

결혼이주여성의 가정 너머 불안정성: (잠재적) 다문화강사의 가정 너머 불안정성의 생산 사례를 중심으로*

The precarity of female marital migrants beyond their home:
The production of precarity of (potential) Multicultural Instructors beyond
female marital migrants' home

고민경**

이 논문은 다문화강사 및 다문화강사양성과정을 수강하는 결혼이주여성을 대상으로 하여 이들이 경험하는 사회재생산의 공간을 불안정성의 개념을 사용하여 가정 너머로 확장하는 시도이다. 결혼이주여성은 자신의 생활에 대해 갖는 기대와 실제와의 차이를 경험함에 따라 불안정성이 생산된다. 이 논문은 가정 내 사회재생산 노동자가 되기를 요구받는 결혼이주여성이 가정 밖에서 경제활동참여자가 되도록 결정하게 된 방식을 분석하여 불안정성의 생산을 구체적으로 확인한다. 첫째, 결혼이주여성은 가정 내 자신의 사회재생산 노동 의무로 인해 불안전, 저임금 및 일시적인 직업을 자발적으로 선택한다. 둘째, 그녀들의 가정 너머의 노동은 자신의 능력을 발휘할 수 있게 하고 타인의 무시를 피할 수 있게 하지만, 동시에 그녀들에게 더욱더 취약한 지위를 부여하기도 한다. 여성의 가정 내 사회재생산 활동은 유연한 직업을 선택할 수밖에 없게 만드며, 이는 결국 그녀들을 한국 사회의 가장자리로 내몰게 된다. 위의 두 결과를 토대로, 본 논문은 결혼이주여성의 사회재생산은 '아내'에서 다양한 불안정성을 경험하는 '노동자'에 이르는 연속체에 위치하고 있으며, 이주여성은 한국 사회에서 소외된 위치에 자리매김하게 됨을 주장한다.

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** 서울대학교아시아연구소도시사회센터객원연구원(koh.geo54@gmail.com)

주요어: 결혼이주여성, 다문화강사, 신자유주의 주체, 불안정성, 가정, 사회재생산

1. Introduction

Since the 1970s, women's voluntary migration has grown in the Western world, so much that term 'feminization of migration' has been used to describe the increase of female migrant workers (UN-INSTRAW, 2007). A large number of these women, mostly from developing countries, are employed in the care and domestic sectors of Europe and North America, which commodify women's care and reproductive labor in order to solve care deficits and reduce welfare spending. East Asian countries have also witnessed an increase of female migrants from China and Southeast Asia since the 1990s. However, the migration of women in East Asia is predominantly for marriage, which is regarded as one solution for the sociobiological reproduction crisis derived from rapid economic development.

Women's labor migration in the Western world and marriage migration in East Asia seem very different; however, it is difficult to distinguish marriage migrants from labor migrants because feminized domestic labor, either paid or unpaid, channels their work in the family as well as in the market (Lan, 2003; Piper, 2003). For example, female migrant workers can become transnational breadwinners but remain burdened by gendered domestic duties. On the other hand, female marital migrants can participate in the labor market beyond their homes, to support their families. Also, the recruitment of migrant women can

be understood as class-specific strategies to solve care deficits: upper-class and middle-class households hire migrant workers for substitute domestic care work, but lower-class households seek foreign wives as a source of unpaid domestic labor (Lan, 2008; Wang, 2007). In any case, the continuum between paid domestic labor and unpaid home labor or between worker and wife is central to these women's migration.

Despite these similarities, the range of domestic labor among female migrants remains underexplored. As the commodification of care work is understood as one of the significant effects of neoliberalism in the labor market (Farris, 2015), the exploitation of female migrant workers and their precarious lives have been widely discussed. Feminist migration studies reveal how and why migrant women are likely to engage in the undocumented or low-skilled labor market, and how their lives become precarious by experiencing gendered and racialized discrimination and harsh labor conditions. In addition to precarious labor work, female labor migrants' transnational mothering difficulties are also discussed using the concept of a global care chain (Parreñas, 2013); however, difficulties of marital migrants tend to be discussed only within their homes such as domestic violence and cultural adjustment. Their difficulties beyond homes have not been widely explored.

To fill this gap, the purpose of this paper is to extend the space for conceptualizing female marital migrants' precarity beyond their homes. The concept of precarity is usually understood as insecure labor condition of the working poor (Waite, 2009). However, this paper defines it as insecure life conditions and existence between production and reproduction by applying it to female marital migrants. The paper

views female marital migrants as neoliberal subjects who accept full responsibility for their self-care and family-care. Their experiences are predicated on crafting a felicitous but fictitious work-family balance based on a cost-benefit calculus, but differences between expectations and actual practices produce their precarity. My analysis elaborates how female marital migrants, as neoliberal subjects, appreciate themselves, choose to become flexible income earners, and experience precarities beyond their home.

By examining the lives of female marital migrants who are current Multicultural Instructors or who want to work as Multicultural Instructors in South Korea, I show how female marital migrants' economic participation brings about two paradoxical results. First, despite female marital migrants' desire to be engaged in professional and high-wage work, they voluntarily choose insecure, low-paid, and temporary work positions due to domestic responsibilities. Second, their labor enables these women to exercise their abilities and avoid others' disrespect, but also gives them a more vulnerable status. Based on these results, I argue that precarity of female marital migrants is produced in the continuum from wife to worker, and that the produced precarity situates the women in a marginalized social position in Korean society.

2. Data and methods

Following the work of Foster (2013), McDowell (2013), Strauss (2012), and Waite et al. (2015), all of whom identify interview and narrative as ideal methods to understand personal experiences of life and work, this paper relies methodologically on in-depth interviews.

The interviews focus on female marital migrants who want to work as ‘Multicultural Instructors,’ a position created by the Korean government in 2009 to enhance native Koreans’ understandings of migrants and their culture. Several multicultural instructor training courses are offered by nationwide government-supported institutions such as Multicultural Support Centers. These courses certify students (mainly female marital migrants) as multicultural instructors after they complete a 1- to 6-month program. Students learn how to introduce their traditional culture and language to the public, particularly to students from pre-school through elementary school.

Data for the paper was collected from narrative interviews with 30 female marital migrants who participated in a Multicultural Instructor Vocational Program operated by a Multicultural Family Support Center in Seoul, interviews with six multicultural instructors (four foreigners and two Koreans), and two officers from the Multicultural Family Support Center. I recruited interviewees from four Multicultural Instructor Vocational Programs, in which I participated as a teaching assistant during fieldwork in May-June 2015 and May-June 2016. All interviews were done in Korean, except for the Filipina migrants who were interviewed in English, and all interviewees are represented by numbers. Policies on family welfare, immigration, and multicultural families from the 1990s, assessed using media discourse analysis, are used as secondary research data.

The following section reviews the concept of precarity and situates precarity between labor and lives, in an attempt to view female marital migrants as neoliberal subjects who are responsible for social risks and transform the risks into a problem of self-care. In order to examine how the women’s precarity is produced while they accept their home

responsibilities, I analyze how they experience various precarities by recognizing the differences between their expectations and society's expectations, which are a basis of their income-earning activities. This helps provoke the necessity of expanding the place of precarity beyond the homes in the empirical analysis. Based on the analysis, I then illustrate how female marital migrants' precarities are produced within and outside homes: 1) female migrants appreciate themselves as wives and mothers of the Korean nation and choose to participate in insecure job positions; and 2) the women experience precarities between their homes and workplaces, entwined with their gender, race, and class, and these precarities lead them to remain in the periphery of mainstream society.

3. Understanding precarity from labor to lives

While precarity is generally understood as a widespread condition of temporary, flexible, and contingent work, the literature generally develops the concept in two different ways: as a condition of a neoliberal labor market and as a part of broader human life (Fantone, 2007; Lewis et al., 2015; Waite, 2009). According to the former understanding, globalization and neoliberalism have inevitably created low-paid and flexible jobs by promoting higher profits and stable economic expansion across the globe (Vosko, 2009). These unstable and insecure jobs tend to be taken by migrants who are at the bottom end of the labor market. Indeed, there is a growing evidence that many migrants, as non-citizens who are represented mostly in low-paid labor sectors and the informal economy, are the most exploited (Banki, 2013;

Ferguson and McNally, 2015; Lewis et al., 2015; McDowell et al., 2009; Mountz, 2010). Migrants' temporary and limited visas, along with their social differences, make their vulnerable status worse (Yeoh et al., 2013). Moreover, insecure labor and lives, intertwined with undocumented migrants' international mobility, are exacerbated (Mountz and Hiemstra, 2014).

Female migrants are particularly understood as susceptible to the exploitation in the labor market based on their race, ethnicity, gender, and class (Piper and Lee, 2016). Focusing on the intimate labor of domestic migrant workers, Anderson (2007) reveals how female migrant workers are more complexly exposed to precarity than simple low-wage labor workers. Since these women are not only engaged in productive labor but also in reproductive work, their precarities can be expanded beyond labor, to their lives or 'life's work' (Meehan and Strauss, 2015). From this point, understanding precarity as a labor condition can be connected to the second model, which considers it as characteristics of broader human life.

This second understanding of precarity pays attention to how precarity is entwined with diverse aspects of people's lives (Stewart, 2007), and in turn, how different types of precarity are *produced* (Neilson and Rossiter, 2006). Ettlinger (2007) stresses that precarity is not limited to time-specific contexts such as post-Fordism and neoliberalism, but located in the 'microspaces of everyday life.' Katz et al. (2015) argue that the social reproduction which enables and maintain life is central to our everyday experience; it is devalued due to its invisible and unpaid characteristics, which renders normalized exploitations as precarious practices.

Recent research sheds further light on the uneven geographies of

precarities produced around gender, class, and race (Anderson, 2010; Dyer et al., 2011; Elwood et al., 2016; Kern, 2010; Laurie et al., 2015). For example, May et al. (2007) examines the emergence of a new ‘migrant division of labour’ across migrants’ skills, races, occupation sectors, and genders. Lewis et al. (2015) explore why and how certain migrants, such as women in the care and domestic sectors, experience compounded precarity derived from uneven power relations between employers and workers, particularly in private workplaces.

Feminist geographers also extend related precarity research to the subjective dimension (Philo, 2014; Noxolo, 2014; Waite et al., 2014). For example, Worth (2016) points out that the whole story of individuals’ lives is hidden and not examined by objective research, and suggests that the differentially produced precarities from each individual’s experiences and feelings should be examined. Deploying sensory geographies as a research method, Munt (2016) specifically examines the hybrid subjectivities of migrant women when they encounter unexpected and different circumstances.

While Waite (2009) and Lewis et al. (2015) suggest that precarity is more suitable when it is related to the labor market conditions of particular groups such as migrant labor workers, female marital migrants’ precarity is not limited to labor conditions: they are deeply involved in productive as well as reproductive activities. Furthermore, compounded by their social differences, female marital migrants’ feelings, thoughts, and experiences can produce ‘multi-layered and multi-sited’ precarities (Piper and Lee, 2016). Therefore, female marital migrants’ precarity should be examined both through their jobs in the labor market and through their home lives.

This point is a useful articulation to interpret the complex

vulnerabilities of female marital migrants through the concept of precarity. Feminist studies have developed various attempts to interpret the difficulties of these women including the concept of intersectionality. However, most attempts are based on psychological oppression, and some studies on labor participation only focus on discrimination as migrants. Also, these studies have limitations in that they are based on the critical gaze of patriarchy and remain in the realm of the women's homes. Therefore, it is necessary to link the social relations of these women outside their homes with the social relations within their homes. In other words, the precarity provides useful insights to figure out the difficulties experienced in the life-labor continuum.

To bring the precarity of female marital migrants between their labor and their lives, this paper suggests seeing the women as neoliberal subjects. Foucault suggests that neoliberalism is not simply an economic liberalization policy packet that facilitates privatization, deregulation, reductions in government spending, and increase in corporate profits, but a mode of governance (Foucault, 2008). As a dominant political rationality that moves from the management of the state to a manner in which people are governed and govern themselves, neoliberalism constructs a new way in which people are made subjects: *homo economicus*. Homo economicus, a subject of governmental rationality, are structured by different motivations calculating their own interests, desires, and aspirations, and have a great deal of freedom to choose between competing strategies (Read, 2009). People as entrepreneurs of the self are encouraged 'to see themselves as individualized and active subjects responsible for enhancing their own well-being' (Larner, 2000: 13).

Although it may raise questions about seeing marital migrants as neoliberal subjects, it can be explained in two ways. First, it makes the subjects of neoliberalism broaden. Precarity is viewed as an inevitable by-product of neoliberalism and a neoliberal affliction that has been passed on to certain groups especially one class. However, as this paper illustrates that precarity as a condition of insecure lives that occur between production and reproduction, not limited to neoliberalism, it can broaden the subjects of neoliberalism or a group or precarity.

Second, the application to marital migrants is an attempt to highlight their agency. The oppression, discrimination, and difficulties of marital migrant women have been revealed in previous studies. However, there is still little research on how they understand their difficulties on their own, how they have determined the current decision through the process, and how they reconstruct their own lives. Although there is a growing research on biographical reconstruction, still the research based on the women's subjectivity, understanding of themselves remains underexamined. Therefore, the agency of marital migrant women needs to be expanded, and the attempt to view them as neoliberal subjects makes it possible.

Family, a basic social unit of any society, is not exempt from neoliberal governance; as a privatized sphere, family is considered a 'voluntary machine' that cultivates citizens outside the influence of the state (Rose, 1999). However, a family is more than a unit of social reproduction: it becomes a space with a private social safety net which takes full responsibility for members' risks, even as the state continually rolls back its own commitments to public welfare (Becker, 2009). As wives and mothers, the women in these families are asked to take responsibility for social reproduction, create a safe site, and

provide a better place for their families' good lives. More specifically, since they are not only the entrepreneurs of themselves but also the entrepreneurs of their families, these women are responsible for encompassing public affairs into privatized, individualized, and family affairs (Rottenberg, 2014).

Drawing on mothers' roles to maintain their families during precarious times, Wilson and Yochim (2015) introduce the concept of *mamapreneurs*, who become flexible and enterprising entrepreneurs for their families as well as themselves. According to the authors, mamapreneurs optimize their capabilities and effects for managing the risks surrounding their families by calculating costs and benefits. Mamapreneurism is not only an effort to maintain the family but also a 'constructive project' that reconstitutes the everyday lives of family in both financial and affective ways: mamapreneurs, as wives and mothers, augment family income, optimize and re/distribute household resources, and create a safe and happy place to improve their families' lives. By accepting responsibility and internalizing risks into the dimension of family, mamapreneurs invest their lives based on a calculus of maximum output for minimum expenditure.

Many studies reveal not only the precarious lives of marital migrants but also their active agency in changing and/or negotiating the difficulties surrounding them. However, their various types of precarities were not commonly discussed until very recently. In response to unfair treatment and discrimination toward these women, many studies report on the insecure lives and vulnerable status of female marital migrants (for example, see Bélanger, 2010; Hsia, 2007; Kim, 2010; Lee, 2014). These studies stress the issues that female marital migrants face during the process of migration and social

adaptation. However, this emerging literature has not fully developed yet; the women as mamapreneurs manage their families and themselves, and search for the best optimized strategies that for them remain absent.

In practice, marital migrants recognize the differences between expectations and actual social and home practices, which is the basis for their cost-benefit calculus. For example, the women calculate the cost-benefit of their income-earning activities from multiple angles. Most women interviewed for this research told me that they preferred flexible and part-time jobs to adjust their relationships to paid labor work and unpaid reproduction work. They manage to maintain their personal, privatized ethic of care primarily by continuing to serve as unpaid reproductive labor workers in their homes. They can likewise maintain family autonomy and augment family income by performing paid labor during their time ‘off’ reproductive work. Silva (2013) shows that people facing neoliberal precarity can find self-worth in their individual ability to overcome hardship, and articulate triumph through therapeutic discourses of self-transformation. While cost-benefit - based self-transformation and self-development operate as capital, the women’s experiences of precarity can worsen during the process.

4. Experiencing precarities from contrasting societal and personal expectations

Beyond the precarity related to migrant workers’ social re/production, as members of families composed of non-migrants, marital migrants face new precarities, by weaving transnational social relations between their home and host countries to form and maintain both their families

(Williams, 2010). While these women are situated between their natal and marital families, they provide free domestic and care/intimate labor, to take ethical responsibility as well as to secure their legal status (Kim, 2017). Whether their marriages are commercially arranged or not, female marital migrants and their labor become an object of exchange within their homes to maintain their families. In the process of bargaining their lives between two families, the women experience unevenly and unstably produced power relations surrounding them. The women themselves, their family members, the nation, and the state all have different understandings, interests, and expectations of female marital migrants. The power relations surrounding them, from home to the whole society, not only devalue these women and their labor but also justify discrimination and disbenefits. In other words, female marital migrants are located at the crossroads of '*legal, social, and institutional* precarity,' as Piper and Lee (2016) suggest.

Confessing the experience of various types of precarity, all the interviewees in this research perceived the differences between their expectations and actual societal practices as a major reason for their precarities. Following Piper and Lee (2016), I analyze these precarities in the legal, social, and institutional dimensions. I also add an economic dimension to the analysis based on the interviewees' narratives. Table 1 shows the differences in expectations between migrants and their families and society in the legal, social, institutional, and economic dimensions.

Legally, migrant women expect a stable citizenship status once they enter their new family and country. However, the immigration of women is understood instrumentally as one of the solutions for the social reproductive crisis for families and nations. Therefore, the

women's reasons for and lives after immigration are not only controlled by their families but also the state. The women and their visas should be regulated by the state system with the agreement of their husbands. Accordingly, rather than receiving independent legal status, the women have to be dependent on their husbands and the patriarchal system to secure their legal status. Unless the women have children, their legal rights are limited as foreigners; most of them choose to remain in their homes even if they are exploited for domestic work or sexually abused.

Socially, the women also want to be recognized as a part of their new nation. However, in typical societal discourse they are represented as commodified, different, and poor women who mainly contribute sociobiological reproduction. Migrant women are forced to fulfill their duties as wives/mothers according to this representation. However, the actual practices of migrants make them enter precarious situations even within their homes: the authenticity of their marriages is often doubted,

Table 1. Different expectations between migrants and society surrounding transnational marriage migration

	Migrants' expectations	Family and nation's expectations
Legal dimension	Stable and independent status as migrants, e.g. long-term visa, citizenship, and/or naturalization	The object of regulation and management Dependents based on hierarchical relationship as wives/mothers of the nation
Social dimension	Recognition and integration as a part of the nation Rights as well as duties as a part of the nation	Marriage as material exchange Guarantor of sociobiological reproduction Implementing duties to pay the price for marriage
Institutional dimension	Equal access and opportunity as a part of the nation Respecting difference and diversity	Assimilation Maintaining homogenous identity
Economic dimension	Affluent and modern lives Remittance to natal families	Substitute reproductive work and household-based welfare system

Table 2. Producing female marital migrants' precarity

	Actual practices of family and nation	Actual practices of migrants	Complexly produced precarities
Legal dimension	Enrollment and management system under the agreement of husband	Dependence on the patriarchal system	- Maternal citizenship based on biological reproduction - Doubted authenticity of marriage
Social dimension	Re-imagining marital migrants as commodified Forcing women to fulfill duties	Fulfillment of duties as wife and mother	- Strengthened visa management and transnational marriage regulation - Separation from children - Hierarchized discrimination
Institutional dimension	Hierarchical understanding based on gender, ethnicity, race, and class Establishing norms based on stereotyping and discrimination Emphasizing difference	Limited social participation beyond homes	- Excessive reproductive labor in homes - Divorce, deportation, and/or illegal residence if duties are not fulfilled - Stigmatization and discrimination
Economic dimension	Entering relatively lower-class' lives Promoting certain types of jobs based on social differences	Seeking job opportunities Participating in income-earning activities	- Otherization - Taking fixed roles within homes - Reserve army of labor to substitute for national labor - Limited job opportunities and economic participation in certain areas - Engaged in low-wage, temporary, and hard labor work

and their value and labor are devalued and exploited. Media and public discourses doubting the authenticity of transnational marriage have also led to the strengthening of regulations from the government, which is one of the reasons for the decreasing transnational marriage since 2010 (Kim, 2014). If the women resist these expectations or cannot stand unfair treatment by their husbands and in-laws, their lives are threatened by divorce that implies deportation or illegal residence.¹⁾

Institutionally, the women expect equal access and opportunity as

1) According to the Nationality Act of Korea, a marriage migrant is eligible for naturalization after divorce only if he or she can prove domestic violence by a spouse.

members of Korean society. However, the family and national expectations, which are focused on sociobiological reproduction, evaluate the women according to an established hierarchy based on their lower status as foreigners. In theory, the women have pertinent rights and benefits as mothers and wives of the nation; in practice, however, their social participation is limited to social adaptation and protection of their families. Therefore, their social participation is very limited, and this restricts them to fixed and socially admissible roles within their homes.

Economically, female marital migrants expect more affluent and modern lives in developed countries. For some, transnational marriage migration can be a method for upward social mobility (Constable, 2005). Remittance to natal families is one of the strongest motivations to choose transnational marriage migration. However, as is widely known, these women's marital families are mostly lower-class, so it is difficult to reach economic affluence. This situation leads many women to participate in income-earning activities. In the case of Korea, the government promotes several types of jobs for female marital migrants based on their social differences, in the name of multiculturalism. Such limited job opportunities lead the women to become a reserve army of labor, substituting for native workers, but they are restricted to certain areas that re-differentiate them as foreigners.

In sum, female marital migrants experience differential expectations after migration. Table 2 illustrates the complexities of produced precarities derived from the differences among actual practices of the actors surrounding transnational marriage. The expectational differences are mostly derived from power relations surrounding them, so they experience precarity not only in their homes but in society as a whole.

Therefore, further analysis is needed to explore these women's various precarities beyond the household.

5. Producing precarity beyond home: entering the insecure labor market voluntarily

Most female migrants hope to get a job and, indeed, it is widely acknowledged that foreign brides' economic participation is necessary. Most multicultural families' economic status is relatively lower than that of most Korean families, and the average age gap between husbands and wives is more than 10 years (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, 2010; 2013; 2016). This implies that marital migrants' employment is necessary for economic reasons, especially in the short term (Lee, 2012). Moreover, the women's individual desires to help their natal or new families are considered as one of the main motives for their employment.

However, marital migrants are located in the most vulnerable class within the labor market, due to their relatively low Korean language ability and limited job opportunities. Even for those who are engaged in ideal occupations, the women sometimes have to compete with native Koreans for limited jobs. Some other marital migrants are employed only when they can substitute for natives (Kim et al., 2009; Ko and Kim, 2010). Most occupations, even some that are newly designed for marital migrants, are based on low-wage part-time jobs that do not guarantee labor security; employed marital migrants are often dismissed unexpectedly. Moreover, their domestic duties such as child/elder care make their job search more difficult.

Overall, in most cases, they are forced to help both their families economically, even though their wages are lower than natives' wages. Some women, especially those who immigrate via commercial wedding agencies, choose marriage migration to escape from poverty and the excessive burden of production and reproduction duties in their natal families (Le et al., 2014). And given the economic conditions of their new families, marital migrants must become income earners to support them. Most interviewees pointed out the necessity of their economic participation for economic reasons and the importance of earning a little money, whether they use it to help their natal or new families. For example, an interviewee #3 from Vietnam, who work as a multicultural instructor, explained her need for income:

“My mother-in-law managed my husband’s salary. She told me that we didn’t have enough money to pay our insurance and utilities. She gave me less than \$100 a month for my pocket money, and every time I used the money, I was asked where I spent the money. [...] My vulnerable status at home made me become an income earner even if I only can earn little money.”

—interviewee # 3 from Vietnam

The interviewees’ vulnerable economic conditions worsened with their migrant status. Most interviewees were aware that they should be good mothers, wives, and daughters-in-law. They knew that their sociobiological reproductive obligations had to be fulfilled to be recognized as a member of the family or society. This condition of recognition may become a burden to the women: if they do not fulfill their obligations, they are blamed more than the natives since they are

foreigners. Ensuring that their children receive the best possible education and show superior academic achievement is seen as the key to being a good mother in Korea, so motherhood becomes a stressful experience.

An interviewee from Mongolia confessed that she had ambivalent feelings about her parents, who made her give up her studies due to their poverty. Now, she expressed her expectations of raising her own daughter better in Korea and becoming a good mother to her. Enwrapped in the discourse of multiculturalism that ironically stigmatizes marital migrants as beneficiaries of welfare policies, the desire to become a good mother is connected to the desire not to be discriminated against. Interviewee #5 from China connected her desire for economic activity to her motherhood and to protecting her children from discrimination:

“After paying the insurance and utility bills, my husband’s salary was gone. My children needed private tutoring because their academic achievement lagged behind the native children — they are stigmatized as ‘multicultural,’ which means more problematic than Korean children in any case. So, I realized that I would have to have extra income, that is, I would have to start earning money.”

—interviewee # 5 from China

However, as mentioned above, it is difficult for the women to find suitable jobs because of their reproductive duties and limited language ability. Most interviewees responded that they did part-time work in small factories or convenience stores. At first, they were glad to earn some money through their economic activity; however, soon they

realized that these jobs were only temporary positions that disturbed their reproductive duties because of the tight schedules. They also believed that they were more likely to be ignored because these jobs are socially under-recognized and have lower status. Therefore, they hope to work in socially well-recognized jobs and have more flexible schedules. Moreover, they hope for certain jobs in which they can utilize their mother language and cultural heritage as strategic assets.

To promote these women's economic activity, the government established several jobs for them that correspond to these desires: multicultural instructor, medical tourism coordinator, bilingual teacher, and tourist guide, all of which make use of their cultural and linguistic skills. Many vocational training centers and educational institutions operate low-cost or free training programs for these jobs via subsidies from the government. Compared to number of operating programs, the actual jobs are very scarce. Moreover, except for several government offices and public institutions that require translation services for foreigners, there is not much demand for the women's skills. As such, engaging in these occupations is getting difficult and has become an almost unattainable ideal for the women. Interviewee #6 from Vietnam explained why she hopes to become a multicultural instructor despite her difficulties:

“It is really difficult to get certificates to be employed. In some ways, it wastes my money and time. Although the vocational program is free, I have to leave my children with my mother-in-law to prepare the classes. It is stressful ... But I have no choice. Yes, I know, even though if I become a multicultural instructor, I cannot make lots of money (laugh) ... but making a little money is very important to me. Also, I can be

liberated from reproductive duties at least for the time to work, and I can control the time to fulfill my care duties at home. ... Although it would be a small amount of money, I can spend it at my own discretion. ... I would like to spend it for my children's private tutoring."

—interviewee # 6 from Vietnam

Unfortunately, the idealized multicultural instructor position prompts marital migrants to occupy a precarious position in the labor market. During the initial stage of the multicultural instructor program, multicultural instructors were employed by the Metropolitan and Provincial Offices of Education, where they worked 40 hours per week based on a 1-year contract renewal. However, due to financial problems in 2014, the Offices of Education changed the employment of multicultural instructors to become part-time workers, who now work less than 15 hours a week. Until 2014, the Offices of Education also assigned classes to multicultural instructors. Now, multicultural instructors must register their certification with the Offices of Education and apply for each multicultural class, which are often advertised in preschools and elementary schools. Multicultural instructors do receive \$30-50 dollars per hour, and popular instructors with good evaluations and reputations can get more than 15 classes in a month. However, beginners and other instructors who have not received good evaluations only teach 1-2 classes in a given week or month. Since there is no regular and official evaluation of multicultural instructors' performance, the reputation of the instructors depends only on word of mouth.

Interestingly, most interviewees were satisfied with the expected or current low wage and vulnerable status of their jobs. For them, the multicultural instructor occupation is one of the best jobs, not only to

utilize their unique skills but also to manage flexible schedules that are not disturbed by their reproductive activities. Moreover, Cambodian interviewee #7 noted that working as a multicultural instructor represented a chance for her family to respect her, because the teaching job was socially recognized. Therefore, marital migrants plunge themselves into a low-wage and unstable labor market, which combined with their economic needs and social differences as migrants, leads them to a precarious status.

6. Being situated in marginal positions

Even after marital migrants enter the labor market, their precarious lives continue: their labor participation leads them to experience new types of precarities outside their homes. Classified as foreigners because of their social differences such as skin color and appearance, regardless of their legally secure status, they experience social, economic, and cultural exclusion and discrimination. Even women who look similar to Koreans face discrimination because of their migrant status.

For example, interviewee #10 from Vietnam who works as a multicultural instructor was conscious that she was looked down upon as a foreigner, especially because she came from a less-developed country. To avoid discrimination and neglect from the natives, she changed her name to a Korean one (she looks very similar to native Koreans) because she realized that people began to ignore her after she said her Vietnamese name. However, she had to declare that she was a foreigner to work as a multicultural instructor; she could work only by revealing her identity as a foreigner and paradoxically being

recognized for her social difference.

Marital migrants also experience their reproductive work being extended beyond workplaces, which produces precarious labor conditions. Interviewee #15 from China, who works as an officer in a Multicultural Support Center, said that she had been asked to make lunch for free by a previous chair of the center, to save money. There were other people in the center, but only she was told to make lunch because she was the only foreigner. She refused it at first, but the center chair told her to stop working if she did not want to cook. The chair also said that there were many marital migrants who could replace her. Another Chinese instructor interviewee #8 had a similar experience: she was asked to clean the restroom and office for free.

Frequent and unexpected changes in labor conditions also make these women's lives precarious. Interviewee #12 from Mongolia had worked as a bilingual teacher at an elementary school before she worked as a multicultural instructor. Bilingual teachers are professionally trained from education colleges. Initially, they could work up to 5 years at the school where they were assigned. However, she was forced to move to another school after one year because the principal of the first school was pessimistic about multicultural and bilingual education. She had been transferred to other schools for the past three years, while her salary had been halved. Moreover, unlike Korean teachers she was no longer paid during school vacations, so she worked part-time at a gas station during those periods. Other interviewees also pointed out that the local government and administrative offices maintain working conditions that make the women unable to continue their jobs.

Another Mongolian interviewee #13 who had worked as a bilingual teacher complained that she was so ignored that she could not even be

assigned a class to teach. Eventually, she gave up her hard-earned job and worked at a car wash to get money she needed right away. Nonetheless, she enrolled in the instructor vocational program to pursue her certificate again. Even though the instructors are paid the same as low-skill laborers, she thought it better to have a socially respected teaching profession:

“After receiving the bilingual instructor training, I thought I could give good lectures with pride. But there is nothing I can do consistently in the current condition —a contract-based part-time job that does not guarantee my secure life. My children keep growing but my husband’s income is very limited … and I am so nervous and mentally unstable … as a migrant, lower-class mother and wife, and as a person. We also need a guarantee of secure life … Even though being a multicultural instructor does not guarantee my secure life and work, I believe it is much better than other part-time or low-waged work”.

—interviewee # 6 from Vietnam

Not only multicultural and bilingual instructors but also other job positions established by the government, such as translator, baristas, and nail artists, are evaluated as a part of welfare policy in the name of multiculturalism. While these occupations contribute to increased marital migrants’ participation in economic activities and are useful for some women, the occupations and their training do not help their core integration into society. These occupations enable the women to function as additional income earners in their homes rather than exerting their capacities as members of society. Getting this kind of job implies that the women remain faithful wives and mothers. Although

being engaged in an occupation is a result of a cost-benefit calculus and a negotiation between the women's desires and reality, the occupations ultimately situated the women in marginal positions in Korean society.

7. Discussion and conclusion

Except for three interviewees from Japan and Taiwan, all the interviewees confessed that they sought social mobility through marriage migration. However, it is widely known that the movement between countries does not guarantee upward social mobility. Many female marital migrants have voluntarily or involuntarily participated in income-earning activities. Due to their domestic and reproductive work, their space is considered to be within homes; the women's experiences of precarity are also discussed mainly within homes. However, based on self-autonomy and family-autonomy appreciation, the extent of marital migrants' activities expands beyond their homes.

To extend the existing discussion of the precarious lives of female marital migrants, their labor participation enables us to rethink the concept of precarity between labor and lives. By choosing to become flexible, temporary, low-skill, and low-wage labor workers, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, multicultural instructors and students who wanted to be multicultural instructors remain on the periphery of the nation. As one of government-driven occupations, multicultural instructor was idealized by the participants of this study. However, the women become marginalized due to indifference and discrimination against the women. Thus, exploring the vulnerable lives and labor conditions of female marital migrants shows how the concept of

precarity channels work into dimensions of life that seem distinct but are in fact bound together.

In this context, this paper examined how female marital migrants who have a certain job position or who want to have the position in the near future experiences of precarity can be extended beyond homes, by suggesting that they are neoliberal subjects who accept responsibility for their families and for themselves based on a cost-benefit calculus. I elaborated how the women are engaged in income-earning activities by recognizing the differences between expectations and the practices surrounding them, and by doing so, how they experience various types of precarity. I argued that the women's precarity is produced in the continuum from wife to worker, and this produced precarity situates the women in a marginalized social position in Korean society.

In fact, marital migrants' income-earning activities do not only result in negative effects. Although several of the idealized occupations established by the government as a part of welfare policy contribute to producing precarious migrant women, it is undeniable that earning income helps the women in not only economic but also in legal, social, and institutional ways. Beyond the welfare frame of multiculturalism by the government, the expansion of women's participation in society has helped raise their voices (Kim, 2016). However, as Lee (2012) discusses, the current citizenship requirements are more favorable for women with children. It is more advantageous for them to acquire citizenship by having a child rather than by having a job and integrating into society. It is natural that childcare and reproduction activities after childbirth cannot help but force them to choose flexible occupations, which in turn entrenches them on the margins of Korean society.

Under the current multicultural policies, marital migrants are mainly defined as reproductive labor providers, and their income-earning activities are regarded as secondary income sources for their homes, a tension which produces their precarious lives. This perception thwarts social integration as well as migrants' aspirations for social recognition, by distinguishing between Koreans and migrants as 'us' and 'them.' By relegating these women to the margins of society, multicultural policies espouse a narrow path to social integration and development that reinforces the household-centered welfare regime. Given that marriage migrants actively participate in income-earning activities, but their effects are not highly valued, it is necessary to study how their reproductive and economic activities can be connected to policies for social integration and development. In particular, further studies should probe how the women's precarious lives and marginalized work not only undermines the possibility for successful social integration, but also affects the division of transnational reproductive labor in Asia.

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❖ Abstract

The precarity of female marital migrants beyond their home:
The production of precarity of (potential) Multicultural Instructors beyond
female marital migrants' home

Minkyung Koh

The purpose of this paper is to extend the space of social reproduction of female marital migrants who are Multicultural Instructors or students of the Multicultural Instructors Vocational Programs by using the concept of precarity. The women's experiences are predicated on crafting a felicitous but fictitious work-family balance based on a cost-benefit calculus, but differences between expectations and actual practices produce their precarity. I analyze the ways in which the governance of the women that asks them to be social reproductive labor workers at their homes is slipped over, so the women decide to be income earners beyond their homes. First, despite female marital migrants' desire to be engaged in professional and high-wage work, they voluntarily choose insecure, low-paid, and temporary work positions due to social reproductive work at their homes. Second, their labor beyond their homes enables these women to exercise their abilities and avoid others' disrespect, but also gives them a more vulnerable status; the women's reproduction activities at their homes cannot help but force them to choose flexible occupations, which in turn entrenches them on the margins of Korean society. Based on these results, I argue that social reproduction of female marital migrants is situated in the continuum from wife to worker experiencing various precarities, and that the women are situated in a marginalized social position in Korean society.

Keywords: female marital migrants, Multicultural Instructors, neoliberal subject, precarity, home, social reproduction

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