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Marital Adjustment Factors for International Marriages in South Korea[†]

This study determined the influence of personality patterns on marital adjustments mediated by communication effectiveness for 298 international marriages in South Korea. The results are as follows: (a) The mediator effects of personality patterns and communication effectiveness on the marital adjustment of international marriages were found to be significant; in addition, a mediator path with marital adjustment as a dependent variable was verified. (b) The extroversion, agreeableness, and openness of husbands were found to have a positive effect on their communication and marital adjustment in regards to the personality patterns of international. (c) Conscientiousness was identified as the only factor that affects the marital adjustment of a wife in regards to personality patterns. The implications of this study will be discussed in the conclusion part.

Researchers are interested in understanding the influence of personality and communication in relationships; subsequently, initial studies that compared an adjustment to marriage and maladjustment to marriage found relatively strong personality

(Buss, 1995; John & Ted, 2000; McCrae & Costa, 1994; William & Vicky, 2001) and communication (Brant & Wayne, 1997; Hwang & Ko, 2010; Lee & Yun, 2007; Schneewind & Anna-Katharina, 2002) correlates. In existing international marriage studies (Bray & Jouriles, 1995; Choi *et al.*, 2009; Fu & Kendall, 2001; Qian & Daniel, 2007; Zhang, 2009), husbands or wives only were used as the study subjects due to the cultural difficulties in selecting the subjects to be surveyed. Limitations were encountered in understanding the interactions between husbands and wives and in reporting the study results that the adjustment period for international marriages is profoundly affected by environmental variable caused by cultural differences. However, previous limitations were addressed in this study through the use of paired data and various multiple factors that affect the marital adjustments of international marriages (Bray & Jouriles, 1995; Choi *et al.*, 2009; Fu & Kendall, 2001; Qian & Daniel, 2007; Zhang, 2009).

South Korea has seen various changes in its marriage and family structure due to the socio-economic changes in its population demographics (particularly its low birth and high aging rates). Such changes have created the phenomenon of families formed through international marriages. International marriages (as another type of family formation) have been recognized as a way to reduce negative factors such as gender imbalance, the highly educated women's marriage avoidance phenomenon, the

[†]This Research was supported by the Sookmyung Women's University Research Grants 2011(1-1103-0474).

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Key Words: communication effectiveness, international marriages in South Korea, marital adjustment, mediator effects, personality patterns

exclusion of men from rural areas, and the low-income class in the marriage market in South Korean society (Han & Sul, 2006; Kim, 2009). Studies on the international marriages in South Korea have reported that such couples have lower marital stability and satisfaction than the non-international marriages, and that the rate of their marital conflicts is higher (Kim, 2006; Hong & Chae, 2007; Shin, 2004). Differences in value systems due to the age gap between international marriages family rituals or family role expectations due to the cultural differences make it difficult for them to undertake the necessary adjustments to sustain their marriages.

Studies on international marriages in South Korea have reported that international marriages have lower marital stability and satisfaction than non-international marriages, as well the rate of their marital conflicts is higher (Hong & Chae, 2007a; Kim, 2006; Shin, 2004). Differences in value systems due to age gaps in international marriages, family rituals family role expectations due to cultural differences make it difficult for them to undertake the necessary adjustments to sustain their marriages.

It took international marriage a relatively short time with a collective nature to establish the idea as a viable option for the South Korean marriage market. International marriages are often arranged marriages; subsequently, for-profit marriage brokers provide distorted information to marriage partners who may experience limitations in choosing a suitable spouse. The most important limitation prior to marriage is the shortage of time to search and understand the marriage partner's comprehensive view of life, marriage, family, and socioeconomic status; subsequently, the process of forming marital relations of multicultural families is inherently unstable; and if a union is consummated it may likely contain the vulnerability of predictable maladjustment. For example, some male marriage partners (who paid marriage brokers) take their wife's passport and Certificate of Alien Registration; in addition, they may refuse visa extensions, forcibly restrict partners freedom, and demand unilateral obedience. These instances result in unequal marital power leading to family violence that prompts the wife to run away from home and eventually file for divorce. This

phenomenon has become a constant social issue in South Korean society.

International marriages have a greater tendency to experience difficulties in adjusting to marital life compared to non-international marriages. These difficulties may include language barriers, misunderstanding new social or family customs, or social dilemmas with regard to international marriage. Previous studies have stressed cultural differences and a lack of effective communication as critical factors that affect the marital adjustment of international marriages (Brant & Wayne, 1997; Hong & Chae, 2007). These difficulties tend to lead international marriages to procure a divorce rate that shows a more-than-three fold increase from 3,300 cases in 2004 to 11,255 cases in 2008 (South Korea National Statistics, 2010). This implies that there is a need for an in-depth discussion and investigation of the marital adjustment of international marriages in South Korea.

Existing literature (Choi *et al.*, 2009; Qian & Daniel, 2007; Zhang, 2009) reports that international marriages face many obstacles to a successful marital adjustment; however, the different nationalities is not the only factor that makes international marriages vulnerable. Most preceding studies focused exclusively on cultural differences by social-demographic variables (race, age, marriage duration, family income, and religion) and the language barrier between international marriages to predict their marital adjustment and can represent a limitation to explain the many different types of marital adjustment (Bray & Jouriles, 1995; Fu & Kendall, 2001). This may lead to a misunderstanding of international marriages if only the simple aspects of marital adjustment are analyzed as well as exclude personal and relational characteristics the spouses in the marital adjustment period. To understand the factors that affect the marital adjustment of international marriages, various aspects of marital adjustment (such as the personality patterns and communication effectiveness of spouses) should be investigated.

Personality is not individual behavior or thoughts but the identifiable characteristic tendency based on personal behavior or thoughts that represent the individual uniqueness level (William & Vicky, 2001).

Studies suggested five personality patterns such as extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and neuroticism (McCrae & Costa, 1994). (a) Neuroticism is the dimension underlying the chronic experience of distressing emotions. (b) Extroversion measures energy and sociability. (c) Openness implies imagination, curiosity, and liberal attitudes. (d) Agreeableness measures trust, sympathy, and cooperation. (e) Conscientiousness encompasses a sense of competence, a sense of duty, a need for achievement, and organization (McCrae, *et al*, 1994). These personality patterns help develop a clearer understanding of people and enable the prediction of characteristic individual actions under a certain situation, especially when under stress. Studies on personality patterns affecting marital life reported that as individual personality patterns are quite repeatable, understanding each spousal personality patterns influences marital adjustment (McCrae & Costa, 1994; Richard *et al*, 2000; Vaidya, *et. al.*, 2002; William & Vicky, 2001).

Communication effectiveness has been frequently studied as another key factor that affects marital adjustment, along with personality patterns (Brant & Wayne, 1997; Hwang & Ko, 2010; Lee & Yun, 2007; Schneewind & Anna-Katharina, 2002). Previous relevant studies have consistently reported a positive correlation between marital adjustment and communication effectiveness. It was reported that communication effectiveness influences marital satisfaction through a reduction in marital conflicts based upon effective communication skills where spouses try to solve marital problems. Negative communication skills such as mutual avoidance or the demand-withdrawal pattern between couples were found to have a negative effect on marital adjustment (Yoon, 2004). Couples with these negative communication skills were found to have a high tendency to procure a divorce (Avshalom, *et. al.* 2005). Communication effectiveness between couples is essential to improve marital adjustment as it enables the couple to address their marital conflicts and encourages marital intimacy (Brant & Wayne, 1997; Schneewind & Anna-Katharina, 2002).

Both spouses should be examined in marital-adjustment studies; however, previous studies on the

marital adjustment of international marriages rarely used paired data (Gottman, 1998; Kenny, 1996).

This study examines the effects of international marriage personality patterns on marital adjustment, as mediated by the effectiveness of communication. This could differentiate this study from previous studies on the marital adjustment of international marriages that focused on simple factors that affect marital adjustment such as cultural or social-environmental differences between the spouses. Furthermore, this study is part of a project to understand marital adjustment factors among international marriages in South Korea. This project examines the effects of international marriage personality patterns on marital adjustment, as mediated by the effectiveness of communication skills and marital conflicts. The results of the study are reported separately due to extensive data and limited space.

METHODS

Sample

Participants were drawn from 296 couples who took part in the pair project. A purposive and snowball sampling was used for the subject selection of this study and was facilitated through Multicultural Family Support Centers¹ located in Seoul and other in South Korea. Data were collected through personal visits, a face-to-face survey, and a mail survey of the support organizations for multicultural families from August to October 2011. For the convenience of international marriages with language difficulties, the questionnaires were written in English, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Mongolian, and Vietnamese. The accuracy and understand ability of the statements in the translated questionnaires were confirmed through face validity, based on the advice from an advisory committee composed of native speakers who offered translation or interpretation

¹Multicultural Family Support Centers in South Korea are operated and funded by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family. These centers provide family education, counseling, and cultural services for multicultural families, to support the early settlement of immigrant women in the South Korean society and to help multicultural families enjoy stable family lives.

services at the Multicultural Family Support Centers. Couples accepted a small present for their participation in the study in order to obtain high numbers of participants and an adequate response rate. In this study, excluding inadequate responses (duplicate responses, continuous marking of the same number, and only one spouse of the couples participating in the questionnaires) were used in the final analysis.

Model

This study was conducted to determine the effects of the personality patterns and communication effectiveness of international marriages in South Korea on their marital adjustment. For this purpose, eight different types of mediator models were selected to test the paths between self-effect and counter-effect in how to influence personality patterns on marital adjustment as mediated by communication effectiveness among international marriages (see Figure 1). In the model, the letters (e.g., a, b, c, etc.) represent the mediator paths while the numbers refer to the phases of the mediator effect analysis. Therefore, one model is completed when the same letters are connected following the numeric order. In this study, eight models composed in this way were used.

The first model (path a) predicts that international marriage communication effectiveness by husbands (a2) will influence mediator effects on his personality patterns (a1) between his own perception of marital adjustment (a3) (e.g., Bouchard, Lussier, Sabourin, 1999; Erlenerosow sky, *et al.*, 2012). The second model (path b) predicts that international marriage communication effectiveness by husbands (b2) will influence the mediator effects on personality patterns (b1) and the perception of the wife on the marital adjustment (b3) (e.g., Erlenerosow sky, *et al.*, 2012).

The third model (path c) predicts that the international marriage communication effectiveness by wives (c2) will influence the mediator effects on personality patterns (c1) and her personal perception of the marital adjustment (c3) (e.g., Bouchard *et al.*, 1999). The fourth model (path d) predicts that the international marriage communication effectiveness

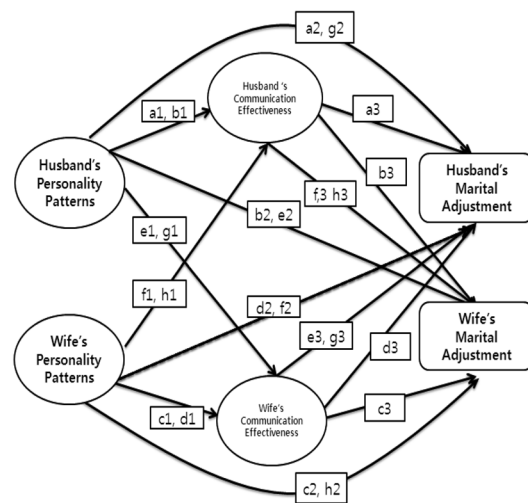


Figure 1. Model

of wives (d2) will influence the mediator effects on personality patterns (d1) and the husband's personal perception of the marital adjustment (d3) (e.g., YoavLavee & Adital Ben-Ari, 1999).

The fifth model (path e) predicts that international marriage communication effectiveness by wives (e2) will influence the mediator effects on the personality patterns of husbands (e1) and his personal perception of the marital adjustment (e3) (e.g., Richard, Avashalom, and Terri, 2000). The sixth model (path f) predicts that the communication effectiveness by the husband (f2) will influence the mediator effects on the personality patterns of wives (f1) and her personal perception of the marital adjustment (f3) (e.g., Erlenerosow sky, *et al.*, 2012).

The seventh model (path g) predicts that the communication effectiveness of the wife (g2) will influence the mediator effects on the personality patterns of the husband (g1) and his personal perception of marital adjustment (g3). The eighth model (path h) predicts that the communication effectiveness of the husband (h2) will influence the mediator effects on the personality patterns of the wife (h1) and her personal perception of the marital adjustment (h3).

This model can be tested by examining the effects of the personality patterns and communication effectiveness of the husband on marital adjustment and relationship outcomes while controlling for the

personality patterns and communication effectiveness of the wife. Path b, f, and h would be indicative of effects on the wife's outcomes, and Path d, e, and g would be reciprocal effects on the husband's outcomes.

Personality Patterns

The Big Five Index (BFI) to measure personality patterns by Benet-Martinez and John (1998), which Seo and Choi (2005) adapted into a Korean version through factor analysis, was utilized. BFI consists of five factors (neuroticism, openness, extroversion, conscientiousness, and agreeableness) and 25 questionnaire items. It employs a 5-point Likert scale for scoring, with 1 meaning "very negative" to 5 meaning "very positive" for each of the factors or personality patterns. Higher points in the BFI equals higher personality pattern characteristics. The reliability of the subordinate factors is as follows. The internal-consistency coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) of the husband's personality pattern was .81, and the internal-consistency coefficients of the subordinate factors were .72 for extroversion, .66 for agreeableness, .77 for conscientiousness, .80 for neuroticism, and .68 for openness. The internal-consistency coefficient of the personality pattern wife was .86, and the internal-consistency coefficients of the subordinate factors were .82 for extroversion, .62 for agreeableness, .73 for conscientiousness, .86 for neuroticism, and .64 for openness.

Communication Effectiveness

The Marital Communication Inventory (MCI) of Bienvenu (1970), which Shim (2000) adapted to the Korean version through factor analysis, was used in this study to measure the communication effectiveness of international marriages. This was composed of 20 questionnaire items: 9 for the positive aspects of communication effectiveness (e.g., "My husband (wife) agrees with my feelings") and 11 for the negative aspects (e.g., "My husband (wife) complains that he (she) does not understand my feelings"). The scale that was employed for scoring was a 5-point Likert scale where 11 questionnaire items were scored in a reverse way. The total number of points in this scale ranged from 20 to 80. Higher scores represent more effective international marriage

couple communication skills. The internal-consistency coefficient of communication effectiveness was .84 for husbands and wives.

Marital Adjustment

The Marriage Adjustment Test Method (MATM) developed by Lee and Han (2003) was used to measure the marital adjustment of the international marriages. With a total of 32 questionnaire items, sub-scales were used only for marital satisfaction (7 items), divorce intent (8 items), couple's intimacy (8 items), mutual communication (4 items), and sexual satisfaction (5 items). The scale employed for scoring was a 5-point Likert scale with 1 meaning "very negative" to 5 "very positive" in terms of marital adjustment where higher scores represent a better the marital in terms of marital adjustment where higher scores represent a better the marital adjustment. The 17 Questionnaire items were scored in a reverse way and the inter-consistency coefficient of marital adjustment was .95 for the husband and .97 for the wife.

Analysis

SPSS 18.0 was used for data analysis. Reliability and frequency analysis were conducted to establish the reliability and frequency of the index scale. A T-test was performed to confirm the differences of the personality patterns, communication effectiveness, and marital adjustment. A Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple-regression analyses analyzed the effects of communication effectiveness and personality patterns on marital adjustment. Mediator models investigated if the communication effectiveness of the international marriage couple (as a parameter variable) influenced personality patterns and marital adjustment. A mediated variable verified the effectiveness of the most widely used regression analysis method and Structural Equation Modeling (Lee & Kim, 2006). SEM is recommended because the mediated variable seemed a distinct possibility in measurement errors (Baron & Kenny, 1986). SEM was used to measure a sample of more than 200 and constrain all the variables that follow a normal distribution; therefore the effect of the mediated variable was used in regression analysis for practical

reasons (Lee, 2007). A mediator model is where a third mediator correlates two other variables when an independent variable influences the subordinate variables (Baron & Kenny, 1986). The analysis of the mediator effect should be made as follows (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Van Dyne *et al.*, 1994). In Step1, a multiple-regression analysis was conducted to determine if personality patterns had a significant influence on communication effectiveness and Step 2, determined if personality patterns and a significant influence on marital adjustment. In Step 3, a multiple-regression analysis determined if personality

patterns and communication effectiveness and a significant influence on marital adjustment. Finally, Step 4 examined if the beta value induced in Step 2 as larger than that in Step 3 (a larger beta value means that the mediator factors are effective).

RESULTS

Demographics of International Marriages

The results of the demographic factors of international marriages for study participants were as follows. In

Table 1. *International Marriage Demographics for Husbands and Wives*

Independent Variable	Husbands		Wives		
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	
Age	No Response	3	1	2	0.7
	20-29 years	3	1	100	33.6
	30-39 years	38	12.8	101	33.9
	40-49 years	188	63.1	63	21.1
	50-59 years	59	19.8	32	10.8
	> 60 years	7	2.3	-	-
Education	No Response	4	1.3	4	1.3
	Elementary School	7	2.3	15	5.0
	Middle School	55	18.5	70	23.5
	High School	166	55.7	130	43.6
	College	50	16.8	49	16.4
	Graduate School	9	3.0	15	5.0
	Other	7	2.3	15	5.0
Occupation	No Response	2	0.7	9	3.0
	Unemployed	14	4.7	-	-
	House wife	-	-	194	65.1
	Office Worker	39	13.1	29	9.7
	Individual Proprietor	56	18.8	3	1.0
	Engineer	117	39.7	16	5.4
	Per Diem Employee	42	14.1	10	3.4
	Other	28	9.4	37	12.4
Marriage Path	Matchmaking Agency	75	25.2	77	25.8
	Religious Group	67	22.5	70	23.5
	Friend or Neighbor	80	26.8	68	22.9
	Family Member	42	14.1	49	16.4
	Love Marriage	31	10.4	31	10.4
	Other	3	1.0	3	1.0

Table 1. Continue

Independent Variable	International Marriages		
	<i>n</i>	%	
Marriage Duration	No Response	3	1.0
	< 5 years	68	22.6
	5 - 9 years	152	50.1
	10-14 years	45	15.1
	15-19 years	15	5.1
	> 20 years	15	5.0
	International marriage ethnicity (wives)	No Response	12
Vietnam		97	32.6
Japan		67	22.6
China		100	33.6
Pilipino		6	2.0
Other		16	5.3
Family Income	No Income	21	7.1
	450-1,300USD	92	30.8
	1,310-2,200 USD	111	37.3
	2,210-3,000USD	58	19.4
	3,100-3,500 USD	7	2.3
	> 3,500 USD	9	3.0

terms of age, the international marriage husbands in their forties (63.1%) accounted for the highest percentage, while the international marriage wives in their thirties (33.9%) and twenties (33.6%) showed a higher percentage. In terms of the highest level of education for international marriages, high school graduates (husbands: 55.7%, wives: 43.6%) showed the highest percentage. Jobs of international marriage husbands were most densely distributed in technical work (39.7%) and owning a private business (18.8%), while most international marriage wives were found to be housewives (65.1%). In the marriage path of international marriages, marriage through match-making agencies (husbands: 25.2%, wives: 25.8%), religious groups (husbands: 22.5%, wives: 23.5%), and introduction by friends (husbands: 26.8%, wives: 22.9%) showed the highest percentage.

The marriage years of international marriages were found to be 5 years and over, less than 9 years (50.1%), and less than 5 years (22.6%). The countries that formed international marriages were China (33.6%), Vietnam (32.6%), and Japan (22.6%). The

monthly family income of international marriages was \$1,310USD (1.5 million won) to \$2,200 USD (less than 2.5 million won), accounting for the highest percentage of 37.3%, followed by \$450 USD (0.5 million won) to \$1,300 USD (less than 1.5 million won), 30.8%. The average family income for multicultural families was relatively low compared to the \$23,749 USD per GDP of Korea (approximately 2.7 million won).

A one-way ANOVA established the average difference between communication effectiveness and marital adjustment with international marriage demographic variables as an independent. When communication effectiveness was set as a dependent variable, a significant difference was observed among husbands based on the education level of the husband ($F=3.65, p<.01$), marriage years ($F=4.76, p<.001$), marriage path ($F=5.02, p<.001$), and family income ($F=6.50, p<.001$). A significant difference was observed among the wives based on their age ($F=2.53, p<.05$), education ($F=3.54, p<.01$), occupation ($F=2.27, p<.05$), marriage years ($F=8.81, p<.001$),

and marriage path ($F=7.41, p<.001$).

The results of a one-way ANOVA with marital adjustment set as a dependent variable showed significant differences among husbands according to age ($F=5.58, p<.001$), education ($F=2.35, p<.05$), occupation ($F=3.78, p<.001$), marriage years ($F=6.08, p<.001$), marriage path ($F=4.82, p<.01$), international marriage ethnicity (wives) ($F=6.23, p<.001$), and family income ($F=13.69, p<.001$). Significant differences were found among wives according to age ($F=3.04, p<.01$), education ($F=2.13, p<.05$), occupation ($F=3.82, p<.001$), marriage years ($F=6.87, p<.001$), international marriage ethnicity (wives) ($F=2.65, p<.05$), and family income ($F=6.36, p<.001$). A comparison of the variables (except marriage path) showed equally significant differences in the marital adjustment for husbands and wives.

*Differences in the Personality Patterns,
Communication Effectiveness, and Marital
Adjustment of International Marriages*

A *t*-test was identified the differences of the subject international marriages in terms of personality patterns, communication effectiveness, and marital adjustment. Table 2 summarizes the average and standard deviation for each variable. With regard to the personality patterns, husbands and wives showed no difference in extroversion ($t=1.001$), agreeableness ($t=1.900$), and neuroticism ($t=-1.414$) but were significantly different in conscientiousness ($t=2.065, p<.05$) and openness ($t=-4.235, p<.001$). This suggests that husbands had a higher conscien-

tiousness than their wives ($M=17.67$ vs. 17.16), and that the wives had a higher openness than their husbands ($M=15.91$ vs. 16.96). The difference in the communication effectiveness of international marriage husbands and wives ($t=-.611$) did not show a statistical significance. Meanwhile, the differences of husbands and wives (in terms of marital adjustment) ($t=3.92, p<.001$) was statistically significant and suggests that the international marriage perceptions for their respective marital adjustments had abroad distinction. The average scores in the international marriage perceptions by husbands and wives of their marital adjustments were 128.97 and 121.49, respectively, showing that the international marriage husbands have higher perceptions of marital adjustments compared to wives.

*Influences in Personality Patterns, Communication
Effectiveness, and Marital Adjustment
of International Marriages*

Factor scales were correlated for husbands and wives (ranging from .63 to -.01). Table 3 shows the results of the correlation analysis that presented a less than .05 statistical significance level and suggests that the five personality patterns and the communication effectiveness represented relatively independent dimensions of marital adjustment. The overall reports of the self or spouse variables were significance but had somewhat low correlations. There were significant positive correlations between the personality patterns, communication effectiveness, and marital adjustment for both husbands and wives; however,

Table 2. A *t*-test of the scores for husbands and wives ($N=586$)

Variable	Husbands		Wives		<i>t</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Personality patterns	-	-	-	-	-
Extroversion	18.27	2.82	18.01	3.48	1.001
Agreeableness	17.37	3.15	16.89	2.96	1.900
Conscientiousness	17.67	3.11	17.16	2.96	2.065*
Neuroticism	12.15	3.75	12.62	4.23	-1.414
Openness	15.91	3.21	16.96	2.88	-4.235***
Communication effectiveness	54.08	7.95	54.49	8.15	-.611
Marital adjustment	128.97	19.10	121.49	26.82	3.920***

* $P<.05$, ** $P<.01$, *** $P<.001$

Table 3. Correlations for Husbands and Wives (N=586)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Wives'														
1. Extroversion	-													
2. Agreeableness	.49***	-												
3. Conscientiousness	.49***	.28***	-											
4. Neuroticism	.10	.28***	.15*	-										
5. Openness	.43***	.32***	.63***	.18***	-									
6. Communication effectiveness	.07	.01	.14*	-.19**	.15**	-								
7. Marital adjustment	.09	.06	.19**	-.01	.22**	.63***	-							
(husbands)														
8. Extroversion	.07	-.05	.13*	-.01	.10	.35***	.27***	-						
9. Agreeableness	-.04	.04	.07	.09	.01	.36***	.39***	.50***	-					
10. Conscientiousness	-.06	.09	.08	-.13*	.05	.16**	.18**	.54**	.63**	-				
11. Neuroticism	-.05	.10	-.08	.19**	-.15	-.33***	-.17**	-.27***	-.19**	-.20**	-			
12. Openness	.04	.05	.04	.09	.03	.12*	.08	.34***	.44***	.45***	.08	-		
13. Communication effectiveness	.11	.10	.08	-.18**	.05	.58***	.50***	.50***	.51***	.43***	-.26***	.20**	-	
14. Marital adjustment	.08	.13*	.08	-.16**	.13*	.65***	.42***	.37***	.30**	.25***	-.34***	.12*	.58***	-
Ms	.20	.19	.21	.17	.16	.28	.33	.43	.45	.39	.12	.44	.79	1
SD	.26	.26	.27	.29	.30	.31	.33	.35	.37	.40	.42	.47	.50	1

*P<.05, **P<.01, ***P<.001

neuroticism had a significantly negative correlation with communication effectiveness and marital adjustment. These show that a higher perception of personality patterns led to an increase in communication effectiveness and marital adjustment versus a higher perception of neuroticism that led to a decrease in communication effectiveness and marital adjustment.

The above data show the correlations between the individual personality patterns, communication effectiveness, and marital adjustment; however, the correlation analysis itself had difficulty inferring the appropriateness of the regression model that can be used to analyze the mediator effects. A multiple-regression analysis was confirmed the appropriateness of the regression model to be used through the identification of the correlations and the existence of multicollinearity for individual personality patterns and the communication effectiveness that influenced the marital adjustments of international marriages.

Table 4 shows the marital adjustment of the

husband as a variable. The personality patterns and communication effectiveness of the husband showed $R^2=.49$ ($F=47.38$; $P<.001$). This suggests that higher scores by the husband were in the five personality patterns and in communication effectiveness, the higher his personal marital adjustment, with a 49% explanation. Meanwhile, the personality patterns and communication effectiveness of the wife showed $R^2=.36$ ($F=26.86$; $P<.001$), which means that the higher scores of the wife were in the five personality patterns and in communication effectiveness, the higher the marital adjustment of the husband with a 36% explanation.

Table 5 shows the marital adjustment of the wife as a subordinate variable. The personality patterns and communication effectiveness of the husband showed $R^2=.27$ ($F=18.07$; $P<.001$). The higher scores of the husband were in the five personality patterns and in communication effectiveness, the higher the marital adjustment of the wife, with a 27% explanation. Meanwhile, the influence of the personality

Table 4. Multiple-Regression Analyses Predicting the Relationship Outcomes from the Husbands Marital Adjustment (N=586)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	B	Beta	t	
Marital adjustment (husbands)	Husband	Extroversion	1.29	.19	3.54***
		Agreeableness	1.12	.27	4.68***
		Conscientiousness	.55	.09	1.52
		Neuroticism	.04	.01	.17
		Openness	-.40	-.67	-1.37
		Communication effectiveness	.99	.41	8.80***
		(Constant)	19.71		2.27
	$R=.70$; $R^2=.49$; modified $R^2=.48$; $F=47.38$; $P=.000$ Durbin-Watson=2.423				
	Wife	Extroversion	.29	.05	.89
		Agreeableness	.75	.12	2.06*
		Conscientiousness	.11	.02	.26
		Neuroticism	-.44	-.10	-1.92
		Openness	-.58	-.09	-1.39
Communication effectiveness		1.32	.56	11.53***	
(Constant)		52.54		5.91	
$R=.59$; $R^2=.36$; modified $R^2=.34$; $F=26.86$; $P=.000$ Durbin-Watson=2.032					

* $P<.05$, ** $P<.01$, *** $P<.001$

Table 5. Multiple-Regression Analyses to predict the Relationship Outcomes from the Wife's Marital Adjustment (N=586)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	B	Beta	T	
Marital adjustment(wives)	Husband	Extroversion	.49	.05	.81
		Agreeableness	3.24	.38	5.57***
		Conscientiousness	-1.11	-.13	-1.83
		Neuroticism	.04	.01	.09
		Openness	-.74	-.09	-1.49
		Communication effectiveness	1.12	.33	5.89***
		(Constant)	26.33		1.80
	$R=.52$; $R^2=.27$; modified $R^2=.27$; $F=18.07$; $P=.000$ Durbin-Watson=2.300				
	Wife	Extroversion	-.23	-.03	-.52
		Agreeableness	.02	.00	.04
		Conscientiousness	.44	.05	.79
		Neuroticism	.56	.09	1.84
		Openness	.86	.09	1.55
Communication effectiveness		2.07	.63	13.54***	
(Constant)		-16.49		-1.39	
$R=.65$; $R^2=.42$; modified $R^2=.41$; $F=35.40$; $P=.000$ Durbin-Watson=2.070					

* $P<.05$, ** $P<.01$, *** $P<.001$

patterns and communication effectiveness of the wife on her personal marital adjustment showed $R^2=.42$ ($F=35.40$; $P<.001$). This suggests that the higher scores of the wife in the five personality patterns and in communication effectiveness resulted in a higher personal marital adjustment, with a 42% explanation.

Mediator Effects of Communication Effectiveness on the Personality Patterns and Marital Adjustment of International Marriages

Linear-regression analyses were conducted to test if the communication effectiveness of husbands and wives mediates their perception of personality patterns and marital adjustment in relationships. In each analysis, independent and mediator variables were entered. For the personality patterns and communication effectiveness scale of husbands and wives, a separate analysis was conducted for each of the three factors. The dependent variables were the reports of marital adjustment by husbands and wives.

The analyses were conducted across 298 international marriages. The mediator effects of communication effectiveness were analyzed in regards to the correlation that personality patterns influence marital adjustment. It was found that extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness by the husband and the conscientiousness of wives, significantly influenced marital adjustment under communication effectiveness as a mediator variable. Table 6 shows the results of the mediator effect analysis for extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness, respectively.

First, the extroversion of husbands towards international marriages was a personality pattern that showed a significant influence on personal marital adjustment as well as their wives with regard to the mediator effects of the communication effectiveness of international marriages on extroversion and marital adjustment. The mediator effect of communication effectiveness on extroversion and marital adjustment showed a significant influence on the verification of routes for husbands. With the influence of the extroversion husbands on personal marital adjustment, their communication effectiveness

were shown to have a positive mediator effect on their marital adjustment as perceived by them [beta index of the three phases: .37 ($R^2=.14$) for a1; .50 ($R^2=.25$) for a2; and .33 ($R^2=.43$) for a3]. With regard to the correlation that the husbands' extroversion influences the marital adjustment wives', the communication effectiveness husbands had a positive mediator effect on the wives' marital adjustment as perceived by wives [beta index of the three phases: .37 ($R^2=.14$) for b1; .27 ($R^2=.07$) for b2; and .13 ($R^2=.19$) for b3]. With regard to the influence extroversion husbands' on their marital adjustment wives', the communication effectiveness wives' had a positive mediator effect on their own marital adjustment as perceived by them [beta index of the three phases: .35 ($R^2=.11$) for g1; .50 ($R^2=.25$) for g2; and .34 ($R^2=.44$) for g3].

The husbands' extroversion was a variable that received more attention than wives during the examination of the mediator effects in the explanation of international marriage marital adjustment. In addition, communication effectiveness was shown to be a variable that correlated with the extroversion and marital adjustment of husbands. It was shown that the communication effectiveness of husbands had a mediator effect on husband extroversion and the marital adjustment of wives, and that the communication effectiveness of wives also had mediator effects on the extroversion and marital adjustment of husbands.

Second, from the results of the examination of communication effectiveness as mediator factor in terms of the correlation between marital adjustment and agreeableness among the personality patterns, it was found that the agreeableness of husbands had a significant influence on their personal as well as their wives' marital adjustment. As a parameter factor between agreeableness and marital adjustment, communication effectiveness was found to be a significant influence. When the agreeableness of the husband influenced personal marital adjustment, the husbands' communication effectiveness had a positive mediator effect on their personal marital adjustment as perceived by them [beta index of the three phases: .30 ($R^2=.90$) for a1; .51 ($R^2=.26$) for a2; and .37 ($R^2=.46$) for a3]. The communication effectiveness of

Table 6. Mediated analyses to predict marital adjustment relationship outcomes (N=586)

Independent	Variable		Path	Standardized B	t	R ²
	Mediated	Dependent				
Extraversion (husbands)	Husbands' Communication Effectiveness	Husbands' Marital Adjustments	1	.37***	6.93	.14
			2	.50***	10.02	.25
			3	.33***	7.05	.43
	Husbands' Communication Effectiveness	Wives' Marital Adjustments	1	.37***	6.93	.14
			2	.27***	4.78	.07
			3	.13***	2.26	.19
	Wives' Communication Effectiveness	Husbands' Marital Adjustments	1	.35***	6.33	.11
			2	.50***	10.02	.25
			3	.35***	7.42	.44
Agreeableness (husbands)	Husbands' Communication Effectiveness	Husbands' Marital Adjustments	1	.30***	5.42	.90
			2	.51***	10.27	.26
			3	.37***	8.34	.46
	Husbands' Communication Effectiveness	Wives' Marital Adjustments	1	.30***	5.42	.09
			2	.39***	7.22	.15
			3	.29***	5.42	.25
	Wives' Communication Effectiveness	Husbands' Marital Adjustments	1	.36***	6.64	.13
			2	.39***	10.27	.26
			3	.35***	7.49	.44
Conscientiousness (husbands)	Husbands' Communication Effectiveness	Husbands' Marital Adjustments	1	.25***	4.34	.06
			2	.43***	8.21	.19
			3	.31***	6.72	.42
	Wives' Communication Effectiveness	Husbands' Marital Adjustments	1	.17**	2.87	.03
			2	.43***	8.21	.19
			3	.25***	7.86	.49
Conscientiousness (wives)	Wives' Communication Effectiveness	Wives' Marital Adjustments	1	.14*	2.44	.02
			2	.19**	3.41	.04
			3	.11*	2.39	.41
Openness (husbands)	Husbands' Communication Effectiveness	Husbands' Marital Adjustments	1	.12*	2.08	.01
			2	.21***	3.60	.04
			3	.14***	2.91	.35

* $P < .05$, ** $P < .01$, *** $P < .001$

husbands had a positive mediator effect on their own marital adjustment as perceived by their wives when the agreeableness of husbands influenced the marital adjustment of their wives [beta indices of the three phases: .30 for b1; .39 for b2; and .29 for b3]. The R² index had a 9% explanation in Phase 1, 15% in Phase 2, and 25% in Phase 3. The communication effectiveness of wives had a positive mediator effect

on their personal marital adjustment as perceived by them when the agreeableness of husbands influenced their personal marital adjustment [beta index of the three phases: .36 for e1; .39 for e2; and .35 for e3]. The R² index had a 13% explanation in Phase 1, 26% in Phase 2, and 44% in Phase 3. The communication effectiveness of wives had a significant mediator effect when the agreeableness of husbands influenced

the marital adjustment wives [beta index of the three phases: .36 ($R^2=.13$) for g1; .51 ($R^2=.15$) for g2; and .35 ($R^2=.43$) for g3].

The agreeableness of husbands was a major independent variable for the mediator verification of international marriage marital adjustment. In addition, as a mediator variable, communication effectiveness showed a significant mediator effect between agreeableness and international marriage marital adjustment. The communication effectiveness showed a mediator effect when the agreeableness of husbands was correlated with their personal marital adjustment as perceived by wives. The communication effectiveness of wives showed a mediator effect when the international marriage agreeableness of husbands was correlated with their personal marital adjustment; in addition, the communication effectiveness of husbands showed a positive mediator effect and had a significant influence on the marital adjustment of wives when the agreeableness of husbands was correlated with the marital adjustment of wives. This indicates that communication effectiveness influenced their personal marital adjustment and that of their spouses through independent or mutual interaction.

Third, the results of the examination of the mediator effects of communication effectiveness in terms of the correlation between conscientiousness (among the personality patterns and international marriage marital adjustment) showed that the conscientiousness of husbands and wives were significant variables for international marriage marital adjustment. The international marriage communication effectiveness (as a mediator variable) showed a mediator effect on the correlation between the agreeableness of husbands and marital adjustment. Their personal communication effectiveness had a positive mediator effect on their pseudo-marital adjustment as perceived by them when the conscientiousness of husbands influenced their personal marital adjustment [beta index of the three phases: .25 ($R^2=.06$) for a1; .43 ($R^2=.19$) for a2; and .31 ($R^2=.42$) for a3]. The communication effectiveness of wives had a positive mediator effect on personal marital adjustment (as perceived by the husbands) when the conscientiousness of husbands influenced their personal marital adjustment [beta index of the

three phases: .17 ($R^2=.03$) for g1; .43 ($R^2=.19$) for g2; and .35 ($R^2=.49$) for g3]. The communication effectiveness of wives had a positive mediator effect on perceived marital adjustment when the conscientiousness of wives influenced their personal marital adjustment [beta index of the three phases: .14 for c1; .19 for c2; and .11 for c3]. The R^2 index had a 2% explanation in Phase 1, 4% in Phase 2, and 41% in Phase 3.

The communication effectiveness of husbands towards international marriage had a significant mediator effect only on the correlation between the conscientiousness of husbands and personal marital adjustment. However, the communication effectiveness of wives had a significant mediator effect on the perceived correlation of conscientiousness and marital adjustment as well as on the correlation of conscientiousness and marital adjustment by husbands. These indicate that the communication effectiveness of wives influenced personal as well as the marital adjustment of their husbands through mutual interactions.

Fourth, the results of the examination of the mediator effects of communication effectiveness on the correlation between openness (among the personality patterns) and international marriage marital adjustment show that the openness of husbands had a significant influence on personal marital adjustment. Communication effectiveness as a mediator variable showed a mediator effect on the correlation between the openness of husbands and marital adjustment [beta index of the three phases: .12 ($R^2=.01$) for a1; .12 ($R^2=.01$) for a2; and .14 ($R^2=.35$) for a3]. These indicate that the communication effectiveness by husbands had a significant mediator effect on the correlation of openness by husbands and perceived marital adjustment.

Communication effectiveness showed a significant mediator variable effect for personality patterns and marital adjustment by international marriage husbands and wives. Influenced by individual personality patterns, communication effectiveness had a significant effect on marital adjustment by husbands and wives towards international marriage. This showed (through mutual interactions) a positive mediator effect on marital adjustment as perceived by spouses.

Meanwhile, the four personality patterns other than neuroticism (extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness) were proven to have significant effects (either independently or mutually) for international marriage marital adjustment.

DISCUSSION

This study determined how the influences of personality patterns on marital adjustment as mediated by communication effectiveness for 298 international marriages in South Korea. Previous studies on international marriages only used the husbands or wives as the study subjects due to the cultural difficulties of selecting the subjects to be surveyed. Limitations were encountered in understanding the interactions between husbands and wives, and in reporting the study results that international marriage adjustment is profoundly affected by the environmental variables caused by cultural differences. However, this study addressed the limitations of the previous studies on international marriage marital adjustment using paired data with various multiple factors that influenced marital adjustment. This study has several implications.

First, communication effectiveness was shown to have mediator effect on personality patterns and marital adjustment, the communication effectiveness of spouses could be referred to as a core factor that affected international marriage marital adjustment. This is different from the results of existing studies where international marriage couple conflicts are caused by cultural differences (Kim, 2011; Kim, 2006). Cultural adjustment is essential for international marriages during a process in which even non-international marriages also adjust as a couple through marriage in the state of mutually different cultures. Cultural adjustment is an important factor for international marriages; however, (unlike non-international marriages) cultural differences were more importantly treated in international marriage relationship adjustment than personality patterns. Social convention tends to show that the relationship maladjustment is based on the cultural backgrounds of countries.

This study confirmed that communication effectiveness can enhance marital adjustment as a medium to mediate differences between husbands and wives. The spouses performed communication effectiveness positively which affected their spouses so that their perceived degree of marital adjustment was positively enhanced. International marriage relationship conflicts may arise from many issues such as talking manners, expression of affection, sexual gratification, and child-rearing; therefore, husband and wife communication is closely related to marital adjustment. In this study, the communication effectiveness of husbands had a significant effect on the marital adjustment of the wife. Wives were more emotionally influenced by the spouse than husbands were by their wives; in addition, happy couples had the characteristics that husbands listened to their wives as they accept their viewpoints and emotions. For these reasons, this study (like others) confirmed the influences husband. The study of couples (Fu & Kendall, 2001; Vaidya, et. al., 2002) indicated that the relational characteristics of couples have a greater effect on wives than on husbands.

Thus, supporting a smooth communication process is necessary so that the international marriages can accept respective individual characteristics and be in harmony. It is suggested that the importance of the mediator effects should be recognized in the existing family life education programs for the international marriages, especially for international marriage husbands in South Korea as well as programs for better communication. With such recognition, family life education programs that focus on the development of effective communication skills between international marriages (especially for international marriage husband) should be developed.

Second, in term of international marriage personality patterns, the extroversion, agreeableness, and openness of husbands had a positive effect through communication effectiveness on marital adjustment; however, neuroticism had a negative effect. In previous studies, it was reported that active extroversion, steady agreeableness, diligent conscientiousness, openness, and artistic sense positively influenced marital adjustment; however, mental instability and vulnerable neuroticism had a negative

effect (Gottman, 1998; Karney & Bradbury, 1997; Schneewind & Anna-Katharina, 2002).

International marriage personality patterns are related to psychological, economical, and cultural factors (the ones that affect intimate marital relationships) beyond individual daily life. The difficulties caused by the maladjustment in the disparity of characters can become serious issues after the initial vulnerability of international marriages is experienced. Personality difference is cited as the most common reason for divorce; therefore, the international marriage personality adjustment is the most important factor for marital adjustment. The personality patterns of Korean male spouses exert an important influence on the marital adjustment of the wife and his personal marital adjustment. Korean spouses are familiar with main stream Korean culture and they can have a better psychological attitude compared to international marriage wives. The personality patterns of husbands and the importance of their role in marital adjustment are the core factors for international marriage marital adjustment. Family life education programs and family counseling programs for international marriage husbands should be developed to lead international marriage spouses to consider the effects of their individual personality patterns on marital interaction and adjustment as well as help them understand that their personality patterns influence the marital adjustment of wives.

The results of this study revealed that conscientiousness of international marriage wives was the only factor that influenced marital adjustment and showed that the personality patterns of wives were less influential on marital adjustment than husbands. This was the result of the role structure in South Korea where spouses do not fully express feelings or express personality marital patterns because the foreign wives embark on their married lives dependent on their husbands due to their lack of Korean language ability and an insufficient understanding of South Korean culture. Foreign wives tend to obtain much information from their husbands and allow their husbands to make the decisions for them in the early stages of the marriage (Hong & Chae, 2007a; Mo & Kim, 2002).

The personality patterns of husbands are more closely related to marital adjustment than the personality patterns of wives. The warm and reciprocal dispositions of husbands are very important for marital adjustment. This may reduce the apprehension of the wives while leaving their own country and forming a family in an unfamiliar South Korea. Thus, the basic premise of this study result is that the individual personality patterns in international marriages have a greater influence on marital adjustment than stress from cultural or language differences.

The level of importance of personality patterns on marital adjustment was different between husbands and wives. Especially for foreign wives, family life education programs should be provided based on their different family life cycle and different stages of adjustment. Korean language and culture should be the initial focus in order to fortify the foreign cultural abilities of wives; however, in the latter stages, family life education programs for husbands and wives should be increased to improve their marital adjustment level. These programs should help them understand their own as well as the personality patterns of spouses. This study confirmed that personality patterns (as a personal factor of international marriages) influence marital adjustment; in addition, communication effectiveness (as a relational factor) represents interactions between personality patterns and marital adjustment. The proposal for the Korean society to support the stable adjustment of international marriage marital relationships by utilizing the results of this study is as follows. South Korean society should recognize the maladjustment problems of multicultural families and reduce their vulnerability, an example of the type of help that could be used is the the government drafted law to regulate marriage brokers (November 2010). Discussions on the roles of central office groups are being actively made as social problems related to multicultural families. For immigrant wives to establish themselves in South Korean society, the relevant branches of the government must aggressively continue to promote alternative programs such as: Korean language education (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, Ministry

of Justice), provision of basic living information (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, Ministry of Justice), improvement of daily living civil complaint system (Ministry of Public Administration and Security, the National Police Agency), expansion of bilingual education for children (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology), and social adjustment programs for stopover immigrant children (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology).

The alternative programs focus on the cultural adjustment of immigrant brides in South Korean society from an assimilation viewpoint and their consideration for family relationship adjustment is deemed insufficient. With the results of this study, relational adjustment between couples becomes the main agenda for multicultural families to overcome cultural differences. Individual personality patterns and communication effectiveness account for a great part of marital adjustment, the role of the Korean husband was emphasized. In an effort to enhance the stability of international marriages, the Korean government only arranges self-help gatherings among families through the Multicultural Family Support Center whose operation is negligible. The Korean government continues its participation in microscopic programs instead of institutional approach to the enhancement of marital relationships in relation to multicultural family policy. The mandatory practice of family life education (marriage preparation education and spouse education) is necessary to establish a welfare policy in institutions like schools and social welfare organizations and strengthen family counseling or couple counseling.

The present study has several limitations. First, the findings may appear to some readers to be too weak to be pragmatically significant. One consideration is that the effects were generally additive across partners, so the impact of personality patterns and communication effectiveness on the marital adjustment of intermarriage couples represents the summed outcome of reciprocal effects. Moreover, marital adjustment outcomes are determined by a complex set of factors and we would not expect personality patterns and communication effectiveness individually to exhaustively account for relationship satisfaction. We believe it is of vital significance to

explain even a small percentage of the variance in an almost universally important well-being centered and happy family relationship. A relationship constitutes a dynamic system and not simply two distinct individuals; however, an important way to understand the system is to better understand its constituent parts (e. g., personality patterns and communication effectiveness). Finally, we propose several possible links between stable traits and micro interaction processes. These mediating links need to be examined more closely and various relationships (specific behaviors and emotions) in future research needs to be pragmatically significant. Second, this study successfully suggests that intermarriages are less about marital adjustment, but is weak in its explanation about the link between individual racial background and marital adjustment. Micro and macro cultural factors would represent a more significant impact on women in their marital adjustment. We hope that this article can develop research interests in the marital adjustment of international marriages and that future studies can examine larger samples to establish clear links of social and cultural backgrounds and marital adjustment.

We report the results of the factors that influence the marital adjustment of international marriages with a focus on personality patterns mediated by communication effectiveness and the use of paired data. This study is different from previous marital adjustment studies on international marriages that focused on simple factors (such as the cultural or social-environmental differences) that affect marital adjustment between spouses. The results of this study can provide information or ideas for South Korean family policy administrators to develop systems that can improve the marital adjustment of international marriages and lower their divorce rate. This study provides needed information for Multicultural Family Support Centers to operate improved family life educational programs such as marital relationship promotion programs and spousal educational programs. The results of this study are significant for the materialization of practical policy measures for multicultural families in South Korea.

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Received October 10, 2012

Revised December 10, 2012

Accepted December 10, 2012