

# **A Study of the Life of Thai Marriage Migrant Women in Korea: With a Focus on Their Economic Empowerment and Implications for Policy**

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## **ABSTRACT**

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Thai marriage migrant women in Korea are often perceived as less-educated, passive, financially dependent, and a helpless victim of domestic violence from a third-world country who migrated to Korea through matchmaking agencies to marry a much older Korean farmer or factory worker to provide her labor to his family. Despite the various efforts of the government to raise awareness of marriage migrants and multicultural families, the public prejudice against Thai marriage migrant women has not yet changed much. However, our interviews and interactions with Thai marriage migrant women gave us a different view of the matter. That is to say, many of them had a decent career in Thailand prior to marriage, and most importantly, they are eager to become a full and independent member of society through economic empowerment. In addition, to get themselves prepared for job market, they are proactively utilizing government-sponsored programs and other available resources. Although they do experience certain hardship as a foreigner, especially with regard to child-rearing, language and discrimination, it did not put a stop to their endeavor for self-empowerment.

**Keywords:** Thai marriage migrant women in Korea, economic empowerment, vocational education, support for multicultural families