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OMNES : The Journal of Multicultural Society

2023, Vol. 13, No. 2, pp. 1-41, <http://dx.doi.org/10.14431/omnes.2023.07.13.2.01>

Article

From Legal Immigrants to Undocumented Workers: A Case Study of Vietnamese Migration Families in South Korea

*Thi Thanh Lan Nguyen**

Department of Liberal Arts, Wonkwang University, South Korea

Department of Korean Studies, Phenikaa University, Hanoi, Vietnam

Van Cuong Nguyen

Department of Nursing, Hanyang University, South Korea

Natalie Thibault

Department of Liberal Arts, Wonkwang University, South Korea

Julia Jiwon Shin

Chonnam National University

Abstract

This qualitative study aims to explore the reasons and realities of legal immigrants who participate in large numbers in the undocumented workforce of South Korea. Applying the theory of push-pull factors of migration, the study distinguishes illegal immigrants from legal immigrants who work without legal permission (undocumented workers). Through the analysis of the process of becoming undocumented workers, as well as individual experiences, the study highlights that the main reasons that family members of migrant families engage in illegal work are not only financial struggles related to family support, debts, or remittances to Vietnam, but the factors of migration networks, employers, and institutional policies. The findings reveal that low wages, long working hours, and discrimination are realities immigrants face in the process of working without a permit in South Korea.

Keywords : undocumented workers, family migration, network, Vietnam, South Korea, push-pull factors

Introduction

In recent years, owing to labor shortages, economic development, and globalization, South Korea (hereafter Korea) has received a large number of immigrants. Korean society is gradually transforming into a multicultural society. According to the Korean Immigrant Bureau, there were 2,245,912 foreign immigrants in South Korea in December 2022. The number of Vietnamese immigrants to Korea rapidly increased from 169,738 in 2017 to 235,007 in 2022, totaling 10.5% of all immigrants. Through this increase, Vietnamese immigrants have become the second largest immigrant group in South Korea after Chinese immigrants (849,804 people; Ministry of Justice, 2022). Two groups constitute the majority of Vietnamese immigrants to Korea: In 2022, Vietnamese students totaled 71,038, accounting for 36% of the total number of foreign students in Korea (449,402); and Vietnamese-married immigrants accounted for 8.7% of the total number of foreign immigrants married in Korea, totalizing 39,136 people (Ministry of Justice, 2022).

After settling in South Korea, Vietnamese immigrants continue to invite sponsors, parents, children, and siblings for family reunification. Therefore, F-1 visa holders (visiting or joining the family) increased from 29,209 in 2010 to 96,015 in 2022, and F-3 visa (Accompanying spouse/child) holders increased from 15,124 in 2010 to 21,237 in 2022 (Ministry of Justice, 2022). Therefore, from 2010 to 2022, the number of F-1 visa holders (visiting or joining the family) more than tripled (from 29,209 to 96,015 people), while the number of F-3 visa holders (accompanying spouses or children) increased by 40.4% (Ministry of Justice, 2022).

In addition to the increasing number of legal immigrants and the benefits they contribute to society, Korea is facing an increase in the number of illegal immigrants and legal immigrants who work illegally as undocumented workers. Many legal immigrants, including holders of C-3 visas (short-term visits), F-1 visas (visiting or joining the family), and F-3 visas (accompanying spouse/child), are not allowed to work or

enter the labor force in South Korea. However, due to the financial struggles of their families, many of these legal immigrants are working as “undocumented workers.” This issue has emerged as a challenge for Korean society, causing headaches for immigration policymakers, that Korean law has yet to control or address effectively. Meanwhile, the labor rights of these legal immigrants are not protected by law.

Accordingly, the participants ($n=20$) of this study were members of families of undergraduate and graduate Vietnamese students and married immigrants. This is because D-2 visa holders; undergraduate, master’s, or doctoral students; and international married immigrants who hold F-6, F-5 visas, and even Korean nationality are allowed to sponsor their spouses, children, and/or parents as dependents to reunite with or support them in Korea. However, their family members are granted dependent or temporary visa statuses, such as C-3, F-1, and F-3 short-term stay visas, which do not allow them to work legally in South Korea. These groups were chosen for study because they are legally immigrants but work without proper documents, accounting for the largest proportion today. Even those holding visas for family sponsorship are not allowed to register for work legally, but due to difficult economic and social conditions, they are forced to find work and work without work permits.

The purpose of this research is to explore the main factors or causes that cause Vietnamese family migrants who come to Korea with legal visas to work illegally, and to describe participants’ experiences related to work-seeking and labor status. Finally, we investigate experiences and perceptions rather than seeking policy solutions (Ruhs and Anderson, 2010). By examining the experiences and perceptions of legal immigrants who work without a work permit, this study seeks to identify the factors that cause them to become undocumented workers and obtain first-hand insight from people working in the socioeconomic context of Korea’s labor source shortage. Since it is difficult for immigration policymakers to gain real insight into foreign immigrants, especially students and multicultural families, this study aims to give a voice to Vietnamese immigrants who end up working illegally in Korea.

This study was divided into four parts. The first discusses the concepts of illegal immigrants and undocumented workers. The second is a discussion of the fieldwork methods and in-depth interviews. The third section examines the factors affecting the decisions of legal immigrants who have to work as undocumented workers, the ways to find a job, and the current work situation in South Korea.

Literature Review

In recent years, although there have been some investigations and studies of illegal immigrants in Korea, the relevant literature remains scarce. Because illegal immigrants often live discreetly, they do not reveal their identities and limit contact with the outside world. For instance, illegal immigrants do not report any damage to the Korean authorities because they cannot receive protection (Ma, 2021). In addition, cultural differences have created a gap between Koreans and foreign workers, increasing the difficulty of accessing this specific population. Therefore, studying illegal immigrants in Korea remains a challenge for researchers.

Joo Jae-jin (2004) examined the types, characteristics, and status of illegal immigrant criminals in Korea and then considered a theory regarding illegal immigration based on anomie theory, cultural conflict theory, and economic theory, as well as suggesting countermeasures to illegal immigrant crimes by identifying the first stage of illegal immigrant exposure in the immigration control section, police repression activities, previous stages of domestic criminal justice, and the international cooperation system to which illegal immigrants are exposed after committing a crime.

Yu Kyung-chan (2009, p. 82) discussed the causes and countermeasures for illegal immigrants in Korea from economic, social, environmental, and institutional perspectives. He predicted that if the number of illegal immigrants increases, the labor market will be distorted, the employment order will be disturbed, and society will become unstable due to the increase in crime.

Meanwhile, illegal immigrants find it difficult to obtain legal protection even if they suffer from labor exploitation, human rights violations, unpaid wages, and occupational accidents while working in the country. Therefore, it is necessary to turn from the view of foreign workers as a kind of economic human resource and examine the realities and conflicts that illegal migrant workers face from the perspective of human rights and welfare. Another study examines the benefits of illegal immigration and suggests ways to solve this problem (Lee, 2011). Kim Young-Joo (2014) examines issues in the enforcement action of deportation and protection, and proposes.

In recent years, researchers have begun Vietnamese immigrants and migrant families in South Korea. In 2022, Nguyen et al. (2022) posited that family migration in Korea poses many difficulties and challenges in childbirth, child care, educating children, and living expenses due to a lack of support from extended families and the Korean government. Language barriers contribute to psychological pressures. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many Vietnamese immigrants were under pressure and faced unemployment or unstable incomes in a difficult socioeconomic context where many businesses went bankrupt (Nguyen et al., 2022).

The realities of Vietnamese immigrants working illegally in Korea have yet to be explored. A review of the relevant literature reveals a gap that this study can fill by addressing the legal immigration of foreign families working without a work permit in Korea.

Theoretical framework: Push-pull factors of migration

The theory of migration, derived from neoclassical economics, posits that rapid and sustained economic growth, increasing internationalization of economic activity, and decolonization have led to the intensification of migration. Migration theorists have long analyzed migration in terms of the “push-pull” model. This model differentiates between push factors, which drive people to leave home, and pull factors, which attract migrants to new locations.

Push factors cause people to leave their countries because of social and economic problems. Migration is necessary when unfavorable living conditions such as unemployment, underdevelopment, low productivity, poor economic conditions, lack of opportunities for improvement, depletion of natural resources, or natural disasters occur in an area, forcing people to migrate (Adams, 1968, p.126).

In contrast, pull factors can be described as elements that attract people to a new region to obtain better opportunities in terms of benefits that cannot be found in their own homeland. Pull factors are the forces that motivate people to migrate (Adams, 1968, p.126), often found in developed countries, where there are strong higher education systems and the demand for highly specialized people in certain fields is rapidly increasing (Oteiza, 1968, p.131).

Many scholars have discussed which of these factors is more important in determining migration. Some researchers suggest that push factors are more important than pull factors (Kainth, 2009, p. 85), because issues that put pressure on rural migration are more potent than those found in big cities, thus playing a key role in determining migration numbers. However, other researchers believe that pull factors are more significant in migration decisions because they emphasize the high rates of investment in urban areas that bring more jobs, business opportunities, and steaming leads over rural areas (Kainth, 2009, p. 86).

However, some researchers have argued that the propulsion and attraction factors are important in the migration process because they are closely related. In other words, people motivated by migration find better opportunities elsewhere (Kainth, 2009, p. 86). Therefore, the impacts of push and pull factors on migration are closely related to economic, demographic, sociocultural, political, and other factors.

Kainth (2009) mentions that migration is motivated by economic factors. Developing countries offer fewer economic opportunities than developed countries. Factors such as unemployment, low wages, and a lack of development opportunities are considered key to promoting migration to more developed places with better business and economic

opportunities. Therefore, most immigrants decide to move to areas with a better economic situation. In addition, demographic factors have a significant impact on migration behavior. Personal characteristics such as age, sex, social class, educational level, family, and race/ethnicity are deemed significant in migration research and analysis. In some cases of migration, international marriages have become a driving force. Because marriage can provide people with more opportunities to migrate, immigrants are transferred from their country of origin to their destination country.

Social culture is another important factor in migration. Currently, many young people want to familiarize themselves with experiences abroad and in other cultures. Cultural elements are often expressed through cultural attractions such as mass media, television, movies, and education.

In addition, one of the factors that play an important role in the migration process is politics. Politics can be considered a push factor when people must leave their country because of political crises, military coups, discrimination, and a lack of political freedom. Laws can also have a direct impact on migration. Host countries can enact immigration laws to encourage or deter this migration process (Kainth, 2009, p. 86).

Finally, there are many other factors impacting migration, which can result in a combination of different dynamic factors for each person, as well as personal motives. These may include institutional stability, differences with government agencies or agencies, employment, promotion criteria, family friendships, and the attractiveness of higher education (Kainth, 2009). For example, when a family member or friend is well connected socially or politically, friends can often choose to migrate because they are friends who can often help them with new or higher education, especially in neighborhoods, urban areas, and other places.

Therefore, it is difficult to conclude whether any factor plays a more important role in the decisions and migration actions of each person. Migrants from different countries are affected by various factors. For Vietnamese emigrants, motivating factors are considered more important

than pull factors.

The concepts of “undocumented worker” and “illegal migration”

Illegal migration is an emerging reality in most countries around the globe, especially in Korea. According to the latest statistics of the Korean Immigration Department, the number of illegal immigrants in Korea increased rapidly from 208,971 in 2016 to 392,196 in 2020, nearly doubling in four years. The number of illegal Vietnamese immigrants has increased nearly three-fold from 27,862 in 2016 to 66,046 in 2020 (Korean Immigration Department, 2020).

The concept of illegality remains controversial. The International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2011) uses the term “illegal migration” to refer to cases of smuggling and human trafficking across borders. However, Shin (2018) introduced the concept of “undocumented” as an alternative to “illegal” to reject the requirement of criminal acts of individuals in migration discourses. According to Shin (2018), there are three types of illegal migrations. The first type refers to people who cross the border without the permits or documents required by the destination country’s authorities. These are cases of migrant smuggling and human trafficking, which are defined as “illegal” by the IOM (2011). The second type is related to people who enter a country legally but stay beyond the legal visa exemption period and reside without valid documents. The third type refers to illegally working migrants. According to Ruhs and Anderson (2010), people of this third type are semi-compliant; that is, they migrate and reside legally but work without lawful permission, thus violating the employment restrictions of their immigration status. De Genova (2002) uses the term “deportable” to refer to people in this third type.

In this study, we used the term “undocumented workers” to refer to the third type, which is the main research object of this study. Such undocumented workers are immigrants and legal residents in Korea, including students and people who visit Korea on visas to visit relatives or tourists. According to Korean immigration laws, they are not allowed

to work in Korea. Therefore, if they were intentionally looking for a job and were working in any form, they were considered “unlicensed workers.”

Countries have developed legal frameworks that define immigrants’ legal entry, residence, and employment. Ruhs and Anderson (2010, p. 197) point out that countries define the boundaries of the “space of legitimacy” within their territories for lawful immigrants, residents, and workers. However, the development of these legal frameworks is complex and varies across countries. Therefore, the host country often imposes an immigration status to classify and denote the conditions for immigrants to work and participate in economic, cultural, political, and social activities. Therefore, it can be said that these very laws or legal frameworks constitute the gaps to create this “illegal” situation (Black, 2003; De Genova, 2002).

In addition, employers have been important contributors to the increase in the number of unlicensed workers. To reduce risks and increase economic benefits for their own businesses, they are sometimes willing to defy rules and institutions to recruit immigrants, even when they are not authorized to work by the state, which constitutes a violation of employee regulations. In particular, those who immigrate because of their family’s or their own economic difficulties still try to find opportunities to work to minimize the difficulties they face while living in the host country and accept all risks, injustice, exploitation, discrimination, and stigmatization while knowing that joining the labor force is illegal in the host country.

Research Methods

The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine Vietnamese family immigrants’ economic activities, determine the factors contributing to their becoming undocumented migrant workers, and investigate their working conditions. Data for the study were collected from field surveys and in-depth interviews with Vietnamese family migrants in Korea con-

ducted between November 2017 and December 2019. The study sample consists of 20 people from 20 families. Participants were divided equally into two groups: Vietnamese and Vietnamese marriage-migrant families. Participants resided in many different regions and cities across Korea, including Jeonnam Province, Gwangju City, Seoul, Incheon, Gyeonggi Province, Busan, and Daejeon.

Field surveys and in-depth interviews were conducted during the data collection. Being able to integrate into the daily lives of these research participants provided the main researcher with a great deal of first-hand knowledge. Face-to-face structured interviews were held with a focus on direct communication and open-ended questions, focusing on the reasons for becoming an undocumented migrant laborer, the process of finding a job, working conditions, and problems. The interview questions were written in Vietnamese to facilitate the elicitation of experiences and recollections from the participants. A multitude of meetings with them in cafés, Vietnamese restaurants, and Vietnamese community events, such as visits to family homes on weekends or in evenings, contributed to the development of trusting and friendly relationships with participants and aided the collection of factual information about their lives, overarching characteristics, experiences, and preferences related to illegal working conditions and lives. Considering how suspicious and secretive illegal workers can be, it is necessary to establish genuine and prolonged contact to gain trust and allow them to speak freely.

In addition to face-to-face structured interviews, contact between the participants and the main researcher was maintained through phones and social networks, such as Facebook and Kakao Talk (a popular messaging client in Korea). This prolonged relationship allowed follow-up and additional questions as well as a more well-rounded understanding of participants' broader lives.

The 20 participants were secondary migrants who followed their relatives, students, and marriage migrants (see Table 1). They were divided into two groups labeled A and B. Group A consisted of 4 wives, 4 husbands, and 2 mothers of 10 Vietnamese students. Group B consisted of

Table 1. Characteristics of Research Objectives

Case ID	Family (Secondary) Migrants							Lead Migrants			
	Gender	Age	Education	Year of Entry	Visa	Job in Korea	Relation with Case lead migrant ID	Gender	Visa Status	Family Formation	
A2-1	Female	33	Bachelor	2016	F-3	Laborer	Wife	A1-1	Male	D-2	Reunified
A2-2	Female	27	Bachelor	2016	F-3	Food Service	Wife	A1-2	Male	D-2	Post-migration
A2-3	Male	36	Middle	2012	E-9	Laborer	Husband	A1-3	Female	D-2	Reunified
A2-4	Male	30	Bachelor	2017	F-3	None	Husband	A1-4	Female	D-2	Accompanied
A2-5	Female	55	Middle	2018	F-3	None	Mother	A1-5	Female	D-2	Reunified
A2-6	Female	34	Master	2016	F-3	None	Wife	A1-6	Male	D-2	Reunified
A2-7	female	30	Bachelor	2010	F-3	Laborer	Husband	A1-7	Male	D-2	Post-migration
A2-8	Female	45	High	2019	C-3	Laborer	Mother	A1-8	Female	D-2	Reunified
A2-9	Female	30	Bachelor	2015	F-3	Food Service	Wife	A1-9	Male	D-2	Reunified
A2-10	Male	37	Master	2015	F-3	Laborer	Husband	A1-10	Female	D-2	Reunified
B2-1	Female	53	Hai Phong	2010	F-1	Laborer	Mother	B1-1	Female	F-6	Post-migration
B2-2	Female	51	Hanoi	2015	C-3	Office	Mother	B1-2	Female	Citizen	Post-migration
B2-3	Male	31	Hai Duong	2018	C-3	Laborer	Brother	B1-3	Female	F-6	Post-migration
B2-4	Male	13	Hai Duong	2018	C3	Student	Son	B1-4	Female	Citizen	Post-migration
B2-5	Female	31	Thanh Hoa	2018	C-3	Laborer	Daughter	B1-5	Female	F-1-15	Post-migration
B2-6	Female	43	Hai Duong	2016	F-1	Laborer	Sister	B1-6	Female	F-6	Post-migration
B2-7	Female	31	Ca Mau	2012	F-1	Office	Sister	B1-7	Female	Citizen	Post-migration
B2-8	Male	21	Hai Duong	2017	F-1	none	Son	B1-8	Female	F-5	Post-migration
B2-9	Female	54	Quang Ninh	2016	F-1	Farmer	Mother	B1-9	Female	Citizen	Formation
B2-10	Female	59	Quang Ninh	2015	F-1	Farmer	Mother	B1-10	Female	Citizen	Post-migration

4 mothers, 2 sons, 1 daughter, 1 sister, and 1 brother of 10 Vietnamese marriedfemale migrants. Among the 20 participants, 8 hold F-3 visas, 7 hold F-1 visas, 2 holding C-3 visas, 1holds a D-2 visa, 1 holds an E-9 visa, and 1 is an illegal migrant. In particular, 14of them hold legal immigration status under F-1, C-3, and D-2 visas, but workin illegal conditions without permission from the government, and one is an illegal migrant.

Results

Reasons for becoming an undocumented migrant labor

Of the participants, 11 work in industrial factories, 3 in restaurants, 1 as an office worker, and 2 as seasonal farmers, 1 is a middle school student, and 8 are not working. Among the 17 people working as undocumented workers, 13 work as undocumented workers and 4 work legally. Among the 13 undocumented workers, 6 were members of Vietnamese student migrant families and 7 were members of Vietnamese married migrant families living in Korea. Regarding the current residence status of these migrants, 11 hold C-3 (short-term visit), F-1 (visiting or joining the family), or F-3 (accompanying spouse/child) visas, and 2 were illegal residents working in Korea.

Members of Vietnamese migrant families decide to work as undocumented workers in South Korea for many reasons. However, the most important reason is the difficult economic conditions that have forced them to find jobs to maintain their families. However, each group of migrant family faces different challenges depending on their family characteristics and living conditions.

Living expenses and main sources of income

Living expenses seem to have become a huge burden for migrant families, especially for Vietnamese students. Vietnamese students study in Korea through various training programs and receive scholarships from various sources. International students who are eligible to sponsor their families in Korea mainly pursue master's and doctoral programs. These people often receive scholarships from professors or universities, and a few from the Vietnamese or Korean government. However, scholarships provide enough money for only one international student to live and study in South Korea. Therefore, for married students, such financial support is insufficient to cover all the costs of living for their families.

The interview results show that among the 10 Vietnamese students

participating in the study, 7 students studied for their PhDs and received scholarships from their professors from 1,000,000 won to 1,500,000 won, 1 one Vietnamese doctoral student received a 911 scholarship from the government of Vietnam of 670,000 won a month, and 3 Vietnamese students enrolled in master's and university programs were self-financing. Families of doctoral students admit that the scholarships they receive from professors or the Vietnamese government are the family's main source of income, and they have to save on tuition each semester and cover rent and living expenses for the whole family.

My husband is studying a Ph.D. program. He gets the professor's scholarship every month. On paper, the scholarship is only 1,200,000 won /month but in fact, his professor grants different amounts of scholarships in months. When my husband completed the project, the professor gave me more money. My husband's average monthly income ranges from 1,300,000 won to 1,400,000 won. (Participant A2, female, age 34).

Moreover, to keep getting scholarships from professors, Vietnamese students are also under pressure and must compete with other international students in their laboratories because, for them, scholarships are the main source of income for studying and living in Korea.

My wife's lab is very competitive. She said that at the end of every semester, the whole lab evaluates students according to their Korean proficiency, final scores, and the number of papers. If students do not meet the criteria, they may be cut off from scholarships. For us, if a scholarship is cut, a big problem will occur because we have to use that scholarship to cover tuition fees and living expenses for the whole family. (Participant A6, male, age 37).

Students who are eligible for family sponsorship are students studying in a master's or doctoral program. They often receive scholarships from

professors or government agencies to study abroad, either in their home or host countries. However, these scholarships are usually only sufficient for one student who can afford to live and study independently. Meanwhile, there was anentire family. The smallest family unit is the nuclear family of spouses and children, whereas others sponsor extra parents to assist in the care of their children. Consequently, scholarships can not cover all the families' living expenses.

At the same time, the research results also show that of the 10 Vietnamese marriage migrants, 5 work in factories, 1 works as a baby sitter at a multi-cultural center, and 4 are housewives. All four married women who were currently housekeepers said that their husbands were the main breadwinners for the entire family. Their main jobs were caring for their children and doing housework. They do not have to worry much about the family finances.

Child care

In addition to paying daily expenses, child care places a heavy burden on migrant families. For Vietnamese students with families and children in Korea, the economic burden appears to be on their shoulders. Low scholarships are not sufficient to cover families' living fees. Their families constantly face a lack of financial resources, and their children are always at a disadvantage in terms of care and nutrition.

According to experts, taking care of the quality of life, including mental health, social and academic well-being, and psychological care for children, plays an important role in determining future success (American Public Health Association & American Academy of Pediatrics, 2011). One of the main goals of student-family migration is to seek better educational opportunities for their children. However, children need to be taken care of both at home and school. In addition to caring for children at home, sending them to school is a significant burden for Vietnamese migrant families, considering that expensive tuition must be paid to send their children to school.

Participant A4 said that his wife had studied for a Ph.D. in commerce and received a scholarship from the Vietnamese government of 670,000 won/month. Additionally, while working in the lab, she received additional research support from the university at 240,000 won/month. He thinks that this scholarship is sufficient for only one international student, but in reality, his wife has to take care of both her father and a 3-year-old son in Korea, so it seems that the living cost is always on the limit, most inadequate, and in need.

Every month, we have to pay 220,000 won for the house renting, 320,000 won for the kindergarten fee for our child, and 50,000 won for insurance. She has only about 270,000 won left for living expenses. But my kid also drinks milk. We have to use 200,000 won for food and all others per month. So, how we can live?(sadly and worry).(Participant A4, male, 30 years)

Participant A10, in the same situation, shared:

My wife's scholarship is only one million won per month. My house rent is 250,000 won per month, not including the gas, electronic, and water fee yet. And especially, every month, we have to pay a 450,000-won tuition fee for my son to go to kindergarten. The teacher said because we were a foreign family, we could not receive any support from the government for our kids' education. I am a husband and a dad, I cannot just stay at home. I have to work, even illegal work. (Participant A10, male, 38 years old)

Thus, Vietnamese student families have very low incomes. Compared to the average Korean income of 2,881,250 won in 2018, this scholarship only accounted for 34.7% to 52% of the total average income of a Korean person. Their families typically had two or more people. They face many economic difficulties and live in poverty compared with the families of legal residents and workers in Korea.

Remittances to families in Vietnam

Lucas and Stark (1985) stated that remittances play an active role in migration decisions. Through remittances, migrants can partly compensate transnational care for remaining family members, make important contributions to children's education and health benefits, and improve the quality of life of remaining family members in their home countries (Kim, 2014).

My mother has lung cancer. Every month, I have to send money to buy good medicine for her. We have to save money because my scholarship is not too much.

Before going to Korea for studying, my parent borrowed over 10,000 dollars for me. Now, every month, of course, I need to send back money to pay them back.

The interview results show that Vietnamese migrant families in Korea not only bear the economic burden of living expenses and education for their own families but also have to send remittances to help struggling family members in Vietnam. These remittances are saved by migrant families who try to cut all expenses to send remittances to Vietnam to help their families take care of their health and cover their debt burdens.

Process of finding a job in Korea for Vietnamese migrant families

Social media networks

Social media networks connect migrants with their families, relatives, friends, and communities (Massey et al., 2005, p. 45) and provide information resources to help them adapt to a new life in the host country. Migrants also reduce costs and risks during migration (de Haas, 2010, p.1589). In particular, migration networks allow newcomers to access new social information and find housing and jobs more easily. Social

networks facilitate international migration and the transnational networks created by migrants (Massey & Garcia Espana, 1987). Although there are many different types of social media networks, Facebook is the most popular and is widely used by Vietnamese immigrants in Korea.

Facebook

Among all social media networks, Facebook has become the most popular and is used in Vietnam because of its advantages related to saving, friendliness, connections, and constant updates of social information in the fastest way. In Korea, Vietnamese immigrants use Facebook as a bridge to help them find friends, connect, and improve their understanding of policies, the economy, and society in the host country. Therefore, most interviewees revealed that they find a job through their friends' recommendations, acquaintances, and social networking sites such as Facebook and KakaoTalk groups (Nguyen & Yim, 2017).

Interviewee A6 shared that her family always lacked money for living expenses, renting a house, or her daughter's education. Her husband cannot work part-time jobs because of the pressure to study and do research at his lab, where he spends all his time studying. Therefore, it was necessary for her to find a job and earn money to care for their children. However, because she had arrived in Korea only a few months prior, neither her husband nor her husband knew how to look for jobs in Korea. They accessed the Facebook group of the Vietnamese community in the Gwangju-Cheonnam area to ask for help with a job or find a job broker.

I use the Facebook group of the Vietnamese community in the Gwangju - Chonnam area and posted that I was looking for a job. Some people introduced jobs for me. Sometimes someone posts job information on that group, and I can call them and get a job, too. (Participant A6, female, aged 34)

Thus, Vietnamese migrant families can obtain a variety of employ-

ment information through social media networks such as Facebook. Job brokers can easily find workers in Facebook groups. This exemplifies how Facebook and other social media play important roles in sharing useful information on life, education, and job opportunities among Vietnamese immigrants. They use Facebook as a bridge to connect with each other and share all the information they need. The results show that Vietnamese migrants now use many Facebook groups on the Internet.

Job brokers

In recent times, job brokers, also known as manpower supply companies or employment services companies, or “requirement agencies,” are emerging quickly in Korea. Through collusion with small construction and trading companies, these job brokers often seek invitations and tourist visa opportunities for clients from developing countries who want to find jobs in Korea (Park, 2017). Many job brokers advertise on social media such as Facebook to connect with and recruit people (Kim & Don, 2018). In a private Facebook group, they posted daily jobs for Vietnamese immigrants.

Interviewees said that they found many job brokers on Facebook. Job brokers are usually married Korean or Vietnamese women. They often post jobs on Facebook pages of the Vietnamese immigrant community and leave personal contact information so that those who want jobs can contact them. Most jobs require recruitment to pay a broker’s fee, typically between 150,000 won and 10% of every month’s salary, depending on the type of job. Participant A2, a factory worker, explained her job in Korea.

I found a Vietnamese sister who introduced jobs for Vietnamese people in Korea through Facebook. She is married and has lived in Korea for over 10 years. She knows many job information. I called her and she introduced me to an electronics factory. It takes over an hour away from my house by bus. She told me not to pay her but the brokerage fee would be deducted 10%

from my first pay month. I agreed and I got the job. (Participant A2, female, age 27).

Vietnamese immigrants can easily find job brokers on Facebook. Interviewee A6 found a job broker as soon as she posted information about her job search needs. Through Facebook, she and the job broker quickly exchanged all information about brokerage fees and jobs before they decided to meet in person.

Job brokers were both Korean and Vietnamese. If they could speak Korean, they could find Korean job brokers. Interviewee A10 shared that during the first stage of his job search, his friend introduced him to a Korean job broker who recruited foreign immigrants for seasonal agriculture:

My friend introduced me to a Korean job broker. Then my wife called him and he agreed to pick me to go to work. I had to get up early to wait for him at the bus stop next to my house at 5 am. He drove a bus to take me and many other Vietnamese people to go to the farm. (Participant A10, male, age 37).

Members of migrant families usually contact job brokers because they do not know how to find a job due to limitations related to the Korean language. Meanwhile, these brokers act as bridges that help them find work faster and easier. Thus, despite the high fees, they were happy to accept.

I don't know Korean at all. I also don't know anyone who hires and I don't know where to find a job. The same goes for everyone else. My friends all found the job broker and recommend me. Of course, if they introduce the job, then I have to pay them. My job broker asks me to pay 10% of my first salary and all my bonuses in my company. I know that, but thanks to them, I have a job ... (Participant B6, female, age 43)

Friends

Interviewee B3, who came to Korea with a tourist visa, said that after his entry into Korea on a tourist visa, he decided to reside illegally immediately by staying in his sister's house, and then illegally found work in Korea. Although he did not know any Korean, through Vietnamese friends living in the same area, it was not difficult for him to get a job at a glass-cutting company near his house:

I do not know Korean, but my sister is married to a Korean man and she has been here for a long time. So, I did not meet any difficulties. I met some Vietnamese people who live around me, they help me to find work. (Participant B3, male, age 31)

Interviewer A2 revealed that her Korean friend had always helped her find part-time work in South Korea. Through this friend, she could easily find work and go to restaurants as soon as she needed one. This Korean friend helped her find additional job information in newspapers or on job web sites, and then directly contacted the workplace before she officially introduced her. She subsequently went to work.

I have met a Korean friend. When I was having difficulty in finding a job, I asked her help. She searched and guided me to interview and apply for a job. (Participant A2, female, age 27)

Therefore, it can be said that the migration network has a strong direct impact on the ability to move to a specific destination and find jobs for Vietnamese family members in Korea (Maritsa Poros, 2011).

Thus, social networks, especially Facebook groups, job brokers, and migrant networks of Vietnamese and Korean friends, have played the most important roles in helping Vietnamese migrant families find jobs in South Korea. Even if they do not know how to speak Korean, they still have the opportunity to obtain jobs to ease their financial struggles. However, their lack of proficiency in Korean limits them from looking for better job opportunities posted and updated daily in newspapers or

on the Internet. This also means that they do not look for jobs on the current mainstream Korean official employment web sites or newspapers, which are written exclusively in Korean. The main cause of this problem is that a majority of Vietnamese migrant family members have limited Korean-speaking skills. Thus, they do not know or cannot read or understand job information on these websites.

Working conditions and problems of undocumented migrant workers

Since the mid-to-late 1980s, the decline in the working population in Korea has accelerated. The phenomenon of Korean workers avoiding the 3D industry (jobs considered dirty, dangerous, and difficult) has caused many small and medium-sized enterprises in the 3D sector to suffer from a severe labor shortage.

Low-skilled jobs

The interview results showed that undocumented Vietnamese workers in Korea face special challenges. Among the 10 participants who were working illegally, 3 had graduated from bachelor's programs and 2 from master's programs in Vietnam. They worked as lecturers at universities and held high-level educational positions in their home countries. However, since moving to Korea, they perform simple technical tasks in 3D industries, work very hard, and do not need bachelor's or master's degrees, jobs that Korean workers do not want.

Most Vietnamese migrant families share that their first job in Korea is seasonal farming. Participants A6 and A10 shared similar experiences of doing hard work on farms, which they had never done before in Vietnam.

After my daughter goes to elementary school, through Facebook, my wife found a job broker. She contacted him on Facebook and I started working as a seasonal farmer for him. I did anything which he asked me to do, such as harvesting apples, toma-

toes, onions on the fields, cutting trees in the forest, or repairing roads. (Participant A10, male, age 37)

The other four interviewees shared that they were fortunate enough to find jobs in the service sector, such as waiters or chefs in Vietnamese restaurants. Recently, the number of restaurant chains serving Vietnamese food has increased in South Korea. Therefore, the demand for Vietnamese labor has also increased. It is convenient and beneficial for these restaurants to hire Vietnamese youths to serve their customers. Vietnamese students and immigrant family members can meet this requirement. However, because of limitations in the Korean language, it is difficult for them to obtain this type of job in restaurants. If someone speaks Korean, they can find jobs in these restaurants, mainly as servers or cooks in kitchens.

Since my son was a one-year-old, I have worked as a waitress at a restaurant, and I work there from 10 am to 10 pm every day. I bring food for guests, clean all the tables, then wash all dishes after the guests finish eating. (Participant A9, female, age 30)

Similarly, Interviewee B6 said that when living in Vietnam, she was a business person. She owned a large store, and her life was very comfortable, with a good and stable financial situation. Under a visiting visa, with the purpose of helping to take care of her younger sister after giving birth, she was sponsored to come to Korea. However, after coming to Korea, her younger sister continued to take care of the baby herself and helped Participant B6 find a job at a Korean restaurant near their house.

I worked in a restaurant after coming to Korea. I had worked there for 5-6 hours per day. I prepared foods and vegetables, washed dishes, and cleaned the tables. (Participant B6, female, age 43)

They all had the same experience of working in restaurants. They

were mostly young and vivacious. It is worth noting that they are all high-ranking people in Vietnamese society, but when they came to Korea, they all went through the same simple, low-skilled work experience in restaurant services. In restaurants, they must perform all service work, from cooking to waiting, for long hours each day.

At the same time, owing to Korean language limitations, other members of migrant families encounter difficulties communicating and finding good jobs. Therefore, they must find employment in manufacturing industries. In particular, they often work part-time in small factories with fewer than 10 workers, or work full-time in the electronics and food manufacturing industries under 3D conditions:

In February 2017, I took my daughter to my mother's home in Vietnam and asked her to take care of my baby. Then, I came back to Korea to find a job. I started working for a company in Hanam Industrial Park in Gwangju City. I work there from 8 am to 6 pm. But I have to go to work by bus at 6 o'clock every morning because my house is quite far. My duty here is to stamp products. (Participant A1, female, age 33)

The evidence provided in the interviews illustrates that members of Vietnamese migrant families must accept employment in occupations that rank low in terms of stratification. Because they cannot speak Korean, they do not have access to employment information. In addition, they work hard for long hours and are often mistreated or verbally abused by job brokers and farm owners.

Working conditions

Poor working environment

The findings demonstrated that most undocumented workers were dissatisfied with their working conditions. Currently, some glass-cutting and chicken processing factories are unsafe and difficult to operate. The

working environment is so poor and hazardous that local workers cannot continue working in the longterm, and young workers do not want to work there. Therefore, employers tend to hire illegal migrants or undocumented workers. This was an opportunity for students to work.

Three interviewees stated that they were working under conditions of intense work, difficulties, and poor working environments, which adversely affected their health. During work, they are often exposed to harsh environments such as noise, vibration, dust, stench, heat, cold, and darkness. These individuals work in environments that are at risk of industrial accidents and are susceptible to occupational diseases.

I work in a glass and metal cutting factory. It's very noisy and dusty here. Koreans are afraid of working here, so there are mostly illegal people from Vietnam or Thailand in the factory. (Participant B3, male, age 31)

My factory is in heavy industry, specializing in welding, painting, and washing iron frames for making stations, glass doors, and iron frames. Our job is to spray paint for those frames every day and wash those frames in the water, and then box them in. My company has many areas, but the jobs I mentioned above are only for Vietnamese workers, the Korean workers do lighter jobs. I finished painting, even though I wore protective clothing, a hat that was covered in paint, and my hands and feet were covered with thick paint. (Participant A10, male, age 37)

Difficulty is a common challenge for illegal and undocumented workers in the industrial sector. In the example below, the employer took advantage of and exploited employees to reduce labor costs. This exemplifies how migrant family members are mainly low-skilled workers who perform simple tasks. However, working on production lines for small businesses is difficult. In a capitalist society, many employers want to

produce at a fast pace to make profits more quickly. Consequently, workers are forced to work fast and exhaust quickly, both physically and mentally.

I work very hard and under a lot of pressure. Moreover, in the same company, foreign workers like us all have to work hard. At factories, Koreans don't work nights and never do heavy work. If the factories have heavy and dirty jobs, the laborers are mostly foreigners. (Participant B6, male, age 46)

Similarly, interviewees who work as seasonal farmers also share a lot of hard work under the hot, outdoor working conditions, which are exposed to working conditions almost not any type of protective equipment:

It's very sunny in the fields. We are old. We could barely breathe with the sun. After lunch, we sat in the middle of the field for lunch and all the food was cold. (Participant B9, female, age 54)

Working for long hours

The study findings also show that special challenges for Vietnamese family immigrants with unlicensed employment status occur frequently, such as employment exploitation (Stoddard, 1976), signing labor and health insurance (Angel, Frias & Hill, 2005; Passel, 2005), and a lack of opportunities for better education (Self, 2004).

The interviewees provided information on the number of hours they worked in agriculture, namely from 8 am to 6 pm. However, because the workplace is far from where they live, they all have to get up early to prepare food for lunch, leave home early, and return home after 7 pm. Job brokers, including Koreans and Vietnamese, often combine their management and shuttle them on private minibuses. They were then transferred to work in different places and work in different jobs.

Interviewees mentioned that they had to work far from where they

lived. They travel by private, cramped, and crowded minibuses without any safety guarantees. These vehicles encounter many other illegal workers from different countries, such as Thailand and China.

Every day, nearly 5 am, he came to pick us up in his 30-seat bus. There are about 50 people including Thai and Vietnamese people on the bus. They are illegal immigrants. We sat in the car for more than 2 hours to rural and work on farms. (Participant A8, female, age 45)

Working for a longtime per day not only involves seasonal farmers, but also undocumented workers in other service industries, such as restaurants.

I work from 9 am to 11 pm. When I returned home, I was very tired. But my husband wants me to work here because he thinks I will improve my Korean and it will not be as toxic as working in factories. (Participant A2, female, age 27)

The above results show that the long working hours of a seasonal farmer are a violation of human rights and are common for members of migrant families or illegal workers. Thus, the average number of working hours for each illegal seasonal farmer is 12 hours a day, 1.5 times the basic working hours for an unskilled worker allowed to work.

Abuse and violence at work

Most people perceive physical attacks as violent. However, workplace violence and harassment have a much broader scope. Workplace violence can be defined as any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening behaviors that occur in the workplace. It ranges from threats and verbal abuse to physical assault, and even murder. It can affect and involve employees, clients, customers, and visitors (United States Department of Labor, 2021).

In Korea, workplace violence and discrimination are common in

work places such as farms, remote fields, and heavy industry factories, with people working illegally today. However, because of the fear of being easily deported when they violate Korean immigration laws by working without a proper visa, they still secretly participate in the Korean labor market while enduring and accepting physical and emotional harm, workplace violence, contempt, and discrimination.

In addition to working long hours each day, several interviewees said that they were constantly stressed by high labor intensity and verbal abuse in the workplace. Three interviewees shared that they had experienced the broker owner verbally abusing or even beating them if they worked slowly and did not understand what the job brokers or farm owners told them. As they do not know Korean, they also think that they are illegal or undocumented workers.

I remember that during the first time, I worked on the farm, I was so tired. I could not plant potatoes as quickly as others. The farmer's owner scolded and ruined me. She was angry and did not allow me to work anymore. Then, I was not paid that day. (Participant A8, female, age 45)

Seasonal farmers suffer the same abuse and verbal abuse while working.

When I worked as a farmer, I had to prepare lunch every day. They only gave us 20 minutes for us to have lunch and take a rest after 12 am. Then we had to work again. If the employer saw us working slowly, they would shout and curse us. Even though we were so tired, we could not dare to rest. They followed us and checked us at work. (Participant A10, male, age 37)

Although they were dissatisfied with being beaten or cursed by their bosses, they still endured and accepted the silence to continue getting work done.

I worked too hard, I was tired so I slowed down. I was cursed by the owner. They spoke Korean loudly and pointed at me shouting... I didn't know Korean so I couldn't understand what they were saying, but I knew they were cursing me.(Participant B5, female, age 62)

Similarly, some interviewees stated that they experienced racism while working in South Korea.

I remember once we unloaded sweet potatoes, the owner there was very fastidious and disdainful. When we finished lunch, we had a little talk or when we were too tired to sit down, he shouted loudly and mentioned Vietnam something in the insult. He showed contempt for Vietnam. (Participant B1, female, age 51)

Such discrimination against Vietnamese migrants in particular and illegal workers in general is something that they must endure in many ways.

In addition, restrictions related to the Korean language have a strong impact on the attitudes and behaviors of Korean officials and directors toward foreign workers. All workers reported that because they did not know Korean, they were scorned and cursed while working in the factory. Interviewee B3 stated that he was scolded and beaten while working for the company. This made him very upset and insulted in his workplace.

My manager was not very good, he talked and shouted a lot. One day, while I was working, the manager suddenly irritated me and hit me. He was religious but very short-tempered. When I was operating the machine, he shouted at me to hurry, but I could do it fast. So, he hit me. Although I was not seriously injured, I felt very angry because they were despised. I felt that I was offended by human rights and treated as a slave. (Participant B3, male, age 31)

Migrant workers may struggle because of labor intensity, but the problem does not stop there. There are countless attacks and followers during work.

This demonstrate show illegal foreign workers often suffer mental violence. They have to listen to bad words, curses, and insults and deal with the irritability of managers. In the two cases above are simply angry in context (not because they are at fault at work, but because they should not say that even when they are angry). It may be considered sufficient to cause verbal abuse in an emotional situation in an objective situation.

Low wages and unpaid wages

It is not uncommon for members of Vietnamese migrant families to receive low wages when participating in labor, because low-status occupations provide low wages. For illegal workers in Korea, real pay is illegal. The interview results showed that there is a difference in pay among seasonal farm workers, waiters, and illegal workers in Korea. Among them, farming is considered the hardest job, which takes the most time but yields the lowest wages and lacks any insurance or compensation regime.

The interviewees provided information that revealed that the agricultural salary they were paid ranged from 60,000 won to 75,000 wonper day:

If the farming work is as simple as digging potatoes or pulling onions, they only pay 60,000 won per day. Depending on the job, one day, the farmer pays a little more, but the highest is only 65,000 won or 70,000 won.(Participant B6, female, age 43)

If they calculate this salary based on the average time they work 12 hours per day, the average hourly salary they receive is approximately 5,000 won. Meanwhile, the average minimum salary each Korean receives was significantly higher. According to the provisions of the

Minimum Wages Act under Article 32 of the Korean Constitution, the Korean minimum wage was 6,470 won per hour in 2017, 7,530 won per hour in 2018, and 8,350 won per hour in 2019.

Interviewees often think that brokers recruit illegal workers very easily because there are many illegal workers and residents from Vietnam, Thailand, and other countries in Korea. Despite such low and illegal wages, they accept it, and there seems to be no complaint about it because they also believe that the employer must also receive part of the remuneration from the employer. Introducing them to jobs and the amount of money they receive each day if converted into Vietnamese currency is also more valuable when they have to spend on a similar labor force whose income is too low in Vietnam:

In Vietnam, we workrenting rice all day and earn only 300,000 VND (equivalent to 15,000 won) but it is very hot and hard. In Korea, one working day is equal to four working days in Vietnam. But in my hometown, there's always nothing to do. Making money at home is hard! (A8, female, aged 45).

The difference in exchange value between the Korean won and Vietnamese dong has created a great attraction that makes workers accept all the hardships and pressures to make money. For them, a salary of 60,000 won is a huge amount of money compared with Vietnam, especially in rural areas where it is difficult to find jobs.

Those who work construction jobs at construction sites are paid more than agricultural workers and are provided with two lunches and dinners each day at the construction site. However, the actual salary they receive is still below the minimum wage received by Korean construction industry workers.

My husband is a construction worker, so he gets 80,000 won every day. In the beginning, he was not used to the job, they paid only 60,000 won/day. They pick up my husband early in the morning and take him home at night, and they give him

two meals daily at the construction site. (Participant B10, female, age 54).

Unlike agriculture, most people working in the service industry or factories say that their salary is equal to the minimum wage in Korea. Their wages were calculated using the hourly rate and were paid equal to the minimum wage set by the current Korean government. However, all interviewees said that, apart from the basic salary they received, they were not entitled to any other salary, idea, or support money.

I work seven hours a day, but I earn over one million won per month. And I do not get coverage here. The salary is also 6,500 won per hour. (Participant A2, female, age 33)

They must work a lot, even overtime, but the salary they receive is the same as their minimum hourly wage. In addition to being paid low wages, some migrant families revealed that they used to be owed wages or not paid at all. The exploitation of work places for foreign immigrants in Korea is a large and organized activity. Employers exploit members of migrant families, international students, and illegal workers.

In the early days when I was a farmer, my employer often kept my salary. He usually pays after about 10 days. Sometimes longer. I don't know Korean so I can't ask. I always had to ask my wife to call him saying the reason was that she was tired, the sick child or the urgent family needed money, and asked him to pay. That day, he paid me the money. There were other relatives who had been paid by him, they were very angry but they did not dare to sue because if they sued, they would be exposed as illegal workers so they left and did not work for him anymore. Some Vietnamese students who learn Korean also say they have been paid a lot by him. (Participant A10, male, age 37)

However, interviewees' experiences revealed that the percentage of

salaries employed by agricultural job brokers is lower than the legal minimum wage in Korea today. Employers or job brokers often use their weaknesses to do bad things, such as paying salaries or wages, or collecting very high brokerage fees. Most said that they had to pay at least 10% of a month's wages and all kinds of bonuses from their companies to job brokers. The findings reveal that foreign migrants, especially members of Vietnamese migrant families, are exploited by job broker rather than the owners of their work places. Respondents said that employers who directly hire and pay them could be called employers. Therefore, the term "owner" refers to employment brokers.

For example, interviewee A6 revealed that after she accepted work at an electronics factory, the broker said that she did not have to pay any job recommendation fee at the beginning, but every month, her salary was reduced by 10% to pay the broker. She also said that during the holidays, the Mid-Autumn Festival or the Lunar New Year, all other colleagues working with her received a small bonus but she did not receive anything. When she asked the owner, they said that all expenses or bonuses were sent to her job broker, and they received the entire amount of money without giving it back to her.

Even if they are not unpaid, they are rarely paid in full. People have to endure long waits for a variety of reasons, mainly because their employer is trying to deduct their paychecks or hold them back when work is needed, or at any time, because the broker has a stable source of cheap labor. However, this has made them feel uncomfortable because they want to be paid quickly and they think it is better not to own their wages.

Absence of insurance and social benefits

The Korean government always offers policies and regimes for legal foreign workers that are not significantly different from those for local citizens and workers. Legal workers in Korea still receive all benefits, such as paid holidays, bonuses, leave, health insurance, provided accom-

modation, stipends. Legal immigrants who work without permission do not receive social benefits or insurance. The research results confirm this point.

Participants A6, A10, and B2 mentioned that they did not receive bonuses or insurance. They lacked all health insurance and social benefits despite working full-time in factories or restaurants.

I get my monthly salary on the 15th of every month, but I don't have insurance and I don't get bonuses on a special day. I don't know why. We have to enroll in our own health and pay monthly premiums. (Participant A10, male, age 37)

Participant A10 said that he received only a basic salary, even though he worked full-time and spent extra time in the evening or weekend at the factory. Similarly, A2 said that she had never received any insurance or bonuses at the restaurant.

The restaurant owner just said she could pay me 1.8 million a month. But she didn't talk about insurance for me. (Participant A2, female, age 27)

Participants A10 and A2 lacked insurance and bonuses in the workplace. They were provided lunch and dinner and received a minimum basic salary.

At the same time, participant B6, who works as a seasoned farmer, mentioned that most seasoned farmers are never provided lunch or even water. They were also required to prepare food and water. Sometimes, farm owners provide water or bread during lunchtime. They do not even provide regular lunch. Interviewees said that they had to get up very early to prepare their own lunches and bring them, and the lunchtime lasted from 20 to 30 minutes in the field or farm:

We usually bring our own lunch. At lunch break, we spread mats on the corner of the field and sit down to eat our food for lunch. (Participant B6, female, age 43)

Migrants and legal workers can apply for public health insurance based on their occupation. However, legal migrants who are not allowed to work but still work illegally do not receive any benefits from their employees. Because they do not hold visas allowing them to work in Korea, they are not protected by labor standard laws. They are also excluded from social benefits, and companies that hire them refuse to pay for health care insurance. Therefore, they did not receive any type of employee insurance.

The government controls undocumented workers

At the end of 2019, an estimated 360,000 undocumented foreign nationals were living in Korea (Ministry of Justice, 2020). Recently, the Korean government made special efforts illegal residents. To restrict migrant workers' problems, the government has implemented crack down-which have grown in scale and intensity (Yonhap News Agency, 2019)

The interviewees acknowledged that they knew very well that their work status was illegal. However, it is surprising that most of them were unafraid or worried about their illegal labor status. Interviewee A6 said that she was afraid of being arrested when she knew that her F-3 visa would not allow her to work. However, her company picks her up and takes her by bus daily, so she does not worry much.

I know that the F3 visa cannot go to work. I know, so I'm afraid to work. But the company has a bus to take me from home to the company and send me back home every day. When we arrived at the factory, the police checked very little. So in the company, we are safe. Some illegal workers are arrested by the police outside the company when they go to eat or go for a walk. There are about 8 or 9 people in my company holding a visiting visa. They are mostly parents of Vietnamese brides. (Participant A6, female, age 34)

Similarly, interviewee B10, who had a family visit visa with his

daughter as a Vietnamese bride, said that her husband went to the construction site every day to work in the private car of the Korean owner and was always protected. Therefore, despite working on construction sites for more than four years, he has never been arrested or worried about being arrested for illegal work:

My husband is the only foreigner there but he works very hard so they protect my husband very much. He is not afraid of being arrested... (Participant B10, female, age 54).

This shows that, for such a large number of undocumented workers, there must come from actual demand and the compromise of Korean employers. Korean employers prefer to hire undocumented workers because their salaries are much cheaper than those paid to Korean workers without insurance or other regimes.

Conclusion

In summary, the results show that families of international students and married migrants face many difficulties in their lives in South Korea. For international students, the amount of scholarships they receive is too low to cover the cost of living for the entire family. For married migrant families, international marriage is the shortest path to a better life for themselves and their families. Bringing together family members, such as parents or siblings, in Korea is the best way for them to work and earn money to improve their lives in Vietnam. Through social networks, and with the help of Vietnamese or Korean friends, they find rudimentary jobs in South Korea. Although they are aware that this type of employment is not allowed by the Korean government, they are still working under the protection of employers.

However, owing to Korean restrictions and illegal employment status, they face many difficulties and challenges at work. All family members must go through rudimentary jobs, such as seasonal farming, working long hours per day in heavy industrial factories, or as waitresses and

cooks in restaurants, regardless of their level of education. In particular, they have been treated unfairly, owed wages, or withheld wages discriminated against, and even cursed at and beaten by unkind employers. They have to perform many hard and dangerous jobs but do not receive proper wages because they are foreigners and are not fluent in Korean. They suffer unfair treatment but cannot protect themselves through the law because they do not know Korean and are afraid of their illegal labor status.

However, the illegal labor status of Vietnamese migrant families continues to increase in proportion to the number of Vietnamese migrant families migrating to Korea. This situation is due to the shortage of manual labor in heavy, dirty, and dangerous workshops. Therefore, in these places, the labor force is mainly illegal workers and job introducers, and factory or farm owners, restaurant owners are housekeepers, and shelters for them to work at present.

The fact that the members of Vietnamese migrant families have become illegal workers and have encountered many difficulties in the labor process reflects how the Korean government's migration policy has not paid enough attention to providing the sustainable support that these immigrants require. This constitutes a gap in migration and labor policies for foreigners in Korea because the government allows family members to immigrate and legally live in the country without considering how they will sustain their lives once in the country. Meanwhile, the Korean government constantly makes decisions to recruit manual labor from developing countries; In fact, the agriculture-forestry-fishery sector still lacks workers and has not been added appropriately. In particular, the Korean government recently introduced a policy allowing members of multicultural families to come to Korea to work as short-term workers to supplement labor in the agricultural sector. Unfortunately, this policy does not appear to be widespread; marriage migrants and their families have not yet informed of it and a large number of immigrant family members of the foreign student group, including their wives, children, and parents, are excluded from this policy. Meanwhile, these international

students, whether they receive scholarships from sources, scientific research projects, or the government or university they attend, cannot afford to pay for their entire families. Therefore, it is inevitable that their family members will have to work and earn money in the field of rudimentary work, even though they are not allowed to do so.

Therefore, the research results from these Vietnamese immigrant families serve as a typical example for Korean policy makers to look deeper into the real situation of the families' inner lives in the two groups of international students and international married women (multicultural families) so that the most appropriate policies can be introduced, such as allowing these immigrants to work legally. They can then maintain a minimum subsistence for their entire families. This also provides employers with an additional source of legal labor to meet their requirements and overcome the current and future serious labor shortages in Korea.

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Biographical Note

Thi Thanh Lan, Nguyen Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Architectural Engineering, Wonkwang University, South Korea, and at the Department of Korean Studies of Phenikaa University, Vietnam. She holds a Ph.D. in International Studies from Chonnam National University, a Master's Degree in International Development Studies from Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, and a Master's Degree in Vietnamese Studies from Vietnam National University. She has pursued additional specializations in international migration, ethnic and Multicultural studies, gender, human rights, international relations, and East Asian communities and diaspora. Her current research focuses on International Migrations (Illegal Workers, International Students, Immigration Women and Children, Family migration, and the Mental Health of Immigrants) and Ethnic Communities in South Korea and the U.S. E-mail: thanh-lan21@wku.ac.kr or Alisanguyen082@gmail.com.

Van Cuong Nguyen Ph.D., Researcher, College of Medicine, Hanyang University, South Korea. Email: nvc11vn@gmail.com

Natalie Thibault Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Liberal Arts, Wonkwang University, South Korea. Email: natalie@wku.ac.kr

Junia Jiwon Shin. Ph.D., Associate Professor, Chonnam National University, South Korea and University at Albany, State University of New York, U.S. E-mail: julia-shin@jnu.ac.kr

Date of submission of the article: September 27, 2022

Date of the peer-review: December 24, 2022

Date of the confirmation of the publication: July 24, 2023