Economic Integration or Segregation? Immigrant Women’s Labor Market Entrance and Their Support Service Utilization in South Korea

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Abstract

This dissertation is comprised of three independent yet interconnected studies. The main objective of the three chapters was to examine the economic integration/segregation of immigrant wives in South Korea, with a particular focus placed on their entrance into the labor market and their utilization of immigrant support services. Possible reasons for immigrant wives’ relatively low position within the labor market compared to their native counterparts were examined based on a framework that encompasses human capital theory, dual labor market theory and statistical discrimination theory. Specifically, the first study identified underlying forces that contribute to the different employment outcomes between Korean and immigrant wives. Data from the National Survey on Multicultural Families and the Korean Labor and Income Panel Study, both conducted in 2009, were used to obtain information on immigrant and native Korean wives. A decomposition technique was used to assess the extent to which the gap between the two groups was attributable to discrimination. Focusing on the heavy concentration of immigrant wives in the informal-sector labor market, the second study documented some possible mechanisms assigning this group to such a bottom segment of the labor market. Specifically, the study paid attention to identifying the causes of different qualities of career positions between immigrant and native Korean women in the labor market. Finally, by utilizing Gelberg-Anersen’s behavioral model, the third study examined factors that determined immigrant wives’ support services use. A structural equation modeling method was used to examine possible differences in service utilization patterns depending on immigrant their employment status situations. Overall, the findings from the three studies suggest that immigrant wives have been incorporated into the Korean labor market in a segregated way. Immigrant wives appear to be employed predominantly in precarious jobs where
their human capital credentials are not fully recognized. In line with statistical discrimination theory, employers’ preference to native Korean workers over immigrant wives seems to persist in the formal sector. Further, regarding immigrant support services, the cleavages that exist between the intended purposes and the actual usage patterns raise questions about the effectiveness of the services. This dissertation hopes to augment the relatively thin research on the economic integration of immigrant women in newly emerging immigrant destination countries, especially in the context of East Asia.
Acknowledgements

It seems impossible for me to adequately and completely thank everyone who has sustained and helped me throughout this process of finishing my PhD. I want to express my deepest appreciation to my doctoral supervisor, Professor Ka Tat Tsang, for his encouragement, guidance, and critical questioning throughout my doctoral program. He has been a true source of support, and I am deeply grateful for his wisdom and humility. My genuine appreciation is also expressed to Professor Barbara Fallon. Her unwavering support has encouraged me to grow in so many ways. A great deal of my gratitude goes to Professor Ito Peng. Her mentoring has guided my graduate education and profoundly broadened my perspectives. I feel privileged to have had Professor Eun-Jung Lee and Professor Suk-Ying Wong as invited examiners on my thesis defense committee. Their insightful feedback helped me see how I might push my research in new directions. Special thanks should also go to Professor Yun-Kyung Cha. Although he was not on the committee, I am heartily grateful for his encouragement and inspiration during my doctoral study. Further, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to many professors who taught me at Ewha Womans University and Seoul National University, from which I obtained my Bachelor's and Master's degrees, respectively.

In addition, I was very fortunate to receive a number of scholarships over the course of my doctoral journey. I greatly benefited from the support from these funding sources: The Connaught International Scholarship, the University of Toronto Doctoral Fellowship, the Yip Scholarship of the Faculty of Social Work and the Doctoral Associate Grant from the Center for Global Social Policy.

I cannot even begin to thank all my friends in the PhD program and throughout the university who made my life as a doctoral student so rich. I was extremely fortunate to have started my doctoral study with Ruth Marie Wilson, Marie Jolie Rwigema, Jennifer Ma and Carrie Smith. I cannot imagine my doctoral journey without you, and I hope that our relationships, both professional and personal, will continue long into the future. I am also thankful to my dear friends Ye-Jin Kim, Tony Antoniades, Seong-Eun Kim, Seong-Gee Um, Eun-Hye Emily Park, Yu-Te Hwang and Joanne Filippelli, who helped me navigate through the various bumps on the PhD road. I am also grateful for the sustained friendship with many colleagues from my Bachelor's and Master’s programs. I am truly blessed to have each of you in my life.

To my parents, no words could ever describe my genuine gratitude. Without your unconditional love, I could not have come this far. I am also deeply indebted to my parents-in-law for their constant support and warm
caring. I offer the warmest thanks to my brother, Kyoo-Won Yang. Your trust in me has always kept me going forward.

To my son, Jay Khium Ham, thank you for being every mother’s dream as a happy and healthy new-born, and for having the good sense to come to the world in such a perfect timing! Last but not least, I share my deepest joy with my soul mate and life companion, Seung-Hwan Ham. Thank you for standing by me and for changing my life in ways I never imagined possible. I cannot wait to see what adventures life has in store for us as we move on to the next chapter. You complete me.
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Chapter 1
Introduction

1. Statement of the problem

South Korea is currently undergoing societal changes associated with unprecedented increases in its immigrant population. According to the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs, as of January, 2014, the proportion of the immigrant population\(^1\) in South Korea is 1,569,740, taking up 3.1% of the total population in South Korea. Although the absolute rate is not that high, the rate of increase has been quite dramatic within the past decade, as witnessed in national statistics indicating an average of 9.7% increase each year since 2006 (Shin, 2013).

This study focused on immigrant women (referred to as immigrant wives) whose initial immigration purpose was to marry Korean men. The number of immigrant wives has been steadily increasing since the 1990s: They numbered 161,999 in 2010, 188,580 in 2011, 196,789 in 2012, and 235,947 in 2013 (Ministry of Public Affairs and Security, hereafter, MPAS), reflecting a 45.65% increase in immigrant wives within a three-year period. Such an influx is widely considered significantly enough to challenge the traditional notion of Korean society as an ethnically homogeneous country. In fact, while the absolute rate of marriage has been decreasing, the percentage of international marriage has been steadily increasing since the early 2000s. Now, one out of every ten marriages in South Korea is international. Because this newly arrived group of people demonstrates a higher fertility rate than that of native-born Korean women\(^2\) (Statistics Korea, 2012), they have been receiving sustained attention from society as a whole.

\[^1\] “Immigrant” includes long-term resident aliens, naturalized citizens, marriage migrants, and children of multicultural families.

\[^2\] According to the Statistics Korea (2012), newborn infants in 2010 numbered 447,171, which was higher than the 2009 figure of 444,649 by 5.7%. Among the total number of infants, newly born babies from multicultural families were 20,312, a 6.8% increase from the previous year (19,024 in 2008). In the meantime, the rate of increase of infants from two Korean-born parents was only 5.6%. This suggests that multicultural families increased the fertility rate to a certain degree.
The expanding presence of immigrant wives from mostly less-developed countries, poses challenging questions about how to facilitate the long-term economic settlement of this population. To this end, many non-government organizations and social welfare agencies have been mobilized to provide various services under the government’s “Policy Plan to Support the Social Integration of Marriage Migrant Families.” Despite such efforts, however, there remains a general consensus that immigrant wives are faring worse than their Korean-born counterparts in terms of employment status and labor market mobility (Chi, 2012; I. S. Yang, Min, & Kim, 2010; K.-E. Yang, 2011). The issue becomes even more crucial in the case of immigrant wives who are trapped in informal-sector jobs that lack growth prospects and stability.

One may reasonably argue that the barriers experienced by immigrant wives in the labor market can be attributed largely to the characteristics of the workers themselves, as they tend to have lower educational credentials than natives of similar status in other respects (Son, 2010; K.-E. Yang, 2011). However, it is also plausible that the barriers may result from various forms of systematic discrimination within the labor market (Boston, 1990; Flanagan, 1973; Loveridge & Mok, 1980; McNabb & Whitfield, 1998; McNabb & Whitfield, 2000; Schwartzman, 2008; Yoo, 2000). Although there are a variety of support services available to immigrant women in South Korea designed to help them overcome such barriers, the degree to which immigrant wives take advantage of those services may vary considerably.

While there is substantial evidence pointing to the increasing racialization/ethnicization of inequality in the labor market in South Korea, little systematic effort has been made to identify factors that either contribute to or alleviate such inequality. In light of this research gap, this study aimed at examining the economic integration/segregation of immigrant wives in South Korea, with a particular focus on their entrance into the labor market and utilization of support services. The study also attended to immigrant support services that characterize the present-day immigrant integration process but hitherto have received little systematic analysis. In fact, despite the increased interest in immigrants’ use of welfare and social services, little is known, especially on a national level, about the support services utilization patterns of immigrants.

3 See section 4.2 for the definition of this term.
Referred to as “Support Services for Multicultural Families,” these services address various hardships experienced by immigrant wives. Thus, by exploring key literatures in service utilization behavior and associated factors of immigrants’ service use, the study hopes to contribute to the formulization of measures that will effectively improve the accessibility of support services for this group.

2. Organization and conceptual frameworks of the three studies

This dissertation comprises three independent but interconnected studies. Chapters two, three, and four are three independent pieces of work related to immigrant wives’ labor market activity and their service utilization pattern. The conceptual frameworks for each study slightly differ, although there is some overlaps (see Appendix for a graphic portrayal of the conceptual framework). Based on a framework that encompasses human capital theory, dual labor market theory, and statistical discrimination theory, chapters two and three situated the relatively lower employment rate of immigrant women as well as the heavy concentration of this population in the informal labor market sector in the context of broader structural barriers to economic integration. The study begins with the assumption that the underemployment of immigrant wives compared to native Korean women may derive in part from the differences in individuals’ attributes, including human capital (i.e., human capital theory), but may also reflect structural discrimination within the labor market (i.e., statistical discrimination theory and dual labor market theory). It is noteworthy that most studies and policy decisions regarding the economic integration of immigrants into the Korean labor market have been heavily dependent on human capital perspectives. Furthermore, few studies have provided realistic estimates of discrimination in the Korean labor market. Given the gap in the existing literature, the results from the two chapters may shed new light on the segregation of immigrant wives in the Korean labor market sector. Chapter four further expanded the discussion of economic integration to immigrant wives’ service utilization patterns. The study allows for gauging some of the key factors that influence their support service use.

4 Specific conceptual directions for each study will be discussed more in detail in the following section.
The specific organization of each chapter is as follows. Chapter one provides various concepts, theoretical frameworks, and background knowledge that serve as the backbone for the rest of the studies. Specifically, the first section provides background knowledge for understanding international marriages, labor market activities, and service use of immigrant wives in South Korea. The second section reviews literature on theoretical approaches that examine economic discrimination. Economic integration and discrimination were defined. The chapter concludes with specific research questions as well as study designs for chapters two, three, and four.

Chapter two (Study One) focused on the mechanism of discrimination that occurs in the labor market entrance stage. The driving forces behind the underemployment of immigrant women compared to their native counterparts were examined using an econometric lens. Using the employment gap experienced by immigrant women as a prototype, a conceptual framework was developed in order to critically understand the tenants of human capital theory and statistical discrimination theory in the context of broader structural barriers to economic integration, specifically relatively lower employment rates of immigrant wives in the Korean labor market. It is important to note that the study’s attention was limited to the spatial boundaries of the Korean labor market. That is, the larger global context, which may also include influential factors, was not considered.

Following the review of these intersecting theories, the chapter examined specific research findings documenting the labor market experiences of immigrant women as well as factors affecting employment of this group. In the third section, methodological issues related to chapters two and three were discussed. In particular, the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition method and logistic regression analyses were analytically utilized to systematically describe immigrant wives’ economic integration process. The strengths of these methods were assessed as tools for shedding light on discriminatory practices that are deeply embedded in Korea’s labor market. The chapter concludes with results and discussion in the context of human capital theory and statistical discrimination theory.

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5 Focusing on employment may contribute to the discourse on economic integration as employment has been considered one of the key indicators of a person’s economic role in society (France & Wiels, 1997).
By expanding the discussion of economic integration to the quality of employment, chapter three (Study Two) focused on the discrimination that occurs on a structural level in an effort to provide increased understanding of the economic integration process as well as the opportunities and barriers experienced by immigrants. Considering the large portion of immigrant women who are concentrated in the informal sector of the economy (D. N. Kim, Shin, Lee, & Choi, 2010; I. S. Yang, et al., 2010), employment status alone may not accurately capture their economic integration process.

The organization of chapter three is as follows. After defining informal and formal sector jobs, the first section briefly reviews the two intersecting theories discussed in chapter two—statistical discrimination theory and human capital theory—as well as the dual labor market theory, all of which are integrated into the theoretical/conceptual framework that guides the chapter. Chapter three also adopted an econometric lens, focusing specifically on what happens in the Korean labor market. The study assumed that the different assignment of workers across the formal and informal sectors (hereafter, sectoral placement) may, as suggested by the human capital theorists, partly result from the differences in individuals’ attributes and human capital, but may also reflect an innate structural discrimination embedded in the labor market (i.e., statistical discrimination theory and dual labor market theory).

The third section examined specific research findings on the underemployment of immigrants, followed by a description of the methodological issues the study faces. As in chapter two, the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition method and logistic regression analyses were used. The chapter concludes with research findings and discussion.

Chapter four (Study Three) examined the factors that determine immigrant wives’ service use. Considering that the degree to which they take advantage of support services varies considerably within the group of immigrant wives, special analytic attention was given to possible differences in service utilization patterns depending on their employment status. Such efforts may provide useful implications for the development of social work services and/or service delivery systems that are tailored to the different needs of immigrant women based on their positions within the labor market.
The organization of chapter four is as follows: First, Gelberg-Andersen’s behavioral model was examined as a conceptual framework through which we are able to critically understand the decision-making process involved in service utilization. The model synthesizes an interrelated set of biological, economic, and social factors related to the decision-making processes involved in immigrant wives’ service utilization. Chapter four specifically assumed that immigrant women’s service utilization pattern may have been determined by predisposing components as well as factors that enable or impede such use, and the immigrants’ level of need. Using the Gelberg-Andersen model also facilitates understanding of immigrants’ service utilization patterns within the broader framework of immigrants’ economic integration process as it includes different domains of support services that are closely related to immigrant wives’ employment.

The second section explored the three domains of factors (i.e., predispositional, enabling, and need factors) which jointly explain the use of services among immigrants. Lastly, specific research findings were examined, followed by an explanation of structural equation model which was used for the study. The chapter concludes with specific research findings and discussion.

3. Background contexts that guide the three studies

This section provides contextual background of female marriage migrants in South Korea. The first sub-section provides an overview of the increasing cross-border/international marriages between Korean men and immigrant women, which have been causing the demographic landscape of South Korea to shift over the last few decades. The local and global contexts that promote marriage migration are discussed. The section also provides a brief description of immigrant wives as well as some of the recent trends in international marriage in Korea.

3.1 Marriage and labor migration in East Asia: The global context

East Asian countries have typically been considered remarkably homogenous in terms of their national compositions (Tseng, 2010). In the last two decades, however, there has been a huge migratory flow, predominated by female migrants. The dramatic increase in the proportion of women in cross-border/international migration since the 1990s is often referred to as the
“feminization of immigration.” Regarding this phenomenon, the following questions can be raised: What has promoted such rapid increase in international marriages in East Asian countries including South Korea? In other words, what have been the factors that trigger marriage migration? While it is difficult to ascertain the precise causes/sources, previous studies generally agree that the cross-border and international marriage mechanisms involve complex interplay between sending and receiving countries.

First, from the context of the receiving countries, the increased international marriages may be closely related to the skewed sex ratios at birth, which ultimately leads to a “shortage of marriageable women.” In the case of South Korea, shaped by the traditional Confucian values preferring boys over girls, prenatal sex screening was widely practiced, reaching a peak of 115.5 in 1994\(^6\) (D.-S. Kim, 2010; Seol et al., 2005). This gender-selective practice resulted in a shortage of potential brides.

Another major pull factor for immigrant wives is the value transformation that has taken place in some developed East Asian countries during the last two decades. Kim (2010) describes substantial improvement in gender equity and the underlying gender-role assumptions as the driving force behind the increase in international marriages. In the case of South Korea, the number of Korean women entering college who intend to enter the labor market after graduation continues to grow. While the rigidly differentiated sex roles for married life still prevail within the Korean family, “More and more young women with a high level of education with economic capability for self-support tend to either postpone or avoid marriage” to pursue their independent lives and careers (D.-S. Kim, 2010, p. 131). As a result, men and families in disadvantageous marriage markets are squeezed out of the market, leading them to choose cross-border/international marriage “as a strategy to form households for sustenance and reproduction” (S. S. Lee, J. J. Choi, & S. J. Park, 2009; cited in Lu & Yang, 2010, p. 17). This is particularly the case for men belonging to low socio-economic strata in impoverished rural or urban areas, some of whom are divorced or widowed. As Tseng (2010) states, “Men with drawbacks such as low income, low prestige, and even handicaps tend to resort to the spousal pool from less

\(^6\) The gender ratio between boys and girls was 115.5:100.
developed countries” (p. 37). In fact, Korea is witnessing the phenomenon of “globalization of reproduction”\(^7\) where foreign domestic workers (who are predominantly women) cross borders to substitute the space of empty professional households without a wife (Liaw, Ochiai, & Ishikawa, 2010). Such a phenomenon led to policies that welcomed immigrant women with the expectation that the primary purpose of the incoming population would be human reproduction.\(^8\) In fact, under the “Helping Farmers Wed Movement,” the Korean government took initiatives to recruit brides or sanction marriage brokering agencies to promote marriage between Korean men and immigrant women (D. N. Kim, et al., 2010; Nakamatsu, 2002).

Equally important are the global and local contexts that compel women to migrate from poorer regions to more affluent countries. In explaining the global/international migration pattern in the health sector of European countries, Hoschild (2000) introduced the concept of “global care chains” where “As a result of a highly unequal global economy, restructuring of European welfare states and shortage of health or care workers experienced in Europe, large numbers of female migrants are drawn to fill the jobs in private households as well as state institutions” (Kofman, 2008; cited in Piper, 2006, p. 146). The central argument is that “the economic disparities among different countries, along with social and political factors at the national and international levels,” may affect the migration motivations and the subsequent decisions of immigrant women to move (Um, 2012, p. 2). As part of the “global configuration of gender roles,” developed countries are experiencing a shortage of care laborers and thus are hiring foreign workers to make up the deficit (Liaw, et al., 2010). South Korea, suffering from labor shortage as well as low fertility rates is increasingly attracting minority workers from other countries. As a result, a certain proportion of the Korean labor market is being filled with foreign migrant workers who are often women.

\(^7\) Another phenomenon accompanying this trend is the “feminization of cross-border migration.” The feminization of migration “refers not only to the increasing percentage of female migrants in the total migration stock, but also to a visible pattern of women from developing countries, migrating to developed countries to work in the export processing zones or as domestic and care workers—what Parrenas calls international division of reproductive labor” (Lu & Yang, 2010, p. 16).

\(^8\) Korea is also facing a detrimentally low fertility rate where the age pyramid of the whole population is beginning to resemble a spindle (Kim et al., 2010).
While Piper (2006) limits the attention to health and care sector jobs, the argument may be extended to other occupations as well. In fact, Belanger (2010), and Belanger, Linh and Duong (2011) focus on how many developed countries in East Asia are experiencing a shortage of low-skilled labor due to rapid economic development especially in the manufacturing, agriculture, and human service sectors. Immigrant women as “emigrants who aim to contribute financially to their home families through remittances” choose international marriage and provide a source of cheap labor to the receiving countries (Belanger, et al., 2011, p. 101). In Belanger’s (2010) words, “the foreign brides hope that by migrating they will be able to provide financial assistance to their families and improve their own lives” (p. 4). As an effort to “kill two birds with one stone,” these women often engage in “undesirable” jobs that native-born workers avoid and send money to help their home families. As the purpose of emigration is to pursue better economic opportunities (Tseng, 2010), these foreign brides often form the backbone of what remain labor-intensive, “3D jobs” (abbreviation of dirty, dangerous, and difficult). This phenomenon is addressed in Doeringer and Piore’s (1985) conceptualization of the “labor shortage and recruitment theory.” The essence of the argument is that “economic expansion absorbs the native workforce in the upper and middle segments of the labor market and creates shortages of labor in the lower segment of the labor market, offering low-paying and low-status jobs” (Luis & Bauder, 2009, p. 29). In such a case, marriage migration may be understood in the context of labor migration, where “the labor demand in the secondary segments of the labor market in the [more] industrialized countries is met by migrant workers [in this case, immigrant women] with corresponding skills from abroad” (Luis & Bauder, 2009, p. 29).

In sum, from the perspective of immigrant wives, marriage migration may be understood largely in the context of economic incentives. In fact, feminist studies survey the situations of individual women, their propensity to relocate, and the nature of the decisions they make (Constable, 2005). Research in this stream notes that many women involved in international marriages are motivated primarily by economic considerations. Nguyen and Tran (2010) observe that immigrant women choose cross-border/international marriages as a way to pursue better economic opportunities (i.e., job opportunities and wealth) and improve their social status. By marrying men from more developed countries, these women anticipate higher social status and economic advancement. The authors pay specific attention to the economic transactions and
remittances made by the immigrants to their natal families and communities. They conclude that cross-border/international marriage does considerably improve the economic circumstances of the brides’ parental families and home communities. However, these initial expectations of these immigrant wives are often not fully met. They enter into a kind of “paradoxical hypergamy”:

The migrants may find that their economic opportunities improved after migrating to a richer country while their social positions in the receiving society and in the husbands’ kin groups are lower than the ones they had prior to migration in their sending society. This stream of research particularly challenges the economic and rational explanation of migration motivations and decisions. (Lu & Yang, 2010, p. 17)

3.2 The socio-economic positionality of immigrant wives in South Korea

Marriage migration is pervasive in South Korea. According to the “Act to Support Multicultural Families Living in Korea,” “multicultural families” are defined as “families formed by a marriage between a Korean citizen and a foreigner residing in Korea” or “families consisting of Korean born citizens and those naturalized.” Among multicultural families, immigrant wives represent one of the largest components.

Considering that South Korea had long been considered an ethnically homogenous country with “little or no experience with large-scale immigration” (H.-S. Kim, 2010, p. 561), the increasing number of foreign wives poses an important question: When did international marriage really begin in South Korea? Existing studies generally agree that international marriage gained popularity during the early 2000s.
As shown in figure 1, the absolute marriage rate in South Korea has been steadily decreasing since the early 2000s; in 1993, the total number of marriages was 402,593. However, this figure dropped to 326,100 by 2010. The percentage of international marriages, on the other hand had been gradually increasing, reaching its peak in 2005; in 1993, the total number of international marriage cases was only 6,545, comprising 1.6% of the total marriage cases. After 2004, the percentage stayed above 10%. Despite the overall decline of international marriages in recent years, international marriages still represent a significant proportion of the total marriages in South Korea.

Another important aspect that needs to be mentioned is the ethnic composition of these immigrant wives. The first wave of immigrant wives was mostly comprised of ethnic Korean–Chinese, also known as Joseonjok. The majority of these ethnic Koreans dwell in the northeast.

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9 The total number of marriages, here, indicates both (1) the marriages between native-born Korean couples and (2) international marriages between Korean citizens and foreigners.

10 To date, there is no agreed-upon spelling for the Korean–Chinese term. Some scholars use “Chosonjok” while others use “Joseonjok.” As the common term used in South Korea is Joseonjok, this notation was used throughout this study.
part of China, maintaining their Korean language and customs (J. K. Kim, 2005; cited in Um, 2012, p. 8). Lee et al. (2006) argues that Joseonjok women choose marriage migration as a way of moving into the Korean labor market. Coupled with the increase in female-dominated service sectors in South Korea, Joseonjok women enter Korea as either marriage migrants or labor migrants seeking employment opportunities. In fact, “given their advantages as ethnic Koreans who share the language, appearance, and culture with Korean-born Koreans,” these immigrant women readily find employment in the service sector (Um, 2012, p. 15). Not surprisingly, the statistics from the Ministry of Justice (2009) suggests that the international marriage between Joseonjok women and Korean men increased from less than 400 cases in 1992 to 25,759 cases in 2009 (Um, 2012). Such pattern is also reflected in figure 2. Although the statistical portrayal does not distinguish between Joseonjok women from the ethnic Chinese group, immigrant women from China take up the highest proportion of international marriages.\footnote{11}

Figure 2 Number of international marriages between Korean men and immigrant women in South Korea, 2000–2013. (Source: Korea National Statistical Office).

\footnote{11}{A few studies classify Joseonjok and immigrant women from China as a homogenous group. However, these two groups are different in terms of ethnicity and cultural identity.}
The ethnic makeup of the marriage migrants shifted between the 1990s and 2000s, however (H.-M. Kim, 2012). As suggested in figure 2, immigrant women from Asian countries including Vietnam and the Philippines began to gradually increase. In 2013, the absolute rate of international marriage between Vietnamese women and Korean men was similar with that between Chinese immigrant women and Korean men; 6,058 international marriages were made between Chinese women and Korean men, followed by 5,770 international marriages between Vietnamese women and Korean men.

Another noteworthy characteristic of the population is their low socio-economic status within Korean society. Because a large group of immigrant women in Korea are married to native Korean men residing in economically impoverished rural areas, the majority of multicultural families suffer from economic hardship. In fact, the national survey conducted in 2009 shows that 38.4% of multicultural families had monthly household incomes of one to two million won, and another 18.7% had monthly household incomes of two to three million won. The average monthly household income in Korea in 2009 was 3.44 million won (I. S. Yang, et al., 2010). As a result, although Korea’s immigrant wives initially moved to Korea to get married, more and more of them are entering the labor market as a way to improve their households’ economic position. Indeed, a national survey conducted in 2009 shows that the desire for employment was one of the top priorities among immigrant wives; at the time of the survey, 36.9% of immigrant wives were currently employed in the Korean labor market and of those who were not currently employed, 86.2% replied that they were hoping to find a job in the future.

Those who fail to enter formal sector jobs seek employment primarily in informal sector jobs. In fact, Lusis and Bauder (2009) reason that for most cases “migrants are self-motivated to follow the demand for labor” as they seek permanent residence within the destination countries (p. 29). As such, the informal sector may represent a cushion against unemployment (J. M. Cho, Kim, & Kwon, 2008), and the heavy concentration of immigrant women in the secondary labor market may reflect active choices made by immigrants.

12 As will be further discussed in chapter two, women’s decision making process of labor market participation is largely dependent on household budget constraints; if the husband’s income is insufficient to sustain the family, women actively seek for jobs to make ends meet (Glass, 1988; Stier & Tienda, 1992).
3.3 The formal/informal dichotomy of the Korean labor market

The following section examined the polarized labor market structure of South Korea which can be characterized as a division between the regular and irregular jobs, or the “core” and the “periphery” of the labor market as suggested by Peng (2011). A “regular” job constitutes full-time workers who are employed under a signed contract, receive social security coverage, and are often entitled to company benefits. An “irregular” job, on the other hand, is often characterized by low wages and precarious working conditions. The structural changes within the Korean labor market during the late 1990s were probed in an attempt to shed light on the labor market experience of immigrant women. At the intersection between occupational status and sectoral placement, the process of polarization between regular and irregular jobs was discussed in the context of workers’ social insurance coverage.

3.3.1 Dual labor market structure in South Korea

In response to the “IMF crisis” (i.e., the economic recession that began in December 1997 when the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Korean government concluded an IMF rescue package), the Korean labor market underwent a major restructuring marked by a flexible labor market. In an effort to recover from the financial crisis, most companies went through prioritized external numerical flexibility, that is, the adjustment of labor intake or number of workers from the external market. This can be achieved by hiring temporary workers or fixed-term contracts or through relaxed regulations where employers can hire or terminate regular employees according to the firms’ needs. The biggest disadvantage to adopting such strategy is that it tends to keep the cleavage of dual labor market intact. In fact, with the onset of corporate restructuring, a large share of regular workers was replaced by temporary and short contract workers, most of who belonged to informal sector jobs. Nation-wide statistics showed that the proportion of non-regular workers continued to grow, reaching its peak in 2004 at 37.0% of the total wage earners (Statistics Korea, 2009). Although the rate steadily declined, reaching 32.4% in 2014, most Korean firms continue to prefer non-regular workers over regular workers (Statistics Korea, 2009). As the 2004 newspaper article in the Korea Central Daily (cited in Chun, 2009, p. 541) states, “They [Non-regular workers] do the same job during the same hours as regular workers,
but for far less pay. Legally, it is not discriminatory because these employees are classified as non-regular, meaning they have been hired on a temporary basis or on contract. In order to cut costs, companies are free to adopt a two-tier wage system.” As such, flexible employment arrangements have led to a stabilization of the existing rigidity between the workers in the formal sector (consisting of regular workers) and informal sectors (consisting of temporary workers and day laborers who are considered replaceable), leading to high job instability in Korea.

3.3.2 The intersection of occupational status and formal/informal sector division

The polarized labor market structure has important implications in terms of social insurance as workers in irregular jobs are often excluded from social protection. A huge gap persists between the suggested social insurance criteria and the actual coverage (Um, 2012). In fact, many temporary or day laborers are disqualified from receiving social insurance due to either the strict eligibility criteria or overdue insurance payments\(^\text{13}\) (Ku & Baek, 2008). In their study, Seo and Baek (2014) estimate that nearly one-third of the total wage earners were excluded from social insurance coverage. The authors argued that workers whose occupational status is either temporary or irregular are excluded from social security benefits. Similarly, Kim et al. (2009) found that among regular employees, nearly 77.5% of the workers were covered by all four types of social security insurance whereas nearly 95.9% of day laborers were excluded from all four types of the social security insurances; as for temporary workers, nearly 73.7% of the workers were completely left out of the social insurance program. Similar results were obtained by Lee (2012), Seong and Lee (2007), and Ku and Baek (2008) whose studies highlight the vulnerability of temporary workers.

\(^{13}\) As for employment insurance, even if a worker is registered, in order to receive unemployment benefits, the worker must have worked for less than 10 days prior to application. Moreover, social insurance that is contribution based (e.g., national pensions, employment insurance, health insurance) requires workers to contribute a certain amount of payment for a certain period. In the case of national health insurance, workers who have failed to pay health insurance premium for three consecutive months become disqualified even if they are otherwise lawfully entitled to receive social insurance.
While it is not always the case, occupational status (i.e., regular employee, temporary worker, day laborer\(^1\)) and sectoral placement based on social insurance frequently have a close relationship wherein the majority of workers categorized as regular employees are covered by social insurance, and temporary workers and day laborers are largely uncovered. In fact, when examining the size of the informal sector based on occupational status, Seong and Lee (2007) found a close link between occupational status and sectoral placement. The majority of workers who were categorized as regular employees were sorted as formal sector workers, while workers who were sorted as temporary or day laborers predominantly were occupied the informal sector jobs.

While it is difficult to gauge the actual size of the informal sector, previous studies suggest that at the very least 15.3\% of the total wage earners are employed in the informal sector (Seong & Lee, 2007). Seong and Lee (2007) used three different definitions in estimating informal sector employment. When defining informal sector employees as workers who are entitled to more than one type of social insurance, nearly 69.7\% of the wage earners were employed in the informal sector; when defining informal employees as workers who are not entitled to all three types of social insurance\(^1\), 22.3\% were identified as informal workers; lastly, when defining informal sectors as those who are not entitled to any type of social insurance including paid vacation, retiring allowance, or overtime allowance, 15.3\% of wage earners turned out to be informal sector workers.

Another noteworthy pattern detected in the Korean labor market is the feminization of informal sector employees in the labor force. Previous studies generally agree that while the absolute rate of women’s employment has increased, the quality of their labor has significantly decreased (Keum & Yoon, 2011; H.-Y. Kim & Hong, 2009). Between 1997 and 2009, the portion of native Korean women who were employed as regular employees was 28.9\%, whereas temporary employees comprised 56.1\% (Keum & Yoon, 2011). The segregation of the labor market

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\(^1\) The Nationals Statistics Office defines occupational status according to the contract of employment. “Temporary worker” refers to anyone who signed on to work for less than one year whereas “day laborer” refers to someone who signed on to work for less than a month. “Regular employees” refers to workers who are employed for more than a year.

\(^1\) The three social insurances include the National Pension and Health Insurance and Employment Insurance.
becomes even more crucial in the case of immigrant women as immigrants are more likely to be informally employed (Shrestha, 2001). In fact, empirical observations from the 2009 national survey suggest immigrant wives hold mostly insecure and low-paying jobs. At the time of the survey, roughly 53.2% of immigrant women were employed as either temporary workers or day laborers. When restricting the pool to wage earners, the percentage was higher, with casual workers making up 32.83% and temporary and day laborers making up 67.18% of the total wage earners. Considering that there is a close link between the occupational status and formal/informal sector division, it can be inferred that roughly more than half of the total immigrant women are employed in the informal sector. Moreover, such precarious form of employment continues to increase. In terms of job category, Kim et al. (2010) found that 87.2% of immigrant women were engaged in low-skilled jobs (thus requiring little education) and concluded that the negative persisting effects associated with employment tend to cement the lack of mobility between the primary and secondary sectors.  

3.4 An overview of the legislations and support services for immigrant wives in South Korea

This section briefly reviews current policies and support services that are directed toward improving the integration process of immigrant wives. As the dominant discourse in South Korea initially endorsed cross-border/international marriage as a solution to decreasing fertility rates and shortage of wives, there is a prior question of whether the integration of immigrant women into the labor market integration is worth discussing in the first place. In fact, until recently, the implicit equation of foreign brides as domestic housewives was prevalent in the dominant discourse of South Korea. However, there has been a gradual shift in the underlying assumptions surrounding gender roles for immigrant wives, and this is reflected at the policy level. During the initial period, the adaptation or acculturation of immigrant wives and their children was the main focus of integration policies with particular attention to mothers’ reproductive health, fertility behavior, and children’s education. Support services were mainly focused on inculcating the traditional notions of gender roles, expecting immigrant wives to embrace the role of

\[16\] Only 12.8% of those currently employed were engaged in professional jobs.
motherhood in their families. Largely seen as commodification of reproductive labor, immigrant wives were often depicted as subordinates within a patriarchal family system. However, such stereotypical images began to gradually change after the mid-2000s when immigrants began to be viewed as an economically significant force. In fact, the Korean government adopted various measures to secure immigrants’ right “to entitlement in equal terms with Korean citizens” (H.-M. Kim, 2012, p. 17). Public policies and legislation stipulated ways to fully support immigrant women in constructing their new lives and integrating into their new society. Such changes also “gave legal grounds for developing, implementing, and providing a broad range of community services to immigrant wives” (D. N. Kim, et al., 2010; cited in H.-M. Kim, 2012, p. 2). Since 2006, a number of policy adjustments have been made to include marriage migrants as eligible recipients of social security programs. With the revision, as of January 1, 2007, marriage migrants, regardless of their citizenship status, were legally covered by the National Health Insurance System, Employment Insurance, and other social security programs. This meant that immigrant wives became eligible to receive benefits under the National Basic Livelihood Security System (hereafter, NBLS) insofar as they meet the specific income- and family-related requirements. Benefits include childbirth allowance, education, housing, and medical allowances.\textsuperscript{17} Such governmental effort is also demonstrated by the “Act to Support Multicultural Families Living in Korea,” which was authorized in 2008. In Kim’s (2012) words, “the act draws a clear distinction between eligible and non-eligible recipients of the support services” (p. 9). Unlike other immigrant groups (e.g., migrant workers, North Korean defectors, and international students), immigrant wives and their families are considered “multicultural families” by law and thus are entitled to government-funded resources. Along with the “Policy Plan to Support Social Integration of Marriage Migrant Families” announced in 2006 under the direction of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Families (hereafter, MOGEF), this act stands out as “the first legal recognition of marriage migrants as members of society in need of government intervention” (H.-M. Kim, 2012, p. 2). In fact, in 2008, the Korean government also announced the “Family Life-Cycle Based Service Plans for Multicultural Families.” According to each family’s life cycle, specific tasks were suggested as guidelines for service agencies.

\textsuperscript{17} It is important to note that legal coverage is different from actual coverage. It is possible for a worker to be legally entitled to receive social insurances but still not receive the benefits.
Thereafter, headed by MOGEF, a range of such services were provided for immigrant women and their families. Under the “Support Services for Multicultural Families” plans, more than 200 Multicultural Family Support Centers (hereafter, MFSCs) were established nation-wide to provide language classes, education seminars on Korean culture, employment assistance services, etc. These MFSCs have been providing an array of services—from computer and Internet classes to counseling and intervention – ever since.

Table 1 The list of support services provided by MFSCs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Required Services</td>
<td>Language Training</td>
<td>Korean language courses are offered at different levels for marriage migrants in need of language training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multicultural Family Integrated Education</td>
<td>Communication program, Children and parent program, Multicultural education program (education sessions for parents in-law’s, and workshops on family life and communication methods are provided)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Counseling Program</td>
<td>Counseling services are provided for families in conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employment Assistance Program</td>
<td>Employment counseling, job placement services, case management as well as business consulting for starting up of new business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selective Services</td>
<td>Self-Support Group</td>
<td>Recruitment of marriage migrants to volunteer as translators for newly arrived migrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Volunteer Program</td>
<td>Recruitment of potential mentors who may provide various volunteer services to marriage migrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raising Awareness Project</td>
<td>Hosting various exhibitions and festivals where both Korean and multicultural families may experience different cultures as well as coordinating campaigns for discrimination-free society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Network Project</td>
<td>Identifying and networking with various community resources for systematic service delivery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 1 presents the list of services provided by MFSCs. As central, one-stop service agencies, the support services are directly provided by the MFSCs. Note that the language training, integration family education program, counseling program, and employment assistance program are mandatory, whereas the remaining services are provided in a selective basis. The 2013 report

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18 In relation to the economic integration of immigrant wives, these services aptly respond to the immediate needs of the population. In the national survey conducted in 2009, when asked about “the primary concerns that need to be addressed for their employment,” 29.6% of the immigrant wives picked “job allocation/finding,” as their primary concern, followed by child-care services (22.9%) and Korean education (18.4%).
from the MOGEF announced that among the various support services provided by the MFSCs, language training showed the highest usage rate (45.6%) followed by multicultural family integration education (30.0%) and employment assistance program (10.1%). Currently these services are being provided either by a center-based approach or through a door-to-door approach. The latter is means-tested based and priority is given to beneficiaries of National Basic Livelihood Security.

In her study, Kim (2012) sorts these support services into three categories: (1) Adjustment assistance services which aim to help foreign spouses acquire knowledge about Korean language, culture, and society; (2) family care services which address family issues such as pre- and postnatal care, family counseling and education, child education and child care; and (3) empowerment services which assist and support immigrants’ employment in the Korean labor market. The present study adopted this categorization.

4. Theoretical and conceptual foundations

The following section reviews literature on economic integration and discrimination, which are the core concepts used in chapter two and three.

4.1 Defining economic integration

While integration in all spheres of the society—e.g., economic, social, cultural, and political—is vital, economic integration is of particular importance as it is known to facilitate access to the other spheres (Ugbe, 2006). In fact, the stream of research on immigrants’ socioeconomic assimilation asserts that one’s economic role within a society is instrumental in providing “inroads to the social, cultural, and political spheres of society” (France & Wiles, 1997; Sen, 2000; Wrench, Rea, & Ouali, 1999, cited in Ugbe, 2006, p. 12). Thus, this study specifically focused on the economic integration of immigrant women.

19 While all three domains of support services are closely related to immigrant women’s labor market activity (i.e., adjustment assistance services, family care services, and employment assistance services), the present study focuses on the first two services available in the data set. As will be discussed later, information on employment assistant service is not provided in the data therefore is not included in the conceptual model.
Largely echoing the definition suggested by Ugbe (2006), economic integration in this study is summarized as “the input, process, and output related to the economic conditions of immigrant wives who are disadvantaged relative to a more affluent mainstream population.” As Ugbe (2006) puts it:

The inputs may include social policies, non-profit programs or self-help interventions that seeks to address the identified [economic] problems; the processes are the ways and approaches of delivering the inputs, and these are sometimes participatory and sometimes top-down; lastly, outputs refer to the various indicators which enable a comparison between the economic well being of the disadvantaged group relative to the mainstream or other similar groups (p. 12-13).

While policy legislations and support services can be understood as the “input” components, this study paid close attention to the “process” and “output” of the economic integration. “Process” in this sense may be examined by documenting the service utilization behavior of immigrants and factors affecting their behavior. As will be further discussed in chapter four, support service use is known to influence immigrants’ economic integration process, and therefore can be seen as an important indicator in gauging their economic integration.

The “outputs” of economic integration are usually described as earnings, employment status, and occupational status (Hamberger, 2009; Kposowa, 2002a). Previous literature pays specific attention to immigrants’ labor market attainment, as both employment and entrepreneurial activities have been considered core measures of equity and opportunity that characterize success for immigrants. As Valtonen (2004) notes, “to be a worker or a wage earner is seen as an essential part of the modern project” (p. 76). An operational definition of employment status usually refers to whether the worker is employed or unemployed. Economists also examine the wage and employment gaps between natives and immigrants as indicators of economic integration, a phenomenon that will be further discussed in chapter two. Economic integration, in this sense, refers to minimalizing the disparities between the two groups in terms of economic opportunities and outcomes.
4.1.1 Economic integration - employment

Among the various indicators and measures of the integration output, chapter two considered the employment status of immigrant women relative to Korean women. Employment has been considered one of the key indicators of a person’s economic role in society (France & Wiles, 1997), and so the study’s focus on employment may contribute to the wider discourse on economic integration. In fact, being employed in the labor market has been generally seen as “a means of facilitating integration into the economic fabric of a society” (Ugbe, 2006, p. 28). The study further looked into the employment gap between immigrant women and Korean women. The rough gross employment gap reveals that immigrant women generally show a lower level of employment rate compared to their native counterparts. In their 2009 report, KWDI (2010) reported that 36.9% of immigrant wives were employed, while 47.7% of married Korean women were employed.

It is also worth noting that immigrant women have shown their desire for employment to be a top priority; as shown in table 2, over 85.7% of immigrant women showed interest in their future employment. According to the KWDI (2010) report, such a high rate of employment desire may imply the need to understand marriage migration in the context of labor migration. In fact, among the immigrant wives, women who were currently employed showed higher rate of satisfaction in their quality of life (S. K. Kim et al., 2009). Such result also coincides with the study of Kim et al. (2009) who found that employed immigrant women were happier and more satisfied with their lives compared to those who were currently not employed.

Table 2 The current employment status of immigrant women and their willingness of future employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment status</td>
<td>Currently employed</td>
<td>43,516</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
<td>117,825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Currently not employed but</td>
<td>26,133</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>have work experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never been employed</td>
<td>48,176</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness of future</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>61,722</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>72,027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employment</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>10,305</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Yang, Min & Kim (2010).

Given the high prioritization of employment by immigrant women as well as the crucial role of employment in their economic integration, chapter two looked into the employment gap between
the two groups. The decomposed results of the employment gap may provide the first approximation to the discrimination that occurs in the Korean labor market entrance stage. Employment was defined as the state of having a paid job, whereas unemployment was defined as the state when an individual is currently not employed but is able to work and is currently seeking a job. The target group of chapter two is suggested in figure 3.

Figure 3 Women who are employed and unemployed as the target group of chapter three

4.1.2 Economic integration: Formal and informal sector employment

The study also considered what happens after the labor market entrance focusing on the over-representation of racialized women in undervalued, low-wage, precarious jobs (Cranford & Vosko, 2006; Das Gupta, 2008). Empirical observations suggest that the jobs of immigrant wives are mostly distributed within the secondary labor market. The national survey conducted in 2009 shows that among the employed immigrant wives, 87.2% were found to be employed in the secondary labor market, where negative persisting effects associated tend to cement the lack of mobility between the primary and secondary sectors. Only 12.8% were engaged in professional jobs. In other words, even if immigrants are employed, employment status itself may not guarantee their economic integration. The increased pool of workers in the informal sector jobs warrants particular attention, as workers employed in these jobs are not protected under legislation such as employment insurance or Occupational Health and Safety Insurance. The informal sector jobs have commonly been defined in a legal context where the informal economy consists of individuals who are not covered by the national social insurance system. While the
operational definition of “informal sector” has been the subject of much debate, previous literature generally agrees that the distinction is about the “quality” of where workers engaged in informal jobs often share characteristics of vulnerability\(^{20}\) (ILO, 2002); because informal sector workers receive little or no legal/social protection and have limited access to economic resources and social benefits, they are excluded from most of the public infrastructure and benefits (ILO, 2002). On a similar note, Mazumdar (1974) argues that “lack of social protection” is one of the core concepts characterizing the informal sector. Studies in this stream have emphasized the necessity of expanding social insurance to those who are not currently covered, some of whom are often workers engaged in irregular jobs. In fact, Cho and Cho (2009) as well as Seong and Lee (2007) argued that a substantial number of workers, most of whom are engaged as either temporary workers or day laborers, are excluded from the four major social insurances in Korea. Despite the government’s effort to expand the coverage to encompass all individual workers,\(^{21}\) huge gap persists between the suggested social insurance criteria and the actual coverage (Um, 2012).

Considering that immigrant women are heavily concentrated in irregular jobs characterized by low wages and precarious work conditions (I. S. Yang, et al., 2010), it is likely that these women are exposed to both financial and health hazards. As Hussmanns (2004) argues, “Informal workers are much more likely than formal workers to be exposed to poor working environments, low safety and health standards, and environment hazards,” all of which point to the need for improved social protection (p. 65). Moreover, according to the UNDP (2004), from a policy perspective, a lack of social protection in the informal economy poses a threat to the formal economy, as a large informal sector is correlated with lower government revenues (Yamasaki, 2010). As workers in informal sector jobs do not contribute to the pension system, employment in informal sector jobs entails tax evasion as well as promotion of underground economy. In line with the international definition of the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2002) chapter

\(^{20}\) In practice, the definition of the term differs from study to study. As Yamasaki (2010, p. 19) puts it, “due to the ambiguity of the informal sector employment, no consistent and universal definition of the term is available in the literature.”

\(^{21}\) The employment insurance system implemented in 1995 was mandated to all enterprises (with one or more employees) in 1999. Likewise, the National Pension and Health Insurance were extended to cover all Korean residents between the ages of 18 and 59 regardless of their income (thus including non-wage workers). The Occupational Accidental Insurance initiated in 1964 was extended in 2000 to all workers who work at enterprises with fewer than five employees.
three adopted the legal definition of the informal sector. Such an approach allows for estimating the current employment status of immigrant women in the context of social exclusion, thus enabling the gauging of the magnitude of discrimination experienced by immigrant women compared to native Koreans in terms of social protection. The definition suggested by ILO (2002) is as follows:

Employees are considered to have informal jobs if their employment relationship is not subject to standard labour legislation, taxation, social protection or entitlement to certain employment benefits (e.g. advance notice of dismissal, severance pay, paid annual or sick leave) for reasons including the following: The job or employee is undeclared (the latter refers, for example, to the employment of illegal immigrants); the job is casual or of a short duration; hours of work or wages are below a certain threshold; the employer is an unregistered enterprise or a person in a household; or the employee’s place of work is outside the premises of the employer’s or customer’s enterprise.

While the ILO’s (2002) definition of informal sector employees incorporates unpaid family workers as well as self-employed workers, it is important to note that workers who are categorized as non-wage earners differ from wage earners in their individual characteristics; the market price value of non-wage earners is not determined by their competitive labor power in the market. In fact, Rhomari (2013) argues that non-wage earners should not be considered as a homogeneous group arguing that “a housemaid or a shop-keeper who owns a store and employs people is not employed based on irregular status for the same reasons and probably does not face the same risk of poverty” (p. 6). Rhomari (2013) further contends that “it is important to differentiate workers based on whether their job placement reflects their voluntary choice or one that reflects constrained choices as the problems and needs are different, for example, for those engaged in survival activities” (p. 7). Thus, chapter three limited its attention to wage-earner workers.

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22 Within the vast pool of jobs, non-wage earners include “own-account workers in survival-type activities, such as street vendors, shoe shiners, garbage collectors and scrap- and rag-pickers; paid domestic workers employed by households; home workers and workers in sweatshops who are “disguised wage workers” in production chains; and the self-employed in micro-enterprises operating on their own or with contributing family workers or sometimes apprentices/employees” (ILO, 2002, p. 2). The kind of works specified often belongs to the informal economy, unregulated by labor laws.

23 As suggested in figure 4, wage earners include regular employees, temporary employee, and day laborers whereas non-wage earners include unpaid family workers, employers, and self-employed business owners.
In terms of the operational definition of the “formal/informal jobs dichotomy,” firm size and coverage by the social insurance system are the two criteria that have been most commonly used (Marcouiller, Ruiz, & Woodruff, 1997). While the definition has been primarily dependent on the availability of the data, the former criterion defines the informal sector according to the number of employees within a firm: A firm with five or fewer employees is classified as an informal sector. The latter criterion defines formal sector based on the coverage of social insurance as well as entitlement to various welfare and employment benefits. Chapter three adopted the latter definition, following the three Korean empirical studies that compared the sectoral placement of Korean men and women. Utilizing the additional data set from the Korean National Statistical Offices’ Economically Active Population Study, Seong and Lee (2007) defined informal employment based on entitlement to the three national social insurances and welfare benefits (e.g., paid sick leave and entitlement to pension). Lee (2012) used the Korean Welfare Panel data and defined informal sector employment according to the coverage of national pension insurance as well as employment insurance. Similarly, Cho and Cho (2009) used Korean Labor Income Study (KLIPS) data set and distinguished workers based on the coverage of three social insurances: “Informal job” was defined based on entitlement to employment insurance, industrial accident compensation insurance, and national health insurance. Workers with full coverage from all three social insurances were labeled as formal

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24 Most previous studies have used an incomplete definition due to poor data-set condition.
sector workers. As chapter three also utilized the KLIPS data set, Cho and Cho’s (2009) operational definition were adopted.

4.2 Defining discrimination

Another important concept with regard to immigrants’ economic integration process is “discrimination.” In fact, there has been a great deal of interest in measuring and understanding the mechanism of discrimination against immigrants worldwide. While there is an apparent lack of agreement on the most appropriate definition of the term, the simplest approach seems to define labor market discrimination as “the receipt of lower pay or unequal treatment in terms and conditions of employment for groups of equally productive workers” (Carline, Pissarides, Siebert & Sloane, 1984, p. 89; see also Aigner & Cain, 1977; Siebert & Sloane, 1981). This construal of discrimination “involves the additional notion that the personal characteristics of the worker that are unrelated to their productivity [and human capital] are also valued in the market” (Arrow, 1973, p. 3). While both human capital and productivity can be sorted as individual characteristics that determine wage structure, the two concepts should not be confused. As will be discussed in section 4.3, human capital refers to “any stock of knowledge or characteristics the worker has [either innate or acquired] that contribute to his or her ‘productivity’” (Acemoglu & Autor, 2009 p. 3). Productivity, on the other hand, can be understood as an economic output.

For operational purposes, discrimination has been mostly estimated or inferred in its residual form rather than observed directly: That is, discrimination is usually assumed to be what is left after accounting for a wide array of proxies for productivity. While there has been much debate over the appropriate way to measure discrimination, discrimination as a residual concept is the most widely used approach in labor economics research. Along with the residual concept of discrimination, the present study also incorporated some of the principles suggested by Yoo (2000) that are useful in defining the term. In his study, Yoo (2000) suggested two principles that are applicable to this study.

First, discrimination in the labor market needs to be clearly identifiable in terms of measurable outcomes such as lower employment rate and lower pay. Although discrimination may emanate from prejudice—“where prejudice feeds the negative connotation of the group and excludes or
devalues other measures of social worth or attributes” (Doyle, 1995, p. 19)—it may not always manifest as real-life discrimination. In a sense, prejudice or bias towards a minority group itself cannot be considered discrimination. Yoo (2000) argues that discrimination, to be described as such, needs to be exhibited in a systematic or persistent manner between different groups.

Secondly, the mechanism of discrimination needs to be understood according to the stage at which it occurs. Yoo (2000) describes discrimination as being manifested in pre-entry and post-entry stages, and that the mechanism of the two needs to be addressed separately. As Sloane (1985) asserts, “It [Discrimination] may arise before a worker has entered the labor market, due to factors such as differential educational opportunities (i.e., pre-entry discrimination), or because of post-entry discrimination resulting from factors acting within the labor market” (p. 90). Discrimination within the labor market, then, refers to what is left after controlling for individual factors that are expected to affect the workers’ employment probability and wage function. Commonly used control factors include individuals’ background characteristics and human capital attributes closely related to their productivity.

Discrimination outside the labor market can fix immigrants’ human capital at a low level and have an indirect effect on discrimination within the labor market. Likewise, discrimination within the labor market can also lower the investment motivation in human capital, leading to discrimination outside the labor market.

Discrimination within the labor market can be further partitioned into pre-entry and post-entry discrimination, as shown in table 3. Discrimination that occurs at the entry level includes employment discrimination and job segregation. Employment discrimination refers to minority group workers having lower chances of employment even when they have the same level of education or other qualifications as their native counterparts.25 Also known as “statistical discrimination,”26 the agents of discrimination are the employers. As Doeringer and Piore (1985) point out, discrimination may happen during the hiring process itself. Although hiring decisions

25 The equivalence in qualifications implies that the same observed characteristics are found when operationally defined and assessed in identical fashion.
26 See section 2.3.1 of chapter two for further detail.
made by employers are in theory made on the basis of objective criteria such as education, in practice, the hiring standards used by employers are informal. Doeringer and Piore (1985) argue that “hiring standards are based upon the subjective judgments of line supervisors and personnel managers whose perceptions may be distorted by prejudice” (p. 139).

Table 3 Classification of discrimination based on where, when and how it occurs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discrimination outside the labor market</th>
<th>Discrimination within the labor market</th>
<th>Employment discrimination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-entry discrimination</td>
<td>Employment discrimination</td>
<td>Job segregation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-entry discrimination</td>
<td>Promotion discrimination</td>
<td>Wage discrimination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Yoo (2000, p. 11).

Job segregation refers to the concentration of immigrants in certain low-paying jobs. In line with the dual labor market theory, “women and blacks [minority group workers] are excluded from higher-paying occupations and are crowded into other occupations, where the enforced abundance of supply lowers” not only their competitiveness in the labor market but also their market value” (Sloane, 1985, p. 114). As a result, minority group workers are paid lower wages even when they have the necessary skills to perform in higher paid jobs.

Post-entry discrimination can be further partitioned into promotion discrimination and wage discrimination. Promotion discrimination refers to unequal opportunity in terms of promotion for groups of equally productive workers in the same job. Minority workers can be denied from promotion by ways of restrictive promotion criteria or by limitations in posting and bidding arrangements. Lastly, wage discrimination refers to unequal pay for groups of equally productive workers when a premium is given to the majority group.

While examining discrimination in both its pre- and post-entry stages is important, this study limited the focus to discrimination that manifests at the pre-entry level. Considering that the history of immigrant wives’ labor market activity is relatively short, it makes more sense to focus on what happens to immigrant wives prior to entering the labor market. As will be further discussed in chapter two, most immigrant wives are experiencing hardship entering the labor force (employment discrimination). Moreover, as will be dealt in chapter three, the employment of this population is heavily concentrated in low-paying jobs (i.e., job segregation).
4.3 Productivity

The term “productivity” is another key concept to understanding the dynamics of wage and employment determination. While some previous studies have used human capital attributes and productivity as synonymous terms, the two concepts carry slightly different connotations. For instance, in previous studies, human capital has been commonly measured by using one’s “innate investments [related to, e.g., intelligence and IQ] or the investments that individuals make [including, e.g., education, on-the-job training, and past work experience]” (Fine, 1998, p. 57). Productivity, on the other hand, is often measured using human capital. In such cases, although “human capital investments made by individuals increase the skill and productivity of workers” (Schmitz, 1996, p. 12), the indirect relationship between the two implies that individuals with same amount of human capital may or may not have the same productivity.27

Another important concept that is often mistakenly used interchangeably with human capital is individuals’ demographic backgrounds. The biological traits of individuals such as age and ethnicity are predefined characteristics, and thus need to be distinguished from the traditional proxies of human capital mentioned above.

In sum, this study separated the three concepts: (1) individual characteristics, (2) human capital—that is, the actual knowledge, skills, and capabilities acquired as well as the investment made by an individual to increase his or her capability to produce28—and (3) productivity as the economic output. All three components are expected to affect potential workers’ market value, and thereby their employment probability and wage.

5. Research design and research questions

This section discusses specific research questions as well as study designs for chapters two, three, and four. First, by utilizing the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition method, chapter two examined

27 When there is no data or direct measure of productivity, it is difficult to conclude that same level of human capital guarantees the same level of human capital.

28 This can be also construed as the actual economic output of labor that is divided by cost.
the different rates of employment between immigrant and Korean women as well as the driving force behind the unemployment of immigrant wives compared to their native counterparts. Following the proposition of the statistical discrimination theory, a range of demographic variables were taken into account. Moreover, the model included the recognition that women’s decision-making process with respect to labor market participation may be influenced by the environment they inhabit, household-related factors, and the traditional proxies of individual productivity. Moreover, by limiting the attention to immigrant wives, the study examined factors that determine their employment status. Logistic regression analyses were conducted to answer research question 1-2 as suggested below. Where immigrant women’s employment was of primary concern, contextual variables such as proxies for social capital as well as household-related factors were given special attention. Taking into account of the discontinuous labor market entrance pattern of female workers, separate logistic regressions were run by different age groups. The specific research questions are as follows:

1-1. Of the total size of the employment gap between immigrant women and native Korean women, how much can be attributed to discrimination in the labor market rather than to observable characteristics?

1-2. What are the determining factors that explain immigrant women’s employment status by age group?

Figure 5 addresses the first research question. Figure 6 addresses the second research question.

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29 Three separate logistic regressions were conducted; one without dividing the age range, and two with age groups divided into 18–39 years old and 40–70 years old, where the first age group represents women in their prime working age. This age group division follows that of previous literature.
Figure 5 Research model for chapter two; research question 1-1

Individual factors
- Age,
- Age^2,
- Health status

Household factors
- Number of children aged 0-2
- Number of children aged 3-6
- Number of children aged 7-12
- Husband’s employment status
- Monthly household income

Human capital factors
- Education level,
- Training experience

Dependent variable
- Employment probability

Figure 6 Research model for chapter three; research question 1-2

Individual factors
- Age, Age^2,
- Region of residence
- Korean citizenship,
- Length of residence

Ethnicity dummies
- Ethnicity

Household factors
- Number of children aged 0-2
- Number of children aged 3-6
- Number of children aged 7-12
- Husband’s employment status
- Monthly household income

Human capital factors
- Education level,
- Korean language proficiency,
- Foreign work experience,
- Training experience

Social Capital factors
- Friends from home country,
- Friends from other countries,
- Korean friends,
Narrowing the interest to those who are currently employed, chapter three focused on the nature/quality of employment where the focus was on the driving forces behind the underemployment of immigrant women compared to their native counterparts. Accordingly, participants who were either unemployed or identified as non-wage earners were filtered out. Following the dual labor market theory, wage earners were partitioned into two groups where one group represents workers in informal sector jobs and the other represents those engaged in formal sector jobs. As in chapter two, the Oaxaca-Blinder method was used. Further, logistic regressions were conducted for immigrant wives in order to examine the factors that account for their formal-sector employment (vis-à-vis informal-sector employment). Where the quality of job was concerned, in addition to the variables included in chapter two, chapter three considered how the respondents obtained their current jobs (i.e., job route) and the types of jobs they were employed in. Chapter three also took into account the discontinuous labor market entrance pattern of female workers. Thus, separate logistic regression analyses were run according to their age range. Specific research questions are as follows:

2-1. Of the total gap between the two groups (i.e., immigrant women and native Korean women) with respect to the probability of attaining formal-sector employment status vis-à-vis informal-sector status, how much can be attributed to discrimination in the labor market rather than observable characteristics?

2-2. What are the determining factors that explain the probability of immigrant women’s employment in the formal sector rather than the informal sector by age group?

Figure 7 illustrates the first research question. Figure 8 illustrates the second research question.

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30 As in chapter two, three separate logistic regressions were conducted; one with no age division, and two, with age ranges of 18–39 and 40–65 where the first age group represents women in their prime working age. Considering that the retirement age of average worker is 65, chapter three incorporated a shorter age range of 18 to 65.
Figure 7 Research model for chapter three; research question 2-1

Human capital factors
- Educational level
- Training experience

Individual factors
- Age, Age^2
- Health
- Union membership
- Experience

Household factors
- Husband’s employment status
- Monthly household income

Occupational factors
- Occupational status dummies
- Job type dummies

Dependent variable
- Formal vs. informal sector employment

Figure 8 Research model for chapter three; research question 2-2

Demographic factors
- Age, Age^2
- Region of residence
- Length of residence
- Korean citizenship

Ethnicity
- Ethnicity dummies

Job characteristics
- Occupational status dummies
- Job type dummies

Household factors
- Husband’s employment status
- Monthly household income

Human capital factors
- Educational level
- Training experience
- Foreign work experience
- Korean language proficiency

Ethnicity
- Ethnicity dummies

Contextual factors
- Job route: 1-4
- Friends from home country
- Friends from other countries
- Korean friends

Dependent variable
- Formal vs. Informal sector employment
Finally, chapter four focused on immigrant women’s support service utilization pattern. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to examine possible differences in service utilization patterns depending on their employment status situations. In addition, the relationship between the two domains of services, adjustment assistance and family care services, were examined. Given that the two services are commonly provided by the same organizations, the study assumed that the use of both types of services may interact with one another, potentially introducing migrants to an array of other available services. Thus, two domains of service use were included in the model in order to simultaneously examine the relationship between these services and relevant variables. Moreover, the chapter explored the three domains of factors (i.e., predispositional, enabling, and need factors) which jointly explain the use of services among immigrant women. The specific research questions are:

3-1. Do factors affecting immigrant women’s support service utilization differ according to their employment status?
3-2. If so, what differences stand out between different groups with respect to their service utilization patterns?

The research model addressed in chapter four is illustrated in figure 9.
6. Implications for social work practice and social policy

Social work as a system of institutional support aims to ensure that everyone can enjoy basic rights as the constituents of a given society regardless of individual background. Immigrant women in Korea, especially female marriage migrants, merit closer analytic attention since the influx of immigrant wives is a fairly recent phenomenon and little systematic attention has been given to it from social work perspectives. Although various support services as well as policy agendas have been raised and implemented during the past decade, the general consensus has been that these efforts are ineffective in helping immigrant wives integrate into Korean society. Considering that many immigrants often experience significant discrimination in the process of occupational attainment, which yields limited job mobility over time and the subsequent widening of the status gap between immigrants and natives, the social and economic integration of immigrant women needs to become an important policy priority. However, to date, empirical research on the distinct experiences of racialized immigrant wives is scarce. Thus, the present study aimed to examine empirically whether the unemployment and/or underemployment of immigrant women compared to their native counterparts reflects underlying differences in their...
average observable characteristics or rather discrimination in the labor market. Moreover, expanding on insights from prior research, this study compared immigrant wives’ service utilization patterns between different employment status groups. Such effort will allow for a greater understanding of the magnitude of discrimination in the labor market, which may consequently help the formulation of social policy that can mitigate its influence.

First, from a social policy perspective, findings from the study may provide insights into policy directions, which may in turn promote the labor market integration of immigrant wives. For instance, examining the magnitude of discrimination may provide an opportunity to widen our view on various forms of active labor market policies (ALMP); depending on the study result, current Korean social and labor market policies may be supplemented by measures designed to reduce discriminatory practices towards immigrant wives.

Secondly, findings from the study may also provide useful insights into service provisions as well as guidelines for designing support services that meet the needs of immigrant women. In fact, for any type of social services, it is important that the services provided by social workers actually meet the unique needs of the target group. To date, however, there has not been any systematic analysis on the service usage pattern of immigrant women based on their employment status. This is a glaring omission considering that immigrant wives, depending on their employment status, may have different needs in terms of support services. For instance, it is possible that the employed group of women have greater needs in terms of child-care support compared to the unemployed immigrant wives. Without any such information, however, it is impossible to determine which group has greater needs in terms of two types of services (i.e., adjustment assistance and family care) that are being provided. This, in turn, may lead to a huge financial inefficiency as well as service inadequacy. In this sense, findings from the study can provide an empirical ground for the development of social work services and/or delivery systems that are tailored to meet the needs of employed and unemployed groups of immigrant women. Such effort may further allow social workers to provide required services to the right target group based on their actual needs. Service underutilization patterns, if any, may be also detected from the study result, offering alternative directions for social work practices and policies.
In sum, this study hopes to add another perspective to the complex body of work on the economic integration of immigrants as well as augment the relatively thin research on the intersecting relationship of race, gender, and immigration status to labor market outcomes in a Korean context. The study also hopes to provoke further inquiry into policies and practices concerning the economic integration of minorities in newly emerging immigrant destinations such as South Korea.
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Appendix

Conceptual framework of the three studies
Evidence of labor market discrimination against immigrant wives in the Korean labor market: An examination of the employment gap

1. Introduction

There is a growing body of literature on the labor market activities of immigrants worldwide. Only recently, however, has the gender dimension entered into the discussion. The wage differentials, employment rates, and poverty levels of immigrant women have typically been determined using the same analytical framework implemented for immigrant men. Thus, little systematic effort has yet been made to identify factors that either contribute to or alleviate barriers with regard to immigrant women. Those empirical studies that have accounted for gender have mostly adopted the traditional human capital theory approach. Research in this stream notes that barriers experienced by immigrant women can be largely attributed to the characteristics of the workers themselves, as they tend to have lower educational credentials than comparable natives (Son, 2010; I. S. Yang, et al., 2010; K.-E. Yang, 2011). However, it is also plausible to expect that the barriers, to a considerable degree, may result from various forms of systematic discrimination within the labor market (Boston, 1990; Flanagan, 1973; Loveridge & Mok, 1980; McNabb & Whitfield, 1998; McNabb & Whitfield, 2000; Schwartzman, 2008; Yoo, 2000). The key issues in this respect include the degree to which such tendency reflects factors associated with individuals’ attributes or ones in which the main impetus comes from labor market discrimination. While there is substantial evidence pointing to the increasing racialization and feminization of inequality in the labor market worldwide, there are no studies of note that facilitate realistic estimates of such discrimination. This study was an effort directed toward filling this void in research; by examining the employment gap at the individual level in relation to the possible systemic discrimination at the macro level, this study hopes to add new knowledge regarding the uneven distribution of employment opportunities between native born Korean and immigrant women in South Korea. Specifically, by utilizing an extended Oaxaca decomposition method, the study considered the possible discriminatory opportunity structure that produces differential outcomes between immigrant and native women in the labor market.
Such an approach allows for separating the effect of individual related supply factors from the demand side effect of the labor market. Addressing this possibility is important because decisions on which intervention strategies to employ to reduce the employment gap would substantially differ depending on the understanding of the factors that are viewed as causes of the employment gap.

The study particularly focused on female marriage migrants who move to South Korea to join their husbands. The influx of immigrant wives in recent years has challenged the traditional notion of Korean society as an ethnically homogeneous country. The findings of the study may contribute not only to the research literature on immigrant issues in Korea, but also to the scholarly dialogue regarding the intersection of gender, labor, and race/ethnicity, provoking further inquiry into the integration process of immigrant women from an international scale.

2. Conceptual framework

This study concedes that immigrant wives’ unemployment in the labor market may partly derive from differences in their individual attributes and human capitals as proposed by human capital theorists, but theorizes that such unemployment may also reflect innate structural discrimination embedded in the labor market, as suggested by statistical discrimination theory. For one thing, human capital theory is built upon the assumption that the labor market functions under perfect competition – free of imperfections and discrimination. In such a perfect labor market, individual workers are assigned to appropriate jobs according to their human capital. The essence of this approach is that the factors generating low pay are associated predominantly with the characteristics of the workers themselves (e.g., low educational level and work experience). In fact, human capital theory suggests models for econometric estimation in which the methodology itself implies such an individualistic approach. The wages of different workers are expected to be in a regression to independent variables that represent the level of human capital. Such an approach implies that the reasons why workers are either unemployed or underemployed in the labor market emanate primarily from the background characteristics of the workers themselves, and therefore immigrant employment rates would be lower even in the absence of discrimination (Akresh, 2007; Friedberg, 2000; Stewart & Swaffield, 1999).
However, human capital theory rests on rational choice assumption in which human behavior is perfectly rational and free of discrimination. It fails to fully account for labor market imperfections. In fact, the sharp contrast between human capital theory and statistical discrimination theory is that the latter assumes an imperfect labor market where the mechanism of discrimination places emphasis on the perception of employers. As suggested by statistical discrimination theory, an employer either pays a premium to the majority group or “screens the potential employees on the basis of the characteristics of the group of which they are a member” (Sloane, 1985, p. 89). The market implications of these preferences can mean differential returns to otherwise identical minority and majority workers. Doyle (1995) argues that discrimination against a certain group often takes the form of “applying stereotypes to individuals and judging them accordingly” (p. 19). In fact, if employers do not have sufficient information to accurately assess the productivity of a certain group, they may base their decisions on information that is thought to be correlated with productivity (e.g., education, experience, etc.). By basing their decision on the average measurable characteristics of a group, employers may give systematic preference or disadvantage to one group over another. On a similar note, Arrow (1973) argues that where the employer would incur some cost in determining a potential employee’s true productivity, the employer’s assessment of the job applicant is often based on preconceived ideas about the average characteristics of the group to which the applicant belongs rather than the objective criteria. Because employers base their judgment on the mean of abilities between the groups (i.e., the majority group workers have higher mean ability than the minority), there is a tendency for the minority group to receive lower compensating wages than members of the majority group with the same qualifications.

3. Factors affecting the (un)employment of immigrant women

3.1 Human capital factors

Previous studies on labor market incorporation among immigrants analyze earnings and employment probability largely as a function of human capital variables that are the vectors of productivity. These variables include items such as years of formal education, previous employment experience and language competency (Cornelius, Tsuda, & Valdez, 2003).
previously mentioned, human capital theorists (Becker, 1971; Mincer, 1994) attribute different performance (or outcomes) in the labor market to individual characteristics: Those who have accrued more education and training experience receive higher pay and higher rates of labor force participation. One problem with this theory, however, is that for immigrants, work experience and education acquired in their native countries are not necessarily transferable in the destination countries (Chiswick & Paltiel, 2009). Due to national differences in education, immigrants tend to have lower qualifications (on average) than the native-born population; the act of migration leads to a devaluation in immigrants’ human capital (Chiswick, 1978; Chiswick, Cohen, & Zack, 1997; Friedberg, 2000). As a result, immigrants who have an equal amount of education compared to the native-born worker benefit considerably less from their educational attainment.

With the passage of time, however, human capital differences between the natives and immigrants may narrow as immigrants make investments to supplement their pre-migration labor skills (Toussaint-Comeau, 2006). A stable pattern of earning growth is expected to be associated with immigrants’ duration of residence in a host country. This line of research also suggests that as the time spent in the host country increases, immigrants are more likely to invest in increasing their human capital stock (Stier & Tienda, 1992). Such investments include development of networks necessary for employment, acquisition of labor market information, language fluency, and other task-specific skills. In fact, following Chiswick (1978) and Borjas (1985), numerous studies have shown that immigrants have an earnings disadvantage upon arrival in the destination country, but as time of residence in the host country increases, immigrants accumulate country-specific forms of human capital, thereby narrowing the initial earning gap. As Chiswick (1978) argues, immigrants tend to experience an occupational trajectory that follows a U-shape pattern.

3.2 Household-related factors

Women’s labor market entrance opportunities are also largely conditioned to family household circumstances such as family formation, child-care arrangements, and household budget constraints (Baker & Dwayne, 1997; Cohen & Bianchi, 1999; Evans, 1996; Foroutan, 2008). The
corollary of this reasoning is that under the traditional “division of labor” in the family, husbands are expected to specialize in market work, providing income while wives are responsible for child rearing and household work (England, Carmen, & Garcia-Beaulieu, 2004). The influence of children on labor market involvement is substantial, particularly when the children are young and many women replace their unpaid market labor with market activity. In fact, for both immigrants and native women, the presence of young children and the age of the youngest child are known to be “the most important single influence in female participation in the labor market” (Brooks & Volker, 1985, p. 740). However, as the children grow, the net income required for child care (payment for child care, tuition, etc.) dramatically increases. To maintain their accustomed levels of consumption, women are inclined to re-enter the labor market (Glass, 1988; Greenless & Saenz, 1999).

Household finances also play a crucial role in women’s employment involvement (S. Cotton, Antill, & Cunningham, 1989; Glass, 1988; Gordon & Kammeyer, 1980; Greenless & Saenz, 1999). Where there is a trade-off between demands for women’s time and efforts in home production versus the financial benefits of generating income in the market, tight budget constraints may influence the wife’s decision to seek employment. In fact, when the husbands’ budgetary contributions are low (i.e., the husbands are either in unemployment or employed in low-income occupations), it increases the likelihood of their wives getting employed (Glass, 1988; Stier & Tienda, 1992). Such results appear to accord with traditional gender role expectations in which women are perceived as secondary wage earners. In such case, if the husband’s income – representing the household’s economic situation – is low, this may affect the spouse’s employment outside the home. This appears to be the case in South Korea. Most Korean men who choose international marriage are disproportionately occupied in low-wage jobs. As the earning from the husbands alone is not considered enough to finance their families’ consumption, empirical evidence suggests that more and more immigrant wives are turning to the labor market (S. K. Kim, et al., 2009).

Married women also face the prospect of discontinuous work experience and constraints on their job mobility on account of family commitments. Cardia and Gomme (2011) argue that the labor force participation pattern of women shows a double-humped structure where the first peak
occurs just before child-rearing age, and the second peak around the age of 40. As women reach child-rearing age, they drop out of the labor market to have and raise children; many, but not all, reenter after those children have gone off to school. Thus, the participation rates reach another local peak around age 40.

3.3 Contextual factors

Informal networks and social support play essential roles in the process of adjustment and integration and thus also have important bearings on immigrants’ economic activities (Berry et al., 1987). Social networks often provide material aid and opportunities for social and economic participation and moreover, constitute an important link to information and knowledge about existing sources in immigrant communities. Newcomer immigrants, often lacking the knowledge and means to cope with foreign struggles, choose to rely on their immediate family members, friends, neighbors, and religious figures. In this stream of research, native friends, friends from home countries, and foreign friends from other countries are commonly utilized as proxies for immigrants’ social capital.

Place of residence—that is, whether the immigrants dwell in an urban area—may also impact their chances of finding employment. According to Zhou (1992), economic adaptation outcomes vary depending on the socioeconomic assets immigrants have brought with them; these assets in turn determine where they settle – from affluent middle-class suburbs to impoverished ghettos. Similarly, Greenless and Saenz (1999) argue that immigrants are more likely to be employed if they reside in areas that have a greater share of jobs.

Whether or not an immigrant acquires citizenship is also considered an important determinant of employment. Kogan (2004) notes that employers tend to discriminate based on immigration status. This may be also applicable in cases of immigrant wives, as empirical evidence suggests that individuals without Korean citizenship were heavily concentrated in secondary sector jobs (K.-E. Yang, 2011). Currently, immigrant wives are granted citizenship after three years of marriage to Korean men. During those first three years, their status is restricted to that of “foreign visitor.” Such strict legal permission is prone to affect their employment negatively
where those without Korean citizenship are left with no choice but to turn to secondary employment (S. S. Lee, H. J. Choi, & S. J. Park, 2009).

4. Data, measures, and method

To date, there is no nationally representative Korean data with information on both immigrant wives and native Korean women. Thus, two separate data sets were used in this study, which contain the same kind of information for each group. Although from different organizations, the two data sets share structurally similar questionnaires. First, the National Survey on Multicultural Families data set from 2009 (hereafter, NSMF) was used to obtain information on immigrant wives. The survey was based on the number of multicultural families recorded in the Basic Status Report on Multicultural Families conducted by the Ministry of Public Affairs and Security (MPAS) in 2009. A total of 154,333 individuals were identified as marriage migrants. However, only 55.9% of the respondents (73,669 individuals) completed the survey and were used in the study. The survey employed post-stratification weights to correct disproportional data and adjust the collected data to represent the marriage migrant population in Korea. The data was weighted to have the same distribution of gender, ethnic, and regional characteristics as the Basic Status Report on Multicultural Families. The sample used for the study was a sub-sample of the original data set. First, only those who were married to Korean men at the time of the survey were included as the present study focuses on immigrant wives; male marriage migrants were excluded from the analyses. Second, only those between the ages of 18 and 70 were included considering that the minimum age requirement for marriage in Korea is 18 years.

In regard to the selection of counterpart data, the Korean Labor & Income Panel Study data set (hereafter, KLIPS), which is a longitudinal survey of the labor and income activities of native Korean households and individuals, was used. As an annual survey of each adult member of a nationally representative sample of approximately 6,000 households, the data produces a total of 10,550 to 13,000 respondents. The KLIPS data set is considered to be closest to the NSMF data set in terms of variable composition. The sample used for the current analysis was a sub-sample of the original data; native Korean women between the age of 18 to 70 whose marital status was identified as ‘currently married’ were incorporated in the analyses.
The study posited the following two questions: First, of the total size of the employment gap between immigrant wives and native Korean women, how much can be attributed to discrimination in the labor market rather than observable characteristics? Second, what are the determining factors that explain immigrant wives’ employment status by different age groups? In order to answer the first question, the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition method was used. As a first step, a measure of labor market success, Y, was regressed on a vector of individual characteristics X in separate regressions for the favored and disfavored groups. The estimated models were then used in the decomposition method in such a way as to approximate the effect of discrimination according to the residual left after subtracting the effects of differences in individual characteristics from the overall wage/employment probability differential (Oaxaca, 1973). Simply put, an explained gap includes all the observable reasons that may contribute to a gap between workers. If, after controlling for all of these observable factors, a gap still emerges between groups, researchers can assume that there are unobservable factors influencing this gap. The method provides a framework for measuring the extent of discrimination against different groups (Ashenfelter & Rees, 1973). The decomposition for a nonlinear equation, as in this study, can be written as follows, where Nj is the sample size for j:

\[
\bar{Y}^K - \bar{Y}^I = [\sum_{i=1}^{N^K} \frac{F(X_i^K \beta^K)}{N^K} - \sum_{i=1}^{N^I} \frac{F(X_i^I \beta^K)}{N^I}] + [\sum_{i=1}^{N^K} \frac{F(X_i^K \beta^K)}{N^K} - \sum_{i=1}^{N^I} \frac{F(X_i^I \beta^K)}{N^I}]
\]

*F(\beta^KX_i^K) = \exp(\beta^KX_i^K) / (1 + \exp(\beta^KX_i^K)) (Fairlie, 2005)

Taking into account of the discontinuous labor market entrance pattern of female workers, separate logistic regressions were run by different age groups. The study also used an omega value (Ω), which allows for the empirical application of statistical discrimination theory where both groups of workers are paid in a labor market void of discrimination. The study adopted an approach used by Cotton (1988) that chooses the weighting matrix depending on the sample size.

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31 Three separate logistic regressions were conducted; one without dividing the age range, and two with age groups divided into 18–39 years old and 40–70 years old, where the first age group represents women at their prime working age. This age group division follows that of previous literature.
In order to answer the second research question, logistic regression analyses by different age groups were conducted using the following variables. First, the dichotomous variable indicating whether or not the participant was employed (coded as 1) or not employed (coded as 0) was used as the dependent variable. In order to see the effect of individuals’ background characteristics on employment probability, age (age), squared term of age (age squared), region of residence (region of residence), whether or not the immigrant wives acquired Korean citizenship (citizen), and their length of residence (length of residence) in Korea was included. Age, squared term of age, and the length of residence were coded as continuous variables. Immigrant wives living in urban areas were coded as 1 and those living in rural areas were coded as 0.

Considering that immigrant wives are not a homogenous group, ethnicity variables were entered into the model, using a total of four dummy variables—including Joseonjok (pob1), Mainland Chinese and Han Chinese (pob2), Vietnamese (pob3), Philippine (pob4), and immigrant wives from elsewhere (pob5). The last dummy category, pob5, was used as the reference group. This coding method was chosen based on a technical consideration; while the original ethnicity variable included eleven categories which also included immigrant wives from Japan, Thailand, Mongolia, Taiwan, Cambodia, Uzbekistan, and Russia, the percentage of immigrant wives in each category was less than 5% and so these groups were merged into one: Immigrant wives from other countries.

Secondly, in order to see the effect of household factors on immigrant wives’ employment status, number of children aged between age 0 to 2 (children age0_2), 3 to 6 (children age3_6) and 7 to 12 (children age7_12) within each household were included in the model. Monthly household income (monthly household income), which was measured as an ordinal variable, and husband’s current employment status (husband’s employment status) were also included. The status where the spouse was employed was coded as 1 and the status signifying an unemployed spouse was coded as 0.

Immigrant wives’ education level was also included in the model, using a total of four dummy variables: Middle school graduate or lower (edu1), high school graduate (edu2), college graduate (edu3), and graduate-level degree (edu4). Edu1 was used as the reference group. Korean language proficiency level (Korean proficiency) was measured as a continuous variable ranging
in value from 1 to 15. This variable measured Korean language proficiency in speaking, reading, and listening ability. Foreign work experience prior to immigration was also included in the model (prior work experience was coded as 1; lack of prior work experience was coded as 0). Training experience funded by the Korean government (training experience) was included in the model as well. The status where an individual had training experience was coded as 1.

Lastly, proxies of social capital related variables were included in the model. Whether or not immigrant wives had friends from Korea, from their home country, and from countries other than South Korea or their home country were included in the model. The status where the immigrant had more than one friend was coded as 1; cases where the individual had no friends were coded as 0.

5. Results

5.1 Oaxaca’s decomposition results

As suggested in table 2, a total of six logistic regression models were conducted. The first three served as preliminary analyses prior to examining the employment gap according to female workers’ age range. Where all three models incorporated women between the ages of 18 and 70, model 1 included both immigrant wives and Korean women whereas models 2 and 3 were run separately.

As shown in the descriptive statistics result, the employment rate of Korean women was higher than that of immigrant wives. Moreover, the immigrant status variable in model 1 turned out to be significant ($b=0.333$, $p<.000$). As there is a difference in the employment probability between the two groups, it is reasonable to proceed with further analyses that decompose the employment probability gap. However, in the older age group, immigrant wives showed a higher employment rate (mean value 0.604) than native Korean women (mean value 0.488). Thus, the decomposition analysis was only conducted for the younger age group.
5.1.1 Different household financial status of immigrant wives and Korean women

Where tight budget constraints may influence women’s decision to seek employment (Long, 1980), the lower employment rate of the older Korean women may indicate stabilization of financial status, meaning less incentive for employment. Note that without age restriction, household income had a positive effect on employment for both immigrant and Korean women. However, as suggested in models 6 and 7, when restricted to the older age group, native Korean women’s household income did not have a significant effect whereas for immigrants, household income had a positive influence. It is also important to note that across all age groups, immigrant wives had a lower household income level than Korean women. This was especially the case for older immigrants with lower household income. Contrarily, among native Koreans, the older age group showed higher monthly household income levels. To some extent, the higher employment rate of the older immigrant wives may mirror the poor financial status of the group, increasing their likelihood for employment.

Also, note that the cause-and-effect relationship obtained from the study contradicts the findings and presumptions of previous studies, where a negative relationship is expected between a household’s financial situation and employment. This may be connected to the nature of the variables that were entered into the model. The family income variable includes income obtained from husbands and wives together. As such, households with a higher income status are more prone to employment, since it is likely that immigrant women in such households are already employed and contribute to the net budget. Thus, a more accurate proxy would have been the husband’s income. When the husband’s budgetary contributions are low (i.e., the husband is either unemployed, under-employed, or employed in a low-income occupation), it increases the likelihood that his wife will be employed (Glass, 1988). However, as the 2009 immigrant data set does not carry information on husbands’ employment, total family income was used as an alternative.

5.1.2 No premiums/employment discrimination detected

Table 3 presents the Oaxaca decomposition results derived from decomposing models 2 and 3 and models 4 and 5 respectively. The first column shows the decomposition result of the entire
Table 1 Descriptive statistics result for younger and older age group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Entire age group (18-70)</th>
<th>Younger age group (18-39)</th>
<th>Older age group (40-70)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model2 Immigrant wives</td>
<td>Model3 Korean women Mean(SD)</td>
<td>Model 4 Immigrant wives Mean(SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>0.377</td>
<td>0.467</td>
<td>0.311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>32.762(9.223)</td>
<td>46.344(11.013)</td>
<td>28.892(5.819)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age square</td>
<td>1158.401(670.305)</td>
<td>2269.032(1057.184)</td>
<td>868.579(339.089)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>3.612(0.920)</td>
<td>3.471(0.832)</td>
<td>3.702(0.893)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband’s employment status</td>
<td>0.877(0.328)</td>
<td>0.830(0.376)</td>
<td>0.895(0.306)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly household income</td>
<td>3.241(1.224)</td>
<td>4.780(2.030)</td>
<td>3.283(1.212)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children age 0-2</td>
<td>0.433(0.593)</td>
<td>0.097(0.312)</td>
<td>0.541(0.619)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children age 3-6</td>
<td>0.204(0.469)</td>
<td>0.163(0.426)</td>
<td>0.230(0.493)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children age 7-12</td>
<td>0.169(0.499)</td>
<td>0.299(0.600)</td>
<td>0.146(0.451)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td>1.879(0.775)</td>
<td>2.005(0.821)</td>
<td>1.894(0.786)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle school graduate</td>
<td>0.351(0.477)</td>
<td>0.312(0.463)</td>
<td>0.348(0.476)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate</td>
<td>0.436(0.496)</td>
<td>0.394(0.489)</td>
<td>0.428(0.495)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td>0.195(0.397)</td>
<td>0.271(0.445)</td>
<td>0.205(0.403)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate degree or higher</td>
<td>0.017(0.130)</td>
<td>0.023(0.149)</td>
<td>0.019(0.137)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training experience</td>
<td>0.111(0.314)</td>
<td>0.044(0.206)</td>
<td>0.121(0.326)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| N                       | 50,241                   | 4,077                     | 39,019                  | 1,368                   | 11,222                  | 2,709                   |
Table 2. Logistic regression models for employment, by age group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Entire age group (18-70)</th>
<th>Younger age group (18-39)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Model 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entire group</td>
<td>Pseudo R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Exp(B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS</td>
<td>0.333(0.095)***</td>
<td>1.395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.002(0.000)***</td>
<td>0.998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age square</td>
<td>-0.060(0.050)</td>
<td>1.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>0.264(0.118)*</td>
<td>1.302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly income status</td>
<td>0.112(0.020)***</td>
<td>1.119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children aged 0–2</td>
<td>-1.054(0.140)***</td>
<td>0.349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children aged 3–6</td>
<td>-0.654(0.093)***</td>
<td>0.520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children aged 7–12</td>
<td>-0.256(0.071)***</td>
<td>0.775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate College graduate</td>
<td>-0.599(0.104)***</td>
<td>0.549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate school graduate Training experience</td>
<td>-0.451(0.131)***</td>
<td>0.637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.268(0.300)</td>
<td>0.765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.672(0.226)***</td>
<td>5.323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R2</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td>0.1254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model χ2(df) N</td>
<td>391.17(13)***</td>
<td>54,318</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2. Cont’d

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Older age group (40-70)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 6 Immigrant wives</td>
<td>Model 7 Korean women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Exp(B)</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.386(0.05)***</td>
<td>1.472</td>
<td>-0.043(0.085)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age square</td>
<td>-0.004(0.001)***</td>
<td>0.996</td>
<td>0.000(0.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>0.214(0.026)***</td>
<td>1.238</td>
<td>0.183(0.058)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband’s employment status</td>
<td>0.270(0.061)***</td>
<td>1.310</td>
<td>0.389(0.125)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly income</td>
<td>0.139(0.022)***</td>
<td>1.149</td>
<td>0.044(0.024)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children aged 0–2</td>
<td>-1.304(0.106)***</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>-1.976(0.577)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children aged 3–6</td>
<td>-0.366(0.060)***</td>
<td>0.693</td>
<td>-1.207(0.286)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children aged 7–12</td>
<td>-0.131(0.034)***</td>
<td>0.878</td>
<td>-0.223(0.122)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate</td>
<td>-0.105(0.052)**</td>
<td>0.900</td>
<td>-0.618(0.115)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td>-0.326(0.073)***</td>
<td>0.722</td>
<td>-0.704(0.169)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate school graduate</td>
<td>-0.235(0.239)</td>
<td>0.791</td>
<td>0.403(0.520)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training experience</td>
<td>-0.098(0.086)</td>
<td>0.906</td>
<td>1.834(0.353)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R2</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model χ²(df)</td>
<td>570.76(12)***</td>
<td>239.06(12)***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>11,222</td>
<td>2,709</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Employment probability decomposition result for model 2 & 3 and model 4 & 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Entire age group (Omega = 0.92)</th>
<th></th>
<th>Younger age group (Omega = 0.97)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coef.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Coef.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prod</td>
<td>0.029</td>
<td>32.12</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>30.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adv</td>
<td>-0.008</td>
<td>-9.38</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>-1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disad</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>77.2%</td>
<td>.077</td>
<td>70.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age group without age division whereas the second column shows the result of the younger age group. As suggested by the omega value, the decomposition model assumed that Korean and immigrant wives make up 92% and 8% of the total population, respectively, which is signified by the omega value 0.92. Where 100% represents the entire employment gap to be explained, 32.12% of the gap was explained by the variables entered in the model; the proxies of one’s productivity (education level, training experience) as well as age, health, and household-related factors (husband’s employment, number of children) collectively accounted for 30% of the employment gap. -9.38% was explained by premiums given to Korean women, and 77.26% was left unexplained. In the 18–39 age range, Korean and immigrant wives made up 97% and 3% of
the total, respectively. Of the total gap to be explained, the gap explained by control variables took 30%, -1.48% was explained by premiums, and the proportion left unexplained was 71%. Note that for both cases, the percentage of the premium value was negative. This indicates that there is no systematical preference given to native Korean women. Such findings do not corroborate statistical discrimination theory, which predicts that higher wages and employment rates for the majority group of workers may be driven by an undeserved premium given to this group out of employers’ preference for the majority group workers. As previously discussed, discrimination may occur through the hiring process itself. The premium value being negative, however, suggests that statistical discrimination is not supported in the Korean labor market.

5.1.3 Composition of the explained gap: Household-related factors as major contributors

While approximately 70% of the employment gap was left unexplained, it is equally important consider how much of the 30% of the explained gap was accounted for by each individual predictor. The singled-out effects of each predictor are suggested in table 4 and figure 1. The results indicate that of the total gap that was explained (30.61%), family household income and husband’s employment status together accounted for 98.69% of the explained gap; the explained gap increased from 0.41% to 30.61% with the inclusion of these two variables that signify the financial status of each household. This implies that financial insufficiency is the single most important factor in the explained gap. It is possible that household financial status may function as a proxy of the resources required for employment; those who are from a more affluent household are more advantaged in terms of getting employed as they are financially better equipped and more prepared in terms of labor market entrance. In fact, as previously discussed, Korean women showed higher household income levels than immigrant wives across all age groups. In such case, it is plausible that the relatively more stable household budgets of Korean women give them an advantage in terms of labor market entrance.

Number of children variables accounted for 75.43% of the explained gap; with the inclusion of children dummies, the explained gap increased from 7.07% to 30.61%. This corroborates the proposition of household resource theory where child care and household financial status
influence women’s employment. While the theory anticipates that younger children will negatively affect employment, the decomposition result suggests that Korean women are in a more favorable position in terms of either child-care arrangements or family composition. It can be said that part of the reason for the employment gap is that immigrant wives have more children and fewer child-care options.

Table 4  Employment gap results for the younger age group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Financial Security</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omega</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prod</td>
<td>30.61%</td>
<td>61.46%</td>
<td>15.61%</td>
<td>7.07%</td>
<td>0.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adv</td>
<td>70.86%</td>
<td>40.31%</td>
<td>85.78%</td>
<td>93.77%</td>
<td>99.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disad</td>
<td>-1.48%</td>
<td>-1.77%</td>
<td>-1.39%</td>
<td>-0.84%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1  Graphic portrayal of table 4 (Employment gap result for the younger age group)

5.1.4  Composition of the explained gap: Mixed results of human capital factors

As for traditional proxies of productivity, education variables explained 47.53% of the total explained gap; with the inclusion of education dummy variables, the explained gap increased from 15.61% to 30.61%. This means that the lower employment rate of immigrants may be
explained by the absolute value of their lower education level. As previously discussed, due to national differences in the rate of educational expansion, immigrants tend to have lower human capital (on average) compared to the native-born population. The descriptive statistics result for Korean women also showed higher mean value in terms of education level across all age groups. In such case, part of the reason immigrant wives showed lower employment rate may be attributable to their low human capital.

The effect of the training variable, on the other hand, increased the unexplained gap; with the inclusion of the training variable, the explained gap decreased from 61.46% to 30.61%. The obvious questions that can be raised are (1) whether the training program designed for the general Korean population will carry the same effectiveness for immigrant wives, and (2) if the result can be used as an approximation of discrimination where immigrant wives’ human capital investments are not being fully credited. The descriptive statistics and coefficient values suggested in tables 1 and 2 may provide some evidence in this respect. Immigrants showed twice the rate of training experience as natives, but the actual return from the variable was lower. This appears to reflect the fact that immigrants had more training experience than Korean women, though the influence of the training variable on the actual employment was significantly lower. This corroborates the findings of previous studies where immigrants who had an equal amount of education and training as native-born workers could be expected to benefit considerably less from their educational attainment; immigrants are not granted employment chances equal to their productivity. Suffice it to say, the increase in the unexplained gap may be partly credited to immigrant wives’ training experience having low transferability.

5.2 Logistic regression for immigrant wives

5.2.1 Minimal contribution of human capital factors to employment probability

As suggested by the Pseudo R-square values in table 6, family factors showed the highest contribution to the outcome, explaining 15.5% of the total variance, followed by demographic factors, which explained 15.2% of the variance. Ethnicity variables explained 7.2% of the total variance. Although the absolute amount of variance is not that high, considering that ethnicity
dummies alone explained 7.2% may indicate that immigrant wives’ ethnicity is important in determining employment probability. Human capital factors, on the other hand, only explained 4.1% of the total variance, which indicates that the human capital of immigrants is not a significant predictor. Social capital factors also showed minimal contribution, accounting for only 1% of the total variance. Such results suggest that the human capital theory has relatively little power in explaining the labor market activities of immigrant wives.

5.2.2 Ethnicity and demographic factors as important determinants of employment

When analyzing models 9 and 10, which compare immigrant wives based on age, most of the variables turned out to be significant. As for immigrant-specific factors, both acquisition of Korean citizenship and length of residence had positive influences on employment for younger immigrant wives, though not for the older group. The average length of residence was nearly twice as long for the older group. Similarly, Korean language proficiency was positively related to employment only for younger immigrants. It is possible that older immigrants engage in jobs where language level and length of residence are not important determinants for their employment.

Immigrant wives showed different employment chances depending on their age and ethnicity. Without age restriction, immigrant wives from the Philippines showed the highest employment probability, followed by Vietnamese, Joseonjok, and Chinese women. However, within the older group, there was a higher integration of immigrant wives from Philippine, Chinese, and Joseonjok ethnicity in the labor market. In the younger age group, Philippine, Vietnamese, and Chinese showed higher employment probability compared to Joseonjok women. While it is unclear why such different patterns appear between ethnic and age groups, one possible explanation can be found in the 2009 report conducted by the Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs, which records that 87.4% of Vietnamese immigrant wives entered Korea after 2005, whereas the percentages were lower for women from China (66.5%) and the Philippines (44.3%). Joseonjok women mostly entered Korea between 2000 and 2004. In terms of their age, 63.4% of Vietnamese immigrant wives were 24 or younger. This contrasts with women from the Philippines and China, where 65.7% and 69.9% were between 25 and 39. As for Joseonjok
women, 69.9% were between 30 and 49. It is possible that Vietnamese showed lower employment rates in the older group and higher employment rates in the younger group either because they were the most recent immigrants amongst the four ethnic groups or because they were in the childbearing age.

Table 5 Descriptive statistics results for immigrant wives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Model 8-F Immigrant wives Age 18-70</th>
<th>Model 8-F Immigrant wives Age 18-39</th>
<th>Model 8-F Immigrant wives Age 40-70</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>0.389(0.487)</td>
<td>0.323(0.468)</td>
<td>0.613(0.487)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>32.980(9.102)</td>
<td>29.136(5.734)</td>
<td>46.115(5.533)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age square</td>
<td>1170.528(664.133)</td>
<td>881.809(335.666)</td>
<td>2157.234(552.197)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region of residence</td>
<td>0.854(0.353)</td>
<td>0.848(0.359)</td>
<td>0.874(0.332)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>0.340(0.474)</td>
<td>0.328(0.470)</td>
<td>0.383(0.486)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of residence</td>
<td>64.434(51.336)</td>
<td>56.683(44.833)</td>
<td>90.923(62.177)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>3.619(0.920)</td>
<td>3.712(0.890)</td>
<td>3.300(0.948)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob1 (Joseonjok)</td>
<td>0.329(0.470)</td>
<td>0.269(0.444)</td>
<td>0.532(0.499)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob2 (Chinese)</td>
<td>0.285(0.451)</td>
<td>0.293(0.455)</td>
<td>0.254(0.436)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob3 (Vietnamese)</td>
<td>0.180(0.384)</td>
<td>0.231(0.421)</td>
<td>0.008(0.086)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob4 (Philippines)</td>
<td>0.055(0.227)</td>
<td>0.060(0.238)</td>
<td>0.036(0.187)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob5 (elsewhere ethnic groups)</td>
<td>0.152(0.359)</td>
<td>0.147(0.354)</td>
<td>0.170(0.376)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband’s employment status</td>
<td>0.877(0.329)</td>
<td>0.895(0.307)</td>
<td>0.816(0.388)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly household income</td>
<td>3.274(1.226)</td>
<td>3.318(1.215)</td>
<td>3.124(1.251)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children age 0-2</td>
<td>0.434(0.593)</td>
<td>0.544(0.619)</td>
<td>0.059(0.249)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children age 3-6</td>
<td>0.219(0.483)</td>
<td>0.247(0.508)</td>
<td>0.121(0.369)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children age 7-12</td>
<td>0.183(0.518)</td>
<td>0.157(0.465)</td>
<td>0.273(0.661)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level (overall)</td>
<td>1.910(0.778)</td>
<td>1.928(0.789)</td>
<td>1.847(0.736)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle school graduate</td>
<td>0.333(0.471)</td>
<td>0.329(0.470)</td>
<td>0.348(0.476)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate</td>
<td>0.442(0.497)</td>
<td>0.434(0.496)</td>
<td>0.468(0.499)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td>0.206(0.404)</td>
<td>0.216(0.411)</td>
<td>0.173(0.378)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate school graduate</td>
<td>0.019(0.135)</td>
<td>0.021(0.143)</td>
<td>0.011(0.104)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean language</td>
<td>9.358(3.598)</td>
<td>9.207(3.526)</td>
<td>9.874(3.789)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign work experience</td>
<td>0.763(0.425)</td>
<td>0.741(0.438)</td>
<td>0.839(0.368)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training experience</td>
<td>0.110(0.313)</td>
<td>0.119(0.324)</td>
<td>0.077(0.267)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of friends from home</td>
<td>0.476(0.499)</td>
<td>0.501(0.500)</td>
<td>0.390(0.488)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of Korean friends</td>
<td>0.488(0.500)</td>
<td>0.466(0.499)</td>
<td>0.564(0.496)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of friends from elsewhere countries</td>
<td>0.023(0.149)</td>
<td>0.024(0.152)</td>
<td>0.019(0.137)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N (SD)</td>
<td>39,280</td>
<td>30,306</td>
<td>8,974</td>
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Table 6 Logistic regression results for immigrant wives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Model 11 (Age 18-70)</th>
<th>Age 18-70</th>
<th>Age 18-39</th>
<th>Age 40-70</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exp(B)</td>
<td>Exp(B)</td>
<td>Exp(B)</td>
<td>Exp(B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.205***</td>
<td>1.210***</td>
<td>1.213***</td>
<td>1.455***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age square</td>
<td>0.998***</td>
<td>0.998***</td>
<td>0.998***</td>
<td>0.996***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Region of residence</td>
<td>0.948*</td>
<td>0.841***</td>
<td>0.784***</td>
<td>0.985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>1.200***</td>
<td>1.101**</td>
<td>1.188***</td>
<td>0.899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of residence</td>
<td>1.003***</td>
<td>1.003***</td>
<td>1.007***</td>
<td>1.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>1.075***</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob1 (Joseonjok)</td>
<td>2.255***</td>
<td>1.487***</td>
<td>1.131*</td>
<td>2.264***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob2 (Chinese)</td>
<td>1.304***</td>
<td>1.470***</td>
<td>1.298***</td>
<td>1.968***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob3 (Vietnamese)</td>
<td>.660***</td>
<td>2.144***</td>
<td>1.904***</td>
<td>1.257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob4 (Philippines)</td>
<td>1.802***</td>
<td>2.819***</td>
<td>2.491***</td>
<td>3.361***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband’s employment</td>
<td>1.016</td>
<td>1.139***</td>
<td>1.048</td>
<td>1.270***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly household income</td>
<td>1.108***</td>
<td>1.129***</td>
<td>1.119***</td>
<td>1.155***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children age_2</td>
<td>0.277***</td>
<td>0.353***</td>
<td>0.356***</td>
<td>0.307***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children age_3-6</td>
<td>0.981</td>
<td>0.806***</td>
<td>0.772***</td>
<td>0.721***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children age_7-12</td>
<td>1.235***</td>
<td>0.884***</td>
<td>0.837***</td>
<td>0.978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate</td>
<td>1.056*</td>
<td>0.883***</td>
<td>0.879***</td>
<td>0.894*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td>1.110***</td>
<td>0.934</td>
<td>1.031</td>
<td>0.799**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate school graduate</td>
<td>1.453***</td>
<td>1.265*</td>
<td>1.431***</td>
<td>0.842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean language proficiency</td>
<td>1.084***</td>
<td>1.037***</td>
<td>1.046***</td>
<td>1.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign work experience</td>
<td>1.544***</td>
<td>1.268***</td>
<td>1.252***</td>
<td>1.559***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training experience</td>
<td>1.073*</td>
<td>1.119**</td>
<td>1.155***</td>
<td>0.963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of friends from home country</td>
<td>0.876***</td>
<td>0.995</td>
<td>0.993</td>
<td>1.127*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of Korean friends</td>
<td>1.314***</td>
<td>1.065**</td>
<td>1.057</td>
<td>1.106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of friends from elsewhere countries</td>
<td>1.241***</td>
<td>1.272***</td>
<td>1.204*</td>
<td>1.400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R2</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR test</td>
<td>5976.693(6)</td>
<td>2996.289(4)</td>
<td>204.372(5)</td>
<td>1524.645(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>50,598</td>
<td>55,390</td>
<td>47,379</td>
<td>49,942</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001
5.2.3 Household factors as determinants for employment

In terms of household-related factors, husband’s employment had a positive effect on the older immigrant wives’ employment whereas for the younger group, the effect was insignificant. It can be inferred that for the older group, husband’s income alone may not sustain the household, compelling older immigrant wives to turn to the labor market. The effect of monthly household income showed a positive relationship with employment across all age groups. As previously discussed, financial insufficiency may be leading immigrant wives to seek to work outside the household.

Number of children, regardless of children’s age, had negative effects on the younger group’s employment, whereas for the older group, number of children aged 0 to 2 and 3 to 6 were negatively associated with employment. Number of children aged 7 to 12 was not significant for the older group, possibly due to low financial status. This corroborates the proposition of household resource theory where child care and household financial status influence women’s employment.

5.2.4 Mixed effects of education on employment and some comments on social capital

The results from both decomposition and logistic regression analyses suggest that education level has direct or indirect bearing on the quality of immigrant wives’ employment. According to human capital theory, higher education leads to higher chances of employment. However, this explanation was not applicable in the case of immigrant wives, as those who had the lowest educational qualifications had higher chances of employment; compared to being a middle school graduate, being a high school graduate had negative effect on employment across all age groups of immigrants. Considering that the average education level of the older immigrants was middle school diploma, it is possible that older immigrant wives are attracted to low waged jobs where education is not accredited. In fact, Shrestha (2001) argued that a J-shaped relation may be detected between education and women’s labor supply. The rationale is that, because those with no formal schooling often come from low socioeconomic backgrounds, there is more financial
pressure for them to find jobs while those with higher educational qualifications are drawn to labor due to their skills and expertise. In fact, the logistic results indicate that having a graduate degree (MA or PHD) increased the likelihood of getting employed for younger immigrant groups. It is plausible that immigrant wives are polarized into two groups, where one group is rewarded for their educational qualification and the other group is not. Other proxies of human capital include Korean language fluency, training experience, and foreign work experience. Korean language fluency and training experience had positive relations with employment only for younger groups, whereas having foreign work experience had a positive effect for both age groups.

As for social capital factors, having friends from one’s home country had a positive influence on the older immigrant group’s employment whereas the effect was not significant for the younger group. Having friends from other foreign countries had a positive relation for the younger group whereas the effect was not significant for the older group. It is reasonable to conjecture that such social connections enable immigrants to capitalize on local resources; such informal social support may facilitate access to employment as well.

6. Summary and implications

This study focused on identifying the causes of differences between immigrant and native Korean women in labor market entrance probability. Of particular interest was whether or not and how much of the employment gap can be attributed to the explained and unexplained gaps. There are several major findings. First, over 30% of the employment rate gap can be attributed to individual attributes, whereas nearly 70% of the gap was left unexplained. While it is difficult to ascertain the source of discrimination, the following point seems reasonably credible: Given the fact that the premium values were negative for both the younger age group and the joint age group, the explanations from statistical theory may carry little weight when it comes to immigrant wives’ employment. That is, Korean women are not benefiting from being native Koreans in terms of employment; as the data show, no premiums were given to the majority group.
The findings related to human capital suggest a mixed bag, however. The decomposition result implies that part of the explained gap contributing to the lower employment of immigrant wives was derived from low transferability of their training experience into the labor market, but also from the lower absolute educational level of immigrant wives. This may suggest that either the training programs currently being provided are not effective for immigrant wives, thus indicating the need for a new program intended for the immigrant population, or it may indicate a true case of discrimination where the Korean labor market is failing to compensate workers on the basis of their productive endowments. In such case, language or education programs may not lead to any improvement in terms of labor market outcomes. Moreover, the study found that immigrant wives are not a homogenous group: We can observe a bimodal distribution where one group was rewarded for educational qualification and the other was not. One direct policy recommendation is that training programs or educational programs intended for employment preparation should be devised according to educational levels and market demands.

Secondly, consistent with the findings of previous studies, this study confirms the designation of immigrant wives, particularly older immigrant wives, as one of the disadvantaged groups in the Korean labor market. While further inquiry is needed, the high employment rate of older immigrant wives as an evidence of tight budget constraints as well as Korean language proficiency and length of residence not being significant predictors of employment all point to the possibility the barriers experienced by the older immigrant wives are far more pronounced than they are with the younger age group and native Korean women. It is also notable that immigrant wives have different employment chances depending on their age and ethnicity, where there was a higher use of the older immigrant wives of Philippine, Chinese, and Joseonjok ethnicity. Such finding has important practical implications. First, the findings suggest that public policies designed to achieve racial equality in the labor market should perhaps focus on the integration of older immigrants into the labor market. The findings also reinforce the observations made in several Western studies where the labor market experiences of immigrants are not homogenous. This implies that public policy strategies, such as employment equity programs that focus on the labor market discrimination need to be more precisely structured in order to target immigrants who are most susceptible to discriminatory labor market practices.
Finally, it can be said that immigrant wives’ employment is largely influenced by family circumstances. Specifically, the existence of children was found to have a negative effect on labor market activity. This suggests that women’s potential mobility in the labor market is restricted by family commitments. Women who do not outsource their child care tend to replace their unpaid labor with labor market activity. Child-care support services may considerably help immigrant wives who seek employment. Moreover, considering that immigrant wives generally have considerably lower household income than native-born Koreans, it is important to expand the availability of affordable child care to immigrant wives.

The study has several limitations. First, using solely the discrimination framework may obscure the reality where immigrant wives make a rational choice to engage in what have been described as poor working conditions. Second, marriage migration is situated in both intra- and transnational contexts. Research results need further elaboration to include such a global context. Third, due to the nature of the data set (i.e., cross-sectional), the causal relationships between some of the independent variables and the outcome variable were difficult to infer. Although the main focus of the study was the magnitude of discrimination within the labor market, had the data set been longitudinal, more accurate causal inferences would have been possible. Fourth, the Oaxaca-Blinder method does not offer details about what underlies these relationships. While the unexplained gap unquestionably consists of “true” discrimination within the labor market, it also consists of all the unobserved characteristics not accounted for in the model. Without being able to rule out such unobserved factors, it is difficult to use the model as conclusive evidence of discrimination. Thus, the findings from the study should be extended and supplemented by studies that capture a more detailed account of the labor market experience of immigrant women. Fifth, the study used a generic approach, assuming the Korean labor market to be a homogenous entity. However, the mixed effect of education on employment suggests that the labor market is differentiated into two sectors where the educational qualifications of individuals are rewarded differently. In such case, a sectoral analysis may better capture the Korean labor market. Sixth and finally, the study mainly focused on the effects of human capital factors and household factors. The effect of contextual factors such as the influence of friends was not specifically dealt with. Future studies might focus on the effect of social capital on immigrant employment.
References


Chapter 3
Unequal chance of getting a secure job: Marriage migrant women in the Korean labor market

1. Introduction

The structural changes in the Korean economy since the late 1990s are characterized by the polarization between the formal and informal sectors and the feminization of informal sector employees in the labor force. Previous studies generally agree that while the absolute rate of women’s employment has increased, the quality of their labor has decreased significantly (Keum & Yoon, 2011; H.-Y. Kim & Hong, 2009). This is particularly true in the case of immigrant women. In fact, there is a growing body of evidence that points to the over-representation of racialized women in under-valued, low-wage, precarious jobs worldwide (Cranford & Vosko, 2006; Das Gupta, 2008; Wallis & Kwok, 2008). Preliminary evidence suggests that the picture is not very different in Korea. Empirical observations from the national survey conducted in 2009 suggest that the jobs of immigrant wives are mostly insecure and low paying. The year 2013 press release from the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family reports that immigrant wives who were employed as day laborers increased from 14.8% to 18.9% between 2009 and 2012 (MOGEF, 2013). This is nearly three times higher than the rate of the native Korean women; in year 2012, 7.0% of native Korean women were employed as day laborers (Korea National Statistical Office, 2012). Considering the large portion of immigrant wives who are concentrated in the informal sector of the economy (D. N. Kim, et al., 2010; I. S. Yang, et al., 2010), this study focused on the quality of their employment. The overall quality of different career positions was examined by partitioning the wage earners into two groups: Formal sector employees and informal sector employees. By expanding the discussion of economic integration to the quality of employment, this study focused on structural discrimination, which may in turn provide an increased understanding of the economic integration process as well as the opportunities and barriers experienced by immigrants. The first section develops a framework based on three intersecting theories: Human capital theory, discrimination theory, and statistical discrimination.
Second, the structural changes that have occurred in the Korean labor market since the late 1990s are discussed. These include the process of polarization between regular jobs and non-regular jobs, especially in the context of workers’ social insurance coverage. Specific research findings on the underemployment of immigrants are examined, followed by methodological issues, research findings, and discussion.

2. Conceptual frameworks

Critically integrating the tenants of human capital theory, dual labor market theory, and statistical discrimination theory, this study situates the lower employment rates of immigrant wives in the Korean labor market in the context of broader structural barriers to economic integration, specifically the relatively lower employment rates of immigrant wives in the Korean labor market. The chapter begins with the assumption that sectoral placement may partly derive from the differences in individuals’ attributes and their human capitals, but may also reflect innate structural discrimination in the labor market (i.e., statistical discrimination theory and dual labor market theory).

First, the basic assumption of the human capital theory is that workers may be failing to gain access to desirable jobs because they lack the qualities required for the job. In fact, previous studies on immigrants’ economic status generally agree that workers in the informal labor market are often characterized by lower levels of human capital (Shrestha, 2001). Such an approach focuses on individual factors in explaining the different assignment of workers across the two segments. However, human capital theory has been challenged for its limited ability to explain informal sector employment. The essence of the counterargument is that “formal criteria such as accumulation of human capital resources that are required to enter the formal sector or achieve upward mobility would have less significance for informal forms of work that are typically less structured and operate under less formal criteria” (Shrestha, 2001, p. 85). This implies that the process of wage-setting may be different in one segment versus another, and the estimated human capital equations may be different across the two sectors.

Human capital theory has been also challenged for providing only a partial answer as to why
immigrants are predominantly employed in the informal sector. Dual labor market theorists (Constant & Massey, 2005; Doeringer & Piore, 1985; Harrison & Sum, 1979) argue that structural discrimination insulates the majority group of workers from the secondary labor market. The theory assumes that the economy consists of two different types of labor markets where jobs fall into either the primary or the secondary sector. Note that there are certain portions of the “formal and informal sector” dichotomy that parallel the “primary and secondary sectors” suggested by the dual labor market theory. It is highly likely that workers in the secondary labor market are also heavily concentrated in the informal sector; where there is clear overlap, there may be a link.

Jobs in the primary sector are considered “good” jobs: Characterized by high wages, job security, substantial responsibility, and potential for internal promotion. Jobs in the secondary sector, also referred to as the “underground economy,” are characterized by low wages, poor working conditions, and little chance of advancement (Boushey, Fremstad, Gragg, & Waller, 2007; Ghilarducci & Lee, 2005). One hypothesis for explaining the segregation of minority group workers into the secondary labor market is the crowding hypothesis developed by Bergmann (1974). Hwang (2001) argues that institutions within the primary sectors (e.g., unions and large enterprises) are usually in favor of the majority group workers and may restrict minority group workers from entering the core sector. Faced with systematic barriers, minority group workers may have no choice but to turn to informal sector jobs (Ward, 1988, 1990). What is worse, as the theory depends on the lack of potential mobility of labor, the gap between immigrants and natives is expected to widen over time. Once a person falls into in the secondary labor market, in other words, it is difficult to escape.

Lastly, statistical discrimination theory (Arrow, 1973) assumes that in the absence of perfect information about individual characteristics and human capitals, employers tend to rely on the average productivity of workers in assessing the qualifications of job applicants. Discriminatory tastes among employers may prevent a certain group of workers from entering occupations that align with the workers’ actual productivity and qualifications. In the context of sectoral placement, the assignment of immigrant wives across the two segments may reflect a bias on the part of employers, ultimately leading to a segregation of immigrant wives into low-paying, low-
skilled, dead-end occupations.

3. Context of the chapter

3.1 The formal vs. informal duality of the Korean labor market

This section examines the polarized labor market structure of South Korea, which can be characterized as a division between regular jobs and non-regular jobs, or the “core” and the “periphery” labor markets, as suggested by Peng (2011). Of particular interest are the major changes that have taken place recently in South Korea. In response to the IMF crisis, the Korean labor market underwent a major restructuring marked by a flexible labor market. In an effort to recover from the financial crisis, most Korean companies adjusted their hiring practices; the greatest disadvantage of the adjustment is that it tends to keep the cleavage of dual labor market intact. In fact, with the onset of corporate restructuring, a large share of regular workers was replaced by temporary and short-term contract workers, most of whom held informal sector jobs.

Nationwide statistics show that the non-regular workers proportion of total wage earners continued to grow, reaching its peak of 37.0% in 2004 (Statistics Korea, 2009). Although the proportion has steadily declined since then, reaching 32.4% in 2014, most Korean firms still have a strong tendency to hire a large proportion of non-regular workers (Statistics Korea, 2009). These changing employment arrangements have led to consolidation of the existing rigidity between the workers in the formal sector (consisting of regular workers) and the informal sector (consisting of temporary workers and day laborers who are considered replaceable), leading to a high degree of job instability in Korea.

The polarized structure of the labor market has important implications in terms of social insurance, because workers who hold non-regular jobs are often excluded from social protection. A large disparity continues to persist between suggested social insurance criteria and actual coverage (Um, 2012). In fact, many temporary workers and day laborers are disqualified from receiving social insurance due to either the strict eligibility criteria or overdue insurance payments (Ku & Baek, 2008). In their study, Seo and Baek (2014) estimated that nearly one-third
of total wage earners are excluded from social insurance coverage. They argued that workers whose occupational status is either temporary or non-regular are likely to be excluded from social security benefits. Similar results were obtained by Lee (2012), Seong and Lee (2007), and Ku and Baek (2008), whose studies have highlighted the vulnerability of temporary workers.

Occupational status and sectoral placement based on social insurance are frequently closely related, such that the majority of workers who are categorized as regular employees are covered by social insurance but temporary workers and day laborers are generally uncovered. When examining the size of the informal sector, based on occupational status, Seong and Lee (2007) found a close link between occupational status and sectoral placement: The majority of the workers who were categorized as regular employees were considered formal-sector workers, while workers who were considered temporary workers or day laborers predominantly occupied informal-sector jobs. Although it is difficult to gauge the actual size of the informal sector, previous studies have suggested that at least 15.3% of total wage earners in South Korea are employed in the informal sector (Seong & Lee, 2007).

3.2 Immigrant women filling informal-sector jobs

The “segregation of the labor market” becomes even more crucial in the case of immigrant women, because they are more likely to be employed in the informal sector (Shrestha, 2001). Empirical observations from a 2009 national survey suggest that, among the 36.9% of immigrant women who were employed, 53.2% of them were temporary workers and day laborers and receive little or no legal or social protection whereas and 26.0% of them were casual workers (I. S. Yang, et al., 2010) (see Table 1 for more in detail). Given that there is a close link between occupational status and placement in the formal vs. the informal sector, it can be inferred that roughly more than half of employed immigrant women are employed in the informal sector.

The increased pool of immigrant wives in informal sector jobs warrants particular attention, because workers in those jobs have limited access to economic resources and benefits (ILO, 2002). Previous studies generally have agreed that workers in the informal sector are exposed to both financial and health hazards (Hussmanns, 2004). As Hussmanns (2004) argued, “informal
workers are much more likely than formal workers to be exposed to poor working environments, low safety and health standards and environment hazards” (p.65), all of which demonstrate why social protection is critical for them. Focusing on the insecure nature of the employment status of immigrant wives, the study added a social protection concept to the discussion. Specifically, possible reasons for the heavy concentration of immigrant wives in the informal sector were analyzed by use of the Oaxaca decomposition method.

Table 1 Occupational status and job category of immigrant women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Employment status</td>
<td>Currently employed</td>
<td>43,516</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>117,825</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not currently employed, but have work experience</td>
<td>26,133</td>
<td>22.2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never been employed</td>
<td>48,176</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational status</td>
<td>Temporary worker</td>
<td>20,295</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>52,815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Casual worker</td>
<td>13,751</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Day laborer</td>
<td>7,827</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Etc</td>
<td>5,038</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-employed worker</td>
<td>3,526</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>1,106</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unpaid family worker</td>
<td>1,272</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Category</td>
<td>Service worker</td>
<td>18,561</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>57,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manual labor worker</td>
<td>9,702</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specialist, professionals</td>
<td>7,112</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Etc</td>
<td>5,408</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sales person</td>
<td>3,374</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technicians</td>
<td>3,262</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manufacturer</td>
<td>2,951</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Household related manual labor worker</td>
<td>2,643</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farmer, agriculture related job worker</td>
<td>1,981</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Office worker</td>
<td>1,193</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Executives and Manager</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Yang, Min & Kim (2010).

32 The job category was sorted based on the Korean Standard Occupation Classification which was organized based on the ILO’s National Standard Occupation Classification. The job category is further divided into major, medium and minor classification.
4. Factors affecting the underemployment of immigrant wives

4.1 Human capital factors

Individual variables such as formal education, labor force experience, and on-the-job training are argued to be positively associated with one’s earnings and employment (Akresh, 2007; Kposowa, 2002b; Mincer, 1994; Shrestha, 2001). However, such an argument is based on occupations in the formal sector and therefore may have limited explanatory power when applied to work and earnings in the informal sector. For example, in explaining the urban labor market segmentation in Brazil, Telles (1993) found that compared to informal sector jobs, there were higher returns on education and work experience in formal sector jobs. Similarly, in the study of Kwon, Cho and Cho (2009) found that women with low educational credentials were predominantly employed in the informal sector. The substance of the argument is that formal criteria such as education would have less significance for informal sector employment as the evaluation in the hiring process would operate under a “particularistic” and less formal process (Shrestha, 2001; Telles, 1993). However, it is difficult to corroborate such findings, as there are variations across different countries. In the case of Bangkok, Tielhet-Waldorf and Waldorf (1983) found past work experience to have a positive influence on informal sector employment. Similarly, based on the study of five Central American countries, Funkhouser (1997) found substantial returns on previous work experience and education in informal sector employment. Given the fact that informal sector jobs are characterized as having unregulated work environments with high turnover rates, this study anticipated that formal criteria such as education and training experiences to have higher relevance in formal sector employment.

4.2 Personal demographic factors

Age is considered an important demographic factor in women’s employment probability. Greenlees and Saenz (1999) note that women in their prime age (24–54) are more likely to be employed compared to women between the ages of 16 and 24 or over 55 (Greenless & Saenz, 1999). Kwon, Cho and Cho (2009), on the other hand, found that older women had higher chances of getting employed in the informal sector.
Ethnic background may also be an important factor, which predicts women’s employment status. In determining formal sector employment in Brazil, Telles (1993) argued that biological characteristics such as ethnicity may have less of an influence on formal sector employment than achieved criterion such as formal education, but more of an influence in the informal sector. On the other hand, Shrestha (2001), who studied the case of Nepal, found ethnic membership was not a significant determinant of women’s participation in the informal sector. The effect of ethnicity on formal sector employment may differ depending on the country, as there are different dynamics associated with ethnic compositions. In the case of South Korea, ethnic background, although an important factor that needs to be controlled for, may not be a significant determinant of formal sector employment. As previously discussed, roughly more than half of employed immigrant women are employed in the informal sector. In such a case, ethnicity may have little significance.

The acquisition of citizenship may also be an important determinant of immigrant wives’ underemployment. According to Kogan (2004) employers tend to discriminate based on immigration status. Yang (2011) corroborates this assertion, noting that immigrant wives who acquired Korean citizenship were more likely to participate in the labor market.

4.3 Household-related factors

The influence of household monthly income and husband’s employment status may have an influence on women’s sectoral placement, particularly as these variables predict net family wealth. Empirical studies have suggested that “married women with high socioeconomic status are expected to show low work participation rates not only due to economic sufficiency, but also due to the social prestige where ‘not working’ symbolizes higher social status” (Shrestha, 2001, p. 86). In particular, being a member of a well-off household may deter women from entering secondary sector jobs. In fact, Shrestha (2001) found that women who had husbands working as day laborers were more likely to be engaged in the labor force, whereas women whose husbands were employed in formal sector jobs were themselves more likely to be employed in the formal sector. Such results indicate that higher economic background may decrease the likelihood of wives’ employment regardless of the quality of the job, also hinting at a homogamous pattern in
which men with high socio-economic status marry women of similar background.

4.4 Occupation related factors

Commonly included occupation-related variables include firm size, industry, type of jobs, and work status. For instance, Kim et al. (2009) controlled for industry types and found that employment in mining, construction, electricity/transportation/telecommunication, wholesale and retail, lodging/food, financial/insurance/lease, and public service all had positive effects on informal sector employment but employment in the manufacturing industry did not. Such result suggests that industry types are closely related with formal/informal sector job employment. Work status is also associated with formal/informal sector employment. Thacker (1993) and Shrestha (2001) note that piece-rate and temporary work activities (rather than skilled and stable activities) promote informal sector employment. In terms of occupation, being employed in jobs that have been traditionally considered skilled and prestigious have a greater likelihood for formal sector employment. Lee et al. (2012) regressed the log of hourly wage on six occupation dummies including manager, specialist/professional, office worker, service worker, sales person, agricultural worker, technician, and manual laborer. The results indicated that being employed as a service worker, sales person, agriculture worker, technician, or manual laborer to be negatively associated with formal sector employment.

This study also looked into the effect of union membership experience, as stable unionized positions can provide workers with a middle-class quality of life and resources. In fact, Lee et al (2012) found that compared to working in a unionized firm, being employed in a firm with no union increased one’s likelihood of getting employed in the informal sector.

4.5 Contextual factors

The location in which the immigrants dwell in (whether the immigrants dwell in urban or rural areas) may impact their sectoral placement as well. For instance, Greenless and Saenz (1999) concluded that there is a higher tendency for immigrants to be employed if they reside in areas that have a greater share of jobs. Immigrants tend to be drawn to larger urban areas where there
is a greater need for workers. However, England et al. (2004) did not find a clear relationship between regional distributions and immigrants’ employment. Such discrepancy may warrant further investigation.

The study also incorporated social capital related variables. Social capital possessed by immigrants may have significance for immigrants’ employment insofar as it plays an essential role in the process of adjustment and acculturation (Berry, Kim, Minde, & D., 1987). In fact, Ho (2000) noted that immigrants turn to their intimate circle of friends and family to get information they need. Thus, number of friends was included in the model to see the effect of social connections on immigrant wives’ sectoral placement.

5. Data, measures, and method

Up to date, there is no nationally representative Korean data with information on both immigrant wives and native Korean women. Therefore, two separate data sets were employed. Although from different organizations, the two data sets share structurally similar questionnaires. First, the “National Survey on Multicultural Families” data set from 2009 (hereafter, NSMF) was used to obtain information on immigrant wives. The survey was based on the number of multicultural families recorded in the Basic Status Report on Multicultural Families conducted by the Ministry of Public Affairs and Security (MPAS) in 2009. A total of 154,333 individuals were identified as marriage migrants. However, only 55.9% of the respondents (73,669 individuals) completed the survey and were used in the study. The survey employed post-stratification weights to correct disproportional data and adjust the collected data to represent the marriage migrant population in Korea. The data was weighted to have the same distribution of gender, ethnic, and regional characteristics as the Basic Status Report on Multicultural Families. The sample used for the analyses was a sub-sample of the original data; first, only those who were married to Korean men at the time of the survey were included. Second, only those between the ages of 18 and 65 were included considering that the minimum age requirement for marriage in Korea is 18 years.

With regard to the selection of counterpart data, the Korean Labor & Income Panel Study data set (hereafter, KLIPS), which is a longitudinal survey of the labor and income activities of native
Korean households and individuals, was used. As an annual survey of each adult member of a nationally representative sample of approximately 6,000 households, the data produces 10,550 to 13,000 respondents. The KLIPS data set is considered to be closest to the NSMF data set in terms of variable composition. The sample used for the current analysis was a sub-sample of the original data; native Korean women between the ages of 18 to 65 whose marital status was identified as ‘currently married’ were incorporated in the analyses. The study posited the following two questions: First, of the total size of the employment gap between immigrant wives and ethnic Korean women, how much can be attributed to discrimination in the labor market rather than observable characteristics? Second, what are the determining factors that explain immigrant wives’ employment status by different age groups? In order to answer the first question, the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition method was used. The decomposition for a nonlinear equation, as in this study, can be written as follows, where Nj is the sample size for j:

$$\bar{Y}^K - \bar{Y}^I = [\sum_{i=1}^{N^K} \frac{F(x_i^K\beta^K)}{N^K} - \sum_{i=1}^{N^I} \frac{F(x_i^I\beta^K)}{N^I}] + \sum_{i=1}^{N^I} \frac{F(x_i^I\beta^I)}{N^I} - \sum_{i=1}^{N^I} F(x_i^I\beta^I)$$

$$F(\beta^Kx_i^K) = \exp(\beta^Kx_i^K) / (1 + \exp(\beta^Kx_i^K)) \text{ (Fairlie, 2005),}$$

Taking into account the discontinuous labor market entrance pattern of female workers, separate logistic regressions were run by different age groups. The study also used an omega value (Ω), which allows for the empirical application of statistical discrimination theory where both groups of workers are paid in a labor market void of discrimination.

In order to answer the second research question, logistic regression analyses by different age groups were conducted using the following variables. The dependent variable is a dummy variable, which reflects the core and periphery duality of the jobs within the labor market. A value of 1 was given if the worker was in the formal sector and 0 for the informal sector. While the operational definition of “informal sector” has been the subject of much debate, previous literatures generally agree that sectoral placement is per se about the “quality” of employment of

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33 Three separate logistic regressions were conducted; one with no age division, and two, with age ranges of 18–39 and 40–65 where the first age group represents women in their prime working age. Considering that the retirement age of average worker is 65, chapter three incorporates a shorter age range of 18 to 65.
a population where workers engaged in the informal jobs are often vulnerable (ILO, 2002) because they receive little or no legal/social protection and have limited access to economic resources and social benefits. The operational definition of formal and informal sector employment was adapted from the study of Cho and Cho (2009) which distinguished workers based on the entitlement to employment insurance and industrial accident compensation insurance. In this study, workers who had full coverage of both types of social insurance were categorized as formal-sector workers, and those who were not enrolled as beneficiaries but were legally entitled to receive both types of social insurances were classified as informal-sector workers.

Using the dependent variable (sectoral placement) as an empirical outcome may lead to a tautological reasoning; the outcome is taken as an evidence of a social structure, which is used to “explain” the outcome. Such an approach is dependent upon the tacit assumption that the structural discrimination is self-evident. However, the focus of the study was not testing the segmentation hypothesis, but rather situating immigrant and Korean women in the context of social insurance coverage. In such case, the sectoral division is not a proxy of discrimination itself, but rather a division based on the coverage of social insurance, which allows for examining the possibility of such structural discrimination within the labor market.

In order to see the effect of individuals’ background characteristics on employment probability, age (age), squared term of age (age squared), region of residence (region of residence), whether or not the immigrant wives acquired Korean citizenship (citizen), and their length of residence (length of residence) in Korea were included. Age, squared term of age, and the length of residence were coded as continuous variables. Immigrant wives living in urban areas were coded as 1 and those living in rural areas were coded as 0.

Considering that immigrant wives are not a homogenous group, ethnicity variables were entered in the model. Four dummy variables—Joseonjok (pob1), Mainland Chinese and Han Chinese (pob2), Vietnamese (pob3), and Philippine (pob4), and immigrant wives from other countries as the reference group (pob5)—were included in the model. This coding method was chosen based on a technical consideration; while the original ethnicity variable included eleven categories,
which also included immigrant wives from Japan, Thailand, Mongolia, Taiwan, Cambodia, Uzbekistan, and Russia, the percentage of immigrant wives in each category was less than 5%. Due to small sample size, these groups were automatically removed from the logistic regression analysis. Thus, instead of making ten sets of dummy categories, the study merged immigrant wives from these eight countries into one group: Immigrant wives from other countries.

Secondly, in order to see the effect of household factors on immigrant wives’ employment status, number of children aged between age 0 to 2 (children age0_2), 3 to 6 (children age3_6) and 7 to 12 (children age7_12) within each household were included in the model. Monthly household income (monthly household income) which was measured as an ordinal variable was also included, where 1 represented income level less than five hundred thousand won and 9 being the highest level of income of over seven hundred thousand won in Korean currency. Husband’s current employment status was coded as a dichotomous variable where the status of 1 signified being employed.

Immigrant wives’ education level was also included in the model. Four dummy variables were included in the model including middle school graduate or lower (edu1), high school graduate (edu2), college graduate (edu3), and graduate-level degree (edu4). The first dummy category, edu1, was used as the reference group. Korean language proficiency level (Korean proficiency) was measured as a continuous variable, which ranged in value from 1 to 15. This variable measured Korean language proficiency in speaking, reading, and listening ability. Foreign work experience prior to immigration was also included in the model (prior work experience was coded as 1; lack of prior work experience was coded as 0). Having training experience funded by the Korean government (training experience) was included in the model as well. The status where an individual had training experience was coded as 1.

Proxies of social capital related variables were included in the model. Whether or not immigrant wives have friends from Korea, from their home country, and from countries other than South Korea or their home country were included in the model. The status where the immigrant had more than one friend was coded as 1; cases where the individual had no friends were coded as 0. How the respondent got their current jobs were also considered in the model. Those who
obtained their jobs by family and friends were used as a reference group.

Lastly, occupational factors were considered as control variables. While human capital factors, individual factors, household-related factors, and contextual factors are all determined prior to employment status, occupation-related factors tend to be determined concurrently with employment. Two occupational status dummies (being a temporary employee and a day laborer) were entered in the model, where being a regular employee was used as a reference group. Specific job types were also controlled, yielding a total of eight dummy variables (sales person, farmer, technician, manufacturer, manual labor worker, office worker, professional, and executives/manager). Being a service worker was used as a reference group.

6. Results

6.1 Oaxaca decomposition result

Table 4 presents the Oaxaca decomposition result. The decomposition model assumed that Korean and immigrant wives take up 94% and 6% among the total population, which is signified in the omega value of 0.94. Where 100% implies the entire employment gap that needs to be explained, 9.78% of the gap was explained by the variables entered in the model, 3.47% was explained by premium given to Korean women, and 86.75% was left unexplained. Note that the percentage of premium value was positive. This means that there is a systematical preference given to ethnic Korean women; Korean native women are receiving undeserved premium in terms of their formal sector employment. Such findings corroborate the hypothesis of statistical discrimination theory. It can be said that employer’s preference for Korean workers over the minority groups exists in the Korean labor market.

A similar result was obtained in the 18–39 age range. Koreans and immigrants took 97% and 3% of the total population, respectively. Among the total gap to be explained, the gap explained by the control variables took 33.22%, 1.40% was explained by premium, and the proportion left unexplained was 65.39%. Note that the younger age group showed a lower discrimination rate
Table 2 Descriptive statistics result for the younger and older age groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Model 2 (Immigrant spouses)</th>
<th>Model 3 (Korean women)</th>
<th>Model 4 (Immigrant spouses)</th>
<th>Model 5 (Korean women)</th>
<th>Model 6 (Immigrant spouses)</th>
<th>Model 7 (Korean women)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular employee</td>
<td>0.163 (0.370)</td>
<td>0.550 (0.498)</td>
<td>0.171 (0.376)</td>
<td>0.705 (0.457)</td>
<td>0.146 (0.353)</td>
<td>0.470 (0.500)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day laborer</td>
<td>0.336 (0.472)</td>
<td>0.637 (0.481)</td>
<td>0.348 (0.476)</td>
<td>0.770 (0.421)</td>
<td>0.308 (0.462)</td>
<td>0.569 (0.496)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales person</td>
<td>0.484 (0.500)</td>
<td>0.240 (0.427)</td>
<td>0.490 (0.500)</td>
<td>0.181 (0.386)</td>
<td>0.470 (0.499)</td>
<td>0.270 (0.444)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service worker</td>
<td>0.180 (0.385)</td>
<td>0.123 (0.329)</td>
<td>0.162 (0.368)</td>
<td>0.049 (0.216)</td>
<td>0.222 (0.416)</td>
<td>0.161 (0.368)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer, agriculture related job</td>
<td>0.013 (0.112)</td>
<td>0.085 (0.280)</td>
<td>0.013 (0.114)</td>
<td>0.139 (0.346)</td>
<td>0.011 (0.105)</td>
<td>0.058 (0.234)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technician</td>
<td>0.071 (0.256)</td>
<td>0.073 (0.260)</td>
<td>0.080 (0.272)</td>
<td>0.086 (0.281)</td>
<td>0.049 (0.217)</td>
<td>0.066 (0.248)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturer</td>
<td>0.067 (0.251)</td>
<td>0.225 (0.418)</td>
<td>0.076 (0.266)</td>
<td>0.304 (0.461)</td>
<td>0.047 (0.213)</td>
<td>0.185 (0.388)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual labor worker</td>
<td>0.265 (0.441)</td>
<td>0.070 (0.255)</td>
<td>0.268 (0.443)</td>
<td>0.055 (0.228)</td>
<td>0.257 (0.437)</td>
<td>0.077 (0.267)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office worker</td>
<td>0.042 (0.201)</td>
<td>0.046 (0.210)</td>
<td>0.053 (0.224)</td>
<td>0.033 (0.179)</td>
<td>0.017 (0.131)</td>
<td>0.053 (0.224)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist</td>
<td>0.141 (0.348)</td>
<td>0.075 (0.264)</td>
<td>0.169 (0.375)</td>
<td>0.093 (0.290)</td>
<td>0.079 (0.270)</td>
<td>0.066 (0.249)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive and manager age</td>
<td>0.003 (0.059)</td>
<td>0.106 (0.308)</td>
<td>0.004 (0.066)</td>
<td>0.050 (0.218)</td>
<td>0.001 (0.036)</td>
<td>0.135 (0.342)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>35.559 (8.753)</td>
<td>43.182 (8.709)</td>
<td>30.858 (5.343)</td>
<td>33.562 (3.910)</td>
<td>45.968 (5.072)</td>
<td>48.100 (5.939)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Months in country</td>
<td>3.353 (1.181)</td>
<td>4.857 (1.792)</td>
<td>3.424 (1.188)</td>
<td>5.146 (1.953)</td>
<td>3.197 (1.151)</td>
<td>4.709 (1.686)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married 1</td>
<td>1.961 (0.795)</td>
<td>2.064 (0.802)</td>
<td>2.031 (0.817)</td>
<td>2.588 (0.588)</td>
<td>1.805 (0.722)</td>
<td>1.796 (0.764)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married 2</td>
<td>0.309 (0.462)</td>
<td>0.268 (0.443)</td>
<td>0.284 (0.451)</td>
<td>0.020 (0.141)</td>
<td>0.365 (0.481)</td>
<td>0.395 (0.489)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td>0.449 (0.497)</td>
<td>0.422 (0.494)</td>
<td>0.436 (0.496)</td>
<td>0.402 (0.491)</td>
<td>0.478 (0.500)</td>
<td>0.432 (0.496)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td>0.214 (0.410)</td>
<td>0.287 (0.452)</td>
<td>0.245 (0.430)</td>
<td>0.547 (0.498)</td>
<td>0.145 (0.352)</td>
<td>0.154 (0.361)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td>0.028 (0.165)</td>
<td>0.023 (0.150)</td>
<td>0.035 (0.183)</td>
<td>0.031 (0.174)</td>
<td>0.013 (0.112)</td>
<td>0.019 (0.137)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health status</td>
<td>3.555 (0.914)</td>
<td>3.568 (0.719)</td>
<td>3.657 (0.883)</td>
<td>3.753 (0.625)</td>
<td>3.329 (0.940)</td>
<td>3.473 (0.746)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>0.106 (0.307)</td>
<td>0.079 (0.270)</td>
<td>0.122 (0.327)</td>
<td>0.093 (0.291)</td>
<td>0.070 (0.254)</td>
<td>0.072 (0.258)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union status</td>
<td>0.027 (0.163)</td>
<td>0.052 (0.223)</td>
<td>0.029 (0.169)</td>
<td>0.093 (0.291)</td>
<td>0.023 (0.150)</td>
<td>0.031 (0.174)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Entire age group (18-65)</th>
<th>Younger age group (18-39)</th>
<th>Older age group (40-65)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>14,630</td>
<td>985</td>
<td>9,915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 Logistic regression results for formal sector employment, by age group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Entire group (18-65)</th>
<th>Younger age group (18-39)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 1 Total</td>
<td>Exp(B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temporary employee</td>
<td>2.335 (2.174)***</td>
<td>10.330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>day laborer</td>
<td>-1.557 (0.046)***</td>
<td>0.211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sales person worker</td>
<td>-2.523 (0.026)***</td>
<td>0.080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farmer, agriculture related job</td>
<td>-1.232 (0.092)***</td>
<td>0.292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technician</td>
<td>0.168 (0.415)</td>
<td>1.183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manufacturer</td>
<td>0.568 (0.718)</td>
<td>1.764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manual labor worker</td>
<td>0.639 (0.600)*</td>
<td>1.894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>office worker specialist, professional executive &amp; manager</td>
<td>-0.355 (0.286)</td>
<td>0.701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>0.001 (0.001)</td>
<td>1.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agesq</td>
<td>-0.087 (0.265)</td>
<td>0.917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h_emp</td>
<td>0.044 (0.063)</td>
<td>1.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monthinc</td>
<td>0.098 (0.244)</td>
<td>0.906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>edu2</td>
<td>-0.232 (0.281)</td>
<td>0.793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>edu3</td>
<td>-0.412 (0.456)</td>
<td>0.663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>health</td>
<td>-0.156 (0.113)</td>
<td>0.856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>training</td>
<td>0.924 (1.140)*</td>
<td>2.519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>union</td>
<td>1.223 (2.570)</td>
<td>3.397</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pseudo R2 0.27 11.53 26.44 10.84 30.34
Model χ2 (df) 451.16 (21)*** 1066.71 (20)*** 174.83 (20)*** 710.85 (20)*** 71.08 (20)***
N 15,615 14,630 985 9,915 366
Table 3 Cont’d

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Older age group (40-65)</th>
<th>Immigrant wives</th>
<th>Korean women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 6</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Exp(B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temporary employee</td>
<td>-1.158 (0.106)***</td>
<td>0.314</td>
<td>-1.385 (0.265)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>day laborer</td>
<td>-1.868 (0.164)***</td>
<td>0.154</td>
<td>-2.337 (0.359)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sales person</td>
<td>-0.277 (0.325)</td>
<td>0.758</td>
<td>-1.247 (0.387)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farmer, agriculture related job worker</td>
<td>-0.462 (0.601)</td>
<td>0.630</td>
<td>0.196 (0.513)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technician</td>
<td>1.094 (0.202)***</td>
<td>2.987</td>
<td>0.680 (0.524)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manufacturer</td>
<td>1.201 (0.207)***</td>
<td>3.324</td>
<td>1.246 (0.383)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manual labor worker</td>
<td>1.136 (0.118)***</td>
<td>3.113</td>
<td>-0.605 (0.540)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>office worker</td>
<td>1.049 (0.278)***</td>
<td>2.854</td>
<td>0.807 (0.450)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specialist, professional</td>
<td>0.447 (0.203)*</td>
<td>1.564</td>
<td>2.146 (0.610)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>executive and manager</td>
<td>0.032 (1.289)*</td>
<td>1.032</td>
<td>-0.223 (0.368)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>0.386 (0.164)*</td>
<td>1.471</td>
<td>0.290 (0.283)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agesq</td>
<td>-0.004 (0.002)*</td>
<td>0.996</td>
<td>-0.003 (0.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h_emp</td>
<td>0.106 (0.152)</td>
<td>1.112</td>
<td>0.013 (0.307)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monthinc</td>
<td>0.172 (0.043)***</td>
<td>1.188</td>
<td>-0.046 (0.079)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>edu2</td>
<td>0.113 (0.113)</td>
<td>1.119</td>
<td>0.008 (0.295)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>edu3</td>
<td>0.076 (0.165)</td>
<td>1.078</td>
<td>-0.381 (0.411)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>edu4</td>
<td>-0.568 (0.431)</td>
<td>0.566</td>
<td>-0.594 (0.895)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>health</td>
<td>0.090 (0.052)</td>
<td>1.094</td>
<td>-0.011 (0.154)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>training</td>
<td>0.213 (0.173)</td>
<td>1.237</td>
<td>1.558 (0.518)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>union</td>
<td>1.452 (0.248)***</td>
<td>4.271</td>
<td>1.797 (0.901)*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pseudo R² | 14.12 | 26.08
Model chi-square (df) | 399.18 (20) | 119.58 (20)
N              | 4,715 | 619

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001
Table 4 Employment probability decomposition results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Entire age group (Omega=0.94)</th>
<th>Younger age group (Omega=0.97)</th>
<th>Older age group (Omega = 0.97)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prod</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.177</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.78%</td>
<td>33.22%</td>
<td>25.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adv</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.47%</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
<td>8.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disad</td>
<td>0.335</td>
<td>0.349</td>
<td>0.213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>86.75%</td>
<td>65.39%</td>
<td>65.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw</td>
<td>0.387</td>
<td>0.534</td>
<td>0.324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

compared to the model with age restriction. The gap explained by premium also decreased from 3.47% to 1.40%. This may indicate, for younger age groups, a significant portion of the gap is coming from differences in individual attributes and job-related characteristics. When restricting the age range to 40 to 65 years old, Koreans and immigrants took 97% and 3% of the total population. Among the total gap to be explained, the gap explained by the control variables took 25.79%, 8.68% was explained by premium, and the proportion left unexplained was 65.53%.

While the unexplained gap remained fairly constant between the two groups across different age settings, the significant increase in the premium value indicates the severity of discrimination in terms of employers’ screening process is higher for the older group. The changed value of the explained gap before and after the inclusion of each variable was compared to see how much each variable contributed to the explained gap. For the younger age group (age 18 to 39), the results indicate that of the total gap to be explained (33.22%), the training variable accounted for 31.10% of the explained gap; the explained gap increased from 10.33% to 33.22% with the inclusion of the variable. Other proxies accounted for a minimal amount of the explained gap. As for the older age group (age 40 to 65), each variable individually had minimal explanatory power, where the explained gap totaled 25.79%. (See table A1 and A2 in the Appendix for more details.)
6.2 Logistic regression results for immigrant wives

6.2.1 Minimal contribution of human capital factors

Table 6 suggests the results of logistic regression for immigrant wives. As suggested in the pseudo R-square values, job characteristics showed the highest contribution to the outcome, explaining 13.9% of the total variance, followed by demographic factors (5.6%), family-related factors (only 2.7%), and ethnicity variables (only 1%). As for human capital variables, only the training variable turned out to be a significant predictor where the effect was positive on formal sector employment. Education dummy variables were not significant. This coincides with previous studies that indicate education has little relevance in explaining informal sector employment. In their study, Kwon, Cho and Cho (2009) found that women with low educational credentials showed higher likelihood for informal sector employment. On a similar note, Oh and Noh (2010) argue that women engaged in care service sectors were predominantly women who had low educational qualifications and were in their 40s and 50s, where their human capital stock had little relevance in the job market. The authors suggest that care work is a major pull factor for less educated, middle-aged women. It can be said that both younger and older immigrant wives are predominantly engaged in lower-waged jobs where human capital factors have less relevance for job placement.

Worth noting is that the logistic regression result suggests that those living in urban areas showed higher likelihood of being employed in the formal sector. Such finding coincides with previous studies where those living in rural areas with a greater share of jobs were more likely to be employed (Greenless & Saenz, 1999).

As for social capital factors, having friends from one’s home country had a negative effect on the older age group with respect to the formal sector employment, whereas the effect was not significant for the younger group. Having Korean friends, on the other hand, increased formal sector employment for the younger age group. It is possible that where older immigrant wives are predominantly engaged in temporary jobs, the informal social networks provide inroads to such jobs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Model 11-F Immigrant wives Age 18-65</th>
<th>Model 12 Immigrant wives Age 18-39</th>
<th>Model 13 Immigrant wives Age 40-65</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sector</td>
<td>0.163 (0.370)</td>
<td>0.171 (0.377)</td>
<td>0.146 (0.353)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>35.822 (8.910)</td>
<td>30.915 (5.312)</td>
<td>46.209 (5.372)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agesq</td>
<td>1362.621 (681.985)</td>
<td>983.925 (321.786)</td>
<td>2164.107 (533.291)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>region</td>
<td>0.890 (0.313)</td>
<td>0.882 (0.322)</td>
<td>0.907 (0.291)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>citizen</td>
<td>0.382 (0.486)</td>
<td>0.395 (0.489)</td>
<td>0.354 (0.478)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resid</td>
<td>73.547 (50.353)</td>
<td>68.204 (46.620)</td>
<td>84.860 (55.832)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>health</td>
<td>3.554 (0.914)</td>
<td>3.664 (0.877)</td>
<td>3.323 (0.946)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob1</td>
<td>0.412 (0.492)</td>
<td>0.337 (0.473)</td>
<td>0.570 (0.495)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob2</td>
<td>0.318 (0.466)</td>
<td>0.340 (0.474)</td>
<td>0.272 (0.445)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob3</td>
<td>0.087 (0.282)</td>
<td>0.126 (0.331)</td>
<td>0.005 (0.069)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob4</td>
<td>0.054 (0.226)</td>
<td>0.065 (0.247)</td>
<td>0.031 (0.174)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob5</td>
<td>0.129 (0.336)</td>
<td>0.132 (0.339)</td>
<td>0.123 (0.328)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regular employee</td>
<td>0.335 (0.472)</td>
<td>0.347 (0.476)</td>
<td>0.308 (0.462)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temporary employee</td>
<td>0.483 (0.500)</td>
<td>0.491 (0.500)</td>
<td>0.467 (0.499)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>day laborer</td>
<td>0.182 (0.386)</td>
<td>0.162 (0.369)</td>
<td>0.225 (0.418)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>service worker</td>
<td>0.366 (0.482)</td>
<td>0.295 (0.456)</td>
<td>0.516 (0.500)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sales person</td>
<td>0.035 (0.185)</td>
<td>0.040 (0.197)</td>
<td>0.025 (0.156)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farmer, agriculture</td>
<td>0.012 (0.108)</td>
<td>0.012 (0.110)</td>
<td>0.011 (0.103)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>related job worker</td>
<td>0.071 (0.257)</td>
<td>0.082 (0.274)</td>
<td>0.049 (0.215)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technician</td>
<td>0.066 (0.249)</td>
<td>0.075 (0.264)</td>
<td>0.047 (0.212)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manufacturer</td>
<td>0.265 (0.441)</td>
<td>0.269 (0.443)</td>
<td>0.257 (0.437)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manual labor worker</td>
<td>0.042 (0.200)</td>
<td>0.054 (0.226)</td>
<td>0.016 (0.126)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>office worker</td>
<td>0.140 (0.347)</td>
<td>0.169 (0.375)</td>
<td>0.078 (0.269)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specialist, professional</td>
<td>0.003 (0.054)</td>
<td>0.004 (0.061)</td>
<td>0.001 (0.036)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>executive and manager</td>
<td>0.873 (0.333)</td>
<td>0.897 (0.304)</td>
<td>0.821 (0.383)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h_emp</td>
<td>3.349 (1.181)</td>
<td>3.422 (1.182)</td>
<td>3.195 (1.163)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monthinc</td>
<td>1.955 (0.793)</td>
<td>2.030 (0.814)</td>
<td>1.795 (0.721)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>edu</td>
<td>0.310 (0.463)</td>
<td>0.282 (0.450)</td>
<td>0.371 (0.483)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>edu1</td>
<td>0.452 (0.498)</td>
<td>0.441 (0.497)</td>
<td>0.476 (0.499)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>edu2</td>
<td>0.210 (0.407)</td>
<td>0.243 (0.429)</td>
<td>0.140 (0.347)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>edu3</td>
<td>0.028 (0.164)</td>
<td>0.035 (0.183)</td>
<td>0.013 (0.112)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>korlang</td>
<td>9.934 (3.574)</td>
<td>9.886 (3.487)</td>
<td>10.036 (3.751)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for_emp</td>
<td>0.818 (0.386)</td>
<td>0.798 (0.402)</td>
<td>0.859 (0.348)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>training</td>
<td>0.105 (0.307)</td>
<td>0.123 (0.328)</td>
<td>0.069 (0.253)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobroute1</td>
<td>0.556 (0.497)</td>
<td>0.564 (0.496)</td>
<td>0.540 (0.498)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobroute2</td>
<td>0.153 (0.360)</td>
<td>0.135 (0.342)</td>
<td>0.191 (0.393)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobroute3</td>
<td>0.223 (0.416)</td>
<td>0.226 (0.418)</td>
<td>0.216 (0.411)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobroute4</td>
<td>0.068 (0.252)</td>
<td>0.075 (0.264)</td>
<td>0.053 (0.225)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social_pobf</td>
<td>0.453 (0.498)</td>
<td>0.490 (0.500)</td>
<td>0.375 (0.484)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social_korf</td>
<td>0.528 (0.499)</td>
<td>0.498 (0.500)</td>
<td>0.590 (0.492)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social_etcf</td>
<td>0.023 (0.151)</td>
<td>0.026 (0.158)</td>
<td>0.019 (0.136)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| N                             | 14,249                              | 9,499                               | 4,750                               |
Table 6 Logistic regression results for immigrant wives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Model 11-A Demo</th>
<th>Model 11-B Ethnicity</th>
<th>Model 11-C Job Characters</th>
<th>Model 11-D Family factors</th>
<th>Model 11-E HC factors</th>
<th>Model 11-F Social capital</th>
<th>Model 11-G Age 18-65</th>
<th>Model 12 Age 18-39</th>
<th>Model 13 Age 40-65</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.068***</td>
<td>1.080**</td>
<td>0.943</td>
<td>1.612**</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age square</td>
<td>0.999***</td>
<td>0.999**</td>
<td>1.001</td>
<td>0.995**</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region of residence</td>
<td>0.700***</td>
<td>0.658***</td>
<td>0.655***</td>
<td>0.653**</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>1.702***</td>
<td>1.700***</td>
<td>1.650***</td>
<td>1.906***</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of residence</td>
<td>1.004***</td>
<td>1.002***</td>
<td>1.004***</td>
<td>1.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>1.230***</td>
<td>1.091**</td>
<td>1.064</td>
<td>1.153**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob1 (Joseonjok)</td>
<td>0.998</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob2 (Chinese)</td>
<td>0.636***</td>
<td>0.782*</td>
<td>0.796</td>
<td>0.701</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob3 (Vietnamese)</td>
<td>0.716***</td>
<td>1.126</td>
<td>1.174</td>
<td>0.899</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob4 (Phillipine)</td>
<td>1.352***</td>
<td>1.203</td>
<td>1.289*</td>
<td>0.918</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary employee</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.322***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(occst2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day laborer (occst3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.164***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales person (occ2)</td>
<td>1.504**</td>
<td>1.410*</td>
<td>1.584**</td>
<td>0.728</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer, agriculture</td>
<td>2.465***</td>
<td>1.007</td>
<td>1.103</td>
<td>0.628</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>related job worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technician (occ4)</td>
<td>2.586***</td>
<td>2.622***</td>
<td>2.362***</td>
<td>3.319***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturer (occ5)</td>
<td>2.101***</td>
<td>3.017***</td>
<td>2.761***</td>
<td>3.614***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual labor worker</td>
<td>3.249***</td>
<td>2.420***</td>
<td>2.044***</td>
<td>3.314***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office worker (occ7)</td>
<td>1.837***</td>
<td>2.717***</td>
<td>2.673***</td>
<td>2.372**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Value 1</td>
<td>Value 2</td>
<td>Value 3</td>
<td>Value 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Specialist, professional (occ8)</td>
<td>3.084***</td>
<td>1.526***</td>
<td>1.494***</td>
<td>1.477*</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>executive &amp; manager (occ9)</td>
<td>0.247***</td>
<td>3.498***</td>
<td>3.936***</td>
<td>1.255</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Husband’s employment status</td>
<td>1.016</td>
<td>0.902</td>
<td>0.822*</td>
<td>1.067</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monthly household income</td>
<td>1.108***</td>
<td>1.249***</td>
<td>1.281***</td>
<td>1.173***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>High school graduate (edu2)</td>
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<td>1.065</td>
<td>0.976</td>
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<td>College school graduate (edu3)</td>
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<td>1.010</td>
<td>1.057</td>
<td>0.849</td>
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<td>Graduate school graduate (edu4)</td>
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<td>0.917</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Korean language proficiency</td>
<td>1.047***</td>
<td>1.007</td>
<td>1.007</td>
<td>1.006</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign work experience</td>
<td>1.108</td>
<td>1.134</td>
<td>1.114</td>
<td>1.318</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training experience</td>
<td>1.395***</td>
<td>1.351***</td>
<td>1.358***</td>
<td>1.384*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of friends from home country</td>
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<td>0.942</td>
<td>0.995</td>
<td>0.806*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Existence of Korean friends</td>
<td>1.395***</td>
<td>1.182**</td>
<td>1.209**</td>
<td>1.090</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of friends from elsewhere countries</td>
<td>1.247</td>
<td>1.167</td>
<td>1.390</td>
<td>0.550</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ad from public/private institution(Jobroute2)</td>
<td>1.033</td>
<td>1.046</td>
<td>1.145</td>
<td>0.896</td>
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<td>Mass media, flyer(Jobroute3)</td>
<td>0.986</td>
<td>0.899</td>
<td>0.939</td>
<td>0.805</td>
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<tr>
<td>Etc (Jobroute4)</td>
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<td>1.104</td>
<td>1.151</td>
<td>0.984</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Pseudo R2 LR test N</th>
<th>5.6</th>
<th>1.0</th>
<th>13.9</th>
<th>2.7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>18,342</td>
<td>19,431</td>
<td>17,974</td>
<td>18,078</td>
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</table>

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001
In terms of ethnicity variables, most of the dummy variables were not statistically significant. It is possible that in terms of predicting the quality of employment (i.e., formal vs. informal sector employment) ethnicity has little relevance. Acquisition of Korean citizenship increased the likelihood of being employed in the formal sector. It can be inferred that the legal status of immigrants is crucial to their economic integration process.

6.2.2 Low position of immigrant wives

The descriptive statistics results show that both younger and older immigrants were predominantly engaged in lower-waged jobs where human capital factors have little to do with their work. As suggested in table 5, as for occupational status, for both age groups, the majority were temporary employees, followed by regular employees, and day laborers. As for job types, both age groups showed a similar pattern where service workers showed the highest employment rate followed by manual laborers and specialists/professionals. Where “irregular employment has become synonymous with discriminatory labor practices (Chun, 2009, p. 539), the descriptive statistics result suggests that a large portion of immigrant wives are employed as informal workers; among the total sample, formal sector workers constitute not more than one fifth of the total work force (17.4%) whereas informal workers occupy a dominant portion of the labor force (83.6%). As Shrestha (2001) puts it, “Given the mode of payment received among the day laborers [and temporary workers], their work is more likely to be unregulated and unprotected” (p. 74). In such case, those who are employed as irregular workers may have higher chances of being employed in the informal sector. In terms of occupation, compared to being a service worker, being employed as a sales person, technician, manufacturer, manual labor worker, office worker, specialist or professional, executive, or manager uniformly increased the likelihood of being employed in the formal sector for younger age group. As for the older group, compared to being a service worker, being employed as a technician, manufacturer, or manual laborer increased the likelihood of formal sector employment. Considering that the majority of immigrant wives are employed in the service sector, the economic outlook for immigrants is dim.

When considering models 12 and 13, which compared immigrant wives based on age, temporary employees and day laborers in both age groups were less likely to have formal sector jobs
compared to regular employees. In terms of job types, with the exception of farmers and agriculture-related workers, younger immigrant wives who were employed in jobs other than service worker positions were more likely to get employed in formal sector jobs. Older immigrant wives employed as technicians, manufacturers, and manual laborers showed higher odds of formal sector employment compared to the younger immigrant wives. The younger group showed higher chances of being employed as office workers, specialists/professionals, or executives/managers compared to the older group. It is possible that older immigrant wives are not only over-represented in low-end jobs but also have higher chances of being employed in these occupations.

Length of residence, which increased the likelihood of employment probability in previous studies, was only significant for the younger group. Moreover, although the odds ratio was statistically significant at a $p$-value of .001, the $\text{Exp}(b)$ value was 1.004, having little practical significance. As the majority of immigrants are engaged in informal sector, it can be said that the additional years of residence in the host country do not affect the economic assimilation process and, as such, the wage and employment gaps between the two groups are expected to widen over time.

Monthly household income had a positive effect on formal sector employment for both age groups. This corroborates the hypothesis of previous studies where women from high socioeconomic status are less likely to participate in the labor market. Considering that the average monthly household income of the immigrant wives’ family is low, most immigrant wives whose husbands earn subsistence-level wages may be drawn out to the labor market to make ends meet. Note that the mean value of household monthly income and husband’s employment rate was higher among the younger age group. This implies that older immigrants may be at more risk.

7. Summary and discussion

Considering that “the purpose of any social insurance is to establish a minimum level of welfare” for each individual worker (J. M. Cho, et al., 2008, p. 407), the high percentage of immigrant
wives especially in the older group, in the informal sector implicates inherent segregation in the economic integration process. In fact, the logistic regression results suggest that older immigrant wives are not only over-represented in low-end jobs but also have higher chances of being employed in these occupations. As suggested by the minimal bearing length of residence had on formal sector employment, the wage and employment gaps between the two groups are expected to widen over time. If immigrant wives continue to be excluded from entering the formal sector, institutionalized discrimination in the form of labor market segmentation may result. In fact, when comparing the model with age restriction from 18 to 39 and the model with age restriction from 40 to 65, the gap explained by all the control variables was 33.22% for the younger group and only 25.79% for the older group. From a social exclusion perspective, such results indicate that while the majority of immigrant wives are not covered by social insurances, the proportion that can be explained by various factors entered into the model is limited; 65.39% of the total gap was left unexplained for the younger group and 65.53% for the older group. While it is difficult to ascertain the source of the unexplained gap, it seems that the different sectoral placement of immigrant and Korean women may be partly due to structural barriers that inhibit immigrant wives from entering the primary sector labor markets. As mentioned earlier, the theory assumes that immigrant wives are steered into lower paying professions by discriminatory hiring practices. In fact, the study results show that there was an undeserved premium given to Korean women in terms of formal sector employment, particularly in the older age group. The fact that the premium value was 8.68% for the older group and 1.40% for the younger group indicate that Korean women are benefiting in terms of formal sector employment due to their native status. Discriminatory hiring practices have direct implications for immigrant wives, as these women may be failing to gain admission to formal sector jobs not because of their individual attributes but rather due to native status.

It is also important to recall that the training variable accounted for 31.10% of the explained gap for the younger age group, suggesting that immigrant wives show higher mean values in terms of training experience. In other words, although immigrant wives had more training experience than native Korean women, their experience was not transferable. This may either suggest that the current training program is not effective for immigrant wives, thus requiring a new program.
intended for the population, or it may indicate a true case of discrimination where the Korean labor market is failing to compensate workers on the basis of their productive endowments.

One way to address labor market segregation is to adopt various policy measures. First, it is necessary to implement and enforce anti-discrimination legislations in the Korean labor market. Western countries including Canada, the US, and Australia have anti-discrimination protections in the workplace, many of which extend to ethnic or racial minority immigrants (Bloemraad & Graauw, 2012). As the significant proportion of the underemployment gap is coming from discriminatory hiring practices, such enactment may significantly reduce discrimination that occurs in the hiring process. In fact, having a strong anti-discrimination infrastructure within the labor market may not only affect the employers’ hiring decisions but also the bargaining power of the informal sector workers in terms of employee benefits, social insurance, and other terms and conditions (Grubb, Lee & Teregeist, 2007).

Secondly, and more fundamentally, it is necessary to increase the employability and income security of informal sector workers by enhancing employment services and expanding the social safety net. As immigrant wives are mostly engaged in the informal sector, public policies in the labor market sector alone may be insufficient to address the growing polarization between formal and informal sectors. Training programs intended for employment preparation should be devised based on immigrants’ educational levels and qualifications.

The study has several limitations. Using solely the discrimination framework may obscure the reality where immigrant wives make a rational choice to engage in what have been described as poor working conditions. Second, marriage migration is situated in both intra- and transnational contexts. Research results need further elaboration in the future to include such a global context. Third, due to the nature of the data set (i.e., cross-sectional), the causal relationships between some of the independent variables and the outcome variable were difficult to be inferred. Although the main focus of the study was examining the magnitude of discrimination within the labor market, had the data set been longitudinal, more accurate inferences would have been possible. Fourth, the Oaxaca-Blinder method does not offer details about what underlies these relationships. While the unexplained gap unquestionably consists of “true” discrimination within
the labor market, it also consists of all the unobserved characteristics not accounted for in the model. Without being able to rule out such unobserved factors, it is difficult to use the model as conclusive evidence of discrimination. Thus, the findings from the study should be supplemented by studies that capture a more detailed account of the labor market experience of immigrant wives.
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Valtonen, K. (2004). From the margin to the mainstream: Conceptualizing refugee settlement


Appendix

Contribution of each gap

Table A1 Employment gap result for younger age group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Job char</th>
<th>Union</th>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Edu</th>
<th>household</th>
<th>health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omega=0.97</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prod</td>
<td>33.22%</td>
<td>10.33%</td>
<td>33.98%</td>
<td>32.18%</td>
<td>32.18%</td>
<td>35.52%</td>
<td>32.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adv</td>
<td>65.40%</td>
<td>88.25%</td>
<td>64.70%</td>
<td>64.67%</td>
<td>66.37%</td>
<td>62.75%</td>
<td>65.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disad</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
<td>1.42%</td>
<td>1.32%</td>
<td>1.36%</td>
<td>1.45%</td>
<td>1.73%</td>
<td>1.46%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table A2 Employment gap result for elderly age group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Job char</th>
<th>Union</th>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Edu</th>
<th>household</th>
<th>health</th>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prod</td>
<td>25.79%</td>
<td>-1.51%</td>
<td>27.29%</td>
<td>24.71%</td>
<td>25.47%</td>
<td>27.97%</td>
<td>25.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adv</td>
<td>65.33%</td>
<td>93.42%</td>
<td>65.02%</td>
<td>66.96%</td>
<td>65.80%</td>
<td>61.61%</td>
<td>65.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disad</td>
<td>8.67%</td>
<td>8.09%</td>
<td>7.69%</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
<td>8.73%</td>
<td>10.42%</td>
<td>8.60%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Chapter 4
Factors associated with support service utilization patterns among immigrant wives

1. Introduction

South Korea is currently undergoing societal changes associated with unprecedented increases in its immigrant population. According to the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs, as of January 2014, the immigrant population in South Korea is 1,569,740, making up 3.1% of the total population in South Korea. “Immigrant” includes long-term resident aliens, naturalized citizens, marriage migrants, and children of multicultural families. Although the absolute rate is not particularly high, the rate of increase has been quite dramatic within the past decade: national statistics indicate an average 9.7% increase each year since 2006 (Shin, 2013). Among the immigrant population, the number of female marriage migrants has also been steadily increasing since the 1990s. The expanding presence of immigrant wives mostly from less-developed countries poses challenging questions about how to facilitate the long-term economic settlement of this population. In fact, as an effort to facilitate the integration process of the population, many non-government organizations and local social welfare agencies have been mobilized and have been providing various services under the government’s “Policy Plan to Support the Social Integration of Marriage Migrant Families.” Referred to as “Support Services for Multicultural Families,” these services address various challenges faced by immigrant wives and their families. Despite the increased use of welfare and social services, however, little is known about the support services utilization patterns of immigrant wives, especially on a national level. In fact, research on immigrant wives’ labor market activity and service utilization in the Korean social work literature is very limited. In light of this gap in research, this study examined the determinant factors of immigrant wives’ service use. Moreover, considering that the degree to which they take advantage of support services may considerably vary within the group of immigrant wives, special analytic attention were given to possible differences in service utilization patterns that depend on their employment status situations. Such efforts may provide
useful implications for the development of social work services and/or service delivery systems that are tailored to meet the different needs of immigrant wives based on their positions within the labor market.

2. Conceptual framework: Gelberg-Andersen’s behavioral model for vulnerable populations

To date, literature on the service utilization behavior of immigrants is relatively scarce. One theory that has acquired substantial support is the behavioral model of Health Service Utilization, also known as the Andersen Model. The original Behavior Model was developed to explore why people use health services. The model suggests that “the use of service is a function of a predisposition by people to use health services, factors that enable or impede such use, and people’s need for care,” where each component makes an independent contribution to predicting service use (Andersen, 1968; cited in Gelberg, Andersen, & Leake, 2000, p. 1275). “Predisposing factors” refers to conditions that either enable or impede individuals to use services. Such factors can be predicted according to demographics, social structure, and health beliefs, all of which represent the sociocultural element of the behavior model (Wolinsky, 1995). “Enabling factors” refers to factors which make services available to the individual for consumption (Wolinsky & Johnson, 1991). Lastly, “need factors” are those that arouse the individual’s perception of service needs. Usually specified as the most immediate cause of health service use, need factors can be further subdivided into perceived needs and evaluated needs (Wolinsky & Johnson, 1991). Perceived needs represent the subjective judgments made by individuals and are usually measured by self-reported health status. Evaluated needs represent professional judgments and are measured by physicians’ assessments. This study adopted a recent variation of the “behavioral model for vulnerable populations,” which is a revised and expanded version of the original Andersen model (Gelberg, Andersen, & Leake, 2000). According to Small (2005), “persons considered to have a vulnerable health status include immigrants and refugees, persons with mental illness, substance abusers, ethnic or racial minorities, persons living with HIV/AIDS or at risk for communicable diseases, chronically ill, homeless, victims of violent crime, as well as mothers and infants at high risk of infant mortality and disability” (p. 1). The present model
“is premised upon an understanding that factors that make a certain group of people vulnerable [such as immigrants] may also affect their access and use of services” (H.-M. Kim, 2012, p. 29). Thus, in addition to traditional measures, population-specific vulnerabilities were factored in as additional determinants of service use.

3. An overview of the support services for immigrant wives in South Korea

In 2008, the Korean government announced the “Family Life-Cycle based Service Plans for Multicultural Families” to be headed by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Families (hereafter, MOGEF). According to each migrant family’s life cycle, specific tasks were suggested as guidelines for service agencies. More than 200 Multicultural Family Support Centers (hereafter, MFSCs) were established nation-wide to provide language classes, education seminars on Korean culture, employment assistance services, computer and Internet classes, counseling and intervention. Table 1 presents the list of services provided by MFSCs. In relation to the integration of immigrant wives, these services aptly respond to the immediate needs of the population. In the national survey conducted in year 2009, when asked “what are the primary concern that need to be addressed for their employment,” 29.6% of the immigrant wives picked “job allocationfinding,” as their primary concerned, followed by child-care services (22.9%) and Korean education (18.4%). The 2013 report from the MOGEF announced that among the various support services provided by the MFSCs, language training showed the highest usage rate (45.6%) followed by multicultural family integration education (30.0%) and employment assistance programs (10.1%). Currently these services are being provided either by a center-based approach or through a door-to-door approach. The latter is means-tested based and priority is given to beneficiaries of National Basic Livelihood Security (hereafter, NBLS).

In her study, Kim (2012) sorts these support services into three categories: (1) Adjustment assistance services which aim to help foreign spouses acquire knowledge about Korean language, culture, and society; (2) family services which address family issues such as pre- and post-natal care, family counseling and education, child education and child care; and (3)
Table 1 Support services provided by MFSC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Required Services</td>
<td>Language Training</td>
<td>- Korean language courses are offered at different levels for marriage migrants in need of language training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multicultural Family Integrated</td>
<td>- Communication program, Children and parent program, Multicultural education program (education sessions for parents in-law’s, and workshops on family life and communication methods are provided)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Counseling Program</td>
<td>- Counseling services are provided for families in conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employment Assistance Program</td>
<td>- Employment counseling, job placement services, case management as well as business consulting for starting up of new business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selective Services</td>
<td>Self-Support Group</td>
<td>- Recruitment of marriage migrants to volunteer as translators for newly arrived migrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Volunteer Program</td>
<td>- Recruitment of potential mentors who may provide various volunteer services to marriage migrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raising Awareness Project</td>
<td>- Hosting various exhibitions and festivals where both Korean and multicultural families may experience different cultures as well as coordinating campaigns for discrimination-free society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Network Project</td>
<td>- Identifying and networking with various community resources for systematic service delivery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


empowerment assistant services which assist and support immigrants’ employment in the Korean labor market. The present study has adopted this categorization. It is important to note that while all three domains of support services are closely related to immigrant women’s labor market activity (i.e., adjustment assistance services, family care services, and employment assistance services), the present study focused on the first two services available in the data set. As will be discussed later, information on employment assistant services was not provided in the data; it was thus not included in the analyses.

4. Factors affecting immigrant wives’ service utilization behavior

Literature on immigrants’ support service use is very scarce as studies on service utilization is mostly bound to that of health and mental health services (H.-M. Kim, 2012). Though the service utilization behavior may vary across different types of services, the next section examines
literature on health and mental health services as an effort to obtain general understanding of the immigrants’ service utilization behavior.

4.1 Predispositional factors and service use

Traditional predispositional factors considered in the Gelberg-Andersen model include demographic factors such as age, marital status, gender, and social structural factors that affect person’s status in the community. While the effect on service utilization may differ depending on the nature and types of the service being provided, age has been widely used as one of the traditional predispositional factors. In the prediction of health care, for example, Akresh (2009) found that age was positively related to service use. Burnette and Mui (1999) found a similar result in terms of physician utilization where older Hispanic immigrants showed a higher propensity for service use than the younger generations.

Other predisposing factors that have been traditionally used are social structural factors which include employment status and ethnicity (Gelberg, et al., 2000; Knipscheer & Kleber, 2001; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Leclere, Jensen, & Biddlecom, 1994; Portes, Kyle, & Eaton, 1992; Vera et al., 1998). Employment’s direct relation to income means that it can serve as an indicator of one’s ability to pay for services. In the prediction of preventive health care services of Latina women living in LA, Katzburg (2002) found employment to be a significant predictor. Similarly, Vera et al. (1998) found employment to be a significant predictor of mental health care service use among immigrants in the US. However, employment status has also been identified as a potential barrier for service use when employment prevents one from seeking services due to time constraints (Leclere, et al., 1994). Such discrepancy may warrant future research.

Another factor that influences utilization is race/ethnicity. Although ethnicity may not have a direct impact on the service utilization pattern, evidence suggests that significant differences exist in service utilization depending on immigrants’ racial or ethnic origins (Bender et al., 2007; Brown & Harrick, 1998; Harris, Edlund, & Larson, 2005; Knipscheer & Kleber, 2001). For example, in their study of mental health service utilization, Bender et al. (2007) found that Hispanics in the US were less likely than whites to receive services. Similarly, Brown and
Harrick (1998) found that Asian Americans were less likely to use mental health services than whites or other racial groups. The discrepancy may reflect different need perceptions across racial groups. Such a pattern is also detected in Korea. Among the diverse pool of immigrant wives, those with a Korean–Chinese ethnic background were found to underutilize adjustment services compared to women from other countries (Seol, et al., 2005).

Length of residence yields ambiguous findings. In the prediction of health services of older Hispanic immigrants in the US, Burnette and Mui (1999) found that length of residence was not a significant predictor. A non-significant relationship was also found in predicting the use of educational support services for multicultural families in Korea (S. Y. Oh, 2010). Knipscheer and Kleber (2001), on the other hand, found length of residence to be a crucial determinant of immigrants’ health service seeking behavior. While it is difficult to corroborate the effect of length of residence on immigrants’ service utilization pattern when discussing different types of services in different countries, such discrepancy may warrant future research.

Lastly, number of children has been utilized as a common predispositional factor across health and mental health service literature. It is expected that the existence of young children is likely to increase the service use in the form of preventive services such as immunization (Leclere, et al., 1994); a negative relationship is expected to be found between the number of children and health utilization behavior. It is argued that “persons in families with children and more full-time workers are likely to be both healthier and busier, which makes them less likely to visit a physician” (Leclere, et al., 1994, p. 379).

4.2 Enabling factors and service use

Availability of resources, including income and possession of insurance, is another essential determinant with respect to service utilization. Knipscheer and Kleber (2001) describe the negative association between poor financial situations and health service utilization in Netherlands. Likewise, possession of insurance is known to affect service utilization of immigrants. Benefit coverage and “its effect on the net price of services” were found to positively influence service utilization (Berkanovic, Telesky, & Reeder, 1981; Ho, 2000). In fact,
the primary way US citizens pay for their medical care services is through insurance. Studies focusing on the influence of government insurances such as Medicaid (Aday & Andersen, 1978; Kronenfeld, 1980; Rabin, Bice, & Starfield, 1974; Shortell, 1975) and Medicare (Ferguson, Lee, & Wallace, 1976; Raffety, 1975) show that having insurance coverage was positively related to service use. In the meantime, it is important to note that services offered by MFSCs are free. Nevertheless, Kim (2012) argues that income may still be a significant enabling factor as it provides the means to pay for transportation and other associated costs. In fact, the study found income to be a significant enabling factor affecting immigrant wives’ support service use.

Social support can be further partitioned into informal (friends and family) and formal (governmental or service-agency) social support. Whereas formal social support has generally been found to increase the use of health services, no consistent agreement has been reached in regards to the effect of informal support. Informal social support may either facilitate access to services by bridging individuals (Chappell, 1987; Ho, 2000; Sussman, 1976) or “act as a substitution for formal services” (Ho, 2000, p. 36). While the effect of social support largely depends on the nature of the services provided (Ho, 2000), both hypotheses may hold for immigrant wives in Korea. For instance, in the context of support services, informal social support may facilitate access to community resources offered by MFSCs or provide instrumental and emotional support as a substitution for care services.

Another enabling factor that should be given some consideration in examining the immigrant wives’ service utilization is their place of residence (Gelberg, et al., 2000), as the number and the kind of services available may differ between urban and rural areas. Accessibility may also be an issue when public transportation is not as available in some rural areas. Perhaps in part for this reason, service-providing agencies tend to be concentrated in urban areas. In Korea, nearly 70% of MFSCs are located in urban areas.

Education may also influence people’s propensity to use services. Past studies on medical care and health care services generally agree that higher education levels are associated with frequent service usage (Arling, 1985; Ho, 2000; Katzburg, 2002; Weisman, 1996). As Portes, Kyle and Eaton (1992) argue, immigrants who are more educated and are more fluent in English tend to
navigate better within the host society, and hence show higher rates of service use. Following such findings, this study also incorporated “Internet usage” as a proxy for one’s potential resources. On a similar note, language proficiency may also be seen as a both predispositional and enabling factor. (Lin et al., 2009; Zambrana, Breen, Fox, & Guiterrez-Mohamed, 1999). Though language proficiency can be perceived as a pre-existing characteristic, its nature better fits the definition of an enabling component in the Andersen model as ability to use a language can be considered a personal resource enabling an immigrant to access the needed service.

4.3 Need factors and service use

Lastly, need factors are immediate causes of service utilization. They include self-perception (perceived need) and objective evaluation (evaluated need) (Portes, et al., 1992). Evidence suggests that service utilization is causally related to need. Both national and regional survey data have consistently shown perceived health and/or mental health status as significant determinants of the number of visits to physicians and professionals (Andersen, 1978; Denktas, Koopmans, Bimie, Foets, & Bonsel, 2009; Fiscella, Franks, Doescher, & Saver, 2002; Katzburg, 2002; Leclere, et al., 1994). In fact, Portes, Kyle and Eaton (1992) assert that need factors are the strongest predictors of service utilization.

5. Data, measures, and method

The “National Survey on Multicultural Families” data set from 2009 (hereafter, NSMF) was used to obtain information on immigrant wives. The survey was based on the number of multicultural families recorded in the Basic Status Report on Multicultural Families conducted by the Ministry of Public Affairs and Security (MPAS) in 2009. A total of 154,333 individuals were identified as marriage migrants. However, only 55.9% of the respondents (73,669 individuals) finished the survey and were incorporated in the study. The survey employed post-stratification weights to correct disproportional data and adjust the collected data to represent the marriage migrant population in Korea. The data was weighted to have the same distribution of gender, ethnic, and regional characteristics as the Basic Status Report on Multicultural Families. The sample used for the study was a sub-sample of the original data, which only includes immigrant women. First,
only those who were married to Korean men at the time of the survey were included. Second, only those between the ages of 18 and 70 were included considering that the minimum age requirement for marriage in South Korea is 18 years.

Largely echoing Kim’s study (2012), variables included in the model were modified from the original Gelberg-Andersen model to match data availability and the specific characteristics needed to study immigrant wives in particular. The adapted model incorporated adjustment assistance service use (AAS) and family care service use (FCS) as the dependent variables. Regarding AAS, a dummy code was created where immigrant wives who utilized the adjustment assistance services were coded as 1 and those who did not utilize the services were coded as 0. A total score was calculated based on three types of adjustment assistance services, ranging from 0 for a person who never used any type of services to 3 for a person who used all three types of services. Likewise, a dummy code was created for FCS where immigrant wives who utilized the family care services were coded as 1 and those who did not utilize the service were coded as 0. A total score was calculated based on two types of family care services, ranging from 0 for a person who never used any type of services to 2 for a person who used all two types of services.

In order to see the effect of predisposing factors on employment probability, age, ethnicity, region of residence, length of residence, and number of children were included. Age, length of residence, and number of children were coded as continuous variables. Immigrant wives living in urban areas were coded as 1 and those living in rural areas were coded as 0. As for ethnicity, four dummy variables—Joseonjok (pob1), Mainland Chinese and Han Chinese (pob2), Vietnamese (pob3), Philippine (pob4) and other countries, as a reference group (pob5)—were used. This coding method was chosen based on a technical consideration. While the original ethnicity variable included eleven categories which also included immigrant wives from Japan, Thailand, Mongolia, Taiwan, Cambodia, Uzbekistan, and Russia, the percentage of immigrant wives in each category was less than 5% and so these groups were merged into one: Immigrant wives from other countries.

Secondly, in order to see the effect of enabling factors on immigrant wives’ employment status, several variables were incorporated into the model, including household income, eligibility to
receive benefits under the NBLS status, the relationship between husbands’ and immigrant wives’ education levels, and proxies of social support. Monthly household income (monthly household income) was measured as an ordinal variable where 1 represents an income level of less than five hundred thousand won, and 9 represents the highest level of income of over seven million won. Relationship with husband was also coded in an ordinal scale where 1 represents “very unsatisfied” and 5 represents “very satisfied.” NBLS status and Internet usage were coded as dichotomous variables where 1 stands for those receiving the benefits and using the Internet. Four dummy variables were included in the model including middle school graduate or lower (edu1), high school graduate (edu2), college graduate (edu3), and graduate-level degree (edu4). Edu1 was used as the reference group. Korean language proficiency level (Korean proficiency) was measured as a continuous variable that ranged in value from 1 to 15. The variable measured the total score of Korean language fluency, reading, and listening ability. Proxies of social support were also included. Whether or not the immigrant wives had friends from their home countries, friends from other foreign countries, or friends from Korea was included in the model. Having more than one friend were coded as 1 and having no friends was coded as 0. Lastly, the perceived needs for each service were included. The two variables were coded in an ordinal scale where 1 represents “not needed at all,” and 5 represents “very urgently needed.”

The study aimed to answer the following two questions. Do factors affecting immigrant wives’ support service utilization differ according to employment status? If so, what differences stand out between different groups? In order to answer these two questions, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to examine possible differences in service utilization in relation to immigrant wives’ employment status situations. In addition, the relationship between the two domains of services (AAS and FCS) was examined. Moreover, the three domains of factors (i.e., predispositional, enabling, and need factors) that jointly explain the use of services among immigrant wives were explored.
6. Results

6.1 Descriptive statistics

The result of the descriptive statistics is suggested in table 2. Immigrant wives were partitioned into two groups: Employed and unemployed. It is interesting to note that the unemployed group showed higher usage of both types of services. Among the predisposing factors, length of residence warrants attention. The employed group showed a higher mean value (mean=80.324, SD=53.669) compared to the unemployed group (mean=54.580, SD=46.730). In terms of ethnic background variables, as for the unemployed group, Chinese immigrants took the highest proportion with a mean value of 0.281, followed by Vietnamese and Joseonjok women, other

Table 2 Descriptive statistics result for younger age group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Unemployed group</th>
<th>Employed group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment assistance service usage</td>
<td>0.625 (0.484)</td>
<td>0.510 (0.500)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family care service usage</td>
<td>0.431 (0.495)</td>
<td>0.357 (0.479)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>29.908 (8.517)</td>
<td>36.183 (9.288)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseonjok (Pob1)</td>
<td>0.247 (0.431)</td>
<td>0.403 (0.491)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese (Pob2)</td>
<td>0.281 (0.449)</td>
<td>0.282 (0.450)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese (Pob3)</td>
<td>0.247 (0.431)</td>
<td>0.117 (0.321)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines (Pob4)</td>
<td>0.073 (0.265)</td>
<td>0.059 (0.236)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsewhere countries (Pob5)</td>
<td>0.166 (0.372)</td>
<td>0.122 (0.328)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3.730 (0.934)</td>
<td>3.860 (0.910)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of residence</td>
<td>54.580 (46.730)</td>
<td>80.324 (53.669)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children</td>
<td>0.958 (0.853)</td>
<td>0.752 (0.919)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household’s monthly income</td>
<td>3.095 (1.072)</td>
<td>3.264 (1.152)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBLs status</td>
<td>0.082 (0.274)</td>
<td>0.070 (0.255)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with husband</td>
<td>4.097 (0.873)</td>
<td>3.923 (0.946)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet usage</td>
<td>0.658 (0.475)</td>
<td>0.585 (0.493)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of Korean friends</td>
<td>0.516 (0.500)</td>
<td>0.447 (0.497)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of friends from home country</td>
<td>0.433 (0.495)</td>
<td>0.518 (0.500)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of friends from other countries</td>
<td>0.021 (0.142)</td>
<td>0.024 (0.154)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of residence</td>
<td>0.805 (0.396)</td>
<td>0.820 (0.384)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean language proficiency</td>
<td>3.123 (1.044)</td>
<td>3.530 (1.050)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived needs for the AAS</td>
<td>3.748 (1.359)</td>
<td>3.043 (1.494)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived needs for the FCS</td>
<td>3.562 (1.247)</td>
<td>2.876 (1.374)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>33,747</td>
<td>19,408</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ethnicities, and Philippine women. Value of 0.403, followed by Chinese, immigrant wives from other countries, Vietnamese, and immigrant wives from the Philippines. The unemployed group, on average, had more children than the employed group where the mean values were 0.958 (SD=0.853) and 0.742 (SD=0.919) respectively.

In terms of enabling factors, the employed group showed slightly higher educational levels. The mean value was 3.860 (SD=0.910) versus 3.730 (SD=0.934) for the unemployed group. As for the relationship with husband, unemployed immigrant wives showed a higher satisfaction level of 4.097 (SD=0.873) compared to employed immigrant wives (mean=3.923, SD=0.946). As for existence of friends from home country, the employed group showed a higher mean value of 0.519 (SD=0.500) compared to the unemployed group (mean=0.433, SD=0.495). Lastly, in terms of Korean language proficiency, the employed group showed a higher mean value of 3.530 (SD=1.050) compared to the unemployed group. In terms of perceived needs for AAS, the unemployed group showed higher need with a mean value of 3.562 (SD=1.237) versus 2.876 (SD=1.374) for the employed group.

6.2 Model specification process and results

Prior to conducting the structural equation model, the full path model with hypothesized relationships among the variables was specified based on the Gelberg-Andersen Model and was empirically tested for goodness of fit. Four different measures were used: The chi-square statistics was statistically significant with a p-value of .033. Other fit indices, however, all indicated that the model is acceptable: IFI=1.000, CFI=1.000, RMSEA=.008.

Table 3 Result of chi-square value change test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>( \chi^2 )</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trimmed model 1st</td>
<td>9.176</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trimmed model 2nd</td>
<td>12.373</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \Delta ) (changed value)</td>
<td>3.197</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.074</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p<.001 ***, p<.01 **, p<.05 *
Based on the measurement of model fit of the hypothesized full model, two trimmed models were devised for the final model of the study. As the trimmed models are nested within the full model, a chi-square test was conducted to see whether the two models were identical. The significance of the chi-square value change ($\chi^2=1.443$) between the trimmed model ($\chi^2=6.008$) and the full model ($\chi^2=4.565$) was tested as a first step. The result indicated that the chi-square value change was 1.443 and was not significant with a p-value of .291. It can be said that the trimmed model fits the data best and explains the same amount of information as the full hypothesized model. The significance of the chi-square value change ($\chi^2=3.197$) between the first model 1 ($\chi^2=9.176$) and the trimmed model ($\chi^2=12.373$) was tested. As suggested in table 3, the result indicates that the chi-square value change was not significant with a p-value of .074. Given the principle of parsimony, the latter model was accepted as the final model.

A structural path invariance test was also conducted. Prior to conducting a multiple group analysis, it is necessary to examine whether the structural paths are different across the two groups (i.e., whether there is an interaction effect). As a first step, two models were compared: The constrained baseline model and the constrained model. As the constrained model is nested within the baseline model, the chi-square statistics values of the two models were contrasted to see the significance of chi-square value change. As suggested in table 4, the change in chi-square value between the two models was significant with a p-value of .000, which rejects the null hypothesis that the structural paths are identical across the two groups. In sum, it can be said that there is a statistically significant difference in the structural paths leading to service usage across the employed and unemployed immigrant groups; among the twenty-six structural paths, at least one of the paths differs between the two groups. In order to specify which one, the chi-square change between the two models—equal constrained and equality unconstrained—was compared. Specific structural path coefficient results are suggested in table 6. Although most of the structural path coefficients turned out to be statistically significant, only estimates where the model comparison value was significant had interaction effects. In terms of adjustment assistance service, a total of 19 path coefficients differed according to immigrant wives’ employment status. Findings from the study generally accord with the findings of Kim (2012).
Table 4 Structural path Invariance Test across employed and unemployed group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta\chi^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>$\Delta df$</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline model</td>
<td>45.088</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constrained model</td>
<td>446.186</td>
<td>401.098</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p<.001 ***, p<0.01 **, p<.05 *

Table 5 $\chi^2$ Change between the equal constrained model & the equality unconstrained model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$\Delta\chi^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta df$</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age --&gt; Adjustment assistance service usage (AAS)</td>
<td>2.233</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob1--&gt; AAs</td>
<td>35.942</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob2--&gt; AAS</td>
<td>149.356</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob3--&gt; AAS</td>
<td>5.168</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob4--&gt; AAS</td>
<td>23.541</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of residence--&gt;AAS</td>
<td>15.439</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children--&gt;AAS</td>
<td>44.291</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education--&gt;AAS</td>
<td>0.383</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly household income--&gt;AAS</td>
<td>11.749</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBLS--&gt;AAS</td>
<td>0.899</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends from home country --&gt; AAS</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends from elsewhere countries --&gt; AAS</td>
<td>5.643</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region of residence--&gt;AAS</td>
<td>26.488</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean language proficiency --&gt; AAS</td>
<td>21.275</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet--&gt; AAS</td>
<td>1.667</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with husband --&gt; AAS</td>
<td>0.499</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived needs for AAS --&gt; AAS</td>
<td>39.001</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived needs for Family care services --&gt; AAS</td>
<td>0.184</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age--&gt; Family care service usage (FCS)</td>
<td>7.758</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob1--&gt; FCS</td>
<td>35.962</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob2--&gt;FCS</td>
<td>0.486</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob3--&gt;FCS</td>
<td>2.374</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob4--&gt;FCS</td>
<td>0.414</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of residence--&gt; FCS</td>
<td>14.751</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children--&gt;FCS</td>
<td>3.916</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly household income-&gt; FCS</td>
<td>3.947</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBLS status-&gt;FCS</td>
<td>0.793</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends from home country --&gt;FCS</td>
<td>0.990</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends from different countries --&gt; FCS</td>
<td>0.189</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region of residence--&gt; FCS</td>
<td>20.529</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean language proficiency --&gt;FCS</td>
<td>7.409</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet--&gt;FCS</td>
<td>0.201</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with husband--&gt;FCS</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived needs for AAS--&gt;FCS</td>
<td>0.491</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived needs for FCS--&gt;FCS</td>
<td>26.76</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p<.001 ***, p<0.01 **, p<.05 *
Table 6 Structural parameter estimates of employed and unemployed group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constrained model</th>
<th>Model fit</th>
<th>Model comparison</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>Employed group</th>
<th>Unemployed group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age -&gt; AAS</td>
<td>443.953(42)</td>
<td>2.233</td>
<td>0.135</td>
<td>-0.001(-0.020)**</td>
<td>-0.001(-0.015)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob1-&gt; AAS</td>
<td>410.244(42)</td>
<td>35.942</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.236(-0.262)***</td>
<td>-0.295(-0.297)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob2-&gt; AAS</td>
<td>296.830(42)</td>
<td>149.356</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.097(-0.074)***</td>
<td>-0.050(-0.038)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob3-&gt; AAS</td>
<td>441.018(42)</td>
<td>5.168</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>0.015(0.012)</td>
<td>-0.062(-0.064)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob4-&gt; AAS</td>
<td>422.645(42)</td>
<td>23.541</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.167(0.110)***</td>
<td>0.076(0.044)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of residence-&gt; AAS</td>
<td>430.747(42)</td>
<td>15.439</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.001(-0.071)***</td>
<td>-0.001(-0.066)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children -&gt; AAS</td>
<td>401.895(42)</td>
<td>44.291</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.034(0.069)***</td>
<td>0.081(0.034)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education-&gt; AAS</td>
<td>445.803(42)</td>
<td>0.383</td>
<td>0.534</td>
<td>0.000(0.000)</td>
<td>-0.012(-0.024)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly household income --&gt; AAS</td>
<td>434.437(42)</td>
<td>11.749</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>-0.008(-0.021)***</td>
<td>0.000(0.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBLS--&gt;AAS</td>
<td>445.197(42)</td>
<td>0.899</td>
<td>0.343</td>
<td>0.057(0.032)***</td>
<td>0.066(0.040)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends from home country--&gt;AAS</td>
<td>446.175(42)</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.917</td>
<td>0.039(0.043)***</td>
<td>0.042(0.046)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends from elsewhere countries --&gt; AAS</td>
<td>440.552(42)</td>
<td>5.643</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>0.015(0.005)</td>
<td>0.073(0.023)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region of residence --&gt; AAS</td>
<td>419.698(42)</td>
<td>26.488</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.099(-0.084)</td>
<td>-0.079(-0.070)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean language fluency --&gt; AAS</td>
<td>424.911(42)</td>
<td>21.275</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.013(0.030)***</td>
<td>0.029(0.066)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet --&gt; AAS</td>
<td>444.519(42)</td>
<td>1.667</td>
<td>0.197</td>
<td>0.049(0.053)***</td>
<td>0.038(-0.040)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with husband --&gt; AAS</td>
<td>445.737(42)</td>
<td>0.499</td>
<td>0.480</td>
<td>-0.004(-0.009)</td>
<td>-0.014(-0.028)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived needs for AAS --&gt; AAS</td>
<td>407.185(42)</td>
<td>39.001</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.077(0.077)***</td>
<td>0.104(0.104)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived needs for FCS --&gt; AAS</td>
<td>446.002(42)</td>
<td>0.184</td>
<td>0.668</td>
<td>0.007(0.007)*</td>
<td>0.003(0.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age --&gt; FCS</td>
<td>438.428(42)</td>
<td>7.578</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.000(-0.006)</td>
<td>0.000(-0.013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob1--&gt; FCS</td>
<td>410.224(42)</td>
<td>35.962</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.236(-0.066)***</td>
<td>-0.295(-0.100)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob3--&gt; FCS</td>
<td>445.700(42)</td>
<td>0.486</td>
<td>0.485</td>
<td>0.032(0.030)***</td>
<td>-0.035(-0.038)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pob4--&gt; FCS</td>
<td>443.812(42)</td>
<td>2.374</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>0.179(0.137)***</td>
<td>0.128(0.079)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of residence --&gt; FCS</td>
<td>445.772(42)</td>
<td>0.414</td>
<td>0.520</td>
<td>0.000(-0.052)***</td>
<td>0.000(-0.048)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children --&gt; FCS</td>
<td>431.435(42)</td>
<td>14.751</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.082(0.194)***</td>
<td>0.079(0.160)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education--&gt; FCS</td>
<td>442.270(42)</td>
<td>3.916</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>-0.005(-0.013)</td>
<td>-0.023(-0.050)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly household income --&gt; FCS</td>
<td>442.239(42)</td>
<td>3.947</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>-0.009(-0.025)***</td>
<td>-0.006(-0.015)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBLS--&gt;FCS</td>
<td>445.393(42)</td>
<td>0.793</td>
<td>0.373</td>
<td>0.140(-0.092)***</td>
<td>0.143(0.094)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends from home country --&gt; FCS</td>
<td>445.196(42)</td>
<td>0.990</td>
<td>0.320</td>
<td>0.022(0.029)***</td>
<td>0.029(0.035)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends from elsewhere countries --&gt; FCS</td>
<td>445.997(42)</td>
<td>0.189</td>
<td>0.664</td>
<td>0.022(0.016)***</td>
<td>0.073(0.023)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region of residence --&gt; FCS</td>
<td>425.657(42)</td>
<td>20.529</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.086(-0.085)***</td>
<td>-0.098(-0.092)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean language proficiency --&gt; FCS</td>
<td>438.777(42)</td>
<td>7.409</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.015(0.041)***</td>
<td>0.033(0.083)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet --&gt; FCS</td>
<td>445.985(42)</td>
<td>0.201</td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td>0.018(0.022)**</td>
<td>0.009(0.010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with husband --&gt; FCS</td>
<td>446.146(42)</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.841</td>
<td>-0.058(-0.013)</td>
<td>-0.011(-0.022)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived needs for AAS --&gt; FCS</td>
<td>445.695(42)</td>
<td>0.491</td>
<td>0.483</td>
<td>0.019(0.075)***</td>
<td>0.031(0.099)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived needs for FCS --&gt; FCS</td>
<td>419.426(42)</td>
<td>26.76</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.051(0.179)***</td>
<td>0.062(0.185)***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p <.001 ***, p <.01 ***, p <.05 *
6.2.1 Adjustment assistance service use

First, among the paths leading to adjustment assistance service usage (AAS), a total of 11 path coefficients were found to interact with employment status, showing group differences. Among the predisposing factors, all four ethnic background dummy variables interacted with employment status. As for length of residence, a significant difference was found between the employed and unemployed groups, indicating an interaction effect. For both groups, those who had lived in Korea for a longer period of time were less likely to use adjustment services. The effect was greater among the employed group (b=-.071, p<.001), compared to the unemployed group (b=-.066, p<.001). A statistically significant difference was also found for the effect of number of children, where the magnitude of effect was greater for the employed group (b=.034, p<.001) compared to the unemployed group (b=.018, p<.001).

Monthly household income also interacted with employment status. While the effect of household income had a negative effect on service use for the employed group (b=-.021, p<.01), the effect was insignificant for the unemployed group. In other words, for the employed group, high monthly income was found to decrease the likelihood of AAS usage. A significant statistical difference was also found between employed and unemployed groups with respect to the relationship between “existence of friends from foreign countries” and AAS usage. For the employed group, the effect was insignificant. However, for the unemployed group, having friends from foreign countries increased the likelihood of service use (b=.073, p<.001).

Region of residence was also a relevant factor. Unemployed immigrant wives living in rural areas showed a higher likelihood of service use (b=.070, p<.001) compared to those in cities, whereas the effect of region on utilization of adjustment service was not significant for the employed group. Korean language proficiency was found to interact with employment status as well. High proficiency was found to increase service utilization for both groups, but the effect was stronger among the unemployed group (b=.029, p<.001) compared to the employed group (b=.013, p<.001).

In terms of need factors, the need for AAS interacted with employment status. The unemployed group showed a stronger association pattern with AAS use (b=.104, p<.001) than the employed group (b=.077, p<.001). In both groups, immigrant wives with higher AAS needs also showed
higher usage pattern, though the effect was greater for the unemployed group. The remaining path coefficients were not found not to have statistically significant group differences.

6.2.2 Family care service use

Among the paths leading to family care service usage (FCS), eight path coefficients were found to interact with employment status, showing group differences. First, as for the effect of ethnicity, only Joseonjok ethnicity was found to have an interaction effect, where for both the employed and unemployed groups, women of Joseonjok ethnicity were less likely to use FCS. The magnitude of the effect was greater in the unemployed group (b=-.295, p<.001) compared to the employed group (b=-.236, p<.001). It can be said that while both groups of Joseonjok immigrant wives showed less likelihood to utilize FCS compared to immigrant wives from other countries, the unemployed Joseonjok women show lesser likelihood of service usage pattern.

Secondly, as for the effect of number of children, a statistically significant group difference was found where, for both groups, having more children led to a higher FCS usage pattern. The effect was slightly higher among the employed group (b=.194, p<.001) compared to the unemployed group (b=.160, p<.001).

Education also had an interaction effect. For both the employed and unemployed groups, higher education levels were negatively associated with FCS usage, where the magnitude of the effect was greater among the unemployed group (b=-.050, p<.001) compared to the employed group (b=-.005, p<.001).

A statistically significant group difference was also found for the effect of Korean language proficiency, where the effect was higher among the unemployed group (b=.083, p<.001) compared to the employed group (b=.041, p<.001). For both groups, higher proficiency increased the likelihood of FCS usage.

Monthly household income also interacted with employment status. For both the employed and unemployed groups, high monthly income was found to decrease the likelihood of AAS usage, where the effect was greater among the employed group (b=-.025, p<.001) compared to the unemployed group (b=-.015, p<.001).

Region of residence was another factor interacting with employment status where for both
groups, those who lived in the countryside as opposed to the city showed higher likelihood of service use. The effect of region on utilization of adjustment service was stronger for the unemployed group (b=-.092, p<.001) compared to the employed group (b=-.085, p<.001).

Lastly, the “need for family care services” varied between the two groups, where the effect was greater in the unemployed group (b=.185, p<.001) compared to the employed group (b=.179, p<.001). For both groups, those who showed higher needs in terms of the family service showed higher usage pattern as well. In fact, the descriptive statistics result shows that the unemployed group had higher perceived needs.

7. Discussion

This study attended to immigrant support services that constitute the present-day immigrant integration process but hitherto have received little systematic attention. The results suggest that immigrant wives have different needs depending on their employment status, thus providing several points to discuss.

First, variables related to immigrant-specific factors were identified as significant predictors, supporting the use of the Behavior Model for Vulnerable Populations. As for the length of residence, no interaction effect was detected in predicting the service use of FCS; for both the employed and unemployed groups, immigrant wives who had been living in Korea for a shorter period showed higher likelihood of service use. This suggests that recently arrived immigrants, regardless of their employment status, show higher service usage in terms of FCS. Similar results were obtained when predicting the use of AAS, suggesting that immigrant wives who had lived in Korea for a shorter period showed higher likelihood of service use. In addressing the effectiveness of any type of service, four components need to be considered: 1) Who gets the service, 2) what kind of services are provided, 3) who pays for the service, and 4) who monitors the quality of service (Branch, 2001; cited H.-M. Kim 2012, p. 129). In the context of the first criterion, the correlation between shorter length of residence and higher service usage may indicate that the service is being applied to the target group as intended. This is especially the case for the AAS as the service, by definition, is designed for helping newly arrived immigrants.

In terms of relationship with husband, for both service domains, no interaction effect was
detected. While there may be various reasons for unsatisfactory marital relationships, it is possible that immigrant wives are using AAS to resolve their problems. In fact, while no significant effect was detected for the employed group, unemployed immigrant wives who were dissatisfied with their husbands showed higher usage. Likewise, in both the employed and unemployed groups, those who were dissatisfied with their spouses showed higher FCS usage.

Another pertinent factor turned out to be perceived needs. While the magnitude of effect differed between the two groups, for both the employed and unemployed immigrant wives, those who perceived a need for service showed a higher usage rate of both AAS and FCS. It is also important to note that when comparing the magnitude of variables related to AAS use, perceived needs appeared as the second highest determinant in predicting service use for the unemployed group. This result coincides with Kim’s (2012) study. In such case, where high service needs are actually leading to high service usage rate, it is plausible to conclude that both types of services are being effectively provided to those with greater needs.

However, such a claim is only partially validated when considering the effect of the Korean language proficiency on both types of services. The multiple group analysis showed that while the magnitude of the effect was different for the employed and unemployed groups, those who were more fluent in Korean language showed a higher FCS usage pattern. The positive beta value of the Korean language fluency variable \( b=.029 \) \((p<.001)\) for the unemployed group and \( b=.013 \) \((p<.001)\) for the employed group suggests that immigrant wives who are more fluent in Korean are utilizing the adjustment assistance program more. The structural paths leading from Korean language proficiency to AAS and FCS were also statistically significant, where the unemployed group showed higher usage pattern. The result suggests that language functions as an enabling factor (i.e., as a personal resource), facilitating the service usage of immigrants. Such a result holds several implications in terms of practice and services. First, when considering that AAS is aimed for early settlers who are not equipped with Korean language, although unemployed immigrant wives are using the service more than employed immigrant wives, the positive beta value may imply that there is a gap between the intended service purpose and the actual usage pattern; those who should be taking advantage of the services are not. Similarly, as immigrant wives who are better equipped with Korean language are utilizing the FCS services (as suggested in the positive beta value), immigrants with low proficiency tend to underutilize the provided services. For both cases, the effectiveness of provided language services may be
questioned. Since language programs are one of the most frequently used programs (H.-M. Kim, 2012), a wider range of language programs should be devised to meet the needs of newly arrived immigrants.

As for the effect of number of children, a statistically significant group difference was found where for both groups, having more children led to a higher family care service usage pattern. It is plausible that, compared to unemployed immigrant wives who can take care of their children themselves, the employed group has higher needs for services and shows a higher service usage pattern. Similarly, having more children led to a higher service usage in terms of adjustment assistance services. Such a result suggests that language programs as well as cultural education services provided in the AAS domain are important not only for the employed group but also for the unemployed group. In terms of the magnitude of effect for each predictor, in the employed group, number of children showed the highest influence, whereas for the unemployed group, need factor showed the highest influence. This implies that, in understanding the help-seeking behaviors and service utilization patterns of the employed group, child care (number of children) is an important determinant.

Significantly, low monthly household income was associated with higher service utility pattern in both domains of services. This is contrary to the findings of previous studies where high income leads to higher service usage. Such inconsistent findings may be related to the nature of the support services that are provided. Kim (2012) argues that most of the services provided by the MFSCs are being offered free of charge or at a very low cost. As such, monthly household income may stand for a proxy of one’s socio-economic status rather than an enabling factor. On a similar note, NBLS status may be regarded as a proxy of the household’s financial status. The insignificant interaction effect of employment status on the service usage pattern in relation to the NBLS status implies that immigrant wives who receive public benefit, regardless of their employment status, are more likely to use support services. It is also noteworthy that, as for AAS, language service is provided on a door-to-door basis, where priority is given to low-wage households. As the services are means-tested based, immigrant wives who belong to low-income households may show high usage patterns regardless of their employment status.

Equally important is the question of how to increase accessibility or the facilitation rate of the services that are being provided. The multiple group analysis of existence of friends may provide
some useful insights. The analysis showed that immigrant wives who had friends from their homeland were more likely to use both types of services compared to those who had no friends. The same result was detected in terms of FCS; immigrant wives who had friends from home countries showed higher service usage patterns regardless of employment status. A similar pattern was detected for the effect of having friends from different countries with respect to both types of services. It is possible that friendships facilitate service usage by introducing services to immigrants. Such results provide useful hints in terms of intervention outreach (H.-M. Kim, 2012). As Lee and Bae (2008) argue, immigrant wives gain access to services largely thanks to the information provided by informal social networks.

The significant effect of social networks on service utilization patterns carries important implications for understanding the effect of place of residence. The multiple group analysis results, in opposition to most of the previous literature on service use, suggest that those in rural areas were more likely to use both types of services. Urban areas generally have more service agencies, and it is therefore assumed that migrants residing in urban areas will be more likely to utilize services. However, it is possible that immigrant wives in rural areas may be relying on informal social support more than those who live in urban areas and therefore, also showing a higher service usage pattern. Where service usage is largely determined by the availability of information on such services, immigrant wives tend to obtain such information from informal social networks. While immigrant wives in rural areas have abundant social networks, those who live in urban areas often lack such networks. Thus, rural dwellers show higher usage rates. If this is so, informal social networks may act as a bridge between immigrant wives and support services; in such cases, MFSCs may target such networks in disseminating information about the services. In fact, Lee and Bae (2008) found that women in rural areas tend to seek assistance or information from their social networks first, followed by Support Centers, while in urban areas, women sought services almost as a last resort. It is equally possible that women in urban areas show less usage since there are resources other than support services.

Some limitations are considered in regard to the methodological and empirical shortcomings of this study. First, considering that older immigrant wives differ from their younger counterparts, service utilization patterns based on age may provide valuable information. Secondly, due to data limitation, information on empowerment services was not included in the model. Future studies should look into the specific usage patterns regarding this last type of service.
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Chapter 5
Conclusion

1. Brief summary of the major findings

1.1 Economic integration in the form of labor market segregation

The main objective of the three preceding chapters has been to explore the integration process of immigrant wives in the Korean labor market and provide information about their employment prospects. Possible reasons behind immigrant wives’ relatively low position within the labor market compared to their native counterparts were examined by incorporating human capital theory, dual labor market theory and statistical discrimination theory. Specifically, chapter two identified underlying forces that contribute to the different employment outcomes between Korean and immigrant wives. The decomposition technique was used to assess the extent to which the gap between the two groups is attributable to discrimination, where the unobserved impact of discrimination is embedded in the residual component of the decomposition (Walters, Phythian & Anisef, 2006). Chapter three focused on the quality of employment. By focusing on the heavy concentration of immigrant wives in the informal labor market, chapter three documented possible mechanisms assigning this group to the lowest segment of the Korean labor market. Specifically, chapter three paid attention to identifying the causes of different qualities of career positions between immigrant and Korean women in the labor market. Of particular interest was whether or not and how much of the employment gap could be attributed to the explained and unexplained gaps. Lastly, chapter four examined the determinant factors of immigrant wives’ service use. Special analytic attention was given to possible differences in service utilization patterns depending on employment status.

The theoretical implication is as follows. Findings from the study suggest that human capital theory alone is not enough to understand immigrant wives’ labor market participation. Explanations based on statistical discrimination theory also carried little weight when it comes to immigrant wives’ employment. However, when predicting the formal sector employment as opposed to informal sector employment, a systematical preference was given to ethnic Korean
women; Korean native women were receiving an undeserved premium in terms of their formal sector employment, which corroborates the hypothesis of statistical discrimination theory. It can be said that employers’ preference over the minority group to Korean workers exists specifically in terms of formal sector employment. This suggests the need to focus on the discriminatory hiring practices in the formal sector labor market rather than limiting the research focus to immigrant wives’ labor market entrance.

The three merged studies also found that immigrant wives are being incorporated into the Korean labor market in a segregated way. Largely echoing the definition suggested by Ugbe (2006), ‘being employed in the labor market’ was seen as an indicator of economic integration. Results from chapters two and three suggest that immigrant wives are being employed only in certain types of jobs. Another major finding from the study was the high employment rate of the older immigrant wives. Older immigrant wives showed a higher employment rate than their native counterparts. Moreover, immigrant wives showed different employment chances depending on their age and ethnicity, where there was a higher need for older immigrant wives from the Philippines, China, and Joseonjok in the Korean labor market. This suggests that immigrant wives are somehow integrating into the labor market and meeting a need there. However, when limiting the attention to immigrant wives who were currently engaged in the labor market, immigrant wives were heavily concentrated in undervalued, low-wage, precarious jobs. The majority of older immigrant wives were employed as service workers (36.6%), followed by manual laborers (26.5%) and specialist/professionals (14%). Where “irregular employment has become synonymous with discriminatory labor practices” (Chun, 2009 p. 539), formal sector workers constitute not more than one fifth of the total work force (17.4%) whereas informal workers occupy a dominant portion of the labor force (83.6%). In sum, when looking into the quality of immigrant wives’ employment, it is not difficult to see the segregation.

The amassment of immigrant wives in the secondary labor market is concerning from an integration perspective, as there is a high chance that immigrant wives may fall into both poverty and low income. What is worse, coupled with the polarization between Korea’s primary and secondary labor markets, there is a high possibility that this pattern will perpetuate, forming a mechanism where these women form the backbone of the low-status job market and leading to the institutionalization of segregation within the labor market. While the increase of informal sector jobs is a global phenomenon, the situation in South Korea is particularly problematic since
the rigidness of the polarized labor market structure appears to be more prominent in the Korean labor market. Workers employed in major firms only make up 30.1% of the total population. Moreover, nearly 60% of wage earners are employed in small firms with fewer than 30 employees, where female workers make up the dominant proportion. Keum and Yoon (2011) argue that such rigidness can be imputed to the “labor market friendly” policies in South Korea. As will be further discussed in the following section, Korea’s Affirmative Action Plan differs from that of the US and Canada in that the act strongly favors the employers (Keum & Yoon, 2011). Currently, there is no compulsory clause enforcing employers to prohibit discriminatory hiring practices, suggesting that the current Affirmative Action Plan is all but nominal. Accordingly, the current policies aimed at integrating immigrant wives into the Korean labor market may not be moving toward that goal. The following section specifically reviews some of the evidence from the study results that immigrant wives are not fully integrating into the labor market.

2. Specific research findings

2.1 Evidence of partial integration of immigrant wives into the Korean labor market

2.1.1 The lower exchange value of immigrant wives’ training experience

The results from chapters two and three suggest that immigrant wives’ human capital, particularly their training experiences obtained in the Korean labor market, are not given the same value, a phenomenon which may be indicative of a labor market imperfection or employers’ systematic discrimination where immigrants’ actual human capital credentials are not fully recognized. To briefly summarize the findings, in chapter two, immigrant wives showed twice the rate of training experience whereas the actual return to employment probability was lower. Similar results were obtained in chapter three. Where both age groups received similar amount of training, the actual return to formal sector employment was much higher for Korean women. This suggests that, although immigrant wives receive more training experience than their Korean counterparts, due to low transferability of their experiences, there is a gap in formal sector employment. This corroborates the findings of previous studies where immigrants who have an equal amount of education or training as the native-born workers are expected to benefit
considerably less from their educational attainment. It is highly likely that immigrant wives are experiencing discrimination as their educational credentials are not being fully recognized; either their training experience has lesser transferability or they are not granted the same employment opportunity according to their actual productivity.

Considering that the training programs are provided by Korean agencies, originally targeting Korean workers, it is difficult to argue that the lack of transferability is due to national differences in quality of education such that the act of migration leads to a devaluation in immigrants’ human capital (Chiswick, et al., 1997; Chiswick & Paltiel, 2009; Friedberg, 2000). Rather, it suggests either that the existing training program is not effective for immigrant wives, thus indicating the need for a new program intended for the immigrant population, or that the Korean labor market is actually failing to compensate workers on the basis of their productive endowments. Although employees were not giving undeserved premiums to Koreans in terms of employment, devaluation of human capital is also another form of discrimination (Yap, Cukier, Holmes & Hanna, 2010). If the latter is the case, extensive training programs may not lead to any improvement in terms of labor market integration and may even exacerbate the matter. Such a view may be further supported by the insignificance of length of residence in predicting the two dependent variables.

2.1.2 Low job mobility despite long length of residence

Length of residence in the destination country has been commonly considered as a leading facilitator of settlement and assimilation of immigrants (Borjas, 1985; Chiswick & Paltiel, 2009; Friedberg, 2000) and has been documented as an important determinant of immigrants’ success in the labor market. The corollary of this reasoning is that, with passage of time, immigrants make investments in their human capital stock by accumulating country-specific skills, thus experiencing occupational changes. However, such a U-shaped pattern of occupational change seems to have little relevance in the Korean labor market. In fact, length of residence was not a significant predictor of employment or of formal sector employment probability. In chapter two, we noted that length of residence had a positive effect on employment for younger immigrant wives but not for the older group. This is contradictory to the descriptive statistics result where the older group showed two times longer residency period in Korea. The results in chapter three were parallel. As the majority of immigrants are engaged in the informal sector, it can be said
that the additional years of residence in the host country do not affect the economic assimilation process of immigrants. As suggested by the dual labor market theory, the wage and employment gaps between the two groups are expected to widen over time. This is consistent with the findings of previous studies, which designate immigrant wives, particularly older immigrant wives, as one of the disadvantaged groups in the Korean labor market. While further inquiry is needed, the prominently high employment rate of the older immigrant wives in 3D jobs as evidence of their tight budget constraints as well as the fact that length of residence was not a significant predictor of employment all point to the possibility that the barriers experienced by older immigrant wives are far more pronounced than they are for younger immigrant wives and native Korean women.

2.1.3 Undeserved premium (discriminatory hiring practices)

In an effort to understand the possible causes behind the barriers experienced by immigrant wives, chapters two and three employed the decomposition method. In chapter two, no premium was found, whereas in terms of formal sector employment an undeserved premium was given to Korean women. This tendency was more severe in the older age group. As the occupational status or jobs in which the immigrant wives are engaged are poor, it is possible to assume that there is no premium given to Koreans when predicting the employment probability. However, when considering the quality of employment, there is a structural barrier, signified in the form of premium, which hinders immigrant wives (particularly older women) from entering formal sector jobs. This further corroborates the premise that the barriers experienced by the older immigrant wives are far more pronounced than the younger age group and Korean women. In fact, the descriptive statistics of study results showed that both younger and older immigrants were predominantly engaged in lower-wage jobs where human capital factors have little to do with the actual work. As for occupational status, for both age groups, the majority were temporary employees, followed by regular employees, then day laborers. As for job types, both age groups showed similar patterns: Service workers had the highest employment rate followed by manual laborers and specialists/professionals. Where “irregular employment has become synonymous with discriminatory labor practices” (Chun, 2009, p. 539), the descriptive statistics result suggests that a large portion of immigrant wives are employed as informal workers; among the total wage earners, formal sector workers constitute less than one fifth of the total work force.
(17.4%) whereas informal workers occupy a dominant portion of the labor force (83.6%). As Shrestha (2001) puts it, “Given the mode of payment received among the day laborers [and temporary workers], their work is more likely to be unregulated and unprotected” (p. 74).

Irregular workers have a higher chance of being employed in the informal sector. Considering that the majority of immigrant wives are employed in the service sector where human capital has little relevance, it is not unreasonable to conclude that immigrants face a dim economic future.

While it is difficult to ascertain the source of the unexplained gap, the following point seems reasonably credible: the different rates of employment of immigrant and Korean women in the formal and informal sectors may be partly due to the structural barriers that inhibit immigrant wives from entering the primary or formal sector labor markets, as suggested by dual labor market theory. As mentioned earlier, the theory assumes that immigrant wives are steered into lower paying professions by discriminatory hiring practices. Such discriminatory hiring practices have direct implications for immigrant wives, as these women may be failing to gain admission to formal sector jobs not because of their individual attributes but rather due to race and ethnicity. It can be said that a certain proportion of the unexplained gap may be derived from structural or statistical discrimination based on ethnicity, or perhaps both, resulting in a higher concentration of migrant women in lower-paying occupations.

2.1.4 Complexity of the issue (other possible reasons for segmentation)

This study examined the economic integration process of immigrant wives using an econometric lens. The study set out to address the following questions: Are immigrant wives successfully integrating into the Korean labor market? If not, through which processes might their segmented employment become institutionalized? Three interrelated forces may attribute to the segregational distribution of immigrant wives in the informal sector: The individual situations that the immigrant wives face (low financial status, human capital credentials not being recognized, children, etc.), the labor market structural influence (bifurcated structure after the IMF crisis), discriminatory hiring practices, and premium. There is a significant overlap among the three forces, where to a certain extent functional dependency as well as on-going interaction effects may be detected. Each sphere gives a different emphasis to explanation and stresses different aspects of on-going interaction. The high concentration of immigrant wives in the secondary labor market is a mark of the failure to effectively incorporate immigrants into the
labor market. The implication is that the combination of these three influences may lead to the institutionalization of discrimination in the form of labor market segmentation. This reflects not only labor market failure; it also poses a grim picture where immigrant wives in general will continue to represent the vulnerable labor pool.

In the meantime, using solely the discrimination framework may obscure the reality where immigrant wives make a rational choice to engage in what have been described as poor working conditions. In fact, the unexplained gap includes discriminatory practices in the labor market (which corners immigrants into certain positions), as well as discriminatory hiring practices signified by premium, but also includes the voluntary choices made by immigrants. While all the analyses conducted in the study are limited within the spatial boundaries of the Korean labor market, there is a larger global context that may also influence such incidents. First, marriage migration carries aspects of both intra- and transnational contexts. As discussed in chapter three, it is debatable whether the job placement of immigrant wives reflects voluntary or constrained choice. In Palriwala and Uberoi’s words (2005), “As regional and international economic disparities widen, and as the global discourse of development designates some cultures as modern and others as backward, global hierarchies of place are mapped by flows of labor migrants seeking opportunities for themselves and their families on a world canvas” (p. 4). This suggests the possibility that the segmentation process may be partially derived from the bifurcated labor market structure, but may also operate under a global context that extends beyond the simple econometric sphere within the domestic labor market conditions. In such case, the migration itself and the jobs migrants take in their destination countries are voluntary. The division of labor between formal and informal sectors as well as the bifurcation of labor markets between natives and immigrants may be sustained and reproduced by the voluntary choices of immigrant wives coupled with discriminatory practices, forming what Liaw, Ochiai and Ishikawa (2010) call the “hierarchical structure of the international economy.”

In sum, while it is difficult to single out the precise contribution of each factor, this much can be said: Immigrant wives are forming the backbone of the Korean labor market, partially voluntarily and partially under the constraints of the labor market. As previously discussed, immigrant wives are heavily concentrated in irregular/informal jobs where there is a high chance that they will be exposed to both financial and health hazards. As Hussmanns (2004) argues, “Informal workers are much more likely than formal workers to be exposed to poor working environments, low
safety and health standards, and environment hazards” all of which point to crucial need for social protection (p. 65). As the labor market segregation process is complex and involves different forces and the international sphere, it is a difficult problem to tackle. Acknowledging the complexity of the problem may be the first step.

2.2 Summary of specific findings from the three chapters

Focusing on the effects of some of the key variables used in the three studies, the following section summarizes specific findings that became visible when all three chapters were put together. Following the summary are the practical implications for support services and social policies.

2.2.1 The effect of Korean language proficiency

Korean language proficiency was an important factor which increased the employment probability of immigrant wives. However, when limiting the attention to those who were employed, Korean language proficiency was not a significant predictor of formal sector employment. It is possible that for those who are already employed, their language proficiency level is already above a certain level, thus having little relevance in predicting the quality of employment. The results shown in chapter four further support this stance. While the magnitude of the effect was different when comparing immigrant wives who were employed versus unemployed, the unemployed group showed higher service usage pattern for both AAS and FCS. Thus, it is possible to argue that Korean language proficiency is an important determinant of immigrant wives’ employment. The fact that those who were more fluent in Korean language showed higher FCS usage also suggests that for both the employed and unemployed group, language functions as an enabling factor that facilitates the service usage of immigrants.

2.2.2 The effect of education

The effect of education considerably varied in chapter two and three. To briefly summarize the findings, immigrant wives with high school graduate diploma were less likely to get employed compared to those with middle school diploma. However, those with higher educational qualifications were drawn to the labor market due to their skills and expertise; having a graduate
degree increased the likelihood of being employed for younger immigrant groups. It is plausible that immigrant wives are polarized into two groups, where one group is rewarded for their educational qualification and the other group is not. It is also important to note that the average education level of the older group immigrants was middle school diploma. In such case, it is possible that immigrant wives are attracted to low-wage jobs where their education is not accredited. In fact, as discussed in chapter three, when looking into the specific types of job immigrants were engaged in, a similar pattern is detected across the two age groups where service workers took the highest proportion, followed by manual laborers and specialists/professionals. This is also supported by the logistic regression result, where education was not a significant predictor of formal sector employment. This may be related to the fact that immigrant wives (both older and younger) are concentrated in informal sector jobs, where human capital factors have less relevance.

2.2.3 The effect of children

Findings from chapters two and four strongly support that the influence of family circumstances, most notably the existence of children, on immigrant wives’ employment and corresponding utilization of child-care related support services. In chapter two, number of children variables accounted for 75.43% of the explained gap, which corroborates household resource theory where child care and household financial status are major influencers for women’s employment. The logistic regression result also suggests that immigrant wives’ employment is heavily influenced by family circumstances; number of children, regardless of the children’s age, had negative effects on the younger group’s employment whereas for the older group, number of children aged 0 to 2 and 3 to 6 were negatively associated with employment. A statistically significant group difference was also found for the effect of number of children in chapter four, where the magnitude of effect was greater for the employed group compared to the unemployed group; employed immigrant wives showed higher service usage in terms of both the adjustment assistance service and family care services. It is plausible that compared to unemployed immigrant wives who take care of their children themselves, the employed group may have higher needs for services during work. Moreover, in terms of the magnitude of the effect of each predictor, number of children showed the highest influence for the employed group, while need factor showed the highest influence for the unemployed group. This implies that the existence of
children is an important determinant in understanding immigrants’ help-seeking behaviors as well as the service usage pattern of the employed group.

2.2.4 The effect of social capital

Chapters two and three included social capital variables in the model to see the influence of friends on predicting employment and formal sector employment probability. In chapter two, we saw that having friends from their home countries positively increased the likelihood that the older immigrant wives would be employed whereas the effect was not significant for the younger group immigrants. Having friends from other countries positively increased the likelihood of being employed for the younger age group, whereas the effect was not significant for the older group. Similar results were obtained in chapter three. Having Korean friends increased formal sector employment for the younger age group. Having friends from their home country on the other hand, had a negative effect on formal sector employment for the older group, and not for the younger aged group. In sum, where immigrant wives with social connections show a higher employment rate, it is reasonable to expect that such informal social support may facilitate their access to employment by bridging individuals. In fact, as immigrants often turn to their intimate circle of friends and families to solve problems (Ho, 2000), the informal social support provided by friends may help immigrant wives to gain access not only to the labor market but to other resources as well. The results from chapter four further substantiate this claim. The existence of friends, as a proxy of one’s social network, turned out to facilitate both types of service use; for both the employed and unemployed group, existence of friends from home countries increased usage of AAS and FCS. As for the effect of friends from different countries on AAS service use, an interaction effect was detected, where a positive relationship was only detected for the unemployed group. For both the employed and unemployed group, having friends from different countries uniformly increased the likelihood of service use.

2.2.5 The effect of citizenship

Immigrants who acquired Korean citizenship were more likely to be employed in the Korean labor market; acquirement of citizenship was found to increase the probability of employment as well as formal sector employment. This suggests that immigrant wives’ legal status is crucial in their economic integration process. Currently, immigrant wives are granted citizenships after
three years of marriage to Korean men. During those first three years, their status is restricted to that of “foreign visitor.” Such strict legal permission is prone to affect immigrant wives’ employment negatively where those without Korean citizenship are left with no choice but to turn to secondary employment (S.S. Lee, et al., 2009).

2.3.6 The effect of ethnicity

It is also notable that immigrant wives showed different employment chances depending on their ethnicity. Chapter two showed that immigrant wives have different employment chances depending on their age and ethnicity. Without age restriction, immigrant wives from the Philippines showed the highest employment probability, followed by Vietnamese, Joseonjok, and Chinese women. However, when restricting the age to the older group, there was a higher assimilation rate for immigrant wives from Philippine, Chinese, and Joseonjok ethnicity in the labor market. As for the younger age group, Philippine, Vietnamese, and Chinese women showed higher employment chances compared to Joseonjok women. In chapter three, the ethnicity dummy variables were only significant for those with Philippine and Chinese background. Chinese women’s chance of being employed in the formal sector was statistically significantly negative. As for immigrant wives with Philippine background, the effect was positive only among the younger immigrants.

While it is unclear why such different patterns appear between ethnic and age groups, the bottom line is that ethnicity and age play an important role in determining employment chances. There may be different demands for immigrant wives in the labor market depending on ethnicity and age, or it may be that age and timing of immigrant wives’ entry into Korea affect their chances of employment. As discussed in chapter two, it is possible that the reason Vietnamese show lower employment rates in the older group and higher employment rates in the younger group may be related to their more recent status as immigrants amongst the four ethnic groups.

The model in chapter four also showed that immigrant wives, depending on their ethnic backgrounds, exhibit different service usage patterns. With the exception of immigrant wives from the Philippines, immigrant wives with Joseonjok, Chinese, and Vietnamese backgrounds show lower service usage pattern compared to immigrant wives from other countries. Moreover, depending on their employment status, immigrant wives with different ethnic backgrounds
showed different service utilization patterns. Such findings reinforce observations made in several western studies where the labor market experiences of immigrants are not homogenous.

3. Implications for social work and social policy

For the most part, policy decisions regarding the economic integration of immigrants into the labor market have been directed by human capital initiatives. As a result, the potential implications of other factors have been largely ignored. Using the Korean labor market as an example, this study addressed the above issues by incorporating various factors, which include women’s work dynamics, contextual factors such as social networks, and other factors that may affect their employment/formal sector employment. The study results revealed that household division of labor and occupational segregation need to be addressed in order to resolve the employment gap between Korean and immigrant wives. The practical implications of the findings can be broadly construed according to five main areas of policy concern, which may have implications for both social work practices and policy recommendations.

3.1 The need to immigrant wives’ human capital

The first area of concern is the relatively low occupational status of immigrant wives in the labor market. While it is difficult to rule out the possibility of a structural barrier which crowds immigrant wives into low-paying jobs (as suggested by the dual labor market theory), it is also possible that part of the reason may be derived from their educational credentials being low. In Bloemrrad & Graauw’s words (2012), “The post-industrial economy rewards those with high education but traps migrants with less human capital in low-wage service economy” (p. 215). As immigrant wives with little formal schooling often come from low socioeconomic backgrounds, there is more financial pressure for them to find jobs in these pools. In fact, Cho and Cho (2009) found that women with low educational credentials showed higher likelihood for informal sector employment. Considering that the average education level of immigrant wives is low, enhancing their educational level through various services could be one way to address the problem.

It is also necessary to increase employability and income security of informal sector workers by enhancing employment services and expanding the social safety net. As immigrant wives are mostly engaged in the informal sector, public policy in the formal labor market sector alone may
be insufficient to address the growing polarization between formal and informal sectors. The educational programs may need to be calibrated to different age groups, considering that older immigrant wives are more highly engaged in informal sector jobs. Moreover, as the study result suggests that immigrant wives are not a homogenous group, any training programs or educational programs intended for their employment preparation should be devised based on educational levels and other qualifications.

3.2 Stronger regulations to prevent employers’ discrimination

Considering the high proportion of informal sector jobs in the Korean labor market, intervention in immigrant wives’ human capital may only be partially effective, especially in jobs that require formal education. This implies that a more fundamental source of inequality needs to be addressed. In fact, the evidence documented in the previous chapters of the growing polarization between the formal and informal sectors points to the need for an overhaul of the labor market structure. The study revealed that a significant proportion of the underemployment of immigrant wives can be chalked up to discriminatory hiring practices where there is a systematical preference given to ethnic Korean women in terms of formal sector employment.

One way to address the issue is to adopt active labor market policies such as anti-discrimination laws. The Korean government did implement the “Gender Equity Act” in 2005 by enacting the “Affirmative Action Plan” which has been in effect since 2006. However, the Affirmative Action Plan in Korea differs from that of the US and Canada in that the nature of the act is labor market friendly favoring the employers (Keum & Yoon, 2011). The absence of a compulsory clause has resulted in minimal application of the Affirmative Action Plan. In such case, it is arguable that a stronger and more active enforcement of the plan is required. For instance, while the current Affirmative Action Plan only applies to firms with more than 500 employees, the target range needs to be expanded to include firms with 100 to 200 employees. Moreover, financial incentives for employers to provide training opportunities to informal sector workers must be implemented. This may be achieved by promoting equal access to training programs for disadvantaged employees including immigrant wives. Policies aimed at solving the problem of credential recognition may also help immigrant wives. As the human capitals of immigrants are generally less valued in the labor market, policy changes aimed at recognizing foreign credentials may address some of the discrimination that occurs in the process.
In sum, having a strong anti-discrimination infrastructure within the labor market may not only affect employers’ hiring decisions but also the bargaining power of informal sector workers in terms of employee benefits, social insurance, and other terms and conditions (Grubb, Lee & Teregeist, 2007). Stronger enforcement of such policies may be also helpful in breaking down the rigid boundaries between the two sectors as well as reducing discrimination that occurs during the allocation process across occupations.

3.3 The dubious effect of Korean language services

The third area of concern is the effect of Korean language skills on employment and service use. The results from the three chapters hold several implications. First, when considering that AAS is aimed for early settlers who are not equipped with Korean language, there is an implied gap between the intended service purpose and the actual usage pattern. Similarly, as immigrant wives who are better equipped with Korean language skills are utilizing the FCS services, immigrants with low proficiency tend to underutilize the available services. For both cases, although the unemployed group showed higher service usage pattern, the effectiveness of the language service may be questioned. Since the language program is one of the most frequently used programs (H.-M. Kim, 2012), a wider range of language classes should be devised which meet the needs and language skill levels of immigrant wives seeking job employment.

3.4 Interventions in child-care support

Existence of children has an important bearing on immigrant employment and service use. For the most part, policy decisions regarding the economic integration of immigrants within the labor market have been human-capital related. Thus, the potential implications of other factors have largely been ignored. However, the study results from chapters two and four suggest that women’s economic activities are largely dependent on family circumstances, especially the existence of children. Moreover, the study result suggests that child-care services may considerably help immigrant wives in terms of labor market activities. As most immigrant wives fall into childrearing ages, policy efforts should reflect this fact. Family care services include pre- and post-natal care, family counseling and education, child education, and child-care. From a policy perspective, it can be said that the support services are being provided to the target group as intended. It is important that such services should be offered free of charge or at very
low cost, as most of immigrant families are financially insecure. Currently, most of the services provided by the MFSCs are being offered at very low cost, and this may greatly support immigrant wives and their families.

3.5 Utilization of informal social networks

The informal social networks of immigrant wives appear to be of substantial importance: They not only increases the chances of employment, but may also act as a bridge connecting immigrant wives who are previously unaware of the support services. Thus, disseminating information about employment opportunities or services through such networks has the potential to significantly increase both service use rate and employment probability.

3.6 Taking ethnic backgrounds into account

Lastly, it is important to take into account the different ethnic backgrounds of immigrant wives when understanding their economic integration process. The differences within ethnic groups indicate that it is necessary to specify whom we mean when we talk about the “disadvantaged.” In fact, findings from the study suggest immigrant wives are not a homogenous group. This implies that public policy strategies, such as employment equity programs that focus on the labor market discrimination, may need to be more precisely structured in order to target immigrants most susceptible to discriminatory labor market practices. In particular, employment equity policies that do not differentiate between ethnic and age groups may be inappropriate. In fact, the category “immigrant wives” itself may be misleading as an indicator for anti-discrimination policy since it seems to capture some ethnic groups and not others. Any public policy designed to achieve racial equality in the labor market may need to focus on the different trajectories of immigrant wives based on their unique positions within the market.

In conclusion, the study found that while various support services and policy efforts are being made to address the economic integration of immigrant wives, immigrant wives are still experiencing various hardships. Their integration process can be characterized as low-entry level and lacking support services. A stable position within the labor market and social insurance coverage may be prerequisites for their integration. To accommodate such process, the current support services need to be supplemented by active measures in the labor market, which include
eliminating discriminatory hiring practices as well as increasing and improving job training. Structural reform in the labor market may also be required in order to overcome the entrenchment of labor market segmentation.

4. Limitations and recommendations for future studies

The study carries several important limitations. First, as previously discussed, the study mainly focused on the discrimination framework in understanding immigrant wives’ labor market activities. It did not account for immigrant wives making a rational choice to engage in relatively poor working conditions. Marriage migration carries both intra- and transnational context. Further research may apply and expand the present findings to examine the labor market segregation process on a global scale.

Second, the study acknowledges that due to data limitation, the conclusion derived from immigrant wives’ social network is limited. The social capital variables were measured as dichotomous variables. Had the data set included more variables that adequately captured the nature of the social relationships immigrant wives possessed (e.g., absolute quantity and quality, and types of social relationship), other meaningful questions about their social network could have been possible to be explored.

Further, the causal inference derived from the study is limited due to the cross-sectional nature of the data sets used. Although the main focus of the study was investigating the magnitude of discrimination within the labor market, had the data set been longitudinal, more accurate causal inferences would have been possible. Future studies may repeat the same analytic procedure but by using longitudinal data sets instead. Such effort may allow for inferring more accurate relationships between the variables examined.

Third, there are several limitations in regards to methodology. The Oaxaca-Blinder method used in this study does not offer details about what underlies the relationships it finds, which requires a careful interpretation of the results, especially with respect to the unexplained portion of the employment gap. While this portion was assumed to include discrimination factors, other unknown factors may also contribute to this portion of the gap. Thus, the findings should be supplemented by studies that allow for a more detailed account of the labor market experience of
immigrant wives. Moreover, considering that older immigrant wives differ from their younger counterparts, service utilization patterns based on age may provide valuable perspective.

Despite the limitations, findings from this study provide useful insights into policy directions that may promote the labor market integration of immigrant women in South Korea. As an effort to better understand both the regularities and complexities involved in immigrants’ labor market experiences, the present study hopes to build a comprehensive framework for sharpening our inquiry into policies and practices concerning the economic integration of minorities. The findings also augment the relatively thin research on the experience of immigrant women in labor markets in East Asia. Because most studies on immigrants have been positioned in North American and European contexts, this study may add yet another perspective about newly emerging immigrant destination countries.
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