

ABSTRACT

A Longitudinal Study of North Korean Migrant Youth in South Korea (II)

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The longitudinal study is to examine the pathways that North Korean immigrant youngsters trace in the life journey at South Korea. Last year the researchers already have conducted the pilot study for the purpose of designing this longitudinal study, which would be implemented from 2011 to 2015. Thus this first-year longitudinal study of North Korean immigrant youth in 2011 focused on consisting the panel group for five years' longitudinal study and examining the characteristics of these participants and factors influencing the adjustment of North Korean migrant youth.

This study utilized both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The total number of the participants giving the written consent is 461 North Korean immigrant students, together with their parents and school teachers. They are from the fourth to sixth grade in primary school and from the first to third grade in middle school. Thus all 461 North Korean immigrant students, their

parents and school teachers responded questionnaires and 31 students with their parents and school teachers are selected as the in-depth interviewees. For the quantitative analysis, ANOVA, regression analysis, exploratory factor analysis, correlation analysis were employed.

In terms of this research, the key findings are as follows:

Firstly, it would be the important factor in determining student school adjustment whether if they have an experience to go to school in China or other country after crossing the borderline of North Korea. Those who have memorized past experience positively before the settlement has the possibility to have the successful school adjustment at South Korea according to the knowledge of school life, the levels of academic achievement and the relationship with peers and teachers. However this follow-up research needs to pay attention to the adjustment of those who was born in China or other third country after crossing the borderline of North Korea. Their language barrier is the significant factor in determining school adjustment.

Secondly, the quality of interpersonal relationships between parents, peers and school teachers is the most influential factor in determining student school adjustment. Especially Most North Korean migrant children have experienced family break-ups in the process of immigrating and adapting to South Korea, such as separation (forced, non-consensual, or otherwise). This can have influence on their family connectness, motivations of the study, attitude in class at school, the ability of parents to provide educational support, self-esteem, self-efficacy and levels of academic achievement etc. Consequently those factors also affect interpersonal relationship with school teachers and peers as well. Therefore the psychological counselling with families in the initial period of settlement and social support acquired from interpersonal relationship with parents, peers and school teachers would be very significant

for newcomers' adjustment in South Korea.

Lastly, personality and individual efforts are also important for the adjustment in new society. Thus North Korean migrants can be required to learn new culture and have the receptive capacity, positive attitudes and thoughts and so other efforts.

Keywords : longitudinal study, North Korean Migrant Youth