Bridal Immigrants and the Decision to Work: Educational Selectivity, Labor Market Participation and Empowerment

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Abstract

This study explores how bridal immigrants, who migrate through a commercially arranged marriage, are different from their non-migrant home-country counterparts and what determines their decision to work in the paid labor market after migration. The study examines the educational selectivity of bridal immigrants and their labor market participation from a gendered perspective. Utilizing the unique 2015 Korea National Survey of Multicultural Families and 2013 Barro-Lee World Educational Attainment data, the educational attainment difference between bridal immigrants to South Korea and non-migrants who remain in their home country are compared. Bridal immigrants and their husbands gender attitudes, perceptions on gender roles within the family, and the impact of these attitudes and perceptions on labor market participation of bridal immigrants are then analyzed. Results demonstrate that all bridal immigrants in Korea are more educated than their home country counterparts (positive selection). Regression results further indicate husbands' perspectives on gender roles are more important than wives' gender attitudes regarding labor market participation decision-making for bridal immigrants themselves.

JEL: B54, J12, J15, J16, J21

Keywords: Bridal Immigrant, Mail-Order Bride, Women's Empowerment, Labor Market Participation, Educational Selectivity

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I.   Introduction

Immigration studies tend to examine one of two types of migrants: labor migrants moving to pursue private success or family migrants moving as part of a household following a primary mover. These studies typically focus on the economic assimilation of the immigrant workers and their families or their impact on the host country's economy, without considering the family formation process itself. Although they have existed throughout history, recently a different type of international (cross-border) migrant has emerged and become more prevalent that does not fit neatly into either of these traditional migrant categories. These migrants are women who move through commercially arranged marriage with men. We call these women "bridal immigrants."[1]

These bridal immigrants do not fit neatly in either of the traditional categories of labor or family migration because economic improvement is usually the immigrant's motivation; however, family formation itself is the central component of the migration process in-this-case. Given that the migration occurs at the onset of new family formation facilitated by an international marriage brokerage agency, these migrants are also different from married immigrants who meet their spouses in the host country after migration or marriage immigrants who meet their spouses through other methods of introduction, such as connections through family, friends or religious association. In these cases, immigration itself is usually a secondary consideration, while bridal immigrants' cross-border marriages arranged through an international marriage brokerage agency are explicitly depicted as a tool of migration. A bridal immigrant's

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[1] We define these immigrant women as "bridal immigrants" who choose commercially arranged marriage as a method of migration and move to a different country as brides of foreign husbands. Immigrant women who marry men in developed countries through international marriage brokerages are often referred to as "mail-order" brides. We choose the term "bridal immigrants" to be more respectful to women who choose their migration and marriage in this fashion, avoiding the historically pejorative "mail-order bride" term which devalues women and implies their commodification.

marriage is different from typical love marriages motivated by romantic interest based on individual choice. It is also different than arranged marriages sometimes observed in non-western culture, in which those who contract may consider their arranged marriages to be a confirmation of an identity embedded in family and kinship, but which is often viewed as a violation of individual freedom by western culture (Robinson, 2015). These women choose this commercially arranged international marriage based on individual choice.

This special type of international migration facilitated through a marriage brokerage has only involved women moving from low-income, developing countries to marry men in high-income, developed countries. The reason for the non-existence of immigrant husbands migrating through commercially arranged marriage is explained by social and cultural logic, including gendered power geometry and the widely held belief that marriage should be upwardly hypergamous for women (Constable, 2005). In this regard, bridal immigrants demonstrate the global reality of traditional gender norms, which define women's role as housewife and men's role as breadwinner, as well as spatial hypergamy in relation to gender. Given bridal immigrants provide a system to maintain the sexual division of labor within the household, the existence of bridal immigrants reflects a deeper structure of patriarchy, and some have argued they could be considered migrant reproductive workers who maintain and produce human resources through women's domestic work (Kojima, 2001).

The unique gender relationship inherent in the marriage and migration of bridal immigrants has increasingly gained attention from scholars. Studies have focused on a range of issues including the process of bridal immigrant's cross-border marriage, policy impacts on their assimilation, and their vulnerable status in the host country, as well as issues such as bridal immigrant's life satisfaction, discrimination they face, their naturalization, or demographic and

economic impacts of marriage markets in the host country. However, few studies focus on the self-selection of bridal immigrants or their decision to work in the paid labor market in the host country, which are closely related to power dynamics within the new family and are influenced by the attitudes on gender equality of their spouses as well as themselves. While marriage is used as the method of migration, like other economic migrants, bridal immigrants also choose migration to pursue individual success and opportunities for a better life. In fact, the opportunity for bridal immigrants in developing countries to leave their home country is often seen as an upwardly mobile and empowering move by both the bridal immigrants and their families (Constable, 2014). Thus, bridal immigrants are a self-selected group, who choose to migrate through marriage to pursue a better life and opportunities for empowering themselves and yet do not fit neatly into the more traditional immigrant category types.

This study is motivated by the unique characteristics across labor, family and marriage that bridal immigrants embody. First, all immigrants are a self-selected group rather than a randomly selected sample. Although the method of migration is different from labor migrants, bridal immigrants are also a self-selected group who seek out opportunities to move for a better life through migration. Given bridal immigrants are self-selected, examining how they are different from those who do not migrate from their home country is important. In particular, this examination can help determine whether bridal immigrants are a more positively or negatively selected group. Second, some bridal immigrants participate in the labor market in the host country after their migration; however, women's labor market participation is impacted not only by economic resources but also by gender status in their societies and families. A married woman's decision to work is closely related to the power dynamics within the family, which are influenced by both the husband's and wife's perspective on gender roles and equality. As such,

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bridal immigrants' decision to participate in the labor market may depend on the husbands' attitudes on gender equality as well as the attitudes of the bridal immigrants themselves. Determining whose gender attitudes, between husbands and wives, exert more influence on the labor market participation of bridal immigrants is therefore also important in better understanding the impact of gender power dynamics.

Utilizing the 2015 Korean National Survey of Multicultural Families and 2013 Barro-Lee World Educational Attainment data, we analyze the educational selectivity of bridal immigrants in South Korea, gender attitudes of bridal immigrants and their husbands, as well as the labor market participation of bridal immigrants after marriage. In the discussion of the selectivity of immigrants, positive (negative) selectivity typically means immigrants possess more (less) favorable characteristics for success compared to their non-migrant counterparts. While selectivity explains differences in both observable and unobservable characteristics between two groups, it is difficult to measure unobservable characteristics, such as ambition, motivation, and dedication to individual success. Therefore, selectivity is often analyzed by comparing differences in observable characteristics, such as educational attainment or wages. In our study, the selectivity of bridal immigrants is analyzed using educational attainment, which reflects not only human capital factors but also individuals' unobservable characteristics such as motivation, work ethic and intelligence. To do so, we compare the educational attainment difference between bridal immigrants and non-migrants who remain in the home country. Further, the study analyzes gender dynamics of bridal immigrants within the new family, measuring the attitude of bridal immigrants and their husbands regarding gender roles within the family and examining the associated effects on the labor market participation of bridal immigrants after migration.

This paper contributes to the growing literature on this important migrant type by examining the educational selectivity of bridal immigrants. The paper also provides a quantitative analysis of the differences between bridal immigrants and non-migrants in the home country, expanding our understanding of bridal immigrants' relative differences from non-migrant women who remain in the home country. Lastly, the study provides an engendered analysis on the labor market decisions of bridal immigrants, considering not only human capital factors but also gender dynamics within the family. In this regard, the paper addresses an important gap in the literature on immigrant studies as well as gender and labor studies.

II.   Literature Review

The early literature on bridal immigrants is mostly in feminist, anthropologic and legal studies focusing on issues such as labor servitude, human trafficking abuses, the legal aspects of the "mail-order" bride industry or the patriarchal ideologies embedded in global capitalism (Stacy 1993; Chun 1996; Robinson 1996; Kojima 2001; Kelly 2001; Jackson 2002; Constable 2005; So 2006; Johnson 2007; Mies and Federici 2014). While many legal experts and human rights advocates focus on elements of human trafficking and issues of abuse and fraud related to the bridal immigrant industry, feminist scholars challenge the idea that bridal immigrants are direct human trafficking victims and instead emphasize multiple factors related to gender, class, and race based on inequality and global colonial disparities between wealthy Western countries and other developing nations (Yakushko and Rajan, 2017). For example, Miles (1986) points out the phenomena of "mail-order" brides in Germany as an example of the link between the patriarchal ideology of women (which define women as housewives and sex objects) and the international division of labor in the capitalist system. Focusing on the gender division of labor and women's

reproductive work, Kojima (2001) considers bridal immigrants as reproductive migrant workers and the commercially arranged international marriage system as a coping strategy in response to women's resistance to the patriarchal capitalist system. Meanwhile, historic and anthropologic studies examine the historical and institutional circumstances around the marriage system process and experiences of "mail-order" brides, as well as how they changed over time (Constable 2005; Zug, 2016). While these studies analyze the phenomena of bridal immigrants, recognizing the reality of the sexual and international division of labor and the patriarchal relationship embedded in the capitalist system which has historically existed and continues today, most of them examine bridal immigrants using qualitative approaches based on case studies, narratives or theoretical analysis.

With the recent influx of bridal immigrants to developed East Asian countries, recent studies on marriage migrants specifically dealing with issues related to bridal immigrants have arisen in sociology and economics. While bridal immigrants are also categorized as marriage migrants, the term marriage migrant is used more broadly in the immigrant literature to address all cross-border marriage-related migrants. This includes interethnic or interracial marriage, and intergenerational marriage.

Interethnic marriage encompasses various combinations of racial marriage. Most previous studies on interethnic marriage focus on non-white and white coupling in majority white countries, addressing issues of assimilation or assortative matching (Meng and Gregory, 2005; Furtado and Theodoropoulos, 2011; Furtado, 2012; Qian et al, 2012). However, none of these studies of interethnic marriage examine marriage between strangers.

Intergenerational marriage studies examine marriage patterns over generations. These studies focus on the marriage of children of immigrants who are looking for their spouses from

their parents' home countries (Çelikaksoy et al, 2006; Jakobsen and Liversage, 2017). These intergenerational marriages between natives (children of immigrants) and immigrants from the familial home country are more associated with the preference for a spouse from the same ethnicity and culture. Given bridal immigrants choose marriage with previously unknown men from other ethnicities and cultures to migrate internationally, the marriage decision of bridal immigrants is quite different from all other types of cross-border marriage migrants.

Among those studies dealing with recent bridal immigrants in developed East Asian countries, many studies focus heavily on foreign wives in South Korea. The large systematic influx of foreign wives to the ethnically homogeneous society of Korea has caused unprecedented demographic changes and consequently socioeconomic and political issues. Both interested scholars and the Korean government have increased efforts to comprehend these new demographic changes and collect information on marriage migrants and their families using large-scale nationwide surveys. The large-scale collection of data on this recent influx of bridal immigrants led to a growing literature on bridal immigrants and their families in Korea.

The early literature on bridal immigrants in Korea mostly focuses on capturing demographic changes (through summary statistics) of the immigrant population in Korea and exploring the marriage immigration process and related government policies (Seol, 2006; Lee et al, 2006; Kim 2010; Kim 2013; Kim et al, 2014). However, with increasing numbers of marriage immigrants and implementation of additional nationwide surveys regarding their status and characteristics, more extensive research on marriage immigrants in Korea has been conducted over time. Most of these later studies focus on issues related to the well-being or life satisfaction of the foreign wives themselves (Lee, 2013; Sung et al., 2013; Chang and Wallace, 2016; Chang, 2016; Kim 2017; Oh, 2018; Yu and Chen, 2018; Hwang 2015; Cheon and Chung, 2016; Lee and Wie,

2020). For example, Lee (2013) finds the level of satisfaction of foreign wives varies across different home countries, while Sung et al. (2013) find variations across ethnicities in which factors contribute to life satisfaction of foreign wives. Examining a range of factors which influence the well-being of foreign wives, these studies consider not only individual factors such as age, education, language proficiency and household income, but also community-level factors, such as social network, institutional support, citizenship acquisition, discrimination and social attitudes. Considering social integration factors, Chang and Wallace (2016) find that having more social relationships with Koreans has positive effects on the self-rated health of Chinese and Vietnamese marriage migrants and Kim (2017) finds the size of the social support network of a marriage migrant significantly reduces the probability of living in poverty. Both, Chang and Wallace (2016) and Cheon and Chung (2016) find a positive relationship between migrants' perceived postmigration socioeconomic status and the subjective health of foreign wives. Comparing the socioeconomic gap between the husband and wife's natal families, Chang (2016) argues that marriage migrant women who married to husbands of higher socioeconomic status have better well-being, confirming the male breadwinner gender norms in their marriage.

Other research on the well-being of foreign wives has extended to naturalization and citizenship acquisition (Hwang, 2015; Lee and Wie, 2020). For instance, Hwang (2015) examines factors associated with citizenship acquisition and finds home country characteristics of foreign wives (such as GDP per capita, geographic distance to Korea, or allowing dual citizenship) matter in addition to other factors, such as the size of the same ethnic population in Korea, experience, length of stay, language proficiency, and household income. Focusing on Vietnamese wives, Lee and Wie (2020) also find that citizenship acquisition lowers the experience of discrimination for foreign wives, although it does not have a significant impact on their empowerment. Most of these

studies focus on marriage migrant women from four large national groups – Joseonjeok (Korean) Chinese, Han Chinese, Vietnamese, and Filipina – while only a few studies consider additional nationalities (such as Japanese or Cambodian) in their analysis (Lee 2013; Hwang 2015; Chang 2016). Importantly, these previous studies simply examine foreign wives without separately identifying bridal immigrants.

Only a few limited studies separate bridal immigrants who met through a brokering agency from the broader marriage migrant category which includes migrant women who met their spouses through personal networks (e.g., families or friends) (Yu and Chen, 2018; Oh, 2018). Comparing life satisfaction between bridal immigrants and other marriage immigrants, both Yu and Chen (2018) and Oh (2018) find that foreign wives who married through a personal network are more satisfied than those who used brokers. While they specify bridal immigrants separately from other marriage migrants, they do not focus on the self-selection of bridal immigrants, labor market participation, or gender empowerment of bridal immigrants within the new family.

Instead of focusing on bridal immigrants and the "supply-side" of the market, other scholars focus on gender status and the marriage market conditions in Korea itself (the "demand-side") to explain the large influx of bridal immigrants (Lee et al, 2006; Chung et al., 2016; Kawaguchi and Lee, 2017; Weiss et al., 2018; Raymo and Park, 2020). In contrast to Western countries, traditional gender norms based on strong patriarchal family cultures are more prevalent in East Asian countries which emphasize women's value as household wives and mothers (Huh, 2013; Kawaguchi and Lee, 2017; Rindfuss and Choe, 2015). With increases in economic development and women's education, women in developed Asian countries are more reluctant to accept the gender-discriminatory division of labor within marriage, and this contributes to the declining marriage rate seen in many Asian countries (Raymo and Park, 2020). Marriage mismatch

between educated women and uneducated men (or the marriage penalty of educated women) is often discussed in close relation to gender-based hypergamy in marriage and the notion of the male breadwinner. For example, Raymo and Park (2020) find that increasing cross-border marriage prevented further declines in the marriage rate of less-educated men in Korea and conclude marriage market mismatches contribute to lower marriage rates in gender-inegalitarian societies. Other studies comparing marriage market conditions and gender status across different host countries in East Asia similarly find that gender-discriminative household arrangements, which fail to incorporate women's improved status in host countries, are one of the main reasons for the increasing demand for bridal immigrants and that men in the lower tail of male attribute distribution in a rich country are more likely to pursue cross-border marriage (Chung et al., 2016; Kawaguchi and Lee, 2017; Weiss et al., 2018). Focusing on host country marriage market conditions and gender status, these studies all provide important insights for demand-side stories of bridal immigrants in East Asian countries from a gendered perspective. However, none of these studies directly address the conditions, characteristics or decisions of the bridal immigrants themselves.

Different from this previous literature examining marriage migrants in Korea, which mostly focus on the well-being or living conditions of foreign wives, the government policies related to marriage immigrants, or host country conditions related to the demand of bridal immigrants, this paper investigates the decision making of bridal immigrants themselves by examining their educational selectivity and labor market participation. Research on the self-selection of bridal immigrants and their economic performance in the host country provide information on not only their selectivity and labor supply but also the socioeconomic and demographic changes which occur through their social integration from a gendered perspective.

In addition, examining gender empowerment of bridal immigrants within the family and its impact on their decision to work in the paid labor market, the paper contributes to studies on gender, labor, and migration. Furthermore, by specifying bridal immigrants who migrated through commercially arranged marriage accurately with the recent and extensive 2015 Korea National Survey of Multicultural Families dataset, this study provides a more precise and in-depth quantitative analysis on issues of (previously called) "mail-order" brides, addressing a gap in the literature on this issue from a data-driven perspective.

III. Institutional and Cultural Context of South Korea

Gender Equity in Korea

In terms of cultural gender norms and family gender relations, patriarchal Confucian values have been preserved in Korean society through the family, economic and political systems, creating barriers to gender equality (Huh, 2013). Gender equity issues within the family and labor market contribute to rising concerns about marriage for Korean women due to difficulties in managing work and family obligations within marriage. Most workplaces in Korea are still not family-friendly, and many married women quit their jobs to raise children (Lee and Choi, 2015). Traditional patriarchal gender norms in Korean society have contributed to a highly discriminative gender division of labor within marriage and this is one of the main reasons for Korean women's declining interest in marriage (Raymo and Park, 2020). In addition, issues of gender equity are a considerable factor that reduces not only the marriage rate but also the fertility rate in Korea, given the strong marriage-fertility link in developed Asian countries in contrast to other developed countries in the U.S., Europe, and Australia (Rindfuss and Choe, 2015). These factors contribute to the demand for bridal immigrants in South Korea.

The Bridal Immigrant Phenomenon in South Korea

Historically, Korea has been one of the most homogeneous countries in terms of ethnic and cultural diversity in the world (CIA World Factbook, 2022; Fearon, 2003). However, the immigrant population in Korea has increased dramatically in recent years. The number of foreigners living in Korea has gone up by a factor of ten in two decades, from 123,886 (0.28% of total population) in 1995 to 1,327,324 (2.64 % of total population) in 2015. The immigrant population in Korea reached 1.73 million persons (3.3% of the total population) in 2019 (Statistics Korea[a], 2020; Macrotrends, 2022). With Korea's rapid growth and economic development, it has become a popular destination for not only labor migrants but also bridal immigrants. The number of bridal immigrants who married South Korean men increased significantly in the 2000s, leading to demographic changes in Korea through the growing number of multicultural families.[2] For example, Korean husbands with foreign brides accounted for 2.1% of total marriages in 2000, quadrupling in a single decade to 8.1% of total marriages in 2010. Marriage between Korean men and foreign women increased slightly more to 8.3% of total marriages by 2019 (Korean Women's Development Institute, 2011; Statistics Korea[b], 2020).

Compared to wealthy Western countries where modern bridal immigrants available through international brokerages have existed since World War II (Bankston III and Hidalgo, 2015), the large influx of bridal immigrants in South Korea is a new phenomenon. Bridal immigrants from various developing nations have increased dramatically only since the early 2000s. Historically, most international marriage migrants (up until the 1990s) were Japanese

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[2] Korea's Multicultural Families Support Act in 2008 defines a multicultural family as a family composed of a Korean national and a foreign national (or a naturalized person) based on marriage, and does not include families composed of foreigners only (Korean Women's Development Institute, 2011)

women who married Korean men through religious association (Korean Immigration Service, 2014). The increasing number of bridal immigrant marriages between Korean husbands and foreign wives reached a peak in 2005, declined slightly in each subsequent year until 2015 (likely due to the enhanced visa process for marriage-related immigrants and restrictions on international marriage brokerages) and then rebounded slightly with increases through 2019.[3]

Government Policies Regarding Bridal Immigrants in Korea

The fast growth of bridal immigrants to ethnically homogeneous Korea caused new social, political, and economic situations to arise. This subsequently resulted in new government policies and changes to existing policies regarding immigration and naturalization processes, as well as social support programs for the assimilation of immigrants and their families. For example, the category of "Marriage Immigrants" was added in the annual immigration report in 2005 (Kim et al, 2014).

Different from a love marriage developed from a romantic relationship, bridal immigrants depend only on information from a brokerage that provides a few contacts with their future spouse. International marriages delivered through commercial brokerages pursuing economic profit created social concerns regarding bridal immigrants' human rights during the marriage and assimilation process. Moreover, Korea's drastically declining population coupled with decreasing marriage and fertility rates brought additional attention to bridal immigrants. These circumstances coupled together resulted in the creation of new policies to encourage international marriage and support programs for the assimilation of marriage immigrants and

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[3] The number of marriages between Korean husbands and foreign wives more than quadrupled between 2000 and 2005, from 6,900 to 30,700. In 2020, the numbers of both labor and marriage migrants significantly decreased due to Covid restrictions. Yu and Chen (2018) report a 10% to 30% annual increase of the number of marriage migrants in Korea since the early 2000s, which plateaued in 2014 when the strict marriage visa control was introduced.

multicultural families. Consequently, the Korean government initiated various policies to increase marriage rates and childbearing by supporting bridal immigrants, such as the "International Marriage for Rural Bachelors Act" in 2006,[4] the "Regulation of Marriage Brokerage Agent Act" in 2007, and the "Support for Multicultural Families Act" in 2008 (Choi, 2019). These policies have been revised repeatedly to address issues regarding international marriage and multicultural families that are observed as they arise. For example, since 2014 the Korean government includes Korean language fluency as a requirement for the marriage visa (F6) so that foreign wives have basic communication skills to ensure they have the best chance at effective assimilation and can navigate Korean society.

The International Marriage Brokerage Process

With the influx of bridal immigrants to Korea, the number of international marriage brokerages initially saw large increases. For example, since the "Regulation of Marriage Brokerage Agent Act" was first enacted in 2007, the number of international marriage brokerages in Korea increased from 922 in 2008 to 1,519 in 2011 (Korean Ministry of Gender, Equality and Family 2017). However, the rapid growth of bridal immigrants and brokerage companies brought many problems. These included fraud and misinformation to both foreign wives and Korean husbands, as well as difficulties for bridal immigrants, including vulnerability to domestic abuse. To address these issues, the Korean government enhanced regulations on not only the visa process for marriage immigrants but also marriage brokerages. The number of

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[4] As problems regarding abuse toward bridal immigrants, criticism of commercial marriage and human rights concerns from civic organizations arose, many local governments stopped projects to support international marriage for rural bachelors. The number of municipalities which have local rural bachelors' marriage projects have declined from 60 in 2007 to 10 in 2011 (Seoul Public News, Nov. 4th, 2011). Recently, the Korean Ministry of Gender, Equality and Family officially announced a recommendation to abolish local governments' projects for supporting international marriage for rural Korean men (The Korea Economic Daily, June 2nd, 2021).

brokerages decreased dramatically to 366 in 2017 from 1,463 in 2012 (Korean Ministry of Gender, Equality and Family 2014; 2017), when the revised "Regulation of Marriage Brokerage Agent Act" enhanced restrictions by creating direct oversight on brokerages through public disclosure requirements and a minimum capital investment of approximately $100,000 U.S. dollars (₩100,000,000 won).[5]

The marriage process for bridal immigrants coming to South Korea (especially before 2012 when the government policy was first implemented to restrict international marriage brokerages) mostly involved "marriage tours" which include in-person meetings with female wife candidates facilitated by the brokering agency (Seol, 2006; Yu and Chen, 2018). Bachelors who want brides stay about a week in the bridal immigrant's home country and choose their bride through in-person meetings. Commercial marriage agencies typically provide "one to group" meetings (one man with multiple women), followed by a few personal meetings (one-to-one dates).[6] In the process, the main economic transaction occurs between the prospective husband paying the marriage brokerage (about $10,000 to $18,000 U.S. dollars). Sometimes the bridal immigrant also pays a small amount to brokerage companies.[7] Most marriages occur within a week after the first meeting, involving a mutual agreement for marriage by both the woman and the man after the personal, one-to-one meetings. In this regard, the marriage of bridal immigrants is also determined by the women's decision to migrate through these available means

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[5] We use an exchange rate of $1 U.S. dollar to ₩1000 Korean won for simplicity. The exchange rate fluctuated between ₩900 to ₩1180 to $1 during the 2000s through 2015.

[6] While one-to-one dates have increased since one-to-group meetings were banned in 2012, about 50% of bridal immigrants and Korean men in 2017 who use marriage brokerages still did not know that one-to-group meetings are illegal (Korean Ministry of Gender, Equality and Family 2017)

[7] According to a Korean Ministry of Gender, Equality and Family announcement, the average cost paid to marriage agencies between 2017 and 2019 by Korean men is about $13,000 dollars (₩13,718,000 won) and by foreign wives is about $680 dollars (₩688,000 won) (Yonhap News, April 1st, 2021).

and is not a simple purchase from the internet or a catalog by bachelors in the host country (Yu and Chen, 2018).

IV. Data

We utilize two types of data in the analysis: individual-level data for bridal immigrants and their families in Korea and country-level data for the educational attainment of the 10 primary home country populations bridal immigrants come from to Korea.

Bridal Immigrant Data

For individual immigrant data, we utilize the 2015 Korea National Survey of Multicultural Families (KNSMF 2015) administered by the Ministry of Gender, Equality and Family and Korea National Statistics Office.[8] It is a national survey of multicultural families, which are defined as families composed of either a married immigrant and a Korean or include a non-native citizen who obtained citizenship later. The surveys were conducted through face-to-face interviews with individual immigrants, immigrants' spouses, children, and family members (e.g., the married immigrant, immigrant's spouse, children, immigrant's parents, spouse's parents, or grandchildren, etc.), from July 22 to August 11 in 2015. A 10% sample of multicultural households in Korea (27,120 households) were extracted based on 2014 Population House Research Data and from this pool 17,846 household surveys (65.8% of the sample) were completed. KNSMF 2015 includes five surveys based on questionnaire and respondent:

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[8] KNSMF 2015 is an updated and improved survey compared to KNSMF 2009 or KNSMF 2012 with changes in survey methods, questionnaire, foreign language service, and survey process to improve the quality of the survey and data generated (Statistics Korea 2015, Korean Women's Development Institute, 2016).

Immigrant survey, Spouse survey, Children survey, *Family Member survey*[9] and *Household Information survey.* KNSMF 2015 is an ideal source of data on bridal immigrants since it includes detailed personal, social, and economic data from immigrants as well as their families in addition to household-level information.

To construct the most complete picture of bridal immigrants and their household, we merge four of the KNSMF 2015 surveys (*Immigrant, Spouse, Family Member,* and *Household Information*) linking across household identifiers. This provides relevant socio-demographic information on the bridal immigrant, spouse and household. To specifically identify bridal immigrants (separate from other marriage migrants), we restrict the sample to married immigrant women who migrated after the age of 18, their spouses are Korean men, and their visa status is matched with one of three types: marriage immigrant status holder (F6), spouse of Korean (F2-1), or Green Card holder (F5). Most importantly, we further restrict the sample only to married immigrant women who met their spouses through a commercial marriage brokerage agency, using the responses to the question about how the immigrant women met their spouses for the first time. In conjunction with the previous restrictions, this effectively distinguishes bridal immigrants from other marriage immigrant types. All these restrictions result in a sample size of 1,633 bridal immigrants from 10 home countries.[10]

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[9] 17,109 immigrants responded to the *Immigrant survey* while 15,540 spouses and 6,079 children (9 - 24 years old) responded to the *Spouse survey* and *Children survey,* respectively.

[10] An additional restriction was at least 20 or more bridal immigrants must have come from a country to be included. This restricts the sample to 10 primary home countries and only reduces the sample size by 15 (from 1,648 to 1,633). Out of the 15 bridal immigrants removed from the analysis, 7 are from Japan and the remaining 8 each come from a unique home country.

Home Country Population Data

To compare bridal immigrants' educational attainment to their home country population, Barro and Lee educational attainment data is utilized for the home country. Barro and Lee (2013) have measured the educational attainment of 142 countries in a consistent manner across time. Barro and Lee (2013) include the population percentage of educational attainment in seven categories (no school, complete and non-complete primary school, complete and non-complete secondary school, complete and non-complete tertiary school) by sex and age at 5-year intervals between 1960 and 2010. For the study, we use the 2005 educational attainment of home country populations aged 25 to 64. Since year of migration for the sample ranges from 1994 to 2015, the 2005 educational attainment home country values represent most of the period that most bridal immigrants would have finished their education in the home country.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 and Table 2 provide the list of the 10 home countries of bridal immigrants to Korea and basic descriptive statistics of the sample. Most bridal immigrants (75.5%) are from Southeast Asia (Cambodia, Vietnam, Philippines, and Laos), while 13% are from East Asia (China and Mongolia), 6% from Central Asia (Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan) and 5.5% from South Asia (Nepal and Thailand). The four largest home countries for bridal immigrants in Korea are Vietnam, the Philippines, China, and Cambodia, representing 84% of the sample, while the largest home country for bridal immigrants is Vietnam (42%). The year of migration ranges from 1994 to 2015; however, 95% of bridal immigrants migrated after 2005 and 68% migrated in 2010 or later. Bridal immigrants from Kyrgyzstan, Laos, and Nepal mostly migrated very

recently, with the 2010 Cohort representing more than 90% of bridal immigrants from these three countries. Details in country composition over time can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Home Countries of Bridal Immigrants

Home Country	Full Sample Frequency	%	1994-2010 Frequency	%	2010-2015 Frequency	%
Vietnam	691	42.31	207	39.13	484	43.84
Cambodia	283	17.33	91	17.20	192	17.39
Philippines	228	13.96	68	12.85	160	14.49
China	175	10.72	78	14.74	97	8.79
Uzbekistan	73	4.47	36	6.81	37	3.35
Nepal	69	4.23	5	0.95	64	5.80
Mongolia	39	2.39	30	5.67	9	0.82
Laos	30	1.84	1	0.19	29	2.63
Kyrgyzstan	25	1.53	3	0.57	22	1.99
Thailand	20	1.22	10	1.89	10	0.91
Total	1,633	100	529	100	1,104	100

Source: Author Calculations.

As expected, bridal immigrants and their husbands show a large age gap (16 years) with the mean age of bridal immigrants and their husbands being 29 and 45 years old respectively (See Table 2). Also, most bridal immigrants in the sample moved to Korea when they are young, as the mean age at migration is 24 years old.

Table 2. Summary Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Bridal Immigrant Age	28.9	6.54	19	64
Husband Age	45.3	6.62	24	80
Year of Migration	2010	2.76	1994	2015
Age at Migration	24.3	5.97	18	53
Years in Korea	4.5	2.76	0	21

Source: Author Calculations.

Table 3 and Table 4 present employment status and occupational categories of labor market participants from the sample. Out of 1,633 bridal immigrants, 39% (634) participate in the paid labor market in Korea and 5% (86) work unpaid for the family business.

Table 3. Employment Status of Bridal Immigrant Labor Market Participants

Employment Status	Frequency	%
Full Time Worker	198	27.50
Temporary worker	283	39.31
Daily worker	131	18.19
Self-employed with employees	4	0.56
Self-employed without employees	18	2.50
Unpaid worker helping family business	86	11.94
Total	720	100

Source: Author Calculations

As seen in Table 3, out of 720 bridal immigrants who answered that they are in the labor market,[11] 27.5% are full-time workers while only about 3% are self-employed. The majority (57.5%) of labor market participants are part-time workers, answering that their employment status is either as a temporary or daily worker.

As seen in Table 4, most bridal immigrant labor market participants (44%) classified themselves as elementary workers who provide simple labor. Bridal immigrants who classified themselves as service workers or machine operating/assembling workers were about 31%, while only 3% answered that they are professional or related workers. None of the bridal immigrants in the sample work as managers.

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[11] While 78% of bridal immigrants (1,272 persons) answered that they have work experience in their home country in the survey, only 44% responded that they participate (paid and unpaid) in the Korean labor market.

Table 4. Occupations of Bridal Immigrant Labor Market Participants (LMP)

Korean Occupational Classification	Total LMP* Frequency	%	Paid LMP Frequency	%	Unpaid LMP Frequency	%
Managers	0	0	0	0	0	0
Professionals & Related	21	2.9	21	3.3	0	0
Clerks	4	0.5	3	0.5	1	1.2
Service	107	14.9	99	15.6	8	9.3
Sales	29	4.0	23	3.6	6	6.9
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishery	69	9.6	9	1.4	60	69.8
Crafts & Related Trades	59	8.2	58	9.2	1	1.2
Machine Operating/Assembly	117	16.3	117	18.5	0	0
Elementary	314	43.6	304	47.9	10	11.6
Total	720	100	634	100	86	100

Source: Author Calculations. *Total LMP comprised of both paid and unpaid labor market participants

V. Methodology

Educational Attainment Net Difference Index

The educational selectivity of bridal immigrants explains how the educational attainments of bridal immigrants are different from those of their non-migrant counterparts in their home country. To compare the educational attainment between bridal immigrants and their non-migrant counterparts, we construct the Net Difference Index (NDI) of educational attainment between two populations. NDI is a measure of the differences in a given characteristic between two populations. Stanley Lieberson (1976) originally developed it to compare differences in given characteristics when the population largely overlaps but one population has a few members who have unusually high or low values.[12] Therefore, it is an ideal measurement for this study which compares immigrants to their home country population.

The Net Difference Index between the bridal immigrant population (X) and the home

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[12] Lieberson (1976) removes the problem in nonparametric rank tests between two samples, which could not distinguish when two populations largely overlap but one population has a few members who are unusually high or low from the situation in which there was absolutely no overlap between the groups.

country population (Y) is calculated by comparing two probabilities, illustrated in equation (1).

$$(1)\ NDI_{xy} = \Pr(X > Y) - \Pr(X < Y)$$

where *Pr(X >Y)* denotes that the probability that the education level of a bridal immigrant in X will exceed the education level of a female non-migrant in Y, and *Pr(X<Y)* denotes the probability that the education level of a female non-migrant in Y will exceed the education level of a bridal immigrant in X.

Since probability ranges between 0 and 1, the value of NDI ranges from +1.0 to -1.0. Thus, NDI would be zero if the two probabilities ($\Pr(X>Y)$ and $\Pr(X<Y)$) are the same. Importantly, the sign and the magnitude of NDI_{xy} indicate the direction of selectivity and the level of difference between the two probabilities, respectively. For example, $NDI_{xy} = +1$ means that the educational attainment of all bridal immigrants exceeds that of all female non-migrants. Conversely, an $NDI_{xy} = -1$ means that the educational attainment of all female non-migrants exceeds that of all bridal immigrants. An NDI_{xy} value of 0.30 indicates that bridal immigrants' educational attainment exceeds that of female non-migrants from the same home country 30% more often than female non-migrants' educational attainment exceeds that of bridal immigrants from that country (Lieberson 2019). A positive (negative) NDI indicates positive (negative) selectivity in educational attainment and therefore bridal immigrants are more (less) highly educated than their home-country non-migrant counterparts.

To calculate the NDI for bridal immigrants, we first construct the population percentages of educational attainment for bridal immigrants across the seven Barro-Lee (2013) education categories. Then, the NDI of educational attainment for bridal immigrants is calculated based on

two probabilities: the percentage share of bridal immigrants which exceed the educational attainment of their home country population and the percentage share of the home country population which exceed the educational attainment of bridal immigrants from the same home country. A detailed explanation of the NDI is in the Appendix.

Labor Market Participation Model

The labor market participation of bridal immigrants is analyzed using the logit model, illustrated in equation (2). The dependent variable, *LMP*, is a binary variable which shows labor market participation of bridal immigrant women and whether they are participating in the labor market (=1) or not (=0). We constructed, *LMP*, based on their KNSMF 2015 survey answer for employment status by including those who answered as being a full-time worker, part-time worker, daily worker, or self-employed but did not include those who answered that they are working unpaid for their family business.

$$(2)\ LMP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Gender\_Attitude\_Wife + \beta_2 Gender\_Attitude\_Husband$$
$$+ \beta_3 Age + \beta_4 Age^2 + \beta_5 Years\_Korea + \beta_6 Years_{Korea}{}^2$$
$$+ \beta_7 Education + \beta_8 Language\_Proficiency + \beta_9 Home\_Country$$
$$+ \beta_{10} Child\_Under5 + \beta_{11} Hh\_Income + \beta_{12} Rural + \beta_{13} Selection + \varepsilon_i$$

The model includes two types of variables: gender role attitude variables and observable personal characteristics.

To measure individuals' attitudes regarding gender roles within the family, we utilize the responses by bridal immigrants and their spouses to a gender role attitude question. This

qualitative variable reflects respondents' views on gender roles within the family. In the surveys, bridal immigrants and their spouses are asked to answer a question expressing their attitude on the following statement: "Recognition of roles within the family: the work men should do is earning money and the work women should do is caring for the home and family." This is assessed on a Likert scale (1=Strongly agree; 2=Somewhat Agree, 3=Neutral, 4=Somewhat Disagree, 5=Strongly Disagree). Lower values represent more traditional, less gender-egalitarian attitudes, while higher values represent less traditional, more gender-egalitarian values.[13] Following Norström et al. (2012), the responses for both husbands and wives can be interpreted as: 1=Very Traditional; 2=Rather Traditional; 3=Equal; 4=Rather Untraditional; and 5=Very Untraditional. Using this variable, we examine how the decision of bridal immigrant's labor market participation is influenced through both their own perspective on gender roles as well as their husband's perspective on gender roles within the family. The gender equality attitude variable for bridal immigrants and their spouses was used to create *Gender_Attitude_Wife* and *Gender_Attitude_Husband.* These variables are included to capture the influences of bridal immigrants' and their spouses' beliefs and attitudes regarding gender equality within the family, respectively.

Observable personal characteristics include *Age* and *Years_Korea,* which denote the age of an individual and number of years a bridal immigrant has stayed in Korea since migration. We included years since migration in the model, to account for the fact that as bridal immigrants live longer in the host country, the impact from their home country would diminish. *Education, Language_Proficiency,* and *Home_Country* represent categorical dummy variables for

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[13] On this 5-point scale, the bridal immigrant wives had a mean value of 2.77 with a standard deviation of 1.16. The husbands had a mean value of 2.88 with a standard deviation of 1.09. On average, this demonstrates bridal immigrants have a less-egalitarian (i.e., more traditional) attitude than husbands regarding breadwinner roles and earnings.

education-level, Korean speaking fluency and the bridal immigrants' home countries. We include home country fixed effects in the model given that unmeasured factors from the home country (such as home country gender roles and other cultural factors) can impact the labor market decisions of married immigrants (Blau et al., 2011). The education variable, *Education,* includes five categories according to the level of final education: individuals who have no schooling *(No_School)*, less than high school education or high school dropout (*Less_High_School*), high school graduate (*High_School*), some college education including 2-year college graduate (*Some_College*), and bachelor's degree or higher (*College_Degree*). *Language_Proficiency* includes four categories: *Excellent, Good, Average,* or *Poor* according to the self-reported level of Korean speaking fluency. *Home_Country* indicates bridal immigrants' home country (*China, Mongolia, Cambodia, Philippines, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Nepal, Kyrgyzstan,* and *Uzbekistan*). *Child_Under5* denotes whether bridal immigrants have young children under the age of 5 (=1) or not (=0). *Hh_Income* denotes monthly household income (converted to U.S. dollars).[14] *Rural* denotes whether an individual resides in a rural area (=1) or not (=0).

Selection denotes the educational selectivity of bridal immigrants compared to their non-migrant home country counterparts. We use the ratio of years of schooling between immigrants and the home country population. While NDI is the best metric for evaluating educational selectivity, it cannot be directly incorporated into the regression due to the resulting perfect collinearity with home country fixed effects in the model. Since we need to include home country fixed effects, including a country-specific explanatory variable (i.e. the same value of NDI for all immigrants

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[14]The reported household income includes eight categories from "less than or equal to 1,000 won" to "above or equal to 7,000 won". The midpoint method from the reported household income is used for the imputed value of monthly household income.

from the same home country) in the model would create a perfectly collinear relationship.

Therefore, to control for selectivity, we use the ratio of years of education between individual

immigrants and the average of their home country population. Individual immigrant's years of

schooling are calculated using multiple survey answers on their education (their highest level of

education, graduation status, current enrollment status, and current year of school) in KMSMF

2015. The average years of schooling for the home country population are utilized as the average

total years of schooling for those between 25 and 64 years of age from Barro and Lee data.[15] The

substantive impact of level of education on labor participation is controlled through *Education*,

while inclusion of *Selection* implicitly controls for self-selection of immigrants by education.

Immigrants who are higher up in the educational distribution of their country of origin may differ

in their unmeasured characteristics from those with an equal level of education who place lower

in their home country's educational distribution (Blau et al., 2011). To the extent this type of

selection is controlled for by this specification, the estimated effects of the other explanatory

variables included in the model will be less biased by selectivity. ε_i is the error term.

VI. Results

Bridal Immigrant Educational Selectivity

Table 5 presents the NDI of all bridal immigrants from all home countries and all show

positive NDI. This indicates bridal immigrants are positively selected, although the degree of

positive selectivity differs across home countries. This is similar to findings from Huh (2017),

which focus on the educational selectivity of immigrant workers in the U.S. and found that all

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[15] For the average years of schooling for Uzbekistan, we utilized mean years of schooling for female aged 25 and older data for 2005, which provided by Human Development Reports. https://hdr.undp.org/en/indicators/24106#

immigrants are positively selected. Here, bridal immigrants' degree of selectivity is somewhat lower than was found for U.S. female immigrant workers overall. For example, three out of the four largest home countries (Vietnam, Philippines, and China), have an NDI value of less than 0.5., while the NDIs for most U.S. immigrant women (from 40 countries out of 42 analyzed) were over 0.7. These results still strongly demonstrate that bridal immigrants are positively self-selected in terms of education. As far as educational selectivity proxies for other positive traits (such as intelligence, motivation, work ethic, etc.), these results show that bridal immigrants will more likely embody these traits relative to those non-migrants from their same home country. The results show that women who choose to migrate as bridal immigrants are not coming from the lowest educational (and ability) strata of their home-country.

**Table 5. Educational Selectivity of Bridal Immigrants in Korea**

Home Country	NDI for Bridal Immigrants
China	0.393
Mongolia	0.346
Cambodia	0.825
Philippines	0.397
Vietnam	0.424
Laos	0.748
Thailand	0.684
Nepal	0.735
Kyrgyzstan	0.689
Uzbekistan*	0.226

Source: Author Calculations. *NDI for Uzbekistan is calculated based on 2013 educational attainment data from the World Bank due to a lack of home country educational data in Barro-Lee (additional information in the Appendix).

As seen in Figure 1, educational differences between bridal immigrants and their home country counterparts from three out of the four largest home countries (Vietnam, Philippines, and China), are smaller than those of bridal immigrants from five other home countries (Cambodia,

Laos, Thailand, Nepal and Kyrgyzstan). Meanwhile, Cambodian bridal immigrants have the highest educational selectivity among all immigrant groups, with an NDI value of 0.826. As a robustness check, we also calculate the NDI of bridal immigrants using home country educational attainments for populations over age 15, as well as using 2010 educational attainment values from Barro-Lee and the NDI values were not much different from the main findings with all showing positive selectivity. These results are provided in the Appendix.

Figure 1. Educational Attainment NDI for Bridal Immigrants in Korea
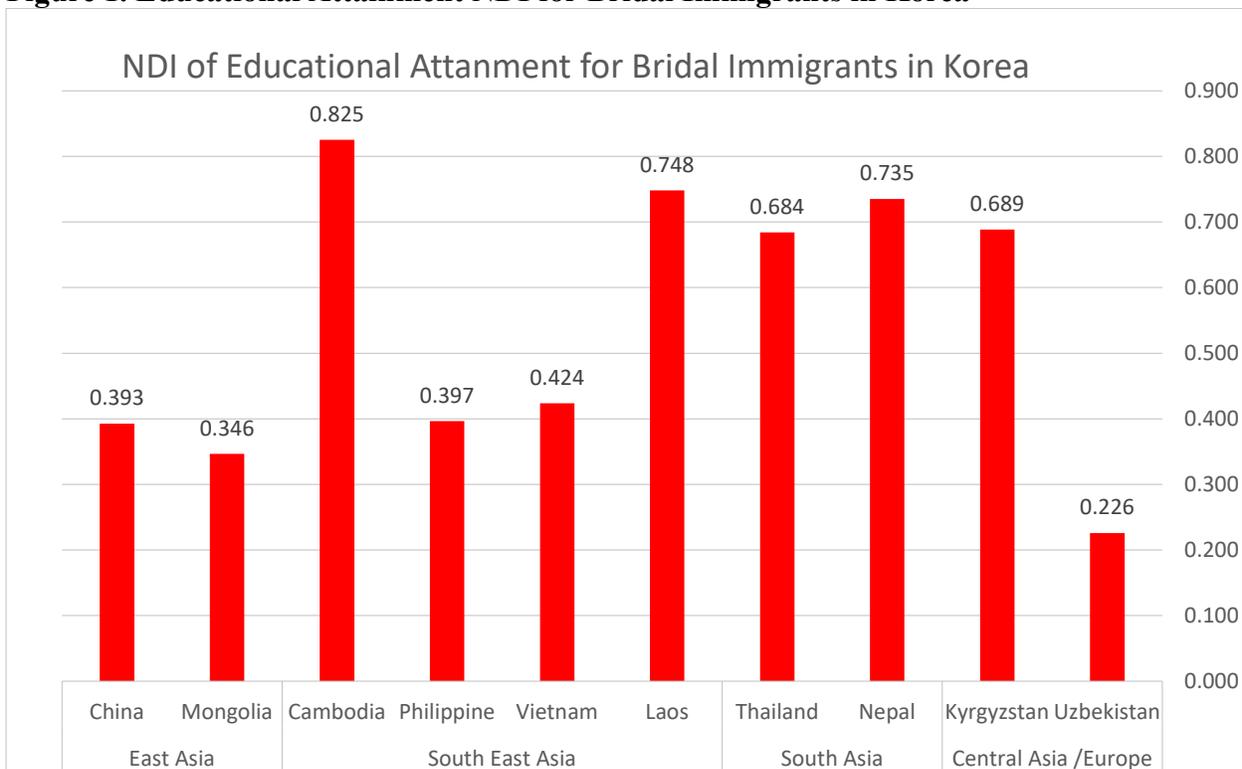
Labor Market Participation of Bridal immigrants

Table 6 presents odds ratios for the Logit model described in equation (2) as well as the baseline model without controls for gender attitudes. Overall, the signs of the odds ratios for most control variables follow expectations and are statistically significant at the 1% level.

Table 6. Labor Market Participation of Bridal Immigrants

Dependent Variable: LMP	Model 1		Model 2	
Independent Variable	Odds Ratio	Robust S.E.	Odds Ratio	Robust S.E.
Constant	0.017***	0.021	0.007***	0.009
Gender_Attitude_Wife			1.118**	0.058
Gender_Attitude_Husband			1.185***	0.064
Age	0.975	0.071	0.973	0.069
Age^2	1.001	0.001	1.001	0.001
Years_Korea	1.854***	0.141	1.861***	0.139
Years_Korea^2	0.966***	0.005	0.966***	0.005
Child_Under5	0.294***	0.040	0.303***	0.041
Hh_Income	1.004***	0.000	1.004***	0.000
Rural	0.867	0.103	0.895	0.108
Selection	1.009	0.964	1.006	0.095
Education				
Less_High_School	1.824**	0.459	1.832**	0.460
High_School	1.677**	0.419	1.689**	0.422
Some_College	0.977	0.454	0.941	0.437
College_Degree	1.603	0.560	1.605	0.559
Language Proficiency				
Excellent	1.948**	0.580	1.974**	0.581
Good	1.747***	0.325	1.704***	0.320
Average	1.586***	0.244	1.553***	0.242
Home Country				
China	0.936	0.285	0.884	0.269
Kyrgyzstan	0.443	0.306	0.441	0.302
Laos	1.426	0.699	1.420	0.680
Mongolia	0.969	0.479	0.897	0.437
Nepal	1.469	0.529	1.475	0.529
Philippines	1.906**	0.568	1.942**	0.584
Thailand	0.991	0.527	0.957	0.561
Uzbekistan	0.517	0.217	0.518	0.217
Vietnam	1.557*	0.368	1.584*	0.378
Observations	1,633		1,633	
Pseudo R2	0.180		0.189	
Chi-Square	283.13		303.68	
(Degrees of Freedom)	(24)		(26)	
Prob > Chi2	0.000		0.000	

reference category for statistical significance: *p<0.10; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

The probability of being in the labor market increases as bridal immigrants live more years in Korea (*Years_Korea*) while the impact of years in Korea decreases over time (*Years_Korea^2*). Bridal immigrants are 1.8 times more likely to work in the labor market as they live one additional year in Korea, holding all other variables at their average for both models. More education, better Korean speaking skills, and larger household income increase the predicted probability of a bridal immigrant being in the labor market. However, educational selectivity does not change the probability for bridal immigrants to work in the labor market.

Education positively impacts labor market participation for bridal immigrants, with the likelihood of being in the labor market highest for those with less than a high school or a high school education (*Less_High_School* and *High_School* respectively) relative to the base group (*No_School*). The college educated groups (*Some_College* and *College_Degree*) are not more or less likely to work relative to the base group. As expected, having young children under the age of 5 (*Child_Under5*) decreases the likelihood of bridal immigrants being in the labor market, indicating that bridal immigrants who have young children under age 5 are 0.3 times less likely to work in the paid labor market across all models. Bridal immigrants located in rural areas (*Rural*) are also neither more nor less likely to be in the paid labor market than their urban counterparts. Different from the typical labor supply model, the ages of bridal immigrants do not influence labor market participation. The insignificant impact of age (which reflects experience) on labor market participation, coupled with the greater likelihood of being in the labor market for lower levels of education, reflects the fact that bridal immigrants are mostly part-time workers providing simple ("elementary") labor. Across all models, Filipina and Vietnamese bridal immigrants are about 1.9 times and 1.6 times more likely to work in the labor market, respectively (all relative to the reference group of Cambodian brides).

The results also demonstrate that bridal immigrants' attitudinal beliefs on gender equality, as represented in the gender role attitude variable have a positive effect on the likelihood of bridal immigrants being in the labor market. The results show that the impact of bridal immigrants' attitudes on likelihood of labor market participation is statistically significant even when controlling for husbands' attitudes. The Model 2 results in Table 6 show that if a bridal immigrant's gender role attitude (represented by *Gender_Attitude_Wife*) increases by one unit (becoming less traditional and more egalitarian), a bridal immigrant is around 1.11 times more likely to work in the labor market, holding husband's attitude and other variables at model averages. Thus, a one unit increase in the bridal immigrant's gender role attitude yields an 11% increase in the odds of a bridal immigrant being in the labor market holding husband's gender attitude and other variables constant. If the bridal immigrant's gender role attitude increases by two units, the odds of being in the labor market increase around 1.25 times (leading to a 25% increase in the likelihood of participation).[16] Considering the scale of the gender role attitude variable, changes in the bridal immigrants' attitudes from the most traditional, least egalitarian attitude (1) to the least traditional, most egalitarian attitude (5) increase the likelihood of a bridal immigrant being in the labor market about 1.75 times, indicating a 75% increase in the odds of a bridal immigrant being in the labor market, holding all other variables constant. The calculated average marginal effect indicates the predicted probability of labor market participation increases by 0.020 with wife's gender role attitude, holding all variables at their averages.

The results even more strongly demonstrate the impact the husbands' attitudinal beliefs on gender equality, as represented in the gender role attitude variable, have on the likelihood of bridal immigrants being in the labor market. The results show that the impact of the husbands'

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[16] Since odds ratios work in a multiplicative fashion, increasing Wife's Gender Attitude Index by two units increases the odds of being in the labor market by around 1.118*1.118 =1.25.

attitudes on likelihood of bridal immigrants' labor market participation is statistically significant even when controlling for the wives' attitudes. The Model 2 results in Table 6 show that if a husband's gender role attitude (represented by *Gender_Attitude_Husband*) increases by one unit (becoming less traditional and more egalitarian), a bridal immigrant is around 1.18 times more likely to work in the labor market, holding her attitude and other variables at model averages. Thus, a one unit increase in the husband's gender role attitude yields an 18% increase in the odds of a bridal immigrant being in the labor market. This is an even larger impact than the bridal immigrant's attitude itself and strongly demonstrates the influence husband's attitudes have on the bridal immigrants themselves. If the husband's gender role attitude increases by two units, the odds of being in the labor market increase around 1.4 times. Considering the scale of the gender role attitude variable, changes in the husbands' attitudes from the most traditional, least egalitarian attitude (1) to the most untraditional, most egalitarian attitude (5) increase the likelihood of a bridal immigrant being in the labor market about 1.97 times, indicating a 97% increase in the odds of a bridal immigrant being in the labor market, holding all other variables constant.

For robustness checks, we ran multiple sets of regressions using sparser control vectors, differing segments of data, and changing models by adding or reducing explanatory variables. We tested the models with only one spouse's gender attitude (either husband's or wife's), as well as with an additional control variable for a more recent cohort group (the 2010 cohort). Models using regressors with more detailed categorical variables for household income, education, Korean language fluency, as well as nationality (which separates Joseonjeok Chinese who have ancestral Korean heritage from Han Chinese) are also tested. All regression results qualitatively and quantitatively look like the main results with consistent signs and magnitudes for

coefficients as well as statistical significance. To test whether results may be biased by the large group size of a single nationality (i.e., Vietnamese bridal immigrants), we test for robustness by repeating all regressions using segments of data without Vietnamese bridal immigrants. The main results did not change. Furthermore, all these regressions are repeated with another dependent variable which more broadly defined labor market participants to include unpaid family workers, rather than paid labor market participants only. The main results are supported even more strongly. We also tested the model replacing the source country dummy variables with the country specific NDI values. The results support the main findings even more strongly and do not show any statistical significance of NDIs. Other tests for robustness, such as multicollinearity and heteroskedasticity are also conducted and results are consistently significant with no issues found.

VII. Conclusion

Understanding how immigrants adapt to their host country as well as who decides to migrate are important sociopolitical and economic issues. Recently, a large influx of bridal immigrants with men in developed Asian countries has occurred. Since these bridal immigrants choose to migrate through marriage after only limited contact with their future husband, they face more risk from unknown information about their husband as well as the host country conditions compared to typical economic migrants or marriage immigrants who follow family members. Consequently, there have been significant concerns raised by the public and media regarding human rights violations, such as human trafficking, sexual slavery, and abuse to migrant women. These concerns have, on the one-hand, created sympathy for bridal immigrants as potential victims of human rights abuses, and on the other-hand, generated negativity from the

potential commodification of sexuality. Bridal immigrants' decisions are influenced not only by economic resources but also these societal gender norms involving family structure, gendered hypergamy, migration, and globalization.

Utilizing KNSMF 2015 data and the Barro-Lee Educational Attainment Dataset, this study examines how the educational attainments of these bridal immigrants are different from those non-migrants who remained in the home country, as well as investigates bridal immigrants' labor market participation after migration from a gendered perspective. Despite the historical and public narratives often surrounding bridal immigrants, the results demonstrate similar findings between bridal immigrants and traditional immigrant workers, demonstrating positive selectivity and the importance of women's gender attitudes on labor market participation. Importantly, this is the first study to quantitatively analyze educational selectivity of bridal immigrants and their labor market participation decisions. In this regard, the study addresses a lack of literature on bridal immigrants as a unique migrant class and additionally contributes to studies in labor, gender, and migration.

Testing educational selectivity, the Net Difference Index of educational attainments for bridal immigrants from 10 home countries are calculated and the results conclusively demonstrate positive selectivity of all bridal immigrants. Examining key factors influencing gender equality, Dilli et al (2018) found that women with more education have an increased capacity to make choices and implement decisions even where gender norms are restrictive. The positive educational selectivity of bridal immigrants implies they have the capacity to make meaningful life decisions. Thus, even if they are victims of the globalized patriarchal system their migration decisions are the result of their effort to improve their lives within that restricted and globalized patriarchal system which may be empowering. It is important to remember;

however, that although bridal immigrants are more educated than their home country counterparts, they are still a marginalized minority group in the host country and face difficulties such as negative public perception toward "mail-order" brides as well as discrimination. In addition, the fact that educational selectivity shows no effect on the labor market participation and there is also no statistically significant impact of higher education (the college-educated group) on the likelihood of working reflects the labor market conditions that bridal immigrants face in the host country, suggesting their human capital are not fully utilized even though they participate in the labor market. In this regard, investigating the impact of gender attitudes on the labor market participation decision of bridal immigrant women can capture the conditions for capable but marginalized women's decisions under the current globalized patriarchal system.

Given the broad literature identifying how income growth and employment empowers the health, social and economic status of women (Rodriguez, 2022), these results strongly demonstrate the role both husband's and wives' gender role attitudinal beliefs have in determining women's employment (and thus women's empowerment). The labor market participation of bridal immigrants is a meaningful decision since it not only enhances their economic empowerment but also reflects women's agency. The employment could enhance the bargaining power of bridal immigrants since they can live less dependent on their husbands if they have an income resource. Importantly, given that the general expectation for bridal immigrants is not involved with activities in the labor market after migration, the labor market participation of bridal immigrants is a more meaningful decision which reflects these women's capability to identify their goals and exercise their agency regarding economic activities. The regression results suggest that bridal immigrants' own perceptions of gender roles within the

family are influential, but not more important than their husbands' perception in determining labor market participation.

Given that the self-selection of bridal immigrants can be influenced by not only their economic condition but also gender status (which restricts women's mobility and opportunities), further examination on the self-selection process of bridal immigrants is needed. For example, what are the most crucial factors for their decision to move from their home country as bridal immigrants? How is the home country gender status of bridal immigrants related to the decision to migrate? To address these topics, more information is needed on bridal immigrants in their home country before migration, including their socioeconomic condition, family relations, and personal information, as well as macro-level home country conditions.

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