong desires to work in wealthy

countries, some women in developing countries enter a sham marriage, which are often orchestrated by international marriage brokers (Lee 2005).

Despite these similarities in personal motivation and social structures between marriage and labor migrations, the two forms of migration fundamentally differ in that a government's ability to intervene on cross-border marriages is low because these are private matter, while it is higher on labor migrant entry because this is controlled by treaties or the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between governments. Therefore, it is much more difficult to find solutions for discrimination and social exclusion of marriage migrant women and their children than for labor migrants.

This paper examines the conditions within the marriage migrant community through the framework of the social quality approach, first by surveying for indicators of social cohesion, inclusiveness, and empowerment, and for indicators of social inclusiveness for marriage migrants. Then, this study compares attitudes toward cross-border marriages in Korea and Taiwan using a unique questionnaire in both countries in 2007 and 2008. Finally, this study reviews the social quality indicators for migrants and presents a different approach that can refine the data-based indices.

Social Quality Theory

The fundamental goal of social development is to move toward a better society beyond mere economic development or political democratization, and while there are numerous opinions on what constitutes a good society, there is consensus within the social development field that social integration should be at the core of an advanced society. Economic growth has long been measured by GDP, the dominant concern for many countries – including South Korea – after the end of the World War II. However, variants of the social development theories, such as modernization theory (Parsons 1964) and dependency theory, have not been effective at explaining the globalization-derived problems that many countries have faced since the 1990s, which highlights the limitations of past iterations of social development theory (Roxborough 1988). The quality-of-life paradigm, which attempts to reflect the well-being of individuals as well as qualitative aspects of social progress that economic frameworks often overlook, was proposed as an alternative to the development perspectives in the 1990s. However, the quality-of-life approach was also limited in that it failed to provide cohesive theoretical foundations (Yee and Chang 2011).

To overcome the limitations of social development theories in general, and the quality-of-life paradigm in particular, several social scientists in Western European countries established the theoretical framework of Social Quality (SQ) in the late 1990s, which emphasized the *social* development beyond economic and political development (Ahn and Chung 2010; J.-O. Ahn 2009; Herrmann 2006). These scholars envisioned that SQ is determined by the constant tension between individual self-realization and participation in various collective identities that constitute everyday life, and by the tension between the world of formal organizations and informal relationships (Yee and Chang 2011). SQ is comprised of four major factors that underlie social relationships – resources, solidarity, accessibility and participation, and empowerment – and the degree of SQ at the societal level depends on the society's experiences with these elements. Further, four conditional SQ factors can be drawn on a quadrant with a spectrum from the individual level to the societal level on a vertical line, and a spectrum from the micro-level structures (such as families, communities, or groups) to macro-level structures (such as systems, institutions, and organizations) on a horizontal line. The four conditional factors are socioeconomic security, social cohesion, social inclusion, and social empowerment (van der Maesen and Walker 2005).

Another theoretical focus of the Social Quality approach was social integration.¹ Even in the Western European countries that achieved the world's highest level of economic development and the institutionalization of political democratization, a social vision that integrates citizens is not apparent. In particular, social integration has become an acute issue as social inequality, racial conflicts, and social exclusion have apparently been exacerbated by the establishment of the European Union (EU). In this context, the modern vision of Social Quality and its analytical framework was made. This approach, which argues that society consists of socioeconomic security, empowerment, social inclusion, and social cohesion (Beck et al. 2001), is similar to social integration theories that have been discussed in traditional sociology. A highly integrated society can be accomplished when all citizens live in the socioeconomic security, without anxiety or alienation, and become cohesive.² Here, socioeconomic security is a material

¹ Note that social integration should be distinguished from social acceptance. According to Keyes (1998), *social integration* refers to the evaluation of the quality of one's relationship to society and community whereas *social acceptance* denotes the construal of society based on the assessment of character and qualities of other people as a generalized category.

² Well-integrated society means that the material basis is fulfilled, cooperation among social

prerequisite for integration, inclusiveness and cohesion, as a network between individuals as well as between individuals and society. This security is the central mechanism that makes social integration possible, and empowerment as a subjective consideration can be seen as a result of the integration.

Regarding the geographic frame of this study, according to various surveys (e.g., Song 2008), there are interesting differences between Koreans and Taiwanese in terms of attitudes. In general, Taiwanese show a more negative attitude toward work migrants and marriage migrants than Koreans. Though, according to the SQ framework that those surveys are based upon, social attitudes toward marriage migration constitute an important part of social cohesion and receptivity, Taiwanese show a higher social cohesion, on average, than Koreans. The main research question that this paper attempts to address is based on the evidence that Taiwanese citizens demonstrate more exclusionary attitudes toward marriage migration than Koreans, despite the Taiwanese having higher levels of social cohesion and receptivity than Koreans.

This article centers on the notion that these inconsistent social indicators are rooted in the different social and historical experiences that Koreans and Taiwanese have obtained.³ Thus, we need to analyze this phenomenon more deeply by reviewing both quantitative indicators and qualitative elements, such as aspects of historical and social contexts as well as the governmental policies that marriage migration brought about. Social behaviors and attitudes are path dependent, meaning that historical developments can have a critical impact on understanding the current phenomena. Individuals embedded in social structure are inherently affected by social policies, which is also influenced by its constituents. Furthermore, it should be noted that it is essential to recognize that each of these elements closely influences the others and that the well-being of marriage migrants should encompass the right to access social services, the right to safe mobility, labor rights, the right to family reunification, and access to residence and citizenship (Puentes et al. 2010). Hence, in order to understand these complex processes, depending solely on the SQ framework may not be sufficient.

This paper is primarily based on public opinion surveys which were

members is maintained, and sociocultural needs is satisfied (Fichter 1957).

³ These two countries are selected not only because of data availability, but also because of relatively similar cultural, political, and historical contexts in the two societies as well as experiences of large influx of marriage and labor migrants from Southeast Asian countries during the more or less similar periods.

conducted in Korea and Taiwan in 2007 and 2008⁴, respectively — from questionnaires having the same set of questions. In 2007, the Institute for Social Development and Policy Research (ISDPR) at the Seoul National University surveyed 1,005 people aged 19 and over living in the country's seven largest cities: Seoul, Busan, Daegu, Gwangju, Incheon, Daejeon, and Ulsan (Chung et al. 2009). The main purpose of the survey, *Survey on People's Attitudes and Values Ten Years After Financial Crisis* (S. Y. Kim 2007), was to examine the effects of the financial crisis that occurred in Asia during the late 1990s. The Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) at the National Taiwan University Faculty of Social Sciences administered the same questionnaire, which was translated into Chinese, to respondents who were living in 16 districts in Taipei and aged 19 and over. Roughly 100 people per district were sampled, and the total Taiwanese sample was 1,607. In terms of demographic composition of both samples, 50.4% and 51.2% were females in Korea and Taiwan, respectively. The share of aged 19-29, 30-39, 40-49, and 50 and older were 22.4%, 24.2%, 22.4%, and 31.0%, respectively in Korean sample. The same set of proportions were 24.2%, 22.7%, 17.8%, and 35.3% in Taiwanese sample. Overall mean age of respondents were similar in both countries. With respect to educational attainment, the fraction of less than high school education, high school, and more than some college were 19.6%, 38.8%, and 41.6% among Korean sample whereas the same proportions were 11.5%, 23.0%, and 65.5% among Taiwanese. Hence, it appears that Taiwanese sample were slightly more educated compared with Korean one.

Overall, the survey was constructed based on the analytical framework of the social quality approach. Based on the results from these surveys, we compared indicators of social quality between Taiwan and Korea. From these indicators, various data related to marriage and labor migration were collected to help interpret the social contexts. That is, by collecting mid- to long-term data, we attempted to deepen the meaning of the indicators by analyzing the historical context on which the countries are based.

⁴ Given the rapid changes in the migration trends and policies in both countries, these surveys might be somewhat outdated. Nonetheless, to our knowledge, data from published source is severely limited in this field, and hence the two surveys used in this study, having same set of questions, provide a unique opportunity to compare and contrast the attitudes toward migrants in both countries.

Social Attitude of Taiwanese and Koreans towards Marriage Migrants

According to the surveys administered in Korea (2007) and in Taiwan (2008), attitudes toward labor migrants and marriage migration are, on average, more negative among Taiwanese than among Koreans, though fear of discrimination against migrants' children was much lower in Taiwan than in Korea. As such, attitudes toward marriage migration are ambivalent and complex.

Attitudes toward Marriage Migrants and Labor Migrants

First, according to Figure 1, the Taiwanese respondents show a much higher level of opposition to the permanent settlement of labor migrants than Koreans. When asked if foreign workers should settle in the country at the end of their training period, Koreans' average response was 3.27 on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*) whereas the Taiwanese average was only 2.50. According to a Student's *t*-test, this mean difference was statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level. Taiwanese antagonism against marriage migrants was less strong than that for labor migrants, though it was still lower than Koreans' level.

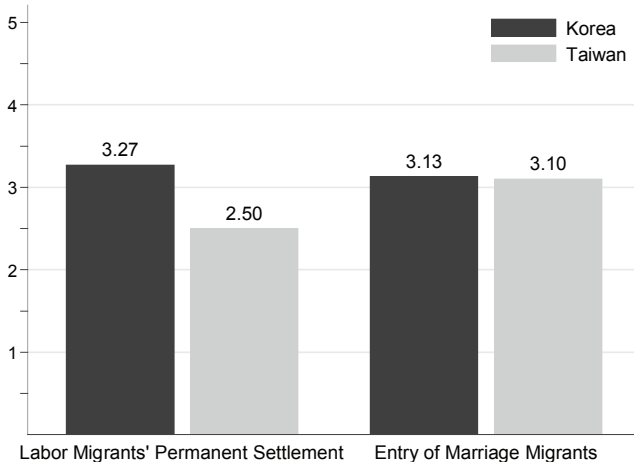
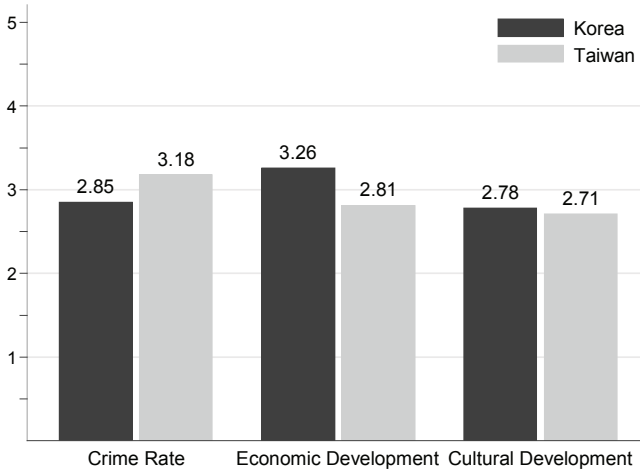


FIG. 1.—Attitudes about labor migrants' permanent settlement and entrance of marriage migrants among Koreans and Taiwanese



NOTE.—Each person was asked how much he or she agreed with following statements using 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*): “Labor migrants and marriage migrants increase the crime rate in our society”; “Labor migrants and marriage migrants are generally helpful for economic development of our country”; “Immigrants make our society better through bringing new ideas and culture.”

FIG. 2.—Social inclusion of foreign immigrants among Koreans and Taiwanese

The results indicate that, with respect to the entrance of labor and marriage immigrants, Taiwanese citizens tend to think more negatively than Koreans (see Figure 2).⁵ The Taiwanese are more likely than their Korean counterparts to think that labor and marriage migrants would increase the crime rate,⁶ and are less likely to think that immigrants help national economic development or enhance culture through new ideas. These differences were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), and align with prior research by Song (2008), who found that Taiwan seems to be the most opposed to immigration, Japan in the middle, and Korea the least opposed.

⁵ It should be noted that these questions were designed to ask about general attitude toward international migrants, including labor as well as marriage migrants. Hence, it is possible that respondents might have negative attitude toward labor migrants and positive attitude toward marriage migrants simultaneously. In other words, due to data limitation, it is not possible to differentiate the attitude toward to labor migrants with the attitude toward to marriage migrants.

⁶ The question was “How strongly do you agree with following statement: Labor migrants and marriage migrants raise the crime rate in our society.” And the respondent answered with a Likert scale with 1 (*strongly disagree*) through 5 (*strongly agree*). Mean value for Taiwanese was 3.18 and for Korean was 2.85, and *t*-test result indicated that the difference was statistically significant at 0.01 level.

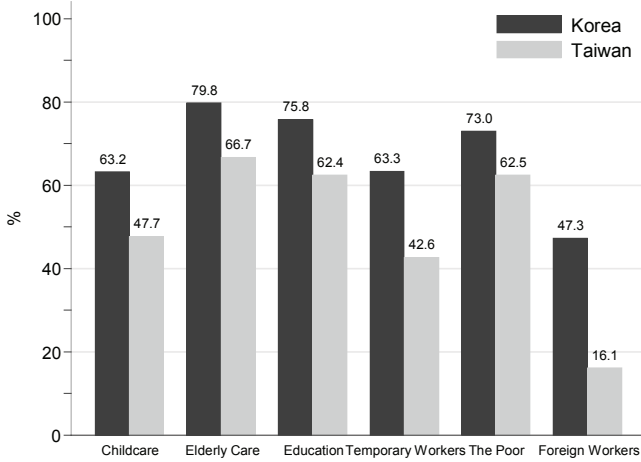


FIG. 3.—Percentage distribution of respondents who agreed with welfare spending on childcare, elderly care, education, temporary workers, the poor, and foreign workers in Korea and Taiwan

Figure 3 presents the percentage distribution of respondents who agreed that welfare expenditures on childcare, elderly care, education, temporary workers, the poor, and foreign workers should be increased. Overall, in both countries, only a small fraction of people feel that the government should raise welfare spending on foreign workers. Also, the two nations' recognition of the need for welfare spending on labor migrants — many of whom are undocumented — was considerably lower compared with spending on other areas, such as childcare, elderly care, education, or the poor. The Taiwanese, in particular, showed a much lower level of recognition than Koreans.

On the other hand, while Taiwan presents a much higher level of negativity against foreign workers and marriage migrants than Korea, a smaller fraction of Taiwanese respondents think that children of labor migrants and marriage migrants will be discriminated against in their society (36.7% in Taiwan vs. 62.1% in Korea). Though in both countries the share of people who believed that immigrants' children would be discriminated against was higher than the share who believed these children would be treated either neutrally or with no discrimination, the extent of concern was much more pronounced among Koreans than among Taiwanese. The fact that Taiwanese show a comparatively stronger opposition toward labor and marriage migrants, while having a weaker concern for discrimination against immigrants' children, might indicate their confidence in the strength of

democracy of their society.

Social Quality Approach

As mentioned earlier, the Taiwanese attitude toward labor and marriage migrants is, more negative than Koreans, overall social inclusion, cohesion, and empowerment indicators are more positive in Taiwan than in Korea.

First, the Taiwanese are generally much more favorable toward international marriage than Koreans: higher levels of the acceptance are shown in all educational groups and age groups. Also, Taiwanese respondents had fewer objections to sending children abroad at early ages to help them learn foreign languages and cultures. Despite the higher level of antagonism toward immigrants among Taiwanese compared with Koreans, a greater proportion of the former answered that they do not care if their children wish to marry a foreigner, indicating that general receptivity to international marriage is higher in Taiwan than it is in Korea.⁷ This might also imply that the Taiwanese have different reference group when they think of immigrants depending on the survey question. That is, they might think of labor or marriage migrants from Southeast Asian countries – who have lower levels of education – when asked for their general opinions about immigrants, but would think of Westerners from Europe or the U.S. when asked about a children's foreign spouse.

Taiwanese respondents also showed a greater level of trust, a typical measure of social cohesion, than Koreans. Korean results indicated that 38.4% answered that they can generally trust other people while 49.2% of Taiwanese said so, meaning that the overall level of societal trust is higher in Taiwan than in Korea; a similar pattern was observed for trust for public institutions. The level of trust for public institutions, except for media, civil society, the military, and the police, was higher among Taiwanese than among Koreans.

Empowerment was also relatively higher among the Taiwanese: the average rating of the level of democracy in their society was 7.01 among Taiwanese, compared to 5.61 among Koreans. In addition, according to the results in Table 1, respondents' assessment of economic, social, and cultural

⁷ The question asked how much the respondent agree with the following statement: "I do not care if my child marries a foreigner if he or she wants to." The answer was measured with 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree 5 = strongly agree), and the mean value for Taiwanese was 3.18 and 2.85 for Koreans. The difference between the two countries was statistically significant ($p < 0.01$).

TABLE 1
EMPOWERMENT INDICES IN KOREA AND TAIWAN

		Korea	Taiwan
Middle-Class Consciousness		4.27	5.28
Evaluation on Democracy		5.61	7.01
Evaluation on Status	Income Status	4.46	5.03
	Asset Status	4.14	4.76
	Social Status	4.20	4.84
	Cultural Status	4.42	5.52
Evaluation on Social Relations	Parents-Children	3.26	3.35
	Labor-Management	2.71	2.77
	Teacher-Student	3.06	3.32
	Civil Service-Citizen	2.91	3.09

status was higher among Taiwanese than among Koreans. Middle-class consciousness and job satisfaction among Taiwanese were also higher than among Koreans.

Historical Approach: Earlier Start of Marriage Migration in Taiwan than in Korea

Why does Taiwan, the country with a higher level of social inclusion and empowerment, show greater antagonism toward labor and marriage migrants than Korea? It is likely that marriage migration in Taiwan started earlier than in Korea, and the Taiwanese government and citizenry have had more time to deal with the variety of social problems associated with the influx of new immigrants.

The modern era of marriage migration dates back to the 1970s. Since the end of civil war during the last 1970s and early 1980s, soldiers who migrated to Taiwan needed spouses and they began to import women from other parts of Southeast Asia (Tsay 2004). The amount of foreign nationals in Taiwan had been rather small, numbering only a few thousand before 1970, but reached 23,000 in 1981. Since the mid-1980s, illegal marriage migration by women who deceived by fraud of employment opportunity in Taiwan emerged. Southeast Asian women who migrated to Taiwan through these forms of human trafficking often ran away.

The number surged rapidly in the 1990s with the opening of the

Taiwanese labor market to other Southeast Asian workers, and further increased by the influx of spouses from China and Southeast Asia. A total of 67,329 foreign wives entered Taiwan between 1996 and 2000 whereas only 402 foreign wives did so during 1991-1995 period (Chung, Kim, and Piper Forthcoming). The upsurge of foreign spouses may be associated with the difficulties of Taiwanese men finding a spouse: many Taiwanese women live in rural areas, are from lower social strata, have disabilities, are divorced, or are pursuing education instead of marriage, plus there was an overall phenomenon in the country in which marriage was seen as less important than it used to be. Accordingly, the number of foreign wives increased through 2003 before beginning a decline in 2004. During 2001-2005, a total of 132,195 foreign wives were admitted to enter Taiwan while it decreased to 85,123 during 2006-2010 period (Chung, Kim, and Piper Forthcoming). Roughly three quarters of all foreign wives come from mainland China, with Vietnamese being the second largest group (Jones 2012; Tsay 2004).

With rapid economic development in Korea in the early 1990s, dual labor market began to emerge, and the number of economic sectors that could not find workers grew, even as the unemployment rate increased. In this context, foreign workers were imported, but policies for them were a strict closure policy. This resulted in large numbers of illegal immigrants: according to Korea Immigration Service statistics, there were nearly 1.1 million foreigners living in Korea as of February 2008, an increase of 21.8% over previous year, and of which over 20% were illegal immigrants (Korea Immigration Service 2008).

As such, despite the Korean government implementing the Industrial Trainee System (ITS) in 1993 and the Employment Permit System (EPS) in 2004, the main goal of policies were still to prevent permanent settlement of immigrants as well as family migration is. Furthermore, the Korean government has not ratified the UN migrant workers convention (The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families). With respect to the rapidly increasing number of illegal immigrants, the Korean government established a policy stance that deports all undocumented migrants, though it extend the grace period several times. Also, illegal immigrants are completely excluded from most forms of legal assistance. In short, though the Korean government attempted to return illegal immigrants to their country of origin and established several policy measures to prevent illegal immigration, the

number of illegal immigrants ultimately increased.⁸ About 8% of illegal immigrants in Korea are staying for 8-10 years and about 9% are staying more than 10 years, implying that the size of illegal immigrants is already significant (Korea Immigration Service 2008).

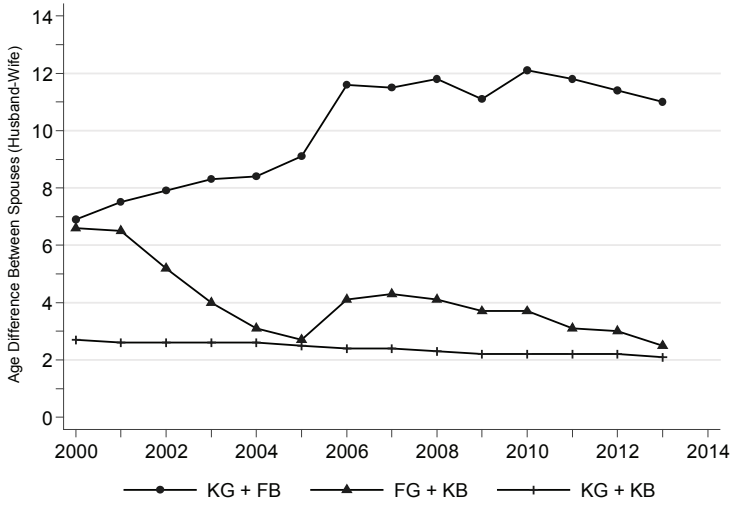
However, issues that should be considered more seriously began to emerge, such as children between two illegal immigrants or between one illegal immigrant and one Korean citizen; because of their parents' status of illegal residence, these children became stateless. The Ministry of Justice does not expel any child under the age of 18 as a kind of special exceptions for illegal residence, and as long as they stayed in Korea, all illegal migrants' children have the right to receive elementary education (Seol et al. 2009). Though the children of illegal immigrants can attend school in Korea, they might be anxious because their parents can be deported any time. Korean society must therefore answer the question of when and how to embrace these children.

Because Korean corporations tend to prefer foreign male workers over foreign females, these women have very limited opportunities to migrate to Korea as laborers. Hence, unmarried Korean men, mostly residing in rural areas, began to marry women from other Southeast Asian countries: over 10,000 Koreans marry foreigners annually, which accounted for 10% of all marriages in 2006, and about 30% of all marriages in rural areas. For instance, 137,824 foreign women married and entered Korea during 2006-2010 periods whereas 61,209 women were admitted during 2011-2013 period (Chung, Kim, and Piper Forthcoming). Hence, it appears that the rate of international marriages has decreased since 2006 in Korea.

The most frequent origin countries of women who married Korean men are China (45.2%), Vietnam (28.8%), the Philippines (6.5%), with women from these three countries consisting of over 80% of all foreign wives in Korea. Also, a large fraction of these husbands' occupation was either farming or manual laborer in urban areas.⁹ Most of the migrant women also

⁸ During 1998-1999, right after the financial crisis in Korea, the number of illegal immigrants began to soar considerably. Also, the number of illegal immigrants peaked in 2002, but it plummeted in 2003. Since then the number is growing slowly again. This is because of the fact that Ministry of Justice, in preparation of the World Cup games in 2002, extended the grace period for deportation until March 2003 for illegal immigrants who reported voluntarily. It presents Korean government's will to prevent illegal aliens because some of the tourists who visits for the World Cup games can become illegal immigrants by overstaying the visa. Furthermore, in 2005, the number of illegal immigrants increased abruptly mainly because the Ministry of Justice crack down illegal immigrants intensively and deported them before complete implementation of the Employment Permit System.

⁹ It is estimated that about 25.9% of all men in farming and fishery married to foreign wives.



NOTE.—KG = Korean Groom; KB = Korean Bride; FB = Foreign Bride; FG = Foreign Groom

FIG. 4.—Mean Age Difference between Spouses by Marriage Types in Korea

come from lower social class in their country of origin, and thus, they are significantly unlikely to be treated equally in Korean society as their husband (Lee 2008).

Social Problem Approach: More Sham Marriages in Taiwan

Marriage migration involves many longstanding problems. In Taiwan, where marriage migration started earlier than in Korea, social problems associated with it also emerged earlier. Still, the developmental phases of these social problem are remarkably similar.

Problems of Marriage Itself

The issues begin with marriage itself. Because men in the destination country, who are often significantly older than an average groom and cannot find local women, tend to marry younger and lower-income women in less developed countries, the age difference between spouses is substantially large compared with native couples. The mean age difference between couples of Korean men and foreign wives was 11.1 years in 2009, while the mean age

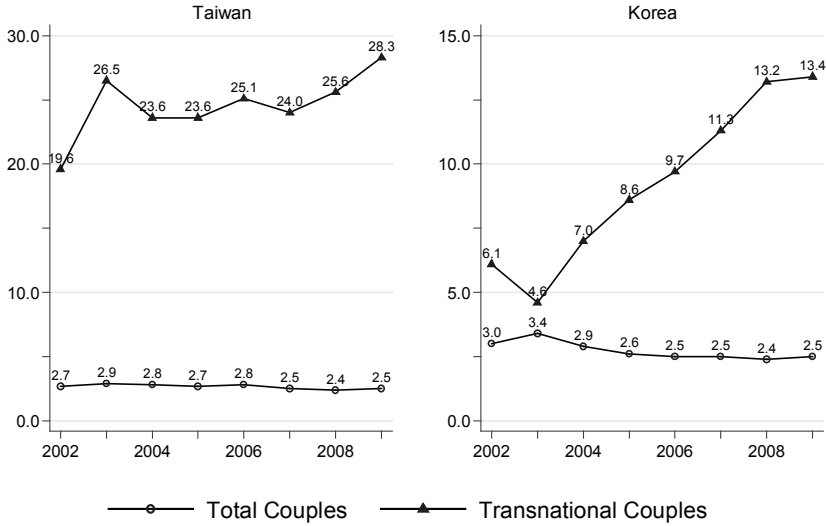


FIG. 5.—Trends in Crude Divorce Rate (CDR) among Transnational Couples and Total Couples in Taiwan and Korea, 2002-2009

difference between Korean grooms and Korean wives was 2.2 years. For Vietnamese brides more specifically, a survey conducted in Ho Chi Minh City in 2007 found that the average Korean groom was 17.9 years older than his Vietnamese wife.¹⁰ These substantial age differences between spouses is a potential risk factor for marriage stability.

The concerns for marital stability of internationally married couples are manifested in the rate of divorce. Figure 5 presents the annual crude divorce rates (CDR) – i.e., the number of divorces per 1,000 persons in a given area for a given period – in Taiwan and Korea for both internationally married couples and total couples. The results show that the CDR for total Taiwanese couples is gradually declining, whereas the CDR for internationally married couples is rapidly increasing. In 2009, the CDR for internationally married couples reached the peak at 28.3 divorces per 1,000 people. Korea shows a similar pattern as Taiwan. While the CDR for total Korean couples showed little changes since 2005, the CDR for international couples increased considerably, implying the instability of internationally married couples.

¹⁰ This survey was conducted by the Korea Center for United Nations Human Rights Policy (KOCUN) between August 1 and December 31 in 2007 as a part of the “pre-departure cultural orientation project for Korea-bound Vietnamese spouses” program.

Domestic violence among internationally married couple is also a serious problem, in that differences in culture and language exacerbate the false-information and age-gap problems mentioned earlier. In the case of Taiwan, 88.75% of marriage migrant women reported that they had experienced domestic violence in 2010. According to Korean government's survey in 2005, the daily life of marriage migrant women from the Philippines or Vietnam was described as routinized violence.

A third serious problem in international marriages is runaway of marriage migrant brides. As mentioned earlier, migrant women's strong desire to work and limited opportunity outside the home resulted in runaway of these women. In the specific case of Korea, about half of the marital dissolution of international couples can be attributed to the husband's violence, and the other half is associated with the wife's runaway. These instabilities for marriage migrants could potentially lead to instability in society as a whole.

Problems of the Marriage Process

Additionally, these problems are frequently germinated during the process of forming those marriages through brokers. Because of profit exploitation of the marriage brokers —their commission is typically over 10,000 USD – the host-country men tend to receive poor services, such as accommodation, translation, matchmaking, and education for women, etc., while the migrant women receive a very small amount of money from the broker.¹¹ Furthermore, the marriage brokers, under the constant risk of arrest by the local law enforcement because marriage brokering for profit is illegal in most Southeast Asian countries, manage a large number of marriage processes to maximize their profit within a short period of time. In some occasions, one man chooses a bride among hundreds of candidates within an hour. Thus, because communication is almost impossible and potential brides are forced to be selected with vastly insufficient information, false information on the bride is often provided. Ultimately, these conditions lead Korean marriage brokering to be labeled human trafficking. Yet the business of brokering continues: about 84.1% of Cambodian marriage migrant women and 66.3% of Vietnamese marriage migrants entered Korea through marriage brokers.

¹¹ According to a research, in case of marriage between Korean men and Vietnamese women through marriage broker, Korean groom, on average, pay 8,000 to 10,000 USD to the broker while the Vietnamese brides or her parents receive only 100 to 300 USD.

In fact, one survey found that 27.2% of all marriage migrants entered Korea through marriage brokers (Lee 2005).

Sham Marriage, Illegal Employment, and Human Trafficking

Owing to the problems of marriage brokering, sham marriages occur quite often. To some marriage migrant women, marriage is only a means to get entry visas, and they seek employment immediately after entrance into the host country. Though a woman with intention to use marriage as a means to get entry visa can hide her real purpose, there are some who either chose not to hide it or are unable to hide it, and even for these women, a number of marriage brokers will arrange the sham marriage anyway. In general, the bogus brides cannot work without her husbands' sponsorship, which frequently lead women to work in the sex industry (Yang and Lu 2010).

Though sham international marriage is not yet a significant social problem in Korea, it is bubbling to the surface. One marriage broker was arrested in 2010, and he arranged 60 sham marriages between Vietnamese women and local men and helped the women find jobs. In return, he received about 15,000 USD per woman (MBN 2010). Also, some international marriage migrant women enter Korea with fake marriage visas and work in the sex industry (KBS 2010). In other cases, because of their unstable legal status, potential brides are exposed to various forms of risks, such as blackmail and sexual harassment.

Problems of Marriage Migrants' Children

Besides the numerous problems associated with the marriage migrants, more serious are the problems facing international marriage migrants' children. As mentioned above, parents of such children are more likely to be located at lower social strata with lower levels of education and income than native children. Hence, it is highly likely that marriage migrants' children do not receive high-quality education, and their language development might be delayed because their parents may use different languages. These children may encounter many problems at school because their mothers cannot help them prepare class materials or homework. In addition to these difficulties, the children suffer from social discriminations that stem from their different physical appearances, as well as social stigma from their partial-immigrant status.

Because of births in international marriages, a new minority group is

being formed in Korean society. According to the local foreign resident survey in 2007, the total number of children in multicultural families was 44,258 and they comprised 0.39% of the population corresponding to the age groups.¹² Within this group, the age trends bear watching: the number of multicultural children is estimated to be 26,445 under age 6, but only 14,392 for ages 7-12, and only 3,421 for ages 13-18. These numbers clearly shows that, reflecting the recent increase in cross-border marriages in Korea, children in the multicultural families are disproportionately very young. The number of school-aged children in multicultural families increased 68% from 7,998 in 2006 to 13,445 in 2008. Of those school-aged children, elementary, middle school, and high school students accounted for 85%, 11.8%, and 3.1%, respectively. Given that more than half of multicultural children are pre-school age, the overall trend is evident that the number of school aged multicultural children will increase substantially in a few years.

According to one survey, 28 out of 100 multicultural children reported that they experienced bullying at school, including insults such as “why does your mother look like an animal?” Nho and Hong (2006) reported that of the 67 respondents who were children of Mongolian labor migrant parents, 23% said they were uncertain about whether they want to continue to attend schools. Furthermore, 70% of them reported that they have not received any social welfare services, 50% answered that they had difficulties with Korean language, and 57% said they have experienced discrimination in Korea. The study shows that children of migrant workers are facing serious challenges in terms of self-esteem and of acculturation stress.

Policy Approach: The Taiwanese Government's Suppressive Policies and the Korean Government's Inaction

When various social problems associated with rapidly increasing cross-border marriages emerge, governments have generally been unable to respond in a timely manner. This is partly because of the fact that marriage is a private matter in which government cannot intervene. However, a more

¹² However, it might be almost impossible to estimate the exact number of children in the multicultural families since marriage migrants who are naturalized and obtained citizenship are classified as Korean nationals and are excluded in the vital statistics as foreign children. Hence, the local foreign resident survey estimated the number of multicultural children indirectly by combining information on birth certificates issued at local hospitals and number of foreign residents. For instance, there are roughly 120,000 foreign residents in Korea and their fertility rate is 0.56, and, thus, it can be estimated that approximately 50,000-70,000 multicultural children in Korea.

fundamental reason for the government’s ineffectiveness may be related to the lack of a clear vision on cross-border marriages: while some local governments arrange cross-border marriages between women from Southeast Asian countries and local men, particularly those who are living in rural areas or in lower social strata, it is unclear that the country as a whole has any philosophy or vision for such marriages. Still, governments have made various policies and programs, albeit without consistent systems, to help multicultural families’ acculturation and reduce social discrimination against them.

Taiwanese Government’s Policies

In Taiwan, there had not been policies for marriage migrants until the early 2000s. As social problems related to the marriage migrants, such as domestic violence, surged in the late 1990s, the Taiwanese government implemented the screening mechanism of compulsory interviews of all mainland Chinese spouses in 2003 (Tsai 2011; Williams and Yu 2006). For the case of marriages between Vietnamese women and Taiwanese men, the government changed the system of visa interview in 2005. Before that year, the visa interviews were conducted in groups, but the Taiwanese government began to recognize that bogus marriages cannot be detected within a group interview system. Hence,

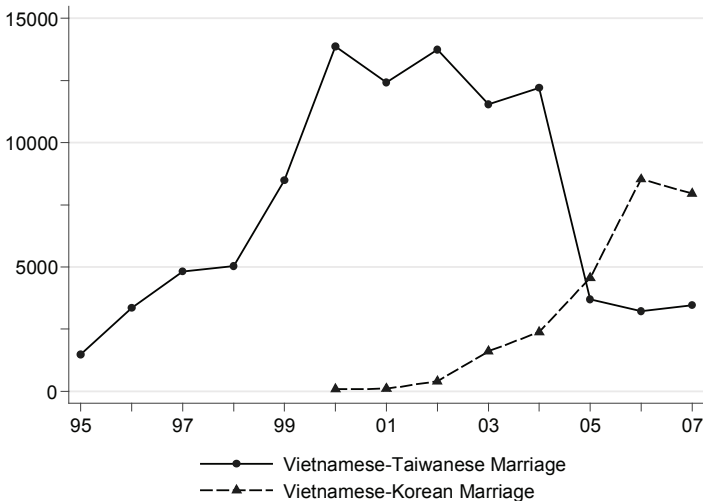


FIG. 6.—Number of Transnational Marriages between Vietnamese Women and Taiwanese Men and between Vietnamese Women and Korean Men

new system required the interviews to occur one couple at a time (Yang and Lu 2010).

The effectiveness of the Taiwanese government's policies appeared in the marriage brokerage market immediately, and a large number of potential marriage migrant women who wanted to move to Taiwan headed to Korea instead. More specifically, about 12,000 marriages between Vietnamese women and Taiwanese men were reported in 2004, but the number of same marriages plummeted to about 3,700 in 2005 (see Figure 6), while marriages between Vietnamese women and Korean men doubled from 2,389 to 4,566 during the same period. Taiwanese Immigration Article 58 clearly states that "international marriage brokerage must neither be for profit nor request commission for the contract." It also prohibits advertisements for international marriage brokerage through publication, media, or the internet (Tsai 2011).

Korean Government's Policies

As its society responded the various issues related to transnational marriages in the early 2000s, the Korean government implemented legal actions and policies, such as the Nationality Act Amendment in 2004, the Immigration Act Amendments in 2005, and various legal revisions on naturalization application, divorce, and domestic violence. Contrary to the migrant workers issue, legal settlements are steadily growing, and the second generation of the marriage migrants could soon form a new minority group. The Korean government's firm commitment to not allowing legal settlements for migrant workers shows a lack of philosophy when it comes to the issues of marriage migrants (H. Kim 2014).

The main policies that the Korean government has implemented for marriage migrants are supports for transnational marriage families, regulations on marriage brokers, and policies on marriage visas. As the number of marriage migrants and divorces have increased, various central ministries within the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, such as the Ministry of Health and Welfare, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Education, as well as local municipalities, are adapting support policies for helping marriage migrants' integration, pregnancy, child birth, child rearing, and children education. In addition, by establishing the Multicultural Family Policy Committee in the Prime Minister's Office in 2009 and the Multicultural Family Support Policy Plan (2010-2012) in 2010, the Korean government launched programs to help

migrant women's, families', and children's social integration. The primary purpose of these policies is to prevent marriage migrants and their families from becoming marginalized minority groups (Seol et al. 2009).

Furthermore, as criticism of the international marriage brokerage surged, the Korean government proposed the Law on the Management of Marriage Brokerage, which became operative on June 15, 2008. This law requires the registration of the marriage brokerages that were previously considered a free business. It also requires that marriage brokers must comply with local laws of the foreign country and use standard written contracts, it prohibits false and exaggerated advertisement, and it imposes responsibility for compensation for any damages onto the marriage brokers. Despite these laws and programs, there has been little supervision of the judicial and administrative authorities on the marriage broker services and illegal brokerages. It is likely due to the fact that, though marriage brokers must be registered according to the new law, it is not possible to punish the human rights violation or illegal activities that occur in foreign countries (Lee 2010). Because of these limitations, some lawmakers requested revising the bill just two months after the law was enacted. As of 2010, at least eight requests for revision were submitted to the National Assembly.

Of the support programs for multicultural families, the first priority is strengthening the management of marriage brokers and visa screening before departure. Civic organizations that work for marriage migrant women, such as the Korea Center for United Nations Human Rights Policy (KOCUN), consistently argue that policies must make citizens approach transnational marriages more carefully, and the government has adopted the requests. The committee amended the Law on Management of Marriage Brokerage, which obliges the marriage brokers to provide personal information of the potential spouse, such as marital history or health status, in a written form, and to incur increasing penalties if the broker violates foreign government's regulations. By amending the current law that applies penalties only when the marriage broker violates criminal law, the committee extends punishment when the broker violates administrative regulations. To promote the entrance of independent immigrants, the committee added new qualifications to the existing criteria for visa issuance, such as the formation of healthy family, ease of social integration, and limiting those with a history of sexual offenses or domestic violence to invite foreign spouses.

Conclusion and Discussion

The current analyses on the attitudes toward marriage migrants among Koreans and Taiwanese provide several theoretical and practical implications. With respect to theoretical implications drawn from the social quality framework, the level of development of a society is primarily determined by the degree of economic development and political democratization, as well as social integration (or the quality of society). Social inclusion constitutes an important part of social quality, as do advances in, social cohesion and empowerment. However, the various elements of social inclusion, social cohesion, and empowerment do not necessarily progress in the same direction, and tension can arise among them. Also, the pattern of the conflict is largely determined by the unique historical and political conditions of the country. Hence, the social quality framework should always be complemented by a historical and political analysis, to evolve an even more comprehensive development theory. Nonetheless, it should be noted that, although Taiwanese and Korean society are comparable in many important respects, the two countries are also quite different from each other in terms of the size of the population, family ethics, family formations and etc. Hence, despite its comprehensiveness of the social quality approach, the analysis solely based on the theory might be too naïve to tease out complex situation that two societies face.

Regarding marriage migration, there are several policy implications. According to prevailing social attitudes toward marriage migrants in Korea and Taiwan, transnational marriages in these two countries are likely to bring about various social conflicts, and attitudes toward marriage migrants is likely to become more negative as marriage migration increases over time. On the other hand, though a number of policies for marriage migrants have been made, policies that support such families after the marriage has occurred must have limitations. Thus, policies that can minimize the sources of problems preventatively, i.e., policies that can help citizens consider transnational marriage more carefully, are an important avenue for the government to intervene in the private matter of transnational marriage. Finally, as a late developer in terms of cross-national marriages, Korea may be able to learn about marriage visa policy or brokerage sanctions policy from Taiwan.

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