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Immigration Pathway and Life Satisfaction:
The case of Female Migrants in Contemporary South Korea

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts

in

Sociology

By

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2017

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2017

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IMMIGRATION PATHWAY AND LIFE SATISFACTION: THE CASE OF FEMALE MIGRANTS IN CONTEMPORARY SOUTH KOREA

University of California, Merced

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines how different types of marriage pathways shape the levels of life satisfaction among female marriage migrants. Based on immigration literatures following Granovetter's argument of the strength of weak ties and the context of cross-border marriage migration into South Korea, I investigate how three different marriage pathways: (1) kinship; (2) friendship, collegueship, and religion; and (3) marriage agencies, which represent strong, weak, and formal pathways, respectively, affect to levels of life satisfaction of female immigrants in Korean society. Using data from the 2012 Korean National Survey for Multicultural Family, findings reveal that female immigrants with strong pathway show higher level of life satisfaction than those with weak and formal pathways. Also, strong pathway has positive and strong influences on life satisfaction of female immigrants in South Korea than other types of pathways. This paper contributes to the immigration and social network literature by suggesting a critical lens that challenges previous research that highlight functional aspects of social networks and by focusing importance of strong ties for understanding life satisfaction among immigrants in the context of cross-border marriage migration.

Keywords: Cross-Border Marriage Migration; Immigration Pathway; Female Immigrants in South Korea; Life Satisfaction; Multiple Regression

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INTRODUCTION

The pioneering work of Granovetter (1973; 1983) provides an insightful theoretical basis for understanding the importance of personal networks for labor market opportunities. Granovetter's theory on social networks has been applied to the field of immigration to understand how social networks effect immigrants' labor migration experiences (Klvaňová 2010; Liu 2013; Kindler and Szulecka 2013; Maher and Cawley 2015; Collyer 2005). Many researchers have highlighted the job hiring processes and occupational attainment of immigrants through their social networks or the information shared through those networks (Sanders and Nee 1996; Phillips and Massey 2000; Sanders, Nee, and Sernau 2002; Lancee 2010; Palloni, Massey, Ceballos, Espinosa, and Spittel 2001). Immigrant social networks have been understood as a bridge for sharing job information and offering hiring opportunities (Maher and Cawley 2015; Harvey 2008; Moroşanu 2016).

Granovetter and studies building on his theory were interested in the strength of interpersonal ties and their functional efficiency; however, this research did not examine the relationship between the strength of ties and the *quality* of labor market outcomes. Following Granovetter, more recent work does examine how social networks affect the quality of individuals' labor market outcomes. Some investigators have suggested that weak ties are more likely to be linked with better outcomes and strong ties are inclined to be connected with poorer outcomes (Campbell, Marsden, and Hurlbert 1986; Elliott 1999; Rankin 2003; Yakubovich 2005). Nevertheless, this relationship varies by different class, gender, and cross-cultural contexts (Montgomery 1992; Pellizzari 2010; Bian 1997).

Labor migration is just one kind of migration, and these studies do not consider how social networks shape the experiences of non-labor migrants. Consequently, such research is unable to discuss the aspects and contexts of cross-border marriage migration. Like job searching in the labor market, social networks are also important sources of ties and information leading to successful marriage matchmaking (Wang and Chang 2002; Lee 2013). Also, like job searching, the quality of the outcome, a job or marriage, matters for lives of individuals.

Using data from the 2012 Korean National Survey for Multicultural Family (NSMF

2012), I examine the relationship between the strength of the tie through which marriage migrants met their spouse and their life satisfaction, as a measure of the quality of marriage migration outcome. Based on the context of cross-border marriage migration in South Korea, in what follows, I denote marriage pathway as marriage migrants' social networks. For marriage migrants, as a key mechanism for cross-border marriage and source for getting primal assistance during immigration, these pathways are equivalent to social ties that Granovetter suggested. Therefore, I ask how different types of pathways for cross-border marriage migration shape the life satisfaction of female immigrants in Korean society. This would help to understand the effect of immigrant social networks on their assimilation trajectories in host society and to broaden our sociological comprehension in diverse immigration experiences.

The case of cross-border marriage migration in South Korea provides an opportunity to better understand international migration beyond the labor market context and outside the United States. First, most immigration research in the United States has focused on labor migration, thus we understand marriage migration comparatively less well (Piper (2003), Williams (2010) and Yang and Lu (2010) provide valuable exceptions).

Second, contrary to the cases of Western societies, scholars argue that marriage migrants in East Asia more heavily rely on their strong ties rather than weak ties (Kim, Cha, and Kim 2008; Bian 1997; Antonio 2004; Kim 2012b; Lim 2014). For instance, Kim et al. (2008) suggest that social networks of family and relatives offer opportunities to marriage migrants for assimilating into host society. Likewise, Kim (2012b) asserts that family networks have a significantly positive effect on their levels of life satisfaction among marriage migrants. Thus, the case of marriage migration in South Korea provides an international test of the strength of weak ties hypothesis.

STRENGTH OF TIES, THEIR QUALITY, AND OUTCOMES

Strength of Social Ties

Focusing on the process of interpersonal networks, Granovetter (1973; 1983) suggests the strength of social ties that is a "combination of amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy, and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie (Granovetter 1973: 1361)." Depending on the strength, he dichotomously divides social ties into two: "strong ties," and "weak ties."

Compared to strong ties, weak ties are relatively distant in terms of social, emotional, and physical aspects (Marsden and Campbell 1984; Wellman and Wortley 1990; Adamic and Adar 2005). While strong ties are related to individuals with homogeneous features, weak ties are linked with relationships among heterogeneous individuals (Granovetter 1983; Smith 2000). Through the continued process of diffusion based on weak ties, individuals can magnify their social networks. He maintains that weak ties would be bridges among social distance without restriction of network size and absence of past networks.

In order to support arguments on weak ties, Granovetter suggests the functional efficiency of weak ties through his labor market study. Investigating on professional and managerial job changers in Boston, he finds that job changers could get information from weak ties, establish new networks that facilitate the mobility opportunity, and give some “sense of community” (Granovetter 1973:1373).

Granovetter’s argument on social networks have been extensively applied in myriad social science studies that highlight the significance of functional efficacy of social networks. They accentuate that, from social networks, individuals could acquire information and resources. Those studies suggest that social networks facilitate the accomplishment of specific goals from individual level, like as job searching, health, religious involvement, immigration, educational achievement and status attainment, to community level, such as social trust, sense of community and social integration, democratic life (Lin and Dumin 1986; Montgomery 1992; Kawachi and Berkman 2001; Seeman 1996; Israel, Beaulieu, and Hartless 2001; Lin, Ensel, and Vaughn 1981; Dika and Singh 2002; Ellison and George 1994; Papacharissi 2010; Portes 2000; Fishman 2004).

From Labor Market to Cross-Border Marriage Migration: The Quality of Outcomes from Social Networks

As Granovetter (1973) primarily highlighted, job-seekers get some supports from their social networks. However, compared to their performance on finding jobs, the quality of outcomes acquired from social networks is quite contentious. Recent sociological research on social networks focus on how these social networks lead different quality of labor market outcomes (Elliott 1999; Rankin 2003; Montgomery 1992; Bian 1997; Pellizzari 2010; Yakubovich 2005).

Using data from the Multi-City Survey of Urban Inequality and Poverty and the 1990 decennial Census, Elliott (1999) finds evidence that less-educated workers experience a negative effect on wages when they use their weak ties to find job opportunities. Rankin (2003) finds that low-income women in Boston, Chicago, and San Antonio areas, most often found jobs through informal strong ties, i.e., close friends and relatives; however, jobs found through informal networks paid nearly 20% less than jobs found through formal channels on average.

On the other hand, based on an economic model of job search, Montgomery (1992:593-594) finds that weak ties do not lead increased wages. According to him, although weak ties are beneficial for job-seekers, “the use of a weak tie will be negatively related to average wages.” He argues this relationship is “counterintuitive” because weak ties provide more job opportunities than strong ties do and offers from weak ties are even better than those from strong ties. Whereas, using data from data from the European Community Household Panel (ECHP), Pellizzari (2010) suggests, in European countries, personal contacts from strong ties sometimes lead to more premiums (i.e., higher wages) when finding jobs through informal contacts. However, sometimes, they also provide some

penalties. He argues that the effect of personal contacts on wage can be “either positive or negative depending on the efficiency of the formal search” (Pellizzari 2010:509).

The quality of labor market outcomes from networks might be varied by cultural contexts. Analyzing secondary data from China, Bian (1997) demonstrates that job-seekers can get more opportunities through strong ties rather than their weak counterparts. In China, job-seekers and their “ultimate helpers” who are authorities in given jobs are indirectly interrelated via “intermediaries to whom both are strongly tied.” According to Bian, these indirect ties provide better jobs to job-seekers, compared to direct ties. He attributes those results to *guanxi* referring to a set of interpersonal connection among Chinese. In terms of job searching, it is characterized by three attributes: familiarity or intimacy, trustworthiness, and reciprocal obligation (Bian 1997:369). Because of these characteristics, in Chinese labor market, strong ties (i.e., *guanxi*) matter when finding jobs, not weak ties.

Like labor market outcomes, outcomes of marriage, such as family relationship, rely heavily on the quality of individuals’ social networks (Wilcox and Dew 2010; Cornwell 2012). Using data from the Marriage Matters Survey (MMS), Wilcox and Dew (2010) demonstrate that individuals who were embedded in social networks showed high quality and stable marriages while those with no support from social networks reported low quality of marriage. Likewise, investigating the degree of overlapping social networks between spouses, Cornwell (2012) shows that the presence of strong social network ties yields strong support between spouses.

The argument expands to maternity, parenting, and physical, psychological, and emotional well-being of family (Riina, Lippert, and Brooks-Gunn 2016; Hagelskamp and Hughes 2016; Veiel, Crisand, Stroszeck-Somschor, and Herrie 1991; Birditt and Antonucci 2007; Allendorf 2013). For instance, examining the association between neighborhood effect and parent-child relationship, Riina, Lippert, and Brooks-Gunn (2016) suggest that supports from interpersonal relationship among family members moderated the effect of residential instability on the quality of parent-child relationship. That is, supportive relationships within strong ties can compensate “less available forms of support from other sources” (Riina et al. 2016:857). Discussing the linkage between mothers’ job stressor and the mother-child relationship, Hagelskamp and Hughes (2016:120) indicate “when women perceived their social networks as supportive, there was little evidence that psychosocial job stress was associated with qualities of the mother–early adolescent relationship.” According to them, supports from friends and family members are important for building and developing better-quality of family relationship. Investigating relationship quality and well-being of marriage adults, Birditt and Antonucci (2007:602) show “links between relationship quality and well-being depend on the number of relationships, the types of relationship, and the relationship context.” They, thus, propose “reinforcing and maintaining good family and friend relationships may improve their wellbeing.”

In this sense, cross-border marriage migration could be an intersecting point between discussing the quality of outcomes from social network and researching the effect of social networks on marriage. As a form of international family union, cross-border marriage migrants, like labor migrants, require interpersonal networks based on family, friends, religion, or community to get support for transnational movement (Wang and Chang 2002).

Despite little attention compared to labor migration, researchers have discussed how aspects of international marriage market has been changed (Shim 2008; Davin 2008; Maffioli, Paterno, and Gabrielli 2014) and how social networks influence cross-border marriage migration and marriage migrants (Wang and Chang 2002; Lee 2013). Pointing out the commodification of cross-border marriage, Wang and Chang (2002) indicate that social networks of individuals have been replaced by agents, and this change affected lives of marriage migrants. Lee (2013) argues that the degree of social networks affected the perceived quality of lives in Korean society among female marriage migrant in South Korea.

As I suggested above, the quality of individuals' social networks is a significant determinant for outcomes in labor market and marriage. Researchers who examine the cross-border marriage migration suggest social networks have an influence on lives of marriage migrants. That is, we can expect that the quality of lives among marriage migrants would be varied by their social networks.

CROSS-BORDER MARRIAGE MIGRATION IN SOUTH KOREA

There are two distinctive characteristics of cross-border marriage migration into East Asia. The first is that the cross-border marriage migration in the area demonstrate the pattern of cross-border marriages between an immigrant bride from sending countries - China and South East Asia countries - and a (native) groom in receiving countries - Japan, South Korea, Taiwan (Piper 1999; 2003; Piper and Roces 2004; Shim 2008; Kwon 2012).

The second is that the vast majority of such immigrant brides have had insufficient information on the receiving country, even, their own husband. Thus, their cross-border marriage is mostly mediated by others, such as kin, religion, or agencies, as their pathway for cross-border marriage migration (Lee 1999; Kim, Cha, and Kim 2008; Yang and Lu 2010; Kim and Kim 2010; Seo 2011). That is, how female marriage immigrants meet their current husband was a pathway for their cross-border marriage migration, and simultaneously, it became their original social network in host society. A growing body of literatures suggest that the pathways have a key role in the process of cross-border marriage migration into South Korea as mating selection and family formation (Kim 2009; Seo 2011), immigration policies (Lim 2013; Lee 2015), and acculturation and assimilation into Korean society (Lee and Jun 2014; Kim 2012a).

In this section, I describe the social contexts of cross-border marriage migration embedded in Korean society. First I provide a brief overview of empirical evidence that reveals demographic and geographic characteristics of marriage migrant in South Korea. Next, I explore literatures that show that lives in South Korea could be varied by country of origin among marriage migrant. Finally, I highlight three types of marriage pathways for cross-border marriage pathway corresponding with marriage migrant social ties: strong, weak, and formal pathway.

Marriage Migrant in South Korea

The Ministry of Justice of Korea estimates that in 2015, there were 149,972 marriage migrants in South Korea. Approximately, 85% of them are female immigrants (n=126,765). The numbers would increase if naturalized Korean citizens who were foreign-born were included. It estimates that South East Asian countries occupied the highest percentage (49.6%) versus 36.6% for China, 9.1% for Japan, and 3.2% for Central Asian countries including Russia (The Ministry of Justice of Korea 2016).

Similarly, the number of cross-border marriages shows same propensity. The Statistics Korea reports that from 2005 to 2014, there had been 245,904 marriages between Korean husband and foreign-born wives, whereas only 83,876 marriages between Korean wives and foreign-born husbands. Among cross-border marriage between Korean husband and foreign-born wives, 82% of foreign-born wives were from China and South East Asian countries (Statistics Korea 2015). Those statistics show that most cross-border marriage immigrants in South Korea are female and a vast majority of those female immigrants are from South East Asian countries and China.

Shim (2008:47) suggests that those phenomena result from the consequent international sexual division of labor and the change in the marriage market in South Korea. The son preference and sex imbalance in birth by Confucian and patriarchal cultural contexts had led to the shortage of women in a marriageable age. The low fertility have also accelerated the insufficiency. Because of those reasons, the number of foreign wives from developing countries has been increasing continuously. Compared to male immigrants, there are remarkable characteristics of female immigrants in Korean society. According to the Ministry of Justice of Korea, in terms of demographic distribution of foreign-born residents in South Korea by age and gender, the rates of twenties and thirties are highest for both male and female immigrants. However, after forty, despite some declines, the number of female immigrants in South Korea relatively remains constant while their male counterpart is rapidly decreased.¹

In order to interpret the difference, we have to examine the geographical distribution of those immigrants. The Statistics of foreign residence 2013 reported by the Ministry of Interior of Korean indicated that most foreign-born males live in Seoul, the capital of South Korea, and its suburbs or other big cities. On the contrary, females reside all across the country. It also showed that the proportion of foreign females to total population of female is substantively higher in rural areas than urban or suburban areas.² Those results corroborate the unique characteristics of immigration into Korea that most of male immigrants are related to labor migration finding their jobs in urban area, while vast majority of female immigrants engage in cross-border marriage migration living in rural area as wives of Korean husbands (Kwon 2012; Hwang 2009).

¹ See Appendix A.

² See Appendix B.

Marriage Migrant's Country of Origin

Depending on the country of origin, female immigrants' lifestyle and adaptation in Korean society could be varied (Kim 2006; Kim and Lee 2007; Kim 2011; Hwang 2016). Since, there would be distinct social circumstance and context of immigrants by their specific country of origin. Also, Korean society treats them differently by political and cultural background depending on their country of origin. It is required to identify the difference of female immigrant's social context due to country of origin.

China and South East Asian countries

Constable (2005:10) suggests the concept of "global hypergamy" referring to a global phenomenon that is displacement of women from developing countries to developed countries through cross-border marriage migration. Massive immigration from China and South East Asian countries into Korean society would be a representative example of global hypergamy (Lee 2015). Those countries are still developing, but the average level of wage in them is notably lower than South Korea. Therefore, myriad immigrants from China and South East Asian countries try to find new places in order to get an opportunity for pursuing flourishing affluence. Lower barriers of immigration and employment would also be an incentive for those immigrants to choose South Korea as their host country. For the Korean government, massive immigration from China and South East Asian countries is useful because immigrants could be a human resource for covering marginal jobs with low level of wage which native Koreans avoid and for supplementing the low level of fertility by cross-border marriages and procreation between them. Therefore, nowadays, a multitude of female marriage immigrant in Korean society is from China and South East Asian countries.

However, research reveals that female Chinese and South East Asian immigrants can't be favorably assimilated into Korean society (Kim and Lee 2013; Lee 2005; Hwang 2016; Kim, Lim, and Jeong 2013). Although they can get more income in South Korea than their country of origin, they are suffering from social and cultural maladjustment. After economic depression, Koreans' general resentment against immigrants has fortified. Chinese and South East Asian immigrants could be easily targeted by conservative social atmosphere. Also, because, as Figure 2 showed, most of female marriage immigrants are spouses of Korean husbands in rural areas, they usually experience culture shock from patriarchic and hierarchical cultural (Hwang 2009).

Japan

Unlike the economical motivation of the relatively large number of immigrants from China and South East Asian countries, the major reason for immigration from Japan is not economic prosperity. Japan is more industrially developed than other Asian countries, and wages in Japan are generally higher than South Korea. In addition, there's a long history

of conflict between Korea and Japan. Therefore, a different perspective is required to understand why Japanese women immigrate into Korean society.

A considerable number of social scientists suggest that religion is the key factor to ruminates the cross border marriage migration from Japan (Lee 1999; Kim, Cha, and Kim 2008; Kim and Choi 2012; Lee 2015). Since 1980s, at the beginning, most Japanese female marriage immigrants in South Korea were members of the Unification Church founded in 1954 by a Korean man. Despite vagueness of actual substance and religious doctrine, the Unification Church exerts its own absolute influence on their members. The religion has been encouraging its members to engage in cross-border marriage by mass-wedding (Lee 1999). Although the frequency of immigration by this kind of religion-motivated cross-border marriage has decreased as time passed, it is indisputable that religion would play a significant role in cross-border marriages between Korean and Japanese.

Russia and Central Asian countries

Not only economical and religious backgrounds, there's another historical motivation for immigrating into South Korea from Russia and central Asia. During the Japanese colonial era, from 1910 to 1945, many Koreans were deported from the Korean Peninsula. Most of Korean deportees settled down some parts of China, Russia, and Central Asian countries (Gelb 1995). After the Independence, a vast majority of descendants of those deportees have remained in Central Asian countries. Since the mid-1990s, in order to pursue the incorporation of overseas Koreans into Korean society, the Korean government have introduced the Visitor Employment System. Compared to other visa types, it provides opportunities for of overseas Koreans in Russia and Central Asian countries whose ancestors were deported during Japanese colonial era to easily return back to their ancestral home country and lowers barriers to getting a job (Lee 2008; Jun 2009). After the introduction of the Visitor Employment System, immigration from Russia and Central Asian countries have continuously increased.

Northern American and European countries

Compared to immigrants from the Asian region, it is salient that immigrants from Northern American and European countries lie in more amicable social atmosphere in South Korea. The 2010 Korean General Social Survey (KGSS) reports that 40.2% of respondents were willing to accept Americans as their children's spouse while 37.7% would accept European spouses. However, KGSS also estimates that only 28.4% of respondents were willing to accept people from China and Southern East Asian countries as their children's spouse. Likewise, 34.6% of respondents replied that they are open to

marrying Americans versus 34.2% with European, 26% with Chinese, and 25.5% with South East Asian.³

This polarization could result from internalized racism in Korean society. Ha (2012: 534) posit that Koreans have their own ‘refracted yellow supremacy’ against people of color. He speculates that there is a white-dominance racial hierarchy in Korean society. According to him, Whites are in the top of hierarchy while people of color and other Asians are in the bottom. Koreans occupy the middle of hierarchy.

Three Types of Pathways for Cross-border Marriage Migration

During the process of immigration, immigrants get support from their social networks (Choldin 1973; Boyd 1989; Massey 1990; Portes 1995; Menjivar 2003; Aguilera and Massey 2003). In case of female immigrants in Korean society, they are assisted from their marriage pathways: strong, weak, and formal pathways. Likewise other immigration studies on the effect of strong and weak ties, immigrants in South Korea are strongly affected by them based on their social networks. Also, marriage agencies, as a new form of formal marriage pathway, are vital for understanding female immigrants and cross-border marriage migration. In this part, I briefly discuss these pathways in immigration literature and argue the meaning of them in the context of cross-border marriage migration in Korean society.

Kinship networks as strong pathway

Scholars of immigration highlight the significance of family and kinship in order to explain the processes of immigration and immigrant’s incorporation. Choldin (1973) argues immigrants move in family unit and join in kinship communities for settlement and adjustment. In kinship affiliation, immigrants get material necessities, establish new social connection, and maintain morale. Schiller, Basch, and Blanc (1995) suggest the importance of family networks. Schiller et al. (1995: 54) explain:

Families are able to maximize the utilization of labor and resources in multiple settings and survive within situations of economic uncertainty and subordination. Those family networks, across political and economic borders, provide the possibility for individual survival.

Through investigations on Irish Catholic immigrants, Fraser (1996: 217) indicates that immigrants can be provided advice and information for work and accommodation, and material assistance from kinship networks. Valenzuela and Dornbusch (1994) also shows the importance of family networks for academic achievement of second-generation of Mexican origin and Anglo adolescents. Family and kinship networks also positively

³ Source: Survey Research Center at Sungkyunkwan University (2010). *2010 Korean General Social Survey*. Raw data.

contribute to adjustment and integration of immigrants who experience return migration (Chodin 1973; Boyd 1989; Rezaei and Marques 2016).

Further, Menjivar (1997) focuses on the social and structural forces that modify and reproduce immigrant's kinship networks. Interviewing 80 immigrants in San Francisco, Menjivar (1997) maintains that those forces in sending country influence the internal dynamics of immigrants' kinship networks. Kinship networks can be maintained only if its conditions are socially allowed. According to her, immigrant networks are not stable, because they are affected by structural conditions immigrants encounter. Thus, material, financial, informational, and emotional assistance from social networks are dynamic differentiated by gender, age, and class (Menjivar 2000). Boyd (1989: 652) also suggests that the operation of networks are molded by policies of sending countries. Foner (1997) argues that the patterns of immigrants' family and kinship networks change in the process of immigration.

On the other hand, Portes (2000) reveals that social ties can also have negative effects. In this sense, some researchers points out the immigrant's dependency on kinship network. Tilly and Brown (1967) argue that immigrants who lean on kinship networks are less likely to obtain linguistic assimilation than immigrants who are relatively separate from their kinship networks. Korinek, Entwisle, and Jampaklay (2005: 783) mention that immigrant communities don't inevitably provide social networks that extend immigrant's networks to individuals outside the communities.

In Eastern societies, including South Korea, kinship networks are regarded as the most effective immigration pathway of all (Kim et al. 2008; Kim 2012b; Antonio 2004; Hugo 1995; Yeoh, Huang, and Lam 2005). Because of the influences of Confucianism, there is deep-rooted culture of familyism that accentuates the great importance to value of family and kinship. Lim (2014:81) argues "a viewpoint of Confucian provides 'a framework of relationship building' for female marriage immigrants and Koreans and makes it possible to explore 'the possibility of coexistence between the two.'" Thus, networks within kinship can create the reciprocal solidarity and provide immigrants substantial support to adjust in host country. For instance, Yeoh, Huang, and Lam (2005) indicate that migrants can ensure economic survival and maximize social mobility through family-based networks. Hugo (1995) maintains that family has a definite role for decision-making of migrants. Kim et al. (2008) indicate that strong interpersonal ties consisting of family and relatives among female marriage migrant in South Korea provide better opportunities for acquiring social capital for assimilation into Korean society. Investigating Chinses, Vietnamese, and Japanese migrants in South Korea, Kim (2012b) suggests that family networks have a significantly positive effect on their levels of life satisfaction.

Friends, colleague, and religion as weak pathway

Based on the context of cross-border marriage migration in Korea embedded in Confucian perspectives that regard the kinship networks as most important interpersonal ties, in this paper, I denote other intermediary mechanisms of formal ties, such as friends, colleagues, and religion as weak ties. This definition does diverge from Granovetter's

classic definition of weak ties; however it reflects the context of cross-border marriage migration in Korea. Although networks of friends, colleagues, religious affiliates, and acquaintances, provide useful information for labor migrants, those networks cannot offer as much functional and emotional support as family members for marriage migrant in Eastern society. Thus, compared to kinship, those interpersonal ties are regarded as weak.

As I noted above, most literatures discussing the efficacy of interpersonal networks in labor market setting focus on networks formed by friendship and collegueship. For instance, through broad investigations on professional immigrants in Silicon Valley, Saxenian, Motoyama, and Quan (2002) illustrate that immigrants can get labor market information from local and global networks of friends and colleagues. By suggesting the concept of “organizational ties” referring “the mediation structure of the organization, where colleagues, co-workers related to each other”, Poros (2001) maintains those organizational ties from workplace diversely promotes immigration and that lead significant and different occupational outcomes (Poros 2001: 245-246).

Research demonstrate that religion plays an important role in the process of immigration and immigrant’s incorporation into host country. In general, gathering religiously in a host country would be a specific type of forming communities for immigrants (Warner and Wittner 1998). Religion offers considerable information to immigrants that can increase the life satisfaction of immigrants and help to achieve their goals in the host country (Menjivar 2003; Cadge and Howard Ecklund 2007; Alba, Raboteau, and DeWind 2009; Lim and Putnam 2010). Also, it facilitates the cultivation of culture and identity of immigrants, and provides opportunities for training and motivating of civic engagement (Carnes and Karpathakis 2001; Foley and Hoge 2007). However, at the same time, some social scientists point out the negative effect to immigrants. (Lucassen 2005; Foner and Alba 2008)

Marriage agencies as formal pathway

Although Granovetter doesn’t account for, there is the third mechanism that is a pathway for cross-border marriage in South Korea, marriage agencies. In East Asian countries, a high percentage of immigration into those countries is cross-border marriage migration intermediated by marriage agencies (Piper 1999; 2003; Piper and Roces 2004; Yang and Lu 2010). Most of female marriage immigrants who want to immigrate into Korea usually get assistances from marriage agencies. Because they don’t have sufficient information on qualifications, legal procedures of marriage, and immigration policies of Korea that marriage agencies have already known. Marriage agencies not only support the immigration process but also perform an absolute role for matchmaking between Korean husbands and foreign wives (Kim and Kim 2010; Seo 2011; Lim 2013; Park 2013).

The general matchmaking process of cross-border marriages between Korean husbands and foreign wives through the mediation of marriage agencies is as following. The first step is making a contract between the customer - Korean husband – and the agent – marriage agencies. Marriage agencies are typically paid an initial base fee, and additional payment depending on agencies accomplishment. The next is Korean husband’s departure

from Korea. In this step, marriage agencies coach the process of matchmaking, and support detailed procedures (e.g. booking a flight, deputizing for issuing a visa, etc.). And they arrange group matchmaking dates between Korean husbands and women from sending country. During these dates, Korean husbands choose their potential wife and make an agreement of marriage with her. After the visit of Korean husband, he returns to Korea and officially invites his foreign wife. Through the official invitation permitted from the Korean government, foreign wife can gain entrance into the country holding a spousal visa. Generally, the contract between the Korean husbands and marriage agencies expire at this point. Because, agencies are payed the success fees in parallel with a marriage, there's no more incentives for agencies to coach Korean husbands. The process is commonly found in cross-border marriage mediated by marriage agencies not only in South Korea but also in other East Asian countries (Nakamatsu 2004; Lu 2008; Wang and Hsiao 2009; Seo 2011).

Nevertheless, many social scientists argue that those agencies have negative effects on female marriage immigrants (Wang and Chang 2002; Lu 2005; Davin 2008; Constable 2009). They highlight the commercialized aspect of cross-border matchmaking. During the process of matchmaking, autonomy of female immigrants is disregarded, and they are treated as commodity for husbands. Also, they usually experience an infringement of human rights, such as domestic violence and sexual abuse from their husbands (Jung 2012; Ko and Jeong 2012; Lee 2014). However, because they heavily depend on the advice of marriage agencies, they don't have any insufficient information on the host country. The dependency makes them stay in those unfavorable circumstance.

I expand these three marriage pathways, shifting focus from their role and efficiency in cross-border marriage migration in South Korea to how these pathways affect incorporation of female marriage migrant in Korean society. Because investigators have discussed that these pathways would differently affect female marriage migrants. In particular, as I mentioned before, female marriage migrants are more likely to remain in Korea as a member of family. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss how these pathways have an influence on incorporation of potential member of Korean society. In the next part, I examine the outcome and causes of immigrant's incorporation focusing on life satisfaction of them.

IMMIGRANT LIFE SATISFACTION

After broad research of contemporary immigration studies, DeWind and Kasinitz (1997: 1102) note that "incorporation and improvement of the quality of life go hand in hand." They reveal a meaningful correlation between the degree of how much immigrants incorporate into host country and their accomplishment of better life quality.

Not only them, there are also plenty of investigations providing insights into the outcome of immigrants' incorporation. Among them, life satisfaction has been broadly used for an index that captures their incorporation into the host country (Gordon 1964; Chow 2007; Ullman and Tatar 2001; Verkuyten 2008; Amit 2010). For the psychological perspectives, life satisfaction is related to sense of belonging (Chow 2007). Especially,

being an ethnic minority member could be the reason of low level of life satisfaction. (Ullman and Tatar 2001; Verkuyten 2008). Also, immigrants may be dissatisfied because of their experience of “inferiorization” mechanisms based on being minorities (Gordon 1964). Overall, subjective and psychological perception of immigrants on life satisfaction shapes the social integration of immigrants (Amit 2010; McMichael and Manderson 2004). Social scientists who are interested in life satisfaction of immigrants suggest that socio-demographic factors, such as age, education, occupation, income, and residence period in host country have an influence on life satisfaction (Ying 1992; Safi 2009; Jong et al. 2002; Neto 2001; Vohra and Adair 2000). They generally indicate that immigrants who are older with higher educational attainment, higher occupational prestige, more wage and income, and longer period of residence in host country demonstrate higher level of life satisfaction than their counterparts. Table 1 shows brief description of those investigations on causes of life satisfaction.

Synthetically, Granovetter’s argument on social networks accentuating the functional aspect of networks reveals that weaker ties of individuals are more effective rather than stronger ties. I simultaneously argued the critiques that Granovetter overlooked the importance of the quality of networks. Extensive immigration studies have leaned on his study that highlights the influence of social networks to immigrants in terms of efficiency of networks for the context of labor migration. In order to challenge these investigations, I focused on the case of female immigrants in South Korea engaging in cross-border marriage migration. For dealing with the case of cross-border marriage migration into South Korea, I suggested three types of marriage pathways of female immigrants: (1) strong pathway (kinship); (2) weak pathway (friend, colleague, and religion), and (3) formal pathway (marriage agencies). In the contexts of East Asia, researchers argue that immigrants’ stronger ties would be more influential than weaker ties because of cultural backgrounds. As an outcome, life satisfaction and its causes were discussed.

METHODS

Data

I use data from the 2012 Korean National Survey for Multicultural Family (NSMF 2012), which monitors the social adjustment of marriage immigrants and multicultural families⁴ conducted by Ministry of Gender Equality and Family of Korea. Through the 2008 Multicultural Family Support Act, the Korean government performs the survey every three years. The data covers 5.8% of multicultural households (15,341/266,547), 5.3% of

⁴ In respect of the Multicultural Family Support Act of 2008, the “multicultural family” refers to a family which consists of a marriage immigrant and a person who has acquired Korean nationality, or a family which consists of people who both have acquired Korean nationality. That is, in order to be legally protected and supported by the Act, it is important to organize a family that has at least one member whose nationality is South Korea.

Table 1. Selected examples of investigations on causes for immigrants life satisfaction

| Outcome | Investigator | Causes | Sample | Method |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| Life satisfaction | Ying (1992) | Years in U.S., Age, Marital status, SES, Generation, Domain satisfaction | 142 Chinese-American adults in San Francisco | Regression analysis |
| | Safi (2009) | Gender, Age, Years of education, Family structure, Income, Subjective health, Unemployment/ Occupation, Immigration, Length of stay, Immigration generations | 59,449 adults in 13 European countries | Regression analysis |
| | Jong et al. (2002) | Age, Dependents, Migration type, Education, Network size, Occupation, Settlement assist, Home ownership | 2,827 international migrants in Thailand | Logistic regression |
| | Verkuyten (2008) | Age, Gender, Parental background, Racial/ethnic identification, Perceived structural discrimination | 208 Turkish-Dutch, Turkish, and Dutch participants in the Netherlands | Path analysis |
| | Neto (2001) | Race/ethnicity, Age, Gender, Place of birth, SES, Neighborhood, Ethnic identity, Ethnic behavior, Perceived discrimination, Self-esteem, etc. | 313 adolescents from immigrant families in Portugal | Regression analysis |
| | Vohra and Adair (2000) | Gender, Education, SES in India, SES in Canada, Immigration status, Membership in ethnic group, years of stay in Canada, Age at immigration, etc. | 189 Indian immigrants in Canada | Multiple regression and path analysis |
| | Chu and Hail (2014) | Income, Age, Gender, Education, Employment | 1,225 migrant workers in China | Regression analysis |
| | Wright (2011) | Income, Employment, Housing, Community | 99 Peruvians in London and Madrid | Semi-structured interview |
| | Lowenstein and Katz (2005) | Health status, Standard of living, Formal support, Informal support, Affectual solidarity, Function solidarity, Living arrangements | 425 two generation of migrants in Israel (1 st =248; 2 nd =177) | Regression analysis |
| | Nielson, Smyth, and Zhai (2010) | Standard of living, Health, Life achievement, Personal relationships, Personal safety, Feeling part of the community, Future security | 525 off-farm migrants in China | Regression analysis |
| Haagsman, Mazzucato, and Dito (2015) | Age, Sex, Marital status, Education, Enough money, Economically achieve, Economically inactive, Years in Netherlands, Legal status, Numbers of friends, Amount of family, Language proficiency, Parent-child relationship, Number of child under 8 years old | 306 Angolan and 301 Nigerian parents in Netherlands | Regression analysis | |

marriage migrants and naturalized Korean citizens (15,001/283,224), 5.5% of their spouses (13,859/234,505), and 7.2% of their children aged 9-24 (4,775/66,536) in South Korea.

For this analysis, I draw a subsample of married female immigrants and naturalized female Koreans by cross-border marriages who got support for their matchmaking from above immigration pathways. Total sample size is 8,324. Among the sample, 33.8% of respondents (n=2,814) used strong ties for their cross-border marriage pathway, versus 44.6% for weak ties (n=3,716) and 21.0% for formal ties (n=1,749). In terms of country of origin, 80.2% of respondent (n=6,672) were from China and South East Asian countries, versus 8.5% for Japan (n=704), 3.9% for Russia and Central Asian countries (n=322), 2.3% for European and North American countries (n=191), and 5.2% for other countries (n=435).

Variables

Life satisfaction

This empirical investigation focuses on the effect of cross-border marriage migration pathways on the life satisfaction of female migrants in Korean society. Therefore, the level of life satisfaction among female immigrants is the dependent variable for the analysis. In order to measure life satisfaction, I used two questions that asked, “How much are you generally satisfied with life in Korea?” and “How much are you satisfied with marriage?” Each item was coded in a five-category: 1=very satisfied; 5=very dissatisfied. I recoded the item so that high values indicate the more satisfaction: 1= very dissatisfied; 5= very satisfied, and then, combined them into one variable, life satisfaction. Thus, the range of life satisfaction is from 2 to 10 with the larger number representing more satisfaction. The alpha coefficient for the variable is .657.

Marriage pathways

The primary independent variable of interest is marriage pathways of female immigrants. I used a variable that asked respondents, “How did you meet your Korean spouse?” I compartmentalized the pathways into three dummy variables by following their responses: strong (family and relatives), weak (friendship, collegueship, and religion) and formal (marriage agencies) pathway.

Female immigrant’s country of origin

As literatures show, female immigrants’ lifestyle and assimilation processes into South Korea vary by their country of origin. In order to control the difference by sending country, I included a variable of country of origin using following five categories: 1=China and South East Asian countries; 2= Japan; 3=Russia and Central Asian countries; 4=Northern America and Europe; 5=others.

Socio-demographics variables

As I mentioned before, some socio-demographic factors could affect life satisfaction of female marriage immigrants. Therefore, I controlled female immigrants' age, level of education, residential region, marriage duration, family income, occupation, and subjected socio-economic status. A variable for age in years the survey conducted was included. Residential region was divided into urban and rural areas, based on classification of Korean administrative district. I accounted for education level using a variable that captures highest degree completed recoded as (1) below secondary level, (2) high school completed, (3) college level, and (4) over college level. Marriage duration was calculated from distance between when the survey administered and respondent were married. For family income, I included a variable that is the sum of monthly wage of respondent and her spouse reflecting the exchange rate between Korea and United States, and the inflation rate between the year the survey conducted and this year.⁵ Also, to account for workforce participation, I used a variable for occupation coded as (1) professional and managerial jobs, (2) white-collar jobs, (3) service jobs, (4) agriculture, forestry, and fishery, (5) blue-collar jobs, and (6) house job or no regular job. A control for subjective socio-economic status was measured by eleven categories that high values indicate the more positive recognition on their family's socio-economic status.

Additional controls

Spouse factors. Not only characteristics of female immigrants themselves, those of their spouse are also important factors that have an influence of female immigrants (Lee 2005; Kim 2006; Kim, Cha, and Kim 2008). In addition, in order for controlling "homophilous" mate selection (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001) between cross-border marriage couples, these factors need to be dealt with. First, I used a variable for age gap between female immigrant and Korean husband. Second, to see educational gap between cross-border marriage couples, I also accounted for gap of education level recoded as (1) husband more educated, (2) same level, and (3) wife more educated.

Language proficiency. As many social scientists argue, language proficiency would have an influence on the well-being of immigrants (Tienda and Neidert 1984; Chiswick and Miller 1996; Espenshade and Fu 1997; Mesch 2003). I included a variable for language proficiency that asked respondents how well they could speak, write, read, and understand spoken Korean. Each item was coded as a five-category: 1=do very well; 5=not do very well. I also recoded the item so that high values indicate the better proficiency in Korean language, and combined them into one variable, language proficiency. The range of language proficiency, hence, is from 4 to 20, and the large represents better proficiency in Korean language. The alpha coefficient for this variable is .937.

Self-reported health. In addition, health condition could affect the degree of life satisfaction of immigrants. Ying (1992) argues that self-reported health are directly correlated to immigrants' life satisfaction in host country. In order to account for health condition, I used

⁵ The variables were originally measured by fifteen categories with the unit of Korean Won (₩). First, I recoded the variables that each category is coded as the midpoint of the earnings range. And then, reflecting the currency rate between Korea and the United States in 2013 when the survey conducted, I calculated the values as dollars based on the currency rate of June 1st, 2013 (USD 1 = KRW 1,130). Lastly, I reflected the inflation rate between 2013 and 2016 (inflation rates=1.04) and combined respondent's wage and spouses' wage to create the variable.

a variable that asked respondents, “How do you feel your overall health condition?” The variable was coded as five categories: (1) very good, (2) good, (3) moderate, (4) bad, or (5) very bad. I recoded the item so that high values indicate the more positive recognition on their own health condition. Among these variables, missing values were excluded. The descriptive statistics of these measurements are reported in Table 2.

Analytic Strategy

For analyzing the incorporation of female immigrants, I employ an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and ordinary least square (OLS) regression. First, ANOVA is conducted for comparing the differences among female immigrants including levels of life satisfaction by three types of marriage pathways and other factors. Table 2 and Table 3 represents the results of ANOVA.

Also, I conduct an OLS regression model to estimate the effect of marriage pathways on female marriage immigrant’s life satisfaction controlling other variables. Table 4 shows the result of OLS regression predicting life satisfaction of female immigrants. In Table 4, for examining the baseline effect of marriage pathway on levels of life satisfaction, Model 1 regresses marriage pathway to life satisfaction. Model 2 includes country of origin and socio-demographic variables of female immigrants. Model 3 adds additional control variables. Finally, based on Model 3, Model 4 includes an interaction term between marriage pathway and marriage duration. Given variables, in this sample, overall multiple regression function estimating female immigrants’ levels of life satisfaction is as following in Equation (1):

$$\begin{aligned}
 Satisfaction_i = & \hat{\beta}_0 + Weak_i\hat{\beta}_1 + Formal_i\hat{\beta}_2 + country_i\hat{\beta}_3 + age_i\hat{\beta}_4 \\
 & + education_i\hat{\beta}_5 + region_i\hat{\beta}_6 + duration_i\hat{\beta}_7 + income_i\hat{\beta}_8 \\
 & + occupation_i\hat{\beta}_9 + SES_i\hat{\beta}_{10} + Agegap_i\hat{\beta}_{11} + Edugap_i\hat{\beta}_{12} \\
 & + language_i\hat{\beta}_{13} + health_i\hat{\beta}_{14} + Pathway * duration_i\hat{\beta}_{15} + \hat{\mu}_i
 \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

where satisfaction is a measure of levels of life satisfaction; Weak is a measure of marriage pathway from friendship, colleagueship, and religion while Formal is a measure of marriage pathway from marriage agencies, as compared to kinship network (marriage pathway from strong ties); countries of origin are included as dummy variables for Japan, Russia and Central Asia countries, European and North American countries, and other countries, as compared to China and other South East Asian countries; age is measured in years; education level was divided into a series of dummy variables for high school completed, college degree, and more than college level, as compared to not completing high school; duration is a measure of marriage duration; occupation was included as dummy variables for a professional or managerial job, a white-collar job, a service job, an agriculture, forestry, and fishery job, and a blue-collar job, as compared to a house job or has no regular job; SES is a measure of subjective socio-economic status; age gap is a measure of gap between couples in terms of age; educational gap was divided into two dummy variables for more educated husband or more educated wife, as compared to same levels of education of couples; language is a measure of levels of Korean proficiency; health is a measure of levels of self-reported health. Additionally, Figure 1 estimates levels of life satisfaction among female immigrants by marriage pathway by adding an interaction between marriage pathway and marriage duration.

FINDINGS

Bivariate results

Table 2 show the differences of the degree which female immigrants are satisfied with their marriage and life in Korean society. In terms of marriage pathway, Table 2 indicates 45% of the female marriage migrants in the sample were married via their weak ties - friends, colleagues, or religious affiliates. This pattern indicates the most common pathway for cross-border marriage migration is weak ties. It is similar to Granovetter's argument on labor markets,

Table 2. Differences among female immigrants on selected variables, by marriage pathway, NSMF 2012.

| Variable | Range | Mean | S.D. | Life satisfaction | |
|--|---------------------|----------|----------|-------------------|----------|
| | | | | Mean | F-ratio |
| Marriage pathway | | | | | 9.59*** |
| Formal ties (n=2,814) | 0 to 1 | .34 | .47 | 7.88 | |
| Weak ties (n=3,716) | 0 to 1 | .45 | .50 | 7.77 | |
| Strong ties (n=1,749) | 0 to 1 | .21 | .41 | 7.96 | |
| Country of origin | | | | | 21.80*** |
| China and South East Asian countries (n=6,672) | 0 to 1 | .80 | .40 | 7.88 | |
| Japan (n=704) | 0 to 1 | .08 | .28 | 7.37 | |
| Russia and Central Asian countries (n=322) | 0 to 1 | .04 | .19 | 7.88 | |
| Northern America and Europe (n=191) | 0 to 1 | .02 | .15 | 8.38 | |
| Others (n=435) | 0 to 1 | .05 | .22 | 7.79 | |
| Age | 15 to 75 | 33.98 | 9.65 | - | - |
| Education | | | | | 4.18** |
| < High school completed (n=2,669) | 0 to 1 | .32 | .47 | 7.88 | |
| High school completed (n=3,661) | 0 to 1 | .44 | .50 | 7.81 | |
| College degree (n=1,902) | 0 to 1 | .23 | .42 | 7.85 | |
| > College degree (n=92) | 0 to 1 | .01 | .10 | 8.34 | |
| Residential region | | | | | 3.94* |
| Urban areas (n=4,919) | 0 to 1 | .59 | .49 | 7.87 | |
| Rural areas (n=3,405) | 0 to 1 | .41 | .49 | 7.80 | |
| Marriage duration (year) | 1 to 49 | 7.76 | 5.55 | - | - |
| Family income (dollars) | 230.09 to 19,327.43 | 2,333.12 | 1,358.90 | - | - |
| Occupation | | | | | 25.95*** |
| Professional and managerial jobs (n=524) | 0 to 1 | .06 | .24 | 7.75 | |
| White-collar jobs (n=143) | 0 to 1 | .02 | .13 | 7.93 | |
| Service jobs (n=896) | 0 to 1 | .11 | .31 | 7.66 | |
| Agriculture, forestry, and fishery (n=389) | 0 to 1 | .05 | .21 | 7.48 | |
| Blue-collar jobs (n=2,027) | 0 to 1 | .24 | .43 | 7.63 | |
| House job / No job (n=4,345) | 0 to 1 | .52 | .50 | 8.03 | |
| Subjective SES | 1 to 11 | 5.81 | 1.81 | - | - |
| Age gap | 0 to 42 | 11.35 | 7.16 | | |
| Education gap | | | | | 35.00*** |
| Husband superiority (n=2,742) | 0 to 1 | .33 | .47 | 8.02 | |
| Same level (3,395) | 0 to 1 | .41 | .49 | 7.84 | |
| Wife superiority (2,187) | 0 to 1 | .26 | .44 | 7.63 | |
| Language proficiency | 4 to 20 | 13.41 | 4.29 | - | - |
| Self-reported health | 1 to 5 | 4.01 | 1.01 | - | - |

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. (two-tailed tests)

indicating that weak ties play a crucial role in shaping individuals' marriage outcomes. However, compared to labor migrants, weak pathways are less beneficial for marriage migrants and their levels of life satisfaction. The average levels of life satisfaction among marriage migrants married via weak ties is 7.77, which is lower than the life satisfaction of those married via formal ties (7.88) and those married via strong ties (7.96). That is, the common pathway is not generally associated with higher levels of life satisfaction among marriage migrants.

For country of origin, the highest level of life satisfaction, in order of the degree, were North American and European, China and South East Asian countries, Russia and Central Asian countries, other countries, and Japan. In terms of education level, the findings generally present that female immigrants with higher levels of education would show the higher levels of life satisfaction. In terms of residential region, female immigrants living in urban areas (7.87) show higher levels of life satisfaction than those who dwell in rural areas (7.80).

For occupation, female immigrants who are a housewife or has no regular job show the highest level of life satisfaction. Also, female immigrants who have professional and managerial, and white-collar jobs would show higher levels of life satisfaction than those of having service, agriculture, forestry, and fishery, and blue-collar jobs. For education gap between couples, the more educated wife and the less educated husband, the more levels of life satisfaction.

Along with Table 2, Table 3 which shows the differences among female immigrants by marriage pathway demonstrates the importance of analyzing marriage pathway, as a reference for understanding lives of female immigrants in Korean society. Relating to the context of cross-border marriage migration into South Korea, what we have to emphasize is differences among female immigrants on marriage duration and language proficiency depending on marriage pathway. For marriage duration, female immigrants with formal ties (7.76 years) show are expected to live shorter than those with weak ties (9.24 years) or strong ties (8.31 years).

The result from differences on language proficiency seems to be similar with that of marriage duration. Female immigrants with formal ties show 11.79 level of language proficiency versus 14.09 for weak ties, and 14.53 for strong ties. These disparities might result from the fact that cross-border marriages through marriage agencies don't operate well because marriage agencies which monopolize information on cross-border marriage didn't provide enough information on Korean culture and, even, their husband to female immigrants who has no background knowledge. It results in female immigrants' difficulties in relationships, such as domestic violence, social mal-adjustment and isolation in Korean society (Jung 2012; Lee

Table 3. Differences among female immigrants on selected variables, by marriage pathway, NSMF 2012.

| Variable | Sample | Marriage pathway | | | F |
|-------------------------|--------|------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------|
| | | Formal pathway | Weak pathway | Strong pathway | |
| Marriage duration (yrs) | 7.76 | 5.44 | 9.24 | 8.31 | 427.22*** |
| Subjective SES | 5.81 | 5.93 | 5.73 | 5.81 | 9.78*** |
| Language proficiency | 13.41 | 11.79 | 14.09 | 14.53 | 332.97*** |
| Self-reported health | 4.01 | 4.18 | 3.90 | 3.99 | 62.47*** |

Note: *** p < .001. (two-tailed tests)

2014; Ko and Jeong 2012).⁶

Multivariate results

Table 4 demonstrates the results of the OLS regression models predicting life satisfaction of female immigrants. Model 1 deals with the baseline effect of marriage pathways on life satisfaction. It reveals, all else equal, the average life satisfaction among female migrants using weak pathway for their marriage are .194 units lower using this scale than the average life satisfaction of female immigrants using strong pathway. It also shows the average level of life satisfaction among female immigrants with formal pathway is lower than that of strong pathway. The result indicates that female immigrants who met their Korean husband through their family members or relatives show higher level of satisfaction on their marriage and life in Korean society compared to those who met their Korean husband through friends, colleagues, religion, or even marriage agencies.

In Model 2, there're differences on levels of life satisfaction among female immigrant depending their country of origin. It demonstrates that female immigrants from Japan, Russia and Central Asia countries, other countries show lower levels of life satisfaction compared to those from China and South East Asia countries. As compared to strong pathway, weak and formal pathway have still has negative influence on levels of life satisfaction. Among socio-demographic variables, age, marriage duration, four occupational dummies (professional and managerial jobs, service jobs, agricultural, forestry, and fishery jobs, and blue-collar jobs as compared to house job or no regular jobs) are negatively associated with higher levels of life satisfaction among female immigrants. Rather, family income and subjective SES have positive effect on higher levels of life satisfaction.

Adding additional control variables, Model 3 indicates that the variables for formal and weak pathway are significant, indicating statistical difference in life satisfaction among female immigrants depending on their marriage pathway such that female immigrants who met their Korean husband through strong pathway (kinship) show higher levels of life satisfaction, compared to those who met their Korean husband through formal (marriage agencies) or weak pathway (friends, colleagues, and religion). Model 3 also reveals that female immigrants from Japan are expected to show lower levels of life satisfaction than those from China and South East Asia countries. In terms of education, female immigrants with college degrees show higher levels of life satisfaction than those with lower educational attainment. For occupation, ironically, female immigrants who have house job or no regular job show higher degree of life satisfaction than those with any other forms of job. Besides, higher subjective SES and family income are positively associated with higher life satisfaction of female immigrants. In terms of educational gap between cross-border marriage couples, when husband's education attainment is higher than that of wife's, it is expected to show higher levels of life satisfaction, *ceteris paribus*.

⁶ Not only marriage pathway, as I mentioned above, country of origin of female immigrants is another important source for understanding differences of female immigrants in South Korean and how well those female immigrants incorporate into Korean society. My findings suggest there are statistically significant differences among female immigrants by their country of origin, in terms of marriage pathway, occupation, marriage duration, subjective SES, language proficiency, and self-reported health. See Appendix C and Appendix D.

Table 4. Coefficients from OLS Regressions Predicting Life Satisfaction of Female Immigrants, NSMF 2012.

| Variables | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Formal pathway ^a | -.081† | -.226*** | -.190*** | .087 |
| Weak pathway ^a | -.194*** | -.088† | -.076† | -.118 |
| Japan ^b | | -.211*** | -.121† | -.157* |
| Russia and Central Asian countries ^b | | -.156† | -.111 | -.078 |
| North America and Europe ^b | | .019 | -.180 | -.208† |
| Others countries ^b | | -.144† | -.121 | -.111 |
| Age | | -.007*** | .002 | .002 |
| High school completed ^c | | -.029 | .010 | -.002 |
| College degree ^c | | .008 | .120† | .115† |
| > College degree ^c | | .172 | .240 | .219 |
| Urban area ^d | | .003 | .015 | .014 |
| Marriage duration | | -.032*** | -.034*** | -.031*** |
| Family income | | .000*** | .000*** | .000*** |
| Professional and managerial jobs ^e | | -.234*** | -.265*** | -.253*** |
| White-collar jobs ^e | | -.163 | -.304* | -.277* |
| Service jobs ^e | | -.277*** | -.312*** | -.300*** |
| Agriculture, forestry, and fishery ^e | | -.368*** | -.376*** | -.346*** |
| Blue-collar jobs ^e | | -.334*** | -.328*** | -.308*** |
| Subjective SES | | .172*** | .142*** | .141*** |
| Age gap | | | -.004 | -.005 |
| Husband > Wife ^f | | | .125*** | .112* |
| Husband < Wife ^f | | | -.152*** | -.154*** |
| Language proficiency | | | .025*** | .027*** |
| Self-reported health | | | .420*** | .420*** |
| Marriage duration * formal pathway | | | | -.048*** |
| Marriage duration * weak pathway | | | | .005 |
| Constant | 7.960*** | 7.385*** | 5.300*** | 5.253*** |
| F ratio | 9.59*** | 44.28*** | 67.50*** | 63.56*** |
| R ² | .002 | .092 | .163 | .166 |

Note: † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

^a Strong ties excluded; ^b China and South East Asian countries excluded; ^c Below high school completed excluded; ^d Rural area excluded; ^e House job or no regular job excluded; ^f Same levels of education of couples excluded.

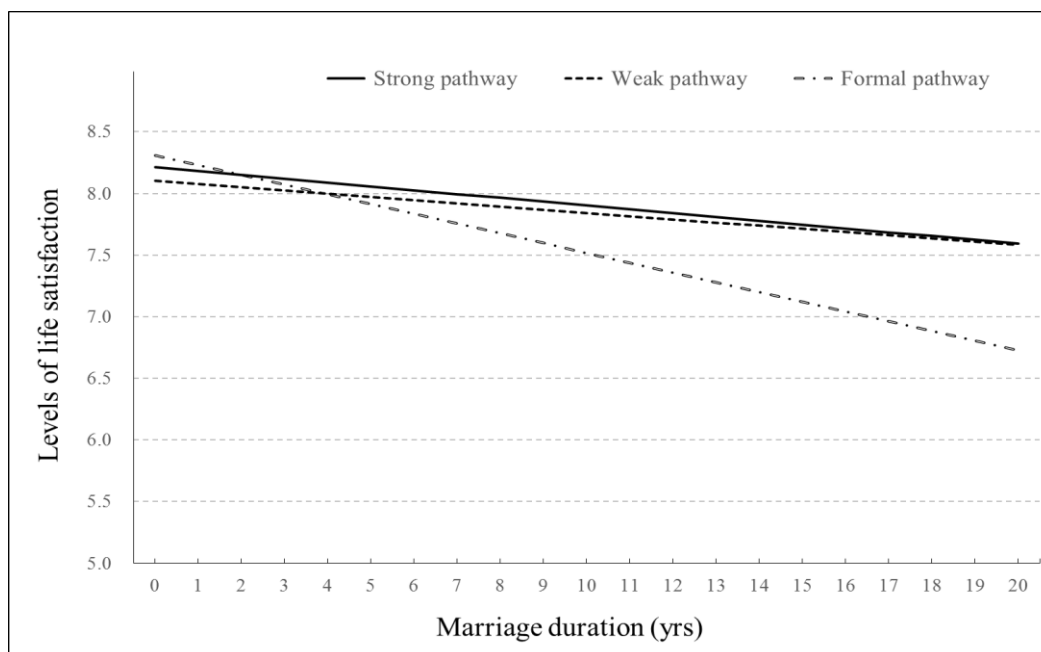


Figure 1. Expected life satisfaction among female immigrants by marriage pathway and marriage duration.

Except for marriage pathways and countries of origin, the effects of marriage duration, self-reported health, and language proficiency on life satisfaction are salient. The variables for self-reported health and language proficiency are strong and positive, *ceteris paribus*, such that higher levels of subjective health and better language skills have a strong effect on reporting higher levels of life satisfaction for female immigrants in South Korea.

On the other hand, the effect of marriage duration is negative and significant, indicating that every additional years of marriage duration is associated with decrease of levels of life satisfaction among female immigrants, if other variables are constant as their average. It reflects that the longer the cross-border marriage lasts, the lower life satisfaction for female immigrants. However, the effect of marriage duration differs from pathways. As shown in Model 4, when adding two interaction terms between marriage pathway and marriage duration (duration*weak pathway, duration*formal pathway), strong and weak pathways are statistically indistinguishable, while only formal pathways are distinctive, and that only becomes apparent after the marriage has lasted for 4 years of marriage duration. In other words, the results indicate that, for the first 4 years of female migrants' marriage, it doesn't matter how the immigrant was married. Life satisfaction is pretty much the same across the board. Even, marriage migrant with formal pathways show higher levels of life satisfaction than those with weak pathways. After roughly 4 years, however, the life satisfaction of immigrants who are married via formal pathways were overtaken and plummeted. That is, as time passed, female immigrants with formal pathway would be more dissatisfied with their life and marriage compared to those with strong or weak pathways. This interaction effect between marriage pathway and marriage duration is graphically represented in Figure 1.

CONCLUSION

When discussing interpersonal networks, Granovetter argues that weak ties characterized as relationship among heterogeneous individuals with unsolidified linkage are more

functionally efficient for gaining information and resources rather than strong ties. Building on his theoretical contribution, researchers in a field of immigration suggest the efficacy of immigrant weak ties based on the context of labor migration, particularly, at western societies. However, despite its importance, the quality of immigrant social networks has not been frequently discussed. Moreover, non-labor arrangements outside western societies are still unexplored of immigration research.

Using data from the 2012 Korean National Survey for Multicultural Family (NSMF 2012), I examine the applicability and limitation of Granovetter's theory of weak ties and other immigration research building on his argument based on the context of cross-border marriage migration in South Korea. I ask how three different types of marriage pathways (strong, weak, and formal) corresponding with Granovetter's interpersonal ties affect levels of life satisfaction among female immigrants in Korean society. My results revealed that female immigrants with strong pathways show the highest levels of life satisfaction compared to those with formal and weak pathways. The results indicate, as immigration pathway, kinship networks are more likely to be associated with higher levels of life satisfaction among female immigrants rather than friendship, colleagueship, and religion, or even, marriage agencies. It is linked with literatures that highlight the significance of kinship networks as immigration pathway with regard to cross-border marriage migration in East Asia countries (Bian 1997; Antonio 2004; Kim et al 2008; Lim 2014). Also, it is inconsistent with the earlier studies of immigrant social networks inspired by Granovetter (1973; 1983) that have focused on the efficacy of weak ties among immigrants in the context of labor migration (Maher and Cawley 2015; Harvey 2008; Moroşanu 2016).

Additionally, the results also demonstrated the social and cultural context of cross-border marriage migration in South Korea. First, in terms of country of origin among female immigrant, I found that female immigrants from Japan are expected to show lower levels of life satisfaction than those from China and South East Asia countries. It could result from the characteristics of cross-border marriage between Korean husbands and Japan wives. Different from the cross-border marriage migration driven by economical motivation, the major mechanism of cross-border marriage migration between two countries are religion (Lee 1999; Kim et al. 2008; Kim and Choi 2012; Lee 2015). In order to expand its religious congregation, the Unification Church have encouraged mass-wedding within its believers, regardless of their counties of origin (Lee 1999). Thus, in general, the Unification Church couples have no more similar characteristics than their religion. Research indicates that Japanese wives generally show low levels of marriage satisfaction, and frequently experience conflicts with their husbands (Kim et al. 2008)

Moreover, with regard to occupation and educational gap between couples, my findings showed patriarchal aspects of Eastern society. Female immigrants who have house job or no regular job show higher levels of life satisfaction than those with any other forms of job. Also, when husband's education attainment is higher than that of wife's, it is expected to show higher levels of life satisfaction. Many researchers suggest that it is not uncommon that there are domestic gender inequalities within cross-border marriage families in South Korea (Kim 2007; Shim 2008; Hwang 2009). In particular, Hwang (2009) argues that cross-border marriage migration, more specifically, a downward marriage with women from developing countries is mechanism for reinforcing male hierarchy of patriarchal family.

Also, I found interaction effect between marriage pathways and marriage duration. On the one hand, the effect of marriage duration is negative indicating that every additional years of marriage duration are associated with decrease of levels of life satisfaction among female

immigrants. However, on the other hand, as Figure 1 showed, the negative effect of marriage duration is the largest in case of formal pathway group suggesting that female immigrants with formal pathway are more dissatisfied with their life and marriage as time passed, compared to those with strong or weak pathway. The effect of marriage duration on marital stability, levels of marital happiness and satisfaction is highly controversial. The relationship could be positively linear (Miller 1975; Morris, Crull, and Winter 1976), negatively linear (Schumm and Bugaighis 1986; Johnson, Amoloza, and Booth 1992; Bradbury, Fincham, and Beach 2000; Wendorf, Lucas, Imamoğlu, Weisfeld, and Weisfeld 2011), curve-linear (Van Laningham, Johnson, and Amato 2001), varied by other factors (Zietlow and Van Lear Jr 1991; Shek 1995; Proulx, Helms, and Buehler 2007), or even, insignificant (Skinner, Bahr, Crane, and Call 2002). In case of cross-border marriage migration in South Korea, despite a low volume of investigation, researchers can't make a consensus on relationship between marriage duration and levels of satisfaction. It might be positive (Kim 2012b), negative (Yang and Lee 2011), or insignificant (Lee and Jun 2014). Thus, suggesting the interactive effect between marriage pathway and marriage duration, my finding could be a plausible answer for discussing the relationship between marriage duration and levels of life satisfaction among female immigrants in Korean society.

My findings have some limitations. First, I assumed that friend and colleagues are weak pathways for cross-border marriage migration that most immigration studies regarded as strong ties. However, this denotation could be justified from the context of immigration in Eastern societies that give highest value to kinship networks among interpersonal ties. By following this cultural perspective, when asking a pathway for cross-border marriage, the data, NSMF 2012, measured friend, colleague, and religion in same category. Instead, as I mentioned, the finding properly reflected the context of immigration in Korea, not simply repeated previous literature based on different culture. Second, in my analysis, I excluded the female immigrants who had not supported from others for meeting their husband. Autonomous process of mate selection and family formation in cross-border marriage could be also important issue for scholars who are interested in immigration and sociology of family. Third, despite of controlling age and marriage duration, I didn't include the variation on the extent to which female immigrant in Korean society are satisfied with their marriage and general life during their life course. Further research should identify the variation of female immigrants' life satisfaction using panel data.

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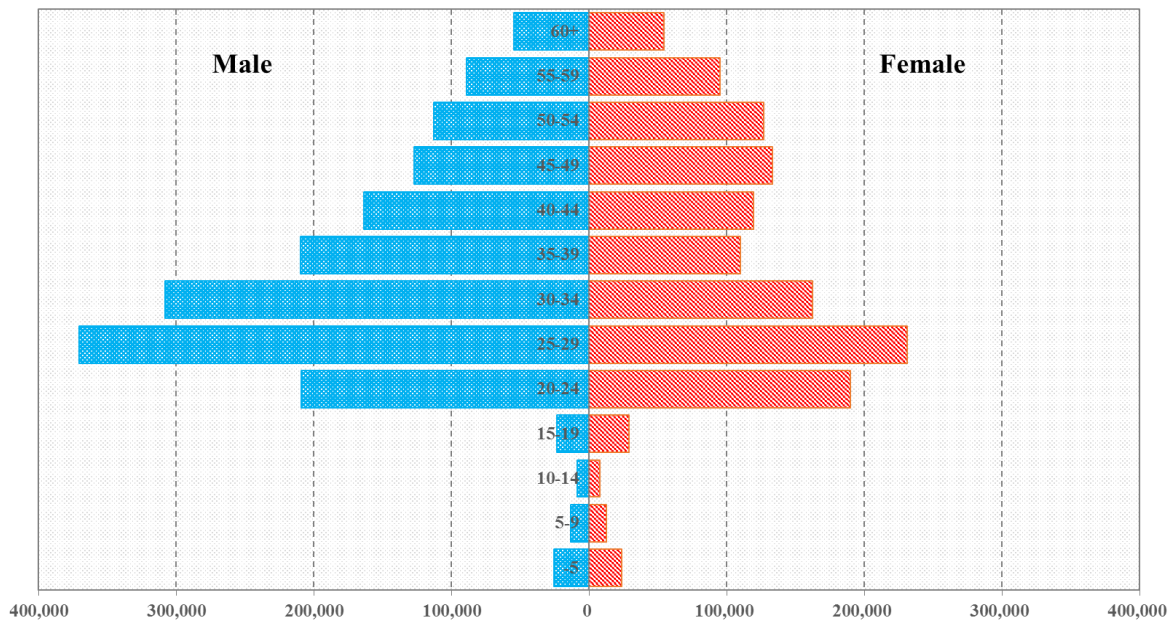
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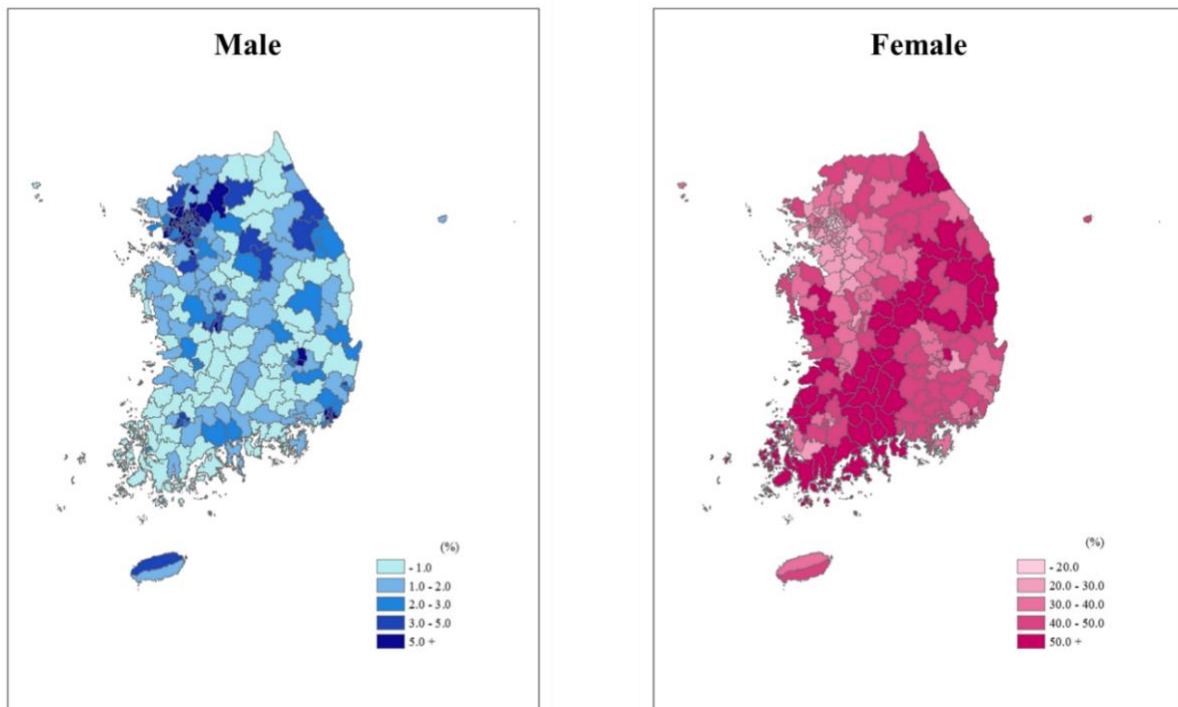
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[Appendix A] Demographic distribution of foreign residences in South Korea by age and gender, 2011-2014.



Note: Data are from Author's calculation of Statistics of Immigration 2012-2015 from The Ministry of Justice of Korea.

[Appendix B] The proportion of cross-border marriage immigrants to foreign residents by gender and administrative district, 2012.



Note: Data are from Author's calculation of Statistics of foreign residence 2013 from The Ministry of Interior of Korea.

[Appendix C] Differences among female immigrants on marriage pathway and occupation, by country of origin, NSMF 2012.

| Variable | Country of origin | | | | | <i>Chi</i> ² |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| | CHN ^a | JAP ^b | RUS ^c | EUP ^d | ETC ^e | |
| Total | 6,672 | 704 | 322 | 191 | 435 | |
| Marriage pathway | | | | | | 971.15*** |
| Formal ties | 2,574 (38.6) | 11 (1.6) | 124 (38.5) | 4 (2.1) | 101 (23.2) | |
| Weak ties | 2,561 (38.4) | 672 (95.5) | 153 (47.5) | 125 (65.5) | 250 (57.5) | |
| Strong ties | 1,537 (23.0) | 21 (3.0) | 45 (14.0) | 62 (32.5) | 84 (19.3) | |
| Occupation | | | | | | 483.81*** |
| Professional and managerial jobs | 291 (4.4) | 119 (16.9) | 27 (8.4) | 46 (24.1) | 41 (9.4) | |
| White-collar jobs | 92 (1.4) | 26 (3.7) | 5 (1.6) | 8 (4.2) | 12 (2.8) | |
| Service jobs | 773 (11.6) | 48 (6.9) | 31 (9.6) | 7 (3.7) | 37 (8.5) | |
| Agriculture, forestry, and fishery | 316 (4.7) | 56 (8.0) | 8 (2.5) | 1 (0.5) | 8 (1.8) | |
| Blue-collar jobs | 1,777 (26.6) | 94 (13.4) | 49 (15.2) | 0 (0.0) | 107 (24.6) | |
| House job / No job | 3,423 (51.3) | 361 (51.3) | 202 (62.7) | 129 (67.5) | 230 (52.9) | |

Note: *** p < .001. (two-tailed tests) ; Percentages in parentheses

^a China and South East Asia countries; ^b Japan; ^c Russia and Central Asia countries; ^d European and North America countries; ^e Other countries.

[Appendix D] Differences among female immigrants on marriage duration, subjective SES, language proficiency, and self-reported health, by country of origin, NSMF 2012.

| Variable | Sample | Country of origin | | | | | F |
|-------------------------|--------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------|
| | | CHN ^a | JAP ^b | RUS ^c | EUP ^d | ETC ^e | |
| Marriage duration (yrs) | 7.76 | 6.92 | 14.47 | 6.98 | 13.54 | 7.80 | 418.96*** |
| Subjective SES | 5.81 | 5.79 | 5.53 | 6.11 | 7.13 | 5.92 | 33.02*** |
| Language proficiency | 13.41 | 13.18 | 14.12 | 12.73 | 18.40 | 14.06 | 82.12*** |
| Self-reported health | 4.01 | 4.05 | 3.56 | 4.04 | 4.18 | 3.98 | 4.01*** |

Note: *** p < .001. (two-tailed tests)

^a China and South East Asia countries; ^b Japan; ^c Russia and Central Asia countries; ^d European and North America countries; ^e Other countries.