

**‘Vietnamese Women Marriage Migrants in South Korea:  
A Study of Their Sense of Well-being in the Process of Their Settlement’**

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**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study is to understand the experience of the Vietnamese women marriage migrants overcoming difficulties in the process of settlement in South Korea through international marriage, and to suggest the directions for achieving a stable settlement by maintaining their sense of well-being, based on the factors overcoming their difficulties. For this purpose, the research question in this study was set as: 'To what extent do the resources of Vietnamese women marriage migrants against the challenges in their settlement to South Korea influence their sense of well-being?' I applied the phenomenological method of Giorgi and Schütze's biographical narrative interview method to analyse the interview data in the qualitative research methodology.

Participants of this study, the Vietnamese women marriage migrants, were found to have the curiosity and desire to live in a new country free from the reality of difficult family situations and a poor society, and they chose international marriage with great anticipation and longing for South Korea. However, they have gone through many difficulties during their settlement process. Two factors are crucial: Without enough information on their marriage migration, and their family's strong opposition, led to their worries about international marriage before migration. Even after migration, they spent the time of pregnancy, childbirth and child care without the help of their husbands under the influence of their mothers-in-law who showed an authoritarian style within their family. Outside their family, they were discriminated against and ignored by South Koreans with added inconveniences caused by the unfamiliar surroundings and their limited communication.

The factors that overcome the difficulties and maintain their sense of well-being in the settlement process, are found in four aspects: internally, externally, transnationally, and demographically. The results of this study provide in-depth data not only to understand the experiences of the Vietnamese marriage migrants, but also to expand support programmes and centres for their stable settlement in South Korean society.



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A Study on Their Sense of Well-being in the Process of Their Settlement’**

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## **DECLARATION**

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed 

Date 31st March 2019

## **STATEMENT ONE**

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Where correction services have been used, the extent and nature of the correction is clearly marked in a footnote.

Other sources are acknowledged by midnotes or footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

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Date 31st March 2019

## **STATEMENT TWO**

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## **Abbreviations**

KJT – South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan

PP01-30 – Participants of this Study 01-30

WMM – Women Marriage Migrant

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

#### **1 Research Background**

##### **1.1 Past Experiences**

This study originated from my experience in a South Korean church for an international congregation in South Korea. The church located in a junior high school near Anyang City where there were many foreign workers from all over the Third World. There were also many foreign workers in the church, most of them illegal aliens, and the church became their ghetto. At that time, as a researcher of this study, and as a pastor of foreign saints, I played a role of listening to and solving their grievances. Many factory employers, taking advantage of the weakness of illegal foreign workers, neither paid their wages, nor arranged any medical services for them when injured. I demanded wages from the factory employers on behalf of the workers who could not get any wages for a long time, and sometimes took them to hospitals when they were injured.

However, I had not experienced foreign workers, or even foreigners in South Korea, and did not know how to help them properly, and had no idea what they really wanted in their foreign land. In those days, a wave of foreign workers and women married migrants (hereafter in this study referred to as WMM) entered South Korea before systemic and supportive measures were provided at the national level. As a Christian or rather a pastor, I was concerned with the practice of love for neighbours, especially for widows, orphans, and strangers, according to the Bible. As time passed and the proportion of migrants in South Korean society increased, much research has been done and the results have been published in academia. However, as I was in charge of the ministry of migrants in the field, I had become increasingly saddened about the poor practical support to the

migrants because of the discrepancy between theory and practice. I tried to apply the existing results of research cases of migrants to my ministries, and found that even the basic rights for the migrants were not guaranteed.

No matter where they are in any environment, they also have the right to pursue happiness as dignified human beings, and their hosting society should be responsible for them. In 1689, Locke declared in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* that "the highest perfection of intellectual nature lies in a careful and constant pursuit of true and solid happiness (Locke 1975)."

The beginning of this study was to examine the factors that affect their sense of well-being or their happiness when they adapt to the new environment. I considered the sense of well-being of WMMs a more important issue than that of foreign workers as the former left their home countries to live in South Korea permanently and eventually became South Koreans, whereas the latter are supposed to return to their home countries at the end of their contract period.

## **1.2 Research Model Case**

There were some international marriage couples in my church where the wives were from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Nepal. Among them, a Vietnamese WMM attracted my attention. She did not know in advance that she would go to a rural area in South Korea when she got married. Later, I found out that particularly Vietnamese WMMs were getting married in rural areas because of their lack of information from international marriage agencies. She could get out of their farming land to Anyang City after persuading her husband for a long time. Her name is Y.H. Kim and she came to South Korea 6 years before moving to Anyang City. South Korean drama made her feel curious about South Korea and led her to study the Korean language at a Korean language institute in Vietnam. After a while, she got married to a South Korean husband through an international

marriage agency. She thought she could manage her life well in South Korea as she was sure to be accustomed to South Korean culture to some extent. It was not long after she came to South Korea, however, that the reality of South Korea was very much different from what she imagined it to be in Vietnam. Even though she had learned the Korean language before she came to South Korea, it was not enough for her to communicate with South Korean people in daily life. When got pregnant, she could do nothing by herself, and did not receive help from her own family. She could not eat Korean food as she could not avoid the disgusting smell owing to her morning sickness. After 6 years of her life experience in South Korea, she could overcome the difficulty of communication with her neighbours in the local community but still felt uneasy to communicate with public officers such as at the public health centre, the general hospital, and the immigration office. She had two sons aged 5 and 3. She was very concerned about their identity. She said they were her only hope after all the experiences she had in the course of her adaptation to the South Korean lifestyle. She felt happy whenever she heard they were praised or they made good grades at their schools. She also recalled her earlier days in South Korea when she had made a remittance to her family in Vietnam. She felt so happy to support her family by herself, earning money on the side.

## **2 Research Environment, Problems and Purpose**

Globalization and the liberalization of the global village call for a new paradigm of social integration beyond the nation, race, occupation, appearance and ideology. South Korean immigration policies, however, were neither well organized nor consistent whenever the regime changed as it had only 10-20 years of immigration policy, whereas Western Europe had a relatively long history of exercising immigration policies. I could not find any fundamental differences between WMMs and South Korean wives in that they were mostly concerned about the education of their children, their uneasy relationship with their in-laws, particularly with their parents-in-law, and their daily life with their husbands.

They are not foreigners to South Koreans, but are already their neighbours. Most of them felt the stinging dart of segregation and prejudice. They asked their South Korean neighbours to treat them with kindness. I was hurt and felt sorry when WMMs were explaining, with tears in their eyes, their experiences of being ignored by South Koreans. My multicultural research started from the perspective of human respect.

Individual human beings try to adapt themselves to an unfamiliar environment which is different from their own values and culture, by internalizing the new value and culture, and at the same time, by modifying their original values and culture (Chirkov et al. 2003: 97). The foreign WMMs tend to be marginalized at the border of a new culture in the process of settlement after migration to a new country. They experience the conflict between their cultural identity from their motherland, such as the value system and the way of life, and the new culture of the receiving country. The change of their identity as a result of the conflict influenced their sense of belonging. The foreign WMMs, therefore, develop their relationship with their local community through the change of their identity in the process of adaptation after migration. In terms of assimilation theory, this kind of adaptation is considered as social integration, but is rather its process than the social integration itself (Kostakopoulou 2010: 831). It is not possible to achieve social integration solely by individual adaptation, but by social acceptance and change together. In this regard, the social integration of foreign WMMs should be done not only with the adaptation of foreign WMMs on an individual level but also with the support, acceptance and change at a social level on the basis of mutual understanding between the minor influx and the major society members. The interrelationship between the foreign WMMs and their local community members as well as the local government's support programmes could increase or decrease the formation of a new identity for the foreign WMMs and the level of their sense of well-being. As a first step to help their social integration, it is necessary to research the factors on multilateral levels which affect their sense of well-being in their life.

## **2.1 Research Environment**

According to Y. H. Cha (2008: 188), there were deficiencies in approaching multicultural phenomena in South Korea: 1) lack of analysis to the factors from an emigrational perspective of original countries, producing a multicultural society in South Korea, 2) academic limitations in understanding the multicultural phenomena such as ethnic fine arts, festivals, language, foods, costumes, and music, and 3) difficulties in scholarly research in relation to the international relationship and national competitiveness in terms of national economy and labour markets.

However, the trend is of expanding the academic study and research on immigration policy concerning the social integration of migrants, a multicultural society, and an immigration labour policy. Also, the low birth rate, ageing society and the increase of international human interchanges call for the expansion of the study on immigration, such as the integration of an immigrant society and labour market, and the development of a multicultural society. According to this trend, it is necessary to build up the research and the education of immigration policy as a part of national development strategies (H. K. Lee 2005).

The South Korean government made an effort to help foreign WMMs with several policies established since 2006. In the wake of these efforts on the government level, the foreign WMMs' difficulties in their lives in South Korea could not be relieved significantly. Their divorce cases and suicides are continually on the rise. The issue of their psycho-social maladjustment to their social environment became obvious. It is, therefore, necessary to re-examine the current government policies for foreign WMMs, and to establish policies to intervene aggressively in those issues mentioned above (G. S. Han 2006).

A recent study on the governmental policies for supporting the settlement of

WMMs in South Korea states that governmental efforts to support WMMs to adapt themselves in South Korea were manifest in many ways for the last ten years. However, they left much to be desired: 1) Korean language and culture education programme – not enough time provided, simple and uniform standard; 2) childcare and education of children – lack of support, especially at the earlier stage of settlement; 3) reformation of national consciousness – discrimination and prejudice against WMMs; 4) medical and legal consulting service – lack of educational and promotional programme; 5) settlement support system – lack of programmes customized and dedicated to WMMs according to their origin and age; 6) local government and NGO service – lack of institutional services in legal, economic, social, and cultural sectors (G. S. Kim 2017).

So far, the South Korean government has dealt with conjugal problems and WMMs' family issues as only private matters, and consequently its counter-measures to these problems and issues were lukewarm. WMMs' increasing conflicts with their husbands lead to domestic violence and deviant behaviour, and their conflicts with their parents-in-laws are obstructions to the virtue of traditional filial piety of South Korea. Furthermore, WMMs' conflicting relationship with their husbands and parents-in-law could lead to a loss of trust and bring about the breakdown of their families.

The discrimination and prejudice against WMMs and their children are directly related to human dignity issues. South Korean society shows prejudice and discrimination against them culturally, racially, and linguistically. Especially, it has shown discrimination and prejudice against WMMs and their children from economically poorer Southeast Asian countries than South Korea, and has broken up their language, culture, and even their identities to make them assimilate to the status of the leading society of South Korea. After all, WMMs who married South Korean men to form families and who contributed to the reproduction of social members by giving birth to babies, have suffered from the violation of the value of their human dignity with all kinds of insults and humiliation, far from being treated as human beings. As Glazer entitled his book "We Are All Multiculturalists Now,"

he argues that multiculturalism arose from the failure of American mainstream society to assimilate African Americans. No more do they seek assimilation, now they pursue multiculturalism. This transformation has been most evident in the public schools, where a traditional curriculum has been replaced by diversity, confrontation and confusion (Glazer 1998: 121).

Experts on multiculturalism claim that now is the time for South Korean society to understand and embrace multi-culture equally (G. S. Kim 2017: 130-131). It is high time for them to improve their perception of migrants through education. It has been already taught in schools. It is, however, difficult to educate South Korean society and it becomes a problem to improve their perception of migrants.

## **2.2 Research Problems**

The difficulties foreign WMMs are experiencing and their social integration cannot be solved wholly by their efforts under an individual environment or by a certain factor alone. It is necessary, therefore, to have a comprehensive approach to various factors which affect their level of sense of well-being and their social integration.

According to the awareness of issues as mentioned above, this study tries to understand the difficulties (or challenges) and the responses (or resources) of the foreign WMMs which affect their level of sense of well-being and their social integration in the course of WMMs' settlement to South Korea. Through this understanding, this study will present the practical measures to help foreign WMMs in their sense of well-being in their life and their social integration in South Korean society.

This study of the WMMs' sense of well-being is not simply a survey of their current situation or phenomena, but is the research of their life history divided into three crucial stages of their life before and after their international marriage, that is, pre-marriage stage of their life in their mother country, the marriage process stage, and post-marriage

stage of their life in South Korea. It naturally requires interviews with the WMMs several times over a long period. Accordingly, the following research problems are expected in this process of study.

In order to undertake a vigorous research considering those problems addressed above, I established the research question and other research questions.

- Research question

To what extent do Vietnamese WMMs' challenges in their settlement in South Korea influence their sense of well-being?

- Research sub-questions

1. What were their motives and expectations for international marriage?

2. What were the challenges did they face in their settlement in South Korea?

3. How have they negotiated the challenges with their resources to overcome the difficulties in their settlement in South Korea?

4. What were and should be their resources to improve their sense of well-being despite the challenges?

### **2.3 Research Purpose**

Considering these problems and situations in multicultural South Korea as mentioned above, it is necessary to find ways to secure the migrants' human dignity to improve the South Korean society's perception of migrants. The migrants who become members of South Korean society are allowed to pursue their own right to happiness. In this regard, it is the purpose of this study to research the WMMs' experiences in the course of their settlement in South Korea to determine in what situations they feel happy and proud of their becoming South Koreans, and in what situations they feel unhappy and regret coming to South Korea. The results will help South Korean society to accelerate the

efforts to improve their perception of migrants and it will provide South Korea with more opportunities to develop a better environment to live together.

### **3 Research Limitations**

#### **3.1 Specified Subject and Period of Research**

This study is specified and confined to the issues of “foreign WMMs in rural areas” among international marriages in South Korea. It is interesting to note that the foreign WMMs in rural areas have become a common feature. It is an unavoidable trend, and it should be expected as a complement to demographically defective South Korea. To concentrate in detail, it focuses on the Vietnamese WMMs who married South Korean men. In other words, it focuses on the “rural wives” from foreign countries that are poor. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between South Korea and China in 1992, the majority of foreign WMMs were Chinese and Chinese Korean (so called “chosun-jok”). However, at the turn of the 21st century, the nationalities of the WMMs who were married to South Korean men diversified. WMMs from various countries such as Vietnam, Philippines, Thailand and Cambodia started to appear as wives of South Korean men. Among them, Vietnamese women manifested several rather different characteristics than the others. South Korean men prefer Vietnamese women over Filipino women because there are fewer cultural differences between South Korea and Vietnam than the others. In addition, older South Korean men had opportunities to get acquainted and interact with Vietnamese women when they were sent to the battlefield during the Vietnam War. More WMMs from Japan married South Korean men due to religious reasons as they belong to the religious sect, the “Moonies.” (Jang and Lee 2010: 70). Whereas the average age gap of the married couples between South Korean men and foreign women was 8.3 years, those between South Korean men and Vietnamese women was 17.1 years, showing the most significant age gap among national groups. Furthermore, more than half of WMMs from

Vietnam barely finished their 9th grade in school, recorded as the lowest level of education among the WMM groups in South Korea. Consequently, the majority of these women live in rural areas (Doo-Sub Kim 2006).

In terms of the boundaries of this study, it is necessary to address two important elements: time and location. It has a three years' time-frame, which is sufficient to observe the factors and their effects on the Vietnamese WMMs' sense of well-being and social integration in South Korean society, plus a reflection and evaluation process, so that it may generate reasonable and legitimate outcomes without any form of compromise. In relation to the location limit, a city and an adjacent county in Southwest of South Korea were selected – Kwangju Metropolitan City and nearby Hwasoon County in Jeollanam-Do (province), where there are 408 Vietnamese women marriage migrants out of 1,669 women marriage migrants as of 31 December 2013 (Figure 1). The reasons for choosing these

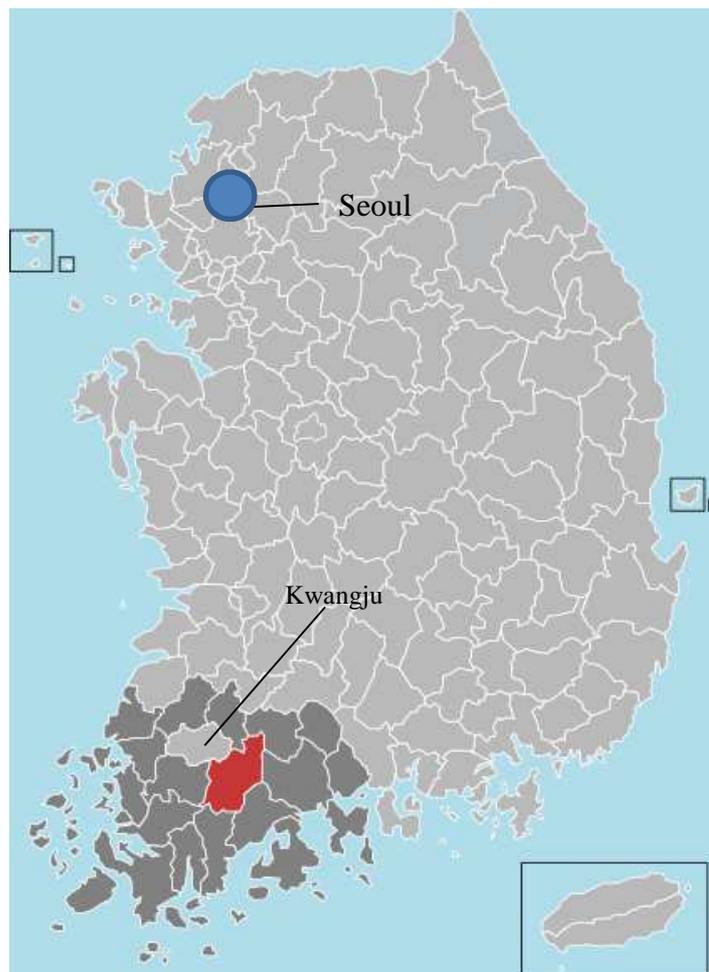


Figure 1 Map of Hwasoon County (Marked in Red) and Kwangju Metropolitan City as Field Research Area.

places were: 1) the city and rural areas are adjacent to each other, and 2) it was difficult to find research subjects, so these were introduced by a fellow scholar.

### **3.2 Interview Language Issues: Korean, Vietnamese, and English**

Interviews with Vietnamese WMMs are to proceed mainly in the Korean language. However, in some cases, when it is not easy in Korean, Vietnamese is used, interpreted, and translated into Korean later. In addition, the keyword of this study, "well-being," is used as it is in English, as there is no Korean word equivalent to it. When the interview data of Vietnamese WMMs are analysed, many incorrect use of Korean words, especially in relation to the meaning "well-being" are expected to be found.

The use of Korean language at the interviews with Vietnamese WMMs is likely to be miscommunicated in a different meaning from the original meaning they try to convey. However, since the purpose of this study is to find out the factors affecting the Vietnamese WMMs' sense of well-being and their interrelationships, it is correct to comprehensively analyse the words related to well-being as a whole, rather than an individual analysis of the words themselves according to the purpose of this study.

### **3.3 Difficulty in Finding Interviewees**

The result of the survey prior to main research revealed that the local government officers and the staff of the Multicultural Family Support Centres were not helpful. They were very reluctant to accept my request as there had been many disadvantages they had experienced when they had helped researchers previously. Another reason why the foreign WMMs were so unhelpful was because too many of the researchers approached them when multiculturalism became a big social issue in South Korea since 1990.

### **3.4 Issue of Multiculturalism in South Korea**

The words “multicultural society” and “multicultural family” are also frequently mentioned in daily news, newspapers, and even in TV entertainment programmes in South Korea. The majority of South Koreans admit that the multicultural society already has come. Theoretically, however, it is still debatable. Though the South Korean government initiated a few multicultural policies, it does not mean the start of a multicultural society. There are some grounds to argue that South Korea has not yet become a multicultural society. First, the proportion of foreigners who are residing in South Korea is under the OECD’s<sup>1</sup> criterion of multicultural society which is 5% (Joe 2012: 219). Second, the main agenda of multicultural discourse is focusing mainly on WMMs.

As South Korea has not yet become a multicultural society, the direction of future research should be changed to interculturalism where each unique culture is exchanged and respected, rather than multiculturalism where the individual culture is isolated and forced into the mainstream culture. However, this study tentatively uses the term multiculturalism for convenience.

### **4 Research Context: WMMs in Far East Asia**

Issues and characteristics of international marriages are so different among regions worldwide that it is necessary to confine the scope of this section to the migration trend of intra-Asia where foreign workers and international marriages are frequent from China and Southeast Asian countries to South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and Singapore.

Among them, Singapore is mainly a host country for foreign workers whereas South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan (hereafter referred to as ‘KJT’) commonly show an increase of marriage migrants and foreign workers altogether. Especially, the increase of WMMs had a leading role in shaping multicultural families in KJT.

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<sup>1</sup> It stands for ‘Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development’.

It is inevitable that international marriage is more difficult to define and conceptualize than might at first appear. For example, when a Briton marries a woman from South Korea – different ethnic and socio-cultural background – who migrated to U.K. seven years ago, that would not normally be considered as an international marriage. When a Korean-American man from a well-settled immigrant population in USA goes to South Korea to find a bride, this will certainly be considered an international marriage, though the cultural distance involved may be much less.

## **4.1 WMMs in KJT**

### **4.1.1 Trends of International Marriages in KJT**

Although each has different characteristics in detail, KJT have shared some similarity in their socio-cultural characteristics. It is, therefore, necessary for South Korean society to learn the experiences of Japan and Taiwan that received marriage migration, and formed multicultural families into a multicultural society earlier.

KJT have traditionally been reluctant to accept immigration and have experienced similar patterns of demographic changes to lead the influx of marriage migrants. The first pattern of the demographic change in common is the decrease of TFR:<sup>2</sup> Korea 1.19, Japan 1.43, and Taiwan 1.07 in 2013.<sup>3</sup> They have kept these levels far below population replacement for a long time. It naturally leads to the decrease of births. Consequently, the demographic structure of the marriageable age forms an inverted triangle which shows the younger the less. Also, the age norm in marriage is still applied strongly that husband's age should be higher than the wife's. The demographic structure and marriage culture inevitably call for the imbalance in marriage market which falls short of marriageable

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<sup>2</sup> Total Fertility Rate (TFR) is the expected number of children born per woman during her child-bearing years (age between 15 and 49).

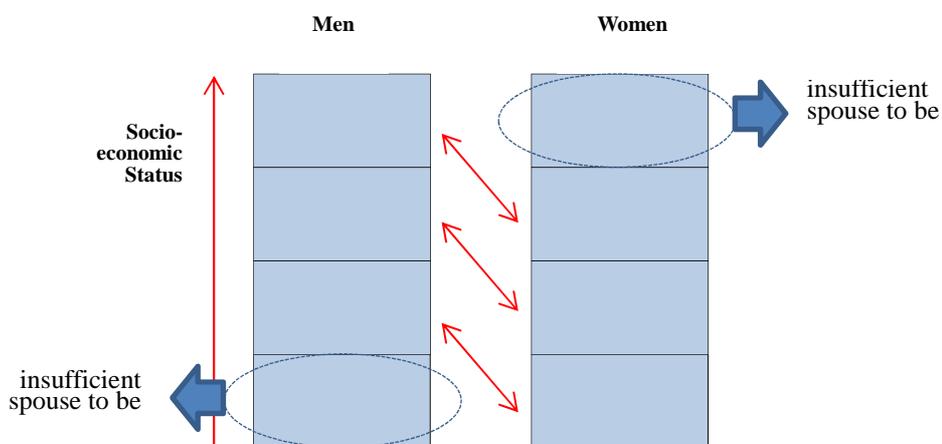
<sup>3</sup> Sources: Statistics Korea 2014, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan: Vital Statistics of Japan, and <http://www.moi.gov.tw/stat/>

women. This structural marriage squeeze<sup>4</sup> in KJT creates the demand for foreign brides (Doo-Sub Kim 2006).

Demographic figures find the correlation between the imbalance in the marriage market and the increase of international marriages. International marriages between foreign brides and South Korean husbands increased sharply between 2000 and 2005 from 2.1% to 9.9% of total marriages, and during the same period the number of never married Korean women in their late twenties – the major marriageable group – also increased sharply. Japan shows similar trends that when the number of never-married Japanese women in their late twenties increased sharply between 1980 and 1990, the international marriages also increased rapidly.

The demographic phenomenon of sex imbalance in the marriage market is not experienced by the contemporary marriageable population all together at the same time, but reflects differently according to the socio-economic status (Figure 2). It is understandable both in Korea and Japan that the import of foreign brides to rural areas – where women outflow is high and influx is rare – initiated the reception of marriage migrants. It implies that the multicultural families formed through the marriage migration

Figure 2. Mechanism of Marriage Market (S. R. Lee 2013: 110)



<sup>4</sup> Imbalance between men and women in the number of potential spouses.

can be more vulnerable to family crises than ordinary families according to their socio-economic characteristics in that the international marriages are matched as counter-measures for rural bachelors who have low profiles compared to their ethnic women in the marriage market.

Furthermore, WMMs who have to take the course of their adaptation to the family whose members have totally different cultural backgrounds may experience more serious cultural conflicts than those immigrants in other patterns. As this imbalance of marriage market caused by the change of demographic structure is expected to last a long time, this demographic explanation about the marriage migration trend shows that the international marriages and, in turn, the influx of marriage migrants, are not short-term phenomena but expected to continue. Although the scale of influx may be reduced according to the change of demographic structure in the future, the phenomenon of marriage migration is not expected to disappear (S. R. Lee 2013: 110).

As the marriage migrants come to host countries in order to settle permanently, they suffer discrimination compared with other migrants. Also, they will produce their children in future to contribute to the change in the demographic situation of the host countries. Contrary to the Western countries that have experienced the influx of immigrants and accepted them in their long history, the marriage migrants produce very important implications to KJT who have a comparatively simple ethnic constitution and are not yet familiar with multiculturalism.

The second pattern of the demographic change in common for KJT is that they are rapidly changing into an ageing society. The third is that South Korea and Taiwan have experienced a sex ratio imbalance. These distinctive demographic changes started in Japan and were followed by Korea and Taiwan, occurring along with the migration of foreigners, especially with WMMs. This trend shows KJT have been changed into multicultural societies gradually (Kim and Oh 2011: 1570).

Table 1 shows the general trends in international marriages of KJT during 2000-2010. The number of marriages of Taiwanese men to foreign brides fell from 49,000 in 2003 to 21,000 in 2006, and has levelled off from 2006 onwards. In 2004, the government intervened with a series of legal restrictions and penalties to limit international marriages and to inhibit marriage fraud. “There is no guarantee of legal status for marriage migrants until couples can pass a face-to-face interview held either at the checkpoints of major airports or in foreign spouses’ home countries.” The number of marriages of Korean men to foreign brides rose sharply since 2000, and peaked in 2005, and since then has hovered around 10 to 11 per cent of all marriages.

Table 1 General Trends in International Marriages of KJT, 2000-2010

UNIT: one thousand cases

year	South Korea				Japan				Taiwan			
	Number of Marriages	International Marriage Cases			Number of Marriages	International Marriage Cases			Number of Marriages	International Marriage Cases		
		M	F	TTL		M	F	TTL		M	F	TTL
2000	332	7	5	12	798	28	8	36	182	42	3	45
2001	318	10	5	15	800	32	8	40	171	43	3	46
2002	305	11	5	16	757	28	8	36	173	45	4	49
2003	303	19	6	25	740	28	8	36	171	49	6	55
2004	309	25	10	35	720	31	9	40	131	18	3	21
2005	314	31	12	43	714	33	8	41	141	15	3	18
2006	331	30	9	39	731	36	9	45	143	21	3	24
2007	344	29	9	38	720	32	8	40	135	22	3	25
2008	328	28	8	36	726	29	8	37	155	18	4	22
2009	310	25	8	33	708	25	8	33	117	18	4	22
2010	326	26	8	34	702	23	7	30	139	18	4	22

Sources: Calculated from data in 1) Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan 2014, 2) National Immigration Agency, Foreign Spouses Statistics of Taiwan, 3) Statistics Korea 2014

Some changes in the source country of the brides are also noticeable. Despite the sharp decline in number of foreign brides in Taiwan, the supply by the source region did not change a lot: the proportion from China from 65.4% in 2003 to 70.7% in 2010, that of others from 34.6% in 2003 to 29.3% in 2010 (Table 2). During this period, Vietnam has been dominant among Southeast Asian source countries: 74-77% of those from Southeast Asia who applied for resident visas in Taiwan (Wang 2010).

Table 2 Taiwan: Proportion of International Marriages, by Nationality of Wife, 2000-2010

year	Number of Marriages	Foreign Wives					
		Number of Marriages	Share	from China		from other	
				Cases	Portion	Cases	Portion
2000	181,642	41,844	23.0%	22,782	54.4%	19,062	45.6%
2001	170,515	42,802	25.1%	25,814	60.3%	16,988	39.7%
2002	172,655	44,647	25.9%	27,308	61.2%	17,339	38.8%
2003	171,483	48,633	28.4%	31,784	65.4%	16,849	34.6%
2004	131,453	28,134	21.4%	10,567	37.6%	17,567	62.4%
2005	141,140	25,288	17.9%	14,167	56.0%	11,121	44.0%
2006	142,669	20,716	14.5%	13,900	67.1%	6,816	32.9%
2007	135,041	21,559	16.0%	14,595	67.7%	6,964	32.3%
2008	154,866	18,213	11.8%	12,151	66.7%	6,062	33.3%
2009	117,099	18,241	15.6%	12,603	69.1%	5,638	30.9%
2010	138,819	17,709	12.8%	12,525	70.7%	5,184	29.3%

Source: <http://www.moi.gov.tw/stat/>

In Korea, some local government and agricultural associations contributed to the international marriages by importing ethnic Korean Chinese women<sup>5</sup> for their unmarried rural men (Lee 2005) and they maintained their majority until recently. In 2008, however, the proportion of foreign brides fell below 49%, and again fell to 28% in 2010. On the

<sup>5</sup> Ethnic Koreans, or *Josunjok*.

contrary, there has been an enormous increase in the proportion of Vietnamese brides, which reached 34% of the total in 2006. The number of brides from other countries, such as Japan and the Philippines, has not changed much.

In Japan, throughout the 1990s and 2000s, three countries have dominated as sources of brides: Korea, China and the Philippines. Their proportion, however, changed: those from Korea and the Philippines decreased steadily, and those from China increased as seen in Table 3. The small number of Vietnamese brides in Japan compared with the other countries may be explainable that marriage brokerages for Vietnamese brides have not been accommodated in Japan in the same way that they have in the other countries.

Table 3 Countries of Origin of Foreign Wives marrying Japanese Husbands, 1990-2009

Country of Origin	1990	1995	2000	2003	2009
Korea (N or S)	44.6%	21.7%	21.9%	19.1%	15.4%
China	18.0%	24.9%	34.9%	36.7%	47.6%
Philippines		34.6%	26.5%	28.0%	21.5%
Thailand		9.2%	7.5%	5.2%	4.6%
Brazil		2.8%	1.2%	1.1%	1.0%
Other Countries	37.4%	6.8%	8.0%	9.9%	9.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Calculated from data in Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan, 2009

#### 4.1.2 Key Features of International Marriage Patterns in KJT

From the trends shown in the previous tables and from a range of other sources, the key characteristics of international marriage issues in KJT can be extracted: 1) The ratio of men marrying foreign brides is of the order of 3 or 4 to 1, except in Taiwan where

it is much higher (Table 1). 2) The age of men marrying foreign brides is higher than that of men marrying local women. Particularly in Korea, there has been an increase in the proportion of the once-married (mainly divorced) among men marrying again never-married foreign brides (Doo-Sub Kim 2007). 3) Men are marrying foreign brides from lower-income countries in Asia, whereas women are marrying foreign husbands from a wider range of countries. 4) The educational differences between spouses in international marriages of KJT show diverse evidence. Brides from the Philippines and Mongolia tended to be better educated than those from China and Vietnam. Many South Koreans studying English in the Philippines get more opportunity to meet well-educated Filipinas (C. Kim 2008: 147). 5) Residence patterns of international brides are varied among KJT. According to the country of origin of brides, more than half of those from Philippines and Vietnam live outside of the five big cities of Korea, whereas those from China are strongly concentrated in cities (Doo-Sub Kim 2007). In Japan, the majority of foreign wives live in big cities (Liaw et al. 2010: 74-76).

#### **4.1.3 Further Issues related to International Marriages in KJT**

Marriage migration not only provides women with some new opportunities but also creates new inequalities (Jones and Shen 2008: 20-21). In “Wife or Worker?”, Piper and Roces (2003) stated that the distinction between ‘wife’ and ‘worker’ becomes very ambiguous. The boundaries between labour migration and marriage migration and between commercial international marriages and the trafficking of women into international marriages become fluid and inclusive. Love and labour, care and money exist in fluid states of partial substitutability and complementarity (S. A. Yeoh et al. 2014). Some agency-recruited brides from poorer countries are used by the husbands to serve a function as a maid to care for them and for elderly or disabled members of their households.

Another issue is the social consequences in the source area on gender relations and

on the marriage prospects of poor young men (Belanger and Linh 2011).

Public attitudes in host country are also an issue. They view the country the bride comes from as relatively backward and underdeveloped, and their motivations and character are stereotyped in negative ways: Filipinas in Japan as entertainers, Vietnamese in Korea and Taiwan as typically with a low education and rural background, and Southeast Asians in Taiwan as social problems (Huang 2006: 459).

## **4.2 International Marriages in South Korea**

### **4.2.1 Brief History**

International marriages in Korea<sup>6</sup> go back to the Three Kingdoms period (B.C.E.57-C.E.668). The King of ‘Gumgwan Gaya’ took a wife from India.<sup>7</sup> Later in the Middle Ages, the Muslims – a number of Arab, Persian and Turkic navigators and traders – settled and took local Korean wives, establishing several Muslim communities in Korea (H. Lee 1991). Korea's geographical remoteness from the Muslim influences, however, eventually made some assimilation of Muslims into Buddhism and Shamanism (Lankov 2002). Two or three Korean clans today claim descent from Muslim families (Grayson 2002). However, international marriages were not frequent throughout Korean history.

The majority of international marriages in Korea were initiated by the invasion of Korea from neighbouring countries, such as China and later Japan. During the Chinese Chung Dynasty (C.E.1644-1911), Korean women were captured as spoils of war. Afterwards some of them returned home and they were looked down upon as shamed outcasts, and had to move to live in a segregated area, now known as ‘Itaewon.’ However,

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<sup>6</sup> Throughout this study, the term ‘South Korea(n)’ is used in the case of referring to Korea(n) in the south after the division of its land into the north and south in 1945. But ‘Korea(n)’ is still used to refer its language, customs, culture, and the people as a whole when it is not necessary to differentiate the two.

<sup>7</sup> There are records about the period, in particular, the section in the ‘Samguk Yusa’ about the Gaya Kingdom (it was absorbed by the Kingdom of Silla later) that indicate in C.DE48, King Suro Kim of Gaya (the progenitor of the Gimhae Kim clan) took a princess from the “Ayuta nation” (which is the Korean name for the city of Ayodhya in North India) as his bride and queen. Gimhae Kim and Gimhae Huh, the two major Korean clans today claim descent from this union (C. S. Lee 2012). However, academia is definitely split as to her origin.

succeeding generations were able to survive and adjust to Korean society because they resembled their fellow Koreans. What is remarkable in this era is that Korea was recognized as a Hermit Nation/Kingdom, or Land of Morning Calm until 1905 when it became a protectorate of Japan (Bonsal 1907). Actually, this concept made Korean people describe this era as pre-modern Korea, and think of themselves as homogeneous.

Many Korean women, although the exact numbers are unknown, became mistresses of Japanese men during the colonial period from 1910 to 1945. After the Koreans were liberated in 1945, international marriages have been increasing due to the US military being stationed in South Korea. As a result, derogatory terms, such as “Yanggongju” or “Yanggalbo” which mean “a vulgar and shameful social object,” “GI Brides,” were used to refer to South Korean women who engaged in the sex industry or married American soldiers (Hyun Sook Kim 1998). Therefore, international marriages in general, and in particular those South Korean women who married foreigners, have been condemned as betrayals. Consequently, children of mixed blood from both foreign wives and South Korean husbands, and South Korean wives and foreign husbands, are subject to social prejudice and discrimination.

Even if there were some international marriages between South Korean men and Japanese women during the 1980s, these were only small numbers if excluding those organized by the Unification Church (a.k.a. Moonies). Until 1990, international marriages applied mostly to South Korean women, whereas South Korean men were involved in merely 619 cases, just 0.2% of total marriages in South Korea, but it increased to 4.8% in 2015. As result, there were 212,826 foreign WMMs living in South Korea as of 31.12.2015. The trends of the post-1990 international marriages in South Korea are shown in Table 4, which show the number of foreigners, divided by sex, who married South Koreans between 1990 and 2015. From 1995, the number of men participating in international marriages surpassed that of women.

Table 4 Trends in International Marriages of South Koreans, Number of Cases and Rates, 1990-2015

Year	Total Marriage Cases	International marriage		Foreign wives		Foreign husbands	
		Cases	%	Cases	%	Cases	%
1990	399,312	4,710	1.2	619	0.2	4,091	1.0
1995	398,484	13,494	3.4	10,365	2.6	3,129	0.8
2000	332,090	11,605	3.5	6,945	2.1	4,660	1.4
2005	314,304	42,356	13.5	30,719	9.8	11,637	3.7
2010	326,104	34,235	10.5	26,274	8.1	7,961	2.4
2015	302,828	21,274	7.0	14,677	4.8	6,597	2.2

Source: Population Dynamics (Marriage and Divorce), Statistics Korea, 2016

There are several reasons why the international marriages increased as above mentioned: 1) the drastic socio-economic change of South Korea produced gender imbalance between urban and rural areas, 2) low fertility and ageing of population in South Korea gave opportunities for women in social participation, and consequently it led to women delaying the marriageable age and increasing unmarried single women, 3) The industrialization and urbanization brought down the status of local farmers and fishermen in rural areas of South Korea (Seol and Yoon 2005). These three main reasons mentioned above, caused, accelerated, and intensified the imbalance of marital supply and demand. The local men in rural areas, therefore, found it very difficult to marry their ethnic women, and they had to induce foreign women from relatively under-developed countries. The trend of importing foreign women was accelerated evidently when rural local government intervened and supported the marriage between local South Korean men and foreign women. In addition, the rapid increase of the commercial international marriage agencies was estimated to contribute to the sharp increase of the foreign WMMs to South Korea. Another factor of the increase of foreign WMMs cannot be ignored: the influence of some religious organizations or others who had managed the international marriages, provoked

the increase of foreign WMMs to South Korea.

The influx of foreign WMMs, however, reached its peak in the year of 2005 and gradually declined through the years of 2006 and 2007. As the international marriages reached their highest and the multicultural families had increased rapidly, various social issues arose in and around multicultural families. The WMMs experienced domestic violence and abuse by their South Korean husbands, and left their families after they had acquired South Korean nationality though they had come to South Korea with the purpose of marriage. These issues became known to the WMMs' origin countries and the influx of WMMs had showed slowdown. The decreasing of international marriage cases since 2006 could be interpreted as the result of those issues. Whereas the number of foreign husbands who married South Korean wives had changed little, the number of WMMs had decreased and influenced the change in the total international marriage cases (Byun et al. 2014: 71).

#### **4.2.2 Demographic Situation of South Korea**

“South Koreans will be extinct by 2750,” if nothing can be done to stop her falling fertility rate,<sup>8</sup> according to a study by The National Assembly Research Service in Seoul, Korea. Its simulation suggests that the population reduces to 40 million in 2056 and 10 million in 2136 and the last South Korean will die in 2750 (National Assembly Research Service 2014). Her fertility rate has continually decreased since 1970 at 4.53, 1975 at 3.47, 1980 at 2.83, 1985 at 1.67, 1990 at 1.59, 1995 at 1.65, 2000 at 1.47, 2005 at 1.08, 2010 at 1.22m and 2013 at 1.19 (Statistics Korea 2014). It showed well below the fertility rate necessary to keep her current population.

More bad news for South Koreans was from Harry Dent, Jr. He warned that South Korea could face a serious demographic cliff<sup>9</sup> if she could not find ways to boost her birth

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<sup>8</sup> Birth rate is the number of live births there were in an area per thousand of the population in a year, and fertility rate is the average number of children born to each woman through her childbearing years.

<sup>9</sup> Demographic cliff refers to the sharp drop in consumption that is expected to come when fewer heads of household are in the peak age group (Dent, 2015a)

rate immediately and rapidly, or to induce more immigration (Dent 2015a).

South Koreans never thought they would confront the demographic issues as mentioned above. After the Korean War in 1950s, the population of South Korea remained mainly rural and agricultural. As the post-war population had naturally been increased, its birth rate exceeded six children per woman during the period from the middle of 1950s to the early 1960s. In 1962, South Korea had begun its nationwide family planning campaign to reduce women's unwanted births that seemed essential to achieve the goals of economic growth and modernization. The campaign was successful to lower the total fertility rate to 1.74 by 1984. Even the below-replacement rate, no changes were made in the family planning programme and still concerns and issues of a large population in a small country remained. Dent claimed decreasing population, ageing society and excessive public/private debts make inevitable global economic depression that is particularly serious in South Korea (Dent 2015b).

South Korea turned into a labour-importing nation from a labour-exporting nation since the late 1980s (Park 1994). The shortage of workers estimated at 100,000, mainly in small/medium-sized manufacturing factories brought the migrant workers from outside into South Korea in 1987 (Kwon 2004: 1). Since the mid-1980s, South Korea met with a shortage of the domestic labour force as the surplus of rural labour had been exhausted and the youth (15-19 age group) in the labour force had reduced remarkably due to longer schooling hours. The booming construction business drawing South Korean workers into higher-paying construction work out of low-paying factory jobs also made the labour shortage go deeper. Furthermore, the growing segmentation of labour market since the early 1990s imbalanced uneven labour shortages: large firms subcontracted some of their labour-intensive works to small firms (5-29 employees) to cope with domestic and international competition. Therefore, the labour shortages in South Korea had been and were “more in smaller firms than in larger ones, and in unskilled jobs than in highly-skilled” (H. K. Lee 1997: 357).

Another factor to consider in the demographic change of South Korea was the defectors from North Korea. At the end of October 2016, the total defectors from North to South Korea are expected more than 30,000. The reason to classify them as multicultural is because Korea has been divided into South and North for more than 70 years and shows marked differences in socio-cultural trends.

In addition to the influx of a work force from outside and North Korean defectors, there comes another factor to shape multicultural South Korea: the influx of brides from outside. Rapid urbanization brought young women from the rural countryside into urban areas that provide better education and job opportunities. Men in the rural countryside, however, have to stay behind to continue family farming carried on for generations. It was very difficult for them to find marriage partners who could give up the conveniences of city life to marry farmers or fishermen in rural areas. They had no other choice, therefore, but try to look outside for their marriages.

Among these three factors shaping multicultural South Korea, the most important one is the brides from outside. Even though some of the workers from outside may remain in South Korea undocumented after their due date in South Korea, the majority of them will return home eventually. As for the defectors from North Korea, even though they may have a different cultural background for generations, they are considered as the same bloodline as South Koreans, and could become members of South Korean society unlike the case of foreigners who come to South Korea for good to be included in the society.

At the end of the first half of 2016, there were 2,001,828 foreigners, 4% of total population of South Korea, staying in South Korea. The South Korean Ministry of Justice expected there would be foreigners up to 5.8% of total population (OECD average is 5.7%) in 2021, and 5 million foreigners in 2030 (Korea Immigration Service 2016). The reasons for the influx of foreigners to South Korea, according to the analysis of the South Korean Ministry of Justice, are the rapid increase of 1) foreign students (mainly due to Chinese students), 2) marriage migrants, and 3) foreign workers (Korea Immigration Service 2016).

Even though it seems natural in a globalized era for people to move between countries more than ever, it is particularly because of the international marriage boom between foreign women marriage migrants who stay for good and Korean men.

#### **4.2.3 Multicultural Tendency in South Korea**

Multiculturalism presupposes diverse cultures in a community and a minimum unit of the community is a family. So, a multicultural family comprises diverse cultures. It has members from diverse cultural backgrounds. There are largely four types of multicultural family in South Korea: 1) a family consisting of a South Korean man and a WMM, or of a foreign man and a South Korean woman through international marriage; 2) a family of a foreign labourer who married in South Korea or who married in his/her country and came to South Korea; 3) a family of North Korean defectors who had been born in North Korea and came to South Korea, or who married in South Korea; and 4) a foreign labourer or student who came to South Korea as single-person household (M. Choi et al. 2009: 86). All of these four types of multicultural family may influence the multiculturalization of South Korea but the families made by international marriage are most influential in shaping multicultural South Korea among these 4 types of a multicultural family. It is because WMMs are naturalized and become South Korean citizens that their children become South Koreans by birth. North Korean defectors may be culturally homogeneous. Migrant workers and foreign students are supposed to go back to their country eventually. It is, therefore, the reason why the South Korean government gives more attention and makes more effort in dealing with WMMs' multicultural families comprising a large proportion of immigrants who settle down in South Korea.

The South Korean government endeavoured to legislate for multicultural family aid law in the year of 2008. According to KIHASA,<sup>10</sup> the budget for multicultural families

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<sup>10</sup> It stands for 'Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.'

had increased 100 times: 1.2 billion won (equivalent to 1 million US dollars, as of 19 July 2017) in 2006 and 116.2 billion won (equivalent to approx. 100 million US dollars, as of 19 July 2017) in 2011. Also, the number of multicultural family aid centres increased 10 times, from 21 to 201 centres at the same period. Besides, the multicultural family's childcare fees are 100 % supported. Notwithstanding these governmental efforts, chronic problems in relation to multicultural families have been made worse as days go by (Byun et al. 2014: 170-171).

The influx of foreign WMMs to South Korea has both positive and negative aspects: it is positive as it could be a very effective solution to the difficulties in the marriages of rural farmers and fishermen. On the other hand, however, it calls for the foreign WMMs' adaptation to an unfamiliar environment individually and South Korean society has to give up the pride of pure blood and accept the concept of multicultural society to prepare for the social change according to the influx of new population. Therefore, many difficult issues and problems could confront both individuals and society together if not well prepared for in the multicultural society both by the foreign WMMs and their receiving society.

#### **4.2.4 Multicultural Issues in South Korea**

According to Seol and other scholars' research on the foreign WMMs, they were suffering from the difficulties in communication, from the problems of cultural differences, and discrimination. Also, the differences of value systems and mentality, owing to the different backgrounds, produced the conflicts between husband and wife, and between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. Furthermore, as South Korean society could neither create an accepting and understanding climate for the foreign WMMs, nor establish a support system for them, they felt their difficulties were causing mounting pressure. These difficulties were not confined to the individual foreign WMM, but transferred to their

children they had given birth to, and these difficulties made maladjusted children at school, and a lack of class guidance led them to the problems of communication such as language and reading skills, and to the problems of low study achievement (Seol and Yoon 2005; I. S. Na 2008; H. K. Lee 2005).

#### 4.2.4.1 Divorce Rate Increases

The increasing divorce rate of multicultural families caused social problems. According to Statistics Korea (2015), the divorce rate of multicultural families was increasing gradually as shown in Table 5. Causes of these divorce cases were various but generally there were culture clashes, language barriers, social prejudice and discrimination precipitated by differences in values and the patriarchal culture of South Korea. Besides, since the international marriage couples had the same bed but different dreams, conflicts arose that led them into divorce. In a multicultural family, a South Korean man usually wants an obedient and supportive wife, whereas a foreign WMM wants a husband who is wealthy so that she could make a remittance to her family in her home country (A. Kim

Table 5 Divorce Cases of Multicultural Families (Unit: Cases)

Multicultural Families \ Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
South Korean man + Foreign woman	7,852	8,349	7,878	7,588	6,998
South Korean woman + Foreign man	3,236	3,146	3,009	2,892	2,756
Total	11,088	11,495	10,887	10,480	9,754

Source: Population Dynamics (Marriage and Divorce), Statistics Korea, 2015

2012: 57-60). As international marriage cases have increased, South Koreans' attitude toward foreigners may mature. Still there are, however, many who tend to treat Southeast Asian women scornfully. Furthermore, in some multicultural families, family members do not regard WMMs with respect or even ignore them, and discriminate against them by controlling them with money.

The improvement of educational levels and the awareness of human rights of WMMs have also played a part in the divorce rate increases. When the foreign WMMs prove to be innocent and not responsible for the failure of the international marriage at trial, it will be easy for her to be granted permission to stay in South Korea. There were a few cases in which WMMs made wrong use of international marriages to come into South Korea and acquired citizenship (Yun and Seo 2014: 102). WMMs getting married to South Koreans with the unethical purposes of cheating have made South Korean husbands lose the confidence in their foreign wives and fall into distrustful marriages (A. Kim 2012: 61). On the other hand, with a lack of information about her would-be South Korean husband before international marriage, foreign WMMs often become disappointed after international marriage. She, in turn, runs away from her home or gets divorced. There are international marriage agencies behind these problems. The matchmaking agencies hung banners with such provocative advertising expressions as 'Second Marriage Welcome,' 'The Disabled Welcome,' '100% After Sales Service' (Pressian.com 2007). Since they are only interested in their business performances of international marriage now and do not care the marriage couples' actual marriage life in the future, they would not provide specific information on critical personal status in detail, particularly to the wife to-be. The average duration of their marriage in multicultural families who divorced was 4.7 years. It brought out a significant issue as it was not only matters with the divorced couples themselves, but also their children. When the parents got divorced, children should inevitably live with single parents and may undergo much more hardship (The UOS Times 2012).

#### 4.2.4.2 Discrimination against Children of Multicultural Families

Children in multicultural families are more exposed to and suffer from various problems other than the case of parents getting divorced. South Korean nationality law adopts the principle of personal jurisdiction.<sup>11</sup> So, children in multicultural families which were built on international marriages between South Korean and foreigners are South Korean. Even though they are South Koreans, the discrimination against them is serious.

The number of children in multicultural families increased 4.5 times from 44,258 at 2007 to 204,204 at 2014 as shown in Table 6. As Chinese WMMs occupied a high proportion of the total foreign WMMs, the number of children of Chinese WMMs shows higher than those of other foreign WMMs. For the period from 2009 to 2014, however, it is

Table 6 Number of Children and Students in Multicultural Families

Unit: person

Year	2013	2014	2015
Number of Multicultural Students	55,780	67,806	82,536
<u>Nationality of one of parents</u>			
Japanese	13,070	13,225	13,153
Chinese	10,800	13,990	17,182
Korean-Chinese	8,452	9,340	10,773
Philippines	8,613	9,695	11,103
Vietnamese	6,310	11,218	17,247
Number of Total Students	6,529,196	6,333,617	6,097,297
Proportion of Multicultural Students	0.86%	1.07%	1.35%
Number of Multicultural Children	191,328	204,204	207,693
<u>Nationality of one of parents</u>			
Japanese	17,806	18,185	17,195
Chinese	37,084	38,824	42,791
Korean-Chinese	42,294	43,890	39,160
Philippines	18,020	19,568	20,584
Vietnamese	49,458	54,737	57,856

Source: Population Dynamics (Children of Multicultural Family), Statistics Korea, 2015

<sup>11</sup> Children with at least one South Korean parent are South Koreans wherever they are born.

the number of children of Vietnamese WMMs that increased more than 10 times which is the highest increase of those of all foreign WMMs. It shows much higher increase than those of other foreign WMMs' families even considering the number of Vietnamese WMMs increased rapidly (Statistics Korea 2015)<sup>0</sup>

### **4.3 Understanding of Vietnamese WMMs in South Korea**

#### **4.3.1 Influx of Vietnamese WMMs**

##### **4.3.1.1 Influx of Asian WMMs**

The start of marriage migrations of foreign brides to South Korea began in December 1990, when an old bachelor farmer in Kyunggido married a Korean-Chinese woman. This marriage was arranged by a former congressman and professor in order to unite South Korea and its diaspora in China. After this, some local governments, assemblies and related agricultural associations arranged marriage meetings between their local farmers and Korean-Chinese women (H. K. Lee 2005: 80-81). Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between South Korea and China in 1992, the majority of foreign WMM had been Chinese and Chinese Korean (so called “chosun-jok”). However, from 1996, international marriages involving South Korean-Chinese women gradually began to decrease as ‘sham’ (or ‘fake’) marriages became a social issue, and it made the process of marriage complicated between South Koreans and Chinese (1996-2003). Other reasons of this decrease were the aftermath of the economic crisis of the IMF (1997-1998) and the amendment of the Korean Nationality Act (1997) (Seol and Yoon 2008). At the turn of the 21st century, the nationalities of the WMM who were married to South Korean men diversified (Table 7).<sup>12</sup> WMMs from various countries such as Vietnam, Philippines, Thailand and Cambodia, started to appear as wives of South Korean men.

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<sup>12</sup> Nationality columns classification in the original source changed from 2000.

Table 7 Nationality of Foreign Wives (1990-2015)

Nationality \ Year	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015
China	88	8,450	3,566	20,582	9,623	4,545
Vietnam			77	5,822	9,623	4,651
Japan	175	1,412	819	883	1,193	1,030
Philippines			1,174	980	1,906	1,006
Others	356	503	1,309	2,452	3,929	3,445
Total	619	10,365	6,945	30,719	26,274	14,677

Source: Population Dynamics (International Marriage by Nationality), Statistics Korea, 2016

#### 4.3.1.2 Significant Upsurge of Vietnamese WMMs

According to the report from Statistics Korea, there were 77 Vietnamese WMMs in the year 2000, and it comprised 1.1% of total cases of the international marriages between South Korean men and foreign women. In 2006, it rose to 34.1%, a sharp increase, second only to Chinese WMMs (Statistics Korea 2008). The rapid increase of Vietnamese WMMs is quite remarkable and there were several reasons given: 1) South Korea has a similar cultural background to Vietnam; 2) Diversified countries for international marriage as a result of the strengthening of the international marriage process between South Korea and China (Vietnamese WMM started to fill the vacancy in international marriages which had been dominated by Chinese and Korean-Chinese women); 3) Deregulation of international marriage brokerage in 1999; 4) Commercialization of Vietnamese women by international marriage brokerage; 5) Similarity of family values based on Confucian culture; 6) Preferences for similar appearance to maintain Korean homogeneous nationalism; 7) Historical familiarity through the Vietnam War (Lee and Jun 2014: 65); 8) Korean Wave with Korean drama and K-pop; 9) Vigorous interchanges between the two

countries (Lee and Jun 2016: 131-132).

Current phenomena out of the above reasons and socio-political situations of international marriage markets conspired to bring Vietnamese WMMs to recognize South Korea as their alternative destination to Taiwan whose government had started to control businesses of illegal international marriage brokers.<sup>13</sup> Also, South Korean men recognised Vietnamese WMMs as alternative brides to Chinese and Korean-Chinese women. These international marriage situations of both South Korea and Vietnam were timed to coincide with positive influences on Vietnamese WMMs in their decision to marry South Korean men (H. J. Kim 2007). Thus, the huge influx of Vietnamese WMM became a distinct social phenomenon in South Korea with a variety of reasons explained above.

#### **4.3.2 Situations of Vietnamese WMMs in South Korea**

The majority of South Korean husbands of Vietnamese WMMs are engaged in agriculture, forestry and fishery. The proportion of Vietnamese WMMs living together with their parents-in-law is higher than the average (Ministry of Gender Equality & Family 2013)

It is interesting to see the regional pattern of Vietnamese WMMs. Figure 3 indicates the proportion of Vietnamese WMMs among non-Korean wives married in 2006. The proportion of Vietnamese is lower in the capital, Seoul and its vicinity, Gyeonggi Province, while in Gyeongbuk Province, Gyeongnam Province, and Jeonnam Province, the proportion is much higher. It implies that more men living in rural areas married Vietnamese WMMs than those from Seoul and its surrounding areas. It is expected that Vietnamese WMMs, with little knowledge about the hosting society, experience many difficulties in their daily lives in rural South Korea, while Korean-Chinese women, who are

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<sup>13</sup> As social issues, such as fake marriages, marriage fraud, human rights abuse, and violence in the process of marriage migration conducted by international marriage brokers were continued without end, the Taiwanese government revised international marriages and visa regulations to activate the interview system that every contracting party in an international marriage must grant.

more knowledgeable, avoid marrying South Korean men from rural areas. Most of the South Korean men married to non-Korean women work as full-time farmers, and their

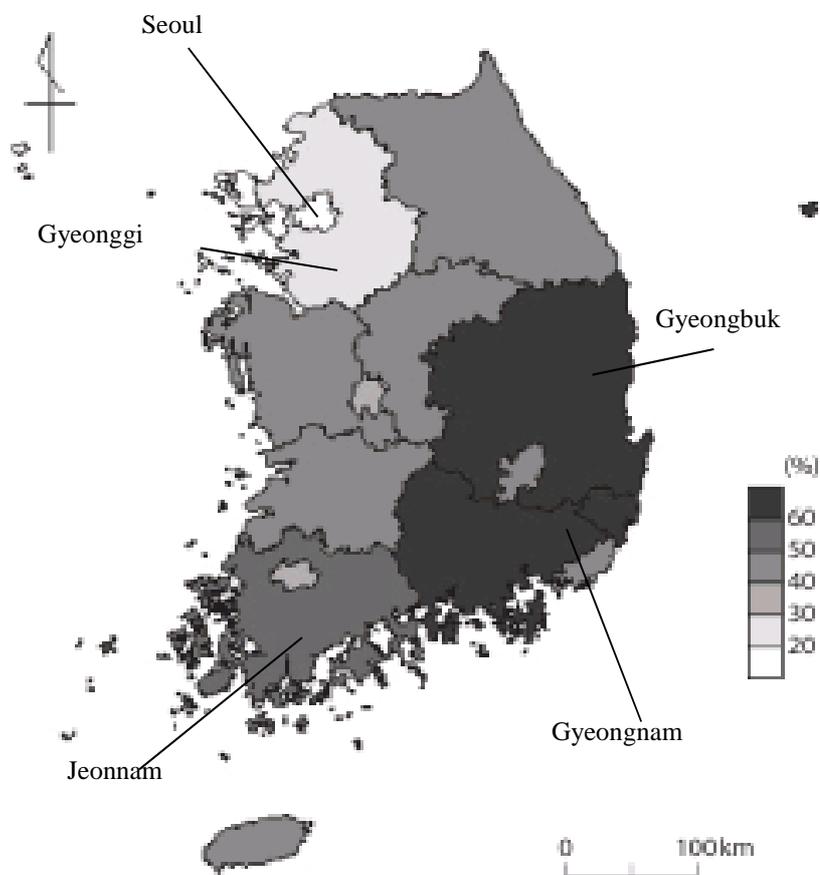


Figure 3 Share of Vietnamese Wives among the non-Korean Wives married in 2006 (Source: Statistics Korea, 2007)

wives tend to work alongside their husbands on their farm land. The regional pattern and residential types of WMM are influenced by their ethnicity and what their husband expected them to be. Vietnamese WMMs' proportion of spatial distribution to Gyeongsang Province is higher than WMMs from other countries. It is because Gyungsang area, where Confucian ideas traditionally prevailed, showed high preferences to Vietnamese WMMs where culture is recognized to be affected by Confucianism (J. H. Ryu 2012). This tendency also applies to the fact that Vietnamese WMM's proportion of living together with her parents-in-law is higher than that of WMM from other countries. It is expected that Vietnamese WMMs, with little knowledge about South Korean society, experience many difficulties in their daily lives in rural South Korea, while Korean-Chinese women,

who are more knowledgeable about South Korean rural life, avoid marrying South Korean men from rural areas.

The age gap, meanwhile, between Vietnamese WMM and her husband is 17 years average and it is much higher than the whole average of 9.9 years (Ministry of Gender Equality & Family 2010). It means their generation gap is huge between themselves. It is highly possible, in such situations, that conservative patriarchal values are imposed upon Vietnamese WMMs in their family life culture. It gives, therefore, less opportunity for Vietnamese WMMs than WMMs from other countries to feel the sense of well-being.

#### **4.3.3 Socio-Economic Situation of Vietnam**

Vietnam is located on the Eastern Indochina Peninsula, and composed of five municipalities: Hanoi and Hai Phong in the north (Red River Delta), Da Nang in the centre (South Central Coast), Ho Chi Minh City and Can Tho in the south (Mekong Delta). Vietnam was unified under a Communist government in 1975, and they initiated a series of economic and political reforms called “Doi Moi,<sup>14</sup>” which means renovation, since 1986. It invited a sharp increase of foreign capital influx and a lot of foreign companies have made inroads in Vietnam since the turn of the century.

The influx of Vietnamese women in South Korea began when Vietnam established diplomatic ties with South Korea in 1992 which expanded the socio-cultural interchanges between the two countries. Vietnam was the first country in Southeast Asia that introduced South Korean dramas: “Neuggim<sup>15</sup> (‘feeling’)” in 1997, and “Euigahyungje<sup>16</sup> (‘Doctor Brothers’)” in 1998, which gained popularity and became the source of “Hanryu,” that is “Korean Style” (Nguyen 2013). Since the 2000s, “Hanryu” fever, in other words, ‘Korean

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<sup>14</sup> Đổi Mới (Renovation) is the economic reforms initiated in Vietnam in 1986, and its goal is to create a "socialist-oriented market economy." The term đổi mới itself is a general term widely used in the daily life in Vietnam, however, the "Doi Moi Policy" refers specifically to these reforms (Beresford 2006: 200).

<sup>15</sup> It was first broadcast in Korea at 1994 by KBS (Korean Broadcasting System).

<sup>16</sup> It was first broadcast in Korea at 1997 by MBC (Munhwa Broadcasting Company).

Dream' was amplified through South Korean movies and dramas, and seven to eight dramas a week were broadcast intensively at that period (Song 2012). The tidy living environment and the attentive, sweet and caring image of South Korean men shown in the movies and dramas produced very positive influences on the Vietnamese women's decisions in marriage migration. In other words, "Hanryu" could give Vietnamese women a dream for a new world rather than a fear of transnational migration through imaginary communication beyond the geographical and spatial distances of Korea. In terms of the economic aspect, Vietnam's population viewed according to age-structure is a pyramid shape which has a long base side owing to the Vietnam War. It means the young generation who were born just before or after the 1980s are comparatively many, and they could become human capital for industrialization and economic changes (World Population Review 2014). However, the Vietnamese women who are living in backward regions separated from industrial regions geographically and spatially have rare opportunities to choose their jobs after they graduate from junior or senior high school. Most of them in their high teens start to work in factories, and when it is not available, they have no other alternative but to help their parents at home. They realize there is nothing apart from these jobs to secure their future (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family 2012).

In 2006, when Vietnamese WMMs increased definitively, Korea invested gross US\$2.7 billion in Vietnam to emerge as the largest foreign investor (Statistics Korea 2014). The image of the largest investor country in Vietnam accelerated the Korean Dream, and gave Vietnamese women who had no hope for their opportunities to develop, the awareness that South Korea is fast growing, rich and a land of opportunity. The socio-economic situation of Vietnam is one of the major factors to motivate Vietnamese women to choose migration to Korea. In other words, a large number of WMMs choose Korea with the dream of life in a foreign country and with the pursuit of life to be developed, and in these cases marriage can be one of the major means of migration.

## **5 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the purpose, background, environment, limitations, and research problems of this study, and examined the WMMs in Japan, Taiwan and South Korea. According to the purpose of this study, Chapter 2 discusses the theoretical background and reviews earlier researches on the marriage migration and on the WMMs' sense of well-being. Chapter 3 discusses the qualitative research methods to find the factors to overcome the difficulties experienced in the WMMs' settlement process in South Korea, including the methods to collect and to analyse the interview data.

As the factors overcoming the difficulties are closely related to their sense of well-being, the factors found through the analysis of the interview data are explained in two chapters, divided before and after their migration to South Korea, Chapters 4 and 5 respectively, and the application of these factors to their sense of well-being is discussed in Chapter 6, and is concluded in Chapter 7.



## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

#### **1 Introduction**

WMMs in South Korea imply that they migrated to South Korea from their original country at a certain time, so that their lived experiences in the course of their settlement cannot be understood apart from their social and cultural background of origin and destination, together with the theories of migration, acculturation, and multiculturalism.

As the purpose of this study is to look into the factors affecting the Vietnamese WMMs' sense of well-being in the course of their adaptation and settlement to their rural family life in South Korea, from a phenomenological perspective, it is necessary to review the concept of well-being, the theories, and previous research into marriage migration.

#### **2 Theoretical Background**

##### **2.1 Concept and Definition of Well-Being**

There have been many attempts to cope up with the problems of international marriages in South Korea since the influx of foreign WMMs, initiated by governmental level or by NGOs (including religious institutions). According to the previous researches on this issue, however, their attempts were not successful as they had mainly focused on the quantitative research results and phenomena as a whole. This study recognizes, therefore, the importance of the lived experience of each individual WMM, especially their sense of "well-being" to ease the difficulties in their adaptation to a South Korean lifestyle.

The concept of well-being was introduced by WHO when it defined the term 'health' as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the

absence of disease or infirmity" (World Health Organization 1948). Since the 1950s, well-being has been a hotly discussed topic of social scientists. Even until now, there is no widely agreed definition of well-being, but only descriptions of Western perspectives. Therefore, it is necessary to have a clear definition of well-being to measure and interpret the data collected as results of interviews with WMMs in this study. It is also necessary to explore the Asian concept of well-being formed by the three main sources - Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism - in Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese traditional cultures for the last 2,500 years.

### **2.1.1 Concept of Well-Being**

#### **2.1.1.1 Western Concept of Well-Being**

Well-being is relevant to happiness or wellness. Happiness has been one of the major themes human beings have paid attention to, and is interpreted in various perspectives by scholars, particularly by psychologists in search of mental health (Peterson 2006: 8). One of the perspectives on happiness is subjective well-being. Happiness is a state of mind feeling one's own life subjectively. It is composed of affective elements (positive affect and Well-being) and cognitive elements (life satisfaction) (Diener 1984: 543). Another perspective on happiness is psychological well-being. It is a way to achieve happiness through self-realization. It is the degree of functioning as a member of the society, and it is subjective self-recognition of endeavouring to attain the best appearance, or social status in the society (Ryff 1989: 37). Keyes added the concept of social well-being to these two perspectives on happiness, and introduced the collective concept of mental well-being. He named the former subjective well-being as affective well-being and claimed that it is necessary for individuals' well-functioning in their lives to include the elements of affective, psychological, and social well-being (Keyes 2008). Social well-being is an attitude to contribute to the society with the sense of belonging and responsibility (Keyes 2002). Seligman put these definitions together and concluded that

mental well-being includes affective well-being (experienced positive affect and satisfaction in life), psychological well-being (active participation with enthusiasm for life), and social well-being (contribution to society with responsibility and sense of belonging to a community) (Seligman 2002).

### **2.1.1.2 Asian Concept of Well-Being**

The concepts of well-being mentioned above do not provide a proper definition but descriptions from Western perspectives. Therefore, it is necessary to have a clear definition of well-being to measure and interpret the data collected as results of interviews with Vietnamese WMMs in this study. Since the object of this study is the well-being of Vietnamese WMMs in South Korea, it is necessary to understand the Asian concept of happiness or well-being common to Vietnam and South Korea. The Asian concept of well-being has been shaped by Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism over the last 2,500 years.

Confucianism values both emotional happiness and rational happiness, the former originated from having a happy family with one's parents and siblings all around, whilst the later originated from the spiritual pursuit of *ren* and *yi* (Confucianist benevolence and righteousness). Confucianism separates happiness into two levels: one level where happiness is derived from the satisfaction of basic needs in real life, and the other from being kind to others and contributing to society at large (Li 2011). Buddhism also views that apart from entering *nirvana* by himself/herself, one should also help the others that were suffering to get into *nirvana* because the real relief and well-being can only be obtained from the connections you made with others. Buddhism promotes that even after one achieves Buddhist enlightenment, the person should spare no effort to help others achieve the same. Taoism suggests that happiness and unhappiness were mutually dependent. Well-being is a dialectically balanced state. Happiness and unhappiness can be transformable. Therefore, people should not pursue extravagant joy but focus on inner

peace and a harmonious relationship with the surroundings, and look beyond reality for happiness in nature (Li and Zhao 2016).

All of these three main sources agree that well-being is a state of harmony (Li and Zhao 2016). Confucianism claims that a harmonious interpersonal relationship is well-being. Taoism sees well-being as the harmony between oneself and the external environment, that is, nature and the universe. Buddhism emphasizes each person's inner peace and harmony. They all have the same opinion that well-being is a state of spiritual comfort and joy, of inner peace and harmony. They also unanimously pursue well-being through controlling and suppressing one's material desires (Li and Zhao 2016). In short, the common characteristics of the three schools are the contempt of immediate joy and interests, and the high evaluation of long-term development and future gains. People should hold a positive attitude towards the past and focus on the future.

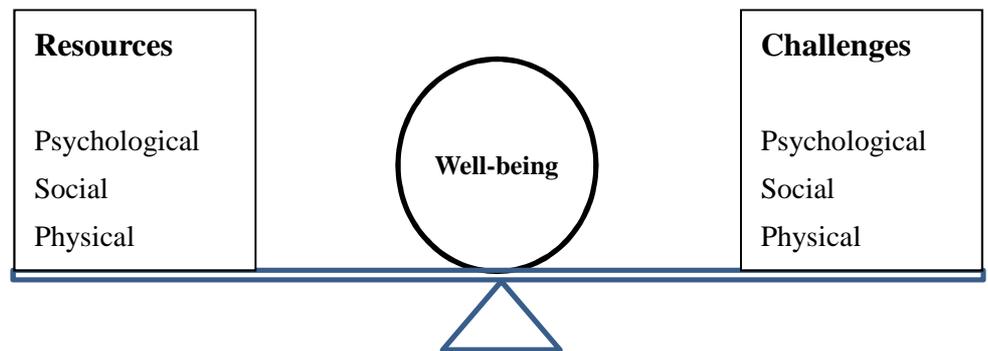
From this point of view, it is easy to imagine that the sense of well-being of the Vietnamese WMMs, as one of the Asian peoples, was influenced by Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. For many East Asians, the physical and the spiritual fit together. Indeed, many Vietnamese are ancestor worshippers and for them there is a strong sense of integration between the physical world around us and the spiritual realm beyond. Well-being is thus a complex interweaving of contentment, material provision, good relationships, and doing what is right. Given their cultural and religious background, their sense of well-being also is associated with spirituality in more broad sense.

### **2.1.2 Definitions of Well-Being**

As discussed above, there are differences between Asian and Western concepts of well-being, but they have the concepts of balance, harmony, or equilibrium in common: balance between material desires and spiritual comfort, harmony oneself with external environment that is the nature and the universe, and equilibrium of physical and mental

well-being. However, the balance of the well-being is not maintained for good at that balance point. If either the weight of left or right of the balance point changes, the equilibrium of balanced well-being collapses and moves to a new balance trying to maintain the status of well-being. Human beings, the subject of well-being, face constant challenges during their lives on the earth. Responses to resources, changes or challenges make a new balance, and the result is a new well-being at the new point. In the end, well-being is constantly changing its balance and trying to achieve a new balance due to the challenges and resources that affect it. Therefore, the state of static well-being is impossible and always changes. This principle of well-being balance is similar to Arnold Toynbee's principle of challenge and response which explains the historical development of civilization, or the Hegelian dialectic. In this regard, it is worth applying the definition of well-being by Dodge et al. to this study as “the balance point between an individual’s resource pool and the challenges faced” as illustrated in Figure 4 (2012: 230).

Figure 4 Definition of Well-Being



However, in the well-being definition of Dodge et al., it is unlikely that the specific scope of resources or challenges should be limited to the psychological, social, and physical. Any element can be included in resources or challenges as far as it affects well-being.

## 2.2 Definitions of Key Terms

### 2.2.1 Migration

Migration is not a recent phenomenon according to Gündüz (2013):

The history of migration is as old as the history of humanity. Since the very beginnings humans have migrated to build a new, more hopeful existence somewhere else. Today migrants often break away from their home countries as a consequence of warfare, political repression, or severe poverty.

According to the glossary on migration (Perruchoud and Redpath-Cross 2011: 62-63), the definition of (human) migration is:

The movement of a person or a group of persons, either across an international border, or within a State. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, and persons moving for other purposes, including family reunification.

Nicholas Van Hear considered migratory movements have five essential components as stated in Table 8. All migrations involve some kind of multi-dimensional and complex movements such as outward, inward, return, onward, and stay-put (Hear 1998: 42). According to Table 8, marriage migration is categorized by less choice and fewer options between voluntary and involuntary migration with an outward component.

Also, Castles and Miller call the current age as "the Age of Migration" characterized by six major phenomena: 1) globalization; 2) acceleration; 3) differentiation (a variety of ethnicities and groups); 4) politicization; 5) proliferation of transition; and 6) feminization (Castles and Miller 2009: 10-12). In fact, the flow of migration across national borders in the context of globalization has increased in volume and frequency.

Recent trends of international migration with diverse paths and patterns are different from traditional labour migration. International marriage migration is a remarkable feature in these trends. As discussed in the previous chapter, this dominant trend characterized by feminization has been observed in South Korea since the start of the 1990s.

Table 8 Force and Choice in Five Components of Migration

	voluntary migration more choice more options	less choice fewer options	involuntary migration little choice few options
	<----->		
	proactive migrants		reactive migrants
<b>outward</b>	tourists visitors students professional transients business travellers	economic/labour migrants rural-urban migrants anticipatory refugees people induced to move	refugees expellees internally displaced people development of displacement disaster displacement
<b>inward</b>	primary migrant newcomers family reunion/formation	visitors, students or tourists who seek asylum	asylum seekers refuge seekers
<b>return</b>	returning migrants and refugees voluntary repatriates voluntary returnees repatriates long-settled abroad	returning migrants and refugees mixture of compulsion inducement and choice	deported or expelled migrants refugees subject to refoulement forced returnees
<b>onward</b>	resettlement dispersal by strategy	third country resettlement of refugees	scattering forced dispersal
<b>staying-put</b>	stayers by choice household dispersal strategy	people confined to safe havens safe countries, safe areas	stayers of necessity containment

### 2.2.2 Diaspora

Diaspora may not be a simple term to be defined from a single perspective. IOM<sup>17</sup> (Perruchoud & Redpath-Cross 2011: 28) defined diaspora as follows:

As individuals and members or networks, associations and communities, who have left their country of origin, but maintain links with their homelands. This concept covers more

<sup>17</sup> International Organization for Migration.

settled expatriate communities, migrant workers based abroad temporarily, expatriates with the nationality of the host country, dual nationals, and second/third generation migrants.

Faist explains that diaspora was originally a term to represent the migratory status of a number of groups, beginning with Jews. It was also used to depicture Africans sold in the slave trade. The term was to point out the unique histories of these two groups. However, during the past decades, the term has been applied to plenteous migrant groups, and diaspora is considered as a synonym for migration to some extent, and thus as a term has lost its uniqueness and usefulness in social science (Faist 2010: 12).

Cohen has tried to work out a typology of diaspora, and suggests five types: victim, labour, trade, imperial and cultural diasporas (Cohen 2008: 160). He is also able to suggest a more elaborate list of 9 common features of a diaspora than Safran's 6 features (Safran 1991: 83-84) as follows (Cohen 2008: 162-163):

- 1) Dispersal from an original homeland, often traumatically, to two or more foreign regions;
- 2) alternatively, the expansion from a homeland in search of work, in pursuit trade or to further colonial ambitions;
- 3) a collective memory and myth about the homeland, including its location, history and achievements;
- 4) an idealization of the putative ancestral home and a collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration, safety and prosperity, even to its creation;
- 5) the development of a return movement that gains collective approbation;
- 6) a strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time and based on a sense of distinctiveness, a common history and the belief in a common fate;
- 7) a troubled relationship with host societies, suggesting a lack of acceptance at the least or the possibility that another calamity might befall the group; and
- 8) a sense of empathy and solidarity with co-ethnic members in other countries of settlement; and
- 9) the possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in host countries with a tolerance for pluralism.

Although the terms 'diaspora' and 'migration' have similar usages, migration is describing a movement and diaspora a place settled after movement according to the above

definitions of the two terms. In other words, migration puts emphasis on the movement, whereas diaspora emphasizes the communal settlement after the movement.

### **2.2.3 Immigration**

The definition of immigration is “a process by which non-nationals move into a country for the purpose of settlement (Perruchoud & Redpath-Cross 2011: 49).” It is different from migration which is not confined to borders and includes domestic movement, whereas immigration is a movement from the origin country to the host country by crossing a border. In other words, immigration is a movement that crosses national boundaries. This study uses the term “migration” for the foreign woman’s purpose of international marriage, not the term “immigration” as it is the result of their migration in due course after their international marriage.

The relationship between the immigrants and their home country previously showed the pattern of permanent rupture. The immigrants gave up the way of life in their home country and had to learn the new culture and language in their new country. Nowadays, however, the immigrants maintain their networks between their home country and their host country, and share the lifestyles of both countries by the benefit of the modern information and communication technologies.

### **2.2.4 Transnationalism**

The phenomenon of transnational migration that transcends the boundaries of the national state and appears in various fields such as economics, politics, and sociology cannot be fully analyzed at the national level. Many scholars have pointed out that the concept of globalization ignores human behavioural identity and that political and economic deterministic view unifies the cause of migration, and introduces transnationalism which emphasizes the identity of immigrants. Linda Basch defines

transnationalism as “the processes by which migrant forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement” (Basch et al. 1994: 7). The immigrants form and plurally connect the socio-cultural spaces across geo-political boundaries. The transnational immigrants develop their identities in the relatedly deterritorialized networks linked to two or more nation-states simultaneously. The immigrants endeavour to find their identities maintaining their emotional and substantive ties with their home country owing to their marginalized distinctiveness as they survive in their current society with great difficulty. The connections of the ties are food, costumes, language, customs, religion, and several symbols which may enhance the identities of their home country.

It is necessary to mention here the different characteristics between diaspora and transnationalism. In the abstract of his research, Yoon collated diaspora with transnationalism as follows (Yoon 2012):

Diaspora studies have been divided into the politico-classic model that focuses on objective and collective experience like forced migration and persecution, and the personal modern model that focuses on individual’s state of being disconnected from both home and host countries. Thus, the essential characteristic of diaspora is being homeless. By contrast, the essential characteristic of transnationalism is simultaneous connectedness to both home and host countries.

Yoon also claims that mobility and connectedness may be the two major dimensions that distinguish diaspora from transnationalism. Diaspora is the state where both mobility and connectedness are low, while transnationalism is the state where both mobility and connectedness are high (Yoon 2012).

Yoon's argument that the essential characteristics of diaspora is being homeless and disconnected from both home and host countries, as mentioned above, is different from Cohen's or Safran's argument on diaspora as described earlier. It may be rather closer to

explaining the liminality of migrants.

### **2.2.5 Liminality**

Victor Turner defined liminality as a state between states, a 'betwixt and between,' a beginning and a final state (Turner 1967: 97), and he explicated later that liminality represents the midpoint of transition in a state-sequence between two positions (Turner 1974: 237). However, his original concept of transition is inappropriate as it is inevitably single-dimensional (Woods 2015: 80). Woods claims that the migration experience can be examined from several different viewpoints: a sense of attachment, vocation, identity, nationality, ethnicity etc. (Woods 2015:80).

The WMMs' migration to South Korea may be through the transitory stage between two social positions, between two stages of life before and after their marriage. Their status both socially and structurally is ambiguous. The change of social status and role generates vulnerability. When they first come to South Korea, they are indeed marginal. They may be marginalized by their ignorance of the South Korean culture and language; in other words, they cannot communicate with Koreans either culturally (that is, cultural differences prevented mutual understanding) or linguistically. As they become more familiar with both the culture and language, they move into a liminal position. They are now part of South Korean society to some extent, no longer fully liminal. They cannot go back to their homeland easily as they become a wife and a mother in a family in South Korea. They are betwixt and between for a while. For Turner, there are similarities between liminality, marginality, and inferiority (Turner 1969: 128).

The current situations of WMMs in South Korea are mixed states where both liminal diasporic and transnational states co-exist. Thus, it is a wise strategy to use selectively a relevant concept for appropriate situations rather than use one single concept for different situations.

### **2.2.6 Ghetto and Social Exclusion**

According to the dictionary definition, “ghetto” meant ‘a section of a city in which all Jews were required to live, formerly, in most European countries,’ or ‘a section predominantly inhabited by Jews.’ Its definition applied today is ‘a section of a city, especially a populated slum area, inhabited predominantly by members of an ethnic or other minority group, often as a result of social or economic restrictions, pressures, or hardships’ (Dictionary.com 2016).

As mentioned earlier, ‘migration’ puts emphasis on the movement and diaspora the communal settlement after the movement. So, migration of an ethnic group could result in forming a diaspora and further to ghettos in a part of a city in the host country. They might suffer from various forms of social exclusion which brought in perpetuation of their poverty and marginalization. It is foreign women, however, who migrated into South Korea for international marriage and it is not likely for them to form their own diaspora, or ghetto. Nonetheless, the influx of foreign WMMs from poor countries to South Korean rural areas might not alleviate social exclusion.

### **2.2.7 Globalization and Globality**

Anthony Giddens described globalization as ‘the intensification of worldwide social relations linking distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many thousands of miles away and vice versa’ (Giddens 1990: 64). Ted Lewellen prefers the definition of globalization as ‘the increasing flow of trade, finance, culture, ideas and people brought about by the sophisticated technology of communications and travel and by the worldwide spread of neoliberal capitalism, and it is the local and regional adaptations to and resistances against these flows’ (Lewellen 2002: 7).

Roland Robertson expressed that ‘globalization as a concept refers both to the

compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole' (Robertson 1992: 8). As time and space are compressed, the world becomes one place and one system. Now the world becomes a single space with dynamics and integrity through globalization despite inner conflicts. Such globalization accelerates the spread of migration.

The global system appeared in world history since the Europeans' age of discovery and the colonial era. The motivations of globalization in the 20<sup>th</sup> century which brought about mass migration are the development of transportation and the advance of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies). These developments of modern technologies are leading the era of connectivity and accessibility in the global space.

Cohen and Kennedy introduced the concept of 'globality' as a companion to the processes of globalization. Whereas globalization implies the objective change of the world, globality means the subjective realm which receives the globalization (Cohen and Kennedy 2007: 7-8). Globality is a subjective value judgment to recognize the world as one space. Globality has four major components and contains four major aspects: humankind, selves, national societies and the world system of societies. The four major aspects are: 1) thinking about selves collectively while identifying with all humanity, 2) the end to one way flows and the growth of multicultural awareness, 3) the empowerment of self-aware social actors, and 4) the widening of identities (Robertson 1992: 8-10). Robert Schreiter insisted that the more globalization spreads, the more the resistance of the locals increases. He considers the tension, conflict, and collision in the process of globalization as the locals' response. In other words, the global power and local power occurred simultaneously (Schreiter 1997: 12).

The rapid globalization of the 21st century has changed international relationships and relations between the state and individuals. Since then, for the last twenty years or so, South Korean society has been accepting labour and marriage migrants mainly from other Asian countries in order to solve its social problems such as a decrease in population, low birth rate, and labour shortage. On the contrary, the Vietnamese society has been exporting

labourers and migrant women to other countries, including South Korea, since the end of the 1980s with the introduction of the capitalist system. Vietnamese women marriage migrants in South Korea tend to maintain their Vietnamese cultural identity even after they change their nationality. The concept of globality or cosmopolitanism is required for South Koreans to approach a multicultural society in understanding their life situations as a cultural hybridity. It is critical, therefore, to consider Vietnamese social contexts, which play a great role in forming their cultural identities in South Korean society.

### **2.2.8 Woman Marriage Migrant (WMM)**

A WMM generally means a foreign woman who has been married to a South Korean man, and is living together with him in South Korea. This term, however, has many variations such as “Marriage Immigrant Women,” and “Female Married Immigrant”. The term “Marriage Immigrant” is used to emphasize the current situation where the actual immigration is under process, and the immigrants are on the way to become naturalized South Korean citizens even though South Korea never allow official immigration (G. S. Han 2006). The term “Female Married Immigrant” is used to emphasize the foreign woman who immigrates to South Korea through an international marriage with a South Korean man (K. S. Han 2008). The reason why the term to mean “a foreign woman living with her South Korean husband in South Korea” has many variations is because there was not enough time to achieve consensus on the definition of this term when the women marriage migrants and the multicultural policies in South Korea were introduced in such a compact period. Even though there are many such terms, this study uses the term “Woman Marriage Migrant” focusing on the migration of foreign women with the purpose of marriage. The term “Woman Marriage Migrant” is proper to use in this study because it clearly discerns the gender as the characteristics of marriage reveal differences according to the gender of foreign spouse migrating to South Korea, and because migration is an important factor for foreign woman to decide to marry a South Korean man (M. Kim et al.

2006).

## **2.3 Attitudes toward Different Cultures**

In a multicultural society, people have to live together with the people who have another culture. There are four major attitudes to deal with others who have a different culture: exclusivism, assimilation, multiculturalism, and interculturalism. These attitudes are mainly expressed by the policies of the host society.

### **2.3.1 Exclusivism**

In exclusivism, the major group which consists of the majority of the society considers the immigrants as ethnic minorities, excluding them in principle from participation in economic, social, and cultural life. The policy of an exclusivistic government reveals a guest worker policy which rejects the foreign labourers' family reunion and permanent settlement, and limits their stay to the short-term. The South Korean government's policy toward the foreign labourers does not allow them to settle in South Korea by sticking to a rotation principle.<sup>18</sup> It is, therefore, still considered as an exclusivistic approach.

Social exclusion toward immigrants appears as racism.<sup>19</sup> Dawn M. Nothwehr claims three types of racism (Nothwehr 2010: 121-124): 1) physical colour-coded racism, 2) ethnocentrism, and 3) xenophobia. Her classification of racism, however, does not seem to be discrete but overlapped, interwoven, and incomplete. It is better to understand them as phenomena of racism.

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<sup>18</sup> This term came from the German word "Rotationsprinzip." It is at the heart of temporary foreign worker programmes: migrants are expected to work one or more years abroad and then return to their countries of origin. If the demand for migrants persists, there may be replacement migrants.

<sup>19</sup> Racism is an ideological construct that assigns a certain race and/or ethnic groups to a position of power over others on the basis of physical and cultural attributes, as well as economic domination and control over others. Racism can be defined as a doctrine of or belief in racial superiority. This includes the belief that race determines intelligence, cultural characteristics and moral attitudes (Perruchoud and Redpath-Cross 2011: 78).

Racism is not an issue of biological or genetic superiority but made by the ruling power as the ground of political and economic discrimination. The apartheid rule in South Africa is typical of racism by government policy (Meredith 1988: 1). This discrimination against skin colour is also very much apparent in South Korean society. The skin colour constructs a fictional hierarchy. South Koreans have double attitudes: they are generous towards whites but discriminate against coloured peoples – Blacks and Asians.

Ethnocentrism is the attitude of the members of a specific ethnic group or culture who believe in the superiority of their own over all other ethnic groups or cultures. However, the superiority of their own ethnic group or culture with a strong sense of loyalty shows in their manner, as ethnocentrism works as a mechanism to discriminate against other groups or cultures (Jung 2014: 48).

Xenophobia means hatred, prejudice, and discrimination against foreigners and strangers (Jung 2014: 48). Whereas xenophobia is exclusivism according to ethnicity, Islamophobia is of collective exclusivistic acts according to religion.<sup>20</sup> Such an exclusivistic attitude is intensified in a socio-political crisis or in economically hard times.

The exclusivistic paradigm such as racism, ethnocentrism, xenophobia, and Islamophobia works as a power game to ostracize the immigrants completely and keep their own profits (Jung 2014: 49). Such an exclusivistic paradigm, however, may cause vicious circles of conflict and violence and lead society into instability. As migration becomes an inevitable trend and the awareness of human rights are enhanced, the exclusivistic approach seems not acceptable in contemporary society. It still, however, lies hidden in the people's consciousness, and appears abruptly and unexpectedly to become a social issue.

Exclusivism demands that difference be destroyed, while the melting pot of

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<sup>20</sup> In 1997, the publication of the Runnymede Trust report entitled 'Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All' was the first report to raise awareness about the problem of Islamophobia in the UK and elsewhere. It defined Islamophobia as 'the shorthand way of referring to dread or hatred of Islam - and, therefore, to fear or dislike all or most Muslims' (Runnymede Trust 1997: 1).

difference is summed up in the term assimilation.

### **2.3.2 Assimilation**

Assimilation is what mainstream society expects from the immigrants in giving up their linguistic, cultural, and ethnic identity to become adapted to the host country. The melting-pot theory in U.S.A. is an example of such assimilation. It means each ethnic identity and culture melts down and disappears in the melting-pot, that is, the American nation. Milton Gordon explains the process of assimilation as first from acculturation to structural assimilation (integration), and later to marital assimilation (intermarriage) (Gordon 1964: 71).

Both Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Nathan Glazer revealed the limitations of the assimilation paradigm. They conducted research into the ethnic minorities in New York. They found that the ethnic minorities' sense of national identity did not disappear but was recreated continually in their communities, and worked as positive factors to give them meaning and empowerment (Glazer and Moynihan 1970). It proved that the ethnic minorities were not assimilated to the mainstream society completely, but their ethnicities were continuously preserved.

### **2.3.3 Multiculturalism**

Multiculturalism came out of assimilation theory. It recognizes the difference of the ethnic minorities' ethnicity, religion, cultural nature, and grants them equal rights (Taylor 1994: 36-38). Canada and Australia are the typical countries that executed multiculturalism as their national policy.

Multiculturalism has several principles (Abdallah-Preteille 2017: 37-40): First, it gives the belonging group priority over the individual. Multiculturalism recognizes that

groups are formed on the basis of the similarity, and their identities are composed on the basis of sameness. Second is the spatialization of difference. It means a certain area of an ethnic group unit becomes a ghetto. Third, it is based on cultural relativism that claims each culture should be examined within its own situation and context. Cultural relativism puts too much emphasis on particularity while ignoring the universal dimension.

As the national policies based on multiculturalism have been widely spread in Europe, mainstream societies considered the immigrants as threats to their own cultures and identities. The immigrants also criticized multiculturalism when these cultural diversities ended up merely as a superficial acceptance (Jung 2014: 51). Out of the European experiences of these policies, multiculturalism showed its limitations in the parallel co-existence of cultures.

Multiculturalism encouraged the ethnic minority group to overcome the assimilation paradigm and to coexist among groups in society. It results, however, in the fixation of the cultural differences to each group as it put an end to merely parallel co-existence (Jung 2014: 51). Interculturalism came out of the reflection on such a fixation on the cultural differences in multiculturalism.

#### **2.3.4 Interculturalism**

The concept of interculturalism appeared in French school education at 1975, and its application spread to immigrants' issues (Abdallah-Preteille 2017: 60). Interculturalism tried to overcome the weaknesses of multiculturalism – the hierarchy of multiculturalism and the separation between the major group and the ethnic minorities.

The most important issues of interculturalism are mutuality and encounter. Mutual means interactions among different groups, individuals and identities. Whereas multiculturalism stops at the confirmation of parallel differences of culture, interculturalism places emphasis on the interactive procedure and process that enable the

negotiations of the differences (Abdallah-Preteille 2017: 65). The cultural differences in interculturalism are neither fixed nor unchangeable attributes but are in dynamic relations between two entities. Whereas multiculturalism regards category and structure highly, interculturalism emphasizes the relationship between the two entities (Jung 2014: 53).

Interculturalism is brought forth in Europe as an alternative to overcome the limitations of multiculturalism. However, it is not yet prepared to produce the policies in detail for the immigrants. The 'mutuality' and 'encounter' claimed in interculturalism can be the insights to overcome the limitations of multiculturalism. Theo Sundermeier introduced three elements 1) to help one another, 2) to learn from one another, and 3) to celebrate together - as the principles of mutual encounters in multi-religious and multicultural society (Sundermeier 2007: 74). In a multicultural society a mutual relationship should be made between the mainstream society and the ethnic minorities or the immigrants.

South Korean governmental policies for the immigrants were oriented to the assimilation policy, and so there was a huge gap between multicultural policy and social realities. Taking various values and the efforts of integration to make a better society would be a desirable direction which a multicultural society should take. It is necessary, therefore, to analyze multiculturalism critically and explore the possibility of the interculturalism as a new alternative perspective for an integration policy in South Korea.

## **2.4 Multicultural Views toward Different Cultures**

### **2.4.1 Cultural Difference and Cultural Diversity**

The term 'cultural difference' is likely to be replaced by the term 'cultural diversity,' owing to the negative connotations of the term 'difference' as Eriksen claims that diversity get public support while difference is seen as a main cause of social problems

associated with immigrants and their descendants (Eriksen 2006: 14-15). The acknowledgement of difference can separate 'us' from 'them,' and discriminate between superiority and inferiority, and dominate others. However, cultural diversity neither separates us from them, nor discriminates between superiority and inferiority, but accepts them as they are.

The paradigm shift from cultural difference to cultural diversity is to acknowledge cultural diversity. The cultural diversity of others cannot be recognized if the inner diversity is not acknowledged. The recognition of one's own self is an important starting point to shift the paradigm from the hierarchical cultural difference to the horizontal cultural diversity in the multicultural age.

South Korea will inevitably develop into a multicultural society. To maintain a healthy society, it is necessary for its members to accept and embrace immigrants, especially foreign WMM who have different cultures and form multicultural families. The conflicts and segregation owing to their cultural otherness make South Korean society sick. After all, it matters not only to the multicultural families but also to every member of South Korean society as a whole who needs inter-communication, reconciliation and caring.

#### **2.4.2 Multiple Identities**

The meaning of identity is changed in the modern and postmodern worldviews. Whereas the modern worldview is concerned with the cultivation of identities and maintains them as solid and stable, the identities in the postmodern worldview avoid fixation and the choice is left open. The conventional concept of identity as consistently monolithic is changing as race, ideas, and cultures are intermingled by the global migration brought on by globalization. Identity is influenced by the global system which discourages fixed structures and mechanisms - family, society and culture - which formulate identity

(Hiebert 2008: 255).

In traditional society, belonging to a group is crucial and mutually exclusive. It becomes difficult to define a person with one identity belong to a single group because of the socio-cultural realities in contemporary society. Belonging and identity are no more singular concepts but become plural concepts. Not only the plurality among groups and the differences in the group but also the individual's inner plurality is added to these concepts. Identity is not in the singular independent category but in the dynamic category, and works as the source of adaptation, contradiction, conflict and modification in the postmodern and glocal (a combination of global and local) worldviews. As the concept of identity moves from singular to plural, the individual is not defined according to his/her attributes or characteristics, but to his/her interpersonal relationships and situations. Identity is understood by signs related to relationship, context, and situation in the system. Identity is defined as the strategies used for interacting with situations in a multicultural age (Abdallah-Preteille 2017: 22-24). People with multiple identities choose their identity strategically and flexibly whenever possible according to their situation. It is called 'situational identity' (Cohen and Kennedy 2007: 170) because they make a choice of one among multiple identities according to their situation.

What is the source to accommodate the multiple identities in multicultural society? Rawls recognized it was to develop the shared values polity. The basis of social harmony is a shared concept of justice. He noticed that the public consensus on the issues of socio-political justice maintains the ties of civic friendship and secures social solidarity in the teeth of the divisions and diversification of a previously well-ordered society (Rawls 1980: 540). More important than the identities of shared values is the idea of shared identities. Will Kymlicka argues that it is not dependent on subordinating other ethnic identities but on accommodating them to enhance the ties that bind in multicultural societies. When the larger polity is made by the development of ethnic identities of the people from different ethnic groups, rather than by their subordination, loyalty to the polity will be shared

(Kymlicka 1995: 189).

### 2.4.3 Cultural Hybridity

Cultural hybridity is a unique cultural blend developed through encounters among cultures, and is the possibility to create a distinctive culture crossing over the boundaries of cultures. The term 'hybridity' was introduced by Edward Said. He mentioned that all cultures are involved in one another, none is single and pure, and all are hybrid, heterogeneous (Said 1994: xxv). Hybridity is a kind of inter-relationship influencing mutually through interconnection among people who have a different ethnicity, culture, and tradition from each other. Homi Bhabha introduces the term 'hybridity' to explicate the ways in which the power that colonial discourses attempt to exercise is disintegrated and through its very attempts to disclaim other knowledge:

All forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity ... hybridity is the third space which enables other positions to emerge, ... sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, ... a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation (Bhabha 1990: 211).

Cultural hybridity is also expressed as creolization.<sup>21</sup> Recently, sociologists and cultural anthropologists used this term to describe the cross-fertilization between different cultures as they interact. When creolization occurs, participants choose a specific element from an incoming or inherited culture, assign a different meaning they have in the original culture, and then creatively merge to create a new breed that replaces the previous form

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<sup>21</sup> The term 'creole' has been used for centuries in Spanish, Portuguese, French, and English, and depicts people born in the Americas whose ancestors came from different continents. Linguists have used the term 'creolization' to describe situations in which former lingua franca or pidgin developed complex structures, when people began using them for general purposes or even in their native language. Based on intimacy or consistency, the two languages that contact each other 'converge' to create a third language that often uses most of the vocabulary as the mother tongue and uses structures or phrases from other languages (Burke 2009: 61-62).

(Cohen 2007: 1). This mingling of cultures, the fusion that leads to supposedly new products, is a metaphor that can only succeed in terms of a precious metaphor, that of culture as matter, in this case, apparently, a fluid (Friedman 1994: 208).

## **2.5 Acculturation Theory**

When an ethnic group lives in a certain cultural area for a long time, they established a common lifestyle and form social contacts of customary standard practice. The lifestyle formed by continual repetition for a long time in the same cultural area never changes its fundamental spirit, and keeps a unique lifestyle. As this lifestyle is acquired mainly through family life, it is expressed as “family life culture.”<sup>22</sup> It is an important fact that culture is dynamic in that it appears in different patterns according to time and space such as the era, the environment and the situation, and can be chosen by humans. It is highly possible, therefore, for the individual to adapt himself/herself to the new culture freely or under pressure when the old culture he/she learned from experience meets another culture. In other words, the cultural adaptation may be a process for an individual or group to become the member of the culture when they come into and learn the culture of a new society (Sung Hwan Choi 2009: 27). Culture is an endless process of formation, and conflict in this process is a factor in creating culture. Furthermore, to create new things may not be possible without conflict. It is appropriate in the process of change and development not only among the variety of cultures but also within a specific individual culture (Sung Hwan Choi 2009: 27). When WMMs come to South Korea, they confront a new culture in the course of adaptation to a South Korean lifestyle. So, it is necessary to survey their adaptation experiences to a South Korean lifestyle to understand them and help them adapt to South Korean society.

The concept of acculturation or adaptation refers to the culture on the collective

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<sup>22</sup> The contents in the books of lifestyle, therefore, were constructed mainly focusing on family life culture, not taking the two concepts apart (Kye et al. 2009: 25).

level at the beginning of cultural contact. The most widely used definition of acculturation is:

Those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups (Redfield, Linton and Herskovits 1936: 149).

Berry mentioned that the concept of acculturation is a neutral term for both groups but in fact it induces more changes from one group than another (Berry 1990: 202). The cultural adaptation, however, may be considered as a concept occurring simultaneously in both groups with interaction between the two groups because there are some cases when even the relatively weak minor group induces the changes in a strong major group to achieve cultural adaptation. The common ground with scholars in the concept of acculturation is that it is the process of cultural change according to cultural contact. Oberg classified the emotional responses experienced when encountering other cultures into four stages: First was the 'honeymoon stage' where the new culture is fascinating. Second was 'crisis,' where there is a reaction against the new culture and an experience of a breakdown. Third was 'recovery' where there is an acceptance of the situation and the learning of the new culture. Fourth and finally was an adaptation where there is an enjoyment of the new environment, overcoming culture shock. That is also called 'culture shock theory' (Oberg 1960: 177-182).

Earlier arguments considered it desirable for the immigrants to assimilate into the host country's culture as a means of reducing or eliminating the conflicts among different cultures. In recent discussions, however, cultural diversity is considered as a valuable asset to actively support and to enjoy. It is a great improvement in the cultural adaptation field to have a perspective on this mutual integration – through the mutual changes of the immigrants and the host country rather than the immigrants' unilateral assimilation to the

host country. The perspective changes to the direction where human cultural diversity is recognized and human rights are protected for the immigrants to keep their identities. These changes add to its significance in that it is not only logical changes according to ideology but also based on the result of empirical research (Jeong & Yang 2004: 106).

The research on acculturation has been developed on the basis of anthropology on the collective level and on psychology on the individual level. Acculturation on the collective level includes various changes such as economic, technological, social, cultural, and political changes. Acculturation on the individual level brings about the changes of an individual's behaviour, values, attitudes, and identity (Williams and Berry 1991: 634-635). Graves classified acculturation as a phenomenon on the collective level and the psychological acculturation as a phenomenon on the individual level. Acculturation on the collective level means the cultural changes of an existing group as the result of their contact with a new culture, and the psychological acculturation and adaptation means the changes occurred in the individual's mentality (Graves 1967: 340-341). Having classified acculturation synthetically, Berry made a series of attempts to supplement and amend the concepts of psychological acculturation (Berry 1980, 1990, 1992, 1997). In 1980, he defined the acculturation as changes brought about by the direct and persistent contact between two cultures. In 1992, he emphasized the ethnic aspect defining it as the process of all changes occurring through the long-term contact between the peoples of different ethno-cultural groups. He emphasized the actual differences between cultures, excluding the ethnic aspect.

Berry mentioned that an individual deal with two fundamental questions when he/she experiences acculturation: 1) How much of one's cultural identity is valued and retained? 2) To what extent are positive relations with the dominant culture sought? In other words, according to the answers to above questions in social activities, the individual chooses the strategies to adapt himself/herself to the host society. Integration is a strategy for striving to maintain cultural identity to a great extent and become an integral part of a

larger social framework. Assimilation means the abandonment of the culture of origin where the cultural values and behaviour patterns are adapted and the maintenance of a positive relationship with the host society. Separation is defined as maintenance of cultural identity, showing little interest in building positive relationships with other cultural groups, taking over customs or accepting the values of host society. Finally, marginalization can be described as a reaction when migrants abandon their own cultural identity and at the same time they are not interested in maintaining close contact with either the host society or other socio-cultural groups living in the host country (Berry 1997).

Berry argued that it is necessary for the preference of an acculturative strategy to understand three aspects as different according to the situation and time. First, there can be changes even when a certain strategy is preferred throughout. The maintenance of the native culture can be preferred in more private aspects or areas such as the home, the extended family, ethnic people, the community, than in the official areas such as the workplace or politics. The acculturative strategy can be influenced by the larger nationwide context. The preference of integration can be combined with the policy in a multicultural society, and it is easier to choose the assimilative strategy in a society pursuing assimilationism. Second, in the process of development, people are searching for various strategies and finally settle on the more valuable and satisfactory one than others. It is not clear, however, about the sequence and time of the application of each strategy. Third, the acculturative strategies the individual or group prefers may be or may not be allowed by the mainstream society. For example, pursuing an integration strategy and assimilation policy may be against the national ideology of enhancing one culture and identity (Jeong 2009: 28-29).

Berry considered diversity as the most important among cultural adaptation phenomena. The methods for adaptation are different between individuals and groups, even different among family members. Cultural adaptation among family members sometimes amplifies conflict or makes adaptation difficult (Berry 1997).

Nam segmented the levels of individuals and groups in Berry's theory into subdivisions as the individual, family, society, and culture, and developed a new model emphasizing the importance of a multicultural family's cultural values and the international networks. Nam insists that multi-model studies are necessary for the cultural adaptation of WMMs in South Korean society such as the aspects of inner mentality, socio-culture and family mentality. In other words, the cultural adaptation model for the realization of the multicultural community in South Korean society should be a creative one that prevents WMMs from inner mental confusion experienced in South Korean society, and utilizes their own socio-cultural values, while at the same time matches the South Koreans' own culture and emotions considering the unique formation of the multicultural families in South Korean society (Nam 2010). In this regard, Nam's attempt to study the cultural adaptation model for the realization of a multicultural community in South Korean society is significant. WMMs are expected to show integration or assimilation model mainly out of Berry's four acculturation strategies that people use in response to a new culture because the purpose of their migration is to marry a South Korean man and live permanently there. This study will analyze the WMMs' acculturation experiences and find out what strategies they use to maintain their sense of well-being in the course of their adaptation to South Korea.

### **3 Literature Review**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Recent migrants have emerged as social issues on a global scale. International migration is not a simple issue that can be solved simply as it is not only a transnational phenomenon but also a regional problem that occurs within the territory of a nation state. Most host countries to which immigrants are flown, regardless of the size of the migrants, require their immigrants to be assimilated in order to maintain the unity and solidarity of

the host society, and provide various support policies accordingly. However, depending on the degree of tolerance for cultural differences, the level of assimilation required to immigrants differs for each host country.

Most studies dealing with the adaptation of migrants as social phenomena tend to look at the cultural, social and economic adaptation of migrants based on the standpoint of the host country. Therefore, this study will examine the previous studies on the adaptation of WMMs in South Korea based on this viewpoint, and further examination will be carried out on the Vietnamese cultural background followed by the factors affecting WMMs' sense of well-being as these are the main topics of this study.

### **3.2 Cultural, Social, and Economic Adaptation of WMMs in South Korea**

#### **3.2.1 Cultural Adaptation**

Culture is the total sum of the traditional activities descended from generation to generation. On the other hand, acculturation is the status or process of learning and adapting the values, principles, and lifestyles through contact with another cultural group.

WMMs experience the socio-cultural adaptation to a new environment when they migrated to South Korea whose cultural style, values, and principles are different from their own mother country. Throughout earlier research, the migrants generally follow integration first, next assimilation, and then separation, and finally marginalization as a psychological acculturation strategy (Berry et al.1989; Lasry and Sayegh 1992; Van de Vijver et al. 1999). The majority of migrants want to be integrated into the mainstream society, but suffer from negative influences in the process of socio-cultural adaptation, and the stress causes psychological problems, such as confusion, frustration, and anxiety (Bhugra 2003; Fenta et al. 2004). Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the WMMs' experience of cultural adaptation.

According to earlier research on the process of Chinese and Korean-Chinese

WMMs' adaptation (Kang 1999), they suffer difficulties in the cultural and lifestyle differences between South Korea and China, and in the relationship with their in-laws, and they are disheartened by the paternalistic attitude of their South Korean husbands.

Also, they experience disappointment in their economic expectations (K. H. Choi 2005). Again, Southeast Asian WMMs from Philippines and Thailand who have a bilinear family culture experience conflicts with South Korean culture, such as eldest son culture, cultural sacrifice, and patriarchal culture (Kong and Yang 2011). Large numbers of Japanese WMMs marry South Korean men with a certain religious conviction, and they recognize the difficulty with poverty rather than with cultural conflict (D. Lee 2009).

The process of adaptation of immigrants is a process of establishing new social capital in the host country. If migrants recognize direct and indirect discrimination and prejudice in their contact with the local residents of the host country, this can be a negative influence on their cultural adaptation.

Earlier studies on cultural adaptation of WMMs in South Korea are largely divided into 1) cultural adaptation process (Kim and Park 2010; Min 2011; Lee and Jun 2014; Choi 2016), 2) cultural adaptation types and influencing factors (R. Kim 2011; Y. S. Kim 2013; Song and Lee 2014; Lee et al. 2014; Lee and Cho 2014), and 3) spatial distribution of migrants (Kim and Ryu 2012; Ryu 2012; Min et al. 2015) studies. Most of the earlier studies deal with WMMs from Asian countries, especially Chinese, Korean-Chinese, Vietnamese and Filipina, as analysis targets of cultural adaptation research. They account for 76.28% of the total WMMs because their successful cultural adaptation is related to the health of South Korean society (Choi 2016: 80).

In terms of WMMs, adapting to South Korean culture meant getting used to everyday life, trying to understand cultural differences, and knowing how to co-exist with South Koreans (Kim and Park 2010). The cultural adaptation process of WMMs developed within their family category narrowed the boundaries of cultural differences inherent in

both themselves and their husbands by modifying the attitudes of WMMs towards cultural differences. In the patriarchal culture, WMMs were exposed to discrimination and prejudice within the family because they were from poor countries, and experienced strong cultural adaptation stress (Kim and Park 2010; Lee and Jun 2014; Choi 2016). Nonetheless, the main reason why WMMs do not lose heart and actively make efforts to adapt to South Korean culture is because their husbands and children are South Koreans (Kim and Park 2010; H. S. Kim 2013; M. E. Park et al. 2012; Lee and Jun 2014; Choi 2016).

Successful migrants are more likely to be free from cultural adaptation stress, so they have little difficulty in everyday life, have a high level of sense of well-being, and tend to have a low depression level (Berry 1997; Berry 2005; Sam and Berry 2010). In addition, the better their adjustment, the more likely it is that migrants will have intimate relationships with the members of the mainstream group of their host countries and will have similar lifestyles (Kang 2013; Kim and Lee 2014; Berry 2001; Fong and Shen 2016). However, WMMs are not well connected with the formation of social relationships even when they are proficient in Korean language and South Korean culture (Min 2011: 92; Lee et al. 2014: 10). The adaptation of WMMs to South Korean culture varied by subject area: their preference for South Korean media was the highest, and the level of the area of exchange with South Koreans was the lowest (Y. S. Kim 2013; Song and Lee 2014). This was also observed in the fact-finding survey conducted regularly by the South Korean Ministry of Gender Equality and Family. WMMs had difficulty in expanding their social relations outside their family despite of their growth of Korean language ability. (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family 2016: 137).

A number of empirical studies analysing the cultural adaptation of WMMs have identified the importance of WMMs' social influence factors. WMMs were more likely to be included in the integration type of acculturation as higher the support of their families (R. Kim 2011; C. M. Park 2012; Lee et al. 2014), South Korean friends and neighbours (C. M. Park 2012), multicultural family support centres, and welfare counsellors (Lee and Jun

2014; Lee et al. 2014). However, social relations with ethnic friends from their home country did not have a statistically significant effect on South Korean cultural adaptation (R. Kim 2011: 304). The reason why social relations with Koreans have an important influence on the adaptation of WMMs to South Korean culture is related to the psychological resources that mitigate the discrimination, prejudice, and culture shock experienced by WMMs in the process of their cultural adaptation to South Korea (C. M. Park 2012). Psychological resources such as ethnic identity (Lee et al. 2014; Lee and Cho 2014), self-efficacy (Y. S. Kim 2013), self-control (R. Kim 2011; Lee et al. 2014), and self-esteem (Song and Lee 2014) tend to positively affect their cultural adaptation by mitigating the cultural adaptation stress of WMMs.

On the other hand, a multicultural policy has a statistically significant impact on WMMs' cultural adaptation (R. Kim 2011; C. M. Park 2012). Min (2011) reported that the individuals who had been fragmented, recognized that there were common social consciousness and interests, and formed a sense of collective criticism, and at the same time develop their desire to integrate into the South Korean society as a better member, by participating in the multicultural support programmes for WMMs. The multicultural support policy in the nature of social integration education programme not only provides the basic competency education necessary for their settlement of South Korean society, but also serves as a channel to connect with the public resources and mainstream of South Korean society. In the end, the participation of WMMs in support education programmes and community activities is a breakthrough of frustrating reality and a way to learn and practice that can be assimilated into South Korean society. It can be inferred that WMMs are finding and adapting their presence in South Korean society by participating in such activities (H. H. Lee 2010).

In recent years, studies on the adaptation of WMMs and the distribution of local residential spaces have been started. The residence rate of WMMs was higher in rural areas where the promotion of international marriage promotion programme was implemented,

and residential areas were differentiated according to the WMMs' country of origin (Kim and Ryu 2012; Min et al. 2015). For example, the Korean-Chinese WMMs were living in the metropolitan area, the Chinese WMMs in Daejeon and Cheju, the Vietnamese WMMs in Daegu, Gyeongbuk province and Southeast areas, and the Filipina WMMs living in Chungnam, Jeonbuk and Jeonnam provinces along the west coast. The higher the age of WMMs, the longer the period of their stay in South Korea, and the higher their income, the greater the likelihood of residing in their ethnic enclaves (Min et al. 2015). This may be the result of a combination of factors such as international marriage motivation, intimacy with South Korean culture, and ethnic enclave orientation (Kim and Ryu 2012; Ryu 2012; Min et al. 2015). However, considering that WMMs are not actively involved in residence selection, it can be inferred that the residential distribution characteristics of WMMs are different according to the various preferences of WMMs as per their country of origin in each community (Ryu 2012: 72).

### **3.2.2 Social Adaptation**

Although many scholars acknowledge that the voluntary social participation of migrants has a positive effect on attracting adaptation by influencing the formation of their social relations, there are few empirical studies on the voluntary participation of migrants in relation to their adaptation (Fong and Shen 2016). Studies on the social adaptation of WMMs to date can be divided into 1) exploring the meaning of participation in social activities and social network (H. H. Lee 2010; Hwang 2010), 2) factors affecting social capital formation (Kang 2013; Kim and Lee 2014; C. M. Park 2012; Yeon and Kim 2013; Lim and Nam 2014; Fong and Shen 2016), and 3) relationships between social relations and adaptation (K. M. Kim 2012) according to their subjects of interest. Particularly, H. H. Lee (2010) and Hwang (2010) conducted research on WMMs who manage a minimum of 3 years of marriage in South Korea and at the same time who are doing active social activities, and who can express themselves clearly in Korean, in order to explore the

meaning of participation in social activities and social networks.

In general, WMMs experience some confusion by facing realistic problems such as an unfamiliar environment, language and cultural differences, husbands' economic difficulties, and patriarchal family atmosphere at the early stage of their migration to South Korea. For them in such situations, their participation in social activities meant 'a breakthrough in life' (H. H. Lee 2010: 236). The participation in social activities is an opportunity for WMMs to connect themselves with formal and informal social support systems (Fong and Shen 2016). The social activities in which WMMs participate are husband groups, family gatherings, community gatherings, multicultural family support centre gatherings, and social gatherings. The WMMs' participation in these meetings was greatly influenced by their husbands' support (C. M. Park 2012; H. H. Lee 2010).

By participating in the social activities, the WMMs formed social relations with people outside their family, and cultivated their social capital by giving and receiving information and practical help, including emotional and material support, through their relationships (Kim and Lee 2014; Hwang 2010). For example, WMMs mainly discuss with their ethnic people from their country about their difficulties in themselves or their own families, while the percentage of their congregations, leisure, and hobbies together with Koreans is high (Kang 2013: 9). However, WMMs who mainly form social relations with Koreans are more satisfied with their lives (K. M. Kim 2012). In other words, it can be understood that WMMs feel the sense of accomplishment, recognize their own values, and feel they have been accepted in the society after a process of restoring their frustrated identity, by fulfilling their duties and responsibilities to the other side in their relationship.

WMMs' participation in social activities were influenced by personal characteristics, family characteristics, migratory characteristics, social support, and support policy. According to the results of the research in detail, it is found that the younger the age, the more the education, the longer the marriage period, the living in the municipality area, the higher the monthly average household income of the family, it was highly likely for the

WMMs to participate actively in social activities (Kang 2013: 15). These are all in common and are necessary assets when they participated in or to participate in the social meetings (Norris and Inglehart 2006: 78). In addition, social support to influence the modes of incorporation of local community for WMMs and the use of programmes provided by the government were statistically significant contributors to the participation of WMMs in social activities (C. M. Park 2012). On the other hand, according to the nationality of the participants, the WMMs' aggression toward participating in social activities appears differently (Kang 2013: 15), which can be understood as a phenomenon that occurs due to the different cultural attitudes toward participation of social activities in each country (Voicu and Rusu 2012).

### **3.2.3 Economic Adaptation**

Migrants experience cultural adaptation processes regardless of their will. If people with different cultural backgrounds come into contact with one another, they will experience the cultural adaptation process without exception (Sam and Berry 2010: 473). In such moments, the economic status of migrants is an important factor in their cultural adaptation process. This is because they are exposed to the reception context of host countries, which may result in totally different adaptations depending on the economic status of the family (Portes and Rumbaut 2001: 49).

Studies focusing on the economic adaptation of WMMs can be categorized into 1) significance of employment experience (H. S. Kim 2013; Park et al. 2012), 2) factors affecting employment (Kang and Lee 2012; Kim et al. 2016; Kim and Jeong 2016; J. K. Park 2013; Lee and Lee 2012; Lee et al. 2013; Lee and Cho 2014; Cho and Byun 2015). Most of the previous studies were conducted on Asian WMMs. This is because the social context of their adaptation is different from the WMMs of the US and EU.

For Asian WMMs, employment means to meet the needs and desires of individuals

and to open the gateway of opportunity to communicate with South Korean society (H. S. Kim 2013; Park et al. 2012). By being employed, WMMs earn income, experience personal empowerment, expand their social relationships, and more carefully accumulate knowledge and experience about South Korea's language, culture, society, economy, and politics. In other words, employment means an opportunity for WMMs to promote their adaptation to South Korean society (Gordon 1964: 81; Putnam 2000; Negy and Woods 1992). The majority of WMMs want to be rooted in South Korean society living like ordinary South Korean people (Kim and Park 2010; H. S. Kim 2013; Park et al. 2012; Choi 2016). This is because her family, husband and children, are South Korean (Kim and Park 2010: 286; Park et al. 2012). That is why they want to be employed despite the fact that the vast majority of WMMs do not meet the requirements of the South Korean labour market.

Over time, the employment rate of WMMs tends to improve. According to a study by the South Korean Ministry of Gender Equality and Family (2016: 169), the employment rate of WMMs was 59.5%, which was 9.6 higher than that of general women in the same year. This is also 6.5 higher than the employment rate of WMMs in 2012 of 53.0%. (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family 2012: 256). There are three possibilities for improving the employment rate of WMMs.

First, it is possible that the level of human capital of WMMs has improved. An important human capital factor that affects migrant employment is linguistic competence (Bleakley and Chin 2010). The value of human capital acquired by migrants in their home countries is likely to be low in demand in the labour market of the host country or may be subject to other assessments (Basilio et al. 2017). According to a study by the South Korean Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, the Korean language ability of WMMs actually improved from 3.65 to 3.78 (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family 2012: 321; 2016: 126). The Korean language ability of the WMMs was made by the subjective<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Korean language proficiency test officially recognized by the South Korean government is called TOPIK (Test of Proficiency in Korean).

evaluation of the South Korean Ministry of Gender Equality and Family for their ability to use Korean. It has been investigated in speaking, listening, reading and writing. In 2015, the Korean language skills of WMMs have improved slightly in all areas compared to 2012: speaking from 3.73 to 3.84; listening from 3.81 to 3.93; reading from 3.65 to 3.78; and writing from 3.42 to 3.55. In many previous studies, it was confirmed that the Korean abilities of WMMs were positively correlated with employment probability (Kang and Lee 2012; J. K. Park 2013; Lee and Lee 2012; Cho and Byun 2015), whereas the human capital carried on from the WMMs' home countries such as education, career, and technology had a negative correlation with employment probability (Kang and Lee 2012; J. K. Park 2013; Lee and Lee 2012; Lee et al. 2013). However, in the study (Kim and Jeong 2016) which excluded the endogeneity of Korean language ability, the Korean language ability showed a significant positive correlation only with the employment probability of Korean-Chinese WMMs, and showed a significant negative correlation with the employment probability of other WMMs than Korean-Chinese, whereas the human capital carried on from the WMMs' home countries showed a significant positive correlation with the probability of employment of the WMMs.

Second, cultural adaptation is another possibility that improved the employment rate of WMMs. Language skills are very powerful influencing factors to divide the cultural adaptation types (Allen and Turner 1996; Kang 2006; Vigdor 2008). Language is an essential competence for migrants to adapt to a host country and expand their relationships. However, cultural adaptation is a psychological and behavioural change of migrants as a result of complex interaction of individual factors, family factors, and policy factors in addition to language ability (Sam and Berry, 2010). Gordon (1964) argued that the more migrants assimilated in the way of life of middle-class citizens in the host countries, the better their employment. In fact, WMMs who are assimilated into South Korean culture have a significantly higher probability of employment than those belonging to other types (Lee and Cho 2014).

Third, the possibility of influence of the ethnic community. An ethnic community is a cluster of migrants from a particular country in a region, and the migrant receives information and opportunities for settlement and adjustment in the ethnic community (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). It also functions economically to provide employment for migrants who have difficulty finding a job in the labour market of the host country. If all of his qualifications such as human capital, language competency, and cultural adaptation do not reach the level required by the labour market in the host country, or even he who is fully qualified but not to be discriminated against because they are migrants, can get jobs within the ethnic community (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Vinokurov et al. 2017). In this case, the ethnic community is more likely to be an obstacle to migrants' cultural adaptation. This is because they do not feel the need to adapt to and establish a relationship with the host country to meet their needs and desires. In South Korea, research on migrants' ethnic communities is being conducted mainly in their ethnic enclaves (Noh and Koo 2016; Min et al. 2015; Son 2016; Y. K. Lee 2013; Jeong and Lee 2014). In fact, it has been confirmed that the Chinese ethnic communities formed around Daelim-dong and Garibong-dong in Seoul have economic functions (Ahn 2009).

Most of the employment records of WMMs are concentrated on similar occupations. More than half of WMMs working in paid work are still engaged in non-professional jobs, such as simple labour and service jobs, where no special human capital is required (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family 2016: 173). Although it is not possible to disparage all service jobs as non-professional jobs, it is estimated that most of the service jobs in which WMMs are mainly engaged are services with low value added, which do not require skilled skills such as serving in restaurants and cashiers in supermarkets. Non-professional employment of Asian WMMs was positively related to their South Korean nationality, participation in vocational training, their husbands' attitude toward their employment, and their social network (Kang and Lee 2012; Kim and Jeong 2016; Lee et al. 2013). In particular, their husbands' attitudes toward their employment are very

important factors for the employment of WMMs. As the attitude of husbands is negative, the employment rate of WMMs is low (Kang and Lee 2012).

Workplace stability will have a very positive impact on the adaptation of WMMs (Park et al. 2012), which will be a very positive change if WMMs are transitioned from temporary, daily workers to regular workers and wage levels are also rising. The securing of stable sources of income gives a sense of stability to human life, which leads to more active communication (Inglehart and Welzel 2005). It also increases the likelihood of expanding work-based social ties (Putnam 2000: 146). However, within the labour market there exists wage discrimination by nationality of WMMs (Kim et al. 2016). On the other hand, working hours of WMMs have decreased slightly. This can be inferred to be related to their childcare as a prominent phenomenon for WMMs in their early thirties (Kang and Lee 2012; Ministry of Gender Equality and Family 2016: 177).

### **3.3 Vietnamese WMMs' Cultural Background**

#### **3.3.1 Family Values and Culture in Vietnam**

Vietnam with elongated terrains has different neighbouring countries and there are significant regional differences in family values and culture. Yet, the South Koreans misunderstand the Vietnamese family system as similar to China and South Korea implying Confucianism is the prevailing religion of Vietnam (Chae and Hong 2007).

As to the regional family values by region in Vietnam, the north highlands bordering with China have a strong Confucian cultural character as influenced by China, and maintain a patriarchal patriliney (Yoo 1997). Even though they show the character of paternal rights according to patriliney, the wife and husband have comparatively equal status, and children do not necessarily obey unconditionally in an independent and open relationship with their parents, influenced by Vietnamese tradition with their own family values of Southeast Asia. Accordingly, the northern region is based on the principle of

preference of the first-born in the family inheritance, yet there is no unconditional segregation of daughters (Ha 1994). The attitude toward support for aged parents shows paternal characteristics but they take it for granted to live independently apart from each other as far as their economic situation affords (Yoo 1996).

The south breadbasket of Vietnam shows bilinear characteristics, different from the north region. They have a couple-centred nuclear family system, and follow an ultimogenitary principle. In other words, the first-born son starts the division of the property and moves out, and the youngest son who remains last supports his aged parents and inherits the house after his parents die. The duty of sacrifice is also equal to every offspring (Ha 1994). Therefore, the women from South Vietnam do not concern themselves about living together with their parents-in-law at all (Yoo 1996). In short, even though the aspect of northern Vietnam has a similar context with the South Korean family value system, it is a mere superficial similarity according to the same Confucian culture. The overall Vietnamese' family values system is based on Southeast Asian values and is different from the Confucian familistic values of South Koreans.

As for the Vietnamese marriage culture, the proper marriage age of Vietnamese women in rural areas where educational level is not high may be around 16 years old, and the age gap between husband and wife does not seriously matter (Chae and Hong 2007). As choosing partners has an important influence on one's social status and network, the family and origin of the partners were investigated in the past, but it is now changed to give more weight to the partners' economic capacity, academic titles, and occupation (H. M. Kim 2006).

Vietnam has a strong concept of community considering the social network as a higher priority than brotherhood. The neighbourhood implies residence quarters, production cooperatives, and a living community. Therefore, wherever a Vietnamese moves, they first look for their fellow provincials, and have a personal relationship equally regardless of the other's occupation and status (N. Kim 2013). Vietnamese community

culture is easily shown at the way they celebrate their festive season. There are two big festive seasons in Vietnam: “Trung Thu,” the same as ‘Chuseok<sup>24</sup>’ of Korea, takes place in 15<sup>th</sup> of the eighth lunar month, and “Tet” in the lunar New Year. At ‘Trung Thu,’ they tell their family faraway news and spend time together with the family, exchanging gifts among acquaintances. “Tet,” the Lunar New Year, is the biggest festival in Vietnam, and the mass exodus of population towards home happens like in South Korea. They exchange gifts with neighbours and relatives in time for this festival like in “Trung Thu” (Y. Kang 2011).

On the other hand, it is reported that the more WMMs have traditional values, the more positive influences in their adaptation (Ok et al. 2014). Earlier studies on the adaptation of Vietnamese WMMs revealed that they experience value conflicts caused by the cultural difference between Vietnam and South Korea, and it becomes the main issue with their mothers-in-law who stick to traditional values, and leads to divorce (T. Kim 2013). It is not irrelevant that Vietnamese WMMs have a much higher rate of living together with their parents-in-law than WMMs from other countries (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family 2012). However, the Vietnamese are known to have a strong awareness of commitment to their family and relatives traditionally as well as of filial piety and support for their parents (Hwang 1999; Busseon 2006). Therefore, it is understood that their conflict is not simply due to the support for their parents-in-law but due to the difference in the parents-in-law’s emphasis on their traditional values and in the cultural mind-set. In this context, the parents-in-law’s patriarchal preference for male babies and complex protocol of South Korean sacrificial rites make Vietnamese WMMs’ adaptation difficult (Shin and Chang 2010; E. Lee 2013). Also, they recognize the cultural differences in South Korean clothing habits that differentiate between street dress and indoor clothing, and in the South Korean’s large portions compared to Vietnamese two meals a day (Chae and Hong 2007).

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<sup>24</sup> Full Moon Harvest Festival.

In many cases, Vietnamese WMMs migrate to South Korea with a romantic love ideology which in turn cannot become a cultural resource for actual life in South Korea. They adapt themselves to South Korea with their identity as wife and mother from their home country (J. Choi 2009). In other words, the romantic love ideology as a reason for a quick international marriage cannot be useful to their adaptation to South Korea, so their female or maternal identity internalized in their home country becomes an alternative resource for their cultural adaptation. On the other hand, it appears that Vietnamese WMMs' jobs in self-improvement allowed them experience daily stress relief and pride in preparation for the future of their family (E. Lee 2013). In short, even though Vietnamese WMMs suffer from South Korean patriarchal values, their female identity from their mother country and their socio-economic activities are most valuable resources for their adaptation in South Korea.

Research on the WMMs (H. J. Kim 2007) showed that they had experienced difficulties in their conflict between their husbands and/or in-laws, in poor economic situations, in cultural differences, in language barriers, in child-rearing, in prejudice and in loneliness. Whereas married women generally take care of children and house chores even though they work at office in South Korea, Vietnamese have gender equality and they help each other in Vietnam (Kye et al. 2009). South Korean men who have patriarchal attitudes, however, cause the conflict and tension between the couple, attributing the problems out of their cultural differences to the WMM's personal character. The WMMs also expressed their dissatisfaction with their husbands' self-centred attitudes and their too much concerns to their family members as their husbands gave a higher priority to the filial duties to their parents and to the relationship with their relatives than their spouse (Keum Hae Choi 2006).

### **3.3.2 Position of Women and Role of Mothers in Vietnam**

According to the regional environment and historical context, the position of

Vietnamese women can be considered as comparatively high. It is easier to secure women's economic independence in Southeast Asian countries than Northeast Asia. There were many famous heroines in Vietnamese history: "Ba Trieu" (Lady Trieu) who started a revolution against the Chinese Han dynasty who had ruled ancient Vietnam for 1000 years, following "Hai Ba Trung" (Two Trung Sisters) who also tried to establish their own independent country. They have been so much admired by the Vietnamese that streets are named after them (Sim 2009). Also, Vietnam emphasizes women's role in society. It reflects Ho Chi Minh's attitudes about women based on gender equality. Vietnamese women's social responsibility to a village community is revealed in their old sayings: "Vietnamese woman does not remain inside home but goes out worrying about the water of the village even in cold weather," "Women also go and fight against the enemy" (Sim 2009; Y. Choi 2010).

Even though Vietnamese family culture is founded on Confucian values, it is based on respect for women (Busseon 2006). In other words, Vietnamese family culture has patriarchal characteristics with a strong aspect of respect for women (Ryu 2010). Vietnamese women decide all household matters, and can be the head of her household even in the face of her spouse (Sim 2009). Furthermore, the majority of them do economic activities, and household economics are left in their hands (Chae and Hong 2007; N. Kim 2013). In the same context, conventional wisdom considers men unmanly if he controls all the money matters in the family (Sim 2009). In other words, the majority of Vietnamese women exercise the rights of housewife playing the role of decision maker on all household matters, and managing household economics.

The responsibility of parenting is wholly a subject for women in Vietnam. As in the old saying that troublesome children are a mothers' responsibility, there is a conventional wisdom that it is a mothers' responsibility if their children have no manners, and it is grandmothers' responsibility if their grandchildren have no manners (Sim 2009). Also, there exists their own action strategy as 'mother makes her children's success.' (J.

Choi 2009). The socio-economic condition of social adaptation at the early stage of migration is an important factor in the WMMs' fertility. In general, WMMs are more likely to delay their childbirth when they realize their current situation is worse than that of their origin country (Ryu and Kim 2013). The majority of Vietnamese WMMs tends to get pregnant and childbirth at the early stage of migration, that is, at the stage of cultural adaptation. Such childbirth and parenting at the early stage of adaptation sometimes become the cause of experiencing psychological burdens without enough information. Even though Vietnamese WMM's social perspectives of 'becoming a mother,' or their strategy to take quick action to become a mother may not be generalized as their collective conviction, their becoming a mother through parenting can be a very important chapter in revealing their own selves.

Children are the WMMs' hope for life in South Korea. Their life without their babies were like lonesome and difficult to be adapted, but once they have babies they found their motivation to live their life and their babies become their psychological stronghold to continue their life in South Korea (Sung Ran Cha 2011).

### **3.4 Factors affecting WMMs' Sense of Well-Being**

#### **3.4.1 Demographic Factors**

According to earlier research results, there are demographic factors affecting the WMMs sense of well-being such as marriage period, age, income level, education level, language ability, health status, and the number of children (Park et al. 2007; J. B. Lim 1987; Song and Park 2008; Yang 2006; Yang and Kim 2006; Lee and Lee 2010). The WMMs' sense of well-being tends to decrease with the longer the marriage period (Park et al. 2007). It can be inferred that their overall sense of well-being with marriage is lowered due to the difference between the initial fantasy and real life of marriage as time goes by, though their expectation for marriage and new environment was high. According to the research results,

family conflicts were the lowest when the marriage period was less than one year, and then, in order of between 1 to 3 years, over 6 years, and between 3 to 6 years (Park et al. 2007). The age of married couples has also been reported to be related to the WMMs' sense of well-being. In general, the younger the wife, the higher their sense of well-being level (Lim 1987; Tran and Nguyen 1994). In addition, the WMMs' sense of Well-being differed according to the age difference between the husband and WMM. This is probably because the age difference shows their generation gap (Park et al. 2007). In other words, as there are many differences between the traditional values and the new-generation values of the role of the couple, the difference in family values and views of child rearing may increase the possibility of conflict in the family. On the other hand, however, it is reported that the higher the age gap of married couple, the higher the WMMs' sense of well-being (Song and Park 2008). So, the relationship between the age gap and the WMMs sense of well-being of married couple seems to be different according to the other demographic and cultural characteristics.

The income level of the family is considered to be one of the important variables affecting the marital relationship and the WMMs' sense of well-being in the multicultural family as well as the ordinary family. In general, families with higher income levels are reported to have higher sense of well-being than those with less (Y. S. Kim 2007; E. K. Kim 2008; E. R. Kang 1989). In the case of other country, family dismantling or conflicts were more frequent in low income group of families (Lowenstein and Katz 2005) and the economic crisis of the family is often reported to lead to family dismantling. In other words, family dismantling such as divorce or separation is more frequent in low income group of families. In addition, even for those who migrated to the USA, those who acquired real estate there showed a higher overall sense of well-being than those who did not (Massey and Akresh 2006).

In the case of WMMs, communication capacity is reported to be a major factor affecting adaptation to host society and sense of well-being. It is reported that the less their

communication problem, the higher the level of adaptation of WMMs to South Korea (Yang 2006). The Ministry of Health and Welfare of South Korea identified communication and language barriers as one of the immediate and pressing problems of WMMs' families and reported that the lack of communication due to the language barriers between family members leads to the conflict among the members of the family (Seol and Yoon 2005).

### **3.4.2 Cultural Factors**

It is reported that the integration strategy among the four variables of cultural adaptation - assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization - affects the WMMs' sense of well-being (Lee and Lee 2010). In other words, WMMs feel more sense of well-being when they accept South Korean culture while maintaining their own home culture. On the other hand, the higher the husband's control over his wife, the greater the cultural difference between the husband and wife, and the lower the satisfaction with the marital relationship, the lower the psychological adjustment level of WMM (Jeong and Han 2009). Also, the smoother the interaction between husband and wife, the better the adaptation of WMMs to South Korean society (Yang 2006), and it means that the more married couples adapt to each other and the better they get along well together, the more positive the WMMs' sense of well-being and their adaptation to South Korea.

The relationship between family values and decision-making rights has been dominated by husband's decision-making power in the past, but recently it has been changed to a joint decision between husband and wife, and this change may be related to the weakening of traditional patriarchal values. In other words, in the traditional values, the decision-making power was dominant in men, but in modern values, the decision-making power is gradually changing into the type of joint decision-making (Seong 1991). In this way, family values influence decision-making power in the family. If the pattern of family

values tied with decision-making between husband and wife is viewed as one aspect of culture, cultural differences between husband and wife may influence the WMMs' sense of well-being.

### **3.4.3 Social Factors**

There are research results that the support from formal institutions such as multicultural family support centres affect the WMMs' sense of well-being, and it is found that spousal and institutional support are meaningful among the supporters around WMMs such as spouses, parents-in-law, South Korean friends, parents and friends in home country, and institutions in South Korea (H. S. Kim et al. 2010). Formal social support factors affect the WMMs' sense of well-being, rather than informal family and friends support, except for spousal support. Social support factors are related not only to WMMs but also to marital adjustment of their husbands, so they are important in multicultural families (Choo et al 2008). In addition, since the support of the family for the WMMs' participation in the social meeting and in education session are shown to affect their sense of well-being, their participation in public services such as social meeting and education session participation in the public service such as meeting and education is related to their sense of well-being (J. Park 2013).

### **3.4.4 Transnational Factors**

Portes points out that studies on migration have overly analyzed the lives of immigrants as a unit of the nation state and dealt with assimilation and related issues in their places of settlement without considering differences in their place of origin (Portes et al. 1989). Similarly, South Korean society regards international marriage families only within the scope of population and family policy in South Korean society and regards multicultural families as subjects of vulnerable classes or of welfare policies. Many

researchers argue that there is a limit to the understanding of transnational migrants through the concept of family, attribution (or belonging), and lifestyle, based on a single national territory (J. S. Kim 2010; Y. O. Kim et al. 2013).

Kim studied the process of forming a 'transnational family' and the family ties maintained through transnational networks (H. S. Kim 2014). Transnational family relationships show the dynamic aspects of family relationships due to migration, such as forming a family network and maintaining family ties beyond national boundaries. While maintaining ties with their families in the home country, WMMs create diverse social networks by inviting their home family members and relatives. They increase their sense of well-being by using these networks as their social capital.

Globalization along with the innovative development of transportation and of ICT/SNS (Information and Communications Technology/Social Network Services) make it possible to maintain and strengthen not only family ties with diverse contents between family members residing abroad and family members staying in the home country, but also their ethnic network in the host country. Through them, WMMs share experiences, information, and ideas for overcoming the difficulties of settling in a new location and maintain their sense of well-being. One thing that cannot be overlooked in transnational family relationships is that they involve ties with family members living in third countries, other than the WMMs' country of origin and settlement.

#### **4 Conclusion**

This chapter explored the theoretical background to understand the WMMs' adaptation to South Korea. It also examined earlier studies on the WMMs' cultural, social, and economic adaptation in South Korea. Further, the Vietnamese WMMs' cultural background before their international marriages and the factors to affect to the WMMs' sense of well-being in their adaptation process to South Korea were also examined. In

particular, the sense of well-being in four aspects of factors: demographic, cultural, social, and transnational factors, explain what factors affect the WMMs' sense of well-being in different situations.

As to the WMMs, adaptation is the capability to cope with the environment suitably, and is a process to learn and internalize the values, principles, and lifestyles of other cultural groups through contact with them. As the majority of research, however, focuses on the results of the adaptation, it overlooks the WMMs' existential choice of international marriage and its meaning in the socio-cultural context of globalization (D. Seo 2010). In other words, the WMMs' experience with their family-of-origin and their environmental context to choose migration as well as the socio-cultural situation are different. These differences will be the standard of measures and strategies to establish WMMs' adaptation to South Korean society, and to resolve various conflicting situations. It is necessary, therefore, to shed new light on the WMMs' lives in South Korea focusing on their socio-cultural context of their origin countries to support their adaptation to South Korean society. In other words, the differences in their own individual situation and the context of their country should be respected and understood (H. Lee 2013).

The majority of earlier research on the WMMs' adaptation examined the WMMs from different countries as one group (Sung et al. 2013). They tend to regard WMMs as a homogeneous group only because they married South Korean men (K. S. Jeong 2008). Such a perspective portrays conformist alternatives ignoring the WMMs' individual identity or overlooking their socio-cultural context. It is an obstacle to pluralistic approaches for the establishment of multicultural policies.

It is worth, therefore, to review earlier research results at the various stages of WMM's adaptation to South Korean lifestyle, from their life in their homeland to their settlement in South Korean families.

In addition, well-being is considered to be a very important factor for immigrants.

This is because the social contribution to their settled society varies according to their sense of well-being (Vohra and Adair 2000: 112). Well-being of immigrants is often used as a measure of their mental health because immigrants who are satisfied with immigrant life tend to think that they are doing relatively well in the host country (Tran and Nguyen 1994: 324). There are many factors that affect the WMMs' sense of well-being.

The analysis of earlier research' results suggests that the factors related to the WMMs' sense of well-being can be categorized into four: 1) demographic factors such as age, education level, income level, 2) cultural factors such as cultural identity, acculturation, values, 3) social factors such as public service utilization, and 4) transnational factors such as transnational family ties and international networks.



## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology**

#### **1 Introduction**

As a pastor who planted a church for foreigners, mainly workers and WMMs from Vietnam, I had a deep concern for their security, welfare, and well-being in South Korea. To follow up this concern into practice, I opened and ran a refuge centre where there were many foreign workers and WMMs from Vietnam. Seven years' involvement allowed me to explore the meaning of their experiences during their working and marriage life in South Korea. For the last ten to twelve years, there have been a remarkable influx of Vietnamese WMMs which surpasses those of Korean-Chinese the most numerous marriage migrants. I had met some of them and realized they had experienced difficulties during their settlement in South Korean society. They frequently complained that they suffered from depression. They were oppressed by the sense of failure and loneliness. They fear their uncertain future and are anxious for their new life in South Korea. I had started to research on the ways out of these difficulties and set forth to study their sense of well-being as a way out of their difficulties and as a way of giving them hope for their future life in South Korea. This study, therefore, investigates their experiences at each stage in the process of their settlement to South Korean lifestyle to find the factors to overcome the difficulties they met in the course of their adaptation to South Korea, and the result of these findings will be applied to their sense of well-being.

For this purpose, this chapter attempts to collect and analyse interview data on the WMMs' adaptation experience in South Korea based on qualitative methodology. This chapter also reviews the methods of collecting and analysing data, presents issues in the data analysis process, declares the research ethics, and produces the demographic results of

the data analysis.

## **2 Research Methodology**

Qualitative research describes social phenomena as they occur naturally – no attempt is made to manipulate the situation – just to understand and describe. It is not measured quantitative research looking at a set of variables, but seeks for understanding by taking a holistic perspective and approach. According to Ritchie and Spencer, qualitative research meets quite different objectives from quantitative research and provides a distinctive kind of information. Data analysis in qualitative research, together with detection, is a work of explaining and exploring phenomena through categorizing the different types of attitudes, behaviours, motivations, etc. (Ritchie and Spencer 1994: 174-175).

Benoiel (1984) explains qualitative research methods:

As modes of systematic inquiry concerned with understanding human beings and the nature of their transactions with themselves and with their surroundings (3) ... Qualitative approaches in science are distinct modes of inquiry oriented toward understanding the unique nature of human thoughts, behaviours, negotiations, and institutions under different sets of historical and environment circumstances (7).

This study is to reveal the socio-psychological phenomena - fully as they are - in the course of the Vietnamese WMM's adaptation to South Korean society, and to uncover the factors in the structure of their lived experiences influencing their sense of well-being as a way out of their difficulties and as a way of giving them hope for their future life in South Korea. Therefore, as suggested by Husserl's statement, "We must go back to the things themselves!" (Husserl 1970: 9; 1999: 9), this study returns to the world of Vietnamese WMMs' daily life confronting a variety of phenomena in real situations. In order to describe their expressions of sense of well-being in their daily lives which reveal themselves as they are, it is necessary to examine qualitative research methods in data

collection and analysis.

## **2.1 Data Collecting Method: Schütze's Biographical Interview Method**

This study introduces the narrative interview as a specific technique of data collection, particularly, in the format systematized by Schütze (Jovchelovitch and Bauer 2007). The data collection of this study is by his biographical narratives interviews, which are not standardized by certain models, but stories of experiences or incidents that the speakers themselves experienced directly in a free format. The narration reconstructs actions and situations in the most appropriate way: it uncovers place, time, motivation and symbolic direction of the narrator's system (Bruner 1990). The narrative interviews devise a framework to encourage interviewees to talk about important events in their lived life and social context. Schütze proposed the organization of this technology. The basic idea is to reconstruct a social event as directly as possible from the perspective of interviewee.

### **2.1.1 Schütze's Biographical Interview Method**

Although this study adopts the method of Schütze, most of his writings are in the German discourse, so the writings of other scholars who introduced his method are cited in this study.

Schütze's method 'merges the objective features of subject's life with the subjective meanings attached to life experiences' (Denzin 1989: 54-55). The fundamental characteristic of the narrative interview is not the sum of the answers to the questions but an autonomous, uninterrupted explanation that participants are reflexively related to their life experiences. The biographical method developed by Schütze, together with Oevermann's objective hermeneutics, is considered one of the two biographically oriented streams in German sociology (Denzin 1989). Schütze was struggling to provide methodologically consistent concepts from how to use narrative interviews, how to analyse

the collected data, and how to write final research reports. Consistent with the tradition of interpretive sociology, Schütze's method is rooted in the traditions of the Chicago school that is renowned for its ethnographic and sociological resources for analysing social problems experienced by individuals (Faris 1967).

The key participants in the biographical interview are defined as narrators, not as interviewees. Each participant, researcher, and narrator plays a specific role. The narrator is at the centre of attention, and the researcher is primarily a listener, whose role in guiding the direction and nature of the issues presented is limited. It is the person telling the story that constitutes his or her identity (Gelsthrope 2007; Evans and Wallace 2009; Presser 2009; Farrant 2014), and it is the story above all that narrator is able to participate in biographic work. Life stories constitute the subject of the biographical interview. Most of the time these are thrown in the context of certain issues or relationships, such as people's occupation histories or war experiences (Schütze 1992). As a result, the researcher hears 'thick' stories, sometimes hours long, which are recorded and transcribed, and it enables researchers to collect information that is difficult to direct questions. The Schützean approach has been successfully applied to research on migrant workers (Treichel and Schwelling 2006), religious converts (Jindra 2011), and patients (Kolip et al. 2009) among others. Schütze was interested in what people should say and how they talked about their story, and how narrators deeply understand what they have experienced (Riemann 2006).

Schütze was interested both in what people had to tell, and also in how they told their story and how narrators arrive at their own deep understanding of what they experience (Riemann, 2006). Schütze argued that when narrating the story, the narrator was constrained by the 'triple bind of narration': the requirement to close, the requirement to condense, and the requirement to provide detail (Szczepanik and Siebert 2016).

These three requirements mean that the biographical narrative spoken without preparation consists of a consistent, condensed storyline with well-defined turning points and that all characters introduced into the story can expect to perform the defined role. The

story should be compressed, but still the details provided must be reliable. Where narrator agrees to give the account and embark on it, their explanation for their reason and action is inherently reliable and the triple bind of narration makes the story analytically valuable to the researcher (Schütze, 1992).

Not every part of the interview is a narrative. A narrative is a phrase with only a clearly marked beginning that remains in chronological order of the subject. Initially, a description of the development of the event with a connection thread follows, and the account is clearly displayed in terms of time. Schütze's narrative interview consists of five steps: 1) starting the interview, 2) urging story through constructive questions, 3) the narrator tells without interruption until a 'coda,' an ending-formula, comes out, 4) asking questions, and 5) ending the interview. The first step in the interview is important in creating the right conditions for the workout, despite the fact that it is generally not documented and does not generate its own empirical data. In order to define the role of the participant and to create an atmosphere that will help the narrator "open up," the basic rules must be clearly defined. The researcher assumes the role of someone who is interested in the narrator's words, regardless of the structure of the account or the issues discussed. Schütze's method has been subject to further modifications by researchers from a psychoanalytic standpoint. The most notable of these changes is the Free Association Narrative Interview (FANI), which Hollway and Jefferson (2008; 2013) and Wengraf (2001) championed. Free association narrative interview focuses on the tradition of Schütze, which focuses on bringing up stories, using open-end questions, "invisible" interviewers who avoid questions of "why" and do not suggest belief in "objective" figures (Hollway and Jefferson 2013). But unlike Schütze's original method, free association narrative interview focuses on the unconscious rather than the logic of conscious narratives. Abolishing narrative conventions, FANI allows researchers to analyse inconsistencies and absurdities rather than logical storylines. Schütze's method is also related to psycho-social studies (Clarke 2002; Clarke and Hoggett 2009) which rejects a top-down approach to

interviewing cannot avoid the inequality of power relations between interviewer and interviewee without describing the complexity of human life (Stanley 1992; Crewe 2014).

However, this study chose to use the Schützean method of accessing elements of socially available identities that people could naturally evolve when they say who they are, where they are from, and why they came to be who they are, rather than approaching past events or unconscious motives of the present.

### **2.1.2 Application of Schütze's Method**

The strength of Schütze's suggestion is a systematic proposal for eliciting narratives for the purposes of social research (Jovchelovitch and Bauer 2007). He proposed his biographical-narratives interview as an appropriate method of data collection to study the structure of the process of life in a way that the interviewee does not express explicitly in his or her story but can be interpreted the meanings embedded in it. Therefore, the key point of this study is to find out the relationship between WMMs experiences in South Korea, their style of meaning-giving and its interpretation. In that, in qualitative research through biographical-narratives interviews, the story of WMMs plays a central role in the study. The data collecting method in this study follows the basic phases of the narrative interview suggested by Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2007) as shown in Table 9.

## **2.2 Data Analysing Method: Giorgi's Methods**

### **2.2.1 Giorgi's Descriptive Phenomenological Method**

In this study, the phenomenological data analysis method of Giorgi is applied to find the factors that overcome difficulties and affect WMMs' sense of well-being. Among the phenomenological research methods, Giorgi's descriptive phenomenology is evaluated as a human scientific approach that has established phenomenology as a human science

studying human beings (Applebaum 2010). This study focuses on the interpretation of collective experiences of WMMs because they are all same Vietnamese, all same gender, and their educational and economic level are not so different. Therefore, Giorgi's phenomenological method can integrate the individual characteristics of WMMs into the whole experiences of participating WMMs to describe the factors that overcome their difficulties and that affect their sense of well-being.

Table 9 Basic Phases of the Narrative Interview (Jovchelovitch and Bauer

<u>Phases</u>	<u>Rules</u>
Preparation	Exploring the field Formulating examanent questions
1 Initiation	Formulating initial topic for narration Using visual aids
2 Main narration	No interruptions Only non-verbal encouragement to continue story-telling Wait for the coda
3 Questioning phrases	Only 'What happened then?' No opinion and attitude questions No arguing on contradictions No why-questions Examanent into immanent questions
4 Concluding talk	Stop recording Why-questions allowed Memory protocol immediately after interview

First, Giorgi's method is examined with a thorough understanding of the philosophical principles and concepts of phenomenology embodied in the phenomenological methods presented by various scholars. The phenomenology first introduced by Franz Brentano evolved into a phenomenological research by Edmund Husserl (Giorgi 1997). Husserl (1962) noted the phenomenon, which is the core theme of phenomenology, and that the in-depth meaning of the phenomenon is a complex combination of 'experience' and 'internal sense' at the same time. In other words, the phenomenon is the 'consciousness of something' that experiences something outside of itself, not a pure subjective consciousness, although it has a definite inner clarity. Therefore,

phenomenology seeks phenomena rather than causal explanations by asking 'what' rather than 'why' (Crotty 1998). Husserl (1983) stated that phenomenological effort is to break through all the thoughts and habits of the past, and to see through the habitual mental obstacles that follow the limits of our thinking. We understand what is inherent in consciousness prior to the process of objectification (describing or understanding given things as things or events) and subjectivity (describing or understanding given things as my personal experiences) in the flow of pure consciousness, through the pre-regulatory experience (Crotty 1998).

The phenomenological research methods that have been developed so far have been proposed by various scholars such as van Kaam, Giorgi, Colaizzi, and van Manen. They are similar in that they concentrate on the essence of research phenomena, collect data in the life world of research subjects, and perform phenomenological description on the results that are found through the process of reflection, but they differ in the analysis process.

Giorgi's descriptive phenomenology developed a phenomenological method of research based on the fundamental spirit of Husserl's phenomenology, "Go back to the things themselves!" (Giorgi 1985). As a phenomenon is perceived as a subject of phenomenological psychology, it has its own meaning in our everyday life, so phenomenological psychology is psychology as a human science (Giorgi 1970), and in that it is distinguished from traditional quantitative psychology. Therefore, the task of phenomenological psychology as an experiential science is to explore the nature of the various 'daily experiences' that people experience as they live in everyday world (Giorgi 1985). Giorgi's descriptive phenomenology is a methodology that is faithful to describing the nature of phenomena as manifested in human consciousness, and has scientific persuasiveness in that it follows systematic methods and procedures (Giorgi and Giorgi 2003). Giorgi (2004) suggested that the 'free variation' that constantly elucidates the unchanging aspects of the research subject through the process of thinking constantly can

reach the essence of experience. Free variation is the process of freely imagining and counting a myriad of individual objects that are similar to individual objects that embody their essence, beginning with any individual object that implements its essence, to grasp the identity of a certain essence (Giorgi 2004; Giorgi and Giorgi 2003).

Van Manen (1990) criticized Giorgi's descriptive phenomenology for recognizing only intuition, which implies a direct grasp of the nature structure, and not admitting interpretation at all because he follows strictly Husserl's transcendental method. However, unlike Van Manen's argument, Giorgi has never followed Husserl's transcendental method of developing phenomenological research methods. In other words, he follows Husserl's method of phenomenological psychology, not the method of transcendental phenomenology (Giorgi 1985; 2004). Husserl's phenomenology recognizes not only the pure descriptive method but also the interpretation method (Husserl 1983). This fact is not only valid for Husserl's phenomenological psychology, but also for transcendental phenomenology.

Merleau-Ponty (1962) in the preface of his book, concluded that phenomenology is best understood in terms of phenomenological methods because it has four characteristics: description, reduction, intuition, and intentionality. Giorgi described phenomenological psychology as a humanistic science, focusing on these criteria (Giorgi 1985; 2004). The first criterion mentioned by Merleau-Ponty (1962) is that the phenomenological method must be descriptive. Returning to description means that the analytical reflection process ..... and the process of scientific explanations are equally excluded (Merleau-Ponty 1962: ix). It does not mean that any sort of analysis or explanation does not happen continuously, but merely that the analysis must follow pure description. The researcher must be certain that the categories of analysis or explanations do not fall into the original description.

The second criterion of the phenomenological method is reduction. The concept of "phenomenological reduction" refers to a return to a priori consciousness, which means

that the researcher's prejudice should not go into the description of the participant. That is, as bracketing or discontinuance of judgment, the researcher must discontinue judgment on his previous experience. This does not mean that the past is completely forgotten, but it means that past knowledge should not interfere with the researcher's present.

The third criterion is the intuition of the essence. Essence is 'the inevitable general form that cannot think of things like this as an example of that kind without it.' Once faced with description that reveal how research subjects relate to the world and reality in the past, the phenomenologist tries to understand the nature or structure of the experienced relationship. The preliminary process that is most necessary to intuit the essence is phenomenological reduction, which is possible through the process of 'free variation.' Merleau-Ponty (1962: xv) emphasizes that gaining essence is not the purpose of phenomenological analysis, but merely a means to uncover all practical "vital relationships of experience."

The fourth criterion is intentionality, which means that consciousness is always oriented or directed towards something, not consciousness itself. A directed relationship is found in the context of consciousness, where consciousness is always consciousness of something, and the object of consciousness is the fact that it transcends the behaviour that is being revealed.

As this phenomenological research method first explores the essence of the phenomenon through free imaginative variation, remembering the fact that consciousness is oriented after first describing the phenomenon with the attitude of reduction, it can be performed properly only when the researcher actively conducts the research. It means researchers themselves are the main tool in research.

Giorgi (2000) suggested that phenomenology should be general, methodical, systematic, and critical in order to be born into a rigorous scientific discipline that studies human beings. As such Giorgi attempts to scientificize phenomenology as a qualitative

research method, Applebaum (2010) argues that Giorgi sought to find alternatives to the scientism of psychology as positive science while at the same time, seeking implicit relativism to counter hermeneutics and postmodernism. Therefore, Giorgi's outstanding achievement in phenomenological researches is that he sought a reasonable human scientific approach to psychological research in human beings (Applebaum 2010).

A recent scholar like Malterud (2012), rooted in Giorgi's phenomenological approach, presented a new alternative called systematic text condensation. Giorgi (1992; 1994) emphasizes the consistency of theory and methodology in phenomenological research, dismissing the application of various methods as a problem of so-called mixed discourse. In recent years when Rennie (2012) has attempted to approach the descriptive phenomenology based on Husserl's philosophy with a hermeneutical phenomenology, Giorgi (2014) warns that the hermeneutical approach may be valid in qualitative research, but the use of descriptive phenomenology is most desirable for carrying out the phenomenological approach. Giorgi (2014) emphasized that psychological descriptive phenomenology is the most reliable approach to data. Phenomenological research should be based on phenomenological epistemology as the problem of mixed discourse poses the same problem of applying epistemologies of different philosophical background (Giorgi 1994). The researcher should follow the principle of loyalty to the phenomenon with the motivation for the phenomenological research, to grasp the essence or intention required by the descriptive phenomenological methodology, and efforts should be made to explain the problem and result of semantic and linguistic transformation (Giorgi 1994).

Therefore, this study tries to analyse the factors to overcome the difficulties and affect the sense of well-being, describing the experiences of migration and settlement of WMMs in South Korea with Giorgi's phenomenological approach as a human science. Giorgi's phenomenological approach is to transform the meaning of factors that affect WMMs' overcoming the difficulties and the sense of well-being to the form of unambiguous academic terms, to establish the relationship between the factors in the

derived structure, and to present it in the form of consistent description (Giorgi and Giorgi 2003). In that, it is possible to understand more clearly and systematically the phenomena that affect WMMs' overcoming the difficulties and maintain their sense of well-being.

### 2.2.2 Application of Giorgi's Method

The data collection of this study borrowed from the biographical narratives interview method of Schütze. The data analysis of this study, however, used the method of Giorgi. Table 10 shows the data analysis method of Giorgi. Giorgi proposes four steps to do it (Giorgi 1970; 1975).

Table 10 Giorgi's Phenomenological Analysis Method

1 <sup>st</sup> step	Reading the entire description to get a sense of the whole statement.
2 <sup>nd</sup> step	Discriminating meaning units within a psychological perspective.
3 <sup>rd</sup> step	Transforming the subject's every day expressions into psychological language.
4 <sup>th</sup> step	Synthesising transformed meaning units into a consistent statement of the structure of the phenomenon.

In this study, data collection was performed using Schütze's method. However, the purpose of this study is to find the factors affecting the WMMs' sense of well-being by analysing collected data to find the factors to overcome the difficulties in the course of WMMs' settlement in South Korea, so the topic of this study is a "sense of well-being." The sense of well-being is meaningful when it is approached psychologically and phenomenologically. Therefore, the phenomenological methodology of Giorgi is more useful than others because this study should pursue the psychological and phenomenological meaning rather than emphasizing the simple historical fact. In order to analyse the WMMs' lived experience of their adaptation and find out the factors to

overcome their difficulties in the course of their settlement in South Korea and to influence their sense of well-being in their stories and examine what they mean to them, the phenomenological method of Giorgi was chosen to be more appropriate than that of Schütze. The reasons for using Giorgi's phenomenological method in data analysis of this study are: 1) Focusing on descriptions of lived-experiences and follows the Husserlian tradition (Giorgi 1970); 2) The phenomenological method appears adequate and applicable to this study (Giorgi 1975); 3) It does not require the adherence to certain fixed criteria. A couple of other studies appear to have used this approach successfully; 4) Analysing and developing Husserl's phenomenological approach and including a data analysis process (Giorgi 1975).

### **3 Collection of Vietnamese WMM's Lived Experiences**

I looked back over the thoughts and questions raised when I listened to the stories of their lived experiences before and after their international marriage. It might be very difficult for Vietnamese WMMs who married South Korean men to live in and adapt themselves to a new society and culture. The issue of overcoming cultural differences and language barrier might be rather difficult than they thought. They might suffer from their experiences of segregation caused by their misuse of language, and of their cultural shock and segregation which are more than they can bear individually. On the other hand, they are trying their best to overcome those difficulties they met during their settlement into a South Korean lifestyle. The South Korean government also produced many policies for the foreign WMMs to help them out of these difficulties.

This study attempts to understand the cultural tasks of the South Korean multicultural society through researching the experiences of the Vietnamese WMM in South Korea. It is to understand the nature of the sense of well-being that makes them overcome their difficulties in their experiences in South Korea.

### **3.1 Selection of Vietnamese WMMs for Interview**

#### **3.1.1 Pilot Research Study**

Before starting the collection of Vietnamese WMMs' experiences, a pilot research study was conducted during the period from May to June 2013, to explore the field at the preparation phases of the narrative interview method as shown in Table 4. The research methods used at this stage included questionnaires and interviews formulating questions to 1) Vietnamese WMMs at randomly selected areas in South Korea; 2) the local government officers in two municipalities where most of the Vietnamese WMMs live; 3) the staff of the Multicultural Family Support Centres<sup>25</sup> where the researcher had some personal relationships; and 4) two leaders of the local churches that exercise missions to the multicultural families in the suburbs of Seoul City.

The result of this pilot research study was not successful as planned. The target responses to the questionnaires were 120, but only 18 were received, and the local government officers and the staff of the Multicultural Family Support Centres were not helpful. They were very much reluctant to my request as there had been many disadvantages they had had when they had helped researchers previously. Another reason why the foreign WMMs were so unhelpful was because too many of the researchers approached them when multiculturalism became a big social issue in South Korea since 1990.

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<sup>25</sup> Multicultural Family Support Centres in South Korea are operated and funded by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family. The aim and purpose of these centres are to provide family education, counselling and cultural services for multicultural families, to support the early settlement of immigrant women in Korean society, and to help multicultural families enjoy stable family lives. By collaborating with local cities and provinces, the Support Centres manage to provide basic but necessary services to local women such as Korean language and cultural education services, translation and interpretation services, childcare support services, child education support services, employment and venture support services (M. J. Kim et al. 2006).

### 3.1.2 Selection of Target Research Group

The poor results of previous research made me realize the importance of the sampling strategy and made a wide survey canvassing a group of Vietnamese WMMs throughout South Korea. As a result of this survey, I chose a group at Kwangju Metropolitan City and nearby county named Hwasoon in Jeollanam-Do as sample groups.

Thanks to the recommendation of a scholar at Honam Theological University and Seminary, I could easily get access to sample groups of the Vietnamese WMMs through the Multicultural Family Support Centre in Hwasoon County, Jeollanam-Do (hereafter Hwasoon Centre) and, through the Migrant Women Support Centre in Kwangju Metropolitan City (hereafter Kwangju Centre).

The Hwasoon Centre opens the Korean language class at 10:00 am-noon, every Tuesday and Thursday, and the Kwangju Centre at 2:00-4:00 pm, every Sunday. The researcher prepared questionnaires in English and in Korean, assuming that the Vietnamese WMM could read and write the Korean language but had to translate it into Vietnamese just two hours before distributing it to make the questions clearly understood. The questionnaires were distributed to the 120 Vietnamese WMM only to return 59, and 46 of them opted for further in-depth interviews (they marked 'agreed' column in the questionnaire). Considering the research purpose – Vietnamese WMMs' sense of well-being in their lived experiences in the entire course of their adaptation to a South Korean lifestyle, however, 16 Vietnamese women were excluded from the total as they had lived in South Korea for less than three years and had no children. Nine Vietnamese women included in the 16 had different reasons than the above mentioned for being excluded. They drew special attention as they were living in the shelter cared for by the Kwangju centre. They escaped from the domestic violence of their husbands and/or by in-laws. Some of them were in the process of divorce.

## **3.2 Data Collection: Interviews**

### **3.2.1 Basic Phases of Narrative Interviews**

As mentioned above, 30 Vietnamese WMMs who have lived a stable life in South Korea for more than 3 years and who have children were selected as the participants in the interviews for this study. Interviews with them were conducted according to the basic phases of the narrative interview suggested by Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2007) as shown in Table 4. First, at the initiation phase, the purpose of the research was addressed to gain confidence with the participants to the interview, and the principles and methods of the interview were explained to gain intimacy. At this time, I got consent to record the interviews from the interviewees, and made sure that the interview recordings were confidential and not to be used for other than research purposes. At this phase, the interview participants were presented with printed paper of the sub-titles divided by pre-migration and post-migration of the WMMs, so that the participants could express themselves naturally without stopping the narrative flow by external disturbance. At the main narration phase, I made it possible for interview participants to express their own stories in a natural way and ended the interview when they felt that the story of the interview participants was difficult to go on. In addition, I asked the induction questions to continue the interview when the interviewees got stuck in the middle of their interview as they were not familiar with long-term monotonous narrations. At the next questioning phase, when the interview participants finished their story, I asked them to talk about what I did not understand or contradicted in the context of the story, what was not fully talked about, and what I was curious about in the whole story. Finally, at the concluding talk phase, I stopped voice recording and asked the why question if it is necessary to go deeper in their story. Also, I added field notes and memos to the story not to forget but to use for the data analysis.

### **3.2.2 Interviews with Vietnamese WMMs**

#### **3.2.2.1 First Session of Interviews (3-14 June 2014)**

These interviews with the 30 Vietnamese WMMs took two weeks initially from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June 2014. The time and place of interviews were set by the interviewee's choice. All the interviewees preferred their home to outdoors when they were with their in-laws to avoid possible misunderstandings, as they are not happy to see the WMMs meeting with strangers outside. As they were living scattered all around the city and the county, only 3 to 4 interviews a day were possible. When I planned to interview them, at least 6 to 7 interviews a day were expected. The situation that their families did not allow them to meet other people alone outside or inside their home, delayed the plans. Their families' attitude toward the Vietnamese WMMs added to the difficulties in the interviews. When I asked them such sensitive questions related to their relationships with their in-laws, they showed obvious hesitation to mention the reality and only made good comments.

The interview with each participant took one to two hours. The interview started with the ordinary conversation such as greetings and weather issues. I encouraged the interviewees lead their storytelling and endeavour not to step in the interview unnecessarily. I made notes of the interviewees' non-verbal expressions such as speech speed, tone, facial expression, gesture and the researcher's feeling as well as their verbal expression. They already signed their consent to the written form in the questionnaire, assuring privacy and confidentiality, ensured that no data would be presented in a way that it was possible to identify any individuals. All interviews were conducted in Korean initially to make their in-laws feel comfortable and even a Vietnamese interpreter accompanied them. Only when in need of a precise explanation and or the technical means of an interview was the interpreter used. When I asked a participant questions related to her in-laws, using sophisticated Korean language intentionally, the participant responded that she could not understand what I asked, and then the interpreter translated it into Vietnamese. The interpreter and I had worked on new ideas how to get honest answers from the interview

participants when they were together with their in-laws. The participants answered the questions in Vietnamese and the interpreter translated it into Korean for me (and of course for the in-laws around). Later the interpreter and I listened to the voice recordings and she translated for me the “hidden” answers - not translated fully at the interview.

### **3.2.2.2 Second Session of Interviews (7-28 November 2015)**

Although the original purpose of this study was for the WMMs’ adaptation to Korean culture in general, it was confirmed during the literature review of this study that many studies were already conducted in this regard, so that I tried to have another interview session with the same interview participants of the first interview session to survey the overcoming factors of their adaptation to Korean Culture.

In this case, voice recordings were not possible under various circumstances, and an alternative method was used to record additional answers to the first interview contents – related to overcoming factors – and to record their responses in written form added to the transcripts of their first voice recordings.

### **3.2.2.3 Third Session of Interviews (14 November – 11 December 2016)**

While analysing the results of the second interview session, it was confirmed that there were several preliminary studies on the overcoming factors in the process of WMMs’ adaptation to Korean culture and, therefore, the research problems of this study were converted into the WMMs’ sense of well-being in the course of their overcoming their difficulties in their adaptation to Korean culture. I analysed the contents of the interviews of the first and second session, and extracted specific meanings related to their sense of well-being to have third and final interview session. I had interviewed with them face to face again and wrote down their answers to my questions on their sense of well-being issue.

The interviews were not recorded with voice in the second and third interview sessions because the meetings with the WMMs became natural after first interview with them, and it seemed very helpful in freely expressing their feeling of being free from the tension or the carefulness of voice recording. It also took more time to complete the whole interviews with WMMs in the second and third interview sessions than in the first interview session as it was much harder than expected to arrange appointments to visit WMMs according to their availability.

### **3.2.3 Interview Language and Interpreter**

Throughout this research, one Vietnamese WMM worked as an interpreter. She worked for the Hwasoon Centre as a staff member and an interpreter. She was married in 2006 to a Korean farmer named Kim in Hwasoon County. She had finished her secondary school at Vietnam, and continued her study in South Korea to get into Kwangshin University at Kwangju in 2014. She was a vice-chairperson of the Vietnamese Expatriates Association in South Korea. The head of the Hwasoon Centre had recommended her as my interpreter advising me that she was fluent in Korean and in favour with the Vietnamese WMMs in her area.

The interviews were voice recorded with consent. The recordings were listened to many times to transcribe them into written Korean and meaningful words and sentences were translated into English. As a gift or compensation for participation in the research, every interviewee received an English “Twinings” fruit tea box at the end (or at the start to break the ice in some cases) of the interview.

### **3.2.4 Additional Interviews**

Additional interviews were made with the same interviewees to approach the core of the study subject even later in the middle of data analysis stage. I had visited Kwangju

and Hwasoon City every year since 2014. When necessary, long distant international calls, SNS (Facebook and “Kakao Talk”) and emails were also used to get additional data from them. Further interview questions presented some features of the international marriage migration in order to find what gives them the sense of well-being out of the hidden causes and problems behind their adaptation and integration into South Korean society. In addition to the interview data, the written memoirs and published journals of the Vietnamese WMMs were collected and analysed.

Further interview questions were targeted mainly at the Vietnamese WMM in South Korea, then secondly their South Korean husbands, and their local relatives. The support from the expert witnesses – the local government officers, the staff of the Support Centres, and the local church leaders at Kwangju City and Hwasoon County – verified the interview data. They allowed me to use their valuable resources for research purposes only. Combined and compared with the interview data, these resources were a very good complement to the research.

### **3.2.5 Opportunities and Limitations of the Interview Method for Data Collection**

The original plan of the study was not to obtain data from 30 interviews. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, I could not get interviewees easily. After some trial and error, I visited two migrant women support centres, one in Gwangju metropolitan city and the other in neighbouring Hwasun-Gun, and found interviewees who could participate in this study. First, questionnaires were distributed to the WMMs participating in a Hangul (Korean language) class and persuaded to participate in this study. From a total of 120 questionnaires, a final 30 participants who indicated their intention to participate were obtained from the Korean language class. The list of 30 confirmed participants at that moment and the list of final interviewees of this study are inconsistent. Some of the

WMMs who decided to participate in this study cancelled their participation in opposition to their husbands and family-in-laws. So, I had to ask current interviewees if they had any ethnic friends nearby to make appointments for the next interviews before the end of the current interview. Through this process, I was able to interview 30 Vietnamese WMMs. I interviewed each WMM every year for 3 years, and whenever possible face to face, and if not, by e-mail, or text to ask questions which arose in the analysis of their previous interview data or check any changes of information from their previous interviews.

As the reliability and validity of the interview results can vary greatly depending on the researcher's ability to manage interviews and their analysis, a thorough preparation including enough time was necessary. The opportunities and limitations of the interview as a qualitative research method that I experienced during this study are summarized as follows.

### **3.2.5.1 Opportunities**

The advantages or opportunities of the interview method were that I could collect various opinions of the individual interviewee, and it was possible to listen to the in-depth opinions and feelings relating to an individual's particular experiences, which are difficult to obtain by other research methods. If the interviewee found a question painful or difficult to answer, I could easily switch to a subject which I assume they could deal with more easily. Also, when in-laws were present – who did not allow the WMMs exclusive interviews with others - I could avoid topics related to them or lead the WMMs to give their statements in Vietnamese so I could have the information translated into Korean later. Additional information could be obtained through non-verbal gestures, facial expressions and moods that cannot be grasped by questionnaires or other methods. In this case, I should have learned how to keep field notes in advance, but without practice I was not good at it. However, I could manage brief memos and I could remember what I should

have kept in the interview and wrote it down on a memopad quickly after the interview using the memoir technique. Finally, it was good to take interviewees regardless of their education level or age. There were no restrictions on the interviewees chosen.

### **3.2.5.2 Limitations**

Due to the limitations of qualitative research, any generalization of the survey results was not easy for me. In addition, it was difficult for me to interpret the contents of the responses at a single level as I raised different questions according to the individual characteristics and the surrounding circumstances. As the subject of this study, a "sense of well-being," cannot avoid subjective characteristics, the various cases of WMMs' experiences expressed also had to be subjectively analyzed individually according to the number of cases.

I had to spend more time and money on the interviews than I expected. My interviewees were scattered all over the area, so when I was introduced to the next interviewee, I sometimes needed to travel almost 2 hours by car (if I were lucky) or taxi in some cases. Considering that each interview took about 1 - 1:30 hour, it was difficult to do more than four interviews a day. Because I did not reside in South Korea, I had time limitations as I could only afford to go to South Korea once a year to do field research. Also, I tried to be as objective as possible, but human errors could have occurred which I could not find. It was also difficult to ask sensitive or private questions and did not expect candid answers. The researcher was male and the interviewees were females, so there could have been a gender issue. It was fortunate, however, that the Vietnamese interpreter was a woman and could give a lot of help. It was also difficult to ask questions that require deep thinking or memory because they require prompt answers in the interview setting. So, I supplemented the contents of the interviews by interviewing a second and third time face-to-face at least once every year (and/or by email/SNS anytime).

#### **4 Research Ethics**

I conducted and followed the ethical guidelines as established by ESRC<sup>26</sup> of the United Kingdom mainly and because my main research area is South Korea, the Rules and Regulations of SNUIRB<sup>27</sup> in South Korea are also applicable.

I explained the research purpose, the form of research result report, the contents of the interview, and the voice recording in detail. The interviewees agreed to participate in the research after I guaranteed the protection of interviewees' privacy and the security of their rights. I promised the information they gave will not be used for any other purposes except for this research. The names of the interviewees were covered as anonymous. The titles and names of the literature and art works are used as published.

I respected the voluntary interviewees' personal decision. He explained that the interviewees could withdraw from their participation in the research any time if they felt uncomfortable during the interview session. Two of the interviewees expressed their feeling uncomfortable at the fact that the contents of the interview were being used for research data. They were excluded from the interviewees' group and their voice recording files were destroyed. Another interviewee happened to be excluded from the interviewees' group in the middle of the agreed interview session when her mother-in-law intervened in the interview and insisted on stopping it.

I made every effort to keep the interviews in a natural and comfortable atmosphere. I tried not to make many questions but to hear them with frequent nods at the answers to semi-structured open-ended questions.

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<sup>26</sup> Economic and Social Research Council.

<sup>27</sup> Seoul National University Institutional Review Board.

## 5 Data Analysis

The data analysis of this study used the method of Giorgi. It applies mainly the essential four key steps of Giorgi's phenomenological research method to deal with the in-depth interviews' data (Giorgi 1985: 3-12). They are: 1) reading the entire description to get a sense of the whole statement (1<sup>st</sup> step of Giorgi's). The contents of the recorded interviews are transcribed, including the change of voice, emotions, facial expressions, and interrupted parts; 2) discriminating meaning units within a psychological perspective (2<sup>nd</sup> step of Giorgi's), separating the text into indexical and non-indexical material and using all the indexical components of the text to analyse the sequence of events of each individual. The structure of the life process is described that progresses in time. Also, typical and representative events and other social processes among related social and historical facts are described with the growth of WMMs. Then, meaning units within a psychological perspective are discriminated; 3) examining the non-indexical dimensions of the text as 'knowledge analysis.' Opinions, concepts and general theories between normal and abnormal, reflection and separation are the basis for reconstructing operational theory, and transforming the subject's every day expressions into psychological language (3<sup>rd</sup> step of Giorgi's). In this step, the analytic concept was derived and expressed in the phenomenological language, based on the structural description. The frame of the whole history of WMMs' life, that is the prominent historical and current structures at individual life stages, are extracted by linking inferred structural statements about the stages of WMMs' life systematically; 4) synthesising transformed meaning units into a consistent statement of the structure of the phenomenon (4<sup>th</sup> step of Giorgi's). At this stage, after analysing the cases of individual interviews, the causes and effects of the WMMs' sense of well-being are analysed by comparing 30 interview texts. After similar interview texts with respect to WMMs' sense of well-being were selected and compared, interview texts which showed very different points were compared and analysed. Through this work, the researcher compared the contrasting categories, found alternative structures in the process

of adaptation of WMMs to South Korea, and created a common basic category that still appears in the process.

### **5.1 Triangulation: Establishing Validity**

In qualitative research, validity indicates whether the findings of a research are true (accurately reflect the situation) and certain (supported by the evidence). Triangulation is a method used by researchers in their qualitative studies to check and establish validity by analysing research questions from various perspectives (Guion 2002). Cohen and Manion (2000) define triangulation as "an attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint." Altrichter et al. (2008) argues that triangulation provides a more detailed and balanced picture of the situation. According to O'Donoghue and Punch (2003), triangulation is how to find the regularity of research data by cross-checking data from multiple sources. Denzin (2006) introduced four basic types of triangulation: 1) Data Triangulation; 2) Investigator Triangulation; 3) Theory Triangulation; and 4) Methodological Triangulation. Guion (2002) also identified them and added one more type: 5) Environmental Triangulation.

In this study, data triangulation was used among the triangulation types presented above in order to ensure the findings of this study are true and certain. Data triangulation involves the use of various data and information sources. The core strategy is to categorize each group or type of stakeholder in the programme being evaluated. Then the members of each stakeholder group should be equally included in the evaluation study (Guion 2002).

This study tried to check and establish its validity by additional interview data of the same interviewees even later in the middle of data analysis stage. It took additional interviews every year for three years since 2014. When necessary, internet communication tools such as internet phone, social network systems, and emails were also used to get

additional data from them. In addition to the interview data, the written memoirs and published journals of the Vietnamese WMMs were collected and analysed.

Further interview questions targeted to the Vietnamese WMMs' South Korean husbands, and their local relatives. The support from the expert witnesses – the local government officers, the staff of the Support Centres, and the local church leaders at Kwangju City and Hwasoon County – verified the interview data.

## 5.2 Interview Language Issues: Korean, Vietnamese, and English

Interviews with Vietnamese WMMs proceeded mainly in the Korean language. But in some cases when it was not easy to do in Korean, Vietnamese were used, interpreted, and translated into Korean later. In addition, the keyword of this study, "well-being," was used as it was in English, as there was no Korean word equivalent to it. When the interview data of Vietnamese WMMs were analyzed, many incorrect use of Korean words, especially in relation to the meaning "well-being" were found as follows in Table 11.

Table 11 The Frequency of Korean Words in Relation to the Meaning of “Well-Being” used in the Interviews with Vietnamese WMMs

Seq.	Korean <sup>28</sup>		Vietnamese <sup>29</sup>		Meaning in English
	Word	Freq. <sup>30</sup>	Word	Freq. <sup>31</sup>	
1	Haeng-Bog	190	Hạnh phúc	190	Happiness
2	Gi-Bbeum	34	Niềm vui	34	Pleasure
3	Jeul-Geo-Um	45	Niềm vui	85	Joy
4	Geon-Gang	67	Sức khỏe	67	Health
5	Pyung-An	5	Hòa bình	5	Equability
6	Man-Jog	77	Sự hài lòng	150	Satisfaction
7	Kwae-Rag	7	Niềm vui	7	Pleasure
8	An-Nyung	3	Hòa bình	3	Peace
9	Yu-Kwae	5	Niềm vui	5	Gaiety
10	Sang-Kwae	2	Làm mới	2	Refreshing
11	Tong-Kwae	3	Hài hước	3	Excitement
12	Joh-Eum	178	Tốt	55	Good

<sup>28</sup> Korean words related to the meaning of well-being the Vietnamese WMMs used at interviews.

<sup>29</sup> Vietnamese word equivalent to Korean word.

<sup>30</sup> Frequency of Korean words used in the interviews of Vietnamese WMMs.

<sup>31</sup> Frequency of real meaning in Vietnamese as a result of interview data analysis.

The use of the Korean language at the interviews with Vietnamese WMMs in Korean shows the limitations of using other languages in the interviews. However, since the purpose of this study is to find out the factors affecting the Vietnamese WMMs' sense of well-being, and their interrelationships, it seems correct to comprehensively analyse of the words related to well-being as a whole, collectively rather than individual analysis of the words themselves according to the purpose of this study.

### 5.3 Extraction of Meaning Units for Themes and Integration of Meaning

This study aims to uncover what are the factors in the structure of the Vietnamese WMMs' lived experiences influencing to their sense of well-being. According to this purpose, this study takes the first and second steps of Giorgi's essential four key steps in phenomenological research method. To extract the meaning units from their statements at the interviews (Giorgi's 2<sup>nd</sup> step), it is necessary to take time to read the statements to grasp the whole story and conclusion, and to repeatedly read again and again (Giorgi's 1<sup>st</sup> step). As a result of the 2<sup>nd</sup> step of Giorgi's, 76 meaning units were extracted, and these units were classified into 25 categories according to their similarities. Finally, 7 themes are produced as their adaptation process. It is presented according to the time sequences as shown in Table 12.

Table 12 Themes and Integration of Meaning according to the Meaning Units

Theme	Integration of Meaning <b>Meaning Unit</b>
Life in Vietnam	Resources <b>Hometown; Culture; Family Relationship; School Life; Work Life; Religion</b>
Adaptation in the process of International Marriage	Motivation <b>Korean Dream; Opportunity; Economic Expectation;</b>

**Happiness out of farmland**

Route

**Workplace; Matchmaking (Broker);  
Introduced by Friends, Relatives, or Neighbours**

Feeling after Decision

**Expectation & Excitement; Anxiety; Burden**

Others' Response

**Envy; Anxiousness; Warm Encouragement**

Adaptation in the marriage life

Accuracy of Information

**Exactly; To some Extent; Rarely**

Difficulties in Honeymoon Period

**Communication; Gathering with In-Laws' in Festive Season;  
Food and Seasoning**

Relationship with In-Laws

**Ignored by In-Laws; Ignored and Segregation by Relatives;  
Intervention and Control by Mother-In-Law;  
Burden from a Sense of Duty; Difficulties in Honourification**

Relationship with Korean Husband

**Love and Embrace; Consideration and Care; Ignorance;  
Domestic Violence; Bad Drinking Habits;  
Personality and the Age Gap**

Difficulty in Expression

**Differences in Cultural Perception; Using Gesture;  
Variety of Expression in Korean Language**

Adaptation in Daily Life

Communication

**Unable to Pour out Troubles; Lack of time to talk;  
Simple Talk to Enhance Intimacy**

Economic Difficulties

**Fall short of Husband's Income;  
Many Dependants of In-Laws' Family; Uneven Income**

Emotional Difficulties

**Loneliness with no one to talk revealing her mind;  
Share troubles with her friends**

Discriminative Attention

**Segregation from Family and Relatives;  
Ignorance of Neighbours**

Adaptation in Children Issues

Identity Crisis

**Confusion of Identity for Homeland (Parents);  
Segregation from Appearance**

Adaptation to School (Study)

**Insufficient Study Progress; Difficulties in Homework;  
School (Nursery) Refusal**

Friend's Attention

**Ignorance of Friends; Friends' fisheye look**

Stressful Experience

**Children's Lack of Confidence;**

	<b>Difficulties in Getting Along with Friends; School (Nursery) Refusal</b>
Adaptation in Korean Traditional Culture	
Festival Culture	<b>Unable to Join Family Fun in Festive Season; Loneliness thinking of Her Family Home; Difficult to Follow the Protocol</b>
Food Culture	<b>Variety of Food and Seasoning; Lack of Knowledge in Korean Recipes</b>
Relatives Culture	<b>Difficulties in Honourification and Titles; Difficulties in Getting Along with Relatives</b>
Adaptation in the multicultural family	
Self-Help Meeting	<b>High Expectation to Self-Help Meeting; Good Opportunity to Review herself</b>
Multi-Cultural Programme	<b>Expectation and Excitement; Opportunity to Learn Korean Culture and Language; Relaxed Getting along with Friends</b>
Call for Help	<b>Support from Multi-Cultural Support Centre; Embassy</b>
Troubles in Reality	<b>Anxiousness to her Parents at Homeland Ignorance of her Family; Fall short of living expenses (deficit)</b>

#### **5.4 Demographic Factors affecting the Sense of Well-Being**

Further to the themes and integration of meaning by extraction of meaning units as mentioned above, the factors affecting the sense of well-being could be found in the process of restructuring the WMMs' transcripts. This study found the demographic variables (or factors) such as the WMM's hometown as background, her age and the age gap between her husband, her and his education levels, their religions, their residence periods and types, their occupations, and their incomes. This study, then, examines the sense of well-being that WMMs perceive subjectively and analyses the difference in the sense of well-being according to the characteristics of demographic variables as found above and shown in Table 13.

Twenty out of thirty Vietnamese WMMs emigrated to South Korea through international marriages. Two emigrated as industrial trainees, who met and married South Korean men. The women's average age was 33.7 and ranged from 27 years old to 44 years old. The median was 33. The average age of their Korean husbands was 49.6 years and ranged from 42 to 59 years old, 15.9 years older than that of their wives. The median age was 48.5.

Table 13 Demographic Variables of Interviewees (as of 30 June 2017)

Case	Age		Level of Education		Length of Marriage	Job (1)		Children	Level of Household Economy (4)	Religion (2)		Family Size (3)
	WMM	Husband	WMM	Husband		WMM	Husband			WMM	Husband	
PP01	34	48	12 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	14yr	FW	SE	2	Middle	No	No	No
PP02	34	46	9 <sup>th</sup>	U	14yr	HW	FM	3	Higher	B	No	No
PP03	32	56	12 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	12yr	HW	FM	2	Middle	No	B	No
PP04	32	52	9 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	13yr	OW	FW	3	Middle	B	No	Yes/F
PP05	42	51	U	C	14yr	FW	FW	1	Middle	B	No	Yes/F
PP06	35	46	9 <sup>th</sup>	C	10yr	HW	SE	2	Middle	No	Ch	Yes/F
PP07	32	48	9 <sup>th</sup>	C	12yr	HW	FM	2	Middle	B	No	No
PP08	27	44	12 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	7yr	HW	FM	2	Lower	No	No	Yes/F
PP09	37	45	U	U	13yr	FW	SE	1	Middle	No	B	Yes/F
PP10	29	47	8 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	9yr	HW	FM	2	Middle	No	Ch	No
PP11	33	59	9 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	7yr	HW	FW	1	Lower	B	No	No
PP12	32	46	9 <sup>th</sup>	C	10yr	HW	SE	3	Middle	Ca	Ca	No
PP13	32	56	12 <sup>th</sup>	C	12yr	HW	FW	3	Middle	Ch	Ch	Yes/L
PP14	35	57	7 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	14yr	HW	FM	1	Lower	No	Ch	No
PP15	34	47	9 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	13yr	HW	OW	1	Lower	B	No	Yes/L
PP16	33	45	12 <sup>th</sup>	C	9yr	HW	SE	2	Middle	Ch	Ch	Yes/F
PP17	31	48	9 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	10yr	HW	SE	1	Lower	No	B	No
PP18	32	49	C	12 <sup>th</sup>	12yr	HW	FM	1	Middle	No	Ch	Yes/F
PP19	34	50	12 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	7yr	HW	FM	1	Lower	No	No	No
PP20	40	52	9 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	12yr	FW	SE	3	Middle	No	B	No
PP21	32	47	9 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	13yr	HW	FM	1	Middle	No	B	Yes/F
PP22	31	44	6 <sup>th</sup>	C	11yr	HW	FM	2	Middle	No	No	Yes/L
PP23	30	45	9 <sup>th</sup>	C	11yr	HW	FM	1	Middle	No	B	No
PP24	35	50	9 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	15yr	HW	FW	2	Middle	No	No	No

PP25	36	57	9 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	17yr	OW	SE	1	Lower	No	Ch	No
PP26	44	55	12 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	13yr	HW	SE	2	Middle	No	No	No
PP27	28	42	12 <sup>th</sup>	U	7yr	FW	SE	2	Middle	Ch	Ch	No
PP28	34	51	11 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	14yr	HW	FW	2	Lower	No	No	No
PP29	40	52	12 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	13yr	HW	SE	3	Middle	B	No	Yes/F
PP30	31	53	6 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	13yr	HW	FM	1	Middle	No	No	No

\* Legend: (1) FM: Farmer, FW: Factory Worker, HW: HouseWife, OW: Office Worker, SE: Self-Employed. (2) B: Buddhist, Ch: Christian, Ca: Catholic. (3) Yes/F: Living together with WMM's family members, Yes/L: Living together with WMM's in-laws. (4) Middle: US\$1,500-3,000 per month, Lower: Less than US\$1,500 per month.

Eighteen women did not graduate high school in Vietnam because they had been expected to help their family in many ways such as working in a family business (mainly farm work), taking care of their siblings, and bringing in an income. Nine women completed high school; two women graduated from university, and one finished 2 years of college. Nineteen husbands completed high school, eight finished 2 years of college, and 3 had been to university. The demographics of the interviewees are shown in Table 13.

## 6 Conclusion

Marriage is an important starting point, a turning point and an interconnection in a person's life, as compared to another birth. In addition, marriage is a process of mutual co-operation that is not completed but dynamic and fluid. The nature of South Korean society could call marriage a family-tie, not just an individual-tie. Therefore, marriage extends not only within the household but also between the households. Furthermore, the international marriage extends the scope of research observation because it adds relations between the two countries to the relations within a nation. The WMMs of this study, living through international marriages, have experienced a lot of confusion and conflicts in a different lifestyle, culture, language, social system and social perception. Nonetheless, even while experiencing chaos and conflicts, the WMMs could express their sense of well-being when they have realized the mitigation and overcoming of cultural shock in their marriage and life in South Korea during their 3-6 years of migration. In the process of adaptation, the

level of their sense of well-being differs according to their personal situation and tendency, their ties to their married families, their background and education level of pre-migrated Vietnam, and their migration purpose. Also, their sense of well-being in the process of adaptation is closely related to their experiences of Vietnam before migration and their experiences of migration to South Korea. Therefore, this study analyses and interprets the sense of well-being of the WMM in the process of adaptation to South Korea divided into three stages: pre-migrated life in Vietnam, migrating process, and life after migration.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation of the Sense of Well-Being of WMMs at the Stage of their Pre-Migration to South Korea**

#### **1 Introduction**

The pre-migration stage of these WMMs can be divided into two parts. One part is their life in Vietnam and the other is the process of marriage migration to South Korea.

Before the WMMs married, the story of their life in Vietnam was found to have much to do with their responses they made in the face of many challenges they experienced in the course of their adjustment after they moved to South Korea. Therefore, careful analysis of their personality and family relationships made as they grew up was crucial in finding the factors that affect the sense of well-being in their adaptation to life in South Korea.

Meanwhile, after the WMMs decided to have an international marriage, the experiences in preparation for migration to South Korea were expected to have a great impact on their sense of well-being during their South Korean adaptation process.

This chapter analyses the experiences of WMMs in Vietnam prior to migration to South Korea such as their growth, motivation, route and preparation. In the meantime, analysing factors affecting their sense of well-being are intertwined with the factors that overcome the difficulties in their migration process. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse the factors of overcoming difficulties during the settlement process of WMMs in this chapter and the next chapter, and then the results are applied to the sense of well-being of WMMs in chapter 6.

## **2 WMMs' Life in Vietnam**

In their pre-migration life in Vietnam, most of the WMMs experienced poverty but their parents tried to overcome the poverty with their economic activities as well as with the WMMs' help. By doing so, they experienced strong family bonds through support and encouragement to each other. The environmental, economic, and educational backgrounds of these WMMs are different but the socio-cultural backgrounds have the following common features. The socio-cultural backgrounds that are common to Vietnamese WMMs are divided into "family life" and "life at work." In the family life, it is divided into bilateral culture, intimate family relationship, efforts for family cohesion, and an open and independent life. In the life at work, it was divided into the life as factory workers who try to overcome the poverty, and the working life as professional women. Also, it is analysed in the following three chapters on how the social and cultural commonalities affect their sense of well-being in Vietnam, in their marriage migration, and in their life after migration.

### **2.1 Family Life**

These WMMs recognize that Vietnam is experiencing economic difficulties at the national level. Although there are cultural differences according to the social status of the upper and lower classes in the traditional peasant society, and according to the regional characteristics of the southern and the northern region, the gender equality influenced by the bilateral system and the equality of Communism, and the flexibility in gender roles are perceived as natural.

#### **2.1.1 Bilateral Culture**

In their bilateral culture, PP05 knows that the husband and wife play a flexible role in all aspects of the family such as economic activity, housework, and child rearing, and furthermore, PP09 thinks that the life structure of the bilateral culture has brought about

the couples' joint responsibility. They interpret this phenomenon as the social culture of Vietnam, not only in their own homes. PP14 recognizes that consciousness by the bilateral culture is indistinguishable not only for the couple but also for the sons and daughters, so that it is natural for the daughter to work for the livelihood of her family:

My father and mother worked for money and did housework together as our situation was difficult economically. My dad quit his job and was doing his business. He went out for business and when home, he cleaned the house and did the dishes instead of my mom (PP05).

We usually eat out from breakfast to dinner in Vietnam, because every man and woman goes to work. After the war, it is so hard to live that I work with my mom and dad like other family in Vietnam. That's our way of life back in Vietnam (PP09).

My sister and I went to a company. My dad was at home and cooked for me. But my father is sick now ... so he was cooking at home and my mom is making money (PP14).

Since the WMMs have internalized the marital relationship, home economics, housekeeping, and child-rearing as natural things that do not distinguish the married couples from each other in the process of their growing, they take for granted the joint responsibility to everything related to their family life according to their household situation and circumstances. Therefore, as a wife or a daughter-in-law, a woman performs economic affairs and social activities relatively freely rather than concentrating solely on housework. Especially, in the case of PP14, it is noticeable that her sick father carries out housework entirely and three women, that is her mother and two daughters, take charge of the home economy.

In addition, the bilateral culture also appears in their sacrificial culture. As they do sacrifices not only to the paternal line but also on bilateral lines, the scope of family can be seen as an extended family relationship through marriage. From the perspective of extended family relations, the practice that married women are able to do sacrifices not only to their in-laws' but also their own ancestors is perpetuated as a natural custom, and

then the boundaries to distinguish between son and daughter, and between home family and in-law's family are ambiguous. PP09 recognizes sacrifices as a type of family gathering that ties the family together when the family members could express their longing for the deceased:

My dad does not have a son. But we do sacrifice. But make it simple only to see our grandparents. Today we do sacrifice to see our grandfather. But I, even a daughter, can do sacrifice to my grandfather in Vietnam. Daughter, not necessarily a son, can do it. My father and mother do sacrifice not only to grandmother but also to grandmother-in-law. Just make it simple and cook delicious dishes for us together (PP05).

### **2.1.2 Intimate Family Relationship**

The extended family relationship through marriage does not separate home family from family-in-law. The bilateral system grants inheritance rights and imposes support obligations on both the daughter and the son, and in some cases, the daughter's role is considered to be more important than the son. PP18 understands that through this family system, women accept both their home family and family-in-law without separating them as their own extended family, and this concept of family maintains the intimacy between the two families. Furthermore, PP30 understands that traditional Vietnamese families established relatives and a kinship community based on lineage in a family and village-centred society. Even though these traditional appearances disappeared in modern times, relatives still reside close to each other and maintain a close family relationship while continuing the family's affection.

Family relationship in Vietnam is closer than in South Korea. Soon after I came to South Korea, my sister-in-law married. She rarely comes to her home. But we Vietnamese are interested not only in my home family but also in family-in-law's. South Korea and Vietnam are a little different (PP18).

Our relatives do not live far away each other in Vietnam. Of course, there are some relatives live far away. From South to North is far, isn't it? Here Jeollanam-do is not far

from Seoul. It takes several hours to go there. However, it takes 3 to 4 days to go there, from South to North in Vietnam. There was no airplane operate between South and North. Now it operates but the ticket is very expensive. We cannot go there. Instead we take bus or train to go there and it takes 2-3 days. Our aunt, eldest aunt lives in North. But we meet 2-3 times in a year (PP30).

These WMMs have grown with encouragement, acknowledgement and compliments in an open and autonomous family atmosphere made by intimate family relationship. They also perceive that they have been able to fully utilize their abilities in both home and social life under the social atmosphere in which men and women are equal without discrimination.

PP05 interprets her as having high confidence and self-esteem because of her excellent academic performance and positive tendency during her school days, and PP09 does because of her parents who complimented, encouraged, and respected her.

There were not many people who graduate university in my age. I studied well during my high school days. I thought I could do anything in Vietnam (PP05).

My parents told me I was good at studying same as they had been. I was well educated that I could explain what I had learned at school to my parents. Whenever I asked something, they said 'O.K., O.K. You can do whatever you want.' My parents praised me very much. They always listened very well to me. They always praised me a lot (PP09).

PP14 understands that she was born with the power of her parents' desire and prayer and received special love and support under the social phenomenon in which the role of women was very diverse. PP21 became dignified and confident as she grew, being supported by her mother who was open and made her do whatever she wanted to do:

My parents only gave birth to sons before me. So, my parents prayed for a daughter every day, and they gave birth to me (PP14).

Our family were really happy when my dad's works were going well, and I was in school. My mother's business was also good. My parents allowed me to do whatever I wanted to.

I used to run away for a month or so when my father had a lot of debt. I ran away for a month to my school friend in Ho Chi Minh (PP21).

Furthermore, though PP21 was a freewheeling personality and showed the deviant behaviour of running away, she understood the heart of her parents who loved and supported her. She also understands herself as a challenging and enterprising person who sought her mother's recognition and support in her decision on international marriage:

From the outset, I thought my mother would object to my international marriage to Korea. .... When I told her, 'I'm trying to marry South Korean man,' she did not say anything nor interfere me. She only said, 'I used to send you alone far away many times, and it is up to you now, my daughter. But watch carefully who he can make your good husband, or not'<sup>36</sup> (PP21).

These WMMs' self-beliefs can be interpreted as a driving force for overcoming and adapting to the environment with confidence, dignity, and positive thinking.

### **2.1.3 Efforts for Family Cohesion**

These WMMs who shared a culture of family intimacy in a family-centred society, have a strong sense of family community. In other words, for the sake of peace and well-being of the other members of their family, they are willing to sacrifice but do not regard it as a sacrifice and expect no compensation.

PP05 understands her efforts for her family, such as helping her brother's school expenses and family livelihood through her job after university graduation, are natural for her to bind her family together. PP14 recalls that the farming work from dawn to midnight was too hard, and emphasizes the family cohesion as "the whole family is participating

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<sup>36</sup> It means her mother supported and encouraged her daughter's international marriage with the heart of a mother who recognized and supported her daughter.

together:"

Before marriage, I made more money than no one else knew,<sup>37</sup> so I could send my brother money for his tuition fee and I had enough money to maintain livelihood of my family (PP05).

I stopped at elementary school, and farmed with my parents. I worked from dawn to night, waking up at 4-5 a.m. and went to work after breakfast. And I plucked and weeded with a hoe all day until 7 p.m. Farming is too hard. The whole family is working together (PP14).

The thicker the family cohesion is, the greater the proportion of thinking about the whole family than the person's own position. PP18 expresses her family ties by giving up her college and working in the office to help her family's livelihood. Though PP30 had experienced many disastrous situations such as her father's death in her childhood and stopping elementary school, she could also express her family ties by taking it for granted to help her struggling mother as a member of a family:

I went to university. My sister is now studying at university. My parents had difficulty sending us to college. I left the university and went to work at Japanese company (PP18).

My mom was having a hard time getting her four children to grow up. I was 12 years old, but I could not go to school and went to the city to work with my mother. I went to the city to sell coffee. My uncle gave me no money but rice, and send my mother to another place to live and work. I was also sent to my friend's mother's house and worked there. It was an apartment where I lived. I had to save water and could not bathe at all. I worked, and do the laundry much as there were many children to take care. I got paid monthly around VND150,000.<sup>38</sup> It might be a small money for others but a big money for me (PP30).

Furthermore, PP30 understands that the consciousness of family cohesion helps to understand the misunderstandings between family members and to realize that they must be together in the difficult times, and so it became a centre point for reuniting families who

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<sup>37</sup> It means she earns more salary than others.

<sup>38</sup> It was worth around KRW15,000 which was worth around GBP12.00 in 1993.

have been scattered:

My mother worked for a local food shop and other job of daily chores from time to time. My younger brother and my grandmother worked in the paddy fields. My eldest brother stayed in his friend's house. My elder brother went away because he hated my mother who remarried. After a few years, my eldest brother went to the North and brought my elder brother back. My mother did not remarry in the end, and now our family live together even though we are poor (PP30).

These WMMs have internalized a strong sense of family community through a culture of intimate family relationships in a family-centred society, and their family cohesion is understood to be the centre of the family. In addition, this family cohesion is analysed as an important resource to feel the sense of well-being even when they are in poor circumstances.

#### **2.1.4 Open and Independent Life**

Although there is a relative and absolute difference in the degree of poverty, these WMMs have grown by experiencing economic difficulties under the couple-centred nuclear family system. It can be, therefore, interpreted that their parents or their whole family participated in the economic activities, and which made these WMMs grow with openness socially, and with self-reliance (independence) personally.

PP05 had to solve her college course financially on her own due to the difficult circumstances of her family. She thinks it was her open mind and her self-reliant spirit that made her overcome the obstacles and made her dream come true. PP09 thinks of herself as a person who has a strong sense of challenge and a sense of openness which was influenced by the open-door policy that conforms to the global age. She also understands that she has an independent and self-supportive philosophy of life in her family life influenced by a bilateral culture:

I was born in 1977 when my country had been unified not long before and it was very difficult in economic situation. I wanted to go to college after graduating from high school, but my mom said that she could not afford it. I found out that the nurse shortage at that time made the nursing college supported by government. If I pass the nursing college, the dormitory and tuition fees are free. I told that to my mom and went to the nursing school. Since then I had been living alone and took part-time job and went to school (PP05).

In 1996, I lived in the centre of Hanoi and had a lot of good culture coming from abroad. At that time, I went to the National Institute for Mathematics and Computing for two years. I was the only woman in the lab. I was the only woman in the lab. Vietnamese people, especially women, have strong independence, so when they get married, they have to get away from their parents (PP09).

PP14 and PP21 come from the southern part of Vietnam, and think it was their open mind and independence that made them choose and decide on international marriage:

I just simply wanted to marry South Korean man (PP14).

It was me who first said I wanted to marry a foreigner. So, I went up alone to an international marriage brokerage company in Ho Chi Minh. I went to that far and chose to marry a foreigner. I was worried because it was not my mom's but my choice (PP21).

These WMMs have open tendency and self-supported temperament owing to various causes and circumstances such as their economic difficulties, the vortex of national transformation, their socio-cultural tradition, and their regional characteristics where they come from. These causes, together with their temperament act as factors influencing their sense of well-being in South Korea.

## **2.2 Life at Work**

These WMMs moved to cities and worked as factory workers or professional women at their pre-migration stage. No matter what they were, their economic activities played an important role to overcome their household economic difficulties and provided

them with opportunities to advance in society. Furthermore, their life at work motivated them to make an international marriage which led them to South Korea.

### **2.2.1 Factory Workers' Life to Overcome Poverty**

These WMMs, who consider family-centred cohesion important, migrated to big cities to solve their household poverty. They supported their household by working in the factories in big cities such as Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City where most big factories were concentrated as their life in farmland had not been improved even after Doi Moi:

I had been to a factory in Ho Chi Minh since I was 16 years old. .... I went to the factory for about 4 years to earn money and gave it to my parents. .... At that time, I had no money to spare but helped my parents (PP14).

I went to work before I got married. .... A Japanese company ..... makes computers, remote controllers ..... and cameras (PP18).

I had been there (her mom's friend's) and then came back to the farm and worked with my mom. But rural life was too hard and could not make money at all. So, I went to the city to work at the company when I turned 17 years old. I worked there for 2 years (PP30).

According to the interviews, these WMMs do not express their dissatisfaction with the family or their lives, even though they had to work hard as factory workers, to help their poor household. Family cohesion and the community sense of family made these WMMs consider it natural for them to participate actively in solving their household poverty. In addition, this family cohesion helps greatly to overcome the difficulties that WMMs face after marriage migration but, on the other hand, they rely too much on their family in remote Vietnam, which makes it difficult for them to live well in South Korea. Finally, their family cohesion becomes an important factor affecting their sense of well-being in their South Korean life.

### **2.2.2 Working as a Professional Woman**

These WMMs with a high academic achievement, graduated from universities, and had an enterprising way of thinking, were also prominent in social life and actively engaged in work as professional women.

After PP05 finished her university course, she gave up her job guaranteed by the government authority and entered a foreign company despite tough competition, and worked as a professional. PP09 has great pride in having worked at a national research institute where only men were working:

Working at a health centre in rural area is very difficult ..... a factory with more than 500 workers needs at least one nurse ..... I worked for the factory as a nurse (PP05).

In the past, I worked in a national research institute in Vietnam for two years. This institute preferred men, and there was no woman but me (PP09).

PP05 and PP09 are from the big cities of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh and they are university graduates. PP05 majored in nursing and worked in an infirmary at a Korean company in Ho Chi Minh. PP09 majored in computer science and worked as a computer programmer and she was the only female among men in a national research institute.

### **2.3 Conclusion**

Before migration, the life of these WMMs in Vietnam is largely divided into family life and work life. In the former, all these WMMs experienced economic hardship. However, they were also found to have grown up receiving encouragement and support from their families even in their poverty. This was interpreted as their driving force for overcoming and adapting to the new environment in their later life by allowing them to form an appreciation of their parents, strong self-reliance, an open enterprising tendency, and positive thinking even in their difficult economic situations. In the latter case, when the

academic background was low, they tried to overcome the poverty of the family through the life of the factory worker. The other WMMs were university graduates, who lived an independent life through demonstrating their competence from their professional life experience.

In conclusion, the experience of their life in Vietnam before their migration to South Korea was one of the important resources to cope with the challenging environment to be met after migration to South Korea, and was also an important factor to affect their sense of well-being.

### **3 WMMs' Process of Marriage Migration to South Korea**

These WMMs have migrated to South Korea through international marriages. The process in the stage of their marriage migration is analysed by the types of their migration routes and motives. There are three types of marriage routes: migration through marriage after dating in Vietnam; migration introduced by relatives or by the Korean Wave; migration through international marriage agencies to overcome their poverty.

Their international marriage motives are summarized as: reality that they wanted to escape from; life adventure toward freedom; vague expectation; longing for affluence, and dream associated with spouse.

These WMMs have had many difficulties in preparing for migration to South Korea after choosing international marriages. The difficulties they faced at this stage were lack of information about spouses, anxiety about their choices, and parents' opposition.

#### **3.1 Marriage Routes**

##### **3.1.1 Marriage after Dating in Vietnam**

PP05 seems to have faced extreme opposition from her parents against her

marriage to her South Korean company colleague a year after she met him. It is understood that was due to a negative perception of South Korean men who produced many Lai Tai Han<sup>39</sup> when they had participated in the Vietnam War as soldiers. Even more Lai Tai Han were born by South Korean expatriates after many South Korean companies had entered Vietnam when the Doi Moi policy<sup>40</sup> was introduced. Lai Tai Han often live at the margins of Vietnamese society. On the other hand, the kindness of a South Korean man living in the same neighbourhood with her, attracted the good feeling of PP09's family. Then, naturally she got to know him, and she became a married migrant to South Korea:

I met my husband at work in 2003, and we were in love each other since. My parents were very opposed to my marrying him when we decided to get married. It was because the image of South Korean men is not good in my town. For instance, South Korean expatriates who had worked for their company in Vietnam for 4-5 years, living together with Vietnamese girls and having children, suddenly disappeared one day without any notice. Later Vietnamese girls found their registered residence address was not actual where their company also pretended not to know. Their images were so bad that my parents objected to my marrying him (PP05).

I graduated from college and met my groom. My mother and my family liked him because he was so kind and good in greeting, and much interested in others. I married him after two years of love (PP09).

This type of migration motives shows that they went through a certain period of love after meeting with each other in the same workplace or town, and got married. The result of the two cases of PP05 and PP09 was international marriage, but shows contrasts in the process. In the case of PP05, she experienced extreme opposition from her parents due to their negative perception of South Korean men. In the case of PP09, she experienced her family's favour of South Korean men. Their direct or indirect perception of South Korean men may affect their sense of well-being in South Korea.

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<sup>39</sup> It is a Vietnamese term, "Lai Đại Hàn," for the children of South Korean fathers and Vietnamese women during the Vietnam War (Shipper 2010).

<sup>40</sup> In 1986, Vietnam started a radical, social, economic, and ideological renovation, termed "Đổi Mới." The ruling Communist Party initiated the Doi Moi in order to develop a market economy for stimulating economic productivity, but keep the socio-political system intact' (Wagstaff and Nguyen 2002).

### **3.1.2 Marriage by Relatives' Introduction or by Korean Wave Influence**

PP18 undertook a different migration process as she was introduced to a South Korean man by her aunt who had married a South Korean man and had already settled in South Korea, whereas PP14 made an autonomous decision to take marriage migration wholly influenced by the Korean Wave:

My aunt introduced me to a South Korean man, my husband in 2005. Her husband and my husband worked at the same company. They were close friends. My aunt suggested my husband to introduce her niece to him. So, after he confirmed, she introduced me to him when she visited Vietnam. We had a wedding in Vietnam at June in 2005. We came to South Korea at September in 2005. We had a wedding again in South Korea. Ah, I remember we were engaged in Vietnam (PP18).

When I was 23 years old, I'd liked to marry. I wanted to live in South Korea where I listened to my friends about. So, I went to Ho Chi Minh where I could meet foreign men. There I met my husband, and married him (PP14).

One case of this type, that is PP18, differentiated from other international marriage cases in that it has accurate information about both families, an engagement ceremony, and two weddings in Vietnam and South Korea. The other case, that is PP14, made marriage migration following the fantasy about South Korea due to the influence of the Korean Wave.

### **3.1.3 Marriage through International Marriage Agencies**

The following cases show marriage migrations through international marriage agencies to support poor parents. PP21 chose her marriage migration to South Korea boldly by herself as she had said frankly and honestly, "I was married for money first," and as she had attempted boldly to run away from family after her father's business failure. PP30 considered marriage migration as a way out of the poverty of her family and it was

not her own decision:

I was married for money first. There are international marriage agencies in Vietnam as in South Korea. It is me who wanted to marry foreigner. There was a woman who married South Korean man. She recommended me to marry South Korean man, saying, 'South Korea is good and South Korean men are also nice.' So, I went to an agency in Ho Chi Minh by myself (PP21).

My aunt recommended me to marry foreigner to help my mother. I married South Korean man at the age of 18 in Vietnamese term and 19 in South Korean term. A woman my aunt knows introduced me an agency and I stayed there for a month until I met my husband (PP30).

### **3.2 Marriage Motives: Excitement and Insecurity**

#### **3.2.1 Reality that they wanted to Escape from**

These WMMs were in a psychological state that they wanted to get out of the reality of their own situation at the time they chose international marriage. They wanted to get away from their home because of the difficult circumstances of their families and the hardships of their parents since their childhood. Even after they grew up to be adults, they still wanted to get away from their countries due to their harsh social environment. As such, these WMMs have chosen international marriage to go to South Korea as a breakthrough to escape from parents, families, and the poor social environment.

##### **3.2.1.1 New Life Different from Parents**

PP28 did not like to see her parents farming, and PP29 hated the way her parents fought each other since her early days. PP24 wanted to live a different life from her father who was conducting tours with his boat:

My parents were farming, rice farming. It was so hard as it was so hot. Originally Vietnam

has same four seasons, Vietnam is the same as spring, summer, autumn and winter, and have 3 farms a year. But when it came to rain, it was getting harder and harder because no one could farm. My brothers helped my parents farming, but I did not want to do farming desperately (PP28).

I have a lot of bad memories when I was a child. Mom and Dad fought a lot at home. There were 5 daughters only in my house. I am the youngest daughter. They wanted a son but in vain and they fought it. From time to time they fought as their work was hard. I minded them a lot. I really hated that mom and dad were fighting (PP29).

My dad was a ship driver. My daddy picks up the travellers and let them see around the scenery. The people who travel were comfortable, but my dad was having a hard time. When I was young, I hated it a little, but I really hated to see my dad working hard when I was grown up. I worried a lot about marry Vietnamese man because all Vietnamese men work so hard as same as my dad (PP24).

### **3.2.1.2 Escape from a Poor Home**

PP29 did not like her family working in agriculture and livestock and PP24 tried to escape from home, where her parents' income was lower despite their hard work:

My home was poor. They did farming, growing pigs, and had ducks ..... Mom and Dad did a lot of hard work. I did not want to live like that. My family lives well off a little bit as I was an only daughter in my family even the living standard of my family was not that high compared to other wealthy family. So, I got into trouble at home without thinking (PP29).

I remember when I was a child. My dad was a ship driver and my mom was a consultant on cosmetics. I just studied and help my mom and dad from time to time. My family became poorer as they couldn't earn enough money even their hard work. I cried because I could not eat good food and felt frustrated (PP24).

### **3.2.1.3 Out of Harsh Circumstances**

These WMMs disliked their life in the social environment in which they lived. PP29 did not want to live in an environment where everyone was farming, and PP24 did not want to live the same life as her parents who lived in an environment where life itself

was difficult:

I thought it would be a hard life consequently if I met a Vietnamese man and married. The same farming, and the environment is same. I know my mom and dad lived a very hard life. So, I did not want to keep living in Vietnam (PP29).

It's hard to live in Vietnam. My mom and dad did not have much work to do, so they were having a hard time. So, I wanted to go to South Korea because I was sure to live the same life as my parents if I live in Vietnam (PP24).

### **3.2.2 Life Adventure toward Freedom**

Some of these WMMs chose to go to South Korea from watching South Korean dramas. Some were also curious about South Korea with the introduction of their local acquaintances, and had a desire to get away from the harsh social environment of their own country to live in another good country once. In addition, some WMMs chose to go to Korea because of their strong desire to live according to their will.

#### **3.2.2.1 Strong Curiosity about a New Country**

Influenced by her elder sister who had first moved to South Korea and married, PP29 wanted to get out of her poor country and chose to go to South Korea to live well:

I have an elder sister in South Korea. She married a South Korean man. She sometimes calls my mom, and keeps saying she lives in South Korea well and it is a good place to live. So, I thought I would like to live in South Korea like my sister as Vietnam is hard to live (PP29).

#### **3.2.2.2 Strong Desire to Live According to their Will**

PP28 ignored the advice of her parents and chose to go to South Korea:

It was so nice to meet my handsome husband that I had no other idea. My mom suggested me to think a little carefully because I'm leaving Vietnam to marry South Korean man, but I did not consider her advice. Anyway, I said that all the people next door were going to marry in South Korea, and I am also going to (PP28).

### **3.2.3 Vague Expectation**

These WMMs turned out to be living with vague expectations about South Korea that had overcome difficult times and achieved high economic growth, standing on the rank of advanced countries. Among these WMMs, there was an expectation that they would be able to live well in South Korea with its good economic conditions. Some of these WMMs chose to go to South Korea with the expectation that they would be able to help their families in Vietnam economically.

#### **3.2.3.1 Vague Expectation about the Richness of South Korea**

These WMMs chose to go to South Korea with the expectation that they will be able to live freely in good conditions and environment if only they could just go to South Korea unconditionally. PP28 chose to go to South Korea after the introduction of her friend that she would be free and happy to live there, and PP24 with the expectation that it would not be difficult to live better in South Korea than her own country once she was introduced to a South Korean man who was good looking, good personality, and economic power:

I came to South Korea because one of my friends next door in my hometown told me I could live well in South Korea. She said one of her relatives also live well there and I would be happy if I could go there (PP28).

One of my distant relative sisters who had married a South Korean man introduced me to my present husband. At first, I had no idea, but she told me to meet him as he was a good person. I was expecting to meet him because she strongly recommended that he had a good personality, wealth, and a good house and it would not be hard if I could live together later (PP24).

### **3.2.3.2 Expect Economic Comfort**

PP29 expected to provide economic help to her family in Vietnam if she went to South Korea when she heard that her elder sister who married and lived well there. PP24 wanted to go to South Korea for her unhealthy father and earn money to help her family in Vietnam:

My elder sister who married and lived in South Korea said South Korea is good to live. She was living in South Korea well, so I thought that if I go there like her, I would help my family in Vietnam together with her (PP29).

My mom was healthy but my dad was not feeling well. He continued to suffer illness keeping on working. So, I'd like to make a lot of money in South Korea and wanted to help my family in Vietnam as South Korea was a good place to make money (PP24).

### **3.2.4 Longing for Affluence**

These WMMs lived with the hope that they would like to live in a good environment together with nice men whom they learned through South Korean dramas. The South Korean men in the drama became romantic ideas for them and brought desires to live in such a good environment of South Korea, which has good houses and facilities. PP24 longed for the economic growth of South Korea despite the fact that it had suffered a lot of hardships in the past:

South Korea is a better country than ours, so everybody wants to go there. The economy of both South Korea and Vietnam were poor and hard in the past, but now South Korea becomes so good that there are a lot of Vietnamese people want to go there (PP24).

### **3.2.5 Dream associated with Spouse**

Some of these WMMs had chosen to marry in anticipation before they met their spouses. South Korean men with neat outfits and nice appearance in addition to their good and sincere personality moved the minds of the WMMs who were looking for South Korean men equipped with economic power.

#### **3.2.5.1 Stolen Hearts by Good Looking South Korean Men**

PP28 lost her mind when introduced to her prospective husband by a matching agency through her friend:

I met my husband through an agency one of my friends introduced. I remember the first impression of my husband was great. His face skin was bright white and his clothes were really good, and he was great overall (PP28).

#### **3.2.5.2 Goodness and Sincerity of South Korean Men**

These WMMs appeared to have chosen to marry South Korean men who were nice, sincere and responsible. In addition to her husband's nice and good personality, PP24 liked how he was doing well with her family:

When my husband came to Vietnam on a business trip, I let him see many places in Vietnam. He had nice and good personality. My parents also liked him when they see him face to face. They said he was nice and good personality, so they liked me to marry him (PP24).

#### **3.2.5.3 Satisfied with Economic Power of South Korean Men**

These WMMs chose to marry South Korean men not only because they liked their

nice appearance and good personality, but also because they felt satisfied with their husbands' economic power. PP28's husband, who was working for a company, looked so good that she shortened her romance and married him in South Korea.

PP29 married her husband when she heard that he was earning a lot of money:

My husband was working for a company and it looked good. It was different with the Vietnamese who were usually farming. So, he looked so great. Also, he earned a lot of money. I met him for a short while in Vietnam, married him, came to South Korea together, and got pregnant (PP28).

I was introduced to my husband through a marriage agency in Vietnam. They gave me information of his family - how many members he has, what they do, and such. I liked to hear that he earned much money (PP29).

### **3.3 Preparation for Migration**

#### **3.3.1 Lack of Information on Spouses**

These WMMs have had many difficulties in preparing for migration to South Korea after choosing international marriage. Without information about South Korea, they had to prepare for their migration in their own country. They were suffering from psychological difficulties not knowing what to do and they were also found to have suffered from inaccurate information from the marriage agencies.

##### **3.3.1.1 Lack of Information on Marriage Migration to South Korea**

When they finished their interviews for marriage migration in Vietnam and were preparing to move to South Korea, they appeared to have suffered from a lack of information, and from frustration due to misinformation. PP28 and PP24 finished the interviews well but they felt at a loss as to how and what to prepare for from then on.

Although PP29 prepared for her marriage migration through a marriage agency, she found it frustrating for her to prepare for the migration only relying only on verbal information and misinformation without knowing about South Korea:

As soon as the interview for marriage migration ended, we had to know about South Korea. But I did not know anything. I was frustrated because I did not know what to take and prepare to go to South Korea (PP28).

The marriage agency prepared my visa and taught me Korean a little - some short words only to barely communicate with my husband. I needed to prepare clothes to go to South Korea, but I was frustrated not to know what clothes to take. The information on my husband was unclear either. No information on the details of his family, nor what does he do. At first, they said he did not live together with his family, but later they changed their words that he lives together with this family again, and it was really weird. I thought their words were changing frequently and seem to be wrong, but I did not know anything, so I had to trust their words. I was very frustrated with that (PP29).

The visa for South Korea takes about a month after interview. I needed to know much information for the interview. It also takes much money. I did not know how to go to South Korea, so it was difficult and frustrating for me to prepare. Of course, it was not a simple tour. I had to live there for good. But I was frustrated because I did not know what to prepare (PP24).

### **3.3.1.2 Preparing Alone for Marriage Migration to South Korea**

These WMMs had a hard time preparing marriage migration alone. PP28 was struggling with her husband who neither cared nor helped her when preparing for a marriage migration. PP29 accepted the marriage immediately after being introduced to her husband by a marriage agency without a dating period and proceeded alone to apply for a visa with the necessary documents. PP24 was helped by her relatives who had married to South Korea earlier but she struggled to prepare for herself because her relatives were not available when needed:

My husband told me to bring some cosmetics instead of bringing a lot of clothes. He did

not say anything else. I can say like that. He should have helped me well in detail. I did not know how to do by myself. So, I just brought my clothes which I had from Vietnam, and prepared almost of all in South Korea (PP28).

My husband just told me to come, come quickly. I did not have dates before marriage. I decided to go to South Korea immediately after I was introduced to my husband by the marriage agency. It was difficult to prepare the related documents for migration all by myself (PP29).

One of my relatives who married a South Korean man told me to prepare something, but I could not get in touch with her every day by phone. Even when I had occasional questions, my husband was busy with his office work so I could not contact him often. It was hard to prepare because my mom did not know well either how to and what to prepare (PP24).

### **3.3.2 Anxiety about their Choices**

These WMMs chose international marriage migration to South Korea but it turned out that they felt uneasy because their parents were anxious about their international marriage. They were feeling anxious due to the psychological burden of living well in order to alleviate the anxieties of their parents against international marriage. In addition, their awkward Korean language skills created more psychological anxiety.

#### **3.3.2.1 Concerns about International Marriage Life in South Korea**

It was revealed that these WMMs were worried about whether they would be able to live well in South Korea because of the bad news about South Korea that they had encountered in Vietnam. PP28 was uneasy about going to South Korea because of her mother's concern about her daughter's life there, including Korean culture. PP29 and PP24 were worried about the news of the conflicts and divorce between international marriage couples in South Korea:

I was also nervous and worried when my mother was worrying about my life in South Korea. I have to go to another country but I don't know about their culture there. I have to live well. First of all, I need to know their language, so I studied only Korean (PP28).

I think there were a lot of unstable moments. I heard other international marriage couples fight each other, go back home, divorce, and so on. I also heard that there were two divorce cases out of every ten international marriage couples in South Korea. I was worried about it (to divorce) if I went to South Korea (PP29).

My mom did not like me going to South Korea. She was worried that I would stay well with my husband in South Korea even though my husband was a good person. She was worried there were many couples who divorced even they seemed to get along well with each other (PP24).

### **3.3.2.2 Burden of International Marriage Life in South Korea**

The story of a WMM who had married and migrated to South Korea and has returned to Vietnam after being divorced so assuming illegal resident status made PP29 frustrated, thinking that she would be like the WMM if she could not live well in South Korea:

I have to live well. I heard the story. A woman got divorced and became illegal. She lived alone and come back to Vietnam later. We are not marrying Vietnamese men, but South Korean. So, it is right to live there well. My family and I were worried about my marriage (PP29).

### **3.3.2.3 Anxious of Korean Language**

After these WMMs chose international marriage, they felt anxious due to their poor communication skills when living in South Korea. PP28 studied Korean in Vietnam but she was worried about her life after migrating to South Korea because of her poor Korean. PP24 had to have basic Korean skills in order to live a practical life in South Korea, so she was worried about the Korean language, which was just terrible:

I'm learning Korean in Vietnam to go to South Korea. There were many Korean language learners. I learned to speak Korean and to write Korean alphabet. I spent about an hour and a half in Korean language class and there were about 40 students in class. It was

difficult to learning speaking Korean, but easy to write it. Writing Korean is easy, but I was worried because it was difficult to speak Korean (PP28).

When I was in Vietnam, I had been in contact with my husband by email. My elder sister who studied Korean taught me some basic Korean greetings such as 'An-Nyung-Ha-Se-Yo?' and I could communicate with my husband while studying Korean. While we contacted each other like this, we can meet each other in Vietnam on my husband's business trip. We didn't talk much to each other. It was okay not to use Korean between ourselves. But if I go to South Korea, I have to speak Korean to communicate with others (PP24).

### **3.3.3 Parents' Opposition with Affection**

The main reason for the difficulty of these WMMs in preparing for the migration to South Korea was the strong opposition of their family to international marriage. Their families were concerned about their health in a distant foreign country and opposed international marriage itself, worrying about living in a country where stability is not guaranteed. Above all, the parents of the WMMs worried that there would be many difficulties in understanding and adapting to different cultural norms.

#### **3.3.3.1 Family against International Marriage**

The parents of these WMMs opposed the international marriage itself to the extent that they interrupted the marriages of their daughters. As PP24 was her first daughter, her mother objected to her international marriage, demanding that PP24 carefully rethink her marriage:

My mom did not like me to go to South Korea at first. She was very opposed to it. Mom told me to think carefully, again think carefully. Because I am the eldest daughter at home, having a brother and a sister. Mom was worried about me (PP24).

### **3.3.3.2 Family concerns about WMMs Health**

The mother of PP24 was worried about her daughter's sickness record in her growing process, and was opposed to her leaving home country to go abroad:

I have been weak since I was a baby. I was so sick if I got sick once. My mom says that she worries me even I am with her in Vietnam right now, much more I will be far away in South Korea (PP24).

### **3.3.3.3 Family Concerns WMMs insecure Life**

The families of these WMMs worried that their international marriage would not last long because they are not guaranteed to be safe and happy if they went to South Korea. PP28's mother was very worried if her daughter could live well or not when she went to South Korea. The mother of PP24 asked her to think carefully about her decision to have an international marriage and to go to South Korea, being worried if she may not live well there at such a young age:

My mother did not strongly oppose my international marriage, but was very worried about my life in South Korea. She was worried that I could live there stable or not. My mom also heard many stories that there are people from Vietnamese who live well in South Korea, but some of them do not. So, my mom was worried much (PP28).

We are getting married early in Vietnam. Eighteen is enough age to marry. It may be early in South Korean standard. My mom also knew that. She said repeatedly I was too young to marry in South Korea. So, my mom told me to think carefully about my marriage again, saying that it would be bad if it went wrong at such a young age (PP24).

### **3.3.3.4 Family concerned about WMMs' Difficulty in Adaptation**

The family of these WMMs expressed concern that their daughter, who had to overcome and adapt to South Korean culture, including Korean language. PP28's mother

was worried that she would face many difficulties in adapting her life in South Korea from the beginning. The mother of PP24 was concerned if she could live well or not in a different environment:

My mother is not worried if I got married in Vietnam, but worried about my getting married in South Korea. I was also burdened. She was worried that it would be hard to live well in South Korea because it is different from our languages and culture (PP28).

My mother was worried because I could not speak Korean well. She said, 'Can you live without talking?' 'Can you survive with different food?' (PP24).'

#### **4 Conclusion**

The migration process has been shown to be correlated with the age of the WMMs at marriage, their place of origin, and their academic background in Vietnam. In the future-oriented recognition, the WMMs who came from a big city where they experienced the national development and the social change directly, made education as their first priority in pursuing a better life. Therefore, despite their economically poor environment, they graduated from university and met their husbands during their professional life, and they married after dating for a while. On the other hand, WMMs from small towns and rural areas placed a greater weight on overcoming their economic difficulties they faced immediately than future preparations through education, due to their lack of socio-cultural accessibility.

At the time of marriage, all WMMs except those who graduated from university migrated to South Korea in their early 20s or teenage years, and their age difference with their husbands was more than double in extreme cases. They were below the average level of education as urban factory workers or agricultural helpers for their family, and married due to the means of escaping from poverty and under the influence of the Korean Wave.

In conclusion, these WMMs' experiences in the process of international marriage

migration to South Korea, such as their routes and motives of marriage, and their experiences of preparing migration were important factors to affect their sense of well-being in their life in South Korea.

## Chapter Five

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation of the Sense of Well-being of WMMs at the Stage of their Life after Marriage Migration to South Korea**

#### **1 Introduction**

WMMs experience conflicts and embarrassment, feeling a gap between their life in familiar homeland and in foreign South Korea without preliminary knowledge. These experiences are likely to happen primarily in their family life. Particularly it happens due to the difference in visible behaviour of everyday life, in food culture, in gender structure and family composition, and in role expectations in the family. Most importantly, however, it happens because of the misunderstandings as a result of poor communication due to language difficulties (I.S. Kim et al. 2006). WMMs' experiences are likely to happen in their social life. Particularly it happens due to prejudice, rejection (A.K. Yang et al. 2007), institutional limitations (R.M. So 2007), lack of awareness of cultural differences (I.S. Kim et al. 2006), psychological atrophy and lack of exchange with neighbours (Jeong and Kang 2008). The WMMs in this study cannot but act in accordance with the concepts that have shaped their socio-cultural identity. If so, it is necessary to inquire how these WMMs overcome the conflicts stated above in their daily life, considering they grew up in a bilateral family system, devoted to their parents in intimate family relationships, and with a strong sense of self-reliance as seen in the previous chapter. It is also necessary to analyse the factors that influence and change their sense of well-being in the course of their adaptation to South Korean family life and society.

The life of these WMMs in South Korea after migration is in line with the pre-migrated life in Vietnam and the marriage migration to South Korea. Their life in South Korea shows differences according to their growth process, their cultural background, their educational background, their personal temperament, their economic situation, and their

motivation and purpose of international marriage. When classifying the adaptation of their life in South Korea into the types of acculturation according to their migration routes and motives, those who married after dating in Vietnam belong to an integration type of acculturation, those who married by relatives' introductions or under the influence of the Korean Wave belong to the assimilation type, and those who married through international marriage agencies belong to the type of assimilation and integration concurrent with resignation. It is also noticed that their sense of well-being has been negotiated and moved to a new balance point in the course of their adaptation to South Korea where they have encountered unfamiliar challenges (Dodge et al 2012: 230). The negotiation and movement of these WMMs' sense of well-being may be called an "overcoming process."

This chapter analyses the factors that overcome the difficulties experienced by the WMMs in their South Korean settlement. If the previous chapter analysed their experiences in the pre-migration stage, this chapter analyses the factors that overcome the difficulties in their family and social life after migration to South Korea.

## **2 Family Life**

International marriage families in South Korea are reported to face various problems (H. M. Kim 2006; Y. H. Lee 2007; Than 2006; I. S. Shim 2008). These WMMs have difficulties in communication, and experience cultural differences, economic problems, and marital relationships. In order to mitigate and overcome these various difficulties, they are making efforts in unilateral assimilation, in compromising between assimilation and integration, or in integration. In the food culture, they are assimilated into South Korean food culture naturally as time goes by. However, in other cultures of everyday life, conflicts are often expressed, particularly against South Korean patriarchy, with excessive intervention of in-laws, and with parenting methods and so on. Such conflicts are remarkable in these WMMs who married after dating in Vietnam, and it is

interpreted that these WMMs who have a strong self-consciousness have selectively and partially accepted their in-laws' excessive, irrational, and inexpedient interventions or one-sided push of assimilation. In such cases, their sense of well-being is greatly reduced and hindered. However, through negotiation between their resources and challenges, their sense of well-being finds another balance point by overcoming the conflicts they have experienced.

## **2.1 Communication Difficulties**

These WMMs put the language communication as a top priority among the obstacles in their South Korean life. They pointed out that the conflicts with their husbands and family members were caused by the lack of language communication in their early days of marriage migration. It turns out, however, that they have tried and are trying to solve the problem of language communication at an early stage in the process of their adaptation to South Korea as follows. It becomes clear that the conflicts were alleviated once they understand others or they make themselves understood after they were able to make communications for everyday life. Therefore, it can be seen that the problem of language communication greatly affects their sense of well-being. In order to overcome their communication difficulties, PP05 is actively using a Korean language education programme provided by the social welfare centre. PP09 overcame the language problems with teaching herself with the workbook she brought from Vietnam:

I need to learn everything quickly, so I can get a job later easily. I find it wherever there is education. I also attend the welfare centre eagerly (PP05).

I had to study. I had to study because Korean language was difficult. I used to surf good website. University websites. I could learn Korean language on the internet websites such as Seogang Univ. and Yonsei Univ. But my mother-in-law let me not to access the computer. I had to study Korean language with books only. I had bought a lot of books at Vietnam. I could not study when my mother-in-law was around. I studied at night and when she was not at home (PP09).

PP09's mother-in-law wanted her daughter-in-law to speak fluent Korean, but at the same time she also emphasized that her daughter-in-law's main role was only doing housework well. However, PP09 did not despair of such obstacles and solved the problem of communication by Korean language study. She persuaded her mother-in-law to let her participate in the Korean language classroom in the local Social Welfare Centre, and now she teaches Korean language as a multicultural family welfare specialist for Vietnamese WMMs in their early stage of migration to South Korea:

First of all, I needed to speak Korean. Actually, I could not speak Korean well. My mother-in-law always let me not speak foreign language, and let me speak only Korean. Her face frequently got worse. She said, 'Just do your housekeeping work.' She emphasized 'housework first.' She made many excuses, such as, 'Did you clean the house?' 'Do not study, and just stay at home.' It was last year, however, that I persuaded her to let me apply for the job of multicultural family welfare specialist, saying, 'I can earn money now with it. It is a good job because I earn money helping my friends from Vietnam.' ..... I said to my students, 'You must learn South Korean culture to live well here. Learn it and make effort to master it, even it is difficult now, but it will make your life better. Learn South Korean language and culture quickest possible' (PP09).

PP14 and PP18 learned Korean language for three months or so in Vietnam before they migrated to South Korea, and have been overcoming language problems by receiving language education through the Korean language classroom operated by the local Social Welfare Centre:

I learned Korean language in Vietnam while waiting for my migration to South Korea about three months.<sup>41</sup> When I first came to South Korea, there was no one I know. No friend. Nobody taught me Korean language. It was last year that I could go to learn Korean language. I had only stayed home doing nothing when I had a baby. I didn't know where to go. I only went to Social Welfare Centre here to learn Korean language. I had a

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<sup>41</sup> It is the waiting time after the wedding and before coming to South Korea.

lot of difficulties with my family because I could not speak Korean at all. But now it is Okay for me (PP14).

I had learned Korean language before I married in Vietnam for about 2 or 3 months. Now I learn hard Korean language in local Welfare Centre (PP18).

On the other hand, PP21 had had personal tutoring in Korean language for one month each in Vietnam and in South Korea. She learned how to read, sing, and speak the Korean language through the television programmes for children's education and through the Korean folk music channel. PP30 has no experience of learning the Korean language. She learned Korean words through her local grandmothers who worked together at the factory for one year. Her husband also helped her to learn Korean letters. She also learned Korean expressions through television dramas and movies:

I got married and learned Korean language in Vietnam for a month. I also learned Korean language from a tutor who came to my house for about a month. Later I couldn't have any tutor who could come to my house to teach me Korean language. So, I watched on television programmes such as children's song and learned Korean language more through a television channel 6 which shows her children letter play (PP21).

I learned Korean language from local grandmothers when I worked at Hwasoon county. At that time, I had a lot of chat with them. I watched on television a lot to learn Korean language. Earlier when I came here for the first time, I did not know Korean language at all. Since then, my husband has taught me. At first it was easy to learn but getting hard as go deeper in learning Korean language. It is 4 years now and I could have command Korean language a lot better. My husband praised my Korean skills (PP30).

Once their communication for everyday life became possible, PP21 could understand others and make herself understood through dialogue, and PP30 could also understand her mother-in-law's speech well, and her husband through dialogue which made it possible to persuade her husband to change her lifestyle. In both cases, it appears that they are alleviating the conflict:

My husband has many friends. When he got a call from his friend, he went out right away leaving me alone home. I could not understand it at that time, but now I understand after time passes. My mother-in-law could not understand me, neither do I at first. I was so scared and cried because she shouted to me in a loud voice at Chusok last year. She told me whenever I made mistake. Now I have a good time with her. She sounds good to me even though she cries out loud (PP21).

Because of my husband, I had many hardships after I had married and came to South Korea. I fought a lot with my husband. However, I became acquainted with my husband's mind and thoughts as I continued to live with my husband. So, now it is okay with my husband as I understand Korean language to some extent after 4 years passed. I did not know anything about South Korean culture as well as Korean language at first when I just came to South Korea. Now I also understand what my mother-in-law says. Now I can tell my husband not to drink because of our baby. In response to my advice, my husband admitted his wrong doing (PP30).

PP21 can be regarded as taking the initiative into action for the purpose without hesitation, and having a dignified self-esteem and a positive thinking. Such a temperament is also well reflected in overcoming the desperate situations that may lead to their negative decision and frustration in their early life in South Korea. It seems that she used the lonely time of desperate crisis rather as a time of opportunity to learn the Korean language:

Earlier in my days of desperation, when my husband out everyday, I followed the television channel singing along with them all night long. Listening to the music and singing alone ..... (PP21).

The common feature for overcoming the difficulties of communication of WMMs as described above, is their recognition of language communication that must be overcome first of all for the adaptation of their life in South Korea, and actually they are actively engaged in overcoming their language problems. These WMMs overcame and are overcoming their problem of language communication through Korean language education

programmes systematically provided by local Support Centres in the case of WMMs who reside in the city, and through their active efforts to acquire Korean language from television programmes in the case of WMMs in rural areas where systematic language educational programmes are absent. These WMMs' efforts to acquire the Korean language are still going on. As seen from the above, language communication ability plays an important role in feeling and enhancing their sense of well-being.

## **2.2 Cultural Differences**

Cultural differences in the family are expressed in many ways. Generally speaking, these WMMs are assimilated to South Korean food culture. However, in other cultures of everyday life, conflicts are often severely expressed, particularly with South Korean patriarchy, with excessive intervention of in-laws, and with parenting methods and so on. These conflicts are most prominent in the case of PP09. It may be because of her mother-in-law's demand for her assimilation to South Korean lifestyle without common sense and objectivity. Such conflicts also happened to other members of her family as the wife of her husband's brother, who was living with her, moved to Seoul because she could not bear the conflict between her mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. The cause of these conflicts can be found in the mother-in-law in that PP09's husband and sister-in-law also often create conflicts with their mother. Her mother-in-law's radical personality and inferiority are interpreted as the cause of these conflicts. It is understood as a reaction to her inferiority, by an overstrained interpretation to strengthen her position of mother-in-law, and by giving her reason that PP09 came from a poor country. On the other hand, conflicts with members of in-laws' can be seen equally in the case of PP05.

### **2.2.1 Differences in Food Culture**

PP09 expresses the conflict of food culture as follows. She remembers that it was

the hardest time to eat cold food, especially when she ate raw oysters for the first time, and when she was forced to eat them consecutively for several days straight. She also remembers that she could never adapt to the life of her mother-in-law who ate the leftovers for several days. She said, however, that as time went on, the conflicts on the food culture were gradually being eased:

We rarely eat raw meat and seafood in Vietnam. Always eat warm food boiled enough. I came to South Korea around Lunar New Year Season. I helped to make holiday food. But they just eat cold food here. I did not understand how to eat such cold food. We just ate raw oysters. Oh my God, they bought a big box of oysters and had too many to eat for a few days consecutively. I cannot understand why they buy it so much as such at once. Who can it that much? They pushed me to eat it more and more (PP09).

I had one more Korean food issue which is no more issue anyway. It was soybean paste. I had eaten it three times a day for three consecutive days. I ate soybean paste soup in a pot for three days. But I could not understand why we ate it so long. After all, I threw it away after three days. My mother-in-law was angry with me, saying, 'Why did you throw it away?' I remember it was soybean paste stew which I felt weird. But now I could make soybean paste. There are many big jars in my house and I could make soybean paste, hot pepper paste, and many other Korean sauces and pastes. Even now, we don't buy them, we just make them by ourselves. I like to make them because I love to cook. I cook Korean food well now (PP09).

PP09, unlike other cases, is forced to assimilate to South Korea by her mother-in-law, while her mother-in-law seems to be considers her daughter-in-law's behaviour as a heterogeneous culture phenomenon because she does not intend to accept or understand Vietnamese culture:

My mother-in-law called me a fool because I ate the plums with salt. We always eat plum with salt because of its sour taste. So, I was dipping plum in salt in a bowl when my mother-in-law saw it and called me 'stupid.' South Korean people would not accept Vietnamese culture at all (PP09).

South Korean in-laws of these WMMs tend to reject Vietnamese culture and this tendency also appears in the case of PP05. It is understood that they consider the Vietnamese food culture as uncivilized because it came from a poor country:

I do not like South Korean people around who do not like foreign people. They live their lives and my life does not fit, for example, food culture. That's hard and difficult issue. It is my family-in-law except my husband that hate it because they think it is from poor country. (PP05).

PP14 and PP18 were not able to eat well because their Korean food did not fit in their mouths at the beginning, but now it seems that they have no problem with Korean food because they had to eat anyway, and they naturally assimilated into it in the course of eating and living in their daily life together. In this type, it does neither appear to be forced to assimilate Korean food nor to make a special effort to work on it. Rather they prefer Korean food rather than the nostalgia for Vietnamese food:

Now I eat Korean food well and live in South Korea well. At first, I had a bit of trouble as the food did not fit in my mouth. I could eat almost any Korean dishes now. I don't feel like to eat Vietnamese food in particular. It has improved a lot. It is delicious if I make it. My husband also likes the food I made. I have learned how to make Korean food from my sister-in-law during ancestor worship preparation. I like Korean food. I can live well in South Korea (PP14).

It was hard to eat Korean food for a month or two when I first come to South Korea (PP18).

Vietnamese WMMs endeavour to adapt themselves to a South Korean lifestyle by learning South Korean culture, and by letting their husbands and children know Vietnamese culture and food. They know Korean traditional food such as kimchi, spicy

soy-paste, and bean paste. They also eat “ddog-gug,<sup>42</sup>” do New Year’s bow to elders, and play “Yut<sup>43</sup>” game (PP02 and PP12) at Korean traditional lunar new year as a way of trying to learn the Korean culture. They also wear Korean traditional costume together with their children, visit Korean traditional house villages, Kwanghuamun<sup>44</sup>, Deoksugung<sup>45</sup>, Gyungju<sup>46</sup> (PP11 and PP12) at the lunar new year. They think seaweed soup is a good Korean food to remember their birthdays as Korean traditionally eat it on their birthdays (PP01), and they like “Dakssaum<sup>47</sup>” as one of the best Korean traditional games (PP11). They consider, however, the commemorative rites for ancestors as one of the most difficult Korean customs, and preparing food for the rituals makes them exhausted and gives them a hard time (PP03 and PP27):

The best thing about Korean culture is eating ‘miyeokguk’ (seaweed soup). As it is a cultural tradition that does not exist in Vietnam, I had ‘miyeokguk’ for the first time on my birthday after I came to Korea. My mother-in-law has passed away and my father-in-law is alive but we do not live together. But I know that it is Parents’ Day on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May and, like Korean people, I give my father-in-law ginseng as a gift on that day. My father-in-law likes it (PP01).

Of Korean traditional games, it is fun to play ‘yut.’ I have worn a hanbok [Korean traditional dress] and have also given a bow of respect to elders on New Year. It is especially fun to make dumplings on New Year’s Day and I also enjoy making and eating ddeok-guk [rice-cake broth]. I have also made gochujang [spicy soy paste] (PP03).

I like that there is a Parents’ Day in Korea and I give money to my parents-in-law on that day. When we go out with the family, we often roast meat and although I have never worn a hanbok, I have been to Gyeongju (PP06).

Of Korean traditional folk games, the most fun is dakssaum (‘cock-fight’); it is fun because it is something I haven’t seen in Vietnam. Among Korean culture, something I really like is the manners of greeting and a Korean historic site I have visited is a Hanok<sup>48</sup> Village. I have eaten ddeok-guk and given a bow of respect for my elders on New Year’s Day, but

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<sup>42</sup> Korean rice cake broth. Traditionally Koreans eat it at the lunar new year.

<sup>43</sup> Korean traditional game at New Year.

<sup>44</sup> The main gate of the palace of Yi Dynasty which now located in the heart of Seoul.

<sup>45</sup> A compound of palaces in Seoul.

<sup>46</sup> The capital of the ancient kingdom of Silla, located at the southeast part of South Korea.

<sup>47</sup> A king of the one-legged fight (cockfight).

<sup>48</sup> Korean traditional building.

the biggest differences between Korean ways of life and ways of life in Vietnam are the meal habits, memorial services and New Year's (PP11).

The most fun folk game in Korea is the game of 'yut' and I think making kimchi and having memorial services for ancestors are the best aspects. I have worn a hanbok in Korea and given a bow of respect to elders on New Year's Day. Because the Korean life is similar to Vietnam, there are no discomforts in the lifestyle. Of Korean historic sites, I've been to Gwang-hwa-mun, Deok-su-gung and Gyeongju (PP12).

A good part of Korean culture is making songpyon<sup>49</sup> on Chuseok<sup>50</sup> [thanksgiving]; this is a fun Korean tradition. But the wife having to prepare all the food for memorial services for ancestors is too hard work and complicated (PP27).

### **2.2.2 Differences in Gender Structure**

PP05, who had been acknowledged in a dynamic society where men and women are equal, or rather where women's social activities and roles are more active, experienced conflict with her husband and her sister-in-law who restrict her ability only to the area within the household. PP09 also appears to recognize the flexible role of gender as a natural trend:

If you want to be recognized as a talented woman in South Korea, you have to have the ability to raise children, and the ability to cook for your husband, that's all. But I do not think so. I really want to be more than that, to be a South Korean mother who work and earn money for household as well as a wife of a South Korean husband. Of course, it is my desire and my feeling to become someone special, but it is not easy to achieve it no matter how much effort I made. My sister-in-law said to me that I just need to raise my children at home, but I would not. We, my husband and I, have to earn money together (PP05).

In Vietnam, mother and father raise their children well together. My dad bathed me, his daughter, and made me food. Sometimes my dad did everything for us, even doing my mom's role (PP09).

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<sup>49</sup> Half-moon shape rice cake.

<sup>50</sup> Full-moon harvest.

However, PP05 recognizes that every duty related to family, such as housework, child care, and household economy should be shared by couples. As she had worked for a company as a competent and recognized worker before migration to South Korea, she wanted to work in South Korea. She is stressed, however, by the disparity in the role sharing of the couple, but she seems to be alleviating her stress through the education programme. PP09 wants to share all things together at home without segregation between men and women. However, it shows that her in-laws clearly distinguish the roles of men and women. She refuses the role of housewife because she cannot understand the roles of woman such as a servant or a slave:

If you marry here in South Korea, wife simply does housework and husband goes out to earn money. It is not like Vietnam where both husband and wife earn money together and do housework together. I get up at 6 o'clock in the morning, go to Gwangju to get a training for an hour, and hurriedly get home at 8:30. I quickly feed my baby with breakfast to send him day care centre. My husband starts for work at 10 o'clock, so it is fine (PP05).

I came to South Korea and I do not have my time at holidays. I have to keep making rice dishes several times a day. No other family members would not do it. South Korean woman is so strange. She keeps cooking and serving for other members of her family. Why they do not do this. Why they don't do it together? I was a lot embarrassed. I was so embarrassed. I have to keep cooking and serving meal all day long, cutting fruits to serve, doing the dishes, cleaning the house, and washing clothes a lot. There are many family members in my house. Most of them are men. All men. But they don't help woman. They tell me to do it this way or that way. I have to serve them with meal, saying 'Here you are, please have a meal.' I cannot understand why I only should do it. I can't understand at all. They can help themselves to their meals. But they don't do it. I have to serve them with meals and later I have to clear the table all the time (PP09).

However, PP09 is trying to understand this culture while learning South Korean culture and she is alleviating the conflict with the hope of their moving out of her parents-in-law's house:

Now I realize that man and woman have their own certain roles in South Korea. I always tell my husband that we should move out of our parents' house even though it will be hard to live apart from them. I am now learning Korean language and culture harder. I used to live a hard life, but now I am changed a lot. I learn, understand, and accept Korean culture through reading books (PP09).

The above WMMs are still questioning South Korean culture where the separation of gender is clear and its roles are distinctively differentiated, unlike Vietnamese culture where couples share their whole lives and common responsibilities without any segregation between men and women in a flexible gender structure. These WMMs are being forced to assimilate to South Korean culture but seek ways to mitigate the conflicts between the two cultures through integration rather than unconditional assimilation. In this respect, they assume an integration model rather than that of separation, marginalization, or unconditional assimilation for their happiness, that is to say, their sense of well-being.

### **2.2.3 Reality of the Patriarchal System in South Korea**

'Patriarchy' is a very important term in looking at the background of society and its interactions, especially in tracing the trajectory of women's lives. Patriarchy, however, is often referred to as "the most abusive and in some ways the least theorized" (Kandiyoti 1988: 274), while its concept as the male domination of women is universal in the exploration and development of feminist theory. Nowadays, patriarchy in South Korea has become a virtually unfamiliar system, which is out of the monolithic framework of existing male domination. The power through which men took charge of the household and managed the family has been shared with women after industrialization, enabling and increasing women's advancement in society. Consequently, forms of households with joint responsibility have become diversified such that the typical patriarchal-type family is now hard to find in 21st century South Korea.

However, the patriarchal system remains in rural areas where Vietnamese WMMs

live in large numbers, showing a dual aspect in which the husband wields power over his wife or in the public sphere, where he cannot make decisions about family or domestic issues, without relying on his mother or elder sisters. In these cases, we can see a remnant of Confucian patriarchy called 'filial piety.'

On the other hand, in most South Korean families, the education of children is the mother's responsibility. Some time after marriage, the wife's interest and love for her husband waned and transferred to her children. The woman attaches all her desires to her children, represented by the new expression "helicopter mom."<sup>51</sup> Her children follow their mother's guidance and direction even after growing up, according to her methods of educating her children which influence everything they have been involved in since childhood. This tendency continues even after marriage, and many times they avoid making decisions in family or domestic issues and defer to their mother or elder sisters. This is seen in the interviews (PP05/09) in this study, when Vietnamese WMMs negotiate with their mothers-in-law who hold the power rather than their husbands, who appear to be heads of the household to outsiders but are actually helpless in domestic affairs.

PP05's family in South Korea was under a patriarchal system. Her sister-in-law who lives near her seems to be deeply involved in the family affairs of her foreign sister-in-law, wife of her brother, instead of her late parents who died earlier. PP05 understands this sister-in-law's behaviour as privacy interference. PP09's in-laws are a parent-centred family under the traditional patriarchal system. As she has grown up in a couple-centred family, she cannot understand her husband who depends entirely on his parents' opinion. Moreover, she thinks that the conflicts with her mother-in-law owing to her being forced to assimilate into the patriarchal culture have created a serious health problem and emotional disorder. She was a professional woman of ability who had lived a full life but she experiences a severe conflict with her Korean in-laws as though she is considered as a fool

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<sup>51</sup> 'Helicopter moms' pay extremely close attention to their children's experiences and problems, particularly in educational institutions. They 'hover overhead,' constantly overseeing every aspect of a child's life.

among them:

She (her sister-in-law) tries to interfere only with words without any help. Actually, I don't like her to help me. I am also old enough and I've studied a lot. I can also think what I should do. It is so strange. Why is she constantly interfering? I can't understand it (PP05).

I married my husband, but when I got married and came to South Korea, he tells me his parents' opinion, not his opinion. He always follows his parents' opinion. So, I have a lot of troubles now. I just got married and I might have to break up. My mother-in-law and I have many different opinions. This is a huge conflict. I am suffering from a serious health problem and emotional disorder (PP09).

I am treated like a fool whenever I come to my parents-in-law's. I am a fool. I was feeling really bad when they let me do a lot of work. I do not want to live with my husband anymore. My life here in South Korea is really stupid (PP09).

Therefore, PP05 is thinking about divorce and wishes that the problem can be corrected by her husband, but he is not able to express his wife's intention to his sister owing to his personality and his cultural background. Therefore, she alleviates these conflicts by avoiding confrontation with her sister-in-law. PP09 alleviates her conflicts with her in-laws by controlling her own thoughts:

I want to divorce because of my sister-in-law. I talked to my husband a few times. I do not like her to do such things to me. I asked him to tell her neither to do interference, nor to do nagging to me. But my husband still cannot do it. He is too meek to do it. I do not want to see her face either. I excuse saying I have no time to see her. When I see her face to face, she will keep nagging to me. Why should I listen to her? Rather not see her. I will not see her. Then I don't have to listen to her and avoid hurting me (PP05).

Whenever I am in trouble, I'm thinking of something else that might be fun. So, I can do it well right now. I can do it. I always think like that (PP09).

The above WMMs suffer severe conflicts between their background of the past living in the couple-centred nuclear family system and the South Korean traditional

patriarchal system. She was a professional woman with pride, independence and self-sufficiency. The life of PP09, in particular, can be interpreted as a form of marriage life of a traditional South Korean daughter-in-law. Nonetheless, these WMMs are interpreted as mitigating the conflict factors, in a passive way avoiding the sister-in-law who causes the conflicts (as PP05), or in a way of mind control (as PP09). In these ways, they adapt to their South Korean life in the form of integration by avoiding conflict.

#### **2.2.4 Lack of Family Support**

PP09 wants to be praised by the family-in-law but does not have encouragement, support, and consideration from them. Instead, her mother-in-law wants to be treated as a respected adult and she behaves in an overly rude manner:

I cannot be praised. I do not want to do anything now. I just want to cry here now. Nobody in my family-in-law praises me. My mother-in-law scolded me this morning, saying, 'Why did not you say good night to me last night? Before you go to bed.' I backed her that I and my husband said good night to her last night. .... I am happy if she would not do that so often. I am so scared when she got angry. She just caught my shoulder like this and this. I really hate her doing that. How can I accept her temper? I have no other way but put up with her action against me (PP09).

Nevertheless, PP09 accepts the relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, and shows that she is trying to alleviate conflict with laughter:

My mother-in-law is senior and the oldest in our family and we are her daughters-in-laws. So, we must to respect surely what she says. I am a little frustrated at times. It's frustrating but it's not the best way to think so (PP09).

Although there is an extreme contrast with the life history before her migration

when she had always been praised and encouraged by her parents, PP09 can be interpreted as alleviating this conflict with her mother-in-law through strengthening her capacity.

The type of marriage by relatives' introductions or under the Korean Wave influence shows that they also point out the experience of communication difficulties in common with other types of marriage, but what is noteworthy is that they do not show any experience of conflict in their family life. Therefore, the adaptation process appears as a natural assimilation model in this type of marriage.

This type also shows that difficulties arising from cultural differences are naturally assimilated without recognition of conflicts. In this assimilation process, the attitude of the Korean family-in-law, that is, encouragement and consideration, is a major factor:

I came to South Korea after married in Vietnam, and it was so difficult to live here at first. I was pregnant at the beginning of my marriage so I could not eat properly. I live with my family-in-laws. My mother-in-law is with me and good to me. I came to Korea for the first time and I did not speak Korean well so I made a lot of mistakes. Now I speak Korean a lot better than that .... Although living in South Korea is hard, I do my best to live well. I have been struggling to live for the first time but now I'm fine. Cultural difference is not a big issue for me either. I do not have to worry about people around me. (PP14).

When I was pregnant, I could not eat well. I did not even want to eat Vietnamese food. I could eat nothing but fruit. So, I guess it is the reason why my baby is a lot smaller. My mother-in-law does well to me. My husband also does well. It looks like my home in Vietnam. Everybody in my family-in-law is with me and let me do whatever I want to do. I am not good at housework. I am living with my mother-in-law now, so she helps me a lot. We also do washing clothes even together (PP18).

PP30 has a cultural background in which the children support or give pocket money to their parents and cannot understand why her mother-in-law does not accept her money while receiving money from her brother-in-law, but later she understands that everything is done by her parents-in-law in consideration of herself. She has gratitude for her mother-in-law, who does not give her a hard time in their family life but embraces her

instead. The love and care of the mother-in-law are important factors to mitigate the conflicts of these WMMs, and thus they have a great influence on their sense of well-being:

My mother-in-law goes out for work, and has shopping with her money. She doesn't accept our money but receive my brother-in-law's. 'Mother, why don't you accept our money but hers? It is so strange, isn't it?' She said, 'I cannot accept your money. you live hard.' She does not take our money we give her for our hardships. My mother-in-law is not bad. I don't prepare breakfast in the morning, but she does everything. She wakes up early in the morning and prepares our breakfast and goes out for work. I wake up finding she's gone already in the morning. I cannot wake up early in the morning even I am a houseworker, but she always wakes up early in the morning. Old people like my mother-in-law are busy. They just wake up at dawn. My husband wakes me up at 6 a.m. in the morning saying, 'What are you doing now? Go and help her to prepare breakfast.' But I am okay even I wake up a little bit late as I am caring my baby all day and night (PP30).

The support and care of the members of the family-in-law in South Korea are positively affecting the adaptation process of WMMs. However, they may rather work as negative factors in that the form of assimilation excludes their own culture or identity. Therefore, the support and care of the members of family-in-law in South Korea should be interpreted not as merely one-way from the viewpoint of the giver but as a positive integration in terms of recognizing, caring, and sharing with the other party reciprocally.

### **2.2.5 Differences in Parenting Methods**

PP09 perceives the conflict of child-rearing method as the biggest difficulty from the perspective of the mother who raises her little daughter. She still cannot find a solution for conflict resolution in this regard but she expects the conflict to be mitigated through her branch family:

My way of raising my baby is different from that of my mother-in-law. She always

threatens to whip her grand-daughter. If my daughter cries, she threatens to take a whip to stop her crying. Because of that issue, I have hard time living with my mother-in-law everyday. My daughter has not slept well at night because of otitis media. She cries and saying, 'Mom, why do you keep crying? If you don't stop crying, I will hit you with a whorl.' My husband said to my daughter, 'Why would you hit her?' She said, 'Because mom is crying.' I cried because my daughter was sick (PP09).

I am currently living with my sister-in-law and I have a good relationship with my husband's siblings. I'm always grateful for my husband. However, there are times when we argue over child raising methods. There are so many differences between the Korean and Vietnamese ways of raising kids (PP04).

It is better to interpret this phenomenon as an intergenerational conflict according to changes of the times because it is not only the problem of PP09 or for the multicultural families, but also the realities that are present in ordinary South Korean homes.

### **2.3 Economic Issues**

PP05 has been working as a multicultural family welfare specialist and Vietnamese interpreter to overcome economic difficulties, and has participated in various education programmes to strengthen competence for better jobs, and expects to actively participate in economic activities after obtaining South Korean nationality. On the other hand, PP09 cannot provide material support to her parents in Vietnam. After marriage, her husband moved to a better company with more income but she understands it is necessary for her to participate in the economic activities as he is struggling. She has been taking a training course to become a native English teacher in Jeollanam-Do:

Everyone thinks I am better off with Vietnamese language skill and manageable Korean language, and earn much money. I earn some money with Korean ability and giving Vietnamese lectures. I know I must do housework, but I have other idea. I should also make money together with my husband now that I obtains South Korean nationality (PP05).

I sometimes worry about my mom and dad. They do not have money. I am anxious to hear

from them because they cannot work for the last three years. So far no news from them (PP09).

My husband was a hospital manager before, and he is doing welding now. He is making more money than before. He should make a lot of money and we plan to move ourselves out of my parents-in-law's house. But my husband says it is very hard to work now. .... My mother told me not to go out to participate in the training for multicultural family welfare specialist if it is not for money and let me just stay home. I'm in a bad mood for her. .... I am now studying to become a native speaker teacher (PP09).

In addition, PP09 acted as a professional woman in Vietnam before her migration to South Korea, and estimates her ability as high, so she expects to provide her own financial support for her parents in Vietnam, and be able to live independently as a branch family:

I studied mathematics and computer science much in Vietnam. I think we can live independently. I want to get a good job to get my husband's consent for our moving out of my parents-in-law's house (PP09).

I have no complaints about my husband and I'm thankful that he remembers my birthday and our wedding anniversary. My husband enjoys Vietnamese foods and I would support my sisters if they chose to marry a Korean husband. However, we have fought about financial problems (PP11).

PP21, who was married for economic reasons at home in Vietnam, solved her family's poverty by abandoning her self-esteem. She recognizes that working hard with her husband supplements the family income. PP30 shows that she worked for a mushroom factory and traditional Korean crackers factory to provide economic support to her mother in Vietnam for a short period. Currently, however, her baby is too young and she cannot go out for work. So, she has a strong will to earn money again by herself to help her mother in Vietnam after her child-rearing:

I am married and came to South Korea because of money. My father had a lot of debt, so I had to help my parents in Vietnam. When my dad first met with my groom, my dad told him that he had a lot of debt in Vietnam and my groom looked somewhat upset. After that, my husband asked me, 'How is your father's debt? Did you pay for him?' So, we had a big fight with each other. Later, he told me that he will send the money because he knows the situation of his father-in-law in Vietnam. My husband is very nice. He is a good man. Even though we fought so much, my husband gave me the money to pay my father's debt in a few days. My father and mother have no debt in Vietnam now, and I feel comfortable because I have nothing to worry. .... My husband is farming, so I have to farm also helping him (PP21).

I am helping my mother a little bit in Vietnam. When I first came to South Korea, I stayed here with my husband and worked several months at a mushroom factory in this neighbourhood. I'm good at the factory. I was good at work and my boss loved me. Now I cannot work because I am raising my baby, so I cannot help my mother in Vietnam either. .... I cannot afford to give my mother pocket money every month. We cannot save much money to send it to Vietnam. Now my husband earns 1.5 million won per month as salary which is enough here at rural area. There is no hard work here, but I have a hard time. There is something to eat here and work to do, but it is hard for me to think about my mom at Vietnam. I live here well, but my mom is not well there. When I think of my mother, I get tears. I should help my mom later anyway. I have a baby whom I only take care of these days. I had a baby after four years of marriage. I have miscarried a few times in the meantime. But I want to go to work now. But it will be after I raise my baby (PP30).

However, PP18 is a full-time housewife, and with her husband and her mother-in-law's full support, she could make remittances to her sister in Vietnam, and she is provided with a car because it is inconvenient to work with her child. However, she wants to have a job when given a chance. On the other hand, some cases like PP14 show no interest in economic issues at all:

I am upset because my parents are far away and cannot help them. I cannot afford to send pocket money to my parents but I sent 100,000 won to my sister in Vietnam every month or every other month without knowing my dad. .... I want to go to work. (PP18).

It's me who take care of sending money to Vietnam. My husband would not send it. Nobody asks that. Even my mother-in-law never. My husband does not say anything either. We live on the living expenses allotted to me, and I can send some if left over. Nobody

intervenes in what I do. I live on what we earn and not much left over, but I am still happy. There is not much difficulty in living (PP14).

These WMMs, who had lived naturally in a bilateral culture where married couples have equal authority in the family and accept common duties in the responsibility of the household economics, accept that they should get their own job to earn money by themselves. WMMs have also shown an effort to earn their own money rather than take help from their husbands or from members of their family-in-law, in providing economic support for their parents in Vietnam. The economic burden of helping their parents by their husbands' income alone is the reason why they want to get job, but their sense of independence based on their bilateral culture is also one of the factors.

## **2.4 Marital Relationship**

There appear conflicts caused by the members of family-in-law such as mother-in-law or sister in-law, the issue of a wife's role in the family under the patriarchal system, and marital conflict due to the husband's tendency to lack a sense of independence in the case of WMMs' marriage after dating in Vietnam. It shows that excessive interference or unreasonable demands from members of the family-in-law encourage marital conflicts that may even lead to divorce:

But I am really trying very hard to recognize South Korea. I gave up my pride for the sake of my baby. Of course, my husband has changed a lot now, but it has been hard for me to change just him only. Because South Korean culture itself is all for and about men. Of course, as I live, I work hard and take care of my husband and raise baby, but he does not know that. .... But ordinary South Korean husbands understand many things about their wives. Because it is South Korean culture. If they marry, wife is simply doing houseworks and husband earns money outside. However, Korean husbands do not do housework because of his pride. My husband has never cleaned our house ever since we married. I understand it enough. But my husband agrees that he should help me with other things if he does not do the things I want him to help me with. But there are a lot of couples who

do not agree each other (PP05).

In the above interview, PP05 recognizes that there is an internal conflict with her husband due to differences in the patriarchal culture of South Korea. However, in order to alleviate such conflicts, she understands this South Korean culture, and is making a lot of effort by giving up pride, and accepting the cultural background of her husband. Furthermore, they agree that he is to co-operate with the things other than housework which is her own duty, through her conversations with her husband. Nevertheless, the excessive interference of her sister-in-law remains the cause of their marital conflict:

I want to divorce because of my sister-in-law. I talked to my husband about her a few times that I do not want her to do like that. I asked him to tell her neither to interfere in issues between ourselves nor to nag me. But he is too good to point it out to her. I have to be gone. She has to see her brother struggling without me (PP05).

My parents-in-law are alive but we only visit them about three times a year. Though the language barrier between my husband and I is frustrating, I do go to the mart with my husband about once a month. I've visited my native country since my marriage and my husband enjoys Vietnam foods and we occasionally go to Vietnamese restaurants. However, my husband does not give me presents for our wedding anniversary or for my birthday (PP24).

The position of PP09's husband, who cannot move out of his parents' house whereas his wife desperately wants to move out, can be analysed in terms of filial duty. When they had been living together with their mother in the same town, his brother's family moved to Seoul because of the conflict between his brother's wife and her mother-in-law, but he is unable to move out while remembering his mother became very unhappy with her elder son's moving out to Seoul. However, PP09, from the viewpoint of bilateral culture, interprets such an attitude of her husband as dependency and helplessness:

I do not know why my husband becomes like a meek child whenever we visit my parents-in-law's. I was so embarrassed. I told him, 'You are a man now. You are independent from your parents and you have to take well care of your wife and baby. You are man.' He always says 'yes, yes, yes' to his parents. I cannot understand him at all (PP09).

Moreover, PP09 says that it is hard to endure and to understand that she is regarded as stupid by her in-laws, and that they looked like being dependent on his parents owing to his lack of independence:

My mom and dad raised us hard in Vietnam. As I grew harder, I get treated like an idiot whenever I visited my parents-in-law's. I feel like to be a stupid. They let me do whatever they want me to do. At that time, I felt really bad. I really do not want to live with my husband any more. I tell my husband, 'Honey, we're in trouble now, but we have to move out of your parents' house. We have to move out. I raise a baby and study a little more to get a job. Later we have to earn our income together (PP09).

Therefore, conflict between a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, and a husband's dependence are still major factors in marital conflict, and PP09 tries to solve the problems of the conflict between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law and marital conflict by moving out of her parents-in-law's house:

I have a hard time with my husband, and with my mother-in-law. I cannot understand why my husband does not try to move out of my parents-in-law's while he knows everything about our circumstances. Now I am worried about my husband. Now we have to move out quickly. My husband is looking for anything from his mom and dad first. I cannot understand his attitude at all. Why are South Korean men not so independent? Always 'Mom! or Dad!' I don't know why (PP09).

I've been on a trip to Cheju Island once, three years after I got married and moved to South Korea from Vietnam. Though it's nice because my husband bought me presents for my birthday and was good to me, there are times when it's frustrating because of the language barrier. At the beginning of the marriage, my husband's siblings and I both put in effort, but our relationships with one another were difficult and my husband's attitude

towards meal preparation made things difficult for me. However, now things are much better and I often eat out with the family; my husband likes Vietnamese foods and rice paper rolls (PP26).

This type of marriage through International Marriage Agencies for international marriage migration to solve the WMMs' domestic poverty started by their migration with no or little information about their spouse and their family-in-law. Therefore, unlike the other two types of migration, they experienced serious marital conflicts and domestic disputes, leading to separations and divorces in the early stages of migration to South Korea. The main reasons for these experiences were the lack of understanding of the personality of their husbands and the South Korean culture in which they lived owing to the lack of language communication, and the drinking habits of their husbands. For example, PP21 started domestic disputes because she had no knowledge of her husband's personality or lifestyle, and was unable to understand his getting home late and staying out overnight due to excessive drinking. PP30 hated to encounter her husband when they had domestic disputes in their early days of marriage. Moreover, even though it just happened once, she experienced domestic violence, which led to her running away and seeking a divorce:

When I first got married and came to South Korea, I did not know what my husband's character was like. He had a lot of friends, so if he went to a meeting with friends once or twice a month, he drank a lot and could not get home early. That's why I fought a lot with my husband. When I first came to South Korea, I was alone at home, but my husband was the only one I knew. he came home late each night and I was at home alone. .... At that time, I fought out only because he stayed out late every day. So, I was gone for three days. My husband is getting better now. Nowadays he goes out three or four times a month (PP21).

My husband is a lot older than me, and does not take baths often, especially in the winter time he does not bath well, afraid of coldness. I hate him too much to sleep together. I hate him really, hate his smell. I used to fight a lot with my husband. I fought with him every day. He hit me once before I came to South Korea when we lived together in Vietnam just

after we married. At that time my husband got angry and hit me. I was also angry at him and hit him with a frying pan so his glasses flew away. We now fight no more with each other. He drank so much. He drank lots of alcohol every day as if addicted to alcohol. He seems to die if not drinking. So, we frequently fought each other because of his over drinking. We did fight with each other a lot. I told him, 'If I live with you any more, I am really a dog, a stupid dog!' I did not want to live with him. Really. I had run away once. I went to one of my friends' in downtown Gwangju. I went there and informed him of my intention to divorce him (PP30).

I have little correspondence with my husband's siblings and do not even know that the 8th of May is Parents' Day. I did not get a gift for my husband's parents on Parents' Day and visit them about once a year. Although I receive no help from my parents-in-law, I also don't receive any stress from them. I married my husband because the state of the Korean economy is better than in Vietnam. I am grateful because my husband is a steady character but one thing I dislike about him is that he drinks too much alcohol; I really have a problem with this (PP25).

In addition, PP21 gave birth to her baby alone without her husband and was the target of her in-law's attacks:

I took a break at home for a week and went to the hospital and gave birth to my baby. I did it alone in the hospital. My husband worked in a greenhouse farm with my mother-in-law, so I had to have a baby alone in the hospital. I cried a lot when I came back with my baby from the hospital. I got a lot of thoughts about my mother in Vietnam. .... It was really hard and disappointing at the time. Everyone in my family-in-law blamed me. At that time, these things went through and my heart was really upset, so I hated my husband who was next to me (PP21).

However, when PP21 learnt the reasons for her husband's frequent staying out overnight, and because of her child after childbirth, she accepted her husband's feeling of being sorry for his wife and resolved the conflict by talking with her mother-in-law. Her clear sense of purpose and duty and responsibility toward her baby as a mother, shows the improvement of their marital relations from the efforts of both husband and wife:

My husband did not come back early once he left home. He used to stay out overnight when he drank alcohol. At first, I suspected he had a concubine outside, but now he does much better. He is surely better now. I understand him now as we live together for a long time. Nowadays, I go to out for fun together with my husband and frequently go to the karaoke room together. Nowadays, he does not drink that much. He goes out and tells me where he is over the phone. My husband told me he was sorry he was wrong. I accepted his apology by saying 'it's okay.' After I had a baby alone and came home right away, my mother-in-law told me everything related to me. Since then, she tells me if I'm wrong. Now I maintain good relationship with her. I have to understand my situation and what else I could do now? After all I gave birth to a baby. I will live well here in South Korea. My husband is a recognized person in my neighbourhood. His past faults to me should now be thought of as if nothing had happened. That is my attitude I should take from now on. If you live, there will be a good day or bad, this or that (PP21).

Also, in the case of PP30, their marriage has changed into a positive relationship by the efforts of both parties. She has pity for her older and less intelligent husband, and takes a positive attitude toward her life after giving birth to her baby:

My husband gives me all the money what he has made, and I give him small amount of money as his pocket money. He calls me three or four times a day working at his factory, asking me what I am doing now, asking if my baby is doing good, and if I have eaten proper meals. When he comes home from work, he helps me to feed our baby, removes our baby's cups, cleans the baby, and cleans the laundry and the house. My husband who does these things looks better than ever. His attitude tells me what he has in mind. Now I remember he was too bad at that time. Too bad. Now he is okay now. He often bathes these days (PP30).

Just after we married, I hated my husband very much. He had nothing I liked. Even though my friends rated him good, but I was not happy at all. But, as we continue to live together, I became aware of his mind, and I know his thoughts, now his is okay with me. That does not mean I love him, but just live together as he looks pitiful. I live with him with the idea that he is miserable as he is old enough. I think he is not just my husband but someone else as stranger. He is not smart. When he as a rural man goes to the city, he does not know how to say properly like downtown man, so he looks pitiful (PP30).

Now than I become a mother, I have to change a lot, change mind to live well ... What else I can do? I do nothing but caring my baby after I gave birth to a baby. My other friends gave birth to a baby early, but I have a baby after four years of my marriage. I had

experienced several miscarriages before (PP30).

In addition, PP30 improved marital relations by accepting the deficiencies of her husband, demanding changes in their marital life, and awakening their sense of responsibility for their family. Her husband is also employed, leaves household economics to his wife, and tries to refrain from drinking and smoking. Through these efforts of the couple due to changes in their lives, they now maintain marital relations as recognized by the members of her family-in-law:

I do not fight with my husband now. However, there is still a lot of time to get angry. He still drinks a lot. I warned him not to drink because of our baby. He admitted that he was wrong to drink a lot I said, 'you drink a lot, and our baby is growing, and if you die, shall we go to Vietnam and live there?' Vietnam is not good for us to live. He is not healthy, smoking and drinking a lot, and got sick almost. He smokes a lot. When at home, he smokes every 5 minutes. He also drinks coffee. Everything he has is poisonous (PP30).

When we are alone, I and my husband call each other 'honey' and 'baby' in Korean. When there are many people around, we call each other in Vietnamese, instead of Korean. When I say, 'My love,' my sister-in-law joked saying, 'rocking the cradle of love.' We could not have that kind of atmosphere two years ago. I could enjoy this harmonious atmosphere these days (PP30).

These results show that the difference in each life history of the married couple and the lack of information about spouses led to their marital conflict. They are reducing the factors of conflict by mutual efforts to understand and to concede to each other. This emphasizes the importance of an open mind and acceptance of a spouse when forming a positive marital relationship for couples with different life histories. These results can be applied not only to couples with different cultural backgrounds but also to couples with the same cultural background.

Although some cases (PP22 and PP27) in this study revealed that they once had

regretted their marriage and thought about divorce, they are now encouraging their ethnic people to marry South Korean men, and are generally satisfied with their current life. Even though the language barriers made their life in South Korea difficult, they were thankful to their South Korean husbands who gave them birthday presents with love (PP17, PP19, PP20, PP02, and PP03):

I'm very happy and pleased because my husband loves me very much. I have a good relationship with my husband's siblings and although I'd like to live in attendance of my parents-in-law, I do not receive any stress. I know that the 8<sup>th</sup> of May is Parents' Day and I give them money on that day. Marital spats are about issues with my husband's family, household problems and economic problems but it is frustrating because of the language barrier (PP17).

Because he does not look after the kids and thinks very differently to me, there isn't much I am grateful to my husband for. The language barrier is frustrating and there are many times when I regret getting married. So, I have thought about divorce many times but divorce isn't easy. Other Vietnamese people all live good lives but I alone don't really have anywhere to go even if I get a divorce. If my Vietnamese acquaintances say they will marry Korean men, I will strongly dissuade them. I've never received an allowance or a present from my husband for our wedding anniversary or my birthday. But these things aren't very important and I don't really care. My relationship with my husband is just so-so (PP22).

I'm not grateful to my husband for anything and I have many complaints. I have never been on holiday or to the cinema with my husband but we go to the department store or mart once a month. My husband doesn't eat Vietnamese food and I have never received a present from him for our wedding anniversary or my birthday. The biggest difficulty in the beginning of adjusting to life with my husband was the differences in our ways of thinking and language (PP27).

I'm thankful that my husband is kind and helps out with the housework but I have a problem with his smoking habit. I have a good relationship with my parents-in-law and am learning to cook from my mother-in-law. However, I get stressed because my mother-in-law's voice is too loud (PP05).

As discussed above, the type of marriage after dating in Vietnam experiences a variety of conflicts in their family life. This phenomenon, however, can be as a result of the

WMMs' high self-esteem, self-reliance, and independence as professional women. These WMMs mitigate their conflicts through efforts to strengthen their capabilities in various fields. Therefore, the above results show that these phenomena can be understood as positive aspects, and in their adaptation process to South Korean society, proves the most desirable model of integration.

On the other hand, the type of marriage by the relatives' introductions or under the Korean Wave influence is difficult in their early South Korean life for a short period as they do not perceive the problems out of cultural differences. Even though everything such as language, culture, and way of life is different with those of WMMs, and they make many errors in their housework, they are assimilated into South Korean lifestyle naturally through the acceptance, support, and consideration of the members of their family-in-law without the marital conflict from their new relations and South Korean culture.

### **3 Social Life**

Although South Korean society claims to be a multicultural society, it is only a political agenda, and the value of racial purity is widespread. Furthermore, in order for WMMs to adapt to South Korean society, they cannot avoid various problems such as social recognition for foreigners, human rights issues, and national policies as social factors to influence their adaptation to South Korean society. Although there have been many changes and reforms in national politics that had been stumbling blocks to WMMs' migration to South Korea, they still face social prejudice and, increasingly, child education issues. In addition, these WMMs want to solve economic problems in their household, and to achieve a social position through their working life. In all the cases of these WMMs, other than PP14, they are working in business or are eager to get a job if and when opportunities arise.

### **3.1 Difficulties in Child Education for a Multicultural Family**

In the case of their education, the children are still young and are attending the nursery school. However, the Vietnamese WMMs are aware of the education problems that their children will experience.

PP05 pays keen attention to children's education by watching the situation of her surrounding ethnic WMMs, and asking the central and local government about their efforts to solve the problems in schools and policies for children of multicultural families. On the other hand, PP09's case reveals the problems of children's language in the extended multicultural family including grandparents living together. This phenomenon appears in most multicultural families of WMMs. In short, they are trying to establish their own social position to help their ethnic neighbours:

It is our children's education issue. Yes, it is my children's problem. Vietnamese mothers are young. They are not much educated. Especially many problems appear in the mothers of multicultural families who are in rural remoted farming village. Mothers of multicultural families who have not studied a lot are concerned about their children's education. How can any parents teach their children what they could not learn and what they do not know? They do not know what they should teach their children. This problem should be solved without fail. South Korean Government should help them at the national level or local level. I would like to believe that they will (PP05).

As my baby is growing up, it is necessary for her to learn Korean language together with me. Her talks sound strange at this moment. We Vietnamese mothers have yet young babies, but they are to go to school soon. Then, we will meet with problems with our children's education. Sooner or later, our children's educational problem will surely become a big social problem. We don't know how to sort it out by ourselves. I want to help them with this issue. I have to study hard first, to get a good job, and to move my family out of my parents-in-law's (PP09).

While there is a tendency for WMMs not to reveal that they are foreigners, PP14 visits the nursery school where her son attends and asks for special care and attention because she is a foreigner in a multicultural family. These attitudes show her involvement

despite the prejudice:

But I do not like the teachers of my son's nursery school. I went to visit there and asked them to take special care of him as he comes from a multicultural family. When there, I noticed other children playing together while my son was playing alone apart from them. Other children were also studying together separated from my son who was playing alone again aside from another group of 2 or 3 years old babies. I shouted, 'Teacher! I asked you to pay special attention to my son because he was from multicultural family. Why is my son playing alone?' and she answered, 'Your son studied another subject earlier.' She does not seem to pay a keen attention to my son. Unlike other nurseries, this school let children watch too much television and video cartoons. My son has nothing he does not know the titles of the cartoons, but unable to read Korean. I am looking for other nurseries for my son to go after this summer. In other nurseries, it seems the children from multicultural families are well taken care of (PP14).

Children represent the WMMs' hope in their South Korean life. Their lives without their babies were lonesome and difficult, but once they have children they found their motivation and psychological reason to continue their life in South Korea (Sung Ran Cha 2011).

The focal point for Vietnamese WMMs in education for their children is to teach their children to accept their mother as Vietnamese (PP28). Although it is difficult for them to help their children with their homework, the majority of them let them receive Korean language lessons (PP26 and PP02). They also teach their children their native Vietnamese culture and feed them with Vietnamese food (PP26, PP25, and PP13). Some of them visit Vietnam together with their children and imprint their mothers' homeland in their memory (PP26 and PP13). As a whole, they endeavour to let their children be educated to understand their dual culture and to live their life in the right way as they are the children of multicultural families:

My son is in second year of elementary school. A difficulty in raising him is when I have

to make Korean food. Also, I think that the thing he needs most right now is education and I'm always grateful that he is very accepting of his mother being a Vietnamese. If there is a programme at his school that introduces Vietnam, I would take part actively. The school knows that he has a Vietnamese mother and brings friends home. I'm not sure yet what the differences are in the child-raising methods of South Korean and of Vietnamese (PP28).

My son is seven and goes to a 'hagwon' (tuition school). I want to be able to look over his homework and to let him receive lots of Korean language education. I have been to my native country, Vietnam, with him and sometimes tell him about my Vietnamese family. He likes Vietnamese rice noodles but I have not yet taught him the Vietnamese language (PP26).

The school teacher knows that my daughter has a Vietnamese mother. She is in fourth year of elementary school but I can't look over her homework. The thing she needs the most right now is school education and although I have fed her Vietnamese food, I have never spoken about my Vietnamese family members or dressed her in Vietnamese dress. I am teaching them the Vietnamese language but it has been a long time since I have gone to an amusement park with her (PP25).

There is difficulty in terms of education because I have three children. A difficult aspect of education in South Korea is that too much money goes into it, but right now I am teaching my kids abacus calculation, computer and piano and I am always thankful because my children get on well with each other. It is really frustrating because I can't communicate with the school teachers or counsellors. My kids know that their mother is Vietnamese and they like it at the moment but I don't know what they'll think when they're older. The Vietnamese methods of raising children are really very different to South Korean methods (PP29).

I have two children and I can look over my children's homework a little. I hope my children will become good people. My children know that their mother is Vietnamese but I have never spoken with other students' parents. I want to go back home to Vietnam with my kids and if there is an opportunity sometime in the future, I want to show them my home town (PP02).

I teach my child the Vietnamese language but they do not follow it very well. The difficult thing about life in South Korea is child education. I have never been to a Vietnamese restaurant in South Korea and I have never dressed my child in Vietnamese dress (PP15).

I give my children education in the Korean language but I cannot look over their homework. They know that mum is Vietnamese and likes the fact I am a Vietnamese. I am teaching them the Vietnamese language and I speak to them about our Vietnamese family. I don't know if I would take part in a programme at my children's school that introduces Vietnam (PP23).

For my children's Korean language education, I read them lots of books and talk with them. I have visited Vietnam with my children and have fed them Vietnamese food and I teach them the Vietnamese language (PP13).

### **3.2 Economic Activity for Positioning as a Member of Society**

As part of the 'Visiting Educational Services' policy implemented by the central government and Jeollanam-do, multicultural family welfare specialists are trained to implement the 'visiting service for the married migrants' family,' and PP05 and PP09 had already finished the training and taken part in the scheme. In addition to their economic

activities, they have also been playing their roles in assisting their ethnic compatriots who are adapting themselves to their South Korean life:

I get up at 6 o'clock in the morning to go to Gwangju city to get a training for an hour, and hurriedly get home at 8:30. I need to learn everything quickly so I can get a good job later. For the last several years while I have lived here, there has been nobody except my husband and a multicultural family welfare specialist who cares foreign WMMs who can listen to me. As I am a foreigner, I can only apply for this kind of job, and there are not many opportunities for us to have a job. But I have it now. Not many people can do it (PP05).

It is really good job to help foreign WMMs. I can help my other friends while I am studying it. .... It was last year. The job, multicultural family welfare specialist, I suggested my mother-in-law that I can earn money if I can do this job. I have to study. If I study it outside, I could learn how other people have lived and have made success in family, in business, and in society (PP09).

Furthermore, PP05 is working as a translator, interpreter, and lecturer for a multicultural family, and she is expected to expand the scope of her activities as she has acquired South Korean nationality. PP09 has a plan to act as an assistant instructor for English language after finishing a native instructor training course for foreign languages.

### **3.3 Negative Social Attitude toward Foreigners**

Although the central government of South Korea and local government are working in various ways to create relations with multicultural families and to create a multicultural friendly atmosphere in the local community, in reality, South Korean society has yet too many insufficient perceptions, attitudes, and policies regarding foreigners to accept them (Yang et al. 2007; So 2007). The WMMs show their efforts to overcome these negative social attitudes toward them. PP05 points out many problems of social attitudes that cannot be found in other cases of WMMs. She points out in various sectors, such as

limitations of social acceptance of multicultural families, difficulties due to limitations of laws and systems, human rights issues for Vietnamese WMMs related to international marriage agencies, and their stress from the prejudice that they came from a poor country. Their painful experiences relate to before the reformation of the system and the law when South Korean society and its government showed a lack of awareness of multicultural families. Despite the reformation and improvements of systems for multicultural families, and changes in their social awareness, and various researches and studies, many sectors these WMMs have pointed out retain social problems and issues which have become objects of attention. Nonetheless, PP05 is positioning herself as a respectable member of society through strengthening her capabilities. She is also making efforts to protect the human rights of her ethnic WMMs. However, PP09 experiences social prejudice from her mother-in-law:

Do you know 'Lai Dai Han?' They call a child 'Lai Dai Han' whose mother is Vietnamese when his South Korean father is not with him. A child with white skin is called American boy. For a long time, our country has had many international marriages. At that time, there were 53 ethnic minorities in our country. We, Vietnamese use the same language, but our skin color is different, so we do not feel special about international marriage in Vietnam. A country like Vietnam has long history of wars for a thousand years, and we have married Chinese without thinking it is international marriage. When I plant a tree, and give only water to it, it cannot live without air and sun. Bad air cannot make it live. Trees from overseas are more difficult to live. South Korean people who know it may be counted on the fingers. .... Well, it is difficult for us to understand South Korean culture and law. What I feel when I have lived in South Korea for over 4 years is that I am disabled. I cannot be legally recognized as my child's mother in South Korea. Even South Korean people never recognize it. We are under a lot of stress in South Korea. My husband is the most important for me but the people around me are also important. May be 50/50. But I feel like I am disabled in prison of South Korea. My stress becomes two or three times here in South Korea. I have a lot of stress because of people around me than my husband. We are not goods to sell or buy. But there are such advertising copies as 'Vietnamese women do not run away,' 'well take care of their parents-in-law and they live clean life' - 'buy these guaranteed brides with only 10 million won!'<sup>52</sup> These advertising copies

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<sup>52</sup> Equivalent to GBP 6,000.00 at the time of interview.

guaranteed the quality of brides. We are not commodities like smartphones which can be changed to a new one if not satisfying. Even such advertising copy exists. .... I feel like I am a robot, a farming machine, and a cleaning machine, not a daughter-in-law. That's it. I am completely guaranteed bride (PP05).

Sometimes the scenes of hard life in rural Vietnamese farmland are broadcast through South Korean television channels. Vietnamese women have to work hard. My mother-in-law pointed these scenes shown on the television screen saying 'Look! Look! How hard work your friends in your hometown do! How lucky you are who live here. You know?' (PP09).'

PP05 and PP09 are creating initiatives to establish themselves as members of their society through social participation, and they are already becoming members of South Korean society in various fields. They are starting the process of becoming leaders for their ethnic people as well as for themselves through active participation in South Korean society without giving up their own commitments.

PP14 experiences negative social attitudes from her neighbours, Whereas PP30 experiences prejudice against their marital age difference during her factory work in Gwangju city:

But others suspect that I married and came to South Korea from Vietnam to make remittance of much money to my parent's home. My in-laws used to bully me saying, 'You married and come to South Korea because of poverty, didn't you?' 'You came over here to help your parents in Vietnam, didn't you?' Someone ask me, 'How much do you make remittance?' I am very upset and uncomfortable with these bullying. I never thought of making remittance (PP14).

When I was living and working at factory in Gwangju city, some South Korean women co-workers asked my age, and saying, 'Why did you marry South Korean man so old that shows big difference of marital age?' I said it is okay for me. I say to them my husband was good husband and nice man. They responded 'Really?' 'Do Vietnamese people get married so early?' Some Vietnamese marry early but others not (PP30).

PP03 stated that South Korean society discriminates against Southeast Asians and

they are treated and segregated as foreigners even though they have South Korean citizenship. The husband of PP15 is disabled and even more discriminated against. Severe discrimination is noticed at the immigration office, especially in attitudes in the case of their visa extensions. They also noticed that the unkindness of the immigration office differs according to the nationality of foreigners:

The biggest problem with the multicultural policy in Korea is that you can't have dual nationality and you can't get a spouse invite. It is especially difficult when getting a medical examination alone in a hospital. I think that introducing people individually is better than through matchmaking agency in international marriage (PP03).

In Korean society, I think there is slight disregard for immigrant wives. And as of yet, I think they still view immigrant women strangely. But, I like that Korean society is comfortable and there are no difficulties when I go out or buy things (PP12).

In South Korean society, such diverse prejudices are still prevalent and are stress factors for these WMMs.

### **3.4 Relationships with Ethnic People**

Some cases (PP28, PP19, PP20, and PP07) show that Korean husbands like to have relationships with their own ethnic people but dislike their wives meeting other Vietnamese people:

My husband dislikes meeting with Vietnamese people and does not get on well with people from Vietnam. Vietnamese people don't give me any help but I go to gatherings often and meet with them to talk about family and gossip. The Vietnamese group meetings I go to often help a lot to relieve stress from Korean life. I especially like sharing gossip with Vietnamese people (PP28).

My husband hates me doing outside activities. I told my husband I wanted to take a short class because I had nowhere to learn about Korean life, but he said he was against it so I have never received an outside lesson. I understand that it is because there is an age gap

between us [16 years], but it is hard. There have been a few times when my husband met with Vietnamese people, but he said nothing and seemed angry the whole time so after that I ended up not going to the meetings very often and now I don't go at all. Although I don't go to the meetings, I do occasionally speak with Vietnamese women on the phone (PP07).

When Vietnamese people get together, we share ideas on child-raising methods and thoughts about lifestyle. We cook and eat Vietnamese food, and also talk about how Korean people are very thrifty and money-efficient (PP13).

Some Vietnamese WMMs' sisters have international marriages and live in Japan or Taiwan. They keep in touch with each other and offer comfort to their lives in foreign countries. They share information on the multicultural policies of their countries and the situations they are facing and pursue a better life. In this way, they are overcoming the real difficulties and maintaining their sense of well-being (PP25, PP16, and PP06):

My sister lives in Japan. Her husband, that is my brother-in-law, is doing well and she goes well without problems. However, it takes at least 5 years of marriage to apply for citizenship in Japan. Compare to that, it is better here in South Korea because it takes only 2 years of marriage in South Korea (PP25).

My cousin lives in Taiwan. She said that her husband was trying to make money by using her, and said they often use international marriage to get concubine in Taiwan (PP16).

My aunt lives in Japan. However, she said Japan does not regard a foreign woman married to a Japanese as a foreigner but rather as a native Japanese. I wish South Korea also considers us as Koreans, not foreigners (PP06).

#### **4 Conclusion**

Continuing the migration process, the South Korean life of these WMMs after migration consists of three types: first, the marriage after dating in Vietnam, second, the marriage by relatives' introduction or under the Korean Wave influence, and third, the marriage for overcoming poverty.

There are differences in their conflicts, marital relations, and settlement process according to the above types. In the first type of marriage after dating in Vietnam, conflicts arising from the differences between a patriarchal culture and a bilateral culture are expressed as the WMMs' conflicts with their mother-in-law or sister-in-law.

In these conflicts, these WMMs selectively accept or refute their mother-in-law who demands unconditional assimilation to their way of life in South Korea, or their sister-in-law who interferes with everything in the life instead of their mother-in-law. By doing so, they made efforts to carry on their bilateral culture of Vietnam toward integration with South Korean culture.

In the second type, there was no experience of conflict. This shows that the love, understanding, and consideration of their husbands and members of the family-in-law, especially their mother-in-law, have acted positively from the beginning of their migration to South Korea. However, by doing so, the problem of assimilation is exposed.

In the third type, there were serious problems in marital relations leading to running away from home, and demanding divorce during the first and second years of their migration. However, solving the problem of language communication, the care of their mothers-in-law, and the efforts of both parties of the couple improved their marital relationship, whereby assimilation accompanied by resignation and integration appeared compromised.

In spite of the differences, these WMMs have been actively adapting themselves to the South Korean society in accordance with their willingness to settle down there. They recognize that the problems of language communication, lack of accurate information about their husbands, their husbands' heavy drinking habit, their lack of understanding and differences in each other's own daily life, together with social discrimination and prejudice, limitations of acceptance in their local community, difficulties in employment, and limitations of law, institutions, and administration were obstacles to their settlement

process, while the education of their children is recognized as the most serious among these problems in the future.

These problems along with their experiences during their preparation to migrate are the challenges that greatly affect the sense of well-being these WMMs feel after their settlement in South Korea.

## Chapter Six

### Discussions and Applications to the Sense of Well-being of WMMs at the Stage of their Future Life in South Korea

#### 1 Introduction

A happy marriage is the aim of family life as well as the hope of all couples and it affects the maintenance of a healthy life. It is an important task for the WMMs from other cultures to adapt to the South Korean culture and to become a healthy member of a family and society. However, the increasing number of divorce cases in international marriages in South Korea cannot help multicultural families as well as accelerating the problems of child-raising and the education of children from divorced families. Therefore, it is important for South Korean society to pay keen attention to the WMMs' adaptation to its culture and to help them to maintain their happy marriages with their spouses.

Recognizing such importance of WMMs' smooth adaptation to South Korean culture as a way of building up a healthy society, this study investigates the factors which affect their sense of well-being. This study conducted interviews with WMMs to collect the data of their lived experiences during their entire marriage migration process, namely, from their life before marriage in their hometown, their marriage process, to their adaptation and settlement in South Korea after marriage. Through the analysis of the voices of WMMs from their interview data in the previous two chapters, the factors affecting their sense of well-being are discussed and applied to their future life in South Korea in this chapter.

This study is a phenomenological study on factors affecting the sense of well-being of Vietnamese WMMs in the process of their settlement in South Korea. The key research questions for this study are, first, what are the motives and expectations of international marriage of WMMs in Vietnam? Then, what were the challenges they face in their settlement in South Korea? Next, how do they negotiate the challenges with their

resources to overcome the difficulties in their settlement in South Korea? Finally, what were and should be their resources to keep their stable sense of well-being against the challenges?

Thus, Giorgi's phenomenological research method and Schütze's biographical-narratives interview method are suitable for finding the factors in the WMMs' resources and the challenges they face in the process of settlement in South Korea which affect their sense of well-being. As a result, the internal and external factors found in the resources, which are the key to overcome the difficulties and secure their sense of well-being in the settlement process, are identified from three perspectives: personal, familial and social. In addition, this study identified the WMMs' demographic factors that have been found to affect them to overcome the difficulties and challenges in their settlement process and to maintain their sense of well-being in South Korea.

This chapter identifies the four aspects of factors in challenges and resources as follows: first, motivations and expectations of choosing international marriage migration from Vietnam to South Korea; second, the difficulties and challenges in the process of preparation for migration and in the settlement process after migration; third, three perspectives of the factors or resources that overcome the challenges and influence their sense of well-being; and fourth, the demographic factors affecting the Vietnamese WMMs' sense of well-being.

## **2 Motivations and Expectations of International Marriages**

This study found the following motivations and expectations of the WMMs' international marriages. They are the motivations for choosing international marriage in Vietnam and the expectations they want to achieve through it.

First, this study found that the motivation for the WMMs to choose international marriage migration from Vietnam to South Korea was due to the fact that they were from

poor homes in Vietnam. In addition, it found that the difficulties they experienced in their childhood in Vietnam also affected them in the process of becoming adults as expressed in a spirit of adventure to change their future lives and a yearning for freedom. The analysis of the interview data discovered that these WMMs wanted to live their lives different from their poor parents who had a hard life in farming and raising livestock. They were willing to move out of Vietnam's bad economic situation and to live freely in a good environment. Some of these WMMs wanted to escape the chaotic situation of their home, where their parents frequently fought. Previous studies of similar subjects found that WMMs have been looking for international marriages in order to live their lives in better conditions and to support their dependent families (Y. Kwak 2009: 15-16). Thus, it was confirmed that when the difficulties experienced during their growth period were not resolved and carried on into their adolescence and adulthood, their psychological anxiety accumulated and resulted in a situation where it is hard for them to endure their life, and WMMs chose the international marriage as a breakthrough in order to escape from their unstable life (Y. O. Kim 2012: 56)

Second, this study found that their expectations of international marriages were for economic gains in a developed country like South Korea which they recognized under the influence of the Korean Wave. In addition, they wanted to achieve the Korean dream after having a crush on South Korean men's good looks, personality, and economic power, and were introduced by the international marriage agency or by their relatives at the time. During the interviews of this study, these WMMs watched South Korean dramas and hoped that if they went to South Korea, they would be able to make their dreams come true, and help their families in Vietnam economically. Some of these WMMs hoped that they could escape from the harsh environment and economic difficulties of Vietnam, and would be able to live happily in South Korea making romantic love with their spouses.

Previous researchers found that the positive image of South Korean culture through the Korean Wave inspired Asian WMMs to have Korean fantasies and as a result,

they see South Korea as a wealthy country and a good country to live in (B. Song 2012: 66). Another researcher found that the WMMs' fantasy of South Korean men and their expectation of economic prosperity in South Korea as a developed country are major factors in determining their international marriages (M. H. Kim 2007: 200). Thus, it was confirmed that WMMs chose international marriages to South Koreans in the expectation that they would make changes in their lives (E. H. Lee 2013: 115).

### **3 Difficulties and Challenges in the Migration and Settlement in South Korea**

This study found the following characteristics in the difficulties and challenges of these WMMs' migration and settlement to South Korea. The difficulties they experienced appear in the process from their preparation for migration in Vietnam to their cultural adaptation and settlement to South Korea.

First, this study found that these WMMs experienced difficulties due to a lack of information on South Korea in preparing for migration before leaving Vietnam after choosing international marriage. In addition, it was found that these WMMs experienced psychological anxiety due to the influence of their parents and family in Vietnam who strongly opposed their children's international marriage. In addition, they had to rely solely on information of an international marriage agency that was unreliable, so they prepared their migration to South Korea with uncertainty. In the course of the interviews of these WMMs, it was found that they prepared their migration alone in the absence of information about South Korea, and in this situation, to make matters worse, they could not get any help from their husbands in South Korea. They were under the heavy influence of their parents' opposition against their international marriage as their family were worrying about their children having a hard time to solve everything themselves in South Korea where their adaptation, security and stability were not guaranteed away from their home country. This study also found that some of these WMMs were suffering with their inner

struggle against international marriage agencies that introduced South Korea and helped them to migrate with inaccurate information or no information on their husbands.

Previous studies have also confirmed that WMMs spend a lonely and hard time in preparation for their migration to South Korea without any help from anyone in Vietnam (Y. O. Kim 2012: 67). Another study suggests that WMMs who had received inaccurate or misinformation about South Korea in an international marriage agency system operated for commercial purposes suffer difficulties in adapting themselves to their life in South Korea (K. W. Yoon 2011: 71-72).

In addition, this study showed that they were preparing for their migration to South Korea with the psychological burden and anxiety due to the reaction of their family in Vietnam who were worried and strongly opposed to their leaving Vietnam and moving to South Korea. In other words, it was confirmed that these WMMs prepared to migrate to South Korea in the hopes that their lives as WMMs would be better than the unstable lives of their own country, Vietnam, even though they were not helped by the people around them and had difficulties caused by the opposition of their family members.

Second, this study found that these WMMs experienced difficulties due to an unfamiliar and limited living environment in the process of adapting to South Korean life after their migration. It was also found that they had difficulties due to their relationship with their husbands who did not stand by their side and with their mothers-in-law. In addition, unlike the facts known to them before their marriage, their husbands' economic power was not adequate, and they voiced the hardship their work-oriented life. During the interviews, it was found that these WMMs were conscious of their unfamiliar surroundings and the gaze of the local people looking at their different skin colour. In addition, their poor Korean language that was their biggest difficulty made them experience a limited life even when passing the downtown street, when using public transportation, and when dealing with official matters. Some of these WMMs have had difficulties even in communicating within the family home, and they have had difficulties with their husbands

who do not help with their house chores. Living a work-centred life like a workaholic with a patriarchal way of thinking, they have had a lot of difficulties with their nagging mother-in-law who are authoritative according to Korean tradition. This study confirmed that these WMMs experiencing limited language skills spent a difficult time due to their husband-centred lifestyle and unfavourable mothers-in-law attitudes in the family life.

In previous studies, it was reaffirmed that WMMs have had difficulty in expressing their thoughts and feelings due to their poor language communication, and have been confronted with difficulties in adjusting to life in South Korea as they cannot maintain a good relationship with their in-laws and the people around them (S. N. Lee 2013: 170-171). Another study also suggests that limited communication is a factor that causes their difficulties in raising children and in the economic activities they desired (M. K. Kwon 2007: 177). It has also been reported that the sex-role stereotype and the differences in patriarchal values lead to value conflicts in the families (T. W. Kim 2013: 69-70), and especially in terms of their relationships with their parents-in-law (K. S. Jeong 2008: 89). In the same context, it is recognized that these WMMs' adaptations and conflicts in their relationship with their husbands and with their mothers-in-law are influenced by the different variables of each individual member of their family (J. O. Park 2011: 128-129). In addition, it is reported that the information on their husbands before marriage is different from that after marriage, and these WMMs have difficulty in settlement due to the difference between their economic expectations and the reality of life in South Korea (J. K. Park 2009: 155-156).

On the other hand, according to the interviews, these WMMs have suffered in relation to the people around them who look at their appearance and hear their accent with prejudice and discrimination in the course of their settlement in South Korea, and some WMMs hated people around them who looked curiously at them as foreigners and who treated them with disfavour. It was also found that these WMMs had spent a lonely and difficult period during pregnancy and child delivery. Some of these WMMs were reported

to have been raising their children with a feeling of resentment due to their family atmosphere that had the preference for boys despite the fact that they had difficulty conceiving and giving birth to their children. As such, these WMMs have experienced self-deprecation owing to the South Korean superiority in society, and they have struggled alone to raise their children after their childbirth in their family home.

Previous studies have also reported that WMMs have spent difficult times in their relationships with the people they meet in the course of their adapting to South Korean life, and the confusion becomes a factor that causes psychological stress (Keum Hae Choi 2006: 128). WMMs have also reported difficulty in the process of postnatal care including pregnancy and childbirth (Nam and Oh 2013: 144-148). In the same context, WMMs worry about the difficulties that their children will experience when they grow up due to their mother's identity, together with their responsibility to raise their children properly (Jeong et al. 2014: 236-237).

Thus, this study shows that after these WMMs migrated, they struggled with an unfamiliar environment in the course of their adapting to South Korean life and lived a limited life in the family home and society. In addition, they have experienced difficulties in expressing their thoughts and feelings due to their inadequate language, as well as in economic activities, in their family life, and in their relationships with people around them. In other words, these WMMs experienced difficulties in their living environment, in their family relationships, in their interpersonal relationships, in their pregnancy, in their childbirth and in their child rearing in the course of adapting to South Korean life.

Third, during the interviews, the researcher found that these WMMs were confused when they encountered Korean culture , and they could not easily understand complicated manners such as obedience to their bosses and seniors. They also refused Korean traditional food, which caused some symptoms of severe physical rejection. In addition, it was most difficult for them to prepare the sacrifice service and some of these WMMs were found to have been forced into religious activities they did not understand

when they could not even take a rest at the weekend. These examples confirmed that WMMs have difficulties in playing various roles in their family home and in society due to the cultural differences and their psychological confusion in their adaptation to South Korean culture.

Existing researches also show that WMMs cause conflicts in their family-in-law by differences in communication and culture in their adaptation to South Korean culture (Jeong and Kim 2010:37-38). Another study reaffirmed that the living in a new environment, as well as a complex festive culture, are challenges for WMMs (E. H. Lee 2013: 117-118). In a similar context, some researchers analysed that WMMs experience serious mental health problems such as psychological depression and stress in the adaptation process because they migrate with a shallow knowledge of South Korean culture and society (Yoo 2015: 33-34). In this way, a previous study confirmed that WMMs' stress is high in their family-in-law relationship because their married life starts without forming an emotional or personal relationship between husband and wife (S. A. Kim 2009: 56-57).

In conclusion, this study shows that the difficulties of WMMs in their settlement into South Korean society started from the process of preparation for migration to South Korea after deciding on international marriage. In addition, these WMMs could not be helped in the South Korean environment, let alone in the family-in-law and in their society after migration

#### **4 Factors and Resources that Overcome the Challenges**

This study found the following characteristics in the factors and resources for overcoming the challenges to influence their sense of well-being in the settlement process of WMMs to South Korean society according to perspectives: internal, external, and the transnational factors.

#### **4.1 Internal Factors**

First, this study found the internal factors in their individual perspective.. The result of reviewing their interviews found that whenever their life situation in South Korea becomes harsh and difficult, these WMMs are self-supportive with positive thoughts by recalling their efforts to change the negative view of their family in Vietnam on their international marriage migration. These WMMs went to local Multicultural Centres, General Welfare Centre for Workers, and Foreign Residents' Centres to improve their basic Korean skills needed for their settlement, and some WMMs tried their best to learn the Korean language, asking their husbands to teach them how to speak and write in Korean at home. In addition, they opened their hearts without hesitation to overcome the unfamiliar and cold surroundings and expanded their intimate relationships with their neighbours, and kept communicating with their local communities responsibly so that their children can grow without experiencing the same difficulties as themselves. In addition, they have gained social experiences through economic activities and volunteer activities, which helped them to restore their household economy and to boost their confidence. Thus, this study confirms that these WMMs have actively and positively accepted their lives as marriage migrants and have lived their life with enthusiasm and hope.

Previous research also reported that WMMs are undergoing the process of conflicts caused by social regulation and discrimination in South Korean society as they are creating new areas in their lives based on self-identity and life agency (H. E. Lee 2005: 118-119). This study also confirmed that these WMMs actively made efforts to expand the area of their lives in their family home and in their society even under difficult circumstances.

According to somewhat different results, WMMs have difficulties in coping with the way of nurturing their children as they were reluctant to accept the stress of their lives

in South Korea (H. R. Seo et al. 2008: 135-137). This study, however, confirms that these WMMs actively communicate and nurture their children everyday by checking their daily routine with a sense of responsibility for them.

On the other hand, another study reported that WMMs were engaged in economic activities by seeking and finding jobs to supplement their living expenses and to make their living (K. S. Jeong 2008: 91), and that raised their self-confidence rather than merely the economic recovery of their family.

In this way, this study confirmed that these WMMs have supported themselves in their family home and society and have lived their life in a positive attitude. In addition, they have actively participated in various social activities and have made efforts to adapt themselves to their life in South Korea.

#### **4.2 External Factors from the WMMs' Family-in-law Perspective**

Second, this study found that these WMMs were able to cope with the difficulties in their settlement process to South Korea with the praise and support of their husbands and mothers-in-law and these are the external factors from their family-in-law perspective. The WMMs have made a change in their homes as a result of their own efforts of the individual perspective, and because of this, members of the Korean family-in-law supported and understood these WMMs and gave them strength and help in their settlement process. During the interviews, these WMMs said that they have gained a lot of strength from their husbands who helped them with housework, and talked to them offering comfort and praise. Some of these WMMs said that their husbands' support helped them to get free from their family-in-law moving out of their house. These WMMs also said that they are empowered by their mother-in-law who understood their mistakes that could occur in their family life, and who gave praise and support to them. The family's support and praise is the external element of overcoming the difficulties from the family-

in-law perspective, and these WMMs became empowered to live well in South Korea, and in turn, their sense of well-being has been heightened.

In previous studies, the support of WMMs' husbands has been reported to be a factor to reduce their marital conflict and a source of strength to comfort the WMMs and help them overcome their difficulties in the process of their settlement in South Korea (O. N. Kim 2006: 94). Thus, this study showed that these WMMs were doing well in their roles as wives of husbands who empowered them in their family.

### **4.3 External Factors from a Social Perspective**

Third, this study found the external factors from a social perspective as these WMMs were able to overcome the difficulties and challenges in their settlement process to South Korea by communicating with social organizations and participating in volunteer activities. These WMMs have gained strength and vitality in finding job recruiting information, in the education for marriage couples and children, and in regular events and gatherings in South Korean society. According to the interviews, these WMMs received news necessary for their living in South Korea from their local multicultural centres where they also got useful information on job recruitment. In addition, these WMMs have been participating in regular events held by social and religious organizations to get help in their daily life through open educational classes for married couples and children.

### **4.4 Transnational Factors**

As seen in the interviews of participants (PP25, PP16, and PP06) in this study, the greater the frequency of contact with family members in their home or in third countries (Japan, Taiwan, etc.), the more likely they were to overcome difficulties and feel a sense of well-being in adapting to life in South Korea. This shows that the transnational network operates as an emotional support system. Such a transnational network infrastructure is

being strengthened by the development and popularization of ICT (Internet Communication Technology).

The development of ICT, especially in South Korea, mitigates the difference in information between cities and rural areas, thus greatly alleviating the alienation of WMMs residing in rural areas.

Furthermore, it is expected that South Korean men and foreign women will be able to communicate and understand each other through cyber-dating before marriage, which will mitigate the difficulties of adaptation of WMMs to South Korean life and enhance their sense of well-being.

In addition, the monthly self-help group meeting of Vietnamese WMMs made their hometown food, and some of these WMMs participated in voluntary activities together. As such, these WMMs have gained strength through the self-help group meetings of Vietnamese WMMs.

Previous studies also found that meeting with people from home countries through self-help groups became the new social support sources, and played a significant role in mitigating stress and depression (Noh 2007: 71-72). In this study, it was confirmed that these WMMs also overcome the difficulties and challenges by obtaining psychological stability and energy through their self-help groups of Vietnamese WMMs.

Thus, this study has shown that these WMMs have received the necessary information for their family and local South Korean society. Also, they enjoyed communicating happily with others through various events and gatherings that eased homesickness for their mother country.

## **5 Demographic Factors affecting the Sense of Well-Being**

In this study, the sense of well-being was verified according to the demographic

characteristics of WMMs: the age of WMMs and age gap between the WMM and her husband, WMMs' place of origin, WMMs' and their husbands' motivation of marriage, the academic attainment of both WMMs and her husband, the total monthly income of the family, residence type and location, husband's support, living with parents-in-law, and child care.

### **5.1 Age and Age Gap**

The WMMs of this study showed an average age difference of 15.9 years with that of their husbands. A previous study has pointed out that the age gap of these couples in multicultural families aggravated their marital relationship due to their unequal marital relationship, which gives the power to the husband in the family (Hong & Chae 2006). In another study, it was found that marital satisfaction increased as the age of the husband was higher than that of wife (Groot & Brink 2002). However, in this study, it was analysed that the age gap between the WMMs and their husbands, or the age of WMMs had no significant effect on their sense of well-being. Out of 30 WMMs in this study, few WMMs (PP04, PP10, and PP30) mentioned the age gap. She said she was content with the age gap but some people around her questioned why she married an old husband:

I have a lot of age difference with my husband, but he does well (actually he does not look so old). He looks much younger than his age. I'm okay with his age (PP04).

In my opinion, we, wives are early to see young and new culture. But our husbands are in their 40s and 50s, and even if they are not very old people, they do not change fast enough. So, there is a gap between the couple in adapting new culture. Young wives have the internet, so they adapt and changes quickly but their husbands cannot follow the trend (PP10).

In another study, WMMs over 36 years old have high self-esteem, suggesting that

they could increase their self-respect and self-esteem through their initial difficult adjustment period in South Korea (D. Yang 2012). This study also confirms this fact through interviews with 30 WMMs over four years. Therefore, the WMMs' sense of well-being increases as time passes with their settlement in South Korea.

## **5.2 WMMs' Place of Origin**

In the case of WMMs, there may be differences in the sense of well-being when adapting to South Korea because of the environment, language, customs, and culture of each WMM's region of origin. Especially in Vietnamese WMMs' cases of this study, because of its topography, this vertically long and thin country has had a number of different influences throughout its history, and has different cultural characteristics which influence the WMMs' sense of well-being differently in their adaptation to South Korean culture. In the previous research, it was found that the WMMs of Southeast Asian countries feel relatively inconvenienced in their settlement to South Korea in terms of the lineament of their face, compared to those from China, Japan, Korean-Chinese, and Koreans 2nd and 3rd generations from Russia (H. S. Kim 2015).

PP14 is from the Southern rural area, and PP30 is from the Northern rural area of Vietnam. They feel it is not so hard to overcome the economic household situation of their family in South Korea as they were used to the hard-working situation of the Vietnamese farming village. On the other hand, PP05 is from the Southern metropolis, Ho Chi Minh and PP09 is from the Northern metropolis, Hanoi. They seem to be living a better life and achieving their sense of well-being in South Korea by compromising and adapting to South Korean life with self-esteem and self-reliance based on their university education and on their working experience in a big city of Vietnam. As discussed earlier, the culture of the Southern and Northern parts of Vietnam is different, but for the WMMs of this study it is difficult to clearly define that their place of origin influences their sense of well-being in

their adaptation to South Korea as there are many other factors interacting.

### **5.3 Motivation of Marriage**

The motives for international marriage migration of WMMs participating in this study can be classified into two broad categories. One is for economic stability and the other is for love. According to the interview data analysis in previous chapters, WMMs married through international marriage agencies mainly pursued economic stability, and those who married after dating in Vietnam, who married through their relatives' introduction, and under the influence of the Korean Wave, married for love.

In this study, the WMMs who married through international marriage agencies expressed a higher sense of well-being than those who married through other channels. It is not adequate to say that this difference is significant, but the main motivation of the WMMs through international marriage agencies is economic stability, and the satisfaction of this motivation can be more easily ascertained than that of the motivation of love, so if the achievement of economic stability is achieved to some extent, their well-being may be perceived higher than the others. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the achievement of their purpose or motivation of international marriage as a factor affecting their sense of well-being:

I was born in the Mekong Delta rural area. My parents were and are farming. I had five brothers and sisters so life was very hard. So, I married my husband through a marriage broker to help my family (PP03).

I help my family in Vietnam a lot after marriage. When they built a new house, I supported them with half of the total cost of building, and whenever there were some special occasions in my family, I gave them one or two thousand US\$. If we, my husband and I visited my family in Vietnam, we gave them four to five thousand US\$. I am happy to support my family in Vietnam (PP07).

On the other hand, the motivation for international marriage by South Korean husbands or their in-laws also influences the WMMs' sense of well-being. As discussed in Chapter Two, the cases of commercial marriage trafficking using international marriage are also found in the motivation of South Korean husbands and their in-laws for their international marriages. These motives become a critical factor influencing the WMMs' sense of well-being.

As the number of WMMs settled in South Korea increased, the problems of international marriages through international marriage agencies were exposed and improvements were made over time. Among the WMMs participating in this study, however, most of those who migrated through international marriage agencies complained that the personal information about their spouses offered by the agencies was very different from reality or did not provide the most necessary information. WMMs resigned themselves to or were often in despair over their real life situations, so mis-information or non-information about their spouses was a negative factor influencing their sense of well-being for a long time.

In this way, misleading or omitted information on WMMs' would-be spouses from international marriage agencies may not only come from the pursuit of commercial interests of the agencies, but also from the hidden intentions of their South Korean husbands or their in-laws. As already discussed in this study, there are cases in which the husband's side hid his illness or disability to marry these WMMs, and the WMM's mother-in-law hid the disability of her son to promote an international marriage for him.

As a result of the analysis of both the interviews with the heads of organizations supporting the WMMs and the journals of the WMMs, which were collected in order to supplement the data of this study, there were cases when international marriages were exploited to fulfil other purposes than its proper purpose and motivation: the desire of WMMs' mother-in-law to get a grandson to carry on the family line, regardless of her son's will; the attempt of WMMs' mother-in-law to make her handicapped son get married; to

recruit a maid to care for her old parents-in-law, not to marry her as his wife; to secure a foreign woman caretaker using international marriage under the assumption that the cost of international marriage is lower than that of recruiting Korean woman carers.

Of course, it is also reported that there are WMMs who took international marriage for the purpose of going to South Korea in any way possible, and disappeared after entering South Korea, but it is not within the scope of this study.

#### **5.4 Academic Attainment**

In general, academic attainment is considered to be a major variable in the social context and potentially a human resource that can be used to promote economic aspects of jobs and income growth.

In the previous studies, there were contradictory results that the higher the education level the higher the sense of well-being (Blanchflower and Oswald 2004; Helliwell 2001), and the opposite case, that is, the lower the education level, the higher the sense of well-being (E. A. Jang 2010). According to this study, the lower the education level of WMMs, the lower their sense of well-being and the higher their tendency to resignation in a given environment.

According to a previous study, the inequality of social capital can be deduced from the level and extent of social capital of women, the social structural discrimination based on her country of origin, and the absence of transnational transfer of her academic attainment. Furthermore, the WMMs' educational capital is cut off from the employment opportunities by a lack of standardized certification in South Korea (M. K. Kim 2011). It is also confirmed by the results of this study that Vietnamese women are in a discriminative situation where they are downgraded, working in lower quality jobs and are dependent on the socio-economic status of their South Korean husbands, even though they have a higher academic attainment.

On the other hand, a South Korean husband's academic attainment, and the gap of academic attainment between him and his Vietnamese wife do not affect her sense of well-being in this study.

### **5.5 Income of the Family**

Traditional factors that are expected to significantly affect an individual's sense of well-being are economic factors. Indeed, there were controversial arguments about the debate about the impact of material wealth on the quality of life. Easterlin (1995) said that happiness is not significantly affected by income in relatively wealthy countries. Other studies have found that people of low income countries are rather more satisfied with their lives than those of high income countries (Bjournskov 2003; Inglehart and Klingemann 2000).

According to the results of this study, it is found that income level has a significant effect on the WMMs' life and their sense of well-being. There is also a difference in the quality of life and their sense of well-being according to the monthly income of their households. Therefore, there is a difference in the sense of well-being according to their economic level or monthly income that WMMs experience. However, most of the WMMs participating in this study live in rural and small and medium-sized cities with monthly household incomes falling in the middle and lower class, indicating that their sense of well-being depends on other factors such as their residence, occupation, and motivation for international marriage.

I got married and lived in the countryside farming family and it was difficult economically, but I worked hard with my husband and now I can get along well with house economy (PP02).

## 5.6 Residence Type and Location

In this study, the residence patterns of WMMs differ between urban and rural areas. In the rural areas, they have their own house whereas in the urban areas, they have rented flats or town houses. The sense of well-being of the multicultural families residing in self-owned or spouse-owned housing is significantly higher than those who live in rented flats or town houses. In other words, the type of residence is a measure of economic ability and it can be used as a parameter to estimate the relationship between the sense of well-being and economic ability.

In this study, WMMs in rural areas have a lower sense of well-being than those in urban areas. Rural WMMs have a limited range of activities due to a lack of transport facilities and vulnerable geographical characteristics compared to urban areas. Therefore, it is more difficult for rural WMMs to join in the process of cultural adaptation to South Korea because their accessibility to programmes and services for their adaptation is poor.

As I live in a rural village where people do not live much, rumours are easily spread when a foreign wife like me cannot be seen even for a short while, such as these and other harsh words as 'Kim's daughter-in-law has run away' and 'after all she married for the money.' I really hate going around my village (PP23).

Rural WMMs have a poor sense of well-being regarding their economic problems and domestic labour because of the nature of their agricultural situation. Their income is generated after the investment of one whole year's labour to a farming business and, therefore, the economic difficulties are experienced in their real life. In addition, housewives of farmers are mobilized as labourers to help farmers in addition to their domestic labours, and such various roles of WMMs in rural areas made their sense of well-being low.

When it was in the farming season, it was rather less severe, but when it was agricultural off-season, I had a lot of conflicts with my parents-in-law and my husband. So, I work part time in winter season. Sometimes I work at a Chinese restaurant or sell goods at a nearby national rest stop. If I ask them for money, I am afraid I feel like being ignored (PP19).

In the South Korean culture, the rural area has a stronger traditional character than the city. Their family-centred thinking that emphasizes filial piety in family relationships and their clear role in the separation of men and women due to the strict hierarchical system values the father-and-son relationship rather than the marital relationship. Vietnamese WMMs of this study who are unfamiliar with these traditions have a great deal of difficulty in adapting to South Korean culture, especially in rural areas, which has a great impact on their sense of well-being. It is because the husband in the family occupies the dominant position of authority that South Korean husbands force unilateral obedience of WMMs rather than provide support to their Vietnamese wives.

### **5.7 Husband's Support**

Their husbands' support for WMMs is very important because they are not only the cause of conflict but also provide clues to resolve their conflicts with each other. In this study, their mutual trust and understanding increased when South Korean husbands made efforts to understand their Vietnamese wives' native culture and, consequently, it helped to maintain their happiness and stable marriage, thus greatly affecting their sense of well-being. These phenomena were more positive for WMMs' sense of well-being as the couple shared their leisure activities together. In short, spousal support plays an important role in supplementing scarce resources for the Vietnamese WMMs in their challenging situations when adaptating to new circumstances:

One day my husband told me his first impression when he first came to Vietnam to meet me. It was poor, of course, what my husband felt about Vietnam, but he still felt that Vietnam has pride though. The country that won the United States in the war. Such pride my husband felt. He thought there was nothing proud of himself. Because of this, probably, he could see the good side of Vietnamese women, and wives again, and in fact they seemed really smart. My husband looks really love me (PP23).

### **5.8 Living with Parents-in-law**

Vietnamese WMMs participating in this study, who grew up in the bilateral gender equality culture, suffered from a cultural shock in the command-obedience relationship between them and their parents-in-law, and in the male-centred South Korean culture. They also performed domestic work, and underwent pregnancy, childbirth, and childcare at the same time as their marriage. As a result of being exposed to multiple roles as wives, domestics, and mothers, they faced many challenges such as cultural adjustment in a foreign land. Most of the people who were able to provide information, knowledge and wisdom related to the domestic life of these Vietnamese WMMs were their parents-in-law who lived together with them. Therefore, if the Vietnamese WMMs received a lot of physical, financial, and emotional support from their parents-in-law with whom they lived together, their stress adapting to South Korean life was reduced and their sense of well-being for the marriage increased. In fact, a representative of the Migrant Women's Support Centre said that local municipalities in Jeollanam-do organized the self-help group of WMMs' husbands to form healthy family relations as part of social policy, and also held education sessions and conferences for WMMs' husbands and parents-in-law to promote happiness and stability in the multicultural families.

The younger sister of PP22 had a Japanese husband and they often made calls and visited each other, comparing their mothers-in-law of Japan and Korea:

My mother-in-law is very unlike my sister's mother-in-law, that is Japanese mother-in-law.

My mother-in-law has a direct nagging and interference. It was difficult for me to understand the Korean culture of the relationship between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law. Japanese mother-in-law thinks before she talks to her daughter-in-law (PP22).

However, PP15 maintained a positive and frank relationship with her mother-in-law, which was possible because she was a foreign daughter-in-law. In other words, her mother-in-law told her about her feelings and sadness from the viewpoint of teaching her foreign daughter-in-law, and since PP15 is also from other culture, she has to be honest and has a correct attitude to rectify mistakes:

My mother-in-law tells me over the wine table if I have something to say to her, and also she tells me what I'm doing wrong frankly in honesty. Then it's okay. She tells us to have fun when we are young enough (PP15).

## **5.9 Child Care**

In this study, the Vietnamese WMMs regarded their children as talented, autonomous and independent people. They expected their children to grow up to be individuals who have the confidence, identity, fit in with others, accept different cultures and help others. The role of parents recognized by the Vietnamese WMMs is to take care of their children's health, to keep them safe, to be counsellors, to play together, to instruct them, to provide character education, to support their studies, to teach about Vietnam, and to contribute to their living expenses. However, due to a lack of command of Korean language, lack of social support, social prejudice and discrimination, and cultural differences, they had difficulties in educating their children. Due to the lack of Korean language skills, they had to endure difficulties with their children's lifestyle, language instruction, and learning:

Because it was my first time raising my baby, I did not know how to do and it was very scary and hard. I had no idea how to care my baby who kept crying without sleep. In Vietnam, we use a swing net (Vietnam Hammock) when we lay our babies. If we make them sleep there, they sleep well. They don't use it in Korea. My husband is out of work, and there is no one to teach me. I am sick after delivered a baby. When I call my mother in Vietnam, she told me that she does not know as Korea seems different with Vietnam. My mother-in-law does not teach how to care a baby but just let me lift up my baby. I should have had a baby in Vietnam and should have come to Korea. I regret having a baby in Korea (PP10).

As a mother who should help my children with their homework, I need a high quality Korean language course and need a program which helps me to understand cultural differences. I would also like my children to have a program that can systematically learn Korean. In addition to big cities, I would like to have Korean learning facilities and consultation facilities in small cities like Hwasoon where I live. It is too far from many benefits. I hope my family live in South Korea with the same treatment as Koreans (PP03).

Also, communication with their children was limited. They suffered both emotionally and physically from pregnancy and delivery to early childhood education due to a lack of social support:

A while ago, an instructor who came to GP to teach us, told us that we should read our babies books much. But I cannot speak Korean so I cannot do it well. My husband does not do well either. I worry about my baby. Because I do not speak Korean well, my baby is not listening to me well and I am frustrated (PP12).

I cannot read book to my baby and since I have nothing to do with my child, sometimes I feel like a stepmother, feeling pathetic (PP27).

Their difficulties were also due to social prejudice and discrimination. They have had difficulties in educating their children due to cultural differences such as the patriarchal atmosphere of the South Korean families and societies and diverse views on child education among their family-in-law's circle. They expected South Korean society to improve their awareness of multicultural families for their children. They demanded

systematic Vietnamese education to help their children establish their identity and cultivate their global talent. The Vietnamese WMMs had the right views and great expectations for their children, and they were doing their very best to care for and educate their children:

In Vietnam, it is said that the baby does not get sick if you make it wear silver bracelet. When the baby becomes ill, it turns black. It is strange that they do not do this practice in Korea, but I just did it to my baby as my mother sent it to me from Vietnam. I will do everything to raise my baby well (PP24).

They argued that South Korean society should provide them with sustained and systematic support to overcome the exclusive and monopolistic views on them in the society in an atmosphere of ignoring WMMs' rights to the education of their children and suppressing and excluding mothers' motherland culture, and with the difficulties in child education due to linguistic limitations.

Neither my son nor my daughter could be sent to the private kindergarten in town. I had to send them to a nearby kindergarten. In the case of my son who was born soon after I came to South Korea, I was awkward in the Korean language and my son was my first baby, so his language development was late. Even now, it seems he has a low understanding of learning, especially mathematics. My daughter is my second baby and she is similar to her peers. If I lived in town, I could send my children to a private kindergarten who teach not only Korean but also English and Chinese characters. Not in the kindergarten nearby. It is desperate and desirable to teach such subjects in every school and kindergarten as I, as a mother, cannot teach them properly (PP26).

In this study, Vietnamese WMMs are most active in expressing their problems in childcare. They have been challenged by many difficulties in adapting themselves to South Korean culture since they migrated to South Korea after international marriage. In the process, they have been disappointed with their husbands, members of their family-in-law

and many parts of South Korean society. Therefore, for these WMMs who have gone through the South Korean adaptation period, their remaining hope has naturally led them to their children. When their husbands, in-laws, and South Korean society were unable to give them a sense of well-being, their only asset was their child. Seeing their children growing up well at home and in school gave them a great sense of well-being. If they see their children who do not fit well in school or at home, they get hurt. Their sense of well-being is always fulfilled by their children. They say they feel a great sense of well-being with the hope that their children will grow up well to reward them though not at present but in the near future:

In fact, foreigners like me have to go out and work because my household is a bit economically difficult. But it is not just for money to go out. I'd like to go out and learn how other people live in Korea, and other mothers can help me. It seems better for my kids (PP25).

I want to take care of my kids and also to teach Korean so that I can send them to a good school next time. I want my child to be a strong and free child as a Korean. I want to be a good mother (PP17).

## **6 Specific Meaning of Well-being expressed by WMMs**

This study explores the relevance of a sense of well-being to the Vietnamese WMMs when overcoming difficulties as they settle in South Korea.

My research method included interviews. As mentioned in Chapter 3, I interviewed the Vietnamese WMMs in Korean. Therefore, it is not expected that the meaning of well-being they expressed in Korean is the same as the concept in their native Vietnamese. In view of their limited ability to speak Korean, I let the Vietnamese interpreter directly contact the interviewees and check the real meaning they wanted to express in Vietnamese words about their well-being used in Korean at the interviews. However, in most cases, it took a long time for me to hear, to transliterate, and to analyse

the interview data (voice recordings, text, and field notes) after the interviews. Therefore, after securing the interview data, I asked the interpreter to follow the above procedure of checking the real meaning. I could get the results via email and/or SNS. Sometimes I could get results when I visited them for the next interview session in the following year. The results are summarized in Table 14 below.

Table 14 List of Vietnamese Meanings for Well-being expressed in the Interviews with Vietnamese WMMs

Situation		Vietnamese Meaning for Well-being	Frequency	
Life in Vietnam	Bilateral Culture	Happiness	18	
	Poor, Hardship but Intimate Family Relationship	Happiness	14	
	Effort for Family Cohesion	Happiness	17	
	Open and Independent Life	Health	16	
Prior-Migration	Korean Dream	Pleasure	2	
		Good	3	
	Opportunity: New Life Different from Parents	Excitement	2	
		Pleasure	3	
	Love South Korean Man	Joy	5	
		Good	3	
Money (Economic Expectation)	Good	14		
Happiness out of Farmland	Happiness	13		
Post-Migration	Family Life	Love and Embrace; Consideration and Care	Happiness	11
			Satisfaction	4
			Joy	3
			Pleasure	5
	Personality and the Age Gap	Good	4	
		Satisfaction	7	
	Moving from Rural to Urban Area	Happiness	16	
Joy		9		
Food, Rites and Festivities	Health	4		
	Satisfaction	6		
Having a Child	Joy	12		

			Happiness	15
			Good	3
			Satisfaction	5
		Becoming Good Mother	Joy	12
			Happiness	15
			Satisfaction	5
		Going to a Good School	Joy	15
			Satisfaction	25
			Good	5
	Networking	Self-Help Meeting	Good	4
			Gaiety	5
			Refreshing	2
		Multi-Cultural Programme	Good	2
			Health	8
		Support from Multi-Cultural Support Centre	Health	17
			Satisfaction	25
		Sharing Troubles with her Friends	Equability	1
			Peace	3
			Health	7
		Getting a Job	Happiness	14
			Excitement	1
			Joy	4
			Pleasure	1
			Good	3
			Equability	2
			Health	10
		Helping Others	Happiness	15
			Satisfaction	12
			Joy	10
			Pleasure	3
			Good	2
			Health	5
		Expanding Networks	Happiness	18
			Satisfaction	20
			Joy	7
			Pleasure	7
			Good	5
		Transnational Networks	Happiness	8
			Satisfaction	20

			Joy	3
			Pleasure	9
			Good	3
			Equability	1
		Remittance to Home Family	Happiness	16
			Satisfaction	21
			Joy	5
			Pleasure	11
			Good	4
			Equability	1

Three (PP05, PP14, and PP30) of the 30 Vietnamese WMMs who participated in my research decided to give up the life that they had lived because of the difficulties of their early adaptation to South Korean lifestyle, and resolved to assimilate into South Korean culture after all. As a result, they learned the Korean language more quickly than others, adapted aggressively to South Korean culture, and now seem more Korean than the Koreans. The sense of well-being they feel is represented by the Vietnamese meaning of good, happiness, satisfaction rather than temporary joy, pleasure, excitement, or gaiety. This phenomenon is more prominent in Vietnamese WMMs who have been adapting for a long time in South Korea.

Their sense of well-being, which overcame the difficulties of the early migration stage to South Korea, was temporary. As their lives became stable with their ability to communicate in the Korean language, and the formation and expansion of networks with their neighbours and ethnic community, and with the connections to transnational networks and self-help groups, the sense of well-being that they feel is a balance between the challenges around them and their own sense of accomplishment.

One point is clear: their sense of well-being does not come from mere material abundance, but rather from a balance of spiritual peace and physical satisfaction (an equilibrium between opposites, such as resources and challenges, internal and external, physical and mental). Eventually, the sense of well-being is influenced by spirituality.

Since most of the Vietnamese WMMs were Buddhists, Taoists, Confucianists, and some Catholics, it is necessary to define spirituality as a broader concept rather than Christian spirituality. According to Murray and Zenter (1989: 259), spirituality is “a quality that goes beyond religious affiliation that strives for inspiration, reverence, awe, meaning and purpose, even in those who do not believe in any God. The spiritual dimension tries to be in harmony with the universe, strives for answers about the infinite and comes into focus when a person faces emotional stress, physical illness or death.”

This study revealed that these Vietnamese WMMs do not feel their sense of well-being simply from overcoming the difficulties they met in the course of their adaptation to South Korea, but rather from the realization that their dream has come true when they arrived at South Korea, from the improvement of their relationship with their parents-in-law by enduring the difficult situation in conflict, from the support of their husbands who had deceived them before, and from their achievement to get a job which can help their ethnic group in the same situation. In doing so, they have the inspiration and awe of their God or divine being to get answers about their future life in this world or beyond. As seen from the above definition of spirituality, the Vietnamese WMMs find harmony with their surroundings (or the universe) and solutions to overcome the difficulties of their life.

Based on these results, it is necessary to provide a spiritual community<sup>53</sup> to support their psychological and spiritual health in the long term, together with material help, social support, and care from the church in order to overcome difficulties in the early phase of adaptation to South Korea. As the psychological and spiritual aspects of well-being are not visible, pastoral care is always important. Pastors should know the condition of their flocks, and give careful attention to their herds (Proverbs 27:23, New International

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<sup>53</sup> South Korean religious organizations such as Christians, Buddhists, and Catholics, are engaged in various missions (or propagation) strategies for foreigners who need help to settle in South Korea. They operate cafes in the churches (or temples), meeting places, counseling and help centres in many areas where foreigners meet for their physical needs, and extend their help to the spiritual realm of the foreigners. Especially, the Christian spiritual community has created a special place and a special community where the visitors' own unique path to God is valued. It is a place where they can explore their spiritual nature without being shunned or excluded as their values and beliefs change over time.

Version).

## **7 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study found the internal and external factors that these WMMs were able to overcome the difficulties and maintain their sense of well-being in the process of their settlement in South Korea. They were not defeated but had reminded themselves of the purpose of choosing their international marriage in their motherland, Vietnam, and actively made efforts to overcome the difficulties and challenges with their determination to support themselves. The result of these WMMs' efforts has changed their alienated relationship with their families-in-law who were the object of their difficulty, and has drawn their support and help. In addition, these WMMs were able to open up their minds that had been held back with the help of social organizations and religious institutes in South Korea, together with the Vietnamese self-help groups. Apart from these factors, demographic factors have meaningful influences on their sense of well-being: 1) age of the Vietnamese WMMs and their age differences with their husbands; 2) the Vietnamese WMMs' place of origin in Vietnam – south or north, urban or rural; 3) WMMs' motivation or purpose of international marriage; 4) education level of both WMMs and their husbands; 5) household income level of their family all together; 6) residence type and location – own house/flat or rent, urban or rural; 7) husband's support – from the family-in-law perspective; 8) WMMs' living together with parents-in-law, including other members of their family-in-law; 9) and WMMs' childcare. The interaction of the four aspects of factors will be discussed in the next chapter.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **Summary and Conclusion**

#### **1 Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to find the factors that overcome the difficulties in the settlement process of the Vietnamese WMMs who came to South Korea as international marriage migrants and to determine how these factors affect their sense of well-being. This chapter summarizes the research methods and the results of the analysis, and concludes with the implications of this study.

#### **2 Research Summary**

This study is a phenomenological research to uncover the significance of the factors to overcome the difficulties in the WMMs' settlement process in South Korea. Moreover, it is to examine how these factors affect their sense of well-being through the in-depth interviews with 30 Vietnamese WMMs who experienced difficulties in their settlement process in South Korea. The Vietnamese WMMs who participated in the research for this purpose are residing in Gwangju metropolitan city and nearby Hwasung-gun in Jeollanam-do. They can communicate in Korean, having stayed in South Korea for more than 3 years, and have lived together with their children.

This study conducted open-ended in-depth interviews three times with the same WMMs once a year for three years in order to enhance the richness of data. The collected data from the interviews were analyzed phenomenologically by Giorgi's research method together with Schütze's narrative method as an ancillary. As a result of this data analysis, the meaningful statements that these WMMs interpreted and explained subjectively by WMMs, are selected into 76 meaning units which are classified into 25 categories and

summarized into 6 themes.

In this way, the analyzed data on the meaningful statements made by the Vietnamese WMMs' voices are divided into themes, categories, and meanings, and are discussed according to the WMMs' migration timeline divided into before and after their migration to South Korea. The themes before their migration to South Korea are subdivided into their story of their growth process in Vietnam and of their decision to choose international marriage and preparation for migration to South Korea. The themes after their migration and settlement process in South Korea are subdivided into family and social perspectives. In addition to the analysis of these 5 themes, the WMMs' demographic characteristics were analysed as the 6<sup>th</sup> theme to find the factors that affect their sense of well-being.

The results of this study are shown in detail in the 6 themes and 25 categories. The 6 themes are: WMMs' life in Vietnam, marriage routes and motives, preparation for migration, family life, social life, and demographic characteristics.

The first theme, 'WMMs' life in Vietnam' consists of 2 categories of family life and life at work, and the second theme, marriage routes and motives has 2 categories of marriage routes and marriage motives, and the third theme, preparation for migration consists of 3 categories of lack of information on spouses, anxiety about their choices, and parents' opposition with affection. The fourth theme, 'family life' has 4 categories of communication difficulties, cultural differences, economic issues, and marital relationship, and the fifth theme, social life consists of 4 categories of difficulty in child education of multicultural family, economic activity for positioning as a member of society, negative social attitude toward foreigners, and relationship with ethnic people. The sixth theme, demographic characteristics, has 9 categories or factors of age of the Vietnamese WMMs and their age differences with their husbands, the Vietnamese WMMs place of origin in Vietnam, WMMs' motivation or purpose of international marriage, education level of both WMMs and their husbands, household income level of their family

all together, residence type and location – own house/flat or rent, urban or rural, husband's support, 'WMMs' living together with parents-in-law, including other members of family-in-law, and 'WMMs' child care. The results of this study are as follows.

First, the motives and expectations of international marriage of these Vietnamese WMMs, who are the objects of this study, were to live freely in a new country away from the difficulties that were formed in their home and society in Vietnam. They chose South Korea that has achieved economic growth undergone through difficult times, as a destination for their escape from Vietnam. They were found to choose international marriage with the hope of a relaxed and affluent life in South Korea through the influence of the South Korean dramas widespread by the 'Hallyu,' that is the Korean Wave. They also expected to make their Korean dream come true through their South Korean spouse introduced to them by the international marriage agency or by their relatives and friends.

Second, the difficulties in the settlement process of the Vietnamese WMMs came from their international marriage routes, marriage motives, preparation for their migration to South Korea, and their life in South Korean family and society. They found it difficult to prepare for their marriage migration because of the lack of information on South Korea in terms of marriage migration and their feeling of anxiety due to the strong objections of their family members who were strongly against international marriage to go to South Korea. In addition, they had difficulties in living in an unfamiliar environment with an inexperienced language during the process of settlement even after their migration to South Korea. They had also spent difficult times in adapting to their life in South Korea when the South Korean members of their family-in-law and other people around them were neither even interested in nor cared about their experiences. In particular, after their migration to South Korea, these Vietnamese WMMs were found to have difficulties in adapting to South Korean culture such as Korean language, Korean food, manners and etiquette, festivals, and religion.

Third, the Vietnamese WMMs were found to have been through the period of

facing up to the factors to overcome the difficulties in their settlement process in South Korea. The positive efforts of these Vietnamese WMMs changed the attitude of their husbands who had neither stood by their side nor taken care of them, to become closer in their relationship. Their efforts also drew their mothers-in-law into a close relationship. In addition, the continuous attention and interest of South Korean society toward them and the self-help groups of these Vietnamese WMMs soothed their repressed emotions and let them gain their vitality of life which enabled them to help other WMMs who were experiencing the same difficulties. It is also worth noting that the sharing of information through transnational networks has become an emotional support to help Vietnamese WMMs ease their loneliness and overcome the difficulties in their settling in South Korea. Through such a series of processes, these Vietnamese WMMs maintained their sense of well-being in their lives in South Korea and affected the sense of well-being of other WMMs around them.

Fourth, the demographic characteristics of these Vietnamese WMMs produced several factors which have meaningful influences on the sense of well-being: WMMs' age and age gap of couples; WMMs' hometown; WMMs' motivation or purpose of international marriage; education level of couples; household income level; residence type and location; husband's support; WMMs' living together with parents-in-law; and WMMs' child care.

As a result, there are internal factors from the individual perspective, and external factors from the family and social perspectives. The features and meanings of these factors were found in the following.

First, the Vietnamese WMMs have endeavoured to overcome the difficulties in their settlement process in South Korea by supporting themselves with positive thoughts.

Second, their husbands' and mothers-in-law's support were the driving forces for overcoming the difficulties. Vietnamese WMMs actively endeavoured to overcome their

difficulties with their inner will and have made a positive change in their family-in-law, so that the members of their Korean family-in-law supported, understood, gave strength and helped the Vietnamese WMMs in their settlement process in South Korea.

Third, the interest and attention of South Korean society helped these Vietnamese WMMs overcome their difficulties in their settlement process in South Korea. Local multicultural centres and religious institutes held various lectures, events, and gatherings for the WMMs. Through this, WMMs were provided with Korean language classes, job information, and the lectures for couples and children of multicultural families. The Vietnamese WMMs also participated actively in every event, self-help group meetings and maintained their transnational networks.

Fourth, the demographic factors of the Vietnamese WMMs together with the factors mentioned above were found to affect the sense of well-being of the WMMs in the settlement process: age and age gap; WMMs' place of origin; motivation of marriage; academic attainment; income of the family; residence type and location; husband's support; living with parents-in-law; and child care.

### **3 Significance of this Study**

This research has the following significance as a study of the factors maintaining the Vietnamese WMMs' sense of well-being, while overcoming the difficulties in the settlement process to South Korea.

First, this study has described the personal experiences of the Vietnamese WMMs in their own terms and with the content of stories from their inner voices. In addition, their settlement process is divided into their early life in Vietnam before migration, the process of their preparation for migration, the process of their adapting to South Korean life after migration, and the process of their adapting to South Korean culture in order to focus on an in-depth understanding of the causes of the difficulties which challenge and affect their

sense of well-being. In particular, their collective experience has been confirmed with a special attention to how the factors that overcome difficulties in the Vietnamese WMMs' psychological state affect their sense of well-being.

Second, this study traces the difficulties in their family and social life from growing up to adulthood of these Vietnamese WMMs who choose international marriage. This study discovered that they choose international marriage because of their strong curiosity and desire to live in a new country.

Third, this study is based on the research of the Vietnamese WMMs who have suffered many difficulties in their migration process from the preparation for their migration to settlement in South Korean life and culture. It is also very meaningful to find that they have tried to help other WMMs who are suffering from the same difficulties as they experienced. They tried to provide the sense of well-being with other WMMs by sharing their experiences of their settlement in South Korea.

Fourth and finally, this study found that there are factors influencing their sense of well-being in their demographic characteristics, as well as in the process of overcoming the difficulties of WMMs' settlement process. The nine demographic factors found in this study could be applied to future studies.

The results of this study show that the understanding of the characteristics of South Korean life and cultural adaptation experienced by the Vietnamese WMMs will help people to understand their difficulties in detail, and will become effective resources for providing a clear understanding of the WMMs to the people around them, including the multicultural families and social organizations that could help them, and teachers and counsellors who educate the WMMs' children. It is also expected to contribute to changes in the perception of foreigners, let alone the WMMs in South Korean society as a whole.

#### **4 Application of this Study to Ministry and Mission in the Local Context**

The practical purpose of this study is to provide scholarly assistance for my fellow workers in multicultural missionary work. I have been interested in mission to migrants in South Korea since the 1990s, when migrant workers and WMMs began to enter South Korea. However, a lack of understanding and prejudice against migrants often frustrated mission to them. This study focuses on mission to WMMs who become South Koreans through international marriage. As a result of this study, I have come to understand WMMs more fully and have realized that it is very important to eliminate prejudice against WMMs in order to create an accessible mission environment.

WMMs who settle in South Korea feel a sense of well-being by overcoming many difficulties in the early stage of their social adjustment. Therefore, the missionary approach to these people should start from a ministry of caring so that they can overcome their difficulties more easily. This should be done at the level of missional approach rather than that of social welfare. This care should be accompanied by caring for physical needs and spiritual issues together holistically. The sense of well-being that WMMs feel in overcoming problems is only temporary. There is always a new difficulty in life, and when the same issues are repeated, the sense of well-being derived from overcoming them eventually falls away, chronic complaints make it difficult for them to adapt to South Korean society, and eventually their marriages in South Korea become unstable.

As a result of this study, Vietnamese WMMs were found to have strong self-esteem, and the robustness to endure and overcome difficulties. If South Korean churches recognize Vietnamese WMMs as Koreans and lead them to Christian faith, this would constitute excellent mission work. If the temporary sense of well-being they felt after overcoming their difficulties is replaced by a sense of security, belonging, and peace in life, they would develop a long-term sense of well-being in adapting to life in South Korea. This is why the caring ministry of South Korean churches is important. Spiritual caring cannot be provided to WMMs by state or local governments.

South Korean churches should be careful not to fall into the trap of cultural superiority. If they do, then what they are doing can no longer be called mission. They must bear witness to the gospel by serving and caring in the humility of Jesus Christ. WMMs have difficulties in adapting to the Korean language as well as the South Korean culture. In addition, they struggle with children's education and nurturing. South Korean churches should teach them the Korean language, while at the same time help them to be witnesses of the gospel.

### **5 Limitations of this Study**

The purpose of this study is to understand the phenomena, which describe from the subjective perspective the factors to overcome the difficulties and to affect their sense of well-being in the Vietnamese WMMs' settlement process in South Korea. The research participants in this study are Vietnamese WMMs, and the nature of their experiences and their personal characteristics may differ slightly from those of various other native WMMs. However, this study began with the assumption that there is a similarity in the larger framework of WMMs as a whole beyond their specific national and personal characteristics. The limited scope of this study is as follows.

First, this study is focused on the factors to overcome the difficulties and to affect their sense of well-being in the Vietnamese WMMs' settlement process in South Korea. It is a limitation of this study because the research was conducted on WMMs from a specific country, i.e., Vietnam. Therefore, if the WMMs from various countries are divided by the country of origin, and the study of the factors to overcome the difficulties and affect their sense of well-being in the settlement process is carried out for each country of the WMMs' origin, then the study can explore the correlation between their statements in various perspectives and the factors to overcome their difficulties and to affect their sense of well-being.

Second, this study focuses on their experiences themselves of the difficulties and of their sense of well-being in their settlement process through the phenomenological research method. Such a perspective in this study cannot go deeper into the research of the whole process from the formation of the difficulties in their growth and development period to the period of intensifying difficulties in their settlement process in South Korea. So, this study suggests that a detailed study of the process of the formation and intensification of the difficulties through the grounded theory research method will be more meaningful.

Third, this study did not lead to in-depth studies on the family in the home country and family-in-law of the Vietnamese WMMs that are related to the difficulty of their settlement in South Korea. Therefore, it is expected that it will be more meaningful if further research continues to study the factors which appear according to their cultures such as the communications and attitudes between members of the family-in-law, the Vietnamese WMMs' own language and level of their sociality, their own family culture, their religion, their nationality, and their relationship with their husbands and the members of their family-in-law who are based in Korean culture.

Fourth, this study did not subdivide the research on the process of overcoming the difficulties and maintaining their sense of well-being in the Vietnamese WMMs' settlement process in South Korea. Therefore, it is anticipated that if the research on the process of overcoming the difficulties and maintaining their sense of well-being for the WMMs currently living in South Korea as well as the WMMs' migrating in the future is conducted, it will be an effective tool for their achieving stable settlement in South Korea.

Fifth, the subjects of this study are Vietnamese WMMs, but they were limited in expressing their feelings in Korean that is not their native language in the interviews, and they cannot express their meaning fully, and their statements in Korean were translated into English when necessary. So, it is inevitable that there is a limit to the accuracy of their true expression.

Sixth, this study was conducted to find out the factors to overcome the difficulties and to maintain their sense of well-being in the settlement process of the Vietnam WMMs in South Korea. In the process of this research, the Vietnamese WMMs were expected to show Berry's four acculturation strategies (Berry 1997) that people use in response to a new culture. However, they showed the strategy of integration by maintaining their own Vietnamese cultural identity to a great extent and by making an effort towards becoming an integral part of the larger South Korean societal framework and the strategy of assimilation by abandoning their Vietnamese culture, and maintaining positive relations with South Korean society, with its cultural values and behaviour patterns. The reason they showed only two kinds of strategy is because the purpose of their migration is to marry a South Korean man and live permanently there. However, if a further study is conducted with WMMs from various countries, it is expected that Berry's acculturation strategies they use to settle in South Korea will show different results.

## **6 Suggestions of this Study**

The purpose of this study was to find out the phenomena and essence of the factors to overcome the difficulties and to affect their sense of well-being of the Vietnamese WMMs in their settlement process in South Korea. In addition, the meaningful results found in this study were intended to provide data for the WMMs to achieve their stable settlement in South Korea. Therefore, this study aims to propose the following research so that WMMs can establish stable settlements in South Korea and enjoy their sense of well-being.

First, WMMs need to be aware that they can lead their family and society when they become healthy for themselves. These WMMs are those who have chosen international marriage with the expectation of living in homes in South Korea after escaping from their difficult life in Vietnam, but there are many cases where they are

frustrated by experiencing the differences between the ideal life expected before their migration and the real one in their actual marriage life after their migration. Therefore, they need guidance and help to maintain their sense of well-being.

Second, a one-to-one mentoring system for WMMs is required. In South Korea, the influx of WMMs is still maintaining its trend, and in particular, the Vietnamese nationality ratio among WMMs and its high divorce rate. However, even though the attention and concern of South Korean society for the WMMs have increased and its various welfare organizations have supported their adaptation, the difficulties in their families and society have not been resolved. Rather, it turned out that their inner state of mind was a continuation of anxiety and depression. In other words, these WMMs show problems of their living a life of oppression and masquerading without pouring out their hearts to anyone else in the process of their migration to South Korea. Therefore, in order to facilitate their open communication, and to resolve any inconveniences or difficulties that may arise in their settlement process, it is necessary to expand multicultural centres currently located in specific metropolitan cities and provinces to small local cities and towns with increases in the number of support centres in each area to establish a one-to-one mentoring system to care for the WMMs.

Third, it is necessary to expand the institutional support programmes to help WMMs. As shown in this study, the main difficulties that these WMMs appeal to during their settlement can be seen in their relationships with their husbands or their mothers-in-law in their family. Their experiences of these difficulties also lead them to their child rearing. Therefore, it is necessary to intervene in their problems of relationships by classifying them into the relationship between husband and wife, between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, and between parents and children in the family with group programmes, family programmes, and treatment programmes.

Fourth, it is necessary to train counsellors in foreign WMMs so that they can take charge of counselling their own people. Even when WMMs express their own ethnic

feelings of discomfort or difficulties that they feel, they do not have anyone to discuss them with, and in some cases they avoid consulting with Koreans. Therefore, it is necessary to operate a consulting system with ethnic counsellors who can understand the background of the growth of the ethnic WMMs and solve their problems by recognizing the cause of their difficulties with a sympathetic attitude.

Finally, WMMs are people who chose South Korea as their country to start their new life in the hope that they will live well away from their home country. Therefore, if South Korea accepts and warmly embraces them as members of its society, they will be able to establish themselves as members contributing to South Korean society. Therefore, in order to help WMMs who are experiencing difficulties in their settlement to adopt a new environment more positively as women, to maintain their sense of well-being, and to achieve their stable settlement without difficulty, it is necessary for South Korean society to conduct extensive research in many areas that can help the WMMs with their inner psychological, emotional stability and their sense of well-being.

## **7 Conclusion**

The idea that did not leave my mind from the beginning to the end of this study was human dignity. Of course, the worldly phenomena cannot be explained wholly by human knowledge, but if there is an attitude that should be maintained as a human being, I think that it is the respect for human dignity.

Although it may be argued that the results of this study are ignored here at its closing, the difficulties of the Vietnamese WMMs' settlement process are the same reasons as why South Korean women are reluctant to marry. In other words, I think the difficulties that South Korean women should have faced have been shifted onto foreign WMMs. The difficulties in the marriage settlement process of WMMs from foreign countries and those of the South Korean women married in South Korea are not much different. Rather, the

problems of the WMMs' settlement in rural areas in South Korea, found as a result of this study, should be treated as an exclusion issue of South Korea in social welfare. It was already discussed in Chapter 1, Figure 2. Mechanism of Marriage Market.

In addition, it will not be easy for Koreans to escape their homogenous nationalism that has long been the perception of Koreans but without the change of their awareness, it will be a demographic problem. Furthermore, now is the time for the academia to extend the direction of research from the intensive research on the WMMs' host country, that is South Korea, to their homeland. Recently, the relationship between South Korea and Vietnam has become very strong in many ways. As a result of the enormous investment of South Korea in Vietnam and the diversification of the Korean Wave, the general atmosphere regarding each other has improved. Many South Korean sports leaders are leading the national teams of Vietnam, and recently the South Korean coach of the Vietnamese national soccer team has been treated as a hero in the contemporary history of Vietnam, like Ho Chi Minh, the father of the nation. Considering these circumstances, it is time for South Koreans to change their perception of foreigners and to provide an environment where WMMs can live proudly as Koreans.



## APPENDICES

### Appendix I

설문지 (Questionnaire)

November 2016

Tôi là Jong Dong Wu, đang nghiên cứu về gia đình đa văn hóa chuẩn bị cho luận văn tiến sĩ tại Oxford, Anh.

Xin bạn vui lòng giúp trả lời những câu hỏi sau một cách thẳng thắn

Vì sự quan tâm và hợp tác của quý vị sẽ trở thành căn cứ nghiên cứu trung thực về gia đình đa văn hóa đang hình thành trong xã hội Hàn Quốc

Xin cảm ơn

Jong Dong Woo

Chương trình tiến sĩ Trường Thần Học Truyền giáo Oxford

안녕하세요? (How are you?)

바쁘신 와중에 설문에 응해주셔서 감사합니다. (Thank you very much for your answer to this questionnaire)

응답하신 내용은 순수한 연구 목적 이외의 다른 어떤 용도로도 사용되지 않으며, 개인 정보와 응답은 모두 익명으로 처리되오니 편안한 마음으로 자신의 생각을 솔직하게 답해 주십시오. (The information you give me will be strictly confidential and will be processed only with a number of statistics and will not be used for any other purposes except for this research so please give me accurate answers.) 충실한 연구 결과를 위해 대화 내용이 녹음됩니다. (Our conversation may be recorded in order to produce reliable research result.)

감사합니다. (Thank you)

옥스포드선교신학대학원 박사 과정 (Ph.D. Candidate, Oxford Centre for Mission Studies)

정동우 올림 (Dongwoo Jung)

1. 본인 소개를 간략하게 해 주세요 (Introduce yourself briefly)

- 출신 도시, 국가: \_\_\_\_\_, 베트남 (Came from \_\_\_\_\_ in Vietnam)

- 가족 사항 (Personal Information)

	성명 (Name )	나이 (Age)	최종학력 (Education )	종교 (Religion )	직업 (Occupation )	기타 (Remarks )
본인 (Yourself)						
남편 (Husband)						
자녀 (Children)	성별(Sex )					

- 귀하는 한국 국적을 취득하였습니까? 취득하였다면 언제입니까? (Did you get South Korean citizenship?)

1) 예 (Yes) ☞ 언제 취득하셨습니다? (When) \_\_\_\_\_ 년 (Year) \_\_\_\_ 월 (Month)

2) 아니요 (No) ☞ 귀하의 현재 체류 자격은? (What is your current visa status?)

a. 영주(F-5) (Permanent Residence)

b. 한국인의 배우자(F-2) (Spouse of Korean)

2. 한국에 온 목적은 무엇입니까? (What is your purpose to come to South Korea?)

1) 결혼 (Marriage), 2) 취업 (Job), 3) 유학 (Study), 4) 기타 (Others) \_\_\_\_\_

3. 귀하의 현재 혼인 상태는 다음 중 어디에 해당합니까? (What is your marital status now?)

1) 기혼 (Married), 2) 별거 (separate), 3) 이혼 (divorce),

4) 혼인신고 하지 않은 채 동거 (cohabitation before marriage), 5) 사별 (widow)

4. 동거중인 일가 친척: 시부 ( ), 시모 ( ), 친부 ( ), 친모 ( ), 기타 \_\_\_\_\_

5. 귀하의 남편이 일하여 번 돈은 누가 관리하십니까? (Who manage the income your husband earns?)

- 1) 나 (myself),      2) 남편 (husband),      3) 부부 공동 (together),  
4) 시부모 (parents-in-law),    5) 기타 (others) \_\_\_\_\_

6. 귀하는 한국에 언제 왔습니까? (When did you come to South Korea?)

\_\_\_\_\_년 (year) \_\_\_\_월 (month)

귀하의 결혼지속 년수는? (How long have you been in marriage?)

\_\_\_\_\_년 (year) \_\_\_\_개월 (months)

7. 귀하는 남편을 어떻게 만났습니까? (How did you meet your husband for the first time?)

- 1) 부모 형제의 소개 (introduced by parents or siblings),  
2) 친척의 소개 (introduced by relatives),  
3) 친구 선후배의 소개 (introduced by social circles)  
4) 잘 알고 지내는 사람의 소개 (introduced by acquaintances)  
5) 결혼중개업체를 통하여 (through the matchmaker)  
6) 행정기관의 주선 (matched by the government authorities)  
7) 종교 단체를 통하여 (through religious institutes)  
8) 타인의 소개 없이 직접 만났음 (direct contact)  
9) 기타 (others) \_\_\_\_\_

8. 귀하가 남편과 결혼한 이유는 무엇입니까? (Why did you marry your husband?)

- 1) 한국에서 살기 위하여 (to live in South Korea)  
2) 본국 가족에게 경제적 지원을 하기 위하여 (to support your family in Vietnam)  
3) 무조건 본국을 떠나고 싶어서 (simply to leave home)  
4) 한국에서 취업하기 위하여 (to get job in South Korea)  
5) 가족과 친척 등의 권유로 (introduced by relatives)  
6) 현재의 남편을 사랑하였기 때문에 (because you love your husband)  
7) 종교적인 이유로 (religious reason)

8) 기타 (others) \_\_\_\_\_

9. 귀하에게 현재 가장 필요한 것은 무엇입니까? (What do you need most now?)

- 1) 경제적 지원 (financial support),
- 2) 취미 및 여가생활 지원 (support my leisure life)
- 3) 친구 및 대화 상대 (friends and talking partner,
- 4) 한글교육 (Korean language education)
- 5) 기타 (others) \_\_\_\_\_

10. 귀하는 여가시간을 주로 어떻게 보내나요? (How do you spend your leisure time?)

- 1) 집에서 혼자 지낸다 (stay alone at home),
- 2) 친구를 만난다 (meeting friends)
- 3) 교회, 성당, 사원 등 종교 기관에 간다 (go to religious institute such as church, cathedral or temple)
- 4) 사회복지기관 및 시설에 간다 (go to social welfare institutes and centres)
- 5) 기타 (others) \_\_\_\_\_

11. 한국에서의 가정생활 중 가장 갈등이 큰 부분은 무엇입니까? (What is the most difficult issue you experience in Korean lifestyle?)

- 1) 음식 문화의 차이 (different in food culture),
- 2) 주거 문화의 차이 (different in residential culture)
- 3) 소비 습관의 차이 (different in consumption habit)
- 4) 가족(친족) 관계 (family and relative relationship),
- 5) 자녀 양육 방식 (child rearing method)
- 6) 기타 (others) \_\_\_\_\_

12. 귀하의 생활을 전반적으로 고려할 때 현재 삶에 어느 정도 만족하십니까? (How much are you satisfied with your current life as a whole?)

- 1) 매우 만족 (very much),      2) 만족 (much),      3) 보통 (so-so),
- 4) 불만 (not satisfied),      5) 매우 불만 (not at all)

13. 여러분의 가정에서는 여러분의 모국 문화가 어느 정도 적용되고 있다고 생각합니까? (To what extent your mother culture is applied to your family?)

- 1) 거의 적용되지 못한다 (never),                      2) 조금 적용된다 (to some extent)
- 3) 비슷하게 적용된다 (equally applied),
- 4) 조금 더 많이 적용된다 (more than Korean culture)
- 5) 더 많이 적용된다 (much more than Korean culture)

14. 귀하는 모국에 있는 가족과 지난 1년간 연락 (전화, 편지, e-mail, 인터넷 채팅)을 얼마나 자주 하였습니까? (How frequently did you correspond with your family in your homeland for the last year – telephone, letter, email, internet chatting, etc.)

- 1) 일주일에 2번 이상 (more than twice a week),    2) 일주일에 한 번 (once a week),
- 3) 한 달에 한 두 번 (once or twice per month),    4) 1년에 2~3번 (twice or thrice a year)
- 5) 1년에 1번 (once a year),                              6) 전혀 없음 (never)

15. 만약 모국에 있는 가족이나 친척이 한국인과 결혼하려고 한다면, 귀하는 어떻게 하겠습니까? (How will you do if your family members or relatives in your homeland are to marry South Korean?)

- 1) 적극 찬성 (very much agree),              2) 찬성 (agree),
- 3) 찬성도 반대도 아님 (neither agree nor against),
- 4) 반대 (against),                                  5) 적극 반대 (very much against)

16. 귀하는 한국에서 생활하면서 외국인이라는 이유로 차별대우를 받은 적이 있습니까? (Have you ever experience segregation as being foreigner in South Korea?)

- 1) 있다 (Yes),                                      (2) 없다 (No)

17. (있다면) 어디에서 어느 정도의 차별 대우를 받았습니까? (If yes, where, and to what extent you experienced it?)

18. (차별대우를 받았을 때) 귀하는 차별 시정을 요구한 적이 있습니까? (Did you claim to rectify it when you experienced it?)

허락하신다면 더 대화를 나누고 싶습니다. **Nếu được cho phép thì tôi muốn được trò chuyện nhiều hơn.** (If you allow me, I'd like to continue this interview further.)

좋습니다 **tốt** (Yes) (            ), 싫습니다 **không thích** (No) (            )

일자 (Date): 2016.11.\_\_\_\_. Time \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_



(Subjects of Open-End Interview)

### 심층 인터뷰 내용

#### 1. 국제결혼 과정의 적응 (Adaptation in the course of international marriage)

##### 1) 국제결혼의 동기 (Motivation)

- 한국에 대한 동경 (Korean Dream)
- 꿈을 이룰 수 있는 좋은 기회 (Opportunity to Dream come true)
- 경제적 기대 (Financial Expectation)
- 농촌에서 벗어나 행복하게 살기 (to Live happy life out of farm land)
- 기타 (others)

##### 2) 국제결혼의 경로 (Route to International Marriage)

- 관련 직업/직장 (Occupation or work place)
- 중매 (Matchmaking)
- 이웃, 친지, 동료 소개 (Neighbours, Relatives, and Friends' Introduction)
- 기타 (Others)

##### 3) 국제결혼 결심 후의 느낌 (Feelings after decision to international marriage)

- 기대와 설렘 (Expectation and fluttering)
- 두려움 (Anxiety)

잘 살아야 한다는 부담감 (Burden to live well)

기타 (Others)

4) 주위의 반응

부러움 (Envy)

걱정 (Anxiety)

따뜻한 격려 (Warm Encouragement)

기타 (Others)

2. 결혼생활 적응과정 (In the process of adaptation to marriage life)

1) 정보의 일치 정도 (Information provided)

정확히 일치 (fairly matched)

어느 정도 일치 (matched to some extent)

일치하지 않음 (not matched)

2) 신혼기의 어려움 (Difficulties in the honeymoon period)

언어 소통 (Communication)

시댁 식구와 명절 모임 (Relationship with families-in-law and festival gatherings)

음식과 간 맞추기 (food and seasoning)

기타 (others)

3) 시댁과의 관계 (Relationship with in-laws)

동서들의 무시 (Ignored by sisters-in-law)

친척들의 차별과 무시 (Ignored and segregated by relatives)

시어머니의 간섭, 통제 (Intervention and control by the mother-in-law)

잘해야 한다는 의무감 (Sense of duty to do better)

가족 존칭 구별의 어려움 (Difficulty in discernment of family title of honour)

기타 (Others)

4) 배우자의 관계 (Marriage relationship)

사랑과 포용 (Love and Tolerance)

배려와 보듬어 줌 (Consideration and Embrace)

무시 (Ignored)

가정 폭력 (Domestic Violence)

- 남편의 주벽 (Husband's bad drinking habit)
- 남편의 성격과 나이 차이 (Husband's personality and age gap)
- 기타 (Others)

5) 표현의 어려움 (Difficulty in expression)

- 문화적 인식의 차이 (Difference in the cultural perception)
- 제스처 사용 (Use of Gesture)
- 한국어 표현의 다양성 (Diversity in the expression of Korean language)
- 기타 (Others)

3. 일상 생활 적응 과정 (In the course of adaptation to daily life)

1) 의사소통 문제 (Communication issues)

- 마음의 고민을 털어 놓지 못함 (Hard to reveal worries deep in mind)
- 대화 시간의 부족 (Fall short of time to dialogue)
- 간단한 대화로 친밀성 향상 (Compact conversation enhance intimacy)
- 기타 (Others)

2) 경제적 어려움 (Difficulty in economy)

- 남편 월급의 적음 (Husband's income too small)
- 시댁 식구의 많은 인원 부양 (support many family-in-law members)
- 일정치 않은 수입 (uneven income)
- 기타 (Others)

3) 정서적 어려움 (Emotional Issues)

- 속대화 상대 부족으로 외로움 (Loneliness from the lack of partner for sharing innermost issues)
- 고민은 동료들과 얘기함 (Sharing worries with friends)
- 기타 (Others)

4) 차별적 시선 (Discriminative attention)

- 가족과 친지의 차별 (Family and Relative's Discrimination)
- 주변 사람들의 무시 (Ignored by Neighbours)
- 기타 (Others)

4. 자녀 문제 적응 과정 (In the course of adaptation to Children Issues)

1) 정체성 혼란 (Confusion of Identity)

- 모국(부모)에 대한 정체성 불확실 (Uncertainty of Identity to their Parents' motherland)
- 외모에서 오는 차별 (Discrimination of appearance)
- 기타 (Others)

2) 학교(학업) 적응 문제 (Issues in adaptation to school and study)

- 학습의 미흡 (inadequacy of study)
- 과제 해결 어려움 (Difficulty in task solution)
- 등원(유치원 등) 거부 (Refusal to attend school)
- 기타 (Others)

3) 친구들의 시선 (Friend's attention)

- 동료 어린이들의 무시 (Ignored by friends)
- 이상한 눈초리 (Odd Look)
- 기타 (Others)

4) 스트레스 경험 (Stress Experience)

- 자녀의 자신감 결여 (Children's lack of confidence)
- 친구들과 어울리지 못함 (Not getting along well with friends)
- 등원(등교) 거부 (Refusal to attend school)
- 기타 (Others)

5. 한국 고유문화 적응 과정 (In the course of adaptation to South Korean Traditional Culture)

1) 명절 문화 (Festival Culture)

- 명절의 가족놀이 문화 참여 못함 (Cannot participate in the cultural family fun in festival)
- 친정 가족 생각에 외로움 (Loneliness thinking of family in homeland)
- 절차가 너무 어렵다 (Hard to follow protocol of tradition)
- 기타 (Others)

2) 음식 문화 (Food Culture)

- 다양한 음식과 간 맞추기 (Variety of food and seasoning)
- 식재료별 음식 만드는 요령 숙지 미흡 (Lack of knowledge to recipes of Korean food)
- 기타 (Others)

3) 친인척 문화 (Relative Culture)

- 호칭과 존칭의 어려움 (Hard to use proper title and honour)
- 가족들과 어울리는데 어려움 (Hard to get along well with family members)
- 기타 (Others)

6. 다문화 가정으로 적응 과정 (In the course of adaptation to multicultural family)

1) 자조 모임 (Self-help Meeting)

- 모임에 대한 기대가 많음 (Much expectation to self-help meeting)
- 자신을 돌아보는 좋은 기회 (Good chance to look into themselves)
- 기타 (Others)

2) 다문화 프로그램 참여 (Participation in multicultural program)

- 기대와 설렘 (Expectation and Fluttering)
- 한국 문화와 언어의 숙지 기회 (Opportunity to learn Korean Culture and Language)
- 동료들과 어울리며 마음이 편안해 짐 (Comforted by gathering with friends)
- 기타 (Others)

3) 도움 요청 (Call for Help)

- 다문화 센터 상담 지원 (Counselling Support from multicultural centre)
- 대사관 민원실 (Public Service Centre at Embassy)
- 기타 (Others)

4) 현실적 고민 (Worries in actual situation)

- 친정 부모님에 대한 걱정 (Worries to parents in motherland)
- 가족의 무시 (Ignored by family-in-law members)
- 생활비 부족 (수입과 지출 차이) (deficit of living expenses – gap between income and expense)
- 기타 (Others)

7. 추가 질문 (Additional Questions)

1) 적응 과정에서 느끼는 생활 만족감 (Sense of well-being in the course of adaptation)

가장 불만족스러운 기억 또는 상태 (과거 그리고 현재) The most unsatisfactory memory or status (past and present)

가장 만족스러운 경험 (과거/현재) The most satisfactory experience (past/present)

2) 종교 또는 믿음 (Religion or faith)

종교 또는 믿음이 적응 과정에 임하는 자세에 미치는 영향은 어느 정도인가?

How much religion or faith affects the attitude toward the adaptation process?

종교 또는 믿음이 생활에 만족감에 어느 정도 영향을 주는가?

To what extent religion or faith influence to the sense of Well-being in life?

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### 1. Interview Data as Primary Sources

#### Interviews

PP01	(03/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(20/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(22/11/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP02	(03/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(24/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(08/12/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP03	(04/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(09/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(21/11/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP04	(04/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(13/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(08/12/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP05	(04/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(12/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(09/12/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP06	(04/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(09/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(09/12/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP07	(05/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(23/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(22/11/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP08	(05/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(12/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(14/11/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP09	(05/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(24/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview

	(14/11/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP10	(06/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(20/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(24/11/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP11	(06/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(13/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(16/11/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP12	(06/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(17/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(21/11/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP13	(06/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(18/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(30/11/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP14	(10/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(17/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(15/11/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP15	(10/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(12/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(16/11/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP16	(10/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(23/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(17/11/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP17	(10/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(23/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(17/11/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP18	(11/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(25/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(24/11/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP19	(11/06/2014)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview
	(12/11/2015)	deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview
	(17/11/2016)	deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview

PP20	(11/06/2014) (18/11/2015) (29/11/2016)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP21	(12/06/2014) (25/11/2015) (25/11/2016)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP22	(12/06/2014) (20/11/2015) (06/12/2016)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP23	(12/06/2014) (26/11/2015) (02/12/2016)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP24	(12/06/2014) (12/11/2015) (24/11/2016)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP25	(12/06/2014) (28/11/2015) (25/11/2016)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP26	(13/06/2014) (18/11/2015) (02/12/2016)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP27	(13/06/2014) (27/11/2015) (25/11/2016)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP28	(13/06/2014) (17/11/2015) (05/12/2016)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview
PP29	(13/06/2014) (26/11/2015) (06/12/2016)	voice recording of 1 <sup>st</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview deposition transcript of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview

PP30 (14/06/2014) voice recording of 1<sup>st</sup> Interview  
(18/11/2015) deposition transcript of 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview  
(07/12/2016) deposition transcript of 3<sup>rd</sup> Interview

Interviews by phone, by email, and by SNS

Jeong, Misun (03/06/2014) phone, email, and SNS

PP01-30 (03/06/2014 - 08/05/2018) phone, email, and SNS

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