

CROSS-BORDER MARRIAGE MIGRATION OF VIETNAMESE WOMEN TO CHINA

by

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Abstract

This study analyzes the cross-border marriage migration of Vietnamese women to China. It is based on sixty-four in-depth interviews with Chinese-Vietnamese couples living in Guangxi province, near the border between China and Vietnam. Most of these Vietnamese women are “invisible,” or undocumented, in China because they do not have legal resident status. The women came from rural areas in northern Vietnam and generally have relatively lower levels of education. The primary reason the Vietnamese women chose to marry Chinese men rather than Vietnamese men was to have a better life in China; the women stated that living in China was better because of its stronger economic conditions, higher standard of living, and the higher quality of housing for families. Many of the Vietnamese women stated that by marrying Chinese men, they could also support their family in Vietnam. The Chinese men who marry Vietnamese women tend to be at the lower end of the social-economic spectrum with limited education. These men often have difficulties finding Chinese wives due to their low economic status and the overall shortage of local Chinese women. Both the Vietnamese women and Chinese men use different types of informal social networks to find their potential spouses. The cultural (particularly linguistic) similarities and historical connections between the border regions of China and Vietnam facilitate cross-border marriages and migration, which are likely to continue in the future.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

This chapter starts with a brief introduction to how I became interested in the issue of cross-border marriage migration of women from Vietnam to China, and why I selected this topic for my thesis. A brief discussion on existing research on cross-border marriage migration follows, as does explanation of the research questions and methodology for the present study. Next, I will discuss the study's relevance including its elucidation of the motivations behind this phenomenon, and roles that social networks play in this process. Finally, the chapter concludes with a description of the thesis's structure.

The topic of cross-border marriage migration of Vietnamese women to China first interested me when I saw a marriage agency advertisement (Figure 1.1) for Vietnamese brides. It makes the following claims that the company will: 1) “provide a virgin bride”, 2) “expedite marriage in three months”, 3) “not charge extra money”, and 4) further guarantee that “if the bride runs away within the first year, they will compensate with a new one”. According to the media, advertisements like this were very common in Taiwan between 1980 and 2000 (Chen 2010). Matchmaking agencies that have advertisements like this one require an upfront payment of TWD\$200,000 (around US\$7,000-10,000) for services prior to the beginning of the search (Wang and Chang 2002; Hugo and Nguyen 2007). These agencies have made Vietnamese brides popular in East Asia and Southeast Asia (Wang and Chang 2002; Tsai 2001; Belanger and Linh 2011). These agencies' advertisements portray Vietnamese women as caring, hardworking, and beautiful. Of course, the ultimate message is that they are commodities.



Figure 1.1 An Advertisement for Vietnamese Brides

Image Source: <http://www.wtovisa.com/vietnamwife.html>

Previous Research devoted to the cross-border marriage migration of Vietnamese women is focused mostly on migration to Taiwan (Wang and Chang 2002; Nguyen and Tran 2010; Belanger and Lihn 2011). Wang and Chang (2002), for example, focused on the commodification of marriage migration and how matchmaking markets continue to develop. However, the situation in mainland China is different. Historically, a shared border has promoted the cross-border marriage migration of Vietnamese women to China. A shared border also helps people to interact (Jin 1995). Currently motivation for cross-border marriage migration between China and Vietnam has more to do with economy. This new motivation also has been influenced by improved communication between the countries. Following the economic reforms initiated in mainland China after 1978, China began to generate significant and steady growth in investment, consumption, and standards of living. China is the world's fastest-growing major economy, as well as the largest exporter and second largest importer of goods in

the world (Naughton 2006). China's improved economy has provided opportunities not only for men from China to purchase foreign brides, but has also led to an increase of Vietnamese women who seek to marry a Chinese man and move to China (Jin 1995; Chen 2010).

Stories of Vietnamese women marrying Chinese men are easily found in the media but I had a firsthand opportunity to discuss this phenomenon with my friends and relatives in China. I learned more about the costs of marrying Vietnamese women and how affordable it was for men. These discussions provided information that is similar to what is often covered in the media which is that some Chinese men cannot find Chinese women to marry so they turn to Vietnamese women. If they decide to marry, they will then negotiate an introduction fee. In Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Chinese men can find a Vietnamese woman for a total payment of CNY3, 000 (less than US\$500).

This cost is similar to purchasing women from other countries, though not directly comparable with Taiwan. In the Taiwanese cases, fees that customers pay to marriage agencies cover services such as the filing of paperwork for a legal marriage. In China however, the filing of legal paperwork is not typically covered in the service fees. Even with the variation fees and the services involved, the overall price for purchasing a foreign bride is not considerably large.

Cross-border marriage migration of Vietnamese women to China is due to better economic conditions in China (Jin 1995; Chen 2010; Yuan 2013). Since the mid-1980s, through the "Doi Moi" reform period, the economy of Vietnam has experienced a rapid growth. Vietnam is now in a period of integration with the world's economy. Given neighboring China's rapid economic ascendancy, Vietnam treats its economic relationship with China with the utmost importance (Croucher 2004; Lucas 2005; Schaeffer 2009). Following the resolution of most territorial disputes, trade with China has been growing rapidly. In 2004, Vietnam imported more

products from China than from any other nation (Hsia 2007). In November 2004, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), of which Vietnam is a member, and China began to make plans to establish the world's largest free-trade area. These collaborations are a change in relationship between the two countries, because the Vietnam War limited trade.

Because of these trade connections, people from both countries saw changes in their daily lives. Some people are now making a living through cross-border trade. For example, the Chinese value redwood furniture and import it from Vietnam. The Vietnamese also export livestock, such as pigs, to China as they can earn more from selling these items in China rather than domestically. Many Chinese-made consumer electronic products are available on Vietnamese markets including televisions, cell phones, and air-conditioners. Many Vietnamese come to China to do business or to work, either legally or illegally. With the volume of transactions between China and Vietnam increasing in recent decades, cross-border commuting is on the rise, and it also has led to an increase in cross-border marriages between China and Vietnam.

Chinese media sources report an increase of Vietnamese women who marry Chinese men. They do not have legal documentation for their marriage because they marry in a traditional ceremony. They usually do not apply for a marriage license either, so these women are undocumented. This also means that the Chinese government does not recognize these marriages. Some questions are: Why do these women want to come to China and live with Chinese men even if they are not actually legally married? What is the role of social media in developing relationships? These women are undocumented, which leads us to consider what factors are motivating them. Questions that focus on motivations and social networking led me to explore the issue of cross-border marriage migration of Vietnamese women to China.

King (2012) argues that geographers, with their broad-ranging subject matter, epistemological pluralism, and varied research methods, are ideally placed to carry out migration research and advance migration theory. My research questions are relevant to geography also because they encompass the human, political, cultural, social, and economic aspects in geography. These questions above involve a study of processes that shape the human society between nations; for instance, I will discuss how two countries' governments treat the marriage migration phenomenon.

My study will mainly focus on the motivations of the cross-border marriages, as well as the role of social networks in the marriage process. In order to study this issue, I did fieldwork to better understand the motivations of this movement, how this movement fits into the migration theory, and what are the push and pull factors behind this international marriage migration. My fieldwork was carried out primarily in my home province of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in Southwest China, which borders Vietnam. I chose this region because of personal connections to the area as well as proximity to the border. My fieldwork was successful and the study findings will be examined in the later chapters following discussion of previous studies and the relevant literature, theoretical frameworks, and empirical data that have shaped my research.

1.1 Cross-border Marriage Migration

Cross-border marriage migration has a long past, it started with the history of European settlement in Australia where there have been periods when males drastically outnumbered females. As a result of the disproportionate number of men, programs were developed to bring in women who tended to be of the same origins as the men they emigrated to marry (Buijs 1993; Hugo 2005a). Marriage migration has changed significantly through different time periods and

had occurred throughout much of the world. In order to interrogate this phenomenon, many scholars study the increase and the widespread characteristics.

During the past decade, the intra-Asia flows of cross-border marriage migration have increased rapidly, particularly between Southeast Asia and East Asia (Wang and Chang 2002; Jones and Shen 2007; Yang and Lu 2010). One of the most striking features of the burgeoning migration in Asian countries is that in many important flows, women outnumber men (Hugo 2005c). International marriages are becoming increasingly common and this is certainly the case in Japan. Japan has attracted a large number of immigrant marriage partners from the Philippines, Korea, China, Taiwan, and other Southeast Asian countries since the 1980s (Sato 1989; Asis 2003; Nakamatus 2005). In 1970, only 2,108 female migrant partners arrived in Japan. This number increased rapidly in the 1980s, from 4,386 in 1980 to 20,026 in 1990. Since then, about 21,000 female migrant partners have come to Japan annually (Nakamatus 2002).

South Korea has also witnessed an extraordinary rise in the number of foreign brides entering the country. They are not just from China but are also from other countries in the region, including Vietnam, the Philippines, Thailand, Mongolia, Cambodia, and Russia (Ablemann 2005; Kim 2007; Belanger, Lee and Wang 2010, 15). By 2001, it was estimated that there were 200,000 ethnic Korean women from China living either legally or illegally in South Korea (Lee 2008, 119). By 2005, 3.6 percent of South Korean men in rural areas were reportedly married to foreign brides (Lee 2008, 109).

Similarly, Taiwan has experienced a net immigration of more than 160,000 female partners for Taiwanese men. The annual rate has increased in recent years, reaching 34,291 women in 2000 (Wang and Chang 2002). The increasing popularity and visibility of marriages between mainland Chinese women and Taiwanese men resulted in the number of brides

permitted to enter Taiwan legally becoming limited since 1996 (Huang 1997). The quota for Chinese migrant partners in Taiwan is 3,600 per year, a quarter of the total applicants. This number represents potential brides from Vietnam and elsewhere entering the country.

Countries, like mainland China, experienced an increase in the number of Chinese women marrying foreign residents and moving overseas after its open door policy. The increasing communication between nations facilitated marriages between mainland Chinese women and overseas Chinese men, as well as foreign men in Hong Kong (Special Economic Region of China after 1997), Taiwan, Japan, European countries, North American countries, and elsewhere (Danneker 2009; Ghosh 2006). The China Statistical Yearbook 2002 reported that after the mid-1980s, the number of Chinese international marriages has increased dramatically, with approximately 20,000 Chinese women marrying abroad each year until 1990. This number increased to 30,000 per year in the early 1990s 50,000 a year by 1998 and almost 80,000 in 2001.

Rapid increases in cross-border marriages in Asia resulted in increased studies of this widespread phenomenon. One organization, the Asian Regional Exchange for New Alternatives (ARENA), is aiming to further examine marriage migration in Asia (Gray 2003). Previous studies found that men from Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, and Hong Kong marry women from the Philippines, China, Vietnam, Thailand, and Indonesia (Piper and Roces 2003). Other cross-border marriage migration studies from East Asian countries (shown in Table 1.1) note that the most common destination for commodity brides are Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan while the number one source country for all marriage migrants combined is mainland China (Suzuki 2005; Wang and Chang 2003; Freeman 2005; Piper and Roces 2003).

Destinations	Primary home countries of marriage migrants
Hong Kong	Mainland China
Taiwan	Mainland China, Vietnam, Indonesia
Korea	Mainland China (Korean Chinese, Chinese)
Japan	Mainland China, Philippines, Korea

Table 1.1 Destinations and Origins of Marriage Migration in East Asia

Sources: Suzuki 2005; Wang & Chang 2003; Freeman 2005; Pipe and Roces 2003

Marriage migration often results in women moving from less developed to more developed regions or countries (Buijs 1996; Asis 2001; Belanger and Pendakis 2009; Nguyen and Hugo 2005; Tseng 2010). Due to the increasing cross-border marriage migration, a great deal of in-depth research has been carried out in the fields of demography, sociology, anthropology, and geography.

More recently there has been interest in the role of social and demographic changes in the regional marriage market. In these studies, scholars point out that “receiving countries of cross-border marriage migration in Asia share the characteristics of delayed or no marriages, extremely low fertility rates, high divorce rates, and skewed sex ratios at birth in some countries” (Lu and Yang 2010, 17). Anthropological studies focus on the communities of origin, and the commercialization of the marriage process (Moore 1988; Salt and Stein 1997; Wang and Chang 2002; Belanger and Khuat 2003; Lauser 2003). Some articles in sociology focus on women who enter a new environment and suffer from cultural shock and are often not treated properly (Wang 2007; Belanger and Linh 2011). Geographers focus on the geographical trends in marriage migration, which reflect a combination of social and economic forces. Social and economic forces that influence trends in marriage migration include: absolute differences in per capita income across regions, differential rates of economic growth, varying sex ratios among the

population of marriageable age, the different attitudes, expectations among men and women in the host and home societies with respect to marital roles (Stoler 1991; Constable 2003; Ghosh 2009; Belanger 2007; Belanger and Khuat 2002; Phan 2003). Some other studies provide a useful framework for explaining global structural factors in shaping women's migration in general (Zlotnik 2003). In addition, some research examines the specificity of marriage migration as compared to labor migration and trafficking in women (Zhao 2003). Recently, empirical research on marital and migratory motivations and processes has started to flourish.

The migration motivations of men and women have been studied from various angles, mostly related to labor migration. Existing research primarily focuses on the labor migration of men, while covering women to a lesser extent (Hugo 2005b). Studies focus on motivations of labor migration as well as the role that social networks play in the processes (Hugo and Nguyen 2005; Yang and Lu 2010). For example, in the case of domestic marriage migration in the city of Gaozhou, in the Guangdong province of China, labor migration may itself often result in marriage migration as young migrant workers find their spouses among their workmates or local men (Fan and Li 2002).

The rising interest concerning the rapid increase in international cross-border marriages are publically expressed in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States (Shih 1998; Li 2001). The flow of marriage migrants from Vietnam to Taiwan is currently attracting the most attention (Wang and Chang 2002, 11; Hong 2005). Studies however have given a better understanding of dynamics in the migrations. In some studies of migration between Vietnam and Taiwan, a major motivation for Vietnamese women to marry foreign men is that they may make contributions to their families and communities of origin (Gosh 2007; Wang and Chang 2002; Belanger, Lee and Khuat 2009). Some research focuses on the motivation in receiving countries, pointing out that

the number of marrying aged males outnumber the available females, which are commonly identified as the main pull factor. However, the cause of this imbalance is different across space and time (Gosh 2009; Yang and Lu 2010).

Overall, literature shows that the motivations of cross-border marriage migration and matchmaking practices vary from one country to another (both at the sending and receiving ends) and are constantly changing (Hugo 2005b). Marriage migration is shown to have considerable consequences for the make-up of the population in both origin and destination areas. The migration of people helps develop networks between the countries. Several scholars studying marriage brokerage or matchmaking industries point out that these industries are different than migrant labor recruitment agencies in the way it is organized and how the women are selected (Wang and Chang 2002; Hugo 2005c; Wang 2008). One study specifically analyzed social networks that are based on the context of a profit-oriented commodification of the cross-border marriage business between Vietnam and Taiwan (Wang and Chang 2002, 93). Labor and marriage markets are considered similar, but there are differences in motivation and the use of networking within the two migration types.

1.2 Research Questions and the Importance of the Study

While the flow of marriage migrants to Taiwan from Vietnam is currently attracting attention, there are an increase number of reports of an upswing in marriage migration into southern China (Nguyen and Tran 2010). China is dominantly a patriarchal society, where male children are preferred because of the government-instituted one child policy. Rates of female fetus abortion, infanticide, and abandonment have risen, resulting in a sex imbalance that raises concern for the future (Jin 1995; Johansson and Nygren 1991). The bordering provinces of

Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and Yunnan have among the highest sex ratio imbalances of men to women in China, resulting in a shortage of women (Banister 2004). This high ratio has resulted in the trafficking of women both within China and from neighboring countries where Chinese men purchase brides and sometimes even abduct females from other regions (Duong and others 2005). A high demand for wives is an intense problem on the Chinese side of the China-Vietnam border (Attane and Veron 2005). The increasing sex imbalance in China in addition to geographic proximity between the two countries has substantially increased the cross-border marriage migration of Vietnamese women to China (Nguyen and Tran 2010; Jones 2012).

The increased marriage migration coincides with an increase in cross-border business transactions between China and Vietnam. Recent changes in policies have opened the border to the extent that in some cases, Chinese-Vietnamese nationals do not need a passport to cross the border. Some people cross the border daily to engage in commercial trade, while others simply seek opportunities to live and work “on the other side.” While there is extensive daily trade between borders, often times Vietnamese women cross the border in hopes of moving to China to marry Chinese men legally or illegally. Interviews with local police in Guangxi revealed that in 1993 there were over 12,000 Vietnamese women in illegal marriages in China (Jin 1995).

To date, there has been only limited research in the field of Geography on the increasing marriage migration of Vietnamese women to China. Current studies have not covered the motivations of cross-border marriage migration near the borders. Some researchers analyzed the role of profit-oriented social networks in the cross-border marriage migration process, but the non-profit social networks have not been investigated fully (Wang and Chang 2002). Furthermore, previous studies have only focused partially on the role that social networks might be playing in this migration.

The purpose of this study is to explore the motivations behind the marriages between Vietnamese women and Chinese men, which involves Vietnamese women subsequently moving across a national boundary to live with their Chinese husband. I hope to provide a better understanding of the motivations of the Vietnamese women involved in cross-border marriage migration to China, as well as the possible roles that social networks play in the marriage process. In order to explore these questions, I focus on the geographic region near the border of China and Vietnam. Specifically, I selected Jingxi County in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in southwest China for a case study. The government does not keep a detailed registry of Vietnamese residents living within the Chinese border, which made statistical analysis difficult. I chose to use qualitative methods for this study and performed in-depth interviews in person with Chinese-Vietnamese couples. With the addition of photos I took from the area, I can better interpret the data I collected and make qualitative judgments about my study area. The opinions of local people can help me understand the cross-border marriage migration from other perspectives, which may be different from the couples. I also collected the quantitative data so that I can use some numbers to show some precise and expressions for the study.

I interviewed a total of sixty-four couples where couples comprised of the Vietnamese women who are married to Chinese men and residing in China. The Vietnamese women moved to China voluntarily and were introduced primarily through informal social connections. Although most of these Vietnamese women are undocumented, they still married a Chinese man in pursuit of a more satisfying life. While performing the on-site study, I visited the border area. I include pictures in the following chapters to show how the housing and border markets between China and Vietnam differ and to demonstrate the better living conditions in China compared with Vietnam.

During the course of the interviews, the Vietnamese women explained that they preferred being married to Chinese men, as opposed to Vietnamese men, because they believe that the economic conditions, such as housing condition and social facilities are more favorable in China. Most of the Vietnamese women either work on family farms or do business together with their husbands. They earn more money than their peers in Vietnam, the better economy, and quality of life is a major factor for the migration of women from Vietnam to China.

The motivation for Chinese men to marry Vietnamese women was largely due to their inability to marry a local woman. Often, the local Chinese women “marry up” thus moving to densely populated areas of China. One example can be seen with the women from Guangxi province marrying and moving to Guangdong province, which has a more developed economy (Huang and Fan 1998). During the interview, some Chinese men also mentioned that they prefer Vietnamese women because of their strong work ethics.

The shared border between the countries has also facilitated the marriage of Vietnamese women to Chinese men because of similar historical and cultural factors such as linguistic similarities. Most of the couples in these villages and towns belong to the same cultural and ethnic group; the Zhuang in Chinese, Nong in Vietnamese. These couples share at least one language or dialect so they can easily communicate with each other.

By focusing on the above issues, this study can contribute additional findings to the literature about cross-border marriage migration near the border areas. My contribution to the knowledge base is an increased understanding of marriage migration motivations between two developing countries. I also discuss a number of push and pull factors of marriage migration in both sending and receiving countries. My study is important because it looks at the region between China and Vietnam that has not been explored by previous studies. In this study,

Vietnamese women are mainly from the north part of Vietnam and marry Chinese men. An additional contribution is to explore how the informal social networks play a role to assist with this international marriage process that is different from the previous studies.

1.3 Organization of the Thesis

In Chapter Two, I will review the existing literature on cross-border marriage migration, focusing on the topics of motivations and the roles of social networks in the marriage process. Within the discussion, I separately focus on the motivation for women's marriage migration and the motivation of men to marry "foreign brides." For the role of the social networks, I focus on both kinship networks and commercial networks.

Chapter Three describes my research design, including my study site, research questions, investigative strategy, fieldwork, and data analysis. Additional information is provided about the fieldwork for this study. This information includes excerpts from the interviews and the questionnaire, which helps me to answer the research questions.

Chapters Four through Six consist of study findings. In Chapter Four, I provide an overview of the cross-border marriage migration between China and Vietnam and focus on the current trends, the undocumented nature of these marriages, and the demographic characteristics of these couples. This chapter provides background information about the Chinese-Vietnamese border areas including economic, political, historical, and geographic factors. Chapter Five focuses on the research questions about the motivations for Vietnamese women to marry Chinese men and for Chinese men to marry Vietnamese women. I present an analysis of the fieldwork data. Chapter Six examines the role of informal social networks during the marriage process, including the role of the matchmakers. Chapter Seven provides a brief conclusion to my thesis.

Chapter 2 - Motivations and the Roles of Social Networks in Cross-border Marriage Migration

The main focus of this chapter is to review the literature on motivations for marriage migration and the roles social networks in the marriage migration process. In the following sections, I will first start with an overview of marriage migration.

Previous research proposed three major motivations of marriage migration for Vietnamese women. The first is that women may enter into marriage migration to pursue a better chance of economic security and wellbeing (Morokvasic 1983; Walby 1990). Women marry up by either marrying a man from a better economic region in the same nation, or in many cases, marrying a foreign man. The second reason is that marriage can be used as a mean to support family (Palriwala 2005). Remittances can help the family back in the original sending place to cope with poverty. The last motivation for Vietnamese women to look for potential partners in other countries is due to the effects of the Vietnam War. The high rate of male mortality during the war, along with the male-dominated emigration, led to an imbalance between the number of men and women in Vietnam, which is known as the “marriage squeeze” (Hugo 1996, 109; Goodkind 1997). For example, there is a sex ratio imbalance in the Mekong region, which leads to many women marrying foreign men (Vietnam Census 2000; Sung 1998; Wang and Chang 2002).

Motivation as it pertains to men has also been analyzed by previous research. The first motivation concerns the “kind” of men who want to marry foreign women. Men that enter into marriage migration are typically suffering from some form of perceived disadvantages, such as low-income compared to the local area of his society, physical disability, or just old age (Brown and others 2009, 5). Due to the high competition in the local marriage market, men with

disadvantages often lose the battle and turn to the overseas marriage market (Wang and Chang 2002). The second motivation stems from the deficit of women resulting from the sex ratio imbalance, which is compounded by women choosing to marry out of the region (Wang and Chang 2002). Men with the Confucius beliefs illustrate an additional motivation: getting a traditional woman who obeys and respects their husband and takes care of his parents and children, which may be easier in a cross-border marriage than a local marriage.

2.1 Marriage Migration Motivations

Migration is selective (Lee 1966). Migration motivation has been explained in the literature in terms of push and pull factors. The push factors exist in the sending country and pull factors are mainly focused on the receiving country (Thomas 1973; Borjas 1990; Espiritu 1999). An understanding of modernity also makes up part of the pull factors that account for motivations of marriage migration, shown in media and other forms of the cultural globalization (Tseng 2010, 35). Due to the influences of media and globalization, marriage to foreigners is considered an easy and secure entry to wealth, stability, and mobility (Suzuki 2005, 128). For example, the high rate of marriage migration in the Mekong Delta region can be attributed to its multicultural characteristics and inter-ethnic marriage traditions among the locals (Wang and Chang 2002; Tseng 2010).

Motivation of cross-border marriage migration can also be interpreted through the ideas of supply and demand. As for the supply side, the increase in migrants through marriage channels in East Asia is largely due to the economic hardships of several sending countries, especially in their rural areas (Yang and Lu 2010; Tseng 2010; Belanger and Linh 2011). Marriage migration is the most efficient and socially acceptable movement for women's

migration (Liaw, Ochiai and Ishikawa 2010). When compared to other types of migration, marriage migration challenges scholars with its wide range of problems, issues, and discourses, given that migration is intertwined with practices of gender, race and class. Marriage migration also covers diverse discourses of citizenship. For example, it is easier to get legal documentation for women to achieve a measure of social and economic mobility (Fan and Huang 1998; Fan 2000; Fan and Li 2002). On the demand side, cross-border marriages are largely done by some of the Asian men, who suffer from a disadvantage in the domestic marriage market and want to utilize the global resources to improve their marriage ability (Constable 2005).

2.1.1 Motivations for Women to Marry

Marriage migration not only can be used for women to achieve upward geographic mobility and independence, but also to provide economic support in the form of remittances to family back home, to escape less than ideal marital opportunities, or to escape gender constraints at home (Suzuki 2005; Oxheld 2005; Freeman 2005; Constable 2005; Thai 2008). Women need to obey their parents; as an example they use marriage mobility in accordance with their family's wishes (Constable 2005; Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2004; Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003). Some women do consider love to be among the factors that motivate them to marry, however, some women use cross-border marriage migration to obtain a desire to improve the collective socio-economic situation of families and communities (Go and Postrado 1986; Gulati 1986; Rahman 2009; Schein 2010). Cross-border marriage migration is also a way of fulfilling personal ambitions for the women (William 2010).

Across the globe, women want a chance for a better life, which marrying into a richer family often provides. They can benefit from marriage migration to overcome economic and

social disadvantages (Glodava 1994; Cunneen and Stubbs 1997; Julag-ay 1997).. Most cases of marriage migration are of women who marry older, better educated, and higher income men (Fitzgerald 1999, 216). One example Tosakul (2005) pointed out is that poor Thai women need responsible Western husbands who can provide them with social security and the financial benefits (2010, 197). The economic benefits, particularly remittances, are a survival strategy for poor families (Bruce 2008). In addition, the imbalanced sex ratio is a push factor for women to marry foreign men.

2.1.1.1 For a Better Life

An international marriage can offer a way out of inequality for many women and their families through mobility (Sung 1990; Hugo 2005a; Mohanty 2011). This mobility is not just geographic, but also social and economic (Palriwala and Uberio 2005; De Haas 2007; Lutz and Erel 2012; Wang and Belanger 2008).

Motivation for marriage across distance is to maximize economic benefits (Hugo 2005c). Economic improvement is when women from a low-wages country moves to a country with expectations of more opportunities and choices for jobs with higher wages. A proportion of migration in low-income countries, particularly in rural areas, is comprised of movements by women for the purpose of marrying men from wealthier countries (Rosenzweig and Stark 1989; Lee, Bradby and Green 2002; Leung and Lee 2005). In conventional migration theory, economic gains are regarded as the primary motivation (Hsia 2007). Previous researchers attribute women's motives for marriage with foreigners in economically advanced countries solely to economic goals (Lu 2008; Wang and Chang 2002; Hugo and Nguyen 2005; Belanger and Linh 2011).

In Japan, there is an especially high support from families and the people in women's communities for marriage migration because the expectation is that they will get more money to send back home (Piper 2004). Another example is the increased movement of women from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union to marry residents of Western Europe and the United States. It is estimated that 80,000 Russian women entered the United States for such marriage migration from 1995 to 2005, while an even larger number entered Western Europe (Human development, 2006). The motivation of this type of marriage migration is mainly based on the economic gains.

The same economic perspective of international marriage migration has been applied to analyze the marriage migration of Vietnamese women to Taiwan (Do et al. 2003; Phan 2003; Belanger and Khuat 2005; Hugo and Nguyen 2005; Wang 2007; Lu 2005). Compared to other countries and regions, like Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, China is not a high-income country. However, China's economy is at a higher economic level than Vietnam (see Table 2.1). In addition, the openness of the border has translated into increasing opportunities for Vietnamese women in (change the proposition) China. Poverty and the desire for economic stability are the push factors, and they are also the main determinants of the Vietnamese women marrying Chinese men. There is a growing trend of cross-border marriage migration of Vietnamese women to China due to the faster economic growth in China. The dynamic Chinese economy and booming border region make marriage migration of Vietnamese women to China particularly attractive for those Vietnamese women who are facing poverty and unemployment (Duong, Belanger, and Hong 2005).

Country	International Monetary Fund (2010)		World Bank (2010)		CIA World Factbook (2010)	
	GDP per Capita	Rank out of 183 countries	GDP per Capita	Rank out of 190 countries	GDP per capita	Rank out of 189 countries
China	\$4,382	91	\$4,393	100	\$4,400	97
Vietnam	\$1,174	141	\$1,191	147	\$1,200	145

Table 2.1 Difference and Rankings for China and Vietnam’s GDP Per Capita in 2010.

Data Source: IMF, World Bank, and CIA World Factbook.

Another aspect of the motivation of marriage migration is women’s upward social mobility (Constable 2005; Desai 2009; Moghadam 2011). The way women use marriage to pursue their ambitions is what some scholars described as hypergamy (Constable 2005). Hypergamy is often used more specifically in reference to a perceived tendency among human cultures for females to seek or to be encouraged to pursue male suitors that are from a higher status than themselves (Caldwell 1983; Jennifer 2004; Padma and Lee 2004). It is global in the sense that it involves men and women from different regions of the world:

Marriage mobility commonly involves the movement of brides from more remote and less developed locations to increasingly developed and less isolated ones, and globally from the poor and less developed global south to the wealthy and developed north. This pattern might aptly be labeled global hypergamy (Constable 2005, 10).

Marriage is one of the few legal channels for women seeking to settle in higher-level societies. It is also the only means for a foreigner to obtain citizenship or long-term residence, particularly for lower-skilled people (Piper 1997; Yang and Lu 2010; Tseng 2010, 33). Many

countries have immigration and visa restrictions that prohibit a person entering the country for the purposes of gaining work without a valid work visa. In Piper's 2003 study, she pointed out that some women's motivation to migrate to Japan originally was to help their family's financial situation where women look for husbands to change their visa status and gain permanent residency privileges (Piper 1999; Piper and Roces 2003; Toyota 2008). Contrary to popular assumptions about poor women marrying foreign men due to the economic gains, the brides are not always necessarily poor, but they want to marry foreign men for a higher social status (Do et al. 2003; Oxfeld 2005, 22).

Marriage migration for economic and social mobility not only applies at an international level, but also at a national level. The situation in China is that female migrants have a double disadvantage in the labor market. The first disadvantage is their gender. The society prefers to hire male workers because female workers have more family obligations. The second disadvantage is the social status defined by the household registration system. This system of residential permits was instituted before the open door policy. This record officially identifies a person as a resident of an area and includes identifying information such as name, parents, spouses, and the date of birth. This household registration also has control over education, employment, and marriage (Huang 2003; Yan and Lu 2010). Because of the system, the number of workers allowed to make geographical moves was controlled tightly.

Marriage migration leads to social and economic increase. In the early 1980s, rural de-collectivization, labor surplus in the countryside, booming cities, and the declining enforcement of household registration systems led to dramatic increase in rural-urban migration (Davin 1999; Fan and Huang 1998). Marital migrations in China have changed dramatically (Davin 1999). The coastal provinces outstrip those of the interior. Marriage to a man in a relatively well-off

province, like the coastal area of China, was considered the most effective way to escape from poverty and to gain an opportunity for a better social status (Huang 1997).

Marriage migration is a strategy for women to seek and improve their own lives in the new communities (Phan 2005; Do and others 2003, Wang and Chang 2002, Farrer 2008). For women, they may opt to migrate as an escape from a traditional patriarchal norm (Erwin 1999; Lavelly 1991; Simon and Brettell 1986; Garrett 2006; Constable 2005). Asian women's social statuses are linked to their ability or inability to meet foreign partners and their decisions to marry or not marry across particular borders. One common desire for them is to have equal rights between the husband and wife (Hadi 2001; Yang and Lu 2010). One example described by Belanger and Lihn (2011, 6) is that women and local men frequently categorized Vietnamese men as being "men of pleasure," "drunken men," "irresponsible men," or "violent men" (p. 6). Many Vietnamese women who previously married and moved to Taiwan told about their good foreign husbands. These successes stimulate the interest of other women's desire for the perfect husbands (Nguyen and Tran 2005). Another example describes women from the Philippines who look for marriage with Western men because they imagine them to be good husbands (i.e. romantic and good providers). In contrast, local men are typified as having mistresses and irresponsible towards the family (Lauser 2005, 130).

Women try to marry a foreign man due to personal and family goals (Phizacklea 1983; Pessar and Mahler 2001; Danneker 2005). This strategy enables analysis of the complexities underlying female marriage migration, stressing institutional, economic, and social-cultural factors that provide opportunities for women's mobility (Fan and Huang 1998).

2.1.1.2 Family Strategy to Cope with Poverty

Previous studies in the literature review discussed how families use marriage as a strategy to cope with poverty by obtaining bride price and remittances. Bride price is an amount of money or property paid by the groom or his family to the parents of a woman upon her marriage (Wang and Chang 2002; Huang 1997; Constable 2005; Yang and Lu 2010). The marriage payments are pervasive; sometimes the payments can be large enough to affect savings' patterns and have implications for the distribution of wealth across families and generations (Anderson 2007, 154). Bride prices are very significant for the poor family (Gates 1989; Davin 2007).

Families are typically from rural areas of Southeast Asia where farming and low-skilled manufacturing jobs are the major sources of livelihood. Rural families are reluctant to have their daughters marry into other rural families (Hsia 2007; Conway-Turner and Cherrin 1998). One method is having their daughters marry men in urban area for higher bride price. An example is Thai women from rural areas moving to the urban areas, particularly for the purpose of marrying men who are from Bangkok (Tosakul 2010, 185). The second method is persuading their daughters to marry foreign men from higher income countries, such as Indonesian women marrying Taiwanese men. This persuasion is a part of the family strategy to help make ends meet (Hsia 2007).

Using bride price to help the family find a way out of poverty occurs many times in Vietnam. Population growth, natural disasters, and low levels of education are factors that influence the poverty rates in the south part of Vietnam (Nguyen and Tran 2010). For example, the natural droughts cause high levels of disaster for the rural areas because the farmers are constantly living in a state of economic struggle to produce enough crops to sustain the population of rural Vietnam. Poor families encourage their daughters to have foreign partners in the hope of escaping their difficult conditions. There are man-made disasters as well, such as the

Vietnam War. Many families are in debt because of the changing political and social factors. Most of these families are only doing hard and unskilled jobs on farms with very low pay. It is impossible for them to get out of poverty or pay off their debt, so the majority of these families hope to improve their economic situation by means of their daughters' marriages to foreign men, and in most cases they are Taiwanese men.

Bride price provides a positive economic impact on brides' home of origin. This impact is the main motivation for Vietnamese women to marry Taiwanese men. The Mekong Delta region has the highest percentage of international marriage migration within Vietnam due to its high poverty levels as well as close proximity to Ho Chi Minh City. Matchmaking companies tend to be more concentrated in these particular areas due to the fact that poverty in the region makes the local women more eager to engage in marriage migration (Do et al. 2003, 39; Wang and Chang 2002).

This strategy has been practiced for centuries. They believe that daughters should sacrifice for the family. Daughters also have a responsibility of taking care of their parents and fulfilling their obligations through material and emotional support. The society in Vietnam teaches children, particularly daughters, they do not have symbolic value because they cannot continue the family name (Belanger 2002). Due to the son preference and daughter neglect in the Confucian culture, son is more precious in the family. These practices were done for political power, family stability, prestige, or to ease the burden of poverty. Peasants, over history, used daughters as commodities (Potter and Potter 1990; Dawson 2005; Wang and Chang 2002; Belanger and Linh 2011). In sum, marriage is a strategy of survival or social mobility for the women's family (Sassen 2004; Palriwala and Uberio 2008).

After the marriage, the bride sends money back to the bride's parents. Remittances play an important role in the motivation of women to marry foreign men (Wang and Chang 2002; Tsay 2004; Do et al. 2003). In migration-sending countries, many families are increasingly dependent on their daughters' marriage for household survival (Pettman 1996, Nguyen and Tran 2010, Hugo 2005a). While the total amount of remittances may be small amount in the developed countries, they are often very significant in home origin countries (Sassen 2002, 114). In addition, current literature pointed out that remittances that are considered a vital source of income are sent to families and individuals across countries (Arnold and Shah 1984; Arnold 1992; Piper 2005). The remittances are used, at a grass-roots level, to cover the cost of daily subsistence, health care, and education (Hugo 2005a, 108; Bruce 2008). Along with a strong obligation towards the extended family, some of these families are conscious about their future and save a portion of their earnings by keeping it in a bank or purchasing insurance and investment bonds (Palriwala and Uberol 2008).

The significant role that remittances play on the brides' household of origin is seen through the marriage migration of Vietnamese women to Taiwan. Vietnamese women attempt to send money home once they have migrated to the destination country with their husband. A very high proportion of the Vietnamese brides' families (88.3%) received remittances (see Figure 2.1 below). The chart indicates the number of households that improved their economic conditions (Wang, and Chang 2002; Tsay 2004; Do et al. 2003).

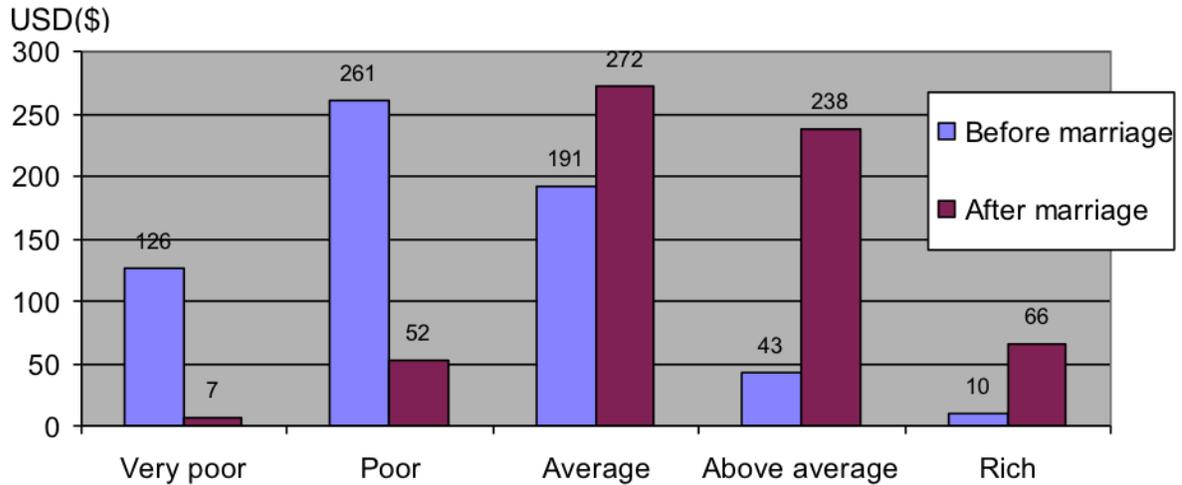


Figure 2.1 Economic Status of Households before and after their Daughters' Marriages.

Source: Wang and Chang 2002, 96; Tsay 2004; Do, et al. 2003, 38.

Due to the bride price and the impact of remittance after their daughters' marriage, many families use this strategy to cope with their poverty situation (Wang and Chang 2002; Anderson 2007; Belanger and Linh 2011; Constable 2005; Tsay 2004). As a result, young women and their families aspire to find a foreign husband (Hugo and Nguyen 2005).

2.1.1.3 "Marriage Squeeze"—Imbalance of the Sex Ratio

Marriage squeeze is another motivation for women's marriage migration. Marriage squeeze is defined by Guttentag and Secord (1983, 77) as:

the relative balance of power between the sexes is determined by dynamic interactions of dyadic and structural power. Dyadic power accrues to whichever sex is relatively rare owing to the larger proportion of potential relationships available to it, the demographic dimensions of which are commonly known as a marriage squeeze.

The demographic dimensions mentioned above refer to the imbalance when the number of potential brides does not equal the number of potential grooms. When not everyone has an opportunity to marry, some will be squeezed out of the marriage market (Hugo 2005a, 56). The primary reason for “marriage squeeze” is the changes in “sex and age composition”, including fertility decline, rise in sex ratio at birth, sex selective migration (Kim 2010, 129; Goodkind 1997; Hugo 2005b).

According to the 1979 Vietnam census, there were over 1.5 million more women than men in Vietnam. Due to the excess of male mortality and sex-selective emigration after the Vietnam War, there is a marriage squeeze in Vietnam. Government reported a large number of male deaths in warfare. In addition, the significant migration of men in the decade after the 1975 reunification produced an insufficient number of marriage partners for women of marriageable age (Goodkind 1997, 107-119). This imbalanced sex ratio has consequences for the first-marriage market (Mizoguchi 2010, 1). Many women of this cohort often married later in their lives, never married at all, or married a less than ideal partner (Malarney 2002, 155). Young women were trying to seek potential partners in other countries during that time instead of being a second or third wife to a local Vietnamese man (Goodkind 1997; Lu and Yang 2009, 13; Nguyen and Tran 2010).

2.1.2 Motivations for Men to Marry “Foreign Brides”

Cross-border marriage for receiving countries is a strategy that men and families in unfavorable marriage markets use to form households for reproduction (Penny and Khoo 1996; Liaw, Ochiai, and Ishikawa 2010). Scholars’ mention delayed marriages, the extremely low

fertility rates, high divorce rates, and skewed sex ratios at birth in some countries as additional factors contributing to marrying foreign brides. In addition, female out migration in the rural areas increase a high male to female ratio. An additional reason that men choose foreign women is to guarantee family obligations (Yang and Lu 2010).

2.1.2.1 Inability to Find Local Women

The factors causing men to be unmarried are complicated. These complications can be related to the men themselves, as well as their families. Characteristics and traits of men and their families that make it difficult for them to find local women include “older age, lower education, low income, poor personal appearance, quiet personality, mental or physical illness, less social capital, [and] family factors [that] include poverty, [and] too many brothers” (Brown, Feldman, Sommer and Li 2009, 5).

Individual factors appear to be the most important determinant of the formation of marriage. Men who have negative traits tend to resort to the spousal pool from less-developed countries (Massey et al. 1993, 457; Ma and Liao 1994; Brown, Feldman, Sommer and Li 2009, 5). The largest percentages of men who marry Southeast Asian women are from rural areas in Taiwan (The Ministry of the Interior Data 2004; Hsia 2007, 173). As Eyton points out:

... rural poorly educated males in lack [of] luster job, possibly with unsociable hours and conservative view on what marriage should be... are looking to mainland China and Southeast Asia for their prospective spouses (2003, 23).

A study shows that Taiwanese men who marry Vietnamese women are on average about thirty-six years old and have an average of less than nine years of compulsory education. These men are from the lower social-economic status in Taiwan. They work in manual labor fields such as cab drivers, farmers, or are self-employed street vendors (Wang and Chang 2002). Bride prices have risen sharply in Taiwan, making it difficult for these Taiwanese men to afford the bride prices for local women (Wang and Chang 2002; Hugo and Nguyen 2005). Cross-border marriage provides an opportunity for these men to purchase a wife with a higher bride price than the price in Taiwan. For example, in Wang and Chang's (2002) study, they found that Taiwanese men pay around US\$2,500 to the Vietnamese women's family and for the entire wedding banquet. In comparison, the bride price alone in the urban area of Taiwan is at least US\$20,000 and the groom still has to pay for the wedding banquet. In the rural area of Taiwan, a bride price is around US\$1,000. According to one study, though a bride price in rural area in Vietnam may be low, Vietnamese men cannot afford a price that is more than US\$100 (Teerawichitchainan and Knodel 2007). Due to the different currency values of Taiwan and Vietnam, the poor Taiwanese men still can pay higher bride price than Vietnamese men.

Another characteristic is that some men have a criminal history, making it harder for them to find a partner as well. Men in these situations are deemed to have little value in the marriage market (Wang and Chang 2002). Cross-border marriage is typically an option for men who suffer from disadvantaged positions in the domestic marriage market. They utilize globalizing resources (women from other countries) to improve prospects for marriage (Tseng 2010).

2.1.2.2 Female Deficit

The next motivation is the unbalanced sex ratio. The outmigration of women for marriage or for work leads to a shortage of local women. Women from other areas usually do not want to move into these places due to their poor economic conditions and remote locations. All these factors combined have an impact on the ability of rural men to marry locally (Brown, Feldman, Sommer, and Li 2009; Kim 2010, 24). This shortage of women in the region phenomenon, also known as community factor appears to play a significant role (Brown, Feldman, Sommer and Li 2009, 5). Sex ratios are measured as the number of males per one hundred females, showing male surplus female at birth. This unbalanced sex ratio has emerged in different regions of Asia over the last three decades, leading to a gradual masculinization of the population (Attane and Guilmoto 2007, 1).

In a large part of Asia, low fertility and sex-selective abortion lead to an unbalanced sex ratio, which is also known as the “missing girls” phenomenon. This phenomenon influences the feminization of cross-border migration (Coale and Banister 1994; Poston and Glover 2005; Cai and William 2005; Sen 1992a, 3; Sen, 1992b; Wichterich 2000; Farrer 2002). One example is the marriage problem of men having difficulties finding wives in the countryside of South Korea, threatening the masculinity and moral integrity of individual rural bachelors (Freeman 2010). The rapid decline in fertility, rise in sex ratio at birth, migration of young women from rural to urban areas, and the rising awareness of sex equality are factors that bring women from other countries and help men to find a wife (Kim 2010, 24). Another example is Taiwanese men from the rural communities trying to use cross-border marriages as a solution to alleviate this issue (Hsia 2007, Suzuki 2005). An additional example of this international marriage is found in the rural areas of north India where sex ratios are high; there is not enough women that is why they bring women in, especially with more men than women at the marriageable age. They have

reported the migration of women from eastern India and Nepal for the purpose of marriage. This marriage migration occurs without regard of linguistic and other cultural differences (Malarney 2002,155).

Women's families' expectation for them to migrate out of the origin area leads to a shortage of women. A woman's expectation to marry someone from a city has created a serious problem for rural men, making it difficult for them to find suitable partners (Hsia 2002). This conflict is increased when there are community factors that make it less desirable for women to remain in such a remote geographic location, a less arable land, and a less-developed local economy (Brown, Feldman, Sommer and Li 2009, 5). East Asian urban families nowadays are reluctant to have their daughters marry into other rural families (Davin 1998, 231; Hsia 2007,173). This is particularly true in rural communities of Taiwan (Wang and Chang 2002).

There is a trend in domestic marriage migration in China with an increase in the number of women who marry across greater geographic distances from the west to east coastal area (Fan and Huang 1998; Gilmartin and Tan 2002). As men from wealthier areas are able to attract female marriage migrants, the bride shortage will continue to be more severe amongst families with the lowest socioeconomic status, (Davin 1999, 141-142; Davin 2007, 83). The increase of long distance marriage migration in China leads to an imbalanced sex ratio and a bride shortage (Cai and William 2005).

Similarly to China, this phenomenon also occurs in Japan, where the internal migration process has been highly selective with respect to gender. The geographic distribution of the marriage squeeze is based on unbalanced sex ratios in the marriageable population, for instance the proportion of unmarried persons in mountain villages is especially high (Ishikawa 2003, 293; Mitsuoka 1990). In the prime marital age interval (i.e. between twenty five and thirty years of

age), there has been a greater net loss of females in rural and peripheral areas, especially in remote rural villages and towns. One difficulty that local people have when it is time to marry is finding a partner with the same traditional and cultural background (Ma et al. 2010, 21). The situation in Japan connected to women's migration to the urban areas causes there to be more men than women at the marriageable age. Due to cultural expectations, the eldest son in a family must stay in the family business in order to sustain the land and communities. Therefore, the eldest sons in rural families are more likely to marry foreign women (Ishikawa 2005a; Yang and Chang 2010).

2.1.2.3 Preferences for Traditional Wives

A man's desire to have a traditional, ideal wife from other countries is another a pull factor of women's migration. Men might also have family pressures and cultural expectations for the potential brides (Qian 1997, Dua 1999, Lu 2008; Chen 2010; Tseng 2010). Many times, men always look for women (from the poorer neighboring countries) who speak their language or share the same religion and culture (Lee 1966; Wang and Chang 2002; Piper 2009).

The motivation of some Taiwanese men marrying women who are from nearby Asian countries is because Taiwan has a strong history of sharing cultures, goods, finance, and ideas with nearby countries (Ta 2002; Wang and Chang 2002). In addition, changes within Taiwan about the role and attitudes of women have been influenced by the traditional patriarchal structures. It is apparent that contemporary young Taiwanese women are less willing than their mothers to enter into marriages where they are constrained by these traditional patriarchal structures (Lu 2008,130). More and more Taiwanese women enjoy delaying marriage or being single educated women (Belanger and Linh 2011). Because of these societal changes, marrying

more traditional foreign brides presents a solution for men as a way of keeping their traditional masculinity strong in response to a decline in the willingness of Taiwanese women to be obedient wives (Tien and Wang 2006). Their definition of traditional, obedient wives is that the women should be at home and should “serve” men in the family and the society, generally fulfilling what is a social or a family expectation (Do et al. 2003; Phan 2005). In other words, the preference that the men have for a traditional wife is the same type that the contemporary women are moving away from, causing a gap in expectations for marriage. Because the men are unable to find the traditional wife in their own local culture, they seek brides from other countries who have more traditional values.

The Taiwanese men prefer women from Vietnam because these women have a culture more similar to the Taiwanese men compared to women from other countries. These women are mainly the ethnic Chinese minority within Vietnam. This minority group can trace their origins from mainland China (Wang and Chang 2002). Tsay describes the similarity of the shared culture as follows:

There is strong feeling among Taiwanese of the similarity between Vietnam and Taiwan in terms of the people, culture, religion and way of life. It is often mentioned that the appearance and complexion of Vietnamese are close to Taiwanese. They also have similar religious beliefs and ways of ancestor worship. Most critically, Taiwanese have the deep impression that Vietnamese women were brought up in patriarchal families and were socialized well in forming their attitudes toward the family, children, parents and husband (Tsay 2004, 185).

Confucianism is a comprehensive system for the achievement of socio-economic well-being, social order, and appropriate patterns of authority in society (Schuerjebbs 2003; Dawson 2005). It emphasizes patriarchy (the father as the head of the family) and the very ancient customs of reverence for ancestors and elders. This creates a situation in which a high value is placed on patriarchy, “filial piety”, and respect for elders—the male elder becomes the ultimate authority figure (Hugo and Nguyen 2007, 56). Added to this, or perhaps implied by it, rural Vietnamese society emphasizes the group (family and community) more and the individual less than is true in the West (Malarney 2002). The connection between Confucianism, traditional values, and patriarchy then makes the rural Vietnamese women ideal foreign brides for Taiwanese men.

Historically, patriarchy has been super-imposed upon what were originally more matriarchal societies throughout Southeast Asia. Many countries in Southeast Asia have also been influenced by widespread Chinese migration throughout history. Some Chinese men prefer Vietnamese wives with traditional traits, such as sympathy, thriftiness, hardworking, and tenderness (Said 1979; Chen 2010). A traditional Chinese notion, reflective of culturally ingrained male chauvinism is that a man should marry a woman of lesser educational or professional status. It is acceptable to marry foreign women in order to abide by the traditional expectations (Pedraza 1991; Erwin 1999).

Traditional values of the Vietnamese lifestyle were deeply affected by the Confucian beliefs, brought by the Chinese during their thousand years of interaction and control over Vietnam (Do et al. 2003; Nguyen and Tran 2010). This philosophy is based on the existence of an extended family structure, as well as the traditional idea of male superiority.(Freeman 2005, 90). In this type of patriarchal society, Vietnamese women have limited rights and take a

secondary place in the family. Especially when a woman gets married, she is forced to obey and serve her husband's family (Do et al. 2003; Breeman 2006). In Vietnam, daughters are raised to accept that they have a duty to the family, and if necessary must sacrifice for it (Wang and Chang 2002; Belanger and Lihh 2011; Belanger and Khuat 2005). The parental role in the family defines the rules for the whole family (Tran 2008). Obedience and respect were the traditional virtues which Vietnamese children were taught to exhibit in their family (Thi 2009, 1). Virginity is cherished and pregnancy out of wedlock is uncommon because it is a grave disgrace to the family (Thai 2008, 20).

Although this tradition has changed over time, especially with economic development, the patriarchal society ideals have been maintained by Asian people especially in rural areas and among people with lower levels of education. Men from many East Asian countries, especially Taiwanese men have preference for the Vietnamese traditional women (Tsay 2004; Thi 2009).

Cross-culture marriage migration can help to meet the need for men's spiritually desires. In a study focused on Western men, who reported being older and lonely, were seeking loving care from young, traditional Thai wives. Tosakul reported that:

Cross-cultural marriages of these two groups [Western men and Thai wives] have provided a social space for them to regain their identities denied at home. They are empowering each other spiritually and materially (2010, 197).

Men have desire marrying traditional foreign brides who are young and beautiful, as well as these brides are good at obeying and taking care of them. This motivation helps cross-border marriage migration flourish from country to country (Tosakul 2010,197).

2.2 Roles of Social Networks

International marriages generally take one of two forms, marriages that unite people within the same ethnic group or across different ethnic groups via different connections (Yang and Lu 2010). Whether mediated by commercial institutions or personal ties, active negotiating channels between brides and grooms-to-be are indispensable. These ties or channels are social networks. A social network is a set of people, organizations, or other social entities (called nodes) connected by a set of relationships (Mitchell and Clyde 1969). Personal networks have the capacity to meet individuals' emotional needs and can also provide instrumental assistance, information, and advice on daily life, all of which can affect the individual's attitudes (Shye, Mullooly, Freeborn, and Pope 1995).

The social network can provide individuals with examples of behaviors that may alter or reinforce their attitudes. A social network eventually influences people's behaviors; this process is referred to as social learning and social influence (Bongarrts and Watkins 1996; Friedkin 1997; Kohler et al. 2001; Curran and Saguy 2001). There are several underlying forces that influence the rapid expansion of social networks facilitating the reproduction of transnational marriage migration (Guarnizo and Smith 1998, 344; Hernandez 2005). The expansion of social networks, affect women's local, regional, and transnational struggles for social, political, and economic justice. For example, because Taiwan expanded investment in East Asian and Southeast Asian countries, there is a strong social network between these countries. Due to these connections, economic and business development is helping women to marry Taiwanese men (Wang and Chang 2002). This section discusses the roles that different types of social networks play in the previously examined studies on marriage migration and some characteristics of marriages through these social networks.

People are more likely to settle in a closer place about which they have more knowledge than in a farther place about which they know and understand little. This is known as distance decay, as distance from a given location increases, understanding of that location decreases. However, social networks can facilitate marriage migration, because they help people to know each other better in order to come across the distance decay (Huang 1998; Fan and Huang 1998; Chun 1996; Kohler et al. 2001). Studies of marriage migration through social networks frequently mention two different styles. The first style is called a kinship network and the other is called a business network (Taskeshita 2010). In Taiwan, the kinship network is the most important network for kin and friends to introduce couples for the reason of marriage. The business network is the second highest way that couples could be introduced (Tseng 2010). Hong (2005) pointed out that due to the role of the social network in the marriage process, the Vietnamese government statistics show that the number of Vietnamese women marrying Taiwanese partners increased gradually from 1995 to 2003, peaking between 2000 and 2002 at more than 112,000 marriages altogether.

Traditionally arranged marriages from the kinship social networks and arranged marriages from the business social networks are very different. The former aims to create and develop bilateral social relationships between two families. Kin and friends are the matchmakers in this traditionally arranged marriage process. Business social networks are profit oriented. In this case, the matchmakers are marriage agencies or companies that play a role in the marriage process (Wang 2007, 16).

Kinship networks play in many different ways, giving people the chance to meet new acquaintances within their connections. One way is indirect contact determined by informal social networks such as family, extended kin, and other acquaintances (Constable 2005). This

indirect connection can create a female migratory chain. These women, such as sisters, nieces, and friends are members of a network by bringing over other people in order to marry future spouses (Hisa 2002; Lu 2008; Hisa 2002). Kinship social networks can also apply to transnational mobility of the matchmaking processes (See Kim, 2012). For example, Tosakul (2010) points out:

In the case of Bann Roi-Et [village name], the majority of women met their Western husbands through family and friends.... It is a local tradition in Isan that family, kin, and friend relations provide a strong foundation for social security of all members belonging to those circles. Most village women under study began their transnational mobility by following other family members, relatives, or friends who had already settled overseas.
(p. 187)

One example is when the first woman marries out of her community. She acts as an anchor due to her leading action. She is the one who introduces other women of the community to migrate through marriage. In Tosakul's study, he:

uses ethnographic accounts to document the process of this chained and network-based migration in both women's labor and marriage migration, and demonstrates how a village in northern Thailand became a 'Swiss Village' with a very high rate of Thai-European marriages starting from the first woman who made the move (2010, 25).

The role of the kinship social network is important for short-distance marriage migration. Female autonomy and agency tend to be higher in areas where women marry closer to home (Han 2009, 53-54). Some Chinese scholars (Wang and Hu 1996, 283; Yang 1991; Zhang and Zhang 1996) mention that peasant women have been encouraged to marry men in nearby villages, and this custom has lasted for thousands of years. Traditional marriage migration occurs over short distances and remains prevalent today. Female matchmakers in rural China are local and have networks, connections, and kin support (Bossen 2007, 104).

The kinship social network also applies to long- distance marriage- matching processes. One marriage can lead to a larger chain migration and like conventional marriages; long distance marriage migration is arranged through relatives and social networks (Han and Eades 1995, 862). In China, as is the case for other international marriages, women may try to create chains of migration for other women to follow who desire to leave their home villages as well (Davin 1999, 150). As an example, in Fan's study site of Gaozhou, many husbands find wives through relatives or friends from other provinces (Fan 2008). Due to patrilocality, long distance marriage migration is difficult and dangerous for women because of the separation from support of natal kin. To improve these conditions, the building of networks and communities are essential. Improvement and support for marriage migrants is becoming more likely as migration grows and information chains become more accurate (Davin 2007, 95).

Kinship social network has complex connections. These connections provide fertile ground for people's interactions (Tseng 2010, 38). The social network created between the homeland of the emigrants and their destination helps provide information on Taiwan to potential brides. In many cases the girls are introduced to Taiwanese men by their relatives or friends who have already moved there.

The role of the business network primarily relies on professional matchmaking agencies. Some of the marriage agencies operate openly and respect their commitments. However, sometimes the business network falls into a “grey area” between agencies and sex traffickers (Guarnizo and Smith 1998, 345; Wang and Chang 2002; Ta 2002). They function more like trafficking networks using deception and abuse through the process of finding or offering a wife to a client (Skolnik and Boontinand 1999).

Marriage agencies are profit-oriented because they can charge men from high-income countries for their services. These commercial transactions contribute to the marriage market, which involves the commoditized transnational marriages of women migrating to the home country of their husbands (Tseng 2000, 2004). This marriage market is defined as follows:

Marriage markets refer to the characteristics, composition, and geographic location of dating pools within which people search for intimate partners. Broadly speaking, marriage market research posits that individuals make decisions regarding the formation and dissolution of intimate relationships, as well as decisions about when and where to have children, according to the availability of desirable partners who reside in their marriage market (Lloyd 2009, 1).

Marriage agencies are scattered in different countries. It is believed that the business social networks take advantage of the huge income differences between men from developed countries and women from developing countries. Many matchmaking agencies are based near women in developing countries, such as Ukraine, Russia, Colombia, Brazil, China, Thailand, or the Philippines. The nations that receive the highest volume of “mail-order brides” include the

United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, and Singapore (Narayan 1995; Mallare 2006; Yang and Chang 2010).

Usually marriage agencies advertise women on national television networks, national newspapers, and on the Internet to attract customers, then arrange for the customers to meet with these women (Hugo 2005b; Piper 2003; Constable 2005; Eddy 1994). The Internet apparently plays a more important role in providing information and enabling contact between would-be spouses (Sholnik and Boontinand 1999; Robinson 1996). Business networks provide various services to meet the needs for the customers (Wang and Chang 2002, 35). Services include the arrangement of meetings and wedding banquets in both the grooms' and brides' countries.

One example shows that Taiwan's marriage market is becoming institutionalized and profit-oriented. Taiwan's investment in Vietnam creates a lucrative economic niche for agencies dedicated to promoting international migration for profit (Massey et al. 1993, 450-451). The process of Vietnamese women who marry Taiwanese men through business networks begins with the match making agencies. Marriage agencies try to attract Taiwanese clients by advertising young, pretty, and obedient girls, and they also described Vietnamese women as "cheap and cheerful soul mate brides" (Wang and Chang 2002, 16; Chen 2010, 26). Customers, with the help of marriage agencies, fly to Ho Chi Minh City where they can stay only as long as their financial resources last. The average stay period is one week, also known as a "one-week marriage tour" (Nguyen and Thai 2005, 57). Within the one-week period, the marriage agencies need to have many prospective brides to choose from. In some cases, relatives or friends with differing opinions may accompany the man, so a wide range of choices is required. Sometimes a Taiwanese man is hesitant in making a decision within the short time available, so being able to present a diversity of young and beautiful Vietnamese women is advantageous to the agency. If

an agency cannot offer a customer sufficient choices in one week, it will lose the customer. The success of the matchmakers' business depends on their ability to find these women (Wang and Chang 2002, 5).

Agencies specializing in the recruitment of “cheap” brides facilitate the trade because these agencies take charge of the whole process on behalf of the men and their families. The “big matchmakers” typically have many “small matchmakers” to recruit Vietnamese women in the south part of the country to help them to get a larger pool of potential brides (Wang and Chang 2002, 6; Yang and Chang 2002, 103; Tseng 2005). When “more and more people enter the marriage market with competitive price, good quality, [and] on-time delivery,” the marriage market becomes “mature” (Wang and Chang 2002, 1).

Some scholars (Sorenson and Audia 2000) are interested in the study of social networks, pointing out that almost any industry reveals geographic concentration. Workers' social networks reinforce the geographic concentration (Smith and Favell 2006). One study pointed out social networks lead to a geographic concentration of female migrants (Do et al. 2003). The matchmaking industry selects the pool of women from the same region. Female migrants are drawn from particular communities in Asia (Hugo and Nguyen 2005). When some women from a community are recruited, they act as leaders to others. They recruit people in a concentration of communities (Do et al. 2003, 39; Tsay 2004, 182).

In the case of cross-border marriage migration of Vietnamese women to Taiwan, most female migrants are not recruited from all areas around Vietnam but are overwhelmingly from rural areas in the Mekong Delta region, where most agencies are located (Lu 2008; see Figure 2.2). This region has some of the poorest communities in Vietnam (Hugo and Nguyen 2005). The smaller agencies in association with the larger agencies from Ho Chi Minh City bring in the

girls recruited in the Mekong Delta region to a centralized location. This centralized location is normally Ho Chi Minh City because it can offer the services needed if the interested men meet their future brides on a trip to Vietnam (Wang and Chang 2002). One study mentions that there is only one Taiwanese official matchmaking agency located in Hanoi. There are also only two agents who visit the office to prepare interview documents for these Vietnamese women (Do et al. 2002). At present there is no agency in central Vietnam (Chang and Yang 2002). This case shows how business social networks lead to a concentration in the sending country.

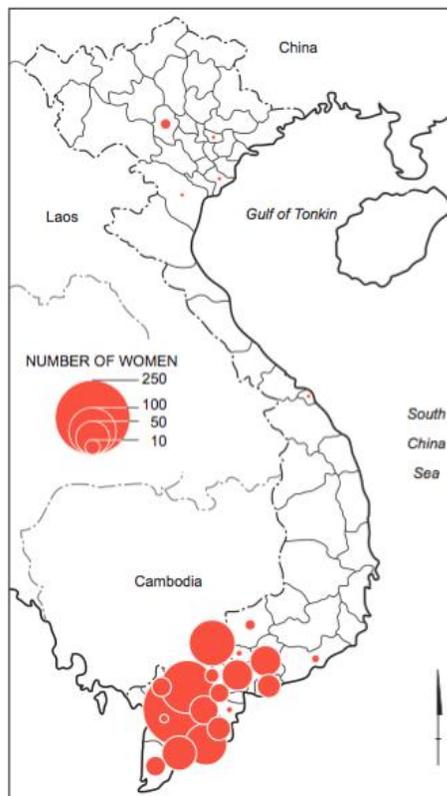


Figure 2.2 Provinces of Origin of Vietnamese Women Marriage Migrants to Taiwan, 1994-2002.

Source: Do and others 2002, 39.

Many people are making large profits in the complex web of interlocking relationships that facilitate the marriage of Vietnamese women to Taiwanese men (Wang and Chang 2002). The excess of younger men and the changing roles and attitudes of Taiwanese women are the driving forces within Taiwan, and are unlikely to be reduced in the foreseeable future. These forces also ensure the continuation and expansion of the international marriage flows through both kinship and business networks (Ta 2002; Wang and Chang 2002, Hugo and Nguyen 2010).

Chapter 3 - Research Design

The objective of this study is to find the push and pull factors for the cross-border marriage migration and the roles of social networks. Research questions I address are:

- 1) Why do Chinese men choose to marry Vietnamese women instead of local Chinese women?
- 2) Why do Vietnamese women marry Chinese men instead of local Chinese women? and
- 3) What roles do social networks play in this process?

In the following sections, I provide detailed information about my research design. First, I describe the study site and explain how the field survey was performed. Next, I explain the method and the process of designing questions for the survey and in-person interviews. Finally, I discuss how I analyzed my data.

3.1 The Study Site

In this section, I define the geographic location of the study area and the reasons for selecting this area, including detailed information about making important connections through friends and relatives. I also explain how people cross the border between China and Vietnam, and I use photographs that were taken during fieldwork.

The border between China and Vietnam is more than one thousand kilometers long. The study site is located in the Jingxi County, the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in the southwest part of China. It has twenty-four towns and more than 270 villages. Jingxi is the county seat of Jingxi County (see Figure 3.1). According to the 2005 Chinese census data, this county has a population of more than 750,000 people.

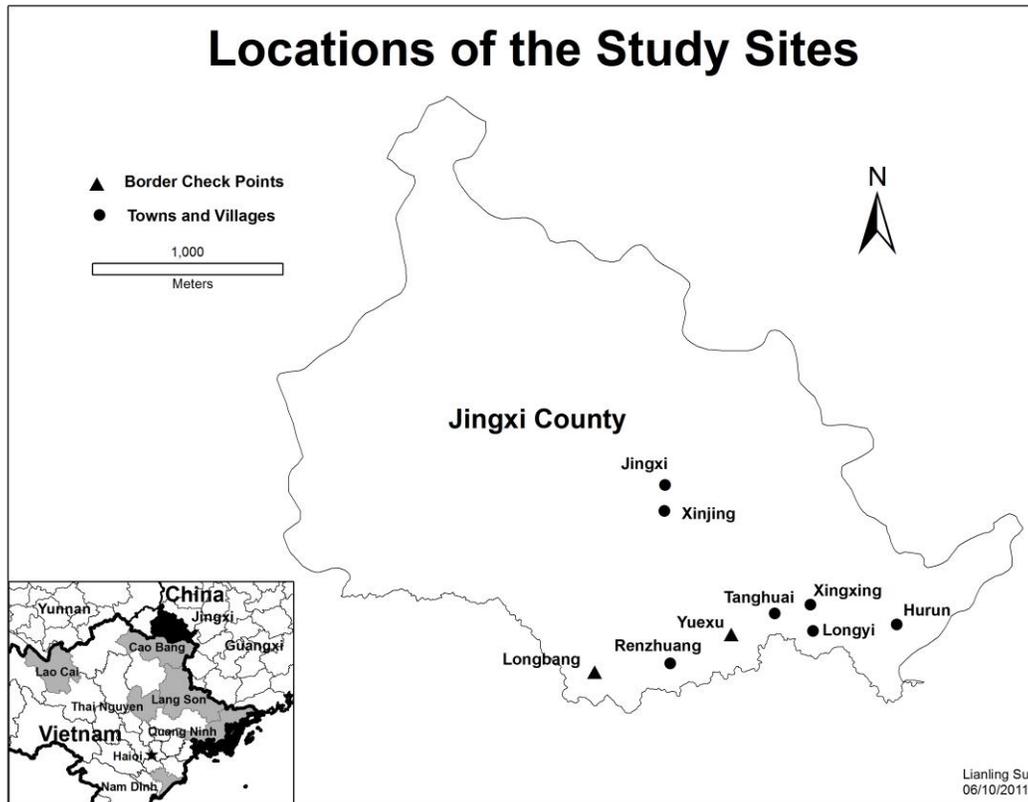


Figure 3.1 The Map of the Study Sites.

I selected Jingxi County as the study site for two reasons. The first is because of reports of a high proportion of marriages between Vietnamese women and Chinese men near the border in Southwest China (Jin 1995; Chen 2010). The second reason is my own connections with friends and relatives in the area. I was able to use these connections to find the Chinese-Vietnamese couples for my study. Vietnamese women’s appearance was no help in locating the couples, so having connections that know the couples was important for me. In addition, Vietnamese women who marry Chinese men often reside in China undocumented; they are, therefore, wary of strangers. Usually they will not talk openly about themselves to strangers. Although I had assumed that matchmaking agencies in the study area could help me obtain information on Chinese and Vietnamese couples, they were unable to provide assistance.

There were two primary contacts. The first one was my uncle's best friend Luo. Luo helped me to find a place to live in when I was in the Jingxi County seat. I lived in his aunt's hotel, and a number of her customers were Chinese-Vietnamese couples. The second one was Tao, an acquaintance of my childhood friend, Qin. Tao was my most important contact because he studied Vietnamese for three years, and had spent a year in Vietnam. I hired Tao, because he helped me with translation. People in this study area use two languages: the local Zhuang dialect and Vietnamese. I cannot speak either of these languages.

He also introduced Chinese-Vietnamese couples to me from his aunt's hometown, Longyi village. Out of the village's 120 households, 40-50 of these included an international marriage. Tao's aunt has an older brother married to a Vietnamese woman. She operates a coal business in which some of her employees are married to Vietnamese women. These people were eager to participate in the study. Tao also helped me locate couples of cross-border marriages through his friend, Huang, who is from Tangxia village. Huang's father introduced to me Chinese-Vietnamese couples from the neighboring village of Tanghuai; no such couples live in Tangxia village. Tao's childhood friend, Liang, used his own connections from his hometown, the Renzhuang village, to introduce me to three Chinese-Vietnamese couples.

Tao's friend, Li, who worked in Longbang Village, provided accommodations to me. During my stay in Longbang Village, I met a local woman named Yu, who was willing to introduce me to her contacts. She has lived in the area for the last fifty years, working as a local bus driver. Yu knew most of the local people and introduced me to many Chinese-Vietnamese couples in Longbang Village.

Using these connections, I visited fifteen locations, mostly rural communities including the county seat of Jingxi and the towns of Xinxing, Hurun, Xinjing, and Yuexu, where a small

number of Chinese-Vietnamese couples resided. Additional locations included the villages of Longyi, Renzhuang, Longbang, and Tanghuai, where many Chinese-Vietnamese couples resided (Figure 3.1).

The Cao Bang province of Vietnam is next to Jingxi County. The Vietnamese border stretching across Jingxi County and Cao Bang is 153 kilometers long with only two checkpoints in Jingxi County where people can legally commute between China and Vietnam. During the fieldwork, I visited the biggest checkpoint of Jingxi County, which is called the Longbang checkpoint (see Figure 3.2 and Figure 3.3). Approximately fifty meters from the Longbang checkpoint building is a stone marker, and across from this border stone, I took a picture of the Vietnamese checkpoint building (see Figure 3.4).



Figure 3.2 The Front of the Official Border Checkpoint in Longbang, Jingxi, China. June 2011. Longbang, Guangxi, China. Photo: Lianling Su



**Figure 3.3 The Back Side of the Official Border Checkpoint in Longbang, Jingxi, China.
June 2011. Longbang, Guangxi, China. Photo: Lianling Su**



Figure 3.4 The Official Border Checkpoint in Cao Bang ,Vietnam. June 2011. (Photo was Taken from Longbang, Guangxi, China.) Photo: Lianling Su

The boundary between China and Vietnam is the result of a long process of adjustment and modification; it is still ongoing (Zou 2005). Parts of the border are centuries old, while others are recent, or postcolonial (Hitchcox 1997; Wicherich 2000). The border between China and Vietnam evolved as part of a cultural landscape that took shape over many years.

Many people cross the border using dirt roads away from the checkpoints. As Figure 3.5 shows, a stone marks some parts of the borders between China and Vietnam. Near this stone marker is a trail that people use to travel from China to the Vietnamese side (see Figure 3.6). This practice is easy because the border between China and Vietnam is very open in places. Yet, many people avoid using the official border checkpoints to commute between China and Vietnam because the process takes time and money; using the dirt roads to cross is easier. People doing daily business transactions or visiting friends and relatives on the opposite side can simply

cross the border whenever they please. If people do not cause problems, the border patrol does not bother them. However, along some of the major roads in China, police will check for Chinese identification cards. If the police find Vietnamese people without documentation, they will send them back to Vietnam.



Figure 3.5 Border Mark between China and Vietnam. June 2011. Longbang, Guangxi, China. Note the Dirt Trail to the Left (see also Figure 3.6). Photo: Lianling Su



Figure 3.6 A Dirt Road that People Use to Commute between China and Vietnam. June 2011. Longbang, Guangxi, China. Photo: Lianling Su

3.2 Fieldwork

To establish credibility for my study and gather a large amount of information, I decided to do fieldwork between late May and late June of 2011. I interacted with Chinese-Vietnamese couples and interviewed other local people to learn their thoughts about Vietnamese brides. During my fieldwork, I also took many photographs to assist in making qualitative judgments for my study. At the beginning of this section, I briefly discuss the questionnaire, how my connections facilitated the interviews, and how I conducted the interviews. I also discuss the types of questions I asked to find answers to the research questions.

I designed two sets of questionnaires for the Chinese-Vietnamese couples and the local people. The main focus of my analysis is to use the questionnaire for the couples. Altogether, I used twenty-five questions in three parts. The first part contained demographic and social

economic characteristics. The second and the third parts focused on how motivations and social networks play a role in these marriages, respectively. The questionnaire for the local people had two questions that gave me different perspectives on the research questions. The first question asked what the locals thought of the motivation behind these marriages, and the second question asked about the role of social networks in cross-border marriages.

Interviews were the primary source of my data. Interviewing people is a productive way to gather information, especially information that would not otherwise be available. Interviewing people allows knowledge to emerge as a result of conversations. People of different socio-economic levels presumably had different perspectives of Vietnamese brides. All comments brought varied perspectives to the conversation.

For the interviews, I combined both the open-ended, as well as closed-ended format for questions. In this way, I obtained quantitative data from the multiple-choice options. I also asked follow-up questions, and this gave respondents the opportunity to state their opinions without being restricted by limited multiple-choice options and explain their answers further. Some interview questions were sufficiently personal that I needed to spend enough time with couples to build a relationship with them before asking these questions. These people are insiders and “the insider methodology is much more acceptable in qualitative research” (Smith 1999, 137). Insiders provide “relationships and the quality and richness of data and analysis” (Smith 1999, 137). The chance to visit and interact with these couples in their own homes and local villages gave me insight into their everyday life that could not have been obtained through a questionnaire. In exchange for their time, I compensated couples with some pocket money, and brought some treats for their children. I also took notes in a field diary as well, which included the time, date, location, and conversations between local people.

One good example of the insider approach during my fieldwork involves Yu from Longbang Village. Yu was interested in my topic and offered to help me with my research. She was an insider who lived with Chinese-Vietnamese couples, her family, and the whole community. Due to her knowledge of the village, most of the Vietnamese women who lived there trust her. Some of these women were her neighbors and married to her friends or relatives. She helped me to think critically and assisted as an interpreter. Because of her help, these couples were willing to accept me into their homes; pictures of these people and their homes can be seen in Figure 3.7 and Figure 3.8. Though I can only build from the short-term relationship with the people I interviewed, I could get information from an insider who already had relationships within the community.



Figure 3.7 Yu (Right) from the Longbang Village with Her Vietnamese Friend (Left). June 2011. Longbang, Guangxi, China. Photo: Lianling Su



Figure 3.8 A Chinese Man from the Longbang Village with His Vietnamese Wife. June 2011. Longbang, Guangxi, China. Photo: Lianling Su

Altogether I visited sixty-four Chinese-Vietnamese couples and four of these Vietnamese women had lost their spouses. The interview questions fell into three categories: the experiences of the couples, the Vietnamese women, and the Chinese men. One side of the questionnaire was for Vietnamese women, and the other side was for Chinese men (see Appendix A: Questionnaire for Vietnamese Women and Chinese Men). I asked some questions separately, for example, I asked Vietnamese women about their ability to speak Mandarin and whether they learned Mandarin before marriage. I will discuss each part of questionnaire in detail and how these questions can help to answer the overall research questions.

The first part of the questionnaire asked general demographic information about the Chinese-Vietnamese couples. The questions were specifically about their individual age, income level, occupation before and after marriage, and education level. One question asked where the

Vietnamese women were originally from which is important because it gives the geographic location of their hometown. Some other questions were predetermined. One example was a question about whether a Vietnamese woman had siblings. If the answer was yes, the next question asked her how many siblings she had. To follow up then, I asked about whether any of her siblings also married Chinese men. If they had siblings also married to Chinese men, I continued with questions about where her siblings lived now and when they got married.

The second part of the interview focused on what motivated these Chinese-Vietnamese couples to marry. I listed four choices for the Vietnamese women (See Appendix A). One option was media coverage saying that many Vietnamese women preferred Chinese men and another was the literature that focused on negative perspectives of Vietnamese men. Other options have already been discussed in the literature review and included imbalanced sex ratio, seeking a better life, and helping their families. The final option for this question was “other,” in case the Vietnamese women did not agree with any of the given options. I provided some choices for Chinese men and their motivation for marrying Vietnamese women, following the same format. The next question was about who were the marriage decision makers, choices included: Vietnamese women themselves, Vietnamese women’s parents, or both the Vietnamese women and their parents are the decision makers. Further questions for the Vietnamese women included how they helped with their families back in Vietnam and how frequently they visited. I asked about remittances, either in money or goods sent or brought to families in Vietnam. Goods would include small livestock (such as pigs) and commodities (such as digital items).

The third part of the questionnaire focused on social networks. I first asked how they met each other, if the couples met in person or were introduced by others. If the couple met in person I asked them where they first met. If others introduced the couple I asked them if it was through

friends, relatives, or marriage agencies. However, during the course of fieldwork, I did not meet anyone who used marriage agencies. If friends or relatives introduced them I asked for more details about the matchmakers. Further questions were about where they arranged to meet and details about the meeting processes. I also asked about dating and details about their wedding ceremony, wedding reception, and the bride price. Following question included if any of these Vietnamese women's siblings/relatives/friends also married Chinese men, the same question was asked the Chinese men. The purpose of this question was to see if the married couples introduced other Vietnamese women from home to Chinese men and if any of the Chinese men had introduced other Chinese men to Vietnamese women.

Additionally, I questioned single Chinese men and women about their opinions of the Vietnamese brides in their communities. For the single Chinese men, I asked if they would prefer to marry a Vietnamese woman or a local Chinese woman, and if they wanted to marry a Vietnamese woman. Question asked the local Chinese women about Chinese men marrying Vietnamese women helps me to understand different perspectives on cross-border marriages.

During my fieldwork, I also visited the marriage registration office, the one-child policy office, and the police station at Longbang Village and Jingxi County seat to ask about the documentation for cross-border marriages. Questions covered different types of visas required to travel from Vietnam and the procedure for visa application. The questions about getting a marriage license for a Chinese man and a Vietnamese woman mainly focused on how to prepare the documentation and the cost of the license. I also asked questions about whether these Chinese-Vietnamese couples have to follow the one child policy.

Limited time and money meant I could not reach all the Chinese-Vietnamese couples in all the villages and towns in Jingxi County. I visited as many places as I could and interviewed as many couples as possible to get as much information as I could for the data analysis.

3.3 Data Analysis

To analyze the data and make the discussion clear, I used qualitative and quantitative methods. Using a qualitative research approach, I first analyzed the data from the interview notes to gather an in-depth understanding of marriage migration behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior. In this way, I can acquire further information from a small group of Chinese-Vietnamese couples, rather than large samples.

For the qualitative study and analysis, I used the notes and the photographs from my fieldwork. The qualitative study showed the interactions with the people I interviewed through the photographs and notes provided examples (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 212-215). I translated the notes into English so that I can use some quotes for the argument in my thesis and outlined the notes using Microsoft Word. I used pseudonyms for the people interviewed during the fieldwork because of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements. Before each conversation, I provided the questions, which were categorized using the different sections of the questionnaire. Subsections help to direct questions so later I can use them to combine the informal conversations and pictures to better discuss the research questions.

Next, I used some quotes from the interviews and then combined them with the multiple-choice questions to analyze why Vietnamese women wanted to marry Chinese men. I then created tables to calculate the frequency for each motivation for marriage. For example, from the conversations among the Vietnamese women, many of them mentioned that they married

Chinese men for a better life. The quotes can be used as qualitative data to help to explain the quantitative data, the numbers of the Vietnamese women and the reason for marrying Chinese men and vice versa.

Qualitative methods can be used to understand the meaning of the conclusions produced by quantitative methods. Using quantitative methods, it is possible to give precise and testable expression to qualitative ideas. I used qualitative methods (some of the in-depth interview notes) to produce information only on the particular cases studied, and then I used quantitative data methods for more general conclusions. I also used secondary data, for example, Chinese census data, to obtain empirical support for further information on my study.

To get results from the raw data to generate a conclusion, I used Microsoft Excel to input the couple's demographic information. I labeled the columns with the questions: age, education level and so forth. I labeled the rows by couples, so I had all couples' information in one spreadsheet. I used this Excel spreadsheet to create many tables in response to different sets of questions. I used the question information to calculate frequency and percentage. For this, I put all the couples I interviewed together in one table for their education levels. I listed the frequency of people and then calculated the percentage. In addition, I also used Excel to create bar charts and pie charts that provided a visual presentation of categorical data. I categorized the year of each couples' marriage. I used a bar chart to compare the different time period of these marriages. Secondary data from the 2000 Chinese census are used to create additional bar charts showing, for example, the sex ratio information.

Finally, I combined the tables, notes, and photos to analyze the data further. For example, to analyze the data connected to the question of Vietnamese women marrying Chinese men, I created a table and interpreted the results. Then I quoted some of the key sentences to explain

why life is better in China than in Vietnam, especially the housing conditions which the Vietnamese women described as more favorable in China. I will show the study findings in Chapters Four, Five and Six.

Chapter 4 - Cross-border Marriages between China and Vietnam

This chapter begins with a short introduction of the current trends of cross-border marriages between China and Vietnam. I then summarize the demographic characteristics of the Chinese-Vietnamese couples I interviewed. At the end of the chapter, I discuss the nature of these couples' marriages.

4.1 Current Trends in Cross-border Marriages

After China and Vietnam resumed trade links in 1991, bilateral trade increased dramatically. Both nations worked to establish an “economic corridor” from China’s Yunnan province to Vietnam’s northern provinces and cities. A similar economic zone is needed to increase the trade between the countries to link China’s Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region with Vietnam’s Lang Son and Quang Ninh provinces and the cities of Ha Noi and Hai Phong (SINA 2008). These commercial ties, along with the geographic linkages, cultural compatibility of individuals who share an ethnic/cultural identity, values and practices, facilitate marriages between the people of these countries (Jin 1995).

Although scholars (Nguyen and Hugo 2005) note that marriage migration from Vietnam to northern neighboring provinces in China has undoubtedly increased substantially, their study provides no data showing the volume of marriage migration of Vietnamese women to China. The Chinese government has never posted any data on international marriages between Chinese and Vietnamese people. A study by Jin (1995) documented that the police station in Guangxi reported more than 12,000 marriages between Chinese men and Vietnamese women in 1993. In addition, many Vietnamese women married to Chinese men reside in China undocumented.

Tengxun News (one of the biggest Chinese media corporations) reported that there are more than seventy Vietnamese brides in Hong'an County, Hubei province, making the largest number of Vietnamese brides in a country (Yuan 2013). Marriages between Vietnamese women and Chinese men have increased recently. Many Chinese newspapers like *Nanguo Daily* and *Yangcheng Evening News* (a Guangzhou newspaper) have reported about "Vietnamese brides boom" (*Nanguo Daily* 2003; *Indian Express* 2012). The news media focuses on Vietnam's mail-order bride business, which is booming in China with a growing numbers of Chinese men going to Vietnam in search of Vietnamese women to marry (Chen 2011). SINA news reports that Chinese men are "Group Shopping for Vietnamese Brides" (*Hangzhou Daily* 2011).

The increasing number of Vietnamese brides in China is also reflected in the couples I interviewed. The number of these marriages peaked between 1990 and 1999 (see Figure 4.1). All the couples I interviewed married voluntarily. I saw no examples of bride trafficking in my study, although the sample in this study is not representative. However, my data can help people understand marriage migration of Vietnamese women to China by sharing the Chinese-Vietnamese couples' opinion.



Figure 4.1 Marriage Dates of the Couples Interviewed in Jingxi, Guangxi, China.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Chinese-Vietnamese Couples

The fact that Vietnamese women are from remote rural areas in Vietnam makes it difficult to map their villages. Figure 4.2 shows the approximate locations of the hometowns of Vietnamese brides at the provincial level. In Table 4.1, I listed four major origin provinces of the Vietnamese women and others involved. The women are mainly from the northern part of Vietnam, especially Cao Bang Province (See Figure 4.2, Table 4.1).



Figure 4.2 Origin Provinces of the Vietnamese Women interviewed.

Origin Places of the Vietnamese women	Number of Women	Percentage
Cao Bang	50	78
Lao Cai	5	8
Quang Ninh	3	5
Thai Nguyen	2	3
Other	4	6

Table 4.1 Home Provinces of the Vietnamese Women.

Variables	Range	Vietnamese Women		Chinese Men	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Age	<25	7	11	1	5
	25-35	29	45	17	28
	36-45	19	29	26	43
	46-59	7	11	12	20
	60+	2	3	2	3
Education	Primary	38	60	33	55
Level	Secondary	20	31	20	33
	Technical	2	3	5	8
	College	3	5	2	3
Occupation	Farmers	20	31	40	67
	Temporary	2	13	20	33
	Workers				
	Retail	21	30	10	17
	Other	2	3	1	2

Table 4.2 Age, Level of Education, and Occupations of Respondents.

Table 4.2 shows three demographic characteristics: age, level of education, and occupation. Most of the Vietnamese women were twenty-five to forty-five years old, and the Chinese men ranged from twenty-five to fifty-nine. The average age of these Vietnamese women is thirty-two, and the average age of the Chinese men is thirty-seven. The age difference in this study (five years) differs from seventeen years in Kim's (2007) study and thirteen years in

Hugo's (2005) study. The second variable in the table is level of education. Most of these couples had an education level less than secondary school. Some had attended college but did not finish their degrees.

The last demographic characteristic in Table 4.2 is occupation. I categorized their occupations into four groups. The people I interviewed mainly worked as farmers, temporary workers, or retailers. According to the 1990 Chinese census, ninety-seven percent of the population in the town of Longbang was farmers. When a Vietnamese woman marries a Chinese farmer she will likely be working on the farm. At the same time, the farmer couples have some land to grow crops, and they also raise livestock like pigs, cows, chickens, and ducks to support the family. In some cases, they might have extra livestock to sell.

Some couples run businesses together, such as a restaurant, but sometimes they work separately in retail. Other couples operate a business across the border. These couples can take advantage of price differences and get things from Vietnam to sell in China and vice versa (Desai 2007, 29). Yu's neighbor sells bananas that she gets from Vietnam. For example, Figure 4.3 shows her house, which is full of bananas obtained from Vietnam. Usually, she and her friends do business together in a temporary shop at one of the regional bazaars (see Figure 4.4). In this business, she keeps all the bananas at home and then sells them in the morning market in Longbang Village. Some economic geographers place this kind of business in the informal sector, because she does not pay taxes (Hector 2005; Sassen 1998; Schaeffer 2009).



Figure 4.3 Inside the House of a Vietnamese Woman Who Sells Bananas in Longbang Village. June 2011. Longbang, Guangxi, China. Photo: Lianling Su



Figure 4.4 Vietnamese Woman Selling Bananas at the Bazaar. June 2011. LongBang Town, Guangxi, China. Photo: Lianling Su

There are two types of temporary workers in the study area. The first is migrant worker. Many Chinese men leave their villages or communities for other places to earn more money and take their Vietnamese wives with them. The second is temporary employee who works locally. Some work as construction workers for neighbors who build new houses, others work for small companies mining coal and minerals. These companies are in what is called the grey market, where commodities are traded “through distribution channels which, while legal, are unofficial, unauthorized, or unintended by the original manufacturer” (Sugden 2009, 36). For example, local companies do not officially register with the government to get permission for coal and mineral mining, thus they do not pay taxes. In addition, without a contract between the employer and employees, employers can pay their employees in cash.

When I asked about income level, answers varied. Some couples provided me with specific numbers. For example, a butcher I interviewed earned about CNY20, 000 (US\$3,077) per year. His Vietnamese wife ran a teashop and earned around CNY15, 000 (US\$2,308) per year. However, some couples could not calculate how much they earned per year because many factors influenced their income. One Vietnamese woman worked on the farm, and the harvest depends on what she chose to grow and the market. She was delighted to tell me that one year she earned CNY36, 000 (around US\$5,538) selling all her crops and most of the pigs she raised. Her husband worked as a temporary construction worker. When he was not employed, he stayed at home taking care of their children and his mother, receiving no income. Many couples did not have a stable income, so exact numbers were not possible.

The next demographic characteristic was regarding the language the couples use to communicate. Figure 4.5 shows 81 percent of the couples used the Zhuang language for everyday communication within and outside of their home. The language similarity is because of the historical and geographic factors. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, the Manchu period, and the late colonial (1870-1940) period, twenty million Chinese people left for Southeast Asia (Hugo 2005a; Yang and Chang 2011). Today Southeast Asia is home to as many as thirty million people of Chinese heritage. The Chinese ethnic group from Zhuang moved to Vietnam and there became known as the Tay.

Many Tay people live in northern Vietnam, particularly in Caobang, Lang Son, Bac Kan, Thai Nguyen, and Quang Ninh Provinces, where they live along the valleys and on the lower slopes of the mountains. Another Chinese ethnic groups living in Vietnam is the Nung group who lives primarily in the provinces of Bac Giang, Bac Kan, Cao Bang, Lang Son, Thai Nguyen, and Tueyen Quang. The Nung and Tay villages in the mountains create rural self-sufficient

economies isolated from modern means of communication. The Nung and Tay still maintain ties with the Chinese Zhuang ethnic group (Dien 2002). All three of these groups are closely related ethnically, on both the Chinese and Vietnamese sides of the border. There are 16,556 members of the Zhuang ethnic race in Jingxi County. The main language for this region is Zhuang according to the 2000 Chinese census data. The sharing of the Zhuang language helps people communicate.

In the literature review, I noted how scholars pointed out that language plays a role in the marriage market between Taiwan and Vietnam. When a Taiwanese customer seeks a Vietnamese woman, he prefers an ethnic Chinese Vietnamese woman. A shared language enables them to communicate (Wang and Chang 2002; Hisao ad Kung 1998). Language barriers caused difficulties for many brides in destination countries (Ta 2002; Wang and Chang 2002). One example is that Vietnamese women who marry Taiwanese men live in cities alone with their new husbands and may suffer social isolation and greater difficulties in learning Mandarin Chinese (William 2010).

A language barrier does not exist in my study area, because the majority of the couples can speak Zhuang language. The official language in China is Mandarin (Mandarin refers to Standard Chinese, which is often simply called Chinese), many Vietnamese women try to improve their ability to speak Mandarin. So the following questions I asked the Vietnamese women were about whether they learned Mandarin before their marriage, followed by questions about their ability to speak Mandarin.

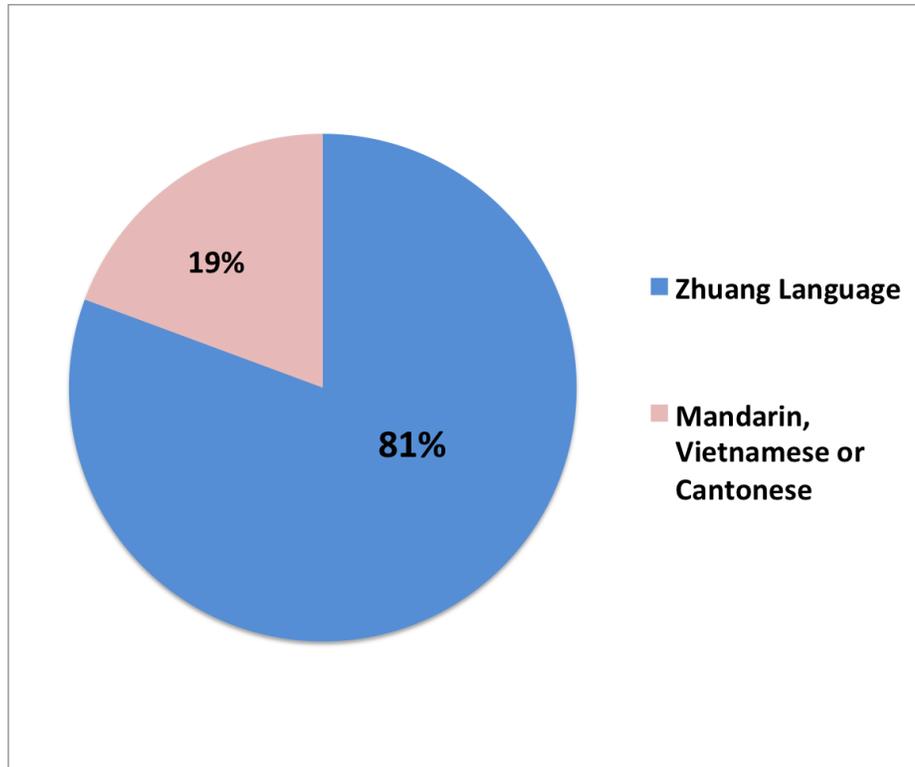


Figure 4.5 Languages Couples Used to Communicate.

Figure 4.6 shows the percentage of Vietnamese women who learn Mandarin before their marriage. Eighty-eight percent of them had no chance to learn Mandarin before their marriage. Figure 4.7 shows the Mandarin speaking skills of married Vietnamese women. Twenty-seven percent of these women can speak fluent Mandarin after living in China. Sixty-two percent of them can speak conversational Mandarin. The final group is comprised of twelve percent of Vietnamese women who cannot speak Mandarin Chinese at all often because they have been married less than one year, or led a purely agrarian lifestyle that limits them to the Zhuang language.

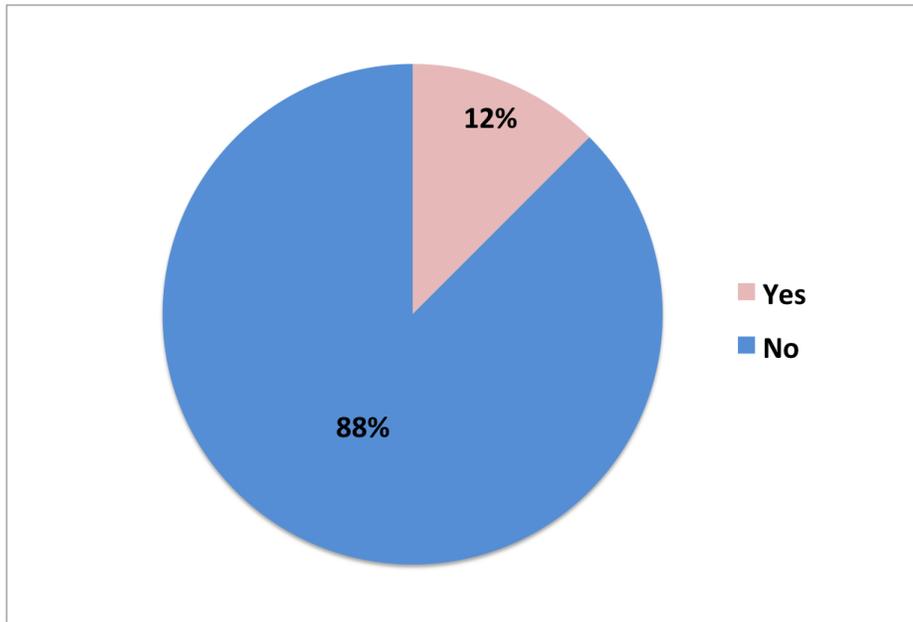


Figure 4.6 Percentage of Vietnamese Women Who Learn Mandarin Before Marriage

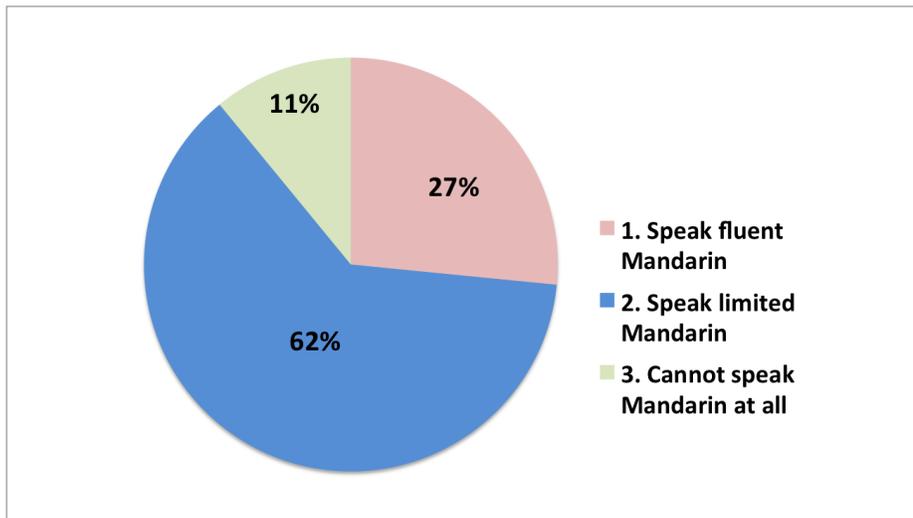


Figure 4.7 Current Mandarin Skills for the Vietnamese Women.

4.3 Nature of the Cross-border Marriages

Most of the Vietnamese women I interviewed are undocumented residents in China. They do not have visas, marriage licenses, or Chinese household registration. Many undocumented Vietnamese brides live in Jingxi County. A hotel owner named Luo shared her experiences:

Many Chinese men marry Vietnamese women nowadays. Chinese-Vietnamese couples stay in my hotel very often. The government requires people to use their ID card to register for a hotel. However, sometimes I forget to check their ID. If I get caught by the police, I have to pay a CNY200 (around US\$30) fine. (Luo, a fifty-eight year old woman, who ran a hotel in Jingxi county seat.)

Most of these Vietnamese women do not know how to apply for a visa and usually cross the border via dirt roads. As the Vietnamese woman I interviewed called Nong mentioned,

I can cross the border using dirt roads because it is free and many people cross the border via dirt roads. I do not know how to get documentation, and no one told me how. All I know is people told me that I couldn't cross from the checkpoint. I will get caught and sent back to Vietnam.

My interpreter Tao explained that her social isolation in rural Vietnam, where her community has only four to five households, meant she did not even understand what a visa was, let alone how to apply for one. During my fieldwork, I captured a moment after the morning bazaar in China, when many Vietnamese women were heading back to Vietnam (see Figure 4.8). Huang's father commented on the issue of travel between the borders.

Many Chinese people cross the border using dirt roads, the same with these Vietnamese women. Some Vietnamese women do business in China and commute cross the border a lot via these roads.

Many Vietnamese women who married Chinese men cross the border on these dirt roads.



Figure 4.8 Vietnamese Women Heading Back to Vietnam Using a Dirt Road. June 2011. Tanghuai, Jingxi, Guangxi, China. Photo: Lianling Su

One reason couples do not apply for a marriage license is they follow the marriage tradition of taking the marriage vows at a wedding ceremony. The wedding ceremony is a ritual where parents, relatives, and friends recognize the union as a marriage. Sometimes this tradition

involves just the approval of the couple's parents and their relatives without any wedding ceremony.

The second reason is the complexity of applying for an international marriage license. I visited the marriage registration office in the Jingxi County seat to learn how to apply for one. One of the officials told me that they do not issue any international marriage licenses. If couples want to register for international marriages, they must travel to Baise City. This involves a five-to-six-hour drive from the Jingxi county seat, which includes transferring from bus to bus. In addition, when applying for an international marriage license in China, couples have to report to the embassies of their birth countries. In this case, the Chinese men have to travel to Baise City, and the Vietnamese women have to travel to Hanoi, the capital city of Vietnam. This complicated procedure includes multiple visits, making the documentation process expensive and time consuming which many couples can hardly afford.

I also visited the Jingxi police station to ask about how these Vietnamese women could apply for household registration, and to ask questions about the citizenship of any children born to these couples. Huang explained:

The Vietnamese women should have a marriage license to apply for a permit of residency. They can apply for an ID card as well. Once they live in China for eight years, they can apply to have their name added on their husband's household registration. If they have children, and the children were born in China, then the children are Chinese citizens. The couple can use the birth certificate to apply for household registration for their children. In addition, the couple has to follow the one child policy.

From my fieldwork interviews, many couples do not know how to apply for an international marriage license and a household registration, let alone have the financial resources to complete the procedure. However, no couple reported their children without any household registration. The reason is that the local government in Jingxi County allows these couples to use their children's birth certificate to apply for a household registration. Yet, *Yangcheng Evening News 2012* newspaper reports that many Chinese-Vietnamese couples' children cannot use their birth certificate to apply for a household registration in Guangdong province. During the 2010 Chinese census, some county governments gave these children household registration so that they can attend school. At the same time, these local counties' governments in Guangdong province also gave Vietnamese women permanent residency to let them stay in China.

I learned that fear of expulsion is a major concern for the Vietnamese women I interviewed, given their illegal immigration status. Their fear of expulsion makes the Chinese-Vietnamese couples eager to obtain proper documentation. These Vietnamese women work hard to gain the respect of the local residents of their new communities. Once the respect is earned, the communities will protect Chinese-Vietnamese couples often warning them or helping them hide when the officials come to the region to check for illegal residents. These women often go back to Vietnam for a short time and return to their husband's house after the threat has passed. Another example is that villagers will usually deny any knowledge of Vietnamese brides when outsiders ask.

4.4 Summary

This chapter provides some information about the Chinese-Vietnamese couples I interviewed. These couples are generally poorly educated and do not have a stable income. They

are mainly farmers, temporary workers, and retail employees. They use the Zhuang language to communicate with each other, because the Vietnamese women are mainly from northern Vietnam. Many Vietnamese women learn Mandarin and can understand Mandarin Chinese after they have lived in China for some years. These women remain undocumented because of the cost and the complexity of acquiring documents. However, Jingxi County government issues their children household registration so that their children enjoy legal Chinese citizenship.

Chapter 5 - Motivations of the Cross-border Marriages

This chapter addresses the first two research questions about the motivations behind cross-border marriages, that is, why do Vietnamese women marry Chinese men, not Vietnamese men, and similarly why do Chinese men marry Vietnamese women, instead of local Chinese women?

5.1 Motivations for Vietnamese Women to Marry Chinese Men

Marriage is generally more than just the simple joining of two people and often involves decision making by the couple, their family members and sometimes non-family members (Oppenheimer 1988). The final decision makers and who those decision makers are in relation to the marrying couples, provide information on the motivations behind a cross-border marriage. Though there are forced marriages such as in cases involving woman trafficking, from the conversations I had with people, parents sold their daughters to traffickers against their will. Figure 5.1 shows, thirty-three percent of the brides made the decision to marry by themselves. Most of the respondents, sixty-two percent, reported that the decision makers for their cross-border marriages include both parents and brides. There is a strong parental involvement in the migration decision-making process and often it is the parents who make the formal and final decision. 5 percent of these brides followed their parents' wishes rather than their own. For example is a Vietnamese woman named HÒNG, her parents arranged her marriage because they have acquaintances in China. They visit China very often and they know a Chinese man, Huang, and his family. HÒNG said that she was young at that time of the arrangement and wanted to obey to her parents. The women I interviewed mentioned other motivations as well.

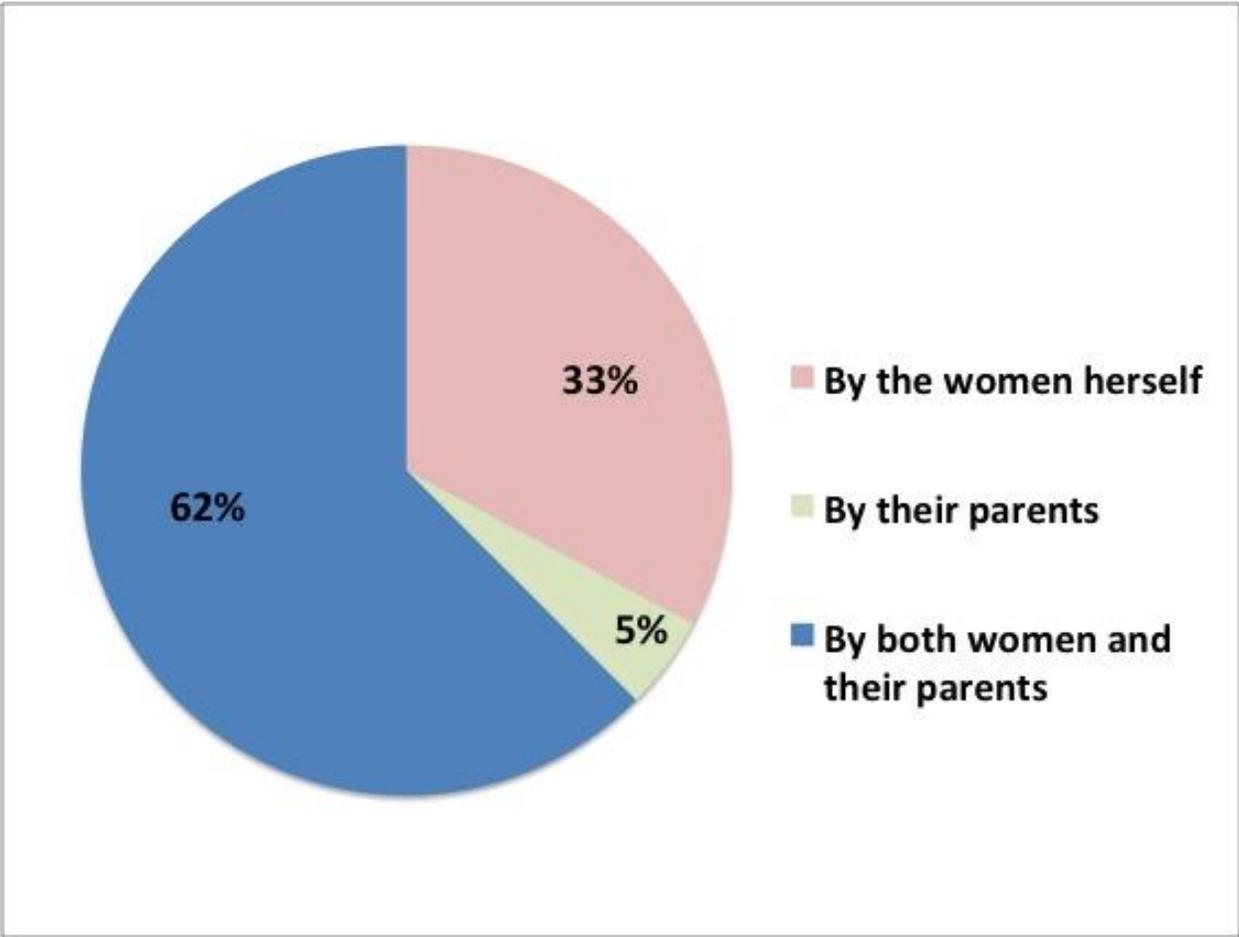


Figure 5.1 Marriage Decision Making for Vietnamese Women (n=64).

Table 5.1 shows the reasons why Vietnamese women marry Chinese men, the most common motivation being to have a better life and to help their families. In the questions they were given the opportunity to either choose one or several motivations for marrying a Chinese man and moved to China, and were able to provide explanations for their answers. Twenty-three out of the total of sixty-four Vietnamese women interviewed gave a single answer. The remaining forty-one women provided multiple motivations for their marriage. As stated in Chapter Three, I calculated how many women choose each answer. Fifty women said that life is

better in China than Vietnam. Thirty-three women mentioned they want to help their family by marrying out of the country. Some minor motivations include preferring Chinese men to Vietnamese men and the difficulties finding a local Vietnamese man. Six women gave other reasons for their motivation to marry Chinese men. In the following section, I demonstrate the motivations of the Vietnamese women to marry Chinese men based on interview data.

Reasons for Vietnamese women marrying Chinese men	Number of women
1. To have a better life	50
2. To support her family in Vietnam	33
3. Prefer Chinese men to Vietnamese men	11
4. Difficult to find a local man	5
5. Other	6

Table 5.1 Reasons for Vietnamese Women Marrying Chinese Men.

5.1.1 For a Better Life

Fifty Vietnamese women I interviewed married Chinese men to have better economic opportunities. These opportunities ensure a better quality of life compared to the poor economic conditions in their own country. Most of the Vietnamese women are from impoverished families. The incidence of poverty in Vietnam is the highest in the northern uplands. Northern Vietnam is hilly with altitudes typically between 500 and 1,000 meters, and some mountainous areas have peaks above 3,000 meters. Due to this topography, the infrastructure is poor, which leads to communities there being relatively isolated from the rest of the country (Minot, Epprecht, Tran, and Quang 2006). According to the Vietnam Household Living Standards Survey in 2002 from the Vietnam General Statistical Office (GSO), average household net income is less than US\$100 per year for farmers in the northern uplands.

Some Vietnamese women are from very small rural areas that with only four to five households in their villages and most of them are farmers before marriage. When it is a bad year for crops, farmers struggle to support their family. The Vietnamese government does not have funds to help them cope with disasters. This also causes most of the families not to have decent houses. Many women described their parents' houses more like a shelter, similar to those that I visited near the border in Vietnam (See Figure 5.2).

Forty-one Vietnamese women said that due to the economic conditions in Vietnam, life is hard. For example, one of the women stated that she had to travel around three hours in each direction if she wanted to attend school while growing up in Vietnam. She had to quit school to help out on the farm at a young age. There are many examples of hardship that villagers live through every day. For many Vietnamese women, one major part of having a better life is to have better housing conditions, contrary to the women's hometowns where they have marginal living conditions. Two of these Vietnamese women explained how marrying Chinese men would improve their own economic conditions and that their parents encouraged them to do so:

Our community is very poor and isolated. Our families hoped that we could marry Chinese men for a better life. Our parents travel a lot to China and they told me that life in China is better because many communities are more developed. They also said that at least after my marriage, we would be living in our husbands' decent houses rather than poor houses in Vietnam.



Figure 5.2 Border Houses in Vietnam. Photography is Taken from the Chinese Side. June. 2011. LongBang, Guangxi, China. Photo: Lianling Su

Tao wanted to share some experience of Vietnam, so he took me to a small town called Chaling in Vietnam, which is a twenty-minute drive from the Longbang checkpoint. There were some Vietnamese women waiting on the Chinese side to recruit people for sightseeing, using their broken Chinese. They could give us a ride to Chaling for the total round trip cost of CNY20 (around US\$4). Tao and I crossed the border using a dirt road with these Vietnamese women and also did some sightseeing in Chaling. On the way, I saw many houses that would be considered only shacks (see Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.4). Tao told me that houses in the small towns of North Vietnam are all like that. While we were sightseeing in the area, one of the scooter drivers described the difference in housing between the two countries. She explained (as interpreted by Tao because the driver did not speak Chinese),

We travel between the border areas every day. China is much better than Vietnam. Chinese people are rich and we are so poor. People in China, most of them, have a nice house with several stores. Inside the house they have a big color television, washing machine, rice cooker and so forth. We cannot afford these nice things. I can earn some money using my scooters to take Chinese people for short sightseeing trips in Vietnam.

Another scooter driver has a friend married to a Chinese man. The driver introduced her friend to us, and she agreed to speak to us,

My friends encouraged me to marry a Chinese man because they said that life is better in China. They told me they earn more money in China so they can send some money back home. I visited China many times before marriage and I gained an impression that some parts of China are much better compared to my hometown. I heard some Vietnamese women married Chinese men and they have a very good life in China, so I wanted to marry a Chinese man too.



Figure 5.3 Houses in Chaling, Vietnam. June. 2011. Photo: Lianling Su



Figure 5.4 More Houses in Chaling Vietnam. June. 2011. Photo: Lianling Su

Three of the Vietnamese women took me around to show me how houses in China are much better than those in Vietnam. I took pictures across the red fences dividing China from Vietnam. Figure 5.2 shows houses in Vietnam. On the north side of the red fences, the Chinese government built houses near the border and sold them at low price to Chinese citizens to increase trade (Figure 5.5). These houses were designed for people to have businesses on the lower floor of the houses and live in the upper floors (Figure 5.6).



Figure 5.5 The border Trade Control Office Near the Longbang Border Checkpoint, Jingxi, China. Front. June. 2011. LongBang, Guangxi, China. Photo: Lianling Su



Figure 5.6 Border Houses in Longbang, Jingxi, China. Front. June. 2011. LongBang Town, Guangxi, China. Photo: Lianling Su

In addition to building new houses near the border checkpoint, the Chinese government also helped the citizens rebuild some of the poor houses. The government will provide 10 percent of the renovation cost. Yu also mentioned that in recent years some of the farmers had rebuilt their houses in Longbang Village (see Figure 5.7). Overall, the housing conditions are getting better. I took some photographs while I was in Longbang, especially those of the Chinese-Vietnamese couples' (see Figure 5.8). Their houses usually have two to three stories, with brick walls, large nice windows, and white-painted walls. Their houses also have utilities. One of the Vietnamese women I spoke with explained how differences in housing affected her family. She stated,

My child does not want to go back to Vietnam with me because the living condition is not favorable in my mother's place. For example, there is no tap water in the village. What is worse, when it rains the house leaks. She wants to stay in our nice house in China.



Figure 5.7 Longbang Village, Three Miles from Longbang Border Checkpoint in China. June. 2011. LongBang, Guangxi, China. Photo: Lianling Su



Figure 5.8 A Chinese-Vietnamese couple's house (the house in the middle) in the Longbang Village. June. 2011. LongBang, Guangxi, China. Photo: Lianling Su

Some Vietnamese women provided additional perspectives to life in China as opposed to than in Vietnam. Living in a different country allows these women to enjoy social services such as good transportation, education, and better health care (Wang and Chang 2002). Two Vietnamese women pointed out that,

Our husbands are Chinese citizens and they can get the benefits (health care) from the Chinese government, which our cousins' Vietnamese husbands do not have in Vietnam. The Chinese government will help us when we have crop disasters by giving us extra money to compensate for our loss. When it is a bad year for harvest, it will be a hard time for my folks back in Vietnam.

Further, once the couples have children, their children can attend better schools and earn a better education. One of the Vietnamese women noted that,

Before my marriage, I heard from my relatives who married Chinese men that their children received a better education. One of my relatives' sons attended high school in Jingxi County seat. She told me that it is a big town with many nice houses. Life is easier there. I was so envious of them. They introduced a Chinese man to me and I was happy to marry him. Now, my eldest son has a nice job in Nanning after he attended technical school. I have visited him many times. I have never seen such a big city in my life and I am happy for my son.

Overall, the main motivation for these women to marry Chinese men is for a better life. For some, a better life means decent housing and running water. For others, while housing was important, they wanted the next generation to have the better education and social system privileges available in China that would not be possible in their home villages.

5.1.2 To Support Families in Vietnam

A total of thirty-three women stated that supporting their families financially in Vietnam is another motivation to marry a Chinese man. Before asking these women how they supported their families in Vietnam, I asked how often they visited them. The frequency of their visits is shown in Table 5.2 below. The difference in how often the women go back to visit their families in Vietnam is due to a number of factors.

The first factor is the distance from where she lived in China to her parents' home in Vietnam. Some of the Vietnamese women's hometowns are far away from the border. A woman named Thi only visited her family once a year because it takes seven to eight hours by bus to travel home, which is the longest travel time among the Vietnamese women I interviewed. Some Vietnamese women's hometowns are around one or two hours from the border and within a walking distance so they could visit more often. The second factor is their occupations. If the Vietnamese women do business, they travel a great deal between the countries and they get more chances to visit home.

The other factor is whether or not they still have connections in Vietnam. Nine women never went back to Vietnam after their marriage because they no longer had connections there. In addition, they mentioned that even though they still have some relatives and friends in Vietnam, they rarely contact them. The most important connection is their parents. If their parents are still alive, the women will visit home more often. This distinction is seen in the example of one Vietnamese woman, Tuyen. Her parents passed away when she was little but she has one older sister who is married and living in southern Vietnam. After her marriage, she never visited Vietnam due to the long distance and travel expenses. She does not have a close relationship with her sister, let alone any other relatives. Two Vietnamese women's mothers died and their fathers remarried. They do not visit their fathers often because they are not close to their fathers. For them, the connection with their mothers was more important.

Visit Frequency	Number of Women	Percent (%)
1. Every month	12	19
2. Every two or three months	5	8
3. Every six months	25	39
4. Once per year	13	20
5. Never	9	14

Table 5.2 How Often the Vietnamese Women Visited Their Hometowns.

While not all Vietnamese women are able to visit their families, many do send money or goods to them. Figure 5.9 below shows that only 14 percent of the women who did not send money or goods back to Vietnam. They explained that it was because they lost connections. The remaining 86 percent of the women who did give money or goods to their original families also visit Vietnam. Most of the time, they bring livestock, clothes, and digital items back home for some holidays or festivals. Overall, the women were happy to be able to provide help to their families. A woman named Nguyet said.

My husband earns enough money, and we renovated the house three years ago. I run my tea shop and my son does not go to school yet, so I can send a lot of money back to Vietnam to my mother. My mother and my relatives are happy for me, because I can help them financially and visit them three to four times a year.

Binh gave another example was that,

Before my marriage, my village had some women who married Chinese men. Every time these women visited their families [in Vietnam], they brought many nice things from China. They also bragged about how much money they have and gave a lot of money to their parents. One of my friend's sisters [Nguyet] married a Chinese man. When we were still in elementary school, her sister supported all her tuition fees and living expenses. Some of my friends encouraged me to marry a Chinese man so that I can help out my poor family like my friend's sister.

For these women, the ability to provide for their families with money and goods is a significant motivation for them to marry Chinese men. Most of the Vietnamese women either experienced or heard from people around them, the stories of the women who married Chinese men and how they helped their family financially.

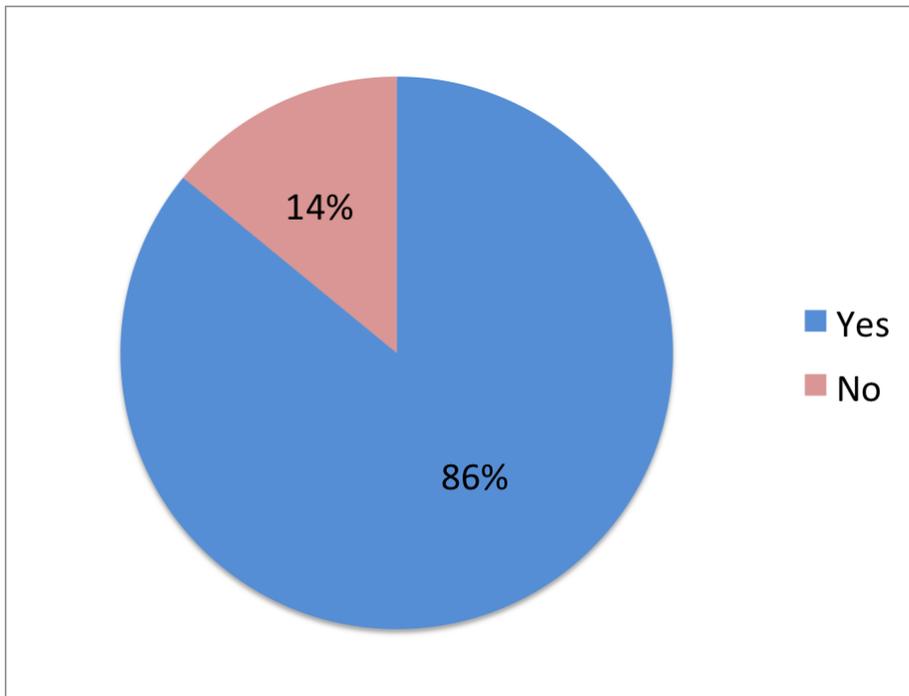


Figure 5.9 Percentage of Vietnamese Women Who Sent Money or Goods to Vietnam

5.1.3 Preference for Chinese Men

For some Vietnamese women, choosing a Chinese man to marry was more about not wanting to marry a Vietnamese man. Belanger and Lihn show how many Vietnamese women and men in their study categorized Vietnamese men as being “men of pleasure,” “drunken men,” “irresponsible men,” or “violent men” (2011, 60). Similar comments from several Vietnamese women I interviewed mentioned that Vietnamese men are seen as undesirable marriage partners. Some shared stories from their neighborhoods about domestic violence with Vietnamese men. The women also shared their perceptions of Chinese men and stated that overall they prefer to marry a Chinese man instead of a Vietnamese man. One woman named Nguyet, said:

In my village, some Vietnamese men are violent. They treat their wives badly. Some of them do drugs and get drunk. They do not work hard on the farm. They let their wife do a lot of farm work and housework. I visited China many times before my marriage. It is the opposite: Chinese men work so hard on the farm and women can stay at home for the housework or take care of the children. Longbang villagers told me that in their village, most of the Chinese men are like that. In addition, they treat women nicely. I wanted to marry a Chinese man instead of a Vietnamese man.

Another Vietnamese woman named Phuong explained that her Vietnamese ex-husband was addicted to drugs and died. She also stated that her ex-husband did not treat her well. She decided then to marry a Chinese man because she heard that Chinese men were better than the Vietnamese men in her village. Someone introduced her to a Chinese man and she married him. A lot of Vietnamese women before they got married had learned from their friends or relatives about how Chinese men work hard to support their family. The communication between friends, families, and neighbors led the Vietnamese women to seek husbands from China. These Chinese men were very different from the Vietnamese men. Another Vietnamese woman named Dung from Tanghuai Village, shared her experience:

I left my Vietnamese husband five years ago, because he always got drunk and was irresponsible towards the family. My Chinese husband found me in Vietnam, and he said that he wanted to marry me because I am beautiful and hardworking. He said that he would work hard to make me happy. During several years, we raised pigs, cows, and

chickens to sell. At the same time, we grew some crops so that we had enough food. Two years ago, we had enough money so that we built our new house.

For some of the Vietnamese women, the decision to marry Chinese men is a clear choice when Vietnamese men are perceived to be not good husband. Many women talked about how much better their lives were with Chinese husbands than with Vietnamese men. Two of them in Longbang Village said,

Life and living conditions are almost the same in my hometown as in Longbang Village. After visiting China, we met Chinese men who were hardworking and respect women. I we would have a happy marriage because they were very nice people and it is hard to find that kind of men in my hometown. Because of that we both married Chinese men.

Such perception of difference between Chinese and Vietnamese men is not just wide spread in Vietnam. Some Chinese villagers shared the view their wives with respect. In Xinxing Town, Tao's aunt opined,

Most of the Chinese men treat their wives in a better manner than Vietnamese men do, and Chinese men have a good reputation in this region.

Some local Chinese people also think that Vietnamese men are irresponsible. For example, they said most Vietnamese men just stay at home and do nothing. Vietnamese women are the breadwinners. They have to work hard on the farm or do business and they also have to

do all the housework on top of that. Some single Chinese men were happy to offer their views about why Vietnamese women prefer Chinese husbands. A twenty-eight year old Chinese man, Huang, explained,

I have met many single Vietnamese women in China. I know many of them want to marry Chinese men, because they say Vietnamese men are lazy. They do not treat their wives as well as Chinese men do.

Regardless of reality, in marriage so in many other aspects of life, perception is what matters.

5.1.4 Difficulty Finding a Local Vietnamese Man

As shown in Table 5.1 at the beginning of this chapter, an additional motivation that five of the Vietnamese women gave for their cross-border marriages was the difficulty of finding local Vietnamese men. There are two reasons for this. The first is due to physical disadvantages such as disability. Yu's neighbor, who sells bananas, has a bad back, which makes it difficult for her to do any type of physical work. Because of that, she could not find a local Vietnamese man to marry. There is a large age difference between her and her Chinese husband is sixty-four years old while she is only thirty-six.

The second reason for the difficulty is the unbalanced sex ratio in some villages in northern Vietnam. Chapter Two discusses in detail the skewed sex ratio in Vietnam, and the marriage squeeze, as it applies in my study. Three Vietnamese women in the interviews mentioned that their villages have more women than men in their age group, so their relatives and friends introduced Chinese men to them. Nong is one such case:

I am from a very rural area, only four families there. It is hard to marry locally because there are more women than men. Many of my friends and siblings married out of the area. My parents had to find people to introduce me to Chinese men because they said that there were more men than women in China. It was easier for them to find a Chinese man for me.

Two of the Vietnamese women interviewed, Jihn and Khn were another case:

I had relatives already in China and they knew our village back in Vietnam has more women than men at marriageable age, so they helped to introduce Chinese men to us.

Yu's daughter also described this marriage squeeze situation for these Vietnamese women:

There are more women than men in some villages in Vietnam. It is difficult for Vietnamese women to find local men. To help solve this problem, many people introduced Vietnamese women to Chinese men in our village-causing there to be many Chinese-Vietnamese couples.

Tao introduced a Chinese businessman named Qi to me, who does a furniture business between China and Vietnam. This man explained another example of how the marriage squeeze caused a lack of local Vietnamese men. He has traveled to many places in Vietnam and he has connections. He pointed out that,

In some rural areas in Vietnam, people have strong son preference. I visited many villages in Vietnam like this: many families' youngest child is a son and among the children the rest are daughters, so there are more women than men in these communities.

5.1.5 Other Reasons

Six Vietnamese women mentioned other reasons during the interviews. One example Nhu (Figure 5.10) gave was,

My family has some connections in China. Due to the Vietnam War my family wanted me to marry a Chinese man so that I could live safely in China.



Figure 5.10 Nhu (left) and my Interpreter Tao (right). Xinxing Town, Guangxi, China.

Photo: Lianling Su

Three of the Vietnamese women pointed out another reason,

Our husband houses are not that far from our hometowns. Our family members and our friends encouraged us to marry Chinese men not only because they believed life is better in China, but also because we could have connections. In addition, we shared some common things and it is not that difficult to communicate with people in China.

The other the two Vietnamese women said they met the Chinese men. They liked each other and got married. One of them also mentioned,

Being married to a Chinese man is my destiny, God arranged this marriage.

5.2 Motivations for Chinese Men to Marry Vietnamese Women

During the fieldwork, I also talked with the Chinese men who married Vietnamese women about their marriage decision-making. Twenty-five percent of the men stated that they made the decision to marry by themselves (Figure 5.11). For the other 75 percent, their decisions for the cross-border marriages were made jointly with their parents. Similar to the Vietnamese women, the Chinese men reported that there is also strong parental involvement in the decision-making process regarding the cross-border marriages.

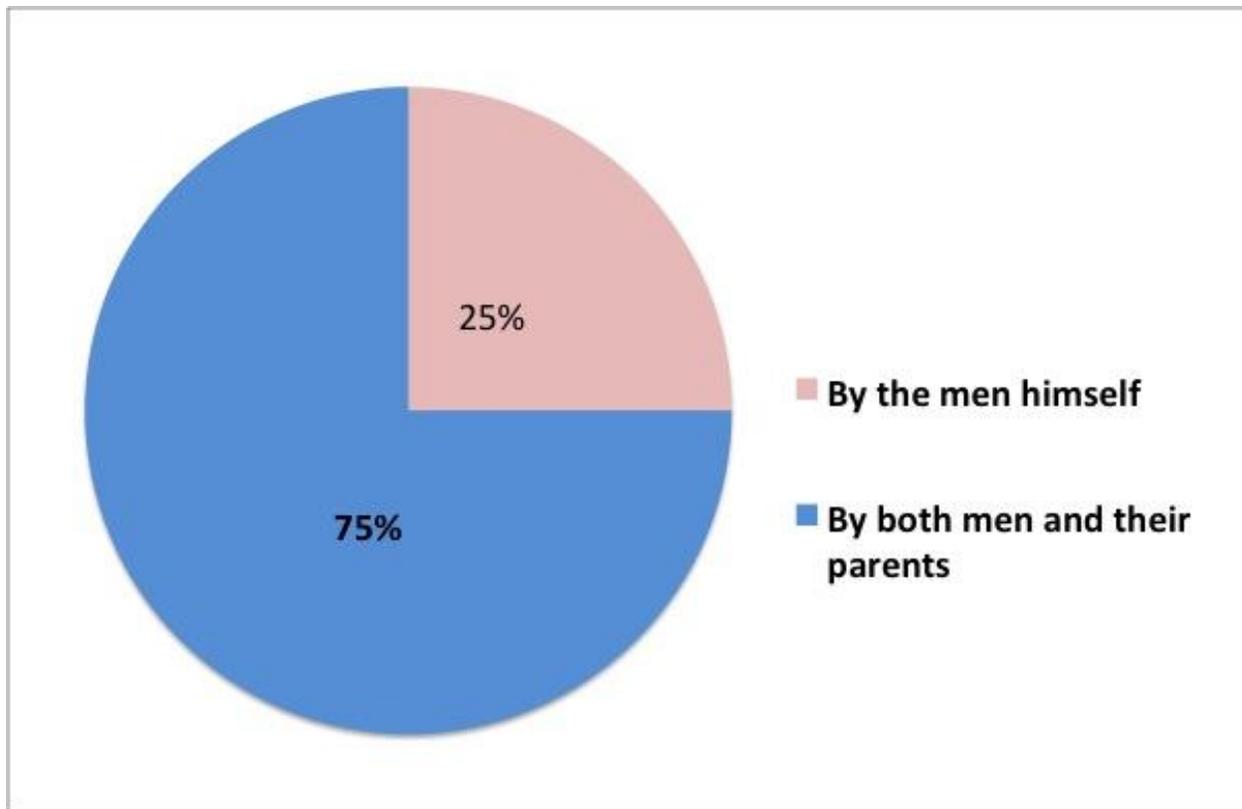


Figure 5.11 Marriage Decision-making for Chinese men (n=60).

After discussing who the decision makers were for the marriage, I asked the Chinese men about their motivations for marrying Vietnamese women. Table 5.3 below shows how many Chinese men chose each motivation. Research questions about marriage motivations for Vietnamese women and Chinese men are similar, thus Table 5.3 follows the same format as Table 5.1. Thirty out of the total of sixty Chinese men gave single reason and the remaining thirty provided multiple reasons. Forty men reported that their major motivation is due to the difficulty in finding a local woman. The reasons for these transnational marriages were not just to end their bachelorhood, but also stated to have foreign brides to assist in the work of agricultural production and help to take care of their elderly parents. Twenty-nine of the men interviewed stated it is cheaper to marry a Vietnamese woman and nineteen men stated their

physical and social disadvantages made it difficult to find local women who are willing to marry them. In the following section, I discuss the motivations of Chinese men for marrying Vietnamese women in more detail.

Reasons given by Chinese men marrying Vietnamese women	Number of men
1. Difficult to find a local woman	40
2. Cheaper to marry a Vietnamese woman	29
3. Social disadvantage	19
4. Other	2

Table 5.3 Reasons of Chinese Men Listed for Marrying Vietnamese Women.

5.2.1 Difficulty of Finding a Local Chinese Woman

There are two major reasons that contribute to the Chinese men having difficulty finding local Chinese women. The first reason is unbalanced sex ratio - men outnumbering women. The second one is that many local Chinese women have moved out of the region either to obtain a better job or to find a companion in marriage from another region.

The unbalanced sex ratio in the region is due to the son preference. China, like many other Asian countries, has a long history of the Confucian belief of son preference (Ebenstein 2008; Davin 2005; Hesketh 2011). Rural areas still have strong remnants of Confucianism with preferences of sons to daughters (Ebenstein 2008). The increase in sex ratio disparity also appears to have been caused by the one-child policy (Johansson and Nygren 1991; Li, Yi, and Zhang 2011). This policy allows couples in rural areas to have a second child if the first one is a daughter (Li, Yi, and Zhang 2011). The preference of sons to daughters causes many couples to not want any daughters at all; in fact, some people want their second child to be a son so much that they resort to sex-selective abortions (Attane and Veron 2005; Belanger, Khuat and Le

2003). China's census data indicates the enforcement of the one child policy is linked to the phenomenon of "missing girls" (Hull 1990; Jonhasson and Nygren 1991, 35; Riley 1996, 4; Eberstadt 2010).

The sex ratio in China rose from a relatively normal ratio of 108.5 boys to 100 girls in the early 1980s to 111:100 in 1990. The sex ratio at birth reached 117:100 in the year 2000, substantially higher than the natural baseline. According to the 2006 CIA World Factbook, China ranked the highest in the category of male to female ratio, with 113, but the most recent figure announced by the National Bureau of Statistics for the country's sex ratio of newborns stood at 119.45 boys to 100 girls in 2009 (China Yearbook 2010). China has a male surplus of 3 percent, around forty million more men than women in total (Zhou, Wang, Li and Hesketh 2011; Hesketh 2011). This imbalance is setting the stage for a marriage squeeze of monumental proportions. By 2030, projections suggest that more than 25 percent of Chinese men in their late 30s will never marry (Zhao 2003). China has the highest male to female sex ratio at birth in the world, with levels highest in poor rural areas (Zhou, Wang, Li and Hesketh 2011, 1422).

Data from the 2000 Chinese census shows a high sex ratio at birth in my study area as well. Figure 5.12 and Figure 5.13 show the sex ratio categorized into two groups by age: 0-14 and 15-64, the only two data sets that is available from the Chinese 2000 Statistic Yearbook. Figure 5.12 shows the sex ratios of the towns of Jingxi County. Half of the towns in Jingxi County have a sex ratio higher than 110:100. In addition, the sex ratio for four of the towns is higher than 120:100. The same is seen in Figure 5.13 - half of the towns with a high sex ratio that is higher than 110:100.

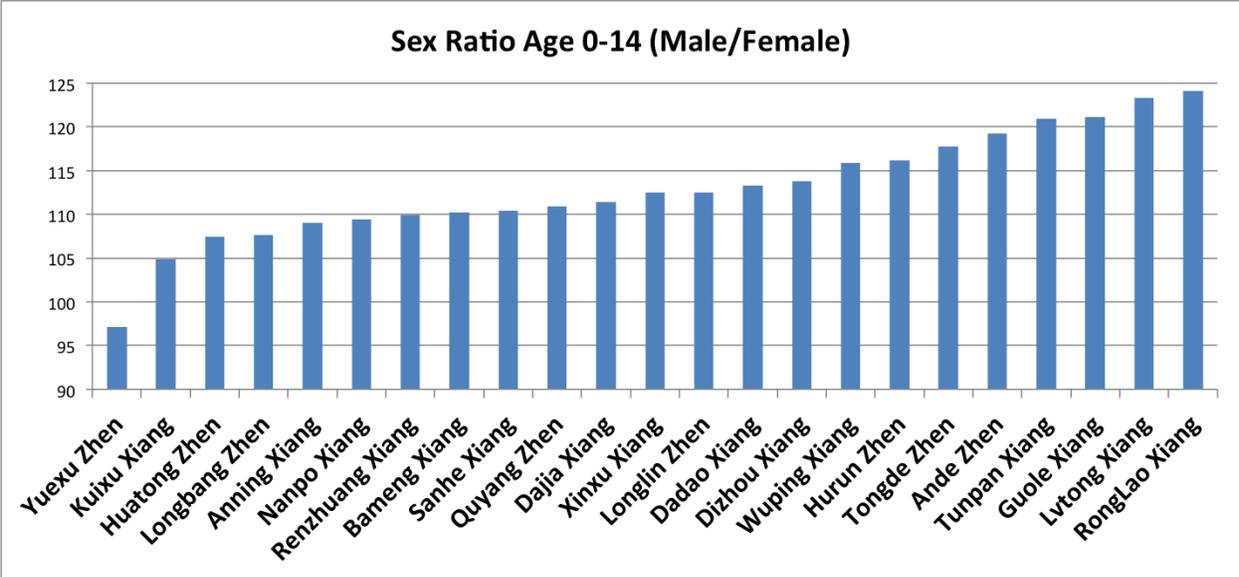


Figure 5.12 Sex Ratio for the Population 0-14 Years of Age in Jingxi County (Data Source: Chinese 5th Census, 2000).

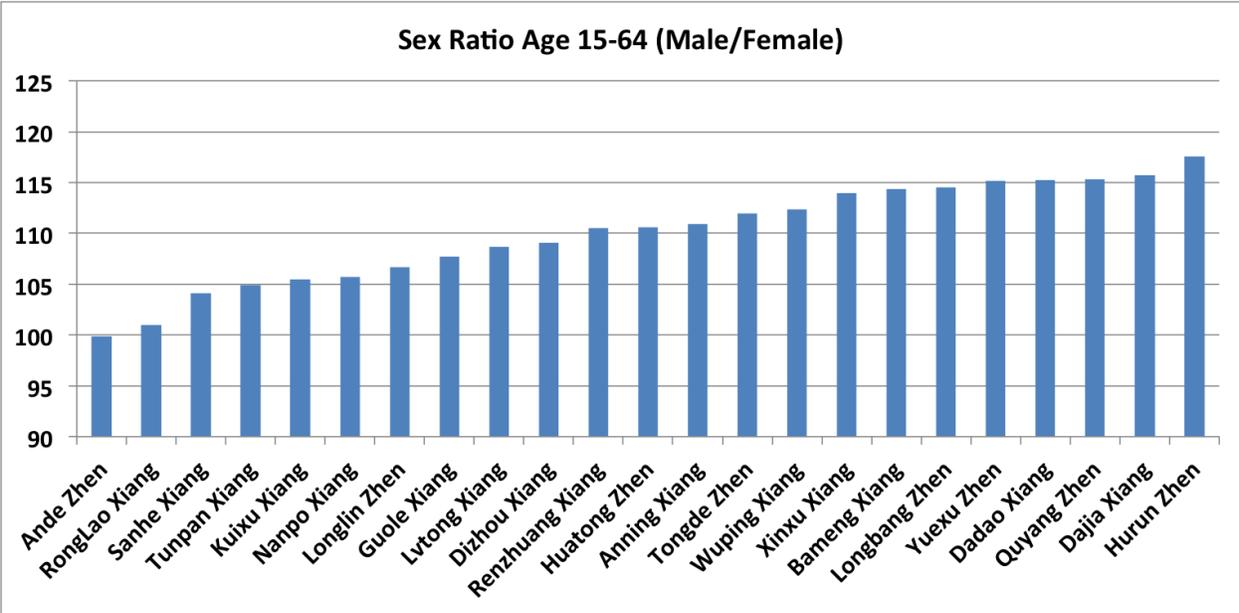


Figure 5.13 Sex Ratio for the Population 15-64 Year Age Group in Jingxi County (Data Source: Chinese 5th Census, 2000).

The female deficit, caused by the unbalanced sex ratio, is a powerful demographic determinant of social practices and processes that has led to a high demand for imported brides. This has led to cross-border marriage movements (Belanger and Khuat 2005; Nguyen and Tran 2010). The deficit of women in China is clearly creating a market for Vietnamese women (Belanger and Khuat 2005). During my fieldwork, some of the Chinese men talked about the difficulty in finding a local woman. Yu, for example, commented,

In my village, there are approximately 120 households. Around forty- to- fifty households have Chinese men married to Vietnamese women. Most of the Chinese men have difficulties finding local Chinese women so they marry Vietnamese women, because there are more men than women. I have relatives, neighbors, and friends who are married to Vietnamese women.

Due to industrialization and urbanization, more women are migrating to urban areas in search of more desirable economic conditions for their marriage (Kim 2007; Fan 2008). The dramatic increase in women migrating out of the rural area has led to higher expectations for their prospective grooms' economic and employment status (Fan and Huang 1998; Gilmartin and Tran 2002; Fan, Zhang and Zhang 2002). As such, these trends have led to the increasing unbalance between the number of men and women in the rural areas.

Yu used her daughters' marriages as examples. She has three daughters. Her two older daughters are married to people from Guangdong province and her youngest daughter is married to a local Chinese man. Yu said that many local women in Longbang prefer to marry Chinese men in urban areas such as Jingxi county seat, or marry a man from Guangdong province. Figure

5.14 shows female net interprovincial marriage migration in China using the 1990 census one-percent sample data (Fan and Huang 1998).

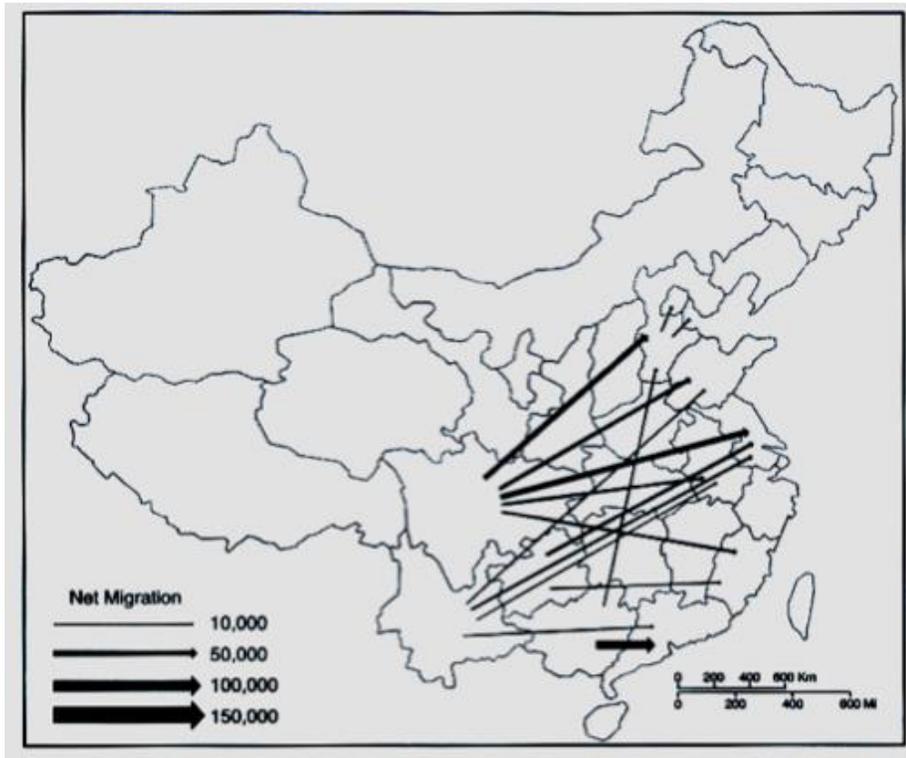


Figure 5.14 Female Net Interprovincial Marriage Migration

Source: 1990 Chinese Census: One Percent Sample (Fan and Huang 1998)

There is a limited choice for Chinese men from poor villages to find a local woman to marry. According to Tao's aunt,

There are no paved roads to Longyi, just a dirt road that is washed out during the rainy season, making foot traffic the only way into and out of the area. Life is not convenient in my village because we are so poor. Women from Longyi (village name) prefer to move to bigger administrative regions like county seat or Xinxing (townname). Other women try

to marry men from neighboring villages, because those villages have a better economy and transportation system. Life is much better and more convenient there. For example, my elder sister married Tao's dad in the Jingxi county seat. I married a man from Xinxing. Due to this migration, not many women are left in my hometown. My older brother had difficulty marrying a local woman, so he married a Vietnamese woman.

Some people interviewed said that international marriage can help the Chinese men do business and they visited Vietnam frequently for business purposes. Marrying a Vietnamese woman can be advantageous to Chinese men because it creates connections in Vietnam to help increase business. Liao, a worker for the local government in Jingxi county seat, has lived there for years and travels between China and Vietnam often. Liao explained,

I know many Chinese men marry Vietnamese women. In my opinion the cross-border marriage migration of Vietnamese women to China can be divided into two types: the first type is marriage for business purposes. For Chinese men, who are doing business in Vietnam, getting a Vietnamese wife can help sell goods in both countries. The second type is that of Chinese men in rural areas with had a hard time finding local Chinese women to marry.

Having limited choices causes the Chinese men to turn to Vietnamese women for a potentially beautiful, younger, and hardworking wife. When I visited Huang's house, he praised his Vietnamese wife by stating,

she is very attractive and hardworking. Now we run a restaurant, and have a new house together (see Figure 5.15).



Figure 5.15 Huang, with his Vietnamese Wife and their Daughter. June. 2011. LongBang, Guangxi, China. Photo: Lianling Su

Qin and his coworker also commented on the appearance of Vietnamese women. Qin stated,

Appearance is important. We do not want to marry ugly women. The women in my village compared to some Vietnamese women are not as attractive. Vietnamese women are beautiful and are very nice, so we married them.

Another example is given by Yang, who is a twenty-five year old, single Chinese man.

He explained,

Some Vietnamese women are very beautiful, not only that, but they also work hard. That is why some of my friends married Vietnamese women. I am currently in a relationship with a Vietnamese girl.

As mentioned previously, Vietnamese women work very hard. In some parts of Vietnam, they are the breadwinners—at least 60 percent of the adult women in Vietnam are economically active, especially in the northern mountainous area and the central highlands (Hamilton 2010, 3). They are involved in business activities, making important contributions to economic growth. They are increasingly active in parts of the economy that were previously considered the male domain (Hamilton 2010, 5). Yang also agreed that the preference for Vietnamese women could be due to the fact that they are hardworking.

5.2.2 Low Cost of Marrying Vietnamese Women

Chinese women from urban areas seldom marry out of the urban communities, due to the household registration (Hukou) restriction and effect of the one child policy. If a woman who is from an urban area marries a man from a rural area, she has to change her household registration as rural. The process of the change is difficult. In addition, the women do not like to do it, because the urban household registration provides them with more benefits on medical care, education and so on. The one child policy officially requires urban couples to have only one child. Now the adult child is left with having to provide support for her two parents and four grandparents. Called the “Four-Two-One Problem” this leaves the older generations with increased chances of dependency on retirement funds or charity in order to receive support (Li

2008; Zhou, Wang, Li and Hesketh 2011). Because of this, their parents have a high expectation for their daughter when it comes to marriage. They usually are against their daughters marrying men who are from rural areas and moving to rural communities (Hesketh 2011).

Due to this need to support retired parents, Chinese women who are from urban areas now have a higher dowry for their hands in marriage. In society, it is reasonable that grooms should give a higher bride price to the bride's family because after marriage, she will move to the groom's family and help take care of his parents and grandparents. The form of a higher dowry has been different through history. Historically, a dowry for a bride, or bride price, was in the form of gold jewelry, fine fabric, or money. Today, it is usually money being passed in red envelopes. Most brides' families try to avoid giving the impression of "selling their daughter", but they still want a high bride price. It is often subject to the groom's family economic status. The payment provided by the groom's family is used for the new couple to start a household for themselves and their families (Belanger and Lihn 2011, 67). This change in higher bride price for urban Chinese women means that the men in a lower income bracket are now perceived as inferior and undesirable.

The recent escalations of the bride price and wedding cost are making it more difficult for men from less wealthy families to marry. In fact, for some men, they are seen as being "on the shelf" (Belanger and Lihn 2011, 66). The alternative strategy for these men is to seek "cheaper" wives in other (generally remote) areas. In these areas, young women are still available and their parents ask for a low bride price. From my interviews with the Chinese men, I learned that most of them are poor compared to the other families in the region. It is cheaper to marry a Vietnamese woman than a Chinese woman. Tao's aunt mentioned her elder brother's wedding,

Many years ago, our family did not have enough money to give to a local Chinese woman, so my brother married a Vietnamese woman. His wedding ceremony was very simple. For example, our family renovated the house, and our relatives gave them new blankets, some bowls and some furniture. The bride price was around CNY 200 (US\$30).

Some Chinese men who work for Tao's aunt shared information with me about their marriage processes as well. One man explained,

It is impossible to marry Chinese women whose families are richer than ours, especially women from urban areas. The women's parents do not allow them to. The local women look down upon us because we are so poor in the region. Rich people who marry a local woman spend at least CNY10,000 (US\$1,666). I cannot afford to give the local women a decent life. In addition, I can hardly pay for the wedding so I married a Vietnamese woman. I spent around CNY3,000 to 4,000 (around US\$500 to 600) as a bride price for her parents and they were happy about our marriage.

Some of these Chinese men, including Wen, did not have any wedding ceremony. Some Vietnamese women no longer had any connections in Vietnam, so the men did not have to pay any bride price. They only had to spend some money to invite the men's relatives for a family meal. In addition, they bought some new clothes for their Vietnamese wives.

5.2.3 Disadvantages of the Chinese Men

Another motivation for Chinese men to marry Vietnamese women is men's physical and social disadvantages, such as older age, poor health, and greater likelihood to have disabilities than the average population. They shared their difficulties of finding wives. Some men revealed that because of their age, many Chinese women do not seem attracted to them. One example is Liang's relative, Li, who was forty years old when he got married. He said that,

No local women wanted to marry an old man like me. My friends introduced Vietnamese women to me. One of them wanted to marry me.

Not only are some Chinese men poor, but also they have family obligations. One example is from Yu's neighbor, named Wen, who shared his story about struggling to find a local woman to help to take care of his mother. He said,

I am from a poor family. When I was two years old, my father left us. My mom had an accident, so she went blind when I was thirteen years old. I had to quit school since then to take care of her. It is hard for me to find a wife from the local area, because I do not have a stable job. I have lost hope because no local woman wanted to marry me and help me take care of my blind mother. So my friends introduced a Vietnamese woman to me. Her parents had passed away long time ago and her elder sister married someone and moved to southern part of Vietnam. She agreed to marry me and I was happy.

Wen and his family are shown in Figure 5.16 below.



Figure 5.16 Wen with His Vietnamese Wife and His Blind Mother. June. 2011. LongBang, Guangxi, China. Photo: Lianling Su

Another example in Longbang Village is from Yu's relative Qin,

Two of my older sisters married Chinese men from other villages and moved out of our poor village. My family is poor and I am living with my mother in this house. We grow some rice for living. My mother is old, so I am the only one working on the farm now. It is hard for me to find a local woman. My relatives helped to introduce a Vietnamese lady to me. Her name is Nu. She is from a remote rural area in Vietnam and she is helping with the farm work. My mother is helping us to take care of our children.

Moreover several men gave examples of their physical disadvantages. In Liang's hometown, Renzhuang village, two men with physical challenge married Vietnamese women. Another disadvantage for men is their perceived undesirable personality. Yu shared an example,

Some Chinese men are quiet and shy and they do not know how to attract local women, so their family members introduced them to Vietnamese women.

Another social disadvantage can be the location of men's home. Tao's aunt pointed this out about her hometown,

Longyi is the poorest village in the region. Due to the inconvenient transportation and low income, many local women want to move out of the village. Women from other villages do not want to marry the men there and move to this poor village, so many Chinese men have to marry Vietnamese women to end their bachelorhood.

Overall, for these men with disadvantages, it was not easy to find local women and instead they married Vietnamese women.

5.2.4 Other Reasons

During the interview, two Chinese men gave different reasons for their international marriage other than the ones listed in my questionnaire. One of them mentioned,

Marrying a Vietnamese woman was just how it happened.

What the men mentioned above is more like his fate, however, the other Chinese man mentioned about similarity of the two countries because of a shared border,

We share the same language and same culture, but sometimes it is different. In my hometown we have a lot of connections with Vietnamese people, so marrying a Vietnamese woman is common for Chinese men in our area.

5.3 Summary

This chapter discussed the findings on the motivations of cross-border marriages between Vietnamese women and Chinese men. The motivations for Vietnamese women who are married to Chinese men are to have a better life and to support their families. Along with their preference for Chinese men over Vietnamese men, the women reported having difficulty finding a local Vietnamese man because of unbalanced sex ratios.

The motivation for Chinese men to marry Vietnamese women was largely due to their difficulty finding local Chinese women. The unbalanced sex ratio at birth in parts of rural China and the female out migration from rural areas causes a shortage of local Chinese women. Bride price and the social norm that Chinese women insist on only marrying men with equal or higher levels of education also cause problems for the local Chinese men (Liang 2010; Li, Yi, and Zhang 2011). The coming marriage squeeze will likely be even more acute in the Chinese countryside, since the poor, uneducated, and rural population will be more likely to lose out in the competition for brides (Watson 1991, 351; Eberstadt 2010).

Men with social and physical disadvantages can take advantage of the transnational marriage market to find a spouse. As seen in this study site, many Chinese men marry Vietnamese women to fill the gap. According to conversations with residents during my fieldwork, there are more women than men in the rural area of Vietnam. In many ways, it makes sense that the Vietnamese women would marry Chinese men. One Chinese woman commented on the Vietnamese brides,

In LongBang village, Chinese women try to marry men in other places. Vietnam has more women than men and many Vietnamese women prefer to marry Chinese men. (Yan, 27 years old woman, doing business in LongBang.)

This was supported by Liang who said,

I have met many Vietnamese girls in China and many of them are from Caobang province [Vietnam], which is next to Jingxi County. I have some relatives and I know some Chinese men in my hometown who are all married to Vietnamese women. I think it is reasonable for the Chinese men to marry Vietnamese women, because Vietnam has more women than men, especially in the rural area in the north part of Vietnam. On the contrary, we have more men than women in the rural area of China. It can help with the couples between the two countries, due to the sex ratio imbalance. If I still failed to find a good Chinese woman, I will try to get a Vietnamese bride, which can be a very good choice, I can have the option of choosing a good Vietnamese woman. (Liang, twenty-seven years old Chinese young men, a construction worker in Jingxi County)

The demographic characteristics of both countries can help compensate for the unbalanced sex ratios. The combination of the unbalanced sex ratio and the other motivations of both the Chinese men and Vietnamese women provide reasons to understand this cross-border marriage migration between China and Vietnam. With the change in culture trends in China regarding the local women seeking upward mobility, a higher bride price, and bad impression of the Vietnamese men as husbands, it is easy to see why there has been an increase in cross-border marriages. Other reasons for the Chinese-Vietnamese marriages are varied.

Chapter 6 - The Roles of Social Networks in Cross-border Marriage Migration

Chapter Six focuses on answering the research question about the roles of social networks within the cross-border marriage migrations. I analyze how the roles of an informal social network play into the cross-border marriage migration of Vietnamese women to China. I use the fieldwork data to show how couples get to know each other and then discuss the informal social network in detail. To conclude, I discuss how it plays a role in the marriage migration process.

6.1 How Do Couples Get to Know Each Other

The couples I interviewed met in different ways. Figure 6.1 shows that 29 percent of the couples were acquaintances and they met each other prior to marrying. However, the remaining 71 percent of the couples were introduced to each other for marriage. A major way for these couples to get to meet each other is through family members or friends. People try to go through many layers of connections to introduce single people to each other. People who want to get married start with their family members or friends and from those connections they find more people to talk to about finding potential brides or grooms.

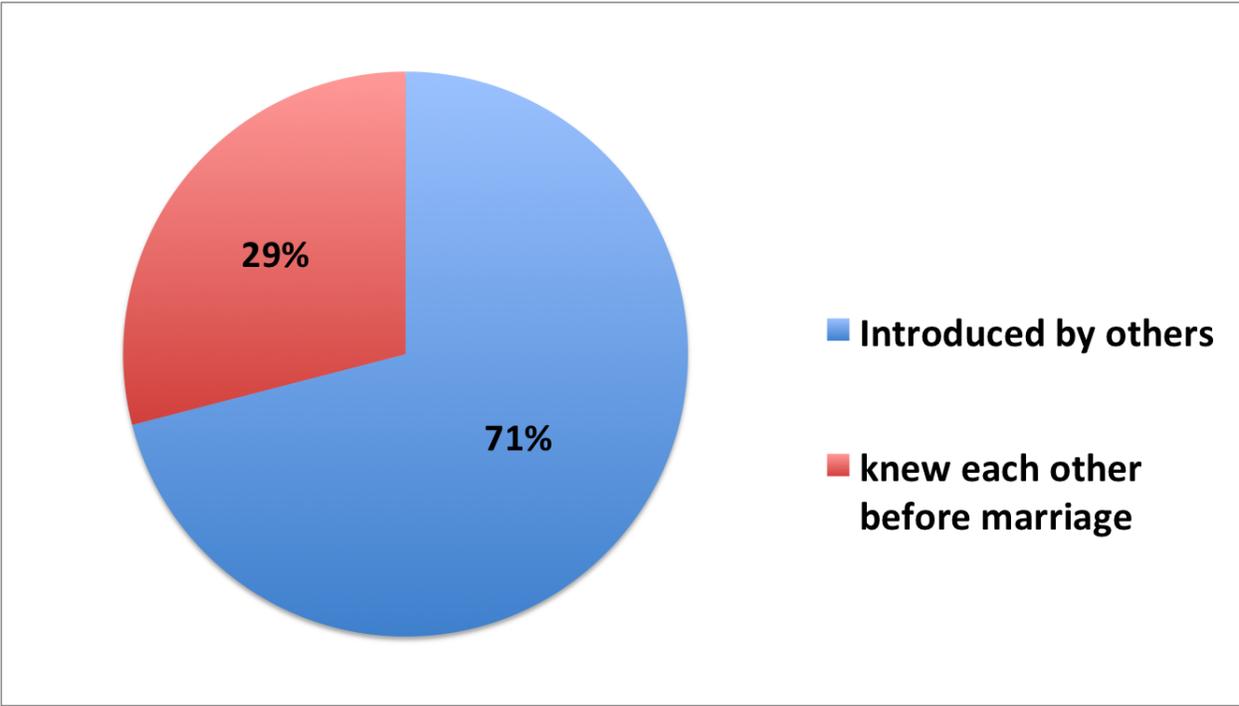


Figure 6.1 Two Ways Couples Met Each Other.

The primary contacts for the Chinese and Vietnamese in the study site are from rural areas, because ties between individuals in these areas are important. Rural communities are those with few people, low population density, relative isolation from urban areas, as well as lower availability to public services and transportation. This, combined with the mountainous area, and geological hazards, make this region a harsh place to live (Farmer 1997; Bealer, Willits, and Kuvlesky 1965). Due to the isolation from urban areas, certain rural norms have evolved causing residents to have a higher feeling of responsibility to others, especially family members and relatives. For example, they build community bonds by integrating themselves into the local economy. Further, the families and communities, try to match people of marriageable age from villages to villages during some certain activities like community events, (Jin 1995; Davin 1999).

The matchmaking process for couples is based on oral information between people in the various communities that forms an informal social network in the region. It starts with the Chinese men and Vietnamese women on each side. When they reach marrying age, people around them will try to help them to find partners. Those who help these Chinese men and Vietnamese women meet each other are called matchmakers.

This matchmaking process is not the same as the one used in the Taiwanese-Vietnamese marriage migration wherein Vietnamese women get to know Taiwanese men through the help of marriage agencies. The marriage agency is a for-profit organization; who employs professional matchmakers (Wang and Chang 2002). The role of informal social networks used in this study area is different from the commercial social networks because couples' social circles are built by the frequent communications between China and Vietnam. This can characterize how informal connections link Vietnamese women and Chinese men together, because the geographic location facilitates the connections.

This communication takes place primarily because the economic development is low for both countries in this region. The social networks in my study do not utilize matchmaking via Internet or marriage agencies. Most of the couples I interviewed are farmers or workers who have low education levels and low incomes, causing them to not have enough money to afford a computer or enjoy Internet service. Matchmakers for the Vietnamese women and Chinese men travel between these two countries and are able to communicate with each other orally. This is why social networks are so imperative.

I learned that there are several types of connections for the cross-border marriages. The first connection involves current Chinese-Vietnamese couples helping to introduce Vietnamese women to Chinese men. Table 6.1 and Table 6.2 shows that married couples I interviewed

helped to introduce individuals that successfully resulted in new marriages. These couples travel across the borders allows the married Vietnamese women to bring information back to China. For example, the sister-in-law of Tao's aunt introduced her niece to a Chinese man in the village two years ago.

Choices	Number of people	Percent (%)
Yes	8	13
No	48	75
No answer	8	13

Table 6.1 Vietnamese Women Who Successfully Introduce Individuals for Marriage.

Choices	Number of people	Percent (%)
Yes	1	2
No	39	65
No answer	20	33

Table 6.2 Chinese Men Who Successfully Introduced Individuals for Marriage.

There are also other types of connections that happen without the help of married Chinese -Vietnamese couples. One is when Vietnamese women purposefully seek out Chinese men through her social circles. These women either stay in Vietnam or go to China to find potential grooms. I met many young single Vietnamese women who visited China and asked local people to introduce them to men. Yu told me about a Vietnamese woman, who asked her to introduce her to a Chinese man,

I know some young Vietnamese girls. They come to China very often and I talk to them in my spare time. Now there is one girl, she hopes that I can introduce Chinese men in our village to her. Her mother died last year and her father got a new wife. She is already twenty-eight years old and wants to marry a Chinese man badly.

Some Chinese men sought help from matchmakers to find a Vietnamese wife. Thirty-four Chinese men in this study were matched by their parents, relatives, or close friends. The other Chinese men in my study looked for Chinese or Vietnamese matchmakers and the matchmakers traveled to Vietnam to find potential brides. The matchmakers then brought Vietnamese women to the Chinese men's houses to introduce them. Huang's father introduced me to three Chinese brothers who all married Vietnamese women. They explained,

Some matchmakers introduced three of our brothers to Vietnamese women and we all married these women with their help.

The matchmaker can be either Chinese or Vietnamese. They try to find friends of the Vietnamese women who would be happy to give information to help them match these individuals to Chinese men. By doing this, matchmakers can try to charge Chinese men for pocket money. Ten Chinese men I interviewed paid fees to be introduced to their friends' connections. The fees can range from CNY100 to 3,000 (around US\$20 to 500). The meeting of the Chinese men and Vietnamese women is similar to a "blind date". I talked too a villager from Renzhuang village, Ji, who told me that,

In recent years, more and more people would like to introduce Vietnamese women to Chinese men in order to earn money. The agreement between matchmakers and Chinese men is usually oral. The matchmakers will do his or her best to find the Vietnamese women who are willing to marry Chinese men.

This informal social network is different from what was discussed in the literature review. Many of the studies I found focused on the commercial networks, which are very important in facilitating cross-border marriage migration in East Asia. One example from the literature review is that in South Korea, social networks may operate without any government sanctions. Most notably, this is shown by the migration of Chinese women with Korean heritage, which started as a South Korean government strategy to help to correct the unbalanced sex ratio problem in the rural areas. It has since become a commercial moneymaking business (Freeman 2005). In such cases where marriages are made across borders, the same sort of brokering arrangements may come into play in the absence of a direct connection and a go-between is necessary to arrange both the practical and the symbolic aspects of the marriage (William 2010). However, the practice of professional matchmaking is unpractical in my study. In some cases of my study, matchmakers asked for introduction fees, which are similar to the commercial marriage agencies. These matchmakers are not as professional as the commercial marriage agencies, because they are introducing couples during their spare time in order to earn extra money.

6.2 Courtship and Marriage Rituals

When a Vietnamese woman is brought to China, the man can see the woman and ask questions through the matchmakers. He can then decide whether he wants to marry the Vietnamese woman or not. If he does not want to marry this woman, his matchmakers will introduce her to other Chinese men looking for a Vietnamese woman. Tao's aunt told me,

When people introduce the Vietnamese women to some Chinese men, some women would like to know more information about the village, because this community will become important to her after their marriage. Usually these Vietnamese women will talk to other Vietnamese women who are already married in that village, to gain more information about the Chinese men before or after their meeting. After visiting the Chinese men's house and interacting with his families, they will decide whether to marry him or not.

The introduction of Vietnamese women and Chinese men in the area happens frequently. Table 6.3 and Table 6.4 below show the frequency and percentage of the couples who have been introduced to the Vietnamese women or Chinese men before marriage. Ten Vietnamese women had experienced being either introduced to Chinese man that did not result in a marriage. Yu gave one example of how the introduction works during my fieldwork:

The Vietnamese woman who is selling tea on the street was introduced to a Chinese guy living near the main office of the village, but he did not want to marry her. Then the people who introduced this woman found the butcher who lives at the end of the main street of the village. The butcher wanted to marry the Vietnamese woman, and she agreed.

Yu said that their marriage is magic, or “love at first sight” since upon being introduced they liked each other, and immediately decided to get married. The Vietnamese woman runs a teashop in China and her husband still works as a butcher in the village. The original Chinese man who lived near the main office has remained single.

Choices	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	10	16
No	34	53
No answer	20	31

Table 6.3 Frequency and the Percentage of People Being Introduced to the Vietnamese Women Before Marriage.

Choices	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	34	57
No	19	32
No answer	7	12

Table 6.4 Frequency and the Percentage of People Being Introduced to the Chinese Men before Marriage.

Figure 6.2 below shows how long the couples dated or were being introduced before they got married. Twenty-two percent of the couples got married within one month. Fifty-eight percent of the couples got married within three months. One to three months is enough time for

them to set up the date and prepare for marrying. Only 5 percent of the couples met in person and dated for a year before getting married.

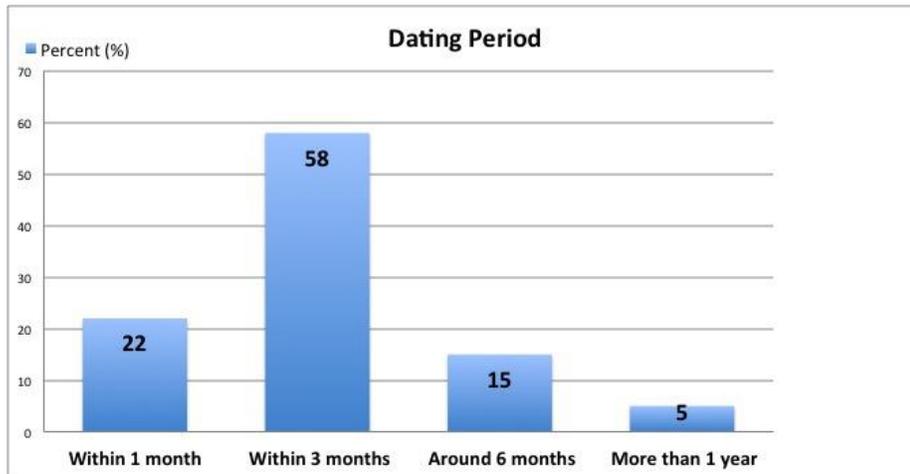


Figure 6.2 Length of Time for Couples from Introduction to Marriage.

The same length of time is seen with Vietnamese women and Taiwanese men being introduced by the marriage agencies, though some courtships are extremely short, less than three months (Wang and Chang 2002). The stream of marriage migration Asian countries, either sustained by kinship social networks or business networks, is largely due to people trying to help others get to know each other for the purpose of getting married (Wang and Chang 2002). These marriages involve a comparatively short period of courtship or none at all (Piper 2000; Hsia 2002; Wang 2001). The marriage process then is quick compared to western cultures and usually involves only the amount of time necessary to plan a wedding ceremony (if there is one) and for the Vietnamese woman to move to China to live with her new husband.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

This study is based on human geography approaches to migration. It analyzes the movement of Vietnamese women to China, as well as informal social networks. It applied the previous marriage migrations (Vietnamese women marrying Taiwanese men) to a new research place of Vietnamese women marrying Chinese men. Though the study sample is not representative for this large phenomenon, this research helps to understand marriage migration that previous researchers have not been giving enough attention.

The Vietnamese women I interviewed married Chinese men in order to settle at the villages near the border areas. The main motivations for the women to marry Chinese men are for a better life. Due to the fact that China's economy is more favorable, a growing numbers of Vietnamese women want to marry Chinese men and settle near the border. This movement can be explained by the desirability of a place that is based on its social, economic, or environmental situation. Ravenstein (1885)'s law of migration stated, "the major causes of migration are economic", and a better economic condition describes the value of living in different locations. Field observations show that housing conditions in China are improving, while the housing conditions in Vietnam are still substandard, especially in the rural areas these women came from. This opportunities nearby are usually considered more attractive than equal or slightly better ones farther away, so migrants tend to settle in a location closer to their point of origin if other factors are equal (Lee 1966; King 2012). A shared border combined with the proximity of the geographic location facilitates communications between the countries.

A majority of the Vietnamese women have a strong sense of responsibility and try to support their family. They continue to send remittances back home after marrying Chinese men (Wang and Chang 2002; Belanger and Linh 2010). A minor motivation among the Vietnamese

women in this study reflects that they prefer Chinese men to Vietnamese men, since they perceive of Chinese men to be hardworking and responsible to families. The people I interacted with during the fieldwork mentioned that unbalanced sex ratio of women to men in their villages in Vietnam could also be a factor for Vietnamese women to want to marry Chinese men. Other factors, such as the Vietnam War and proximity, were also mentioned during my fieldwork.

The motivation for Chinese men to participate in these marriages is due to the shortage of local women; the unbalanced sex ratio means there is a limited supply of local women for Chinese men to marry. The female migration is part of the emergence of China as an industrial superpower. More than 100 million people have been drawn to the burgeoning industrial zones of the east from the rural and less-developed provinces of the interior (Deshingar and Grimm 2005, 10). Many researchers studied this large-scale migration in the discipline of geography. Fan and Huang (1998), Fan and Li (2002) and Davin (2005) carried out research regarding internal marriage migration within this trend of migration. Davin (2005) pointed out that over half of the women that migrated for marriage are from poorer provinces.

The uneven development has contributed to the development of marriage migration as a significant phenomenon in contemporary China. Most of the female migrants use marriage to escape poverty-stricken homes and to move up through the spatial hierarchy to more prosperous areas. The poor areas suffer a net loss of women; men with social and physical disadvantages have difficulties finding a wife, and these men turn to Vietnamese women for brides. In order to fill the gap, a new flow of women comes from a lower income country moving in to the area to neutralize the deficit, which is called “chain theory” by Belanger and Linh (2011, 74), which involves with a series of migration within a family or defined group of people.

This flow of people for marriage migration has been characterized by the emergence of a global marital and reproductive chain within Asia, where the “bride deficit” in one zone will create a migration flow from another (Belanger 2011, 74). Fan and Huang (1998) show marriage migration of Guangxi women to Guangdong, the chain of Vietnamese women moving to Guangxi province to make up for it. This chain migration results in migration field, which is the clustering of people from a specific region (Vietnamese women from CaoBang province marry Chinese men in Jingxi County in this case).

With frequent communications between countries, there are more chances for people to meet and introduce for international marriages. These communications are like the transfer of information from one source to another, people to people, community to community, and can thus be conceived in the terms of an informal network. These informal social networks are created based on the oral introductions. This informal social network is at the micro-level, typically beginning with an individual creating a “snowball effect” (Hugo 2005, 21). As social relationships are traced, many begin with a small group of individuals and then expanded to the communities.

China and Vietnam have historical and cultural connections, particularly linguistic similarities. These connections and the use of social networks facilitate marriages between the countries. The geography of social networks generally assumed that proximity is fundamental to network structures and operations. People from the border areas are more likely to have better connections with closer neighbors than those that are more distant, making the informal social network limited within some distance. People are more likely to settle in a closer place about which they have more knowledge than in a farther place about which they know and understand

little. Many Vietnamese women marry Chinese men and migrate to China near the border of Guangdong, Guangxi, and Yunnan provinces due to the proximity.

The literature shows that Taiwanese men marry Vietnamese women who are mainly from the southern part of Vietnam. However, in this study Chinese men marry Vietnamese women who are mainly from the northern part of Vietnam. This phenomenon of Vietnamese brides moving to China has become more and more popular. It is not only a border phenomenon though; it is also a nationwide phenomenon. Far from the border areas, some parts of China follow the Taiwanese pattern of using business networks to arrange marriages.

Media has reported that a growing number of Chinese men are looking for Vietnamese women through matchmaking companies. According to *Tengxun News*, many Vietnamese women married Chinese men and are residing in China undocumented near the border between China and Vietnam. It also reported that local government in Guangdong province is trying to improve this situation by providing some Vietnamese women and their children with legal documentation. There are still some cases of trafficking Vietnamese women to China, in remote villages, making it hard for police to track down every family. The government cannot intervene in all cases.

According to the people from the study area, there is a recent tendency of people charging money to introduce couples. Chinese men try to use help from friends or relatives to travel to Vietnam in search of potential brides. In the coming years, matchmakers will reap the benefits of finding women in Vietnam and introducing them to China. They will gain expertise, and the procedures and connections will become more professional, evolving into a more commodified and marketing-based approach.

The driving factors within China are unlikely to be reduced in the foreseeable future given the excess of younger males and the changing roles and attitudes of Chinese women. These factors will ensure the continuation and expansion of the marriage migration flows. The cross-border marriages of Vietnamese women and Chinese men are still increasing. Further research is required, especially if Chinese and Vietnamese governments are able to publish the data. I acknowledge that the roles of social networks could be expanded further in the field of geography, such as mapping the migration flows, the relationship between social networks and the geographic concentrations.

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Appendix A - Questionnaires

Questionnaire Number 1: (This questionnaire is for Chinese man and his wife Vietnamese woman who married to China, and the couples are currently living in China.)

1. Bride's name: _____

Groom's name: _____

2. Date of Birth: Bride: ___D___M___Y

Groom: ___D___M___Y

3. Brides' hometown (specific geographic location in Vietnam): _____

Groom's hometown (Specific geographic location in China): _____

Religion Preference: Bride: _____

Do you think religious preference affect your decision to marry to a Chinese man?

Groom: _____

Do you think religious preference affect your decision to marry to a Vietnamese woman?

1. Job status before marriage:

Brides' job title and income: _____

Grooms' job title and income: _____

2. Family Income and job title:

Brides' household in Vietnam: _____

Grooms' household in China: _____

3. Siblings:

Brides' siblings: Do you have siblings? If Yes, how many siblings do you have? Do you have any sisters who married to Chinese men? If Yes, where are they living now?

Grooms' siblings: Do you have siblings? If Yes, how many siblings do you have? Do you have any brothers who married a Vietnamese woman? If yes, where are they living now?

4. Education Level, Year of Schooling

Brides: 1) Primary and lower than Primary; 2) Secondary; 3) Technique school: 4) College.

Groom: 1) Primary and lower than Primary; 2) Secondary; 3) Technique school: 4) College.

5. When did you know each other? ____D__M__Y

6. How did you know each other?

1) Being introduced: A) got charged B) do not get charged

2) Met each other

7. What kind of language do you use to talk to each other everyday? What kind of language can you speak?

1) Vietnamese

2) Zhuang Dialect

3) Mandarin

For Vietnamese women learning Mandarin before marriage:

1) Learn Mandarin before marriage; 2) Never learn Mandarin before marriage

Current Language skills for Vietnamese women speak Mandarin:

1) Speaking fluently Mandarin; 2) Speak with Mandarin at a limited degree; C) Can not speak Mandarin at all.

8. How long did it take for the marriage process? Dating period:

- 1) Within 1 month
- 2) Within 3 month
- 3) Around 6 months
- 4) More than 1 year

9. Date of Marriage ___D___M_____Y

10. Brides: what is your requirement for Chinese men?

Groom: what is your requirement for Vietnamese women?

11. Brides: How much money did you get from your parents for the marriage?

Groom: How much money did you get from your parents for the marriage?

12. Brides: How much money did you prepare for the groom's family?

Groom: How much money did you prepare for the brides' family?

Cost for the entire wedding?

13. Where was the wedding reception?

- 1) China
- 2) Vietnam
- 3) Both in China and in Vietnam

14. Current job status

Brides: Job title and income: _____

Groom: Job title and income: _____

15. Do you have land or house?

16. Brides: Do you have any family members currently living in China after marriage?

If yes, who are they?

Groom: Do you have any family members currently living in Vietnam after marriage?

If yes, who are they?

17. How much money does you sent back to Vietnam per year? If not money, what you usually bring it back to Vietnam?

- 1) Send money or goods
- 2) Do not send money nor goods

18. Brides: Reasons for Vietnamese women marrying Chinese men:

- 1) Prefer Chinese men to Vietnamese men
- 2) For a better life
- 3) Can not find a local man
- 4) Help with her family
- 5) Others

Groom: Reasons for Chinese men marrying Vietnamese women:

- 1) Cheaper to marry Vietnamese women
- 2) Can not find a local woman
- 3) Prefer Vietnamese women to Chinese women
- 4) Others

19. Who help you to make the decision to get married to Chinese man?/Vietnamese woman?

Brides: 1) yourself; 2) parents; 3) both; 4) others

Groom: 1) yourself; 2) parents; 3) both; 4) others

20. Do you have kids?

If Yes, how many kids do you have?

Where are the kids?

1) China 2) Vietnam

21. Brides: 1) Do you think life is better in China? Before marrying in China what was your impression of China?

2) Are you homesick?

22. Brides: How many times have you been back to Vietnam every year? How long did you stay? Did you travel home alone, or with your husband, or someone else?

Groom: How many times have you been back to Vietnam? How long did you stay?

Transportation situation:

23. Brides: Have you ever introduced any women from Vietnam to a Chinese man for marriage?

If Yes, how many?

Will you introduce more women in Vietnam to Chinese men for marriage?

Groom: Have you ever introduced any Chinese men to a Vietnamese woman for marriage?

If yes, how many?

Will you introduce more men in China to Vietnamese women for marriage?

Questionnaire Number 2: (This questionnaire is for local single young Chinese man and local Chinese women's opinion on Vietnamese brides in China)

1. Name:
2. Date of Birth (Age):
3. Hometown:
4. Education level:
 - 1) Primary and lower than Primary
 - 2) Secondary
 - 3) Technique school
 - 4) College
5. Job title and income
6. Do you know any Vietnamese women? Where are they from?
7. What is your opinion for Chinese men get married to Vietnamese women?
8. For local single young Chinese men: Do you want to get married to a Vietnamese woman? Compare to local Chinese women and Vietnamese women, who do you like better when it turns to marriage?

Questionnaire Number 3:

1. What type of visa did you need, before marriage, in order to cross the border between China and Vietnam?

Bride: How did you get a visa to go to China? How long did it take to get a visa? How much does it cost?

Groom: How did you get a visa to go to China? How long did it take? How much does it cost?

3. Where did you fill out the marriage documentation?

4. What kind of documents did you have to prepare?

5. What was the procedure for obtaining the marriage documentation?

How long did it take? Were there any extra procedures to marry a foreigner? How much does it cost?

6. Who will help you? How much did they charge you for their services?

问卷调查 1

1 名字: _____ 丈夫的名字: _____

2 出生日期: _____年____月____日 丈夫的出生日期: _____年____月____日

3 籍贯(越南具体什么地方): _____

丈夫的籍贯(越南具体什么地方) _____

4 宗教: _____ 丈夫的宗教: _____

你觉得宗教对你嫁给中国丈夫有什么影响?

你觉得宗教对你娶越南新娘有什么影响?

5 婚前工作状况

婚前家庭状况婚前家庭状况 工作种类、年收入、文化程度

1 父亲

2 母亲

6 兄弟姐妹 有兄弟姐妹么? 如果有,有____个

如果有姐妹还有其他姐妹嫁给中国人么?

如果有,都嫁到哪里了?离自己近么?

丈夫的兄弟姐妹

丈夫有兄弟姐妹么

如果有,有____个

如果有兄弟还有其兄弟娶越南老婆么?

如果有,都在同村么?离自己近么?

7 文化程度:

A 小学或小学以下

B 初中

C 高中

D 中专技校

E 大学本科

8 什么时候认识的? ____年__月__日

9 怎么认识的?

A 遇见在哪里遇见 _____

B 朋友亲戚介绍谁介绍认识的?如果是相亲认识的,在越南还是在中国?

C 结婚中介 _____什么公司?在哪里? 中介费用_____ 人民币都包括什么服务?

D 其他

10 你们之间用什么语言沟通?都会说什么语言?

A 越南语

B 壮话

C 普通话

11 认识多久结婚的?

12 什么时候结婚 _____年____月____日

13 之前有没有碰到过想娶越南新娘的中国男人?

之前有没有碰到过想中国男人的越南女人?

如果有?有过几个?

14 结婚家里面要准备多少钱?

15 准备给新郎家的彩礼多少钱?

准备给新娘家的彩礼多少钱?

结婚彩礼花费?房子?装修?结婚彩礼花费?房子?装修? 买家具?家电?买家具?家电?

如果有?有过几个?

丈夫的结婚家里面要准备多少钱?

你结婚父母给你多少帮助物质上和金钱上

16 什么时候举办的婚礼?

在哪里举办的婚礼?

A 中国

B 越南

C 中国和越南

办婚礼花费多少钱?有谁出这笔花销?

17 婚后工作状况 工作种类、年收入

家里有房子么?有土地么?

18 结婚后现在的家庭成员有谁居住在中国?

如果有,都是谁?什么工作?

丈夫的婚后工作状况

工作种类、年收入

结婚后现在的家庭成员有谁居住在越南?

如果有,都是谁?什么工作?

停留多久?

19 一年给家里面寄多少钱?

20 女:为什么嫁给中国丈夫?

A 为了帮助家里 (现在一年给家里面寄多少钱?)

B 希望过更好的生活

C 没有合适的当地男人

D 其他

21 谁促使你做出结婚的决定嫁给中国男人(娶越南女人)?

A 自己

B 父母

C 自己还有父母

22 有小孩么?

如果有,有____个, 男孩女孩孩子____岁, 孩子现在在:

A 中国 B 越南

A 上学 B 工作

男:为什么娶越南新娘?

A 喜欢越南姑娘

B 找不到本地姑娘

C 比起娶本地姑娘便宜

D 其他

23 这里的生活是不是比越南好?好在哪里?是不是比嫁过来想象中的更好,或者差不多?

24 互相来往亲戚 女方:想家么? 多久回一次家?呆多久时间?和丈夫一起回去?还有谁?

男方:多久去一次越南?呆多久?

交通 怎么回家?多远?

A 火车要多长时间?

B 大巴要多长时间?

C 走路多长时间

有谁经常来探亲

25 有没有介绍家乡的女孩子嫁给中国男人?

如果有,你介绍了____个?成功没有?

有没有介绍中国男人给越南女孩?

如果有,你介绍了____个?成功没有?

具体情况: 会不会介绍家乡的女孩子嫁给中国男人?

会不会介绍朋友娶越南老婆?

问卷调查 2

1 姓名:

2 出生_____年__月__日

3 籍贯 籍贯:

4 文化程度:

A 小学或小学以下

B 初中

C 高中/中专技校

D 大专

E 大学本科

F 研究生或以上

5 工作种类、年收入

6 认识越南女孩子么?

她们从越南什么地方来的?

有没有想娶越南新娘?

7 对比中国新娘和越南新娘你愿意娶哪个?

8 对中国男人娶越南新娘有什么看法?

对中国男人娶越南新娘有什么看法?

问卷调查 3

关于签证和结婚手续的问题

1 结婚之前用什么签证国边境见面?

男:去越南签证怎么办理?需要多久?花费多少钱?具体情况

女:去中国签证怎么办理?需要多久?具体情况

2 在哪里办的结婚登记手续?

3 都需要准备什么材料?

4 办结婚登记手续需要多久?办结婚登记的过程都有哪些?花多少钱?

5 有谁帮办理?需要花多少钱?