Maternal Practices of Korean Healthcare Workers in Germany[1]

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Abstract

In the framework of the former West German government's "guest worker" (*Gastarbeiter*) recruitment policy between 1955 and 1973, more than 11,000 South Korean nurses and nurse assistants moved to Germany to work in medical or nursing institutions to fill a gap in the provision of healthcare services as "guest workers." Drawing on personal accounts, the current empirical study explores mothering practices primarily between the 1960s and 1990s in the families of Korean migrant healthcare workers who resided in Germany over the course of their working lives and/or returned to Korea. This study charts the manner in which these migrant mothers navigated and balanced competing social discourses around mothering that emerged from the different cultural and historical backgrounds in a new host society. The concepts around mothering consist of the ideology of "intensive mothering," the Confucian ideal of "wise mother and good wife," and the German notion of the "raven mother." Special attention is paid to the way in which mothering is negotiated and experienced by migrant mothers in gendered family roles over the time—the period from childhood to adulthood—spent in the host country. Various practices and strategies for childcare arrangements and education in sustaining a migrant family in the host country are discussed. Another salient question to explore is the manner in which the migrants' ethnic culture and values inform their ethno-specific mothering practices. In this respect, the demands and aspirations of cross-cultural mothering to raise children with dual-cultural competence in both the culture of origin and that of destination are explored.

Keywords: migration, mothering, South Korean nurses, Koreans
              in Germany

Introduction

To deal with the postwar labor force deficit, the former West German government actively implemented the "guest worker" (*Gastarbeiter*) recruitment policy between 1955 and 1973. Having travelled from Turkey, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, and Yugoslavia—among other countries—the number of guestworkers reached 2.6 million in 1973.[3] By 1973, one-third of the arrivals were female guest-workers concentrated in the fields of food, textile, and metal industries, and in the service sector including domestic service.[4] In addition, approximately 11,000 South Korean nurses and nurse assistants were recruited to work in medical or nursing institutions such as hospitals, sanatoriums, nursing homes, or hospices in the former West Germany (hereafter Germany) to fill a gap in the provision of healthcare services. The majority of them were single and in their early twenties or thirties at the time of migration. They sought personal, social, and economic development for themselves and their families at home.[5]

The South Korean (hereafter Korean) guestworkers were not necessarily in a unique position; there are both congruent and disparate aspects to them in comparison with other female guestworkers who moved to Germany between the 1950s and 1970s. The employment of Korean healthcare workers, like that of other categories of female guestworkers, was intended to compensate for the labor shortage in Germany, with these women contributing to the German economy both as guestworkers and as consumers. In general, female guestworkers received a positive reception from the host society for their diligence, swiftness, cleanness, and dexterity.[6] On top of their technical skills, Korean female workers were often praised for their emotional skills such as tenderness and kindness (perceived as ethnic attributes of Korean or Asian femininity in the media and the workplace).[7] As with other guestworkers, their work contracts were usually limited to three years on a rotational basis. Notably, they were solo, independent migrants with the status of semi-skilled or skilled healthcare workers, not simply followers of their male family head's migration. Like other guestworkers, they also faced the risk of deportation when the German guestworker recruitment policy was ended in 1973 and protested successfully for their right to stay.[8] Substantial numbers of Korean healthcare workers have settled and acquired German citizenship.[9]

The increasing number of women migrants concentrated in the care sector raises the important issue of the gender dimension in migration. Transnational

migration affects women and men in gender-specific ways. A substantial amount of migration literature indicates a gendered migration pattern in which the impact of transnational migration both reinforces and shifts gender roles of women and men in the family. Working migrant mothers often have to combine mothering with paid work, yet they bear the primary responsibility for childcare as the chief caregiver in the family. Since mothering is a site in which their critical positions as mothers and as migrants intersect with each other, maternal experiences are arguably a useful perspective from which to investigate the gendered aspect of migrants' social practices in their daily life.

Discussion of mothering and motherhood has been a significant area in Gender Studies. A leading American feminist, Adrienne Rich, conceptualizes *motherhood* as a patriarchal institution, but *mothering* as women's experiences.[10] Early feminists such as Nancy Chodorow and Sara Ruddick discuss women's experiences of mothering and motherhood as universal, thus implying that women share their maternal experiences and practices.[11] However, this universal concept of mothering has recently been questioned, and the diversity and complexity of maternal experiences and practices should arguably be discussed relative to mothers' different positionality based on race, ethnicity, class, religion, sexuality, and any other relevant factors.[12] The present work is based on the premise of mothering and motherhood as socially and culturally constructed practices and activities that are "shaped, altered, and transformed with time, place, space, and social conditions," as scholars including O'Reilly, Glenn, and Arendell have proposed.[13] Hence, attention is paid to variation in mothering experiences depending on a range of relevant sociocultural factors, rather than assuming mothering to be a universal experience shared by all women.

In addition to a general discussion of the diversity of maternal experiences based on women's socioeconomic situation and ethnic or racial background, a more specific focus on themes of migrant women's mothering experiences and challenges has emerged. This research consists mainly of empirical studies on transnational mothering—raising children and childcare provision at a distance and care arrangements within transnational families—in conjunction with the feminization of migration.[14] The current study pays attention not only to the gendered but also to the classed, racialized, or ethnicized aspect of migrants' mothering practices, especially in the host country. So far, although works by Erel, Medwinter and Burton, and Christou and Michail,[15] among others, have dealt with this issue, less attention has been paid to specific maternal practices of migrant mothers in the destination countries than to the overall issue of transnational mothering. Hence, this study charts the manner in which these migrant mothers navigate and balance competing social discourses around mothering. These have emerged

from the interplay of different cultural and historical backgrounds in a new host society and consist of the ideology of "intensive mothering," the Confucian ideal of "wise mother and good wife," and the German notion of the "raven mother."

The field of mothering and motherhood of Korean migrant women has also been under-represented in the body of Korean diaspora literature. Only a few studies on Korean immigrant women's family life, including childrearing, in the United States and in the United Kingdom are available to date.[16] No ethnographic work on the specific maternal experiences and motherhood of Korean immigrant women in Germany has yet been conducted. Thus, this study is an attempt to enhance representation of gendered migrants' transnational lives in the body of Korean diaspora literature and to contribute to the body of study of mothering in migration.

The current empirical study explores mothering practices in the families of Korean migrant healthcare workers who resided in Germany over the course of their working lives and/or returned to Korea. The complex challenges they faced and the various local and transnational strategies they employed to overcome them, consistently constraining their agency as migrant mothers, represent the key themes of this study. Special emphasis is directed to the way in which mothering is negotiated and experienced by migrant mothers in gendered family roles over the time spent in the host country. The period concerned runs from childhood to adulthood, primarily between the 1960s and 1990s. Firstly, various practices and strategies employed by first-generation Korean nurse migrant women for childcare arrangements and education in sustaining a migrant family in the host country are discussed. As they face cultural, linguistic, and institutional challenges in their maternal practices in the new host society, strategies utilized to deal with these are mapped out. Another salient question to explore is the manner in which the migrants' ethnic culture and values inform their ethno-specific mothering practices. In this respect, the demands and aspirations of cross-cultural mothering to raise children with dual-cultural competence in both the culture of origin and that of destination are explored.

Method

This ethnographic study draws on personal accounts of mothering experiences of former Korean healthcare workers from biographical life history narrative interviews. Multiple in-depth interviews with forty-five former Korean healthcare workers, one German husband, and two adult children who were left behind when their mother migrated to Germany alone were conducted in Germany, Canada, Korea, and South Africa between 2011 and 2019. Among them, accounts from twenty who have children are cited in the current work.

The interviewees unpacked their maternal experiences in Germany in the past and present, often with complex emotions of joy, gratitude, frustration, guilt, regret, and/or disappointment. Interviews were taped with the participants' permission and transcribed. They were conducted in Korean, and their accounts were translated into English by the author. All names were changed and anonymized in this article. These biographical interviews, combined with relevant research from gender studies and migration studies, are employed to conduct a micro-level examination of the migrants' maternal practices throughout their life course.

Before migration, they were trained as nurses through vocational school or university education or as nurse assistants through private job training institutes in Korea. Most of them migrated to Germany as single women, except for the three married women who left their children behind in Korea and migrated alone. Among these healthcare guestworkers, some made their further onward migration journey mainly to North America or returned to Korea at some stage; some left after the termination of their initial employment contract at their first workplace, others after retirement. It is estimated that approximately 30% of them settled in Germany. Most of those who stayed built their own family with a Korean partner, mainly miners who migrated around the same time, while others set up house with local partners in Germany or remained single. By now they are pensioners, having mostly worked as healthcare workers until their retirement in Germany; others have already passed away. Very few were still working as a nurse or nurse assistant at the time of their interviews with me.

While a father's role and involvement in childrearing is also important, the current work represents predominantly the mother's side of childrearing experiences. This is because the Korean healthcare migrant women have played a central role in nurturing, caring for, and educating their children. Only one German husband who also worked in the healthcare sector was interviewed about his childcare experiences.

Ideal models of mothering

In this section, the models of ideal mothering, which are canonized in an "intensive mothering" ideology, and the concept of "wise mother and good wife" (*hyŏnmo yangc"ŏ* 현모양처) ideology are outlined. These models have had a great influence on the Korean healthcare workers' approach to childcare. In her seminal work, Sharon Hays delineates an "intensive mothering" ideology encompassing:

> an underlying assumption that the child absolutely requires consistent nurture
> by a single primary caretaker and that the mother is the best person for the

job. In sum, the methods of appropriate child rearing are construed as child centered, expert guided, emotionally absorbing, labor intensive, and financially expensive.[17]

To achieve a high standard of mothering requires significant physical, emotional, financial, and time investment. Criticism of this ideology is that it is based on the premise of the white, Western, middle-class, heterosexual, nuclear family, which represents a workable model for only a few families.[18] However, this ideology of the intensive mother role remains prevalent regardless of class, race, ethnicity, or nationality.[19]

In the Korean or East Asian context, this modern intensive mothering ideology is further reinforced in conjunction with the pre-existing notion of Confucian womanhood, which can be canonized in the model of "wise mother and good wife." The ideology of "wise mother and good wife" as a social model for a "good" mother is embedded in Confucian gender norms. These norms endorse gender segregation in spatiality and role, which limits women's place to the domestic sphere. Women are supposed to take care of the household, provide care for their family, and supervise children's education with devotion and sacrifice. Particular weight is put on childbearing and childrearing as a key element of women's role in maintaining the patrilineage in Confucian womanhood. In contrast, men are expected to adopt the role of economic provider for the family and take up responsibilities in socioeconomic and political affairs in the public sphere.[20]

In tandem with Confucian womanhood, becoming a biological mother through childbearing is a basic presumption in the ideology of "wise mother and good wife" and a prescribed duty imposed on married women. If women are not able to fulfill this obligation, the very foundation of marriage and family is perceived to be in danger. Two of my interviewees faced crises in their marriage when giving birth was delayed or biologically impossible. Min, a retired nurse, made the painful decision to leave her husband as it turned out that she was not able to bear his child.[21] Kang, a former nurse assistant, endured intense pressure and stress from her husband and his family in Korea and was on the verge of divorce when there was no sign of pregnancy for seven years after her marriage.[22] The two cases indicate becoming a biological mother through giving birth is still considered central to a woman's role.

In German, the modern approach to mothering is conceptualized in the term "raven mother" (*Rabenmutter*), which implies criticism of a self-centered, irresponsible mother—especially a working mother—who leaves her dependent child in the hands of a childminder or a childcare facility in pursuit of her career.[23] "Raven mother" can be interpreted as a stereotypical notion of a "deficient" mother and manifests the importance of an embedded moral aspect to women's childrearing

responsibilities. These three ideas—ideologies of intensive mothering, "wise mother and good wife," and the concept of "raven mother"—are interwoven with each other in constituting the dichotomized models of "good" mother and "bad" mother.

Through transnational migration, the migrant mothers encounter and are exposed to diverse ideas of mothering practices from their own culture and from the host country. The gender ideology of "wise mother and good wife" is resistant to change under the circumstances of migration. Even though the migrant mothers constantly juggle responsibilities of work and childrearing in the face of insufficient resources, social support, networks, and time available to achieve intensive mothering, they still strive to devote themselves to fulfilling the ideal of the "good mother." While performing "good" mothering, they encounter various barriers and obstacles. Concurrently, they maneuver and negotiate their position as migrant mothers and attempt to devise various mothering strategies. The next section examines the tactics, challenges, barriers, resilience, and resistance of the Korean migrant mothers in their maternal practices.

Strategies and challenges of migrant mothering

Korean healthcare workers, through their maternal practices, have played a vital role in building and sustaining their family in the host society post-migration. In reality, they have combined multiple roles not only as guestworker but also as mother, wife, daughter, daughter-in-law, and sibling that stretch over families in the countries of both origin and destination. Those who formed a family in the host country, or already had and left a family in the country of origin, faced challenges in combining career and domesticity, especially in childrearing. In these circumstances, the Korean working mothers deftly deployed several strategies in navigating the challenges associated with childrearing, for example by accessing the full range of resources of maternal practices available within the family, neighborhood, and workplace. This section sets out the diverse challenges and strategies associated with organizing childcare arrangements and children's education.

Childcare arrangements within the family

Throughout many periods of historic turmoil, such as the colonial period (1919–1945), the Asia-Pacific War (1937–1945), and the Korean War (1950–1953), the Korean family has functioned as a unit of "survival."[24] In this family-centered culture in the Korean context, family is considered a crucial pillar to lean on for emotional, financial, and care support in times of hardship. The Korean migrant healthcare

mothers also sought to utilize kin-based childrearing support to navigate their lack of resources, social support, network, and time to raise their children competently in Germany.

Mothering at a distance

As for those who already had a family, including young children, in Korea, they had to leave their children and spouse behind to move to Germany to work as guestworkers. In such a transnationally split family, childcare had to be arranged prior to migration, and primarily within the family, to fill the care deficit caused by the mother moving abroad, as in the cases of former nurses Ham and Bak.[25] Rachael Salazar Parreñas plausibly observes how care arrangements in a trans-national family reinforce the traditional gender roles of parenting,[26] as care is deemed to be predominantly women's work. In most cases, female kin such as the mother or mother-in-law of the migrant took over the care responsibility of the physically absent mother. Intergenerational support for childcare is a common practice in the Korean context, which is conceptualized as "shadow motherhood" (*kŭrimja mosŏng* 그림자모성).[27] When support from kin was not available, some families employed a substitute, such as Kong's family, who employed a young woman to look after the household and the children who were left behind. For this type of outsourcing of childcare, kinship networks are often utilized to find a reliable childminder.

Leaving a dependent child behind causes the mother considerable emotional strain, as experienced by Ham, who left two daughters in the hands of her mother prior to her migration to Germany: "In the place where I worked, I often saw Turks or Greeks. So even when I just bumped into a girl with short black hair, my heart was aching because I desperately missed my daughters."[28] The job of nurse, which is closely linked to caregiving, seems to facilitate coping with their emotional burden. Ryu left her ten-month-old daughter in Korea and worked at a pediatric hospital.[29] She recalls that her caring and nursing work for the child patients helped her deal with her difficult emotions of longing for closer relation-ships with her faraway daughter, guilt, and loneliness. Identifying her young patients with her own left-behind child indicates a blurred boundary and suggests an element of continuity between mothering and paid work as a pediatric nurse. Caregiving has often been considered "a labor of love imagined as a familial-type relation,"[30] as Ryu put her child patients in the position of her own child through providing the same level of compassionate care as a loving mother would.[31]

Strategies to compensate for the mother's absence vary. Certainly, the migrant mother seeks to make up for her physical absence with material mothering in the form of financial remittances for her child and family, which is termed

"commodified motherhood" by Parreñas.[32] When Korean women migrated to Germany in the 1960s and the 1970s, it was a time when transnational communication through advanced digital media and the infrastructure for information and communications technology (ICT) were less available and more costly than at present. Frequent communication was not feasible due to the high cost of telephone calls and was further complicated by the time difference between Korea and Germany. This resulted in a low level of interaction between separated mother and child. Hence, a mother and her child living apart at that time represented an even more critical rupture and created greater emotional constraints in both lives than it would today, when digital media is more available and affordable to facilitate interaction. When the mothers did meet their children again after several years of separation, the children often did not recognize them as mothers, which made them even more sad, and feeling more guilt about being unable to be in physical proximity to their children or to provide them with emotional support was common among the migrant mothers. Ham, a former nurse, was able to live together with her two children only when her children reached adulthood and had acquired study permits at a university in Germany after many years of separation. Acquiring a family reunification visa to bring one's child to Germany was theoretically not possible for the guestworkers before the late 1970s unless the migrants had secured a long-term resident permit or citizenship, for example through marriage to a local man. They, as guestworkers, were supposed to return home after their initial employment contract finished. A sense of temporariness as a "guest" who was supposed to leave at some stage was associated with their status and mothering practices in the "host" society.

Some transnational migration resulted in family dissolution caused by divorce, and certain individuals chose to remarry. Some—like Hyon's[33] and Kong's mothers—had been separated without much contact with their mothers in Germany, and others like the late Kong's mother managed to bring her two children over to Germany later, initially without proper long-term visa status. In both cases the relationships between mother and child were strained and the mothers were haunted by a life-long sense of remorse. Mother and child separation through migration evidently undermined their capacity for intimacy and quality of family life.

Bringing family member(s) to Germany

Those who married and built their own family in Germany were faced with the lack of a local kinship support network. Pang recalls her feeling of isolation and frustration with childrearing: "Raising a child here by myself was such hard work, indeed. I was still young, and everything was new. I had to put up with all the

frustration and burdens by myself and felt tired to the bone day and night, it was *so* difficult."[34] Her accounts demarcate maternal struggles in managing her double burden of childbearing work and paid work and her feeling of isolation and loneliness.

One strategy employed was to mobilize available childcare support from family far away by either inviting kin members—primarily female relatives—from Korea to Germany or by sending young children to Korea to be cared for by family members. These are potential ways for the migrants to get childcare support from any available family members in the country of origin. Long-term care exchanges between kin can be observed with these arrangements. Most of these healthcare workers financially supported their family in the home country through remittances particularly before their marriage. These remittances can be conceptualized as provision of care for family with resources available to the family to cover living expenses, ailing parents' medical expenses, siblings' education fees, paying back family debts, or building a new house as narrated by my interviewees. When the migrants established their own family in Germany, some family members like parents and siblings—who were previous recipients of these remittances—offered, or were asked for, support to ease the childcare burden of the previous remitter, the migrant family member. Over time, the remittance recipients within the home-country family come to play an inverse role as substitute caregiver for the previous caregiver. Expectation or obligation to return previously received care within the family circle might be involved in this reciprocal care exchange. This indicates an interdependency of family commitment in care provision—which often takes the form of intergenerational support and sharing the burden in of childrearing—and a longitudinal care exchange through different temporality and spatiality of caregiving and care receiving.

In this respect, reciprocity and circularity of care exchange, as addressed by Baldassar and Merla, and Huang et al.,[35] can be discerned between families in the countries of origin and destination. Son, a former nurse, invited her parents and her mother-in-law in turn to visit Germany in order to get their help with childminding:

> Our parents took turns to look after my baby son. My mother-in-law came and stayed with us for ten months first and then my parents for four months. They came [to Germany] to look after my son when he was a baby. Even now I still think that was a selfish idea, only thinking about myself ... I hardly showed them around Germany, but most of the time they just stayed at home and looked after my son. My mother cooked for us too, and before she returned, she made a big jar of kimchi for us. She was a great help for me.[36]

From Son's side, as both parents were unable to attend her wedding in Germany because of high air fares in the early 1970s, like most of her nurse friends she might have felt a sense of obligation to invite them to spend time together with her newborn baby over and above her need for childcare support. The sense of filial piety made her feel guilty about only letting them work for her child and household rather than taking them sightseeing around Germany. From her parents' side, they might have felt an obligation to help with childrearing in return for material support they had previously been given through remittances from her. Complex senses of expectation, obligation, and guilt are entangled in this familial care exchange system.

Reciprocal care flows can be found in the transnational family as well. For example, Ham,[37] a former nurse, left her children in Korea, and her mother raised them for many years until they had finished high school. Her children applied for and attained admission to universities in Germany to reunite with her. After the arrival of her children, she also invited her ageing mother—who had previously raised the children in Korea—to Germany in order to look after her. The childcare support Ham received from, and returned to, her mother also illustrates the different temporality and spatiality of care circulation to varying degrees over a lifespan.[38] In the Asian context, Huang et al. point out that the concept of reciprocity, which is embedded in care practice, is integral to the notion of filial piety.[39]

Familial care support could present challenges as well. Son, a former nurse, identifies two issues she faced with support from family members: one was the financial burden of expensive airfares between Korea and Germany for her parents, which cost almost two months' salary at that time (in the early 1970s). The other issue was a generational and cultural gap in the style of childrearing. She found her mother's way was traditional and not suitable for the contemporary time or for Germany: "My mother insisted that I should feed my son with rice. When my son didn't eat rice, that meant for her he had missed a meal, which worried her."[40] This generational gap in mothering could be viewed in conjunction with the idea of intensive mothering, which is expert guided, hence the mothering of the grandmother is often considered "to be imperfect, or unscientific, something to be evaluated and adjusted based on the younger generations' standard."[41]

Not only parents but also other family members, often female siblings, were invited to assist with childcare: Han and Kim called on their younger sisters (in Korea) to come and help them. When Han was overburdened with three young children, she had support for childcare from her German mother-in-law, sister-in-law, and her mother and sister from Korea, all female family members:

> I had a really hard time and felt quite down after I gave birth to my second child. I was badly in need of help. So, I asked my younger sister to come over to help

me. While she stayed with me to look after my children, I offered to cover her German language course tuition fee. [When my sister was here], I desperately felt that I had to visit Korea and went there for four weeks. It really did me good. I felt like a singleton or like a bird with lots of freedom, seeing family and old close friends whom I hadn't seen for several years.[42]

Like Han, Kim also invited her siblings, a younger sister and a younger brother, to stay with her family and care for her son. In return, she accommodated and supported them in their studies in Germany when her son was one year old. The reciprocity and circularity of care can be observed in these intergenerational or mutual patterns of support within the family.

Sending a child to family in Korea

When neither child-fostering arrangements in the host country nor inviting family members to Germany was feasible, some chose to send their children to Korea for an extended period to be temporarily fostered by kin in the home country. This was done by Kang, a nurse assistant, who recalls:

Shortly after the birth of my first son, it turned out that I was pregnant again. [After the second child was born] I couldn't manage to take care of two babies at the same time. So, I appealed for help from my younger sister [in Korea]. And she came and looked after my children for ten months. When she went back, I found it was almost impossible to deal with the two babies alone. So, I asked my husband to take my son who was one and a half years old to his mother [in Korea]. My mother-in-law had already offered to raise one of my babies, so I took up her offer and of course wired the [childcare] cost to her.[43]

The mother-in-law's offer to foster Kang's son was not only rooted in the obligation to repay the material support the parents had received in the past, but also arose out of their shared commitment to foster the male heir. The long wait for the first grandson to be born, since Kang's first pregnancy took seven years after her wedding, had caused a crisis in her marriage.

Another cost associated with a mother's reduced childrearing responsibility is the emotional strain caused by a temporary separation from her child and consequent concerns about his or her wellbeing: "I sobbed and sobbed after having sent my son far away [to Korea]. That was not a distance that I could go and visit over the weekend. I desperately missed him. I didn't feel good about it at all. But I couldn't find any other choice, working and looking after two babies ..."[44] Even though she did not specifically mention the "raven mother" term, her narrative indicates her feeling of guilt as a "deficient" mother, which accurately reflects the German sense of a "raven mother" who prioritizes her career and abandons her child. This is because she, as the biological mother, could not be the primary

caretaker of her son—implicit in the idea of intensive mothering—and passed this crucial care responsibility on to her mother-in-law. When her son had an accident at her parents-in-law's place in a rural village, her sense of guilt from not being able to protect and secure his health and wellbeing escalated: "My son had two accidents there [at my parents-in-law's place]. He was nearly drowned once in water and another time in a urine container. Luckily, thank God, he was saved and survived. So, my father-in-law worried about my son and wanted to send him back to us."[45]

As the migrants lacked local kinship support networks for childcare in the host country, they sometimes utilized their transnational family networks in the home country by physically relocating their child to Korea for fostering. This care provision strategy constitutes another type of transnational family. The trajectory of childcare responsibility is extended over intergenerational networks within the transnational family across two continents. The transnational familial support for childcare, by bringing family members to the host country and/or by sending a child back to the home country, could not be a long-term strategy but rather occurred "in an emergency or a crisis."[46]

In this support within kinship, as indicated earlier, material—and social—resources are shared and circulated transnationally for family care. This can be framed as "the circulation of care"[47] or "the reciprocity of care."[48] Baldassar and Merla define "care circulation as the reciprocal, multidirectional and asymmetrical exchange for care that fluctuates over the life course within transnational family networks subject to the political, economic, cultural and social contexts of both sending and receiving societies."[49] There are multiple occasions and times to provide care and "repay" care received. Former recipients can become caregivers and vice versa. As Huang et al. plausibly suggest, interactive and reciprocal care flows feature in care studies on the Asian context, "where the boundary between the caregiver and the care receiver is more often blurred in a mutually dependent care relationship."[50] Through reciprocal care exchange in multiple directions, transnational family networks and relationships, shared responsibility, and obligation could be strengthened, while at the same time tensions emerged.

Sharing childcare with the husband

Another childcare provision option within a family is to share the responsibility with the husband. A few of my interviewees were the main breadwinner and their husbands took on the primary care work for children at home, including Oh's and Yeon's husbands,[51] who were students when their children were still small in the 1970s: "I was working full time at a hospital and my husband was studying at K university [in Germany]. He was more flexible than I, so he looked after, cooked

[for], and fed the kids when they came back from kindergarten. That caused delay to finish his degree, so it took long."[52]

Gender roles within a family and the gender division of labor for a household are often negotiated and reconfigured under the circumstances of migration, particularly when the woman is the main financial provider. Children's role in a migratory family is also negotiated to provide assistance as a carer or interpreter for their parents when the parents' local language competence is limited. In Yeon's family, her daughter also participated in her younger siblings' care.[53] Some, including Son,[54] a former nurse, and Schmidt,[55] a German former male nurse who married a Korean nurse, managed to share childrearing duties with their spouses on a relatively fair basis to cover their different working hours. They worked counter-shift—the wife on the nightshift, the husband on the dayshift—for several years, so at least one of the parents could be home at any given time.

In general, however, there are limited fathering narratives regarding childcare responsibility in my interviewees' accounts. Kang shares memories of the tension between her husband and son caused by his father's lack of care responsibility: "My son seems to feel a bit awkward with his dad. He thinks dad has had so little time [for him] and just focused on his own life and interests. Unfortunately, he retains the idea and the image of a dad who rarely spent time playing with him when he was a child."[56] When a couple experiences strain in their relationship from extramarital affairs, alcohol addiction, or domestic violence, among other reasons, the mother is often left as the sole child raiser and faces even more challenges in sustaining her family.

Although a few fathers temporarily took on the role of primary caregiver for their children because they had flexible schedules, the mothers themselves were still supposed to bear the *main* childcare responsibility on top of their contribution to the family's finances. Those men who were not able to be the main breadwinner of their family and were consequently dependent on their wives' income might have felt their masculinity was damaged by doing domestic tasks and looking after children, which are stereotypically assigned as women's work. The family gender roles of woman as caregiver and man as provider, based on the "wise mother and good wife" ideology, are resistant to change, even when the woman is the primary provider under the circumstances of migration.

Shifting work arrangements

Care provision within the immediate and the extended family was combined with local networks in the host country to find public or private child daycare or childminder services locally. Shifting working arrangements was another

practical strategy widely employed to reconcile conflicts between work and mothering, for example shifting or reducing working hours, or even resigning from a job.

Using a daycare facility

Because of a shortage of childcare facilities in Germany, working mothers with dependent children struggled to balance career and childrearing commitments. Kim,[57] a former nurse, shares the problems she experienced securing a place at a crèche or kindergarten in the 1970s. Hiring a private service, such as a childminder, was not easy to afford. One care arrangement, which the healthcare workers welcomed, was the opportunity to access child daycare facilities at work. Son, a former nurse, even changed her workplace to one where a daycare facility was offered:

> Because the G municipal hospital in city H had a crèche for the staff, I changed my work to start there because of my son, and later gave birth to my second son. It was great, I could go and see my son during my break time and see how he was doing there [at the hospital crèche] and collected him to go back home together after work. I worked there for eight years and sent both of my sons to the crèche.[58]

Another option was to recruit a childminder privately. Yu, a former nurse, like a single mother, had no one at home to look after her children while she was doing nightshifts, as her husband had returned to Korea to take up a job offer. An elderly neighbor took care of her daughter at night with "a very reasonable reward":

> But after she [the elderly lady] moved out of the flat in the same house [we lived], my daughter stayed at her place for eight days while I was working nightshift and after that I took her [my daughter] home and she stayed with me for six days when I had a break in between nightshifts. She was like a granny to my daughter. I can't express how thankful I am.[59]

In the absence of familial support and given the shortage of child daycare services, the neighbor played a role in childcare and became a pseudo-family member. The widespread lack of childcare provision in Germany during the guestworkers period—especially from the end of the 1960s onwards—left the childcare responsibility primarily up to each family, predominantly mothers. Welfare organizations and the media in Germany argued that there was an urgent need to build more kindergartens to provide social support, highlighting how migrants' children were prone to neglect and vulnerable to accidents while their mothers were out working.[60]

Shifting working hours

Another strategy to negotiate the conflict between work and childcare was to make changes in work arrangements. A substantial number of these Korean migrants either reduced their contracted working hours to part-time employment or shifted their working hours to nighttime. When they had to work full time as a co-bread-winner or sole breadwinner, they reconfigured their everyday rhythm by doing nightshifts to be physically present for mothering when their children were at home. They could take a rest for a while after a nightshift: "I started nightshifts after my first child was born. It was a cycle of eight-day nightwork and then a six-day break."[61] Doing nightshift was a strategy many of my interviewees chose— including Yu, Yang, Son, Kim, Schmidt's wife, and others—in order to negotiate their conflicting double roles as care provider and co-breadwinner, or in some cases sole breadwinner.

Doing nightshifts for an extended time might serve to mitigate the conflict of balancing mothering with work, but this decision was motivated by consideration of the child's wellbeing more than that of the mother. Daytime was not always an opportunity to take a rest but rather was dedicated to childcare and housework: "When I worked overnight and came back home, I felt so tired, but it was not easy to sleep during the day and I had to look after my child, cook, clean, and do all sorts of work at home."[62] Kim, who carried on with nightshifts, later managed to switch to part-time employment when she was no longer the sole breadwinner of her family: "I was able to reduce my work to 20 hours a week from full time as my husband [who was studying before] started to work. That was when my son entered a primary school."[63] A lasting health problem from long-term nightshift work—as Schmidt shares from his wife's case—was suffering from sleep disorders. Even though women who took on long-term nightshifts suffered health issues and often experienced exhaustion, they constantly juggled and sought out feasible maternal strategies to combine their career and "good" mothering by switching from day to night work.

Giving up a career

Another potential solution to the work–care conflict is for a woman to give up her personal career development and become a stay-at-home mother. If financial security for the family could be maintained without her income, she could afford to resign from her job. Schmidt, the husband of a Korean nurse, maintains: "The [Korean] nurses who married a [local German] man like a medical doctor, or banker chose to stop working after marriage."[64] Han and In,[65] former nurses who married German men, a resident doctor and a technician civil servant

respectively, gave up their jobs after the birth of their first children. In both cases they left work to commit themselves full time to childrearing. The option of full-time mothering practice depends on the economic position of the family, especially the income level of the husband as the sole breadwinner. The financial circumstances of a migrant's family had a significant impact on their maternal practices and conditions. Furthermore, a shortage of childcare facilities and the German tax system for married couples contributed to the decision of women with dependent children to give up work.[66]

After their resignations, their social position shifted from migrant guest-worker to stay-at-home mother, most often with German husbands whose income was sufficient for the family. The ideal role for them to pursue was the role of "wise mother/good wife" as a professional housewife. Their full-time mothering experiences encompassed a wide range of emotions such as pleasure, intimacy, frustration, isolation, guilt, and emotional exhaustion. It took most of them some time to become accustomed to this transition and to readjust their daily schedule and identity as a full-time housewife and mother. Some enjoyed the relief from juggling a double burden and welcomed the idea and reality of having time available to pursue the role of "good mother." Simultaneously, some missed the social contact with people and felt socially isolated and lonely as a stay-at-home mother.

Han, a former nurse, suffered from postpartum depression and a sense of home-bound isolation after giving birth to her first son:

> The repetitive daily routine with my baby was so tough to go through. My husband [resident doctor at that time] was working hard and was not home from early morning till late at night. I felt so sad and was struggling to make sense of my life, and skeptical about why I was doing this and why I should live like that … It was the time when most of my [Korean nurse] friends like me were busy with their own family, kids … [We] hardly saw or talked to each other.[67]

Lack of social interaction and emotional support for stay-at-home migrant mothers caused emotional stress. A few, such as Han, later re-entered the labor market when their children were grown up and no longer needed extensive care.

As delineated in this section, the Korean migrant mothers deftly employed multiple strategies and choices for childcare arrangements within the family, neighborhood, and at work. Mothering in the context of transnational migration involved constantly searching for available childcare and negotiating related arrangements, both in countries of origin and in those of destination, and making a compromise with their employment situation. In this process, they utilized family resources along with local and transnational care support networks. They drew on their ethnic culture of sharing care responsibility within kinship circles

and adapted their working and parenting arrangements. Individual strategies of the mothers to organize childcare varied dependent on a range of contributing factors. These include the economic circumstances of the family, visa status, the possibility of family reunion, their perceived ideal of mothering practices derived from divergent cultural norms and practices, their workload at work and at home, kin and social support networks in both home and host countries, the degree of their husband's participation in childrearing, marital status, and availability of affordable childcare facilities. It can be widely observed that regardless of which strategies the migrant healthcare workers adopted, their prescribed gendered roles in childcare and the household remained intact in the context of migration—even though they were co-breadwinner and some cases sole breadwinner. Often, their narratives subscribed to the virtue of a "good" mother, the intensive mothering ideology, and a sense of guilt from being a "raven mother."

Focusing on education

Engaging with goal-oriented education

When their children reached school age, which was mainly in the 1980s and the 1990s for these migrant mothers, a core concern of maternal practices was education, particularly in the Korean context. The migrant mothers certainly faced challenges with their children's education, and concurrently focusing on education was considered to constitute a significant component of mothering in the host society. Associated obstacles included the language barrier and lack of knowledge about the school and education system in Germany. "My daughter's school—like any other school—had regular parents' meetings to discuss various things like picnics, excursions, etc. I hardly ever took part in these parents' activities, sometimes because [I had] no time, or not much idea …"[68] The lack of participation in school activities made it difficult for the migrant mother to build a network with other parents to facilitate exchange of information on children's schooling. Because of the unfamiliarity with—and the barriers to—the children's schooling, the migrant mothers often encountered challenges in supervising their children's education: "I wasn't able to help much with checking my son's homework as he went on to a higher class, because I didn't go to school here [in Germany]. So, I insisted that he should do it mostly by himself."[69] Pang,[70] a former nurse assistant, was in the same position, and her solution was to hire a private tutor for her daughter. Both actively sought a way to complement their limited social capital to support their children's education: either striving for

their children's independence or relying on an educator to compensate for their perceived incompetence in assisting with school homework.

Despite challenges with children's education in the new host society, some mothers managed to be actively engaged in their children's schooling. Son was heavily involved with her sons' schoolwork and vocalized her concerns about any possible prejudice and perceived unfair treatment of her sons by teaching staff:

> My elder son was always doing very well at school, he even got a better grade in German Language than German kids in his class! When my son got a grade that I thought did not reflect his ability, I went to see the subject teacher and asked him to explain the reason why he was given that unsatisfactory grade. He [the teacher] was not at all generous with grades for him. When I got to know that the same teacher was going to teach my second son [who later went to the same school], I went to see the headmaster of the school to ask for the teacher to be changed as I didn't want to have a repetition of unfavorable treatment for my second son [by the same teacher]. And it worked! In the end, he [my son] could pass the subject. I'm a typical Korean mum, aren't I? Hahaha.[71]

Her active intervention in her two sons' schooling demonstrates her maternal agency directed at coping with concerns about any negative influences on her sons' school performance. Achievement-oriented education, incorporating a focus on excellent school performance, is presented as a strategy of mothering that is a key ethnic element in Korean maternal practices, as observed in most of the interviewees' accounts. Schmidt, husband of a Korean nurse, recognized this element in his wife's mothering: "My wife always wants my son to have the best grade at school. I believe this is *a national characteristic of Korea*. I actually don't agree with this principle but Korean mothers strongly stick to it."[72] Han observes the contrast between her own approach to childrearing and that of the local German mothers:

> I am indeed a typical Korean mum. I want to raise my kids to be the best [in their class] and I have really tried to do my absolute best to support them. In Germany, [local] parents don't appear to care so much about that [children's performance] and usually let the kids do what they want. I found this very difference between my [German] husband and me. He leaves many things up to my kids' own decision, sometimes he just gives tips for something, but doesn't try to persuade them if they don't show much interest [in his advice]. He thinks that they should make a choice or decide what they want by themselves, but I feel differently. As parents I think you need to guide your kids to the *right* direction, so I keep urging and sometimes pushing them to the direction I think is right.[73]

Her approach to mothering is goal-oriented and encompasses active intervention, high expectations, and exertion of authority in the relationship with her children, while her husband's fathering puts more weight on independence and autonomy, which he wants his children to learn. It might be a simplistic categorization to say

that her way is a Korean style of upbringing, and his is a German style. Certainly, there is congruence and divergence with both styles. Commonality within Korean mothering practices—in both ethnic Korean couples and intercultural couples—can be found, namely the feature of being performance-oriented. The mothers in intercultural marriages with German husbands certainly put weight on raising the second generation as "German" children, too. As observed above, however, they did not give up their goal-oriented Korean style of mothering. Most of the Korean migrant mothers whom I interviewed made a clear distinction between Korean and local mothering styles by upholding the Korean "education mother" ideal of "good" mother and even believing it to be "superior" to the local German style. This appears to provide them with a sense of maternal competence and pride in competition with the local German maternal approach. In a similar vein, this pride in performing as a "good" mother might compensate for their sense of marginalization as a minority in the host society.

The goal-oriented view of education, with its associated emphasis on achievement, might be linked to the Confucian value of learning and improvement and concurrently to migrants' aspiration to join the mainstream host society. Educational achievement often determines personal career success. Some of their children have secured desirable prestigious jobs, such as medical doctor or management position holder, and others carry the burden of expectation of "success." Considering that children feel pressurized by parental expectation to achieve good performance and success, as Hyun-Joo Lim plausibly points out,[74] this does not appear to be aimed at the wellbeing of the child or an outcome of child-centered intensive mothering, as presented in Sharon Hays's concept.[75] Hence the global idea of intensive mothering and Korean mothering practices work in both a disparate and a congruent way in strategies of performing as a "good" mother.

The focus on goal-oriented education as a strategy of maternal practices reflects migrant familial aspirations. Children's accomplishment through attaining social position and wealth is perceived to be a significant means for the migrants to achieve upward social mobility, which could, in turn, enhance the family's status in the host society. This can represent a familial aspiration to attain social security, respectability, and social acceptance within Germany and the Korean community in Germany. Hence, the emphasis on children's education is integral to the sense of belonging of a migrant family in the country of settlement. The ultimate achievement is familial success and pride, not individual accomplishment. In a similar way, financial and temporal investments in children's academic achievement may not only be for the future of the individual child, but also concurrently may represent an investment in the future of the family, for example to enhance the social status and general wellbeing of the family unit.

Children's achievement is also interpreted as the outcome of a "successful" mothering strategy, representing compensation for the self-sacrifice and multiple burdens the migrant mothers endured, thus giving the mothers a sense of achievement, agency, and power. This can be clearly witnessed in interviews with my participants. If any of their children had a prosperous, well-paid job, the "success" stories of raising their children as a "model minority" through "good" mothering were not underplayed but rather shared and eagerly talked about in detail. At the same time, underachievement by a child is considered to indicate a failure of mothering:

> Because I couldn't spare enough time for my son when he needed ... he couldn't get a prosperous job. Somehow, he didn't show much interest in learning and didn't do well at school. I should have put in more effort and time [when he struggled at school] ... Whenever I think about my son, I'm heartbroken.[76]

She believes her lack of dedication to her son as a working mother resulted in his disappointing career progress. Her narrative reflects the discourse of the "raven mother," the German notion of inappropriate mothering. Consequently, she interprets her son's lack of achievement as her own failure in mothering, which has left her with a long-standing feeling of self-criticism and remorse. Both the sense of guilt in the case of a child's low level of achievement and pride in the case of a child's "success" stem from the same origin: upholding the culturally ascribed role in the "wise mother, good wife" ideology.

Engaging with heritage education

The Korean migrants' focus on the educational dimension of childrearing is not limited to children's performance in school but also applies to transmitting their cultural heritage. Their mothering practices are aligned with cultural expectations to pass on ethnic culture, values, language, and customs to the next generation. This is a duty embedded in migrant mothers' childrearing practices.[77] Transmission of the mother tongue or ethnic language is strongly associated with a mother's role in language socialization. Indeed, most of my interviewees made a great effort to bring up their children as bilingual, even though this was not always successful. One of the most popular strategies employed was enrolling them in a Korean language school at the weekend if there were any nearby and/or sending their children—in some cases regularly—to Korea. Some even expanded child education to the home country: Lee enrolled her son in a preschool kindergarten and Taekwondo studio in Korea.[78] Bringing up children with cultural and linguistic proficiency is considered important to enable them to retain their cultural heritage and to connect and interact with their extended family back in

the country of origin. Kang intentionally sent her daughter alone to her family in Korea during the school summer break so that she would have to practice Korean to communicate with her relatives.[79] Hence, raising children as bilingual is seen as vital to cultural and familial affiliation in both countries of origin and settlement. To ensure their children achieve the desired linguistic competence, migrant mothers take on the role of "cultural capital brokers."[80]

At the same time, there is skepticism about bringing children up with the minority language of one of the parents to communicate at home. When Korean is not the mother tongue of both parents or is not familiar to the spouse, Korean is not a common language that all family members can understand: "If I speak to my child in Korean, my husband doesn't know what is going on. That is quite awkward. So, we just used to speak in German at home."[81] Those who were in an intercultural marriage, such as Hwang and Lee, were concerned that their efforts to teach and communicate in their heritage language with their children might give their husbands a sense of exclusion. Most children, regardless of their parents' ethnic origin, resisted speaking Korean with their Korean mothers since they were more comfortable communicating in German. For this practical reason, the home language in most of my interviewees' families is still German.

Some, such as Hwang,[82] sent their children to the United States or the United Kingdom to learn English instead of Korean. Compared with the Korean language, English was considered a language that would improve a child's future job prospects. Substantial numbers of my interviewees shared the concern that their children might be slow or confused by the process of learning German—the public language of the host society—if they had to learn the Korean language concurrently, and that this might represent a barrier to getting access to their peer group: "I wanted my daughter to learn German first so she would have no problem to talk and make friends like others."[83] They preferred to postpone their children's learning of their native language until the children had "perfectly mastered" the German language or had more time. On the flipside of this is a sense of failure: most of the Korean mothers whose children lacked heritage language proficiency, including Hwang, interpreted it as the mother's failure to bring up her children with adequate ethnic culture. Furthermore, this might lead to limited communication between Korean parents and their children, whose mother tongue was German.

Conclusion: Cross-cultural Mothering

The Korean migrant mothers' maternal experiences in Germany illustrate diverse challenges, negotiations, strategies, contradictions, and resilience. They deftly navigated many obstacles and strove to manage the upbringing and transition of

their children from childhood to adulthood. In this process, they utilized family resources, available local and transnational care support networks, and flexible work arrangements.

Children's education has a great significance and concurrently represents a strategy in "good" mothering practices, particularly in the Korean migration context, since this is linked to enhancement of the family's social position in the country of settlement. As mothering involves socially and culturally constructed practices and activities, children's education in a cross-cultural context encompasses various factors: transmitting native culture, values, and customs, while concurrently cultivating "cultural citizenship" to attain cultural competence in the host society.

Hence, cross-cultural mothering activity in the context of migration has a twofold goal of bringing up children with dual-cultural competence in both homeland and host land. When tensions arose between heritage and host norms, the mothers needed to adapt their childrearing approach to achieve a balance between the culture, values, customs, and language of their own ethnicity and those of the host society. Some women put more emphasis on respect for and value of the heritage culture, while others focused more on integration into the host culture to facilitate their children attaining "full membership" of the host society. The ethnic origin of the spouse was an additional influence on the childrearing approach taken. Bringing up a child to attain cultural competence in the host society by a Korean mother with a German husband in an intercultural marriage can also be seen within the framework of goal-oriented mothering strategies. They navigated the range of locally and transnationally available childcare and education resources and strove to find a balance and accord in a disparate and congruent set of mothering ideas in their transnational lives.

Han, a former nurse, shares her focus in childrearing:

I didn't cook Korean food at home when my kids were small. Well, [there was] no specific reason for that, I just thought, my children are German so they should have German style meals at home. It gives them good nutrition, and you know, Korean food has lots of garlic; Germans don't like it. I thought that my children shouldn't have the *Knoblauch* [garlic] breath when they were out and mingling with friends. Probably I myself was biased [about Korean food]. I cooked only German or Western style food for my children. Only when my children were grown and had moved out of the home, I resumed making Korean food at home. In any case, it is practical for me to cook only one kind of meal, not both Korean and German foods [when they lived with me]. Some recipes I learned from my [German] mother-in-law and others from the wife of my husband's colleague. [They are] easy to cook and nutritious, and I think they were suitable for my kids as they liked the [German] meals [I cooked]. Also, I always baked a cake and lit candles on every birthday of my kids.[84]

Her mothering endeavors were designed to ensure the children were brought up to attain "full membership" of the host society as German citizens. Her reluctance to include Korean cuisine in their diet might be in line with her desire for her children to build collegial relationships at school rather than be excluded from peer friendship groups as a consequence of culinary disparity. This made her steer away from ethnic food consumption.

Migrant mothers strive to bring up the second generation to achieve cultural competence and "full membership" in the country where they have settled or want to settle. This approach is more likely to overcome cultural marginalization and to provide an opportunity to develop their children's social and cultural capital, which can be beneficial in engagement with the host culture and society. In tandem with transmission of the heritage culture and language, the migrants are "co-producers of inclusive socialization of the second generation as agents of inter-cultural citizenship"[85] through cross-cultural mothering. From this perspective, mothering is carried out in conjunction with the citizenship practices involved in the making of "new citizens."[86] Umut Erel and Fiona Williams address the embrace of care practices into the normative understanding of citizenship.[87] Erel delineates this issue in the context of migrants' mothering, which "does not simply constitute a reproduction of ethnic groups but challenges the boundaries of ethnic and national groups and their constitution as bases for citizenly belonging and rights-claiming."[88] Through their negotiation of contradictions and convergences of cross-border maternal practices in the two cultures of origin and destination, ethnic and national boundaries are redefined; thus, these boundaries and contingent senses of belonging are blended and reframed. The three competing concepts of mothering—the global idea of intensive mothering, the Confucian ideal of "wise mother and good wife," and the German notion of the "raven mother"—are subscribed congruently in the performance of a good mother in gendered family roles in the context of migration.

Migrant mothers' endorsement of intensive mothering involves the additional goal of their children attaining "cultural citizenship" by raising them with dual-cultural competence in both the ethnic community and the host society. The goal of cross-cultural mothering is, therefore, targeted at bringing up the second generation to meet appropriate sociocultural expectations from the mainstream in the host society while not forgetting the child's Korean roots.

However, as the second generation, whose sense of belonging is blended, grow up, the migrant mothers might encounter an intergenerational gap in cultural norms and customs with their "Germanized" adult children. In, a former nurse, married a German man and returned to Korea alone after her husband passed away. She describes this gap with her daughter:

What I feel a bit disappointed about my daughter is … I mean, in my thoughts …
she seems to be very much convinced that mum has no problem with lack of
money. I think she doesn't worry about me at all … well … maybe I'm a typical
Korean mother in that sense. I hope she could offer me some money, even
though more than likely I would say "no, thank you." I know some Korean
[adult] children still depend on and get money from their parents, but others
bought a package holiday for their parents as a present. My daughter? No way.
She gives me at best a box of chocolates and a book [as presents] when it comes
to Christmas. Nothing else …[89]

The intergenerational gap is a paradox that migrant mothers face because they
wish to raise "successful" children with cultural proficiency in the German
society, but as a consequence they might turn out to be affected by cultural
discrepancies in some attitudes vis-à-vis the second generation. The Korean
mothers attempt to uphold the "good" mother model with devotion and sacrifice,
and some continue to "do" mothering for their adult children, which could
be considered as intervention from the children's viewpoint, for example, a
mother's involvement in choosing a romantic partner or spouse. But from the
mother's viewpoint, this represents an ongoing maternal responsibility and/or
maternal authority to assist in deciding what is best for her child even when he
or she becomes an adult.

Expectations regarding the Confucian cultural value of filial piety might create
another gap when their children are not in a position to support them or to be
future caregivers when they become old and fragile. This prevailing intergener-
ational practice or assumption of filial piety in Korean culture could also cause
an intergenerational gap in expectation. Consequently, the migrant mothers
encounter the necessity of both emotional challenge and negotiation with this
gap. This discrepancy might be caused by selective and situated adoptions of the
various norms and practices by the second generation. This is more likely when
their children's spouses do not share their expected obligation of filial piety for the
parents-in-law or have different cultural backgrounds in which filial piety is less
strongly emphasized. As a result, they might feel disappointed and alienated by
their children's attitudes. Cultural contradictions and dissimilarity across gener-
ations within a family is a paradox embedded in their cross-cultural mothering
approach in which values, norms, and practices drawn from both cultures of
origin and host are embraced. This obliges the migrant mothers to continuously
negotiate and compromise around mothering practices throughout their life
course to maintain their family cohesion and deal with any intergenerational
discrepancies that may arise.

Notes

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