Reflections on Multicultural Education in Korea: Focusing on Female Marriage Migrants

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I. Introduction

- With the flow of globalization, a large number of people are moving for better living conditions.

- According to UN report, around 214 million people have emigrated to a foreign country. (54% are women)

- Specially in Asia, over 70% of immigrants are female. (By UNIFEM; United Nations Development Fund for Women)

  ‘Feminization of immigration’ + ‘Feminization of poverty’

- In Korea, multiculturalism is not only an ethnic issue but strongly shows gender-related matter.

- This presentation is to clarify the problems of multicultural education in terms of multiculturalism in Korea, and suggest several solutions.
II. Special Features of Multiculturalism in Korea

1) Special Features

- Traditional value in Korea: “homogeneity” & “unity”.
- Going to the multicultural society: 1,680,000 people from other countries are living in 2015/14% of the entire population in 2020.

![Pie chart showing percentages of different immigrant groups: Working immigrants 36.0%, Marriage immigrants 10.2%, International student 5.8%, North Korean defector & Korean Chinese 13.0%]

Focus: Marriage immigrants
Since 2000, the number of female migrants for marriage has sharply increased: Female migrants + Rural Bachelors
# Characteristics of female marriage migrants (by 2015 Government report)

| Nationality                  | Female Marriage Migrants (n=11,709) | Reasons for conflicts with spouse |  
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
|                              | n | %                |                                 | n | %                |------------------------------|
| 1st= Vietnamese             | 2,035 | 17.4 | Personality difference | 4,372 | 53.1 |------------------------------|
| 2nd=Chinese                 | 2,019 | 17.2 | Forcing cultural or religious beliefs | 1,937 | 23.5 |------------------------------|
| 3rd=Korean-Chinese          | 1,962 | 16.8 | Difficulties in communication | 2,979 | 36.2 |------------------------------|

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education levels</th>
<th>Female Marriage Migrants (n=11,709)</th>
<th>Difficulties Living in Korea</th>
<th>------------------------------</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school Graduate</td>
<td>8,470</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>Language difficulties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduates &amp; above</td>
<td>3,239</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>Loneliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,515</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>Economic hardship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2) General characteristics of Female marriage immigrants

- Foreign migrants have entered “into” the private family sphere through marriage.

  ‘Feminization of immigration’ is closely connected to the quality of female marriage migrant’s lives.

- Conflicts within a family
  - 70% of multicultural marriage were between Korean man & foreign women.
  - Only 37% of foreign women are satisfied with their marriage (Kim, 2014).

- Language/ Communication Problems from age gap and cultural differences / Economic problems → high rate of divorce.
**The number of marriage**

- Korean men/foreign women
- Korean women/foreign men

**The number of divorce**

- Korean men/foreign women
- Korean women/foreign men
3) Difficulties of Female marriage migrants

- Difficulties for female migrants
  (2005 Report from ministry of health & welfare)

1. Disregard from their spouse (gender discrimination)
2. Difficulties with family members (including parents-in-law)
3. Child education: children’s homework and preparation for classes as well as caring
4. Social exclusion from the Korean society
5. Language barrier, cultural differences
4) Policies of ‘Multicultural Families’

- 2006, Korean Government declared, multi-ethnic society and started multicultural policies “social Integration Support policies for Families of Female Migrants”

- 2008, Multicultural Families Support Act was enacted

- 2010-2012, Support policies for multicultural migrants: Six promotion tasks
  1. Realization of multicultural families with diverse cultures
  2. Supporting the growth and development of children in multicultural families
  3. Cultivating stable foundation of family life
  4. Expansion of socio-economic activities for marriage migrants
  5. Promoting social receptibility for multicultural families
  6. Realigning systems for policy implementation
### Program Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Happy Start”</th>
<th>• Immigration-related tasks such as sojourn and nationality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Guide to the support policies for marriage immigrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Meeting with senior marriage immigrants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| “Social Integration”                               | • <Korean Language>                                           |
|                                                    | • <Understanding Korean Society>                              |
|                                                    | • <Information of the Polices and Trials related to Marriage immigrants in Korea> |
### Program Contents for ‘Multicultural Family’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Korean Language Education</th>
<th>Parent Education</th>
<th>Child Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Korean language education: 1~4 stage  
  • vocabulary, grammar, pragmatics, culture | • Parents Education for supporting child-rearing  
  (parental growth, building relationship between parents and child)  
  • family counseling and emotional supporting service  
  • offering living information for adaption in Korea | • cognitive development  
  : reading guidance, homework guidance, presentations/discussions guidance  
  • Self-Emotion, Sociality domain  
  : guidance for self· emotion· sociality development  
  • cultural competence empowerment domain  
  : guidance for cultural awareness, identity establishment and sense of community |
Government budget on multi-cultural family

Source: Ministry of Strategy and Finance

March 2008
Enacting ‘Multicultural Families Support Act’
III. Problems of Korean Multicultural Education

1) Mainstream: Government-Driven Multicultural Education

Ministry of Justice
- Happy Start program
- Social integration program

Ministry of the Gender Equality & Family
- Educational programs through ‘Multicultural Family Support Center’
  - Korean language education
  - Parents education
  - Child’s life
2013, Ministry of Education

1. Constructing a one-stop service system for foreign migrant student
2. Developing work books for multicultural students
3. Supporting global-leading schools

2013, Ministry of Law

- Programmes to facilitate migrants adaptation into the Korean society
- Programmes for preparing for the acquisition of Korean nationality
- Law education for living in Korea
## 2) Educational Programs for ‘Multicultural Family’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Programmes</th>
<th>Specifics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Korean language courses</td>
<td>• Face-to Face Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outreach training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family-related courses</td>
<td>• Enhancing family relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Meaning and role of the families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Paternal education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human rights courses</td>
<td>• Understanding multiculturalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enhancing sensitivity toward human rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Legislations and institutions on multicultural families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social integration courses</td>
<td>• Basics for job employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Facilitating connections between job seekers and enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Establishing connections with institutes related to job employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>• Adapting to the Korean society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Consumer and Finance education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mentoring programme for marriage migrants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. Problems of Korean Multicultural Education

2) Several problems of Education Policy

① Government-driven policy without considering beneficiaries’ voice

② Assimilation model: Presupposition of multicultural education “To act like a Korean”

③ Expression of “Multicultural Woman” → Ignorance of various categories of women
### 3) Marriage Migrants’ Needs for Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain of Needs</th>
<th>Female(n=11,709)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational education, connections with workplace</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support in children’s studies and living</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-visit education</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education on Korean or adaptation in Korea</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language skill support, Bilingual education</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support in community activities</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support in pregnancy and delivery, Parental education</td>
<td>3.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educating spouses and their family</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation services</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Haejoo Lee (2015)
IV. Issues Related to Higher Education

1) Few programs at the level of higher education

# University Extension Programs: Korean Language or Korean food  ex. Honam University supported by MOL

# Independent ‘University’: Multicultural Women’s University established by Nonghyup (National Agricultural Cooperative Federation): non-degree course with short programs (3.38 hr.) such as ‘making happy family’ for the women of rural area

# Opportunities not for ‘adult women’ but for the ‘multicultural children’: Special entrance process for university.

# Hard to find subjects or course for Migrant women
2015년 1학기 한국방송통신대학교(KNOU) 다문화멘토링
멘토-멘티 발대식

일시: 2015. 3. 21.(토) 11:30-16:30
장소: 한국방송통신대학교 서울지역대학 511호

강사: 서태실(부천북초등학교 다문화강사) 외 2인
행사주관: 학생체 학생통합서비스센터 진료, 심리상담실(02-3668-4490)

이중언어 가족환경조성을 위한 공동협력
2) Demands of Higher Education

For female marriage immigrants
▶ To provide higher education for higher SES
▶ From ‘Higher education’ to ‘Post secondary education’
  : New Paradigm of Knowledge based society
▶ To be collective subjects who construct knowledge for themselves

For family members and other Koreans
▶ To have a chance for reflecting their own culture : Active citizenship at the level of higher education
▶ To enhance the skill of communication
3) **Innovation: Korea National Open University**

- Open university is a good option for migrants to study in higher level of education.
- KNOU is national open university.
- The tuition of KNOU is cheap (1/10 of traditional UNIV)
  - Immigrants can work and study together.
  - Wherever they live, they can study in 13 regional campuses where they can meet other learners and get helps.
- At present, KNOU has about 500 multicultural students
  - 25 mentors to support their study/Regional Center/MOU
  - Trial to Credit exchange program among AAOU Members.
V. Implications

① Crucial role of governmental initiative at the first stage

② Hard to develop new methodology for interactive multicultural education for active citizenship: “Transmission Paradigm”

③ Need of lifelong learning approach: integration programs for mothers with those for children/education for the spouses and family members/vocational education with education for self-confidence and flexible identity

④ More opportunities of higher education for family migrants: No more second grade education / Post-secondary multicultural education
Thank You!