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SKILLED MIGRANTS FROM EAST ASIA IN GERMANY: TRENDS, PATTERNS, AND IMPLICATIONS

JAOK KWON

Society

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Author: Jaok Kwon

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Editorial Board:

Prof. Dr. Anja Senz & Dr. Jaok Kwon-Hein
Heidelberg University, Institute of Chinese Studies
Voßstr. 2, 69115 Heidelberg

ISSN: 2627-9649

E-mail: ostasien-aktuell@zo.uni-heidelberg.de

Download Link: <https://ostasien-aktuell.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/oawp>

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Zusammenfassung

Dieses Papier verfolgt zwei Ziele. Erstens analysiert es die Trends und Muster der Migration aus Ostasien nach Deutschland seit den frühen 2000er Jahren auf Grundlage von Statistiken der Bundesregierung. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt begann in Deutschland eine Diskussion um die Öffnung des Arbeitsmarktes für Drittstaatsangehörige. Der vorliegende Artikel befasst sich mit drei wesentlichen Aspekten ostasiatischer Migration nach Deutschland: die Zunahme der internationalen Studierendenmigration, die Feminisierung der Migration (insbesondere bei der Erwerbsquote) und die Zunahme junger Migranten. Zweitens soll in diesem Papier die zukünftige Forschungsagenda zu qualifizierter Migration aus Ostasien nach Deutschland diskutiert und der aktuelle Forschungsstand dargelegt werden.

Abstract

This paper has two aims. First, it analyses the trends as well as the patterns of the mobility of migrants from East Asia to Germany since the early 2000s, based upon the statistics from the General Federal Government. This is when the discussion concerning the openness of the labour market for third-country nationals began to be activated in Germany. This paper addresses three major trends and patterns of East Asian migrants in Germany – the increase in international student migration, the feminization of migration (in particular, in the labour force participation rate), and the increase of young migrants. Second, this paper aims to discuss the future research agenda concerning skilled migration from East Asia in Germany by examining the previous research on skilled migrants.

Über den Autor

Jaok Kwon ist Assistentin am Zentrum für Ostasienwissenschaften der Universität Heidelberg. Promoviert wurde sie an der Hitotsubashi-Universität in Japan, wo sie sodann als Postdoktorandin tätig war. Nach einer weiteren Station an der Tohoku-Universität war sie zuletzt als wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin am Max-Weber-Institut für Soziologie der Universität Heidelberg beschäftigt. Ihre Forschungsinteressen umfassen die Bereiche Entwicklungssoziologie, Arbeit und Gender in Ostasien, wirtschaftliche Eliten in Ostasien und transnationale Arbeitsmigration.

E-Mail: jaok.kwon@zo.uni-heidelberg.de

About the author

Jaok Kwon is an Assistant Professor in the Centre for East Asian Studies at Heidelberg University, Germany. She previously worked as a research fellow at the Max Weber Institute for Sociology at Heidelberg University, and carried out earlier postdoctoral research at Tohoku University and Hitotsubashi University in Japan, after receiving a PhD (sociology) from the Hitotsubashi University of Tokyo, in Japan. Her research interests include the sociology of development, labour and gender in East Asia, economic elites in East Asia, and transnational labour migration.

E-mail: jaok.kwon@zo.uni-heidelberg.de

Skilled Migrants from East Asia in Germany: Trends, Patterns, and Implications

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1. Introduction

Skilled migrants¹ are commonly defined as “possessing a tertiary level education or its equivalent in experience” (Salt, 1997: 5). Even though the definition of skilled migration varies along with the national migration policy, as well as the labour market demand of each receiving country, skilled workers are generally defined as professionals with a university degree. Skilled migrants “represent an increasingly large component of global migration streams” (Iredale, 2001: 8). According to the UN International Migration Report in 2013, around 30 per cent of all migrants in the OECD member countries were highly educated (UN, 2013). Moreover, the joint report by the OECD, World Bank and ILO (2015) indicates that the proportion of skilled migrants when compared to all other migrant groups has been continually increasing.

Many governments across advanced industrial economies have attempted to attract the ‘best and brightest’ immigrants from around the world (Cerna, 2009). In particular, the EU has confronted common urgent issues such as an ageing population, a decreasing working population, a shrinking welfare system, and growing global competition, especially in the field of knowledge-based economy. As a result, the EU adopted the Lisbon Strategy in 2000, in order to make the EU the “most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world” (European Commission, 2008). Attracting more skilled workers was positioned as one of the major agendas of the Lisbon Strategy. Furthermore, this idea has developed into the Europe 2020 Strategy, which was adopted in 2010. The Europe 2020 Strategy aims to share the common agendas of the EU in general and to establish greater collaboration among EU member states for the active integration of highly skilled workers in the labour market. In this connection, the EU adopted the Directive on the Blue Card on 25 May 2009² (Council, 2009). Furthermore, the EU member states integrated the Directive on the Blue Card into their national legislation until June 2011, and most of the EU states began to issue Blue Cards from 2012. The EU Blue Card allows high-skilled third-country nationals with a job offer to work and live in an EU country, with the possibility of renewal (Giesing and Laurentsyeva, 2017).

These initiatives on the EU level have three implications in the EU’s immigration policies. First, it is significant in the sense that the EU member states attempted to create a common migration policy on

¹ In this paper, I use the term ‘skilled migrants’ and ‘high skilled migrants’ interchangeably. This definition of (high) skilled migrants varies along with the extent of the educational level, as well as one’s working experiences. For further discussion on the definition of (high) skilled workers, see Koser and Salt (1997), Ho (2009), and Cerna (2010).

² Ireland, the United Kingdom, and Denmark are the countries which did not introduce the Blue Card Directive.

skilled migrants. Even though there have been some achievements concerning the agendas of asylum and the free movement of citizens within the EU, many EU member states have been reluctant in transferring the discussion of labour migration to the supranational level, because of the fear of losing sovereignty in migration matters (van Riemsdijk, 2012). In this sense, regional co-operation in the global race for top foreign talent among EU member states could be thought to represent a common attempt to focus on the recruitment of high-skilled migrants (not mid-, or low-skilled foreign migrants). Cerna and Chou (2014) interpret this regional co-operation as a shift of the migration debate towards “securing an area without internal borders”. This means that the EU attempts to make common efforts in attracting high-skilled migrants and to admit the free movement of this labour force within the EU member states.³ At the same time, the EU member states attempt to uphold the security of the EU territory by limiting the flows of the labour force to several targeted skilled migrants from third-country nationals. Second, the common migration policy of the EU means that the EU state members began to realize the urgent necessities to integrate skilled migrants to their labour market. The importance of the knowledge-based economy has significantly increased, and knowledge as well as skills are considered to be transferable and conveyable in a knowledge-based society (in particular, skills in information technology). Since the USA, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom all actively targeted highly-skilled migrant programmes in the earlier stage (Cerna, 2011; Shachar, 2006), the EU member states share the concern that the EU has lagged behind in the “growing global hunt for talent” (Transatlantic Council on Migration, 2010: 25). In this context, the common initiatives on the EU level could be interpreted as a tool to “keep up with Europe’s main economic competitors”, as well as “constructing the Europe of knowledge” (Cerna and Chou, 2014). Finally, the common endeavours of the EU member states to attract skilled workers into the labour market have a significant impact, in the sense that they “attempt to establish common admission standards for non-EU labour migrants” (van Riemsdijk, 2012). Since the EU member states have long been hesitant to receive non-EU workers, citing the establishment of the ideological and normative ‘belonging’ among EU member states, they have strictly regulated the admission of international labour migrants from third countries (Joppke, 2005; Favell et al., 2006; Raghuram, 2008a). The openness of the labour market to non-EU nationals, however, means for the changing future landscape of the structure of the immigration population in the EU.

Germany also joined as one of the host countries for highly skilled migrants since 2000, with its introduction of the Green Card program. Even though Green Card program failed in attracting skilled

³ There are controversies whether the EU member states are ready for unified highly skilled migrant policies (Cerna, 2009; Cerna, 2013).

workers due to its restrictive provisions (e.g. family reunion, work permit for spouses, period of stay, etc.), it has a symbolic meaning in the migration policy in Germany. In particular, it was the first official working permit for international immigrants since the recruitment of migrants had been ceased because of the 1973 oil crisis and the subsequent economic downturn (Kolb, 2003). Furthermore, Germany implemented an Immigration Act in 2005 in order to systematize the acceptance scheme of skilled workers. In particular, along with the integration of the Directive on the EU Blue Card into the national legislation among EU member states, Germany also joined the EU Blue Card scheme in 2012. The EU Blue Card is a new scheme which replaces the failed Green Card program. So far, Germany has ranked as the highest receiving country in the EU Blue Card scheme. For instance, 84.5% of the EU Blue Cards were issued in Germany in 2012 among the entirety of EU member countries. This share has increased to 84.6% in 2018 (Eurostat)⁴.

It is also noteworthy that a majority of the EU Blue Card holders are from Asia. In 2015, 40% of the EU Blue Card holders were from Asia (21.1% from India, 8.8% from China, 1.5% from Japan, and 1.2% from South Korea (hereafter, Korea)). This means that the proportion of Asian migrants in the labour market for high skilled workers is expected to rapidly increase in Germany in the near future, due to the openness of the labour market to these third-country nationals. In fact, the statistics indicate that the Asian migrants have already become dominant in the German labour market. For instance, the Chinese proportion composes the third largest group under the visa category for “highly-qualified” (§19 AufenthG für Hochqualifizierte)⁵, followed by India and Japan (Heß, 2009: 24). Under the category for “qualified” workers (§18 AufenthG für Qualifizierte), the Chinese come in the first position with 13%, followed by India (10.9%), Japan (7.5%) and Korea (2.5%) (Heß, 2012: 28). Considering that these countries have been known for their high rate of investment in education, their high rate of university degree holders, and their high investment in knowledge-based economy sectors, such as communication, technology and information, all of which the German labour market is earnestly looking for, it is expected that the number of highly skilled migrants from East Asia will rapidly increase in Europe in the near future.

In this respect, this paper has two aims. First, it analyses the trends as well as the patterns of the mobility of migrants from East Asia to Germany since the early 2000s, based upon the statistics from

⁴ http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr_resbc1&lang=en

⁵ The visa category of “Highly-qualified” (§19 AufenthG für Hochqualifizierte) differs from the EU Blue Card scheme (§19a Blaue Karte EU), since the visa “High-qualified” is distributed for highly-qualified researchers working in an academic environment.

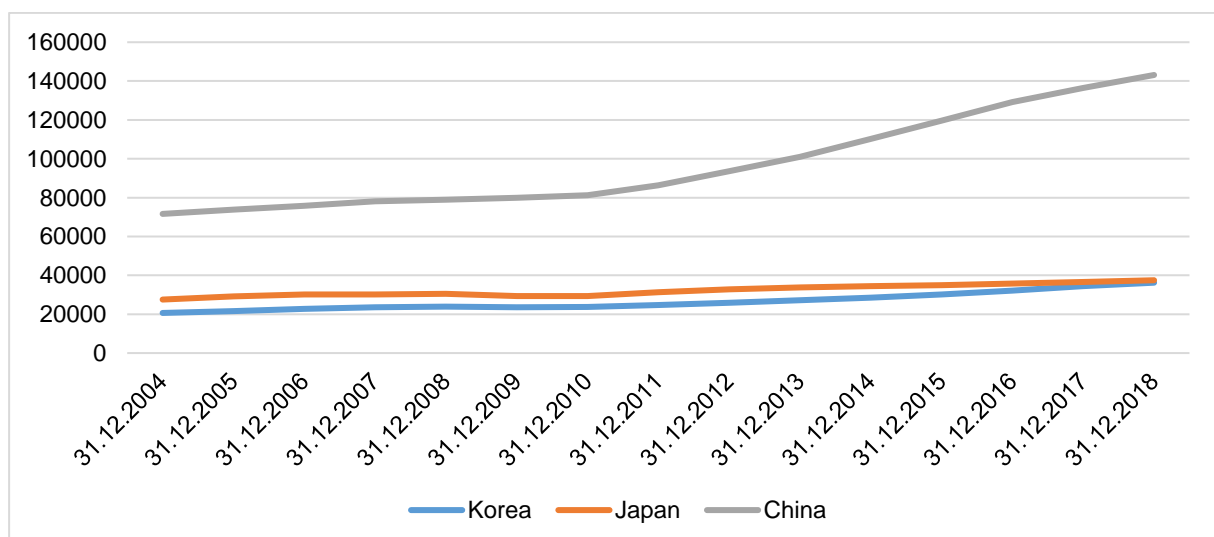
the General Federal Government⁶. This is when the discussion concerning the openness of the labour market for third-country nationals began to be activated in Germany. This paper addresses three major trends and patterns of East Asian migrants in Germany – the increase in international student migration, the feminization of migration (in particular, in the labour force participation rate), and the increase in the number of young migrants. Second, this paper aims to discuss the future research agendas concerning skilled migration from East Asia in Germany by examining the previous research on skilled migrants. In particular, it will question the conventional neoclassical theoretical approach to analysing the migration of skilled workers.

2. Transformation of Skilled Migration Policy and its Impact on Skilled Workers from East Asia

2.1 Increase of Student Migrants

Figure 1 indicates that the proportion of migrants from East Asia in Germany has rapidly increased. In particular, the increased rates of migrants from China and Korea between 2004 and 2018 are significant, being recorded at 99.8% and 75.4% respectively. Even through the share of Japanese migrants has positively developed, with an increase rate of 36.1% during this period, the development is not so significant when compared with China and Korea.

Figure 1: Migrants from East Asia to Germany (2004-2018)

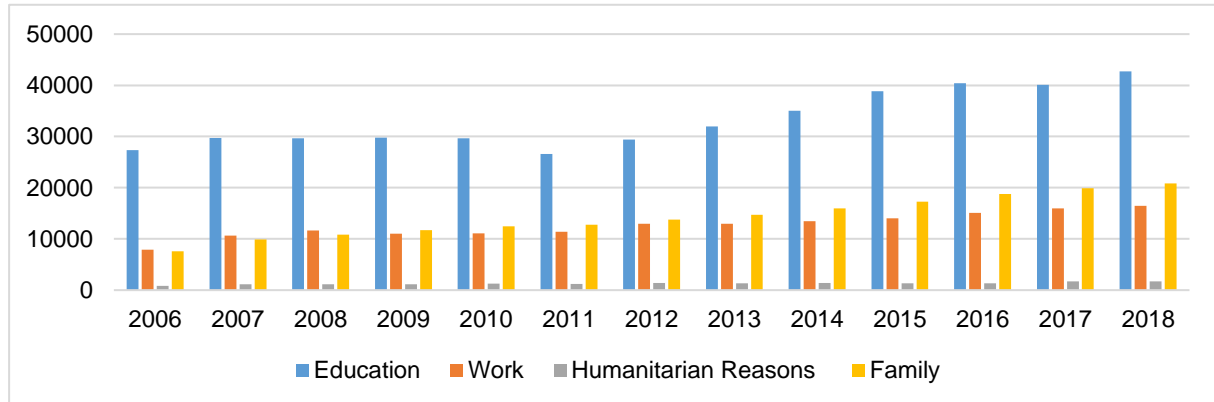


Source: Statistisches Bundesamt (2004-2018)

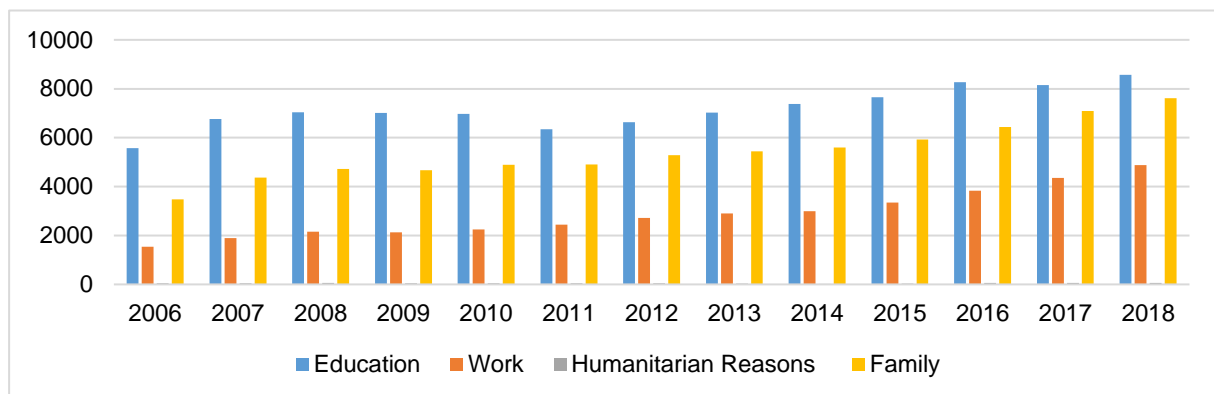
⁶ For the analysis of the statistics, this research mainly refers to the “Bevölkerung und Erwerbstätigkeit (Population and Employment)” from the Statistisches Bundesamt (German Federal Statistical Office) between 2004 and 2018.

Out of the migrant populations from East Asia, the share of student migrants has dramatically increased. In particular, the statistics demonstrate that Germany has attracted students from China and Korea in East Asian regions (Figure 2 & Figure 3). The increase rates of student migrants from China and Korea are 53.9% and 56.5% respectively during the investigated period of 2006-2018. This shows a sharp contrast with the Japanese case. This result also matches with the general tendency of international student mobility on the global level. Even though the entirety of students from China and Korea is on a downward trend overall, these two countries still account for the majority of international students from Asia worldwide (Sugimura, 2015). Japan has witnessed a drastic decline of students who are willing to study abroad, despite the active encouragement from the Japanese government to internationalize high education (ibid). Therefore, it is noteworthy that the rate of the students studying in Germany has increased noticeably. Even though Figure 4 indicates that the increase rate of students from Japan is not so obvious, being recorded at 15.1% during the investigated period, this result nevertheless has significance when considering that the number of Japanese students in the USA dropped by 53% between 2004 and 2011.

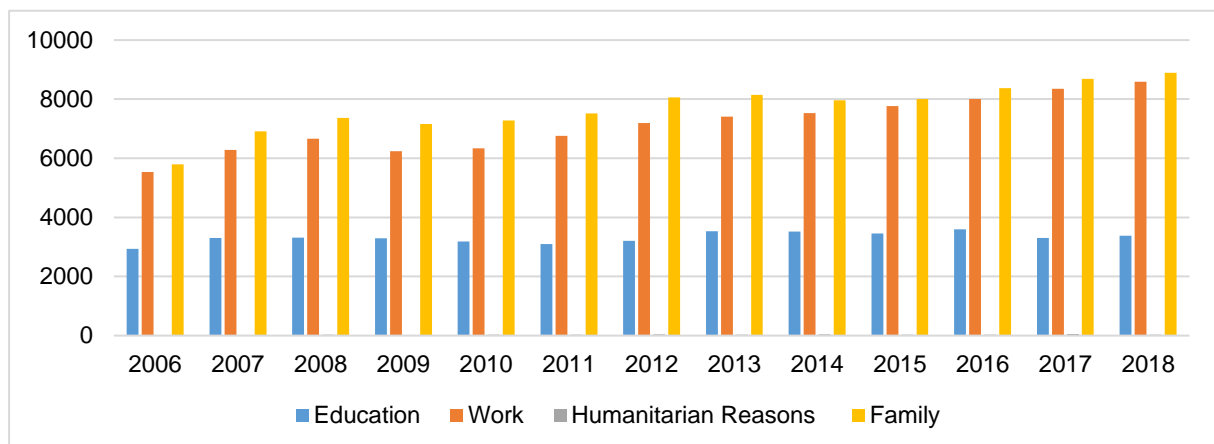
Figure 2: Chinese Migrants divided by Purpose of Stay in Germany (2006-2018)



Source: Statistisches Bundesamt (2006-2018)

Figure 3: Korean Migrants divided by Purpose of Stay in Germany (2006-2018)

Source: Statistisches Bundesamt (2006-2018)

Figure 4: Japanese Migrants divided by Purpose of Stay in Germany (2006-2018)

Source: Statistisches Bundesamt (2006-2018)

The increase of student numbers from East Asia in Germany is meaningful, since English-speaking countries have been so far the main destination for them (Abelmann et al., 2009; Huang et al., 2008; Park, 2009; Park, 2011). This trend also suggests that potentiality has grown for Germany to attract these skilled human resources to the labour market, since the international mobility of students can be partially interpreted as the migration of future labour force (ILO, OECD, World Bank Group, 2015). Meanwhile, it is noteworthy that the share of students from third countries who remained in the EU after the completion of the study is relatively low. For instance, from 16% to 30% of the East Asian student body remained in the EU member states between 2015 and 2016 (OECD, 2016). Meanwhile, there are also impediments that hinder the settlement of the students after the completion of their

degree. Moskal (2017) clarifies the “unevenness of career opportunities, barriers to settlement and various ‘assemblages of power’ that shape students’ life trajectories” after studying in the UK.

Therefore, further research should pay more attention to the background of decision-making of the future labour force in the process of labour market entry, the period of the stay in the EU, after-study lives, and the mobility patterns of high skilled migrants in and out of the EU. Even though research on student mobility has risen in migration/mobility studies in recent years, the interconnectedness between the student mobility and labour market entry has been under-researched. Only very few studies have concentrated on the interconnection of international student mobility and the labour market entry process (e.g. Collins et al., 2017).

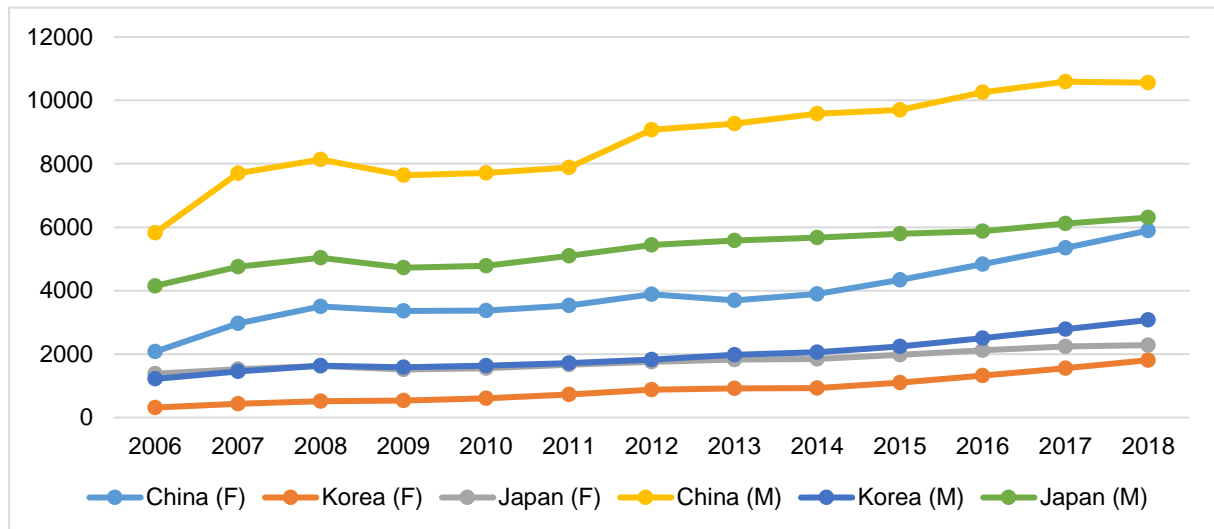
In particular, when discussing the student mobility from East Asia and labour market entry, the following research questions could be addressed: What is the political role of the government of the sending country for the high skilled workforce? What is the job market situation for skilled workers in the origin country? What are the employment practices and career patterns for skilled migrants in the sending country and in the receiving country? What are the hindrances for settlement among skilled migrants after studying? What are the decisive factors for the choice in determining on settlement, mobility, or return? How does the social welfare system in the receiving country impact on the decision of the graduates from East Asia?

2.2 Feminization of East Asian Migrants

The share of female migrants from East Asia in Germany is higher than males for China (53.1%), Korea (58.3%), and Japan (59.3%) in 2018. The increase rate for China in terms of feminization of migration is much higher, being recorded at 14.7% between 2004 and 2018, when compared with Korea (1.9%) and Japan (2.4%). Furthermore, the development of economic participation rates of the female immigration workers from China and Korea is significant: The increase rate for the Chinese female workers is 183.9%, for the Korean female workers 472%, and for Japan 65% between 2006 and 2018. The increase rates of economic participation by female immigrants from East Asia are much higher for each country than those of their male counterparts from East Asia: 81.2% for China, 152.4% for Korea, and 51.8% for Japan respectively across the same period (Figure 5). This increasing share of female skilled migrants from East Asia is also reflected in the statistics for the EU Blue Card holders in Germany: 34.8% of the Blue Card holders from China is female, and 21.1% for Korea, as well as 10.8% for Japan. This result matches with the global trend: Dumont et al. (2007) prove statistically that female migration

to OECD countries has expanded and particularly the female migration of highly skilled has been further increased in recent years.

Figure 5: East Asian Immigrants and the Number of Labour Market Participants by Gender (2006-2018)



Source: Statistisches Bundesamt (2006-2018)

The feminization of migration in the skilled labour market addresses two implications which should be considered in future research. First, the conventional perspective, which considers women as “tied migrants” (e.g. Ackers, 1998), should be reconsidered (Kofman, 2014; Raghuram, 2008b; Roos, 2013). It is based upon the fact that the previous research on the transnational migration of professionals has mainly concentrated on male inter-company transferees (Kofman, 2000; Koser and Salt, 1997). In particular, along with the globalization and emergence of transnational corporations since the 1980s, research on highly skilled migrants has extensively focused on inter-company transferees, who are mainly males (e.g. Beaverstock, 1996; 2002). As a result, female migrants were either invisible or positioned as ‘trailing spouses’ in previous research (e.g. Cangià, 2018).

Yeoh and Willis (2005) strongly maintain that more attention should be paid to the international mobility of female professionals and entrepreneurial women in contemporary research on ‘transnational elites’. Previous research, therefore, shed light on the fact that sets of gender and discriminatory norms against women in the origin country function as a strong motivation for the mobility as well as the migration of skilled women (e.g. Ono and Piper, 2004; Phizacklea, 1997; Willis and Yeoh, 2000b; Wright, 1995). Riaño and Baghdadi (2007), however, maintain that different sets of gender and discriminatory norms against women, not only in the origin country but also in the receiving country, should be further researched. Among the limited existent research, most studies

discuss the negative impacts on the careers of the female skilled migrants: increasing domestic responsibility (Aure, 2013; Ho, 2006; Lee Cooke, 2007; Purkayastha, 2005), language barriers (Aure, 2013), and the fewer opportunities in access to labour market (Kofman, 2000). Meares (2010) categorises the previous research by investigating the difficulties that female professionals experience in the foreign labour market and the consequences into four groups – “de-skilling”, “feminization”, “re-domestication” and “compromised careers”.

In this connection, Kofman (2000; 2014) argues that the invisibility of skilled female migrants in the studies of skilled migration in Europe arises from the fact that the immigration policy for skilled migration concentrates on particular fields, such as communication, information, engineering, and technology, which have been traditionally the sphere for males, while skilled women concentrated in the education, health, and social service sectors. Furthermore, it should also be noted that the feminist literature has mainly shed light on semi- or low-skilled female migrants. In particular, research on Asian migrant women has mainly depicted these women as major victims of the global labour divisions as well as subordinate objects under patriarchy (Raghuram and Kofman, 2004). The previous research on Asian migrant women addresses two future research agendas. First, research on the high skilled Asian women, in particular in Europe, represents a lacuna which should be filled in the future. The second concerns the targeted male-dominant ICT job demands in the EU, and its interconnectedness to female highly skilled workers in the labour market (e.g. Grigoleit-Richter, 2017).

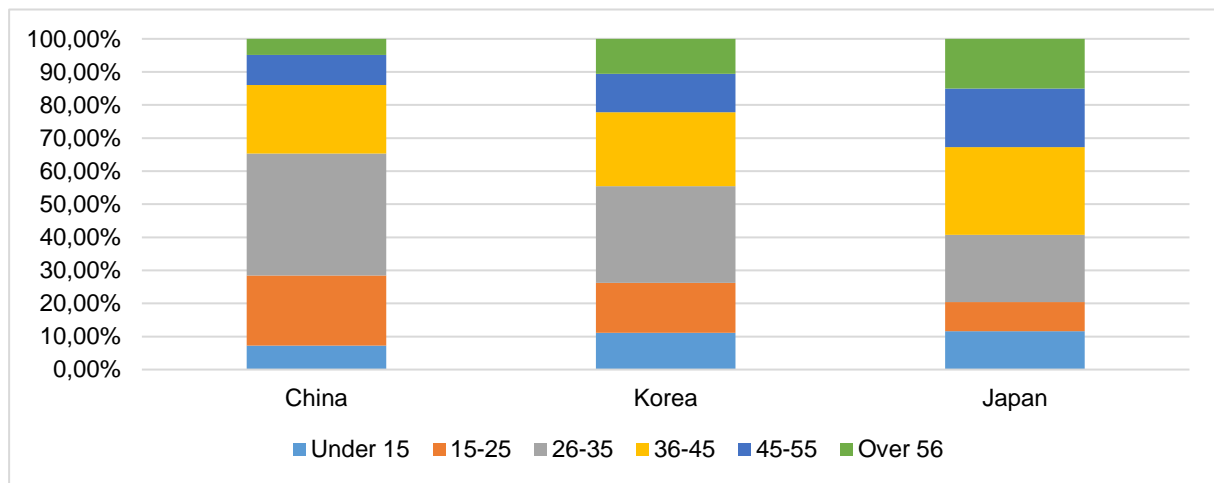
With regard to the first point, the future research should attempt to pay more attention on the intersectionality of the skilled migrant workers in general. Skilled migrants are human capital. At the same time, there exists heterogeneity among individuals such as nationality, age, gender, race/ethnicity. The mobility of skilled migrants has usually been explained through the lens of neoclassical economic theory. Within this theoretical framework, high-skilled individuals are considered to be economic actors who try to maximize their expected income and heighten the rate of return on the investment in education and training through movement across country borders (Iredale, 2001; van Riemsdijk and Wang, 2016). The disdain of individual differences among highly skilled migrants emerges from the general assumption of the neoclassical theory that the mobility of highly skilled migrants is free, individual, and fluid, without any cultural and institutional constraints in migratory decision-making. Furthermore, highly skilled migrants have often been considered as if they are easily accepted and adapted into the host society in the settlement process as a homogeneously privileged social group (van Riemsdijk and Wang, 2016). However, there has been recent studies which explore how different genders, ages, nationalities, race/ethnicity, and sexualities are deeply embedded in the decision-making process for migration as well as in the settlement process for highly

skilled migrants (e.g. Aure, 2013; Koser and Salt, 1997; Grigoleit-Richter, 2017; Iredale, 2001; 2005; Lan, 2011; Roohi, 2017). Intersectionality of the high skilled individuals is hence not only a matter of female professionals, but also relevant for male migrants. Aure (2013: 276) argues that “gendered studies of male migrants are even rarer, as are studies highlighting gender and the labour market mechanism behind de-skilling”. Since global mobility means not only literally cross-border mobility, but also cross-ethnic, cross-racial and cross-class encounters with different social groups and diverse sociocultural settings, these points of view should be taken into account in the theorization of these skilled migrants.

Based upon this future research agenda, the following questions could be further investigated: Which social groups of highly skilled migrants are willing to move to Germany? Are there any characteristics in terms of marital status, gender, and age group? If so, what is the interconnectedness between the specific social group and the decision-making process? Why did they decide to move not to any other conventionally preferable English-speaking countries as a destination, but to Germany? How could this mobility be interpreted in relation to intersectionality, such as gender, race/ethnicity, class, age, and sexuality, etc.? What is the socioeconomic and cultural meaning of the change of mobility patterns among highly skilled migrants from East Asia? How have they forged their own images on “Germany” as well as “Europe” as a new space for their lives? How do they attempt to change their lives through transnational mobility? The understanding of the decision-making process at the individual level will provide many critical clues in understanding the challenges that the highly skilled migrants from East Asia face and their negotiations as well as strategies in the settlement process.

2.3 Increase of Youth Migrants & Young Families

The third trend of the migration from East Asia to Germany is the increase of youth migration. This tendency is more significant for China as well as for Korea, as Figure 6 indicates. For instance, the proportion of migrants from China aged between 15 and 35 years old is 58.1%, 44.3% for Korea, and 29.1% for Japan. These results are also connected with the increasing number of international students from China as well as from Korea. Furthermore, the proportion of migrants aged between 36 and 45 years old is also relatively dominant: 20.7% for China, 22.4% for Korea and 26.6% for Japan. This trend draws a clear contrast with the current migrants of ageing populations from East Asia to Southeast Asian countries in the caring service (e.g. Toyota, 2012).

Figure 6: The Age Composition of Immigrants from East Asia in Germany (2018)

Source: Statistisches Bundesamt

The increase of youth migrants as well as young families gives rise to the following future research agendas. First, the decision-making process of skilled migrants should be analysed not at the individual level, but also at the household level. As mentioned earlier, the mobility of high skilled migrants has been mainly explained from a neoclassical perspective, in which the mobility of individuals is considered to be free, fluid, and rational, being based upon the idea of the maximization of economic returns. However, the increase of youth migrants who are supposed to plan the establishment of family, as well as migrants from young families, demonstrates that research on skilled migrants should consider the collective decision-making process of the family members as well as the household. The new economics of migration theory (e.g. Massey et al., 1993; Stark and Bloom, 1985) has pointed out the importance of the involvement of the household in the decision-making process for migration. However, this theory has mainly been adopted for low-skilled migrants, who migrate from the Global South to Global North and the household strategies (Willis and Yeoh, 2000a). In recent years, there are several studies which demonstrate the importance of taking the household of the skilled migrants into account: childcare strategy (Salaff and Greve, 2004), children's education (Huang and Yeoh, 2005), spouses' careers (Aure, 2013), social integration of the family members to the receiving society (Yeoh and Khoo, 1998), and transnational household strategies of skilled migrants (Yeoh and Willis, 2000a).

With regard to the first point, not only the productive but also the reproductive sphere should be included in the future analysis of highly skilled migrants. Since high skilled migration has been positioned as part of the economic globalization process, skilled migration has been closely associated with the productive sphere (Willis and Yeoh, 2000b). As a result, the reproductive sphere has been largely overlooked. Some researchers have shed light on the dependents of highly-skilled migrants,

but they usually focus on the reproductive roles of “trailing spouses” in the invisible reproductive spheres as either supporters or dependents (e.g. Ackers, 1998; Weyland, 1997). Considering that the high-skilled workers are not only involved with reproductive activities but are also a part of family members, the neoclassical approach, which primarily focuses on the productive labour, should broaden its scope in order to understand the reproductive spheres of professional workers (Willis and Yeoh, 2000b). By this I mean the theorization of skilled migration, which includes “in the workplace” as well as “going beyond the workplace” (Kofman and Raghuram, 2005).

Thirdly, “interactions between place and individuals at the local scale” (van Riemsdijk and Wang, 2017: 5) should be taken into account in the theorization of highly skilled migration. Even though there is a large accumulation of research on the interconnectedness of the global city and transnational elites (e.g. Beaverstock, 2002; 2005; Carroll, 2007; Nagel, 2005) in urban sociology, little attention has hitherto been paid to the embeddedness of household members in the local society.

How has the household involved itself in the decision-making process for migration? What has motivated the high-skilled workers to migrate to Germany in regard to family matters? What are the “household strategies” (Chant and Radcliffe, 1992), in particular for East Asian households in migration to the EU (including Germany)? How do the emerging discourses on the “work-life balance” in East Asia in recent years connect to the decision-making of migrant individuals and families? What is the socioeconomic significance of changes in the interpretation of “work”, “life”, and “family” for highly skilled workers in a neoliberal economy? Furthermore, since previous research has highlighted the productive sphere within a company, little attention has been paid to the diverse social actors who are involved in the decision-making process, such as immigration agencies, governmental policies of the sending as well as receiving countries, and social networks of the highly-skilled migrants in the sending country. How do the high-skilled workers interconnect with the diverse social actors? How have the state and immigration agencies produced discourses on the transnational mobility, especially for highly skilled professionals in East Asia? How have the national as well as international policies regulated the spatial movement of highly skilled migrants from Asia to Europe? What kinds of social networks do the professionals from East Asia have, and what roles do these networks play in the decision-making process as well as in sharing information concerning mobility?

3. Conclusions

This paper has had two aims. First, by using the statistics from the General Federal Government, it analysed the trends and patterns of the migration from East Asia – China, Korea, and Japan. It clarifies

the three main characteristics of the East Asian migrants to Germany: the increase of student migration, the feminization of migration, and the increasing of young migrants. Based upon the statistical analysis of migration from East Asia, this paper demonstrated two future research agendas in the theorization of East Asian migrants in Germany. The first theoretical implication is the further clarification of the interconnectedness between student mobility and skilled labour market entry. The second theoretical implication is the reconsideration of the conventional theoretical perspective – the neoclassical approach – in understanding the mobility/ migration of highly skilled migrants. Through this reframing of the theoretical approach, we can broaden our understanding of the scope, multiple dimensions, and complexity of international skilled migration. On the empirical level, research into the transnational mobility of skilled migrants has mainly focused from Asia to English-speaking countries, in particular to the USA. The research on the transnational mobility of Asian skilled migrants to Europe will broaden our understanding of the multiple reasons behind skilled migration by filling the research lacuna in previous migration studies. As the first step for inquiring into the role played by skilled migrants from East Asia in Europe, the research project “Global Korea: Transnational Mobility of People, Goods, and Ideas” (Academy of Korean Studies, 2019-2022) will provide a fundamental basis for theoretical and empirical development.

4. References

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