

Ethnic Network-driven Domiciliation and Governance of Grievances in Korea*

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〈Abstract〉

In light of increasing flows of labour and marriage migration in Korea, investigation into how and why migrant workers and marriage migrants have made the domiciliation decision to move out of their initial residential settlement in Seoul and Kyōnggi Province has become paramount. To this end, the textual analysis of 110 interviews from China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, and Russia inquires the reasoning behind their subsequent domiciliation decisions. The in-dept interviews highlight the fact that domiciliation decisions beyond initial residential settlement are guided by ethnic network-driven factors. Due to cultural proximity and ethnic familiarity, these factors are also the initial line of defence to govern grievances that occur both in the workplaces and in communities. In exploring how migrants cope with and negotiate their grievances and community affairs, this study probes at the roles of ethnic networks and locally embedded institutions in the appeal and resolution of grievances. If immigrating individuals do not preemptively work together with all stakeholders, they face intensified grievances and institutionalized discriminations in ethnic communities, and ultimately remain outsiders in governance.

*Keywords: Residential settlement, Subsequent domiciliation decisions, ethnic network-driven factors, locally embedded institutions, Governance of Grievances

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I . Introduction

South Korea(hereafter, Korea) has been going through the inevitable and drastic shift initiated by the opening of its doors to migrant workers as well as actively embracing them as members of and contributors to society. It is expected that Korea's transition to a service economy indicates that the need for migrant workers will not diminish and that low-wage service jobs have already become the domain of migrant workers. Furthermore, the number of foreign brides has continuously risen due to a serious imbalance in the sex ratio at birth since the late 1980s which has resulted in an acute shortage of brides. This influx of an ever-increasing and ever-mixed number of migrant workers and marriage migrants has challenged the myth of Korean ethnic homogeneity. Within a relatively short time frame since the early 1990s, the presence of more than 2.5 million foreign residents, composing of 4.9 percentage of the total population in 2019 has threatened the visage of national conformity and continues to bring into question of how to accommodate or integrate non-native elements of multiculturalism into the larger concept of the social fabric of Korean society(Ahn 2012; Durham and Carpenter 2015; Jun 2019; A. Kim 2009; H. Kim 2009, 2013, 2017; K. Kim 2017; J. Kim 2011; N. Kim 2012; Kim and Oh 2011, 2012; Lie 2014; Lim 2010; MOIS 2019; Rhee 2016; Statistics Korea 2019; Watson 2012).

Concomitant with increasing flows of labour and marriage migration, the nascent formation of ethnic communities has been observed since the early 2000(Chung et al. 2013; H. Kim 2017; Oh 2010; Park et al. 2009; Park 2010a, b; Park and Chung 2010; Seol and Skrentny 2009). In recent years, it has been quite noticeable that foreign residential concentration in a few selected cities(*si*), counties(*gun*), and districts(*ku*) of metropolitan city of Seoul(hereafter, Seoul) and Kyōnggi Province appears to have developed rapidly, while remaining at a relatively early stage in a

statistical sense(Chung et al. 2013; H. Kim 2017; Park 2010a, b; Oh 2010; Park and Chung 2010). For example, foreign residents in three of 25 Seoul districts showed a percentage of 10 or more: Yŏngdŭngp'o-ku(14.3), Kŭmch'ŏn-ku(13.1), Kuro-ku(12.5), and Chung-ku(10.1) and three of 28 cities of Kyŏnggi Province—Ansan-si(12.4), P'och'ŏn-si(12.1), and Shihŭng-si (11.6) by the end of 2018(MOIS 2019). In any given city, county, and district of Seoul and Kyŏnggi Province, none of these administrative units has a population of foreign residents exceeding 15 percent of the total number of registered residents(MOIS 2019).

However, at the lower administrative levels of town(*ŭp*), township (*myŏn*), and neighbourhood(*dong*) including 425 neighbourhoods of Seoul, and 37 towns, 103 townships, and 403 neighbourhoods of Kyŏnggi Province, the percentage of foreign residents easily exceeds 15 percent of the total number of registered residents(MOIS 2019). This glaring statistical contrast depicts a potential indication of the development of ethnic communities at lower administrative units. Surprisingly enough, there are more than 40 percent of foreign residents, such as Taerim-2 dong and Karibong-dong of Seoul as well as Wŏnkok1-dong and Wŏnkokbon-dong of Ansan city, Seryu1-dong of Suwŏn city, and a couple of dong of Shihŭng city in Kyŏnggi Province(MOIS 2019). This development seems to indicate that there has been a visible formation of ethnic communities at lower administrative units and further demonstrates clear fault lines of both certain ethnic mixing and ethnic segregation. Especially, Chinese-national residents, including those of ethnic Korean descendants of Chosŏnjoks predominate in a few selected districts of Seoul such as Yŏngdŭngp'o-ku and Kuro-ku, composing almost 40 percent of foreign residents. Also, the cities of Ansan, Shihŭng, and Sŏngnam in Kyŏnggi Province show the potential of residential ethnic segregation of Chinese residents(Jun et al. 2013; H. Kim 2017; H.S. Kim 2010; MOIS 2019). However, in other cities of Hwasŏng, Sihŭng, and P'och'ŏn in Kyŏnggi Province, resident nationalities are a more even mix

with a less visibility and domination of Chinese nationality(Chung et al. 2013; H. Kim 2017; MOIS 2019). Thus, ethnic concentration at lower administrative units has been coalescing on the basis of ethnic nationality and some units in particular show a distinctive pattern of ethnic concentration particularly for Chinese ethnicities, including ethnic Korean descendants of Chosŏnjoks.

Residential settlement tends to show that the initial geographic distribution of migrant workers at their arrival was involuntarily made and often dictated by the location of employment around industrial complexes and parks(Chung et al. 2013; H. Kim 2017; Oh 2010; Park 2010a, b; Park and Chung 2010; Park et al. 2009; Seol and Skrentny 2009). In the early phase of residential settlement, they lived in factory dormitories or adjunct housings provided by their employers. However, since the early 2000s, they have moved out of their initial residential places to form nascent ethnic communities both in Seoul and Kyŏnggi Province(Chung et al. 2013; H. Kim 2017; Park 2010a, b; Park et al. 2009). In this study, I argue that domiciliation decisions after initial residential settlement are no longer chiefly dictated by the location of employment, but are instead influenced by socio-cultural reasons linked to family, relatives, friends, and co-ethnic peers, otherwise deemed, ethnic network-driven factors. What is required in research is a more in-depth study of the reasoning behind moving out of initial residential areas to newly formed ethnically concentrated residential areas which consequently lead to the burgeoning ethnic communities along the lines of ethnic businesses, religious facilities, and locally embedded support organizations and institutions. The ethnic make-up of such residential areas becomes another important factor for resettling immigrants' subsequent residential choices(Castles 2002; Castles and Miller 2009; Dutia 2012; Fee and Rahman 2011; Fennema 2004; Fong and Ooka 2002; Junankar and Mahuteau 2005; Logan et al. 2002). When migrants perceive their residential areas in such a way as to explore ethnic business

opportunities, they are more likely to move to an area in which their residential choices would lucratively develop around a target consumer demographic drawing on the surrounding ethnic communities.

In this study, I further investigate how stakeholders in any given ethnically concentrated area interact with each other in their daily lives and how those parties cope with and navigate their personal grievances. Governance of grievances could be dealt either through intensifying their ethnic networks or through relying on locally embedded organizations and institutions (Boyd 1989; Castles 2002; Fennema 2004; Logan et al. 2002). How and with whom do stakeholders in ethnic communities communicate their needs and struggles? For general complaints and personal inconveniences, they vent their personal grievances to ethnic networks of a similar cultural ethnic background in hopes of receiving counsels and problem-solving insights in their native language (Fee and Rahman 2011; Fong and Ooka 2002; Logan et al. 2002). In instances related directly to their employment, such as a pay delay or remiss wage payment, verbal or physical abuse in the workplace, or employer-provided housing problems, they appeal to locally embedded networks such as ethnic organizations, multicultural centres, churches, or Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). However, if it involves legal issues such as visa issuance, they have no choice but to appeal to government agencies or ministries. Given this predicament, when instances of injustice occur, to what extent are the stakeholders satisfied not only with ethnic network-based resolution at the personal level but also with the institutional system of grievance or injustice resolution at the governmental level? If all parties involved do not pre-emptively work together, immigrants face intensified grievances and perpetuated institutionalized discriminations even in ethnic communities. In exploring how migrants cope with and negotiate and mitigate grievances both at the personal and governmental levels, this study probes at the roles of ethnic networks in the appeal and resolution of these grievances.

II. The Early Phase of Residential Settlement

At the early stage of industrial development in the 1960s, labour-intensive light industries were developed in a few industrial parks and complexes in conjunction with the enactment of the Industrial Complex Development Law for the Export Industry in 1964, concentrating the workforce along gender lines as domestic female workers predominated in these industries. The first named Kuro Industrial Complex in Seoul was developed in between 1965 and 1973. It was located in Kuro-dong of Kuro district and Kasan-dong of Kŭmch'ŏn district of Seoul, and designated for labour-intensive light industrial production mostly by the domestic female workforce. Female workers were basically mobilized to provide labour force and quartered together in a tiny dormitory residence. Especially, those residences where female workers quartered in such industries as textiles, sewing, and wig and stuffed-toy production were called "bee-hives" due to their being packed with a large number of peer female workers for the relatively small residential space. These "bee-hives" quarters became popular as a form of residence in most of dormitory accommodations within or nearby industrial parks and complexes in a few selected cities, counties, and districts of Seoul and Kyŏnggi Province.

Since the late 1980s, a labour shortage has led to ever increasing and ever-mixed flows of labour migration, especially both in the 3D(difficult, dirty, and dangerous) small and medium-scaled labour-intensive light industries. In consequence of the inflow of massive scale of migrant workers as well as a drastic decline of light industries, domestic female workforce was shrunk and at the same time female workers left dormitory residences in and around industrial parks and complexes. In turn, migrant workers have filled these vacancies for their initial residential settlement. At the early stage of their immigration, they were

provided housing in the form of factory dormitories, and therefore had, at least initially, no say as to where they wished to reside. They simply became a new majority of “bee-hive” residents in factory dormitories. Thus, initial congregation and early residential settlement for migrant workers were simply built in and around industrial parks and complexes. However, since the early 2000s, this pattern of migrants’ residential settlement near to and limited to the location of industrial parks and complexes was not much prevalent. Migrant workers have gradually left their factory dormitories to move into ethnically concentrated residential areas (Chung et al. 2013; H. Kim 2017; Park 2010a, b; Park and Chung 2010). As long as they hold better living conditions, they move into nearby residential areas where they live either in small dilapidated apartments, small-sized dosshouses, or flophouses. For example, the aforementioned Taerim-dong and Karibong-dong in Seoul located next to the district of the Kuro Industrial Complex showed ethnically concentrated residential areas for migrant workers. In the same way, the residential concentration in Wönkok1-tong and Wönkokbon-tong of Ansan city, and Chöngwangbon-tong of Shihüŋg city of Kyönggi Province in association with the development of Banwol and Sihwa National Industrial Complexes also shows a similar pattern of ethnically concentrated residential areas.

Such newly developed and ethnically concentrated residential areas tend to be better equipped with ethnic infrastructure and thus have developed into areas on the basis of an ethnic place or ethnic niche frame not only for migrant workers’ weekend excursions but for tourist attractions. For example, the Seoul Metropolitan government recently announced the development of a Chinatown in the neighbourhood and vicinity of Taerim-dong and Yönbyön (a city with a majority of Chosönjok in China) street in the neighbourhood and vicinity of Karibong-dong of Seoul (Jun et al. 2013; Kim, H.S. 2010; Lee 2008). The specific defining characteristic of these neighbourhoods is that they are populated mostly

by Korean Chinese or Chosŏnjok, serving as an ethnic niche for economic and social activities and composing almost half of the vendors in local markets. As a result, this ethnic niche constitutes a new business opportunity for local economies which in turn attracts the subsequent residential settlement(Benson-Rea and Rawlinson 2003; Free and Rahman 2011; Fong and Ooka 2002).

As the foreign population of migrant workers and marriage migrants is growing and more densely populated local areas with ethnic concentrations have been on the rise, foreign residents are forming a pattern of decision-making regarding their domiciliation settings. The original axis for residence selection for migrant workers was initially influenced mostly by employment and economic factors, but in recent years has been based more on ethnic networks of families, relatives, friends, co-ethnic peers, as well as access to ethnic infrastructure and entrepreneurial ethnic niches centered on emerging enclave clientele. Ethnic communities and concomitant residential segregation in a few cities of Kyŏnggi province and the districts of Seoul have developed due to the fact that foreign residents choose to live not for short-term economic reasons, but for long-term ethnic network-driven reasons for their residential settlement. Simply stated, the recent formation of ethnic communities with residential segregation or mixed neighborhoods shows the principle of ethnic network-driven domiciliation. I further argue that the potential for the formation of ethnic communities is closely linked to ethnic niche frame such as ethnic food services, religious facilities, and locally embedded supporting organizations and institutions. The following textual analysis of interview scripts is a study of the reasoning behind moving out of initial residential areas to newly formed ethnically concentrated residential areas which consequently lead to the burgeoning ethnic communities. This study also investigates how stakeholders in any given ethnically concentrated area interact with each other in their daily lives and how those parties navigate and mitigate their personal

grievances and community affairs.

III. Data and Textual Analysis

The data compiled via ethnographic research was made in association with the research project “A Study on Areas with High Concentration of Migrants in Gyeonggi Province: Problems and Policy Suggestions” by International Organization for Migration(IOM) Migration Research & Training Centre(Chung et al. 2013; H. Kim 2017).¹⁾ It comprises of 110 ethnographic in-dept interviews which were conducted intensively for four weeks in June and July of 2012 in the metropolitan areas such as Seoul, Incheon, and Kyönggi Province. Table 1 shows the distribution of nationalities of interviewees across the selected ethnically concentrated areas. In-dept interviews were done by native language speakers²⁾ who could conduct interviews in the interviewees’ mother tongue: Chinese(19), Mongolian(16), Vietnamese(14), Thai(13), Tagalog(10), Uzbek(21), Kazakh(3), and Russian(14).³⁾ The location of interview places were chosen in pre-selected ethnically concentrated areas via a number of resources and criteria in the cities of Ansan(34), Suwon(19), Hwasöng(7), Kimpo(5),

1) The research project was conducted as a team of Keseon Chung, Dong Kwan Kang, Jung-Eun Oh, Hounghée Cho, Seori Choie, Ingyu Oh, and myself and funded by the Migration Research Training Centre of the International Organization for Migration.

2) Nine native language speakers of interviewers were graduate students at the Graduate School of International Studies and performed their field work during summer break.

3) The numbers in parentheses are the number of interviewees for each nationality. For the selection of interviewees, government agencies, multicultural centres, NGO offices, and religious organizations suggested locations or potential interviewees. Interviewers of native language speakers were also allowed to find interviewees on site via personal acquaintances in areas of interest or randomly asked people to be interviewed in pre-selected ethnically concentrated areas. The final sample of 110 interviews for this textual analysis was compiled mostly on the basis of convenient sampling.

Puch'ŏn(4), Osan(4), and others(10) in Kyŏnggi Province, in the city of Inchon(16), and in the neighbourhoods of Tongdaemun(12), Noryangin(5), and others(3) in Seoul.⁴⁾ In this study, I re-analysed the data file of more than 200 pages of interview scripts, focusing on the topics of subsequent domiciliation decisions and the governance of the daily-based grievances in their residential areas. Via the new textual analysis of interview scripts, I attempt to provide evidence of how they make their domiciliation decisions beyond initial residential settlement as well as of how they govern their daily grievances and living conditions within their ethnic communities.

Table 1: The Nationality and Residential Distribution of Interviewees

	Kyŏnggi Province						The city of Inchon	The city of Seoul			Total	
	Arsan	Suwon	Hwa sŏng	Kim po	Pu ch'ŏn	Osan	Others ¹	Inchon	Tongdae-mun	Noryangin		Others ²
Chinese	6	8								5		19
Mongolian	5							5	6			16
Vietnamese	3		4	4				3				14
Thai	5			1				7				13
Tagalog	4		1			4		1				10
Uzbek	9	2	2				3		5			21
Kazakh					1		2					3
Russian	2				3		5		1		3	14
Total	34	10	7	5	4	4	10	16	12	5	3	110

Note: This table is a revised version of Table IV-1(Chung et al. 2013, 38).

Others¹ include the cities of Gunpo(3), Anseong(2), Hanam(1), Seongnam(1), Uijeongbu(1), Goyang(1), and Gwangmyeong(1). The numbers in parentheses are the number of interviewees.

Others² include Ithawon(1), Jongno District(1), and Gangdong District (1). The numbers in parentheses are the number of interviewees.

4) The numbers in parentheses are the number of interviewees in each city or neighbourhood.

Appendix A shows the three topic structures addressed in interviews: 1) the first topic structure is on residential settlement decisions and on the perception on their residential communities, 2) the second topic structure deals with personal long-term plans, social life, community participation, and neighbourhood safety, and 3) the final topic structure is on personal grievances and recommendations. Appendix B shows the overall content flow of questions addressed in interviews: greetings, explanations of the reasons for residential settlement, questions about daily routines and grievances, and concluding remarks of gratitude. The first topic structure was designed to explore the sequence of domiciliation decisions regarding residential settlements after initial places as well as to examine how they perceived the ways in which local communities/neighbourhoods were developed. To have a better understanding of the interviewees' residential settlement and reasons for their residential decisions, the questions of "why did you decide to move here?", "can you explain the whole process?", and "did anyone help you to make such decision?" were asked. The questions regarding daily routines compose two parts: one is on daily routines, asking "please tell me about your daily routines from the time you wake up, go to work, have lunch, life after work, and to the time you go to bed". The other part is on job-related routines and workplaces, asking "I want to know more about your work routines, including the nature of work, communication and verbal abuses at work, and your relationship with Korean co-workers or other foreigners".

The second topic structure was designed to address their personal long-term plans or desires regarding residential settlement, their social life in association with community participation, and their perception on neighbourhood safety around ethnic communities, asking, "what is your future plan regarding residential settlement?", "do you go to church?", "have you met with any people from churches or NGOs?", and "does church or NGO ever help?" "is your neighbourhood safe?", "any security

problems?”, “what’s the worst problem you are having in this area?”, and “how are you dealing with it?”. The final topic structure addresses the experiences of any grievances and trauma the interviewees might have experienced as well as the suggestions or recommendations they wish to make to the government. The questions are, “what are your grievances?” “how are you trying to solve grievances at workplaces or in communities?”, “what do you think the Korean government or local government can do to help?”, and “any recommendations and suggestions to the government?”. Their responses were used to understand the common social, cultural, and economic characteristics of the residents in a particular area as well as to examine how they make domiciliation decisions and how they solve grievances both in the workplaces and in communities. Across the diverse group of interviewees, I attempt to find key overarching themes of ethnic network-driven domiciliation decision makings as well as to provide a better understanding of how they govern their personal and institutional grievances in and around ethnic communities.

IV. Ethnic Network-driven Domiciliation

Interviewees of Chinese migrant workers originally lived where they were settled by their employers. Even though they still remained within closer proximity to the factories, they were less likely to live in factory-based dormitories, but more likely to move into an area with high presence of Chinese population. This is due to the fact that they have been major workforce for over the past 20 years and are in needs of already established social networks and cultural infrastructure for ethnic-specific services and products. On the other hand, interviewees of Chinese small business and restaurant owners stated other factors that guided their domiciliation decisions mostly on the basis of their target

consumer demographics. As many of them focused on selling their ethnic foods or goods, they set up their housing closer to other ethnic peers who were close to their businesses. These business immigrants also invited out family from China; such was the case with one interviewee “unlike my sister [who] came here with her husband, I came here by myself for business purposes.”⁵⁾ Those trying to execute successful business endeavors and those with children were more inclined to stay long-term in Korea. As a consequence, they asserted wanting to be in areas that allowed their businesses to thrive and had the best opportunities for their children scholastically. One female restaurant owner emphasized, “my husband and I just want to run our business well. And I hope my child can have a better life than us.”⁶⁾ Divorced migrant brides, particularly those with children, also sought residence with extended family or friends that offered them the best support and the best opportunities for their children’s future. Many Chinese interviewees stated they purposively chose Chinese communities with a lower cost of living⁷⁾ and at the same time sought inhabitancy that was rich in ethnic community, affordable, profitable, and suitable for business opportunities and future generations.

With regard to Thai interviewees, several females mentioned religious affiliation as the impetus for their initial decision to migrate to Korea, that via affiliation with the Korean Unification Church(KUC) or associated Women’s Federation for World Peace(WFWP) in Thailand, they had found Korean husbands. Also, while some Thai participants reported continuing this church affiliation, several also reported taking part in traditional Thai Buddhist observances and traditions in Korea. Ultimately, reporting on religious practice was divided among those who exclusively continue to affiliate with the KUC or WFWP, those who

5) Chinese interview #13 – page 34(bottom).

6) Chinese interview #20 – page 53(bottom).

7) Chinese interview #13 – page 33(middle).

disassociate with these in favour of association with a Thai Buddhist organization in Korea, and those who associate with both. However, it was not made clear whether or not such affiliation had an effect upon domiciliation subsequent to arrival in Korea. On the other hand, some Thai interviewees reported working as chefs in Korea, both at Thai owned and run restaurants and those with Korean owners. Such restaurants target Korean and/or Western clientele, and do not tend to act as ethnic places for Thai or other migrants to congregate. This study illustrates that if more of business opportunities are identified, a chance exists not only for migrants, but also for local residents, to start businesses targeting new consumers and that such a chance will continue to increase. In most of business opportunities, Thai business entrepreneurs set up shop near the factories as well to cater to their target demographics in the areas of already established ethnic communities.

In contrast, Filipino interviewees reported affiliation with the Catholic Church. But this was not mentioned as a factor regarding subsequent domiciliation decisions. Instead, they reported having come to Korea as marriage migrants or to join family and friends as co-workers. Their domiciliation in Korea is directly influenced by their interpersonal networks. One Filipino factory worker told how he personally experienced the power of word of mouth in recruiting others from his country to come to Korea: "I have an experience that my friend asked me if job in Korea is good. I told him that I like what I was doing in my job. When he heard it, he resigned in his company in the Philippines and go here and work."⁸⁾ "It was not my choice to be here. Because of my friends that's why I came here."⁹⁾ This networking holds particularly true for migrant brides as well: "I met him in the Philippines in 2008. I met my husband through my friend. My friend married a Korean and then she introduced me to my husband. My friend met her husband in an

8) Filipino interview #6 – page 58(middle).

9) Filipino interview #5 – page 41(top).

agency-like in the Philippines, match making agency.”¹⁰) The network of Filipino residents in Korea is also vast, spanning all across the country and even to Jeju Island. Female interviewees who worked on Jeju also described coming via friends’ recommendations to work as entertainers, “I came here through my friend who worked in Jeju island. She invited me to work here [cause] life in the Philippines is difficult. She told me to apply as singer. All of us here are singers.”¹¹) Thus, a combination of networking and agency recruiting is the main manner through which Filipinos come to Korea. It should be noted that Filipino interviewees are unique insofar as many reported patronizing and congregating at small local stores selling Filipino goods, in addition to ethnic restaurants similar to those reported by other nationalities. Like ethnic restaurants, these Filipino stores serve as meeting and socializing spaces where information is exchanged as customers drink together and sing, using “videoke machines.”¹²) More than one third of interviews with Filipino participants were conducted at such stores and ethnic restaurants which become their arguably central standing, alongside church affiliation.

Vietnamese interviewees reported a wide variety of reasons concerning their initial decisions to live in Korea, including friend and family recommendation, and participation in labor exchange programs. Most of Vietnamese interviewees reported relocation in conjunction with work-related concerns. However, for job relocation, they have to be released from their contracts. If they are not released from their contracts, they cannot legally move to a new workplace-living space. Many reported initial, as well as subsequent, jobs being very difficult or involving other problems, such as late or non-payment of wages, and as such a subsequent domiciliation decision was made. Vietnamese interviewees, like Filipino participants, seemed more interested in developing skills and

10) Filipino interview #4 – page 27.

11) Filipino interview #3 – page 14.

12) “Videoke” is a neologism obtained by combining the words video and karaoke.

earning money than where they lived or their domiciliation in general. “After high school graduation, I failed at college entrance exam and heard from my uncle that Korea needs Vietnamese workers, so I studied Korean, took the Korean exam and then came to Korea through the ministry of labor programs.”¹³⁾ Most Vietnamese interviewees confidently described their domiciliation patterns in tandem with their unwavering economic goals. As one female interviewee asserted, “[I moved] because of the low payment at the place I worked before. I talked to my boss and couldn’t get a salary raise. So, I moved.”¹⁴⁾ One interviewee even aspired to return back to Vietnam, saying “in the evening I come home at around 8:30 pm. I work out then I have dinner. I watch movies and sometimes learn Korean. In the weekend I come to this center to study Korean. I study Korean hoping that later I can get a better job in Vietnam.”¹⁵⁾ In general, Vietnamese interviewees demonstrated the most economic driven persistency for job search, not much stating concerns about their subsequent domiciliation.

Among Mongolian interviewees, only a few stated a specific reason for having selected a particular area for domiciliation. Two mentioned friends, one mentioned a romantic partner, and one said the reason was family. The majority of Mongolian interviewees noted that they had neither chosen their initial location of domiciliation, nor even their first place of employment. One interviewee explained the situation: “I didn’t choose to come to Incheon. We never choose which factory or where to come. Employer make [sic.] job offer for each person and send invitation letter for us. We actually don’t know what kind of factory we are going to work for.”¹⁶⁾ Another worker also described the hiring process as: “agency receives invitation and job offer from employer. So, I didn’t

13) Vietnamese interviewee #10 – page 49.

14) Vietnamese interviewee #13 – page 67.

15) Ibid. – page 51.

16) Mongolian interviewee #3 – page 24.

choose to come to the city of Ansan; instead, factory owner chose me and send me job offer and invitation. I would have been in Mongolia if he didn't choose me."¹⁷⁾ Another interviewee experienced: "I was thinking about working with him in his factory but that factory cannot hire [more] foreign workers because immigration caught one illegal worker working at that factory and banned the right to hire foreign workers. So, I get job in this factory."¹⁸⁾ While a few interviewees noted that they had left their initial job and subsequently chosen to take another in a specific area, typically because of one or multiple friends living in that area, the majority of interviewees did not report such freedom with regard to domiciliation choice.

Most interviewees described initial residential locations as "factory housing" provided by, and typically located near to, each interviewee's workplace. The quality of this housing was also typically described as poor; one interviewee said, "I have lived in factory place and live together with many guys. So, it is dirty and roaches and other insects go around."¹⁹⁾ Another interviewee described facilities associated with his housing, saying, "I have four roommates sharing 10x6 [meter] size room together. We all share public toilet, shower room, and kitchen, too. It is so hard to live like this. We don't have shower. We take shower from the big bucket of warm water and take water with big bagger [sic.] and water ourselves to take shower."²⁰⁾ This characterization of housing facilities was not unique to this interview, as many interviewees regardless of their nationalities spoke negatively about factory housing. Generally, interviewees did not note the low quality of factory housing as an impetus behind subsequent domiciliation choices after their initial residential settlement. Instead, they reported having moved because the

17) Mongolian worker #10 – page 48.

18) Mongolian worker #8 – page 41.

19) Mongolian interviewee #9 – page 43.

20) Mongolian interviewee #3 – page 25.

choice to change jobs necessitated relocation, and that decision had been based on the type of work they had done, not the quality of their housing. It is important to note that this does not reflect a conscious domiciliation choice, because interviewees who relocated were typically forced to accept new housing associated with a new job.

The majority of interviewees across all ethnic or national groups cited that their initial residency choices were made in relation to or by their employment.²¹⁾ Subsequent resettlement patterns, however, were more constrained by desired time to remain in Korea, an availability of resources, access to co-ethnic community, and businesses catering to their demographic. In particular, divorced migrant women pursued work in areas that were affordable, close to other family and friends, and suitable for their children to study and grow up in while also seeking access to ethnic business opportunities. Other marriage migrants with children also mentioned wanting to live in ethnically concentrated areas that would be best for their children's adaption and well-being. Most of interviewees stated convenient access to ethnic community and employment as important reasons for choosing their residence. It is through these precariously weighed factors such as connection to community, affordability and familiarity, proximity to resources or facilities, and plans for long-term inhabitancy that areas of ethnic concentration are being formed and perpetuated in Korea.

V. Governance of Personal Grievances

21) After the careful re-analysis of interview scripts for Uzbek(21) and Russian(14), I could not hold of any meaningful and relevant interpretations on their subsequent domiciliation decisions and governance of grievance. They were not yet settled in ethnically concentrated areas and showed no reliable or patterned responses on subsequent domiciliation so that their individualistic responses were not reported in this section.

Given the growing number of diverse groups of foreign residents in Korea, it is timely and relevant to understand how these emerging foreign populations communicate and resolve their daily affairs and grievances. Common grievances are their workplace complaints such as not being paid according to the amount of work they complete, not being paid as much as Korean co-workers, not being treated equally, and verbal abuses being yelled or cursed at by Korean workers and superiors. Migrant workers echoed similar concerns of job-related grievances and workplace complaints, along with working environments, crowded housing, and poor living facilities. With regard to their legal status, they generally raised the issue of the overcomplicated and even unfair immigration and visa issuance system, particularly in relation to their legal sojourn period, saying “if it is possible, we really want to live and work in Korea legally. We have been working and living here 9 years now and I gave birth to my two sons here in Korea.”²²⁾ Several interviewees explicitly expressed the desire to be able to legally remain in Korea for a longer amount of time, as one Vietnamese interviewee said, “I suggest the Korean government to increase the sojourn period for workers. Doing that would benefit both Korea and Vietnam. I find it not beneficial and unreasonable when a worker, after working in Korean for 4 or 5 years and become skilful in his area, but forced to leave Korea. Instead, new and unskilful workers are allowed to immigrate into Korea.”²³⁾

In governance of grievances, most interviewees generally reported not receiving inside assistance from co-ethnic workers and Korean co-workers in the workplaces. Instead, they sought out support from migrant centres or local churches. Many interviewees explained: “actually, if we have problems, we always go to migrant centres close to us. Sometimes we face Koreans and they can’t understand us because of language barrier.

22) Illegal Mongolian worker #1 – page 38.

23) Vietnamese interviewee #8 – page 42.

That's why we really prefer talking to Filipinos at migrant centres so they can translate it for us."²⁴) Most of Filipino interviewees often stated to obtain assistance from priests and pastors associated with local Catholic churches and added the route via frequenting Filipino shops and restaurants. As a largely Catholic country, it is hardly surprising that Filipino migrants would look to their churches to provide assistance, but they were the only national group which repeatedly referred to asking for and receiving assistance from specific church "Fathers," a few of whom were identified by name: "I asked help from Father Glenn in Hyewah"²⁵) or "Father John is also helping intermarriage cases."²⁶) This possibly indicate collective consciousness among Filipinos regarding the already existing and locally embedded ethnic community with a few supporting institutions.

The majority of interviewees across all ethnic or national groups depicts those migrants follow the paths with the quickest, most convenient, and trustworthy information flow. If language barriers strictly constrain information flow, they would rather rely on ethnic network resources. Simply stated, in their daily societal interactions as well as in governance of grievances, migrants are more likely to rely on common cultural and ethnic-based networks as they are the most convenient, trusted, and accessible. Not just churches, but also local multicultural centres were mentioned by interviewees as a resource for help in daily affairs. These centres serve as place particularly for women and their children to interact with both Korean staff and other foreign mothers. Through multicultural centres, migrant brides can take Korean classes and other skill cultivating classes. Migrants in these classes have access to structured and diversified community interactions. As one Mongolian participant described: "I get help or support from 'Tamuna'(multicultural

24) Filipino interview #5 – page 46.

25) Filipino interview #6 – page 54(top).

26) Filipino interview #9 – page 74(bottom).

centres). I registered free language and computer classes and take those classes. We go camping and join some other activities held by Tamuna. I am friends with some Japanese, Vietnamese, Filipinos and Thailand.”²⁷⁾ Some participants reported meetings outside of the multicultural centres in order to become closer: “I usually met other nationality people from language course offered by ‘Tamuna.’ In the language course I learn with foreigners from Cambodia, Japan, Russian, Vietnam and Chinese. We often go out and spend time together.”²⁸⁾ As such, multicultural centres serve as a place to learn language and to share cross-cultural experiences. Multicultural centres are also a place where migrants gather to exchange information on diverse ethnic infrastructures, to get counseling for their grievances, and to cultivate a sense of cultural community.

On the contrary, some other interviewees reported that they did not rely on multicultural centres as a resource for help in daily affairs. As one Mongolian interviewee said, “we don’t know about that kind of organizations. We never get help or support from that kind of organizations. We have been living here for years without anybody’s help or support.”²⁹⁾ This lack of knowledge was mirrored by at least one Filipino interviewee who asked if it would be appropriate to contact the interviewer if he had complaints to make about his workplace. One Kazakh bride also said: “in Seoul, there are foreign centres, but here[in Pango] we have only one and it is very far.”³⁰⁾ She added, saying “very many organizations work as multicultural centres, but it is so uncoordinated.”³¹⁾ Another Kazakh woman also noted this lack of information distribution and coordination. The interviewer asked, “is there an organization for foreigners seeking help?” to which this woman

27) Mongolian Bride #2 – page 5.

28) Mongolian Bride #1 – page 3.

29) Final Mongolian interviewee.

30) Kazakh interviewee #3 – page 204.

31) Kazakh interviewee #3 – page 206.

answered, “This [is] what I don’t know.”³²⁾ Later she continued with, “as you mentioned about help multicultural centres for foreigners. I want the advertisement of those multicultural centres to reach us. I don’t know how, maybe with through [sic.] flyers, because food ads reach every house.”³³⁾ It could be argued that the person should do the necessary research to find multicultural centres. But some migrants believe that it is incumbent upon the government to expend utmost effort to at least make it known that assistance programs exist, along with where and how they can be joined.

Most Interviewees also often complained of a lack of coordination within, and the overall ineptitude of the Korean government vis-à-vis dealing with their daily affairs as well as grievances. Echoing such problems with government policy enforcement, one Thai restaurant owner reported a raid conducted by immigration, saying, “I don’t mind the officer to check up on the people can’t you do it outside? I open a restaurant and we depend on the customer. Their action made people afraid to come and eat here. That’s discrimination.”³⁴⁾ One Thai businessman further described the common goals and struggles that immigrant entrepreneurs want the Korean government to fix:

The thing I want to suggest Korean government about foreigners here is I want people here to respect us. We come here to work to invest in Korea. Our target customers are not Korean. I feel like they are not welcoming us. We follow all the rules they set but they hurt us with those rules also such as when the immigration officers arrest illegal [immigrants] in my restaurant. I want them to think about my restaurant also. I’m the one who paid for everything here so don’t destroy it. I invested a lot of money as the government required. After the officers come to the restaurant to arrest illegal [immigrants], the customers will question about my restaurant and don’t want to come here again.³⁵⁾

32) Kazakh interviewee #1 – page 96.

33) Kazakh interviewee #1 – page 97.

34) Thai interviewee #6a – page 64.

Most interviewees with business ownership argue that they seek the room and autonomy to safely invest in Korea and cater to their target co-cultural demographics while limiting instances that trigger discrimination and fear. Reports of discrimination were not limited to ethnic non-Koreans. An ethnic Korean Kazakh interviewee characterized her situation:

In Kazakhstan... we don't feel comfortable there being Korean. But in here, our historical motherland, we don't feel that, too. We are considered as Kazakhs here. For ethnic Korean CIS countries there is no help at all. Chinese Koreans have many rights here, we don't. We [are] similar foreigners as Filipino[s]. Korean officials say that if you want to prove that you are historically from South Korea, prove that. But how we can prove that if our grandparents took Russian names? Our ancestors didn't save those documents, but instead they annihilated them because there were trouble times. We cannot restore them and we are nobody here.³⁶⁾

Another common issue raised by interviewees was criticism toward the Korean immigration policies concerning visas for marriage as well as labour migrants. There are many interview cases in which they mentioned a lack of visa information on visa requirement related to their place of work, and expressed their wishes for changing visa status from agriculture to industry. Since visa issuance involves both socio-economic status and legal issues, migrants have no choice but to appeal to the Korean government. In the appeal and resolution of visa-related grievances, they mostly felt the system of visa issuance was unfair and overcomplicated. Based upon interviewee testimony, there is clear evidence illuminating the policy shortcomings regarding visa issuance. Thus, in the appeal and resolution of grievances on visa issuance, interviewees often stated the ineptitude of the government in handling

35) Thai interviewee #6b – page 67.

36) Kazakh interviewee #2 – page 168.

visa issues as well as in enforcing fair immigration policies. What they required is not special treatment, but easy access to visa-related information, consideration of their circumstances, and an understanding of mutual respect without discrimination.

Migrants cope with and overcome their grievances via diverse communication and resource utilization. For personal grievances, they first gather at local migrant owned restaurants or pubs with other co-ethnics or immigrant community members to vent their frustrations, be heard, and possibly receive advice. These coping methods center on higher perceived trust and understanding, as there is a shared cultural bubble enwrapping and protecting the parties involved, holding them to a social contract that does not bind Korean native locals. However, for more professional matters such as abuse and discrimination in the workplaces, lack of necessary information and resources, or for legal problems with visa or contract problems, migrants need access to and help from local authorities often found outside of that immediate and more trusted co-cultural bubble. Migrants' access to local authorities and formal institutions is contingent upon their information networks which come through acquired social capital, demanding more societal integration of them. Due to long working hours, household responsibilities, and language barriers, intermediating locally embedded organizations and institutions such as churches or multicultural centres are immigrants' main go-to agencies. Interviewees, by and large, asserted that they did not have abundant information about any local authorities of Korean government or NGOs. If they did, they do not trust these entities as much as they trust their locally embedded cultural and ethnic organizations and institutions. As such, migrants do not avail to more central or local authorities as readily, despite the fact that these authorities should offer feasible resolution packages and even institutional protections for them.

VI. Conclusion

This study finds that the motivation for migrants to move into ethnically concentrated areas is quite different from that of previous studies. Previously identified motivating factors included cheap housing, relative distance from factories or places of employment, and employment opportunity around industrial complexes. On the contrary, this textual analysis of interview scripts suggests that family, friends, co-ethnic peers, and locally embedded cultural and ethnic organizations and institutions are important considerations for subsequent domiciliation decisions. Even though these areas are normally underdeveloped, and even considered to be unstable with regard to living conditions, migrants tend to make domiciliation decisions regarding their residential areas on the basis of ethnic networks and locally embedded environments. If individuals already had family living in an area, their relative's residence was the primary factor they would consider with regard to their own domiciliation. Another factor to be considered was the existence of a closely related ethnic networks, i.e., whether or not migrants had friends or co-ethnic peers or acquaintances in those areas. If no family members, friends, or acquaintances had already established themselves in a given area, they would then consider the ethnic make-up or a shared cultural bubble of such a residential area. This means that if other individuals from the same country were living in that location, they would feel more comfortable settling there. That a given person would seek out familiar and more trusted cultural and ethnic infrastructure is easily understood. Along the lines of ethnic businesses, religious facilities, and locally embedded support organizations and institutions, this ethnic make-up and a shared cultural bubble of residential areas become the ethnic place and ethnic niche for economic and social activities, constituting a new business opportunity for local economies which in turn attracts the

subsequent residential settlement and ultimately forms ethnic communities.

However, the findings in the analysis of interview scripts are still in accordance with previous studies(Chung et al. 2013; Park 2010b) regarding the importance of economic factors for domiciliation, particularly when cultural or ethnic network ties are not available. If interviewees did not have families and friends around whom to live, the main reason for domiciliation in a particular area was less socially based and more economically driven. It should also be noted that cultural infrastructure to which foreign residents are supposed to be attracted is heavily compounded by economic concerns. As the foreign population of Korea is growing and more ethnically concentrated areas are beginning to arise, both social and economic factors are important in considering subsequent domiciliation decisions. However, in the recent years, the primary axis of decision-making regarding domiciliation is more likely based on social networks of families, relatives, friends, co-ethnic peers and acquaintances, and locally embedded cultural and ethnic infrastructure, which also correlate highly with economic opportunities.

The recent formation of nascent ethnic communities in any given district of Seoul or city of Kyönggi Province provides both employment and business opportunities for certain ethnic groups. Furthermore, ethnic communities allow for an environment of cultural opportunity for most people of a specific ethnic minority. In particular, ethnic restaurants have been developed as a large part of such cultural opportunity, specifically allowing for socialization with those of a similar background. Within the boundaries of ethnic concentrated areas, ethnic restaurants are not the only example of cultural influence and opportunity; local churches and street vendors also allow people to gather or to be in contact with others of the same ethnic minority. In this context, most interviewees expressed needs for convenient access to facilities and cultural infrastructure in order that they might congregate and socialize with each other in local

residential areas. Thus, this study demonstrates the importance inherent to the socio-economic axis of ethnic businesses and multicultural infrastructure for ethnically concentrated areas.

Regarding grievances, those who work in factories complained their working conditions and environments. The most important grievance has to do with situations concerning problems of pay and delayed payment of wages. Another is subject to racial discrimination by Korean co-workers and employers alike. For personal grievances, migrants first rely on social networks of co-ethnics or immigrant community members. These coping and survival methods are based on higher perceived trust and understanding, as there is a shared cultural bubble enwrapping and protecting the parties involved. Even for abuse and discrimination in the workplaces, migrants are more likely to access to and help from locally embedded institutions which are contingent upon their cultural and ethnic networks rather than local authorities. However, when they face legal issues of visa or contract problems, migrants need access to and help from local authorities. A few interviewees asserted that they did not have abundant information about any local authorities of Korean government or NGOs. If they did, they do not trust these local authorities as much as they trust their local co-cultural community. That being said, there is need for more cooperation between Korean governmental and non-governmental agencies in facilitating the communication streams with incoming migrant groups to procure and protect the security of all parties involved. As such, migrants do not avail to more central or local authorities as readily, despite the fact that these authorities should offer feasible resolution packages and even institutional protections for them. The Korean government, however, tends to view policy reform for low-skilled migrant workers as a nuisance, and as such is not willing to put forward policies that facilitate migrant workers to settle permanently in communities. As more and more immigrants pour into Korea, if the government agencies or NGOs are

going to close the communication gap, efforts should be directed towards opening effective information channels to the targeted migrant individuals in newly emerged ethnic communities.

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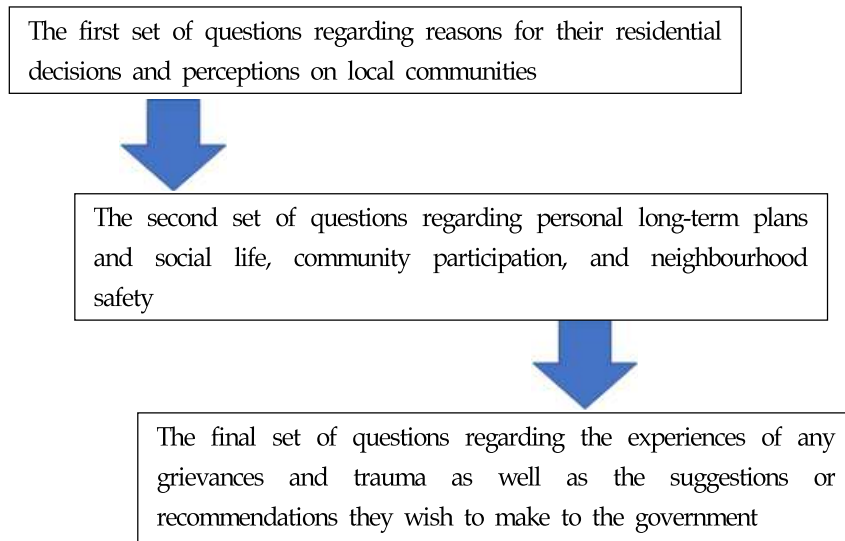
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Appendix A: The Topic Structure of Interview Questions



Appendix B

(1) Greetings

- (a) Hello, how is it like to live in Korea? How's your business going?
- (b) Thanks for willing to share your experience in Korea. I want to learn a lot from this interview.

(2) Explanation

- (a) As I explained briefly before, I wanna know what it's like to live in Korea. I am from the same country as the one you are from. However, I don't have much experience living in this area. I know it's tough to live in Korea as a foreigner, I can't imagine what it's like to live in this area. However, I really want to learn. If you can tell me everything you experience in detail, I'd be appreciative.
- (b) What I want to learn today is the following: (1) why did you move to this area? (2) what's your day like? What are you doing for living?

(3) what do you want the Korean government to do for this area. I know that Korean government tried different programs in this area. I wanna know how those programs affected this area. Also, I wanna ask what kinds of threats (dangers) you are facing in this area.

(3) Questions

- (a) Why did you decide to move here? Can you explain the whole process? Did anyone help you to make such decision?
- (b) Please tell me about your daily routine in detail.
- (c) I want to know more about your work (your relationship with Korean coworkers or other foreigners).
- (d) Have you met with any people from churches or NGOs? Do you go to church? Does church or NGO ever help?
- (e) Is your neighbourhood safe? Any security problems?
- (f) This is a personal question. What's the worst problem you are having in this area? How are you dealing with it? What can the government do to help? What's your future plan?
- (g) Anything new that the government can do to improve the living in this area?

(4) Closing words

- (a) It was really interesting to hear your story and I learned a lot from you. Thank you so much.
- (b) If I have more questions, may I contact you in the future? Here's a little voucher for your great help today. Thank you.

(1) Greetings

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Note: The original sample questions in Korean appear in Appendix 1(Chung et al. 2013, 125-126).

국문요약

이주자의 민족 네트워크 기반 거주지 형성과 고충처리의 거버넌스

김혁래 ■ 연세대학교

한국의 노동 및 결혼 이주가 증가함에 따라 서울과 경기도의 이주 노동자와 결혼 이주민들이 초기 거주정착지로부터 후속적인 거주지역을 어떻게 결정하고 왜 이주하는지에 대한 연구가 중요하다. 이를 위해 본 연구는 중국·필리핀·베트남·태국·우즈베키스탄·몽골·카자흐스탄·러시아의 노동이나 결혼 이주자에 대한 110명의 인터뷰 내용을 텍스트 분석을 통해 후속 거주지역 결정의 이유와 지역사회내의 고충처리 거버넌스의 방법과 내용을 분석한다. 그들의 초기 주거정착 이후의 후속적인 거주지 결정은 민족네트워크 기반요인에 의해 이루어진다. 또한 문화적 근접성과 민족적 친숙성으로 민족네트워크 기반요인들은 직장과 지역 사회내의 고충을 처리하고 관리하는 거버넌스의 초기 방어선이기도 하다. 노동 및 결혼 이주민들이 지역사회내의 다양한 문제들을 어떻게 대처하고 처리하는 거버넌스의 분석을 통하여, 이 연구는 민족네트워크의 기반요인들과 지역사회내 내재된 민족네트워크 관련 조직과 기관의 역할을 강조한다. 노동과 결혼이주자 개개인들이 민족네트워크와 지역공동체의 구성원들과 적극적으로 연계하지 않으면, 지역사회내 고충과 불만은 강화될 뿐만 아니라 제도화된 차별에 직면하게 될 것이며, 궁극적으로 지역 고충처리 거버넌스에서 외부인으로 남게 될 것이다.

주제어: 거주정착, 후속적 주거결정, 민족 네트워크 기반 요인, 지역사회, 민족 조직과 제도, 고충 거버넌스