



# The Effects of Korean Fathers' Acceptance of Immigrant Mothers' Native Language on Multiethnic Children's Attitudes Toward Their Mothers' Culture: The Mediating Effects of Mothers' Participation in Home-Country Activities and Parent-Child Relationship

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**Objective:** The study examined the structural relationship of Korean fathers' acceptance of immigrant mothers' native language, mothers' participation in home-country activities, parent-child relationship and multiethnic children's attitudes toward mothers' minority culture, focusing on the mediational effects of mothers' participation in home-country activities and parent-child relationship.

**Methods:** The study used data from the 2012 National Study of Multiethnic Families. The samples of multiethnic families (N = 1,100) consist of a Korean father, an immigrant mother and a child, aged between 9 and 12 were used. The data were analyzed using the structural equation modeling.

**Results:** The results of this study show that Korean fathers' acceptance of immigrant mothers' native language has a direct effect on multiethnic children's attitudes toward mothers' culture. In addition, mothers' participation in home-country activities and parent-child relationship had statistically significant mediating roles in the relationship between Korean fathers' acceptance of mothers' native language and children's attitudes toward mothers' culture.

**Conclusion:** The results from this study suggest that Korean fathers' acceptance of immigrant mothers' language is an important factor for immigrant mothers' cultural socialization practices, positive home environment and children's socio-emotional development. Implications and limitations of this study and interventions for multiethnic families in South Korea were discussed.

**Keywords:** acceptance of minority culture, cultural socialization practice, parent-child relationship, attitudes toward culture

## Introduction

As a result of international migration and the growth of ethnic minorities, South Korean society has entered a multicultural society. Presently, international marriages account for nearly

8% of all marriages in South Korea and are expected to exceed 10% by 2030 (Ministry of Public Administration and Security, 2017). In particular, a steep increase in marriages between immigrant women and Korean men, which represents 75.8% of all international marriages, is observable in today's Korean society

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(Korean Statistical Information Service, 2016). This increased rate of international marriage comes with an increase in the number of multiethnic children, which increased 58% from 31,951 in 2012 to 54,156 in 2015 (Korean Educational Statistics Service, 2016). This indicates that it is vital to focus on issues concerning the well-being of multiethnic children and youth.

Multiethnic children with immigrant and Korean parents in South Korea are extremely diverse in their parents' countries of origin, and thus face serious challenges in maintaining a balance between two different cultures (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). Regarding how ethnic minority children should perceive these two discrete cultures, thus far there are two major controversial perspectives: assimilation and multiculturalism. Assimilation theory asserts that minority children should adopt as much of the majority culture as possible while excluding heritage culture (Charmaraman & Grossman, 2010). Multiculturalism theory emphasizes the importance of maintaining the values of two different cultures, encouraging minority children to positively accept heritage culture while adapting to the mainstream culture (Berry, 2005). Recent research has supported multiculturalism perspective by showing that multiethnic children, who are given opportunities to learn and positively recognize minority culture, are likely to exhibit higher levels of self-esteem, cultural identity, academic achievement and interpersonal relationships (An, 2007; Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; S. K. Kim & Yang, 2012; Un, 2010). For instance, S. K. Kim and Yang (2012), using a sample of 1,626 multiethnic families, reported that multiethnic children's interests in minority culture are positively related to ego-resiliency. Similarly, Un (2010) found that multiethnic children's positive attitude toward minority culture was one of the strongest predictors of positive school adjustment and peer relationship. Such results demonstrate that forming a positive attitude toward minority culture can be a pivotal factor which leads to multiethnic children's healthy development.

Minority children's attitudes toward heritage culture are no longer individual matters, but rather highly associated with how parents perceive or react to that culture. According to the socialization theory and social learning theory, parents play a critical role in determining their children's attitudes and adaptation by imposing language, culture, and other life factors (Witt, 1997). Especially during the childhood in which the primary socialization

occurs, parents demonstrate their own values and beliefs via attitudes, which are either directly or indirectly transmitted to children (Aboud, 2005). Such parental attitudes are internalized in the children's attitudes within the family arena through various factors such as parent-child relationship, role modeling and parents' behaviors. Thus, children's attitudes can be changed, reinforced and even diminished by parents' attitudes. The similarity between parents' attitudes and those of their children determine the function of socialization (Acock, 1984). The present study added to existing literature by looking at how the theory of intergenerational transmission of attitudes is applicable for children from multiethnic families through perception of their minority culture.

Among previous studies that have examined the intergenerational transmission of attitudes, there were consistent findings with respect to a function of children's age (Stepney, Sanchez, & Handy, 2015; Zentner & Renaud, 2007; Zhao, 2008). Specifically, children's attitudes are independent of parents' attitudes in early years; however, during a period of middle and late childhood, their attitudes tend to align with those of parents. Given the evidence and recent investigation regarding the intergenerational transmission of attitudes, this study examines the link between parents' attitudes and school-aged multiethnic children's attitudes toward inherited minority culture.

Among members of Korean multiethnic families, the present study specifically focused on Korean fathers, culturally majority members whose acceptances of minority culture can greatly influence multiethnic children's attitudes toward minority culture. According to acculturation model offered by Berry (2003), the majority group's expectations of minority group center on two issues: (1) whether they can accept minorities' efforts to maintain their heritage culture and (2) whether they value the contact with minorities. Responses to these dimensions reveal the extent to which minorities can retain the values of heritage culture and their socio-emotional development outcomes. For instance, if majority members have a high degree of tolerance, minorities are offered more opportunities to maintain their own cultural values while actively participating in mainstream society (Berry, 2005). Conversely, low tolerance among majority members can yield the minority's loss of culture as well as have negative psychological outcomes, such as negative self-concepts and societal maladjustment (Berry, 2005).

Especially in Korean society, where patriarchy and assimilation-based approach are still prevalent, Korean fathers typically hold the primary power in determining factors related to their children's development in multiethnic families (M. K. Song, Jee, Cho, & Lim, 2008). In fact, several studies on multiethnic families revealed that majority parents' acceptance of minority culture is one of the main contributors of minority children's positive perceptions of heritage culture (Jung, 2014; Zhao, 2008). Zhao (2008), using a sample of Korean multiethnic families, revealed Korean fathers' positive attitudes toward Japanese culture is positively associated with multiethnic students' attitudes toward Japanese culture. Similarly, Jung (2014) reported that Korean fathers' acceptance of minority culture and school-aged multiethnic children's bicultural competence are positively correlated, even after taking into account the house income, parental educational status, and child gender. However, except these studies aforementioned, most studies have focused on immigrant mothers and multiethnic children's cultural adjustment to the majority culture, less considering the role of Korean fathers. To fill this gap, this study primarily focused on Korean fathers as main contributors of multiethnic children's development and examined how Korean fathers' acceptance of minority culture are related with children's attitudes toward minority culture.

Socialization theory within family contexts also suggests that the family is dynamic and integrated whole, in which each member influences and is influenced by all other members (Acock, 1984). The changing relationship and socializing behaviors of family members are believed to have implications for the growth and development of other individuals within the family (R. M. Lee, Grotevant, Hellerstedt, Gunnar, & Minnesota International Adoption Project Team, 2006). Given the centrality of parents for children's development (Rossi & Rossi, 1990), it is possible to expect that the nature of—and changes in—socialization practices enacted by parents and quality of parent-child relationship are closely linked to the transmission of attitudes toward minority culture from parents to children.

Parents' participation in home-country activities is one of the cultural socialization practices that can explain the influence of parents' attitudes toward minority culture and children's attitudes toward minority culture (M. J. Kim, 2012). Previous studies on immigrant families have demonstrated that children whose

immigrant parents participate in home-country activities, such as ethnic voluntary organizations and churches, are likely to have a strong sense of attitudes toward heritage culture (Bankston & Zhou, 1995; Karssen, 2015; J. Lee, 2010; S. Y. Lee, 2013). Especially in the case of minority families, such behaviors of interacting with people with same nationalities encourage minority parents to instill positive cultural values and beliefs in their children (Karssen, 2015). Directly participating in socialization activities with parents or indirectly observing parents' engagement in activities, children internalize parents' cultural messages, which in turn, have a better understanding of the values of an inherited culture (Glass, Bengtson, & Dunham, 1986; Waters, 1994).

The extent to which minority parents engage in cultural socialization practices is dependent on how they or their influential family members perceive the culture related to those practices (Yun & Chung, 2015). Previous studies on multiethnic families have revealed that immigrant parents are less likely to engage in cultural socialization practices such as teaching their children heritage languages if the parents from the dominant group are intolerant toward minority culture (Kasuga-Jenks, 2012; Yun & Chung, 2015). Similarly, the national survey on Korean multicultural families revealed that most Korean fathers have antagonistic views of immigrant mothers' low engagement in home-country activities, which may put their children at risk of losing the values of mothers' minority culture (Jung, 2014). To better understand the role of cultural socialization practices for immigrant mothers and multiethnic children, the empirical study on finding the mediating role of mothers' participation in home-country activities is required in a sample of multiethnic families.

The parent-child relationship can be another mediating factor that explains how attitudes toward minority culture can be passed on from parents to children (Glass et al., 1986; Whitbeck & Gecas, 1988). Children develop particular values and beliefs and thus form attitudes through the active interaction with parents, who are the most influential adults for themselves (Vygotsky, 1978). Through the collaborative conversation and interaction with parents, children can incorporate parents' attitudes into their own emerging sets of values (Joyce, 2012). Previous studies demonstrated that positive parent-child relationship plays a pivotal role in developing minority children's positive attitudes toward inherited culture, self-concepts and identity (Joyce, 2012; Lamborn & Nguyen, 2004;

Shaffer & Kipp, 2010).

In the case of multiethnic family, in which parents and children share different cultural backgrounds to each other, how parents perceive children's heritage culture can largely determine the quality of the parent-child relationship. Specifically, parents who are sensitive to and aware of ethnicity are likely to create a balance of compatible yet diverse views in the family (Crolley-Simic & Vonk, 2011). Such parents' cultural acceptance of children's native culture results in positive intergenerational interactions, in turn, child's identification with his/her unique ethnic makeup (Vonc, 2001). By contrast, parents' behaviors of excluding the minority culture and language may yield a large cultural gap and ineffective communication in minority language between parents and child (Baumrind, 1991). When applying this concept to multiethnic family, our study hypothesized that Korean fathers' acceptance of minority culture may explain parent-child relationship, which in turn, determine multiethnic children's attitudes toward minority culture.

It is necessary to note that research states that the causal mechanisms through which relationship attitudes are transmitted are still unclear. Although there are a few studies that examined the roles of parents' cultural socialization practices or parent-child relationship, none of them to date have examined their mediating roles except Joyce's (2012). Using parents' participation in religious activities and the parent-child relationship as mediator variables, Joyce (2012) explained in a more comprehensive way how the intergenerational transmission of attitudes toward minority culture occurs within a familial context. Despite the significance of his study, there are several limitations such as an inappropriate age range for children participants as well as the omission of demographic variables. The current study, therefore, investigated the transmission of attitudes toward minority culture in multiethnic children aged 9 to 12 years, which is known as a sensitive age of period determined by parents' attitudes (Harter, 2000). In order to fill the gap, the current study also included demographic variables associated with children's socialization process and immigrant mothers' migration factors. In terms of child's gender, it has been discussed that multiethnic girls typically have more positive attitudes toward their heritage cultures than boys do (H. J. Lee & Kang, 2011). In addition, it was revealed that children's attitudes toward mothers' culture become more positive

as they get older (Stepney et al., 2015). Parental educational status was positively correlated with multiethnic children's attitudes toward minority culture. In regards to migration factors, previous studies found that the longer immigrant parents spend in the mainstream society, the less likely their children are to maintain the values of the minority culture (M. J. Kim, 2012; S. Y. Lee, 2013). Similarly, the better parents' dominant culture language skills are and the more discrimination experiences parents have, the more apt children are to have negative attitudes toward the minority culture (Inman, Howard, Beaumont, & Walker, 2007; Ontai-Grzebik & Raffaelli, 2004).

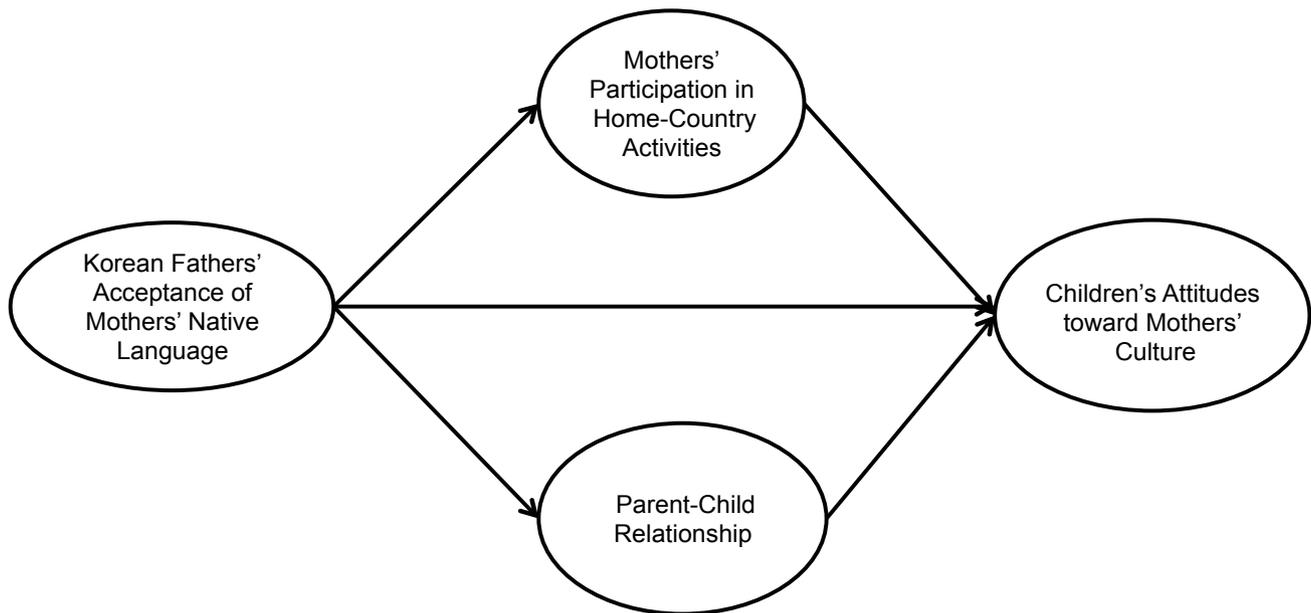
In the current study, we operationalized attitudes toward minority culture as the degree to which Korean fathers from multiethnic families accept the immigrant mothers' native minority language. It has been widely recognized that culture is shaped and transmitted through language (Agar, 1994). Also, since language and culture are naturally bound to one another, maintaining a language can be equivalent to having a cultural existence (Lussier, 2007). Thus, the uses and ideas of language, which reflect the way of thinking and behaviors of group members, can determine whether traditions and culture can, or will, be maintained (Giles & Johnson, 1981). Just as the strong relationship between culture and language has been confirmed, it is possible to assume that when parents think of a language in a certain way and choose to accept it, such attitude will affect how their children think about culture as well.

Overall, the purpose of this study is to examine the effects of the Korean fathers' acceptance of immigrant mothers' native language on the multiethnic children's attitudes toward mothers' culture, as well as to assess whether mothers' participation in home-country activities and the parent-child relationship can mediate the associations between fathers' acceptance of minority language and children's attitudes toward mothers' culture (Figure 1).

Particularly, three specific research questions were addressed in this study.

### **Research Question 1**

**Does Korean fathers' acceptance of immigrant mothers' native language positively affect multiethnic children's attitudes toward mothers' culture?**



*Figure 1.* Hypothesized research model.

#### Research Question 2-1

Does mothers' participation in home-country activities positively affect children's attitudes toward mothers' culture?

#### Research Question 2-2

Does parent-child relationship positively affect children's attitudes toward mothers' culture?

#### Research Question 3

Do mothers' participation in home-country activities and parent-child relationship mediate the relationship between Korean fathers' acceptance of immigrant mothers' native language and children's attitudes toward mothers' culture?

## Method

### Participants

Data for this study were taken from "The 2012 National Survey of Multiethnic Families [NSMF]", a triennial cross-sectional survey administrated by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family to examine a broad variety of actual conditions of marriage migrants and their family members (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family

[MOGEF], 2013). Approximately 15,341 Korean multiethnic families comprised of immigration by marriage, their spouses and children aged from 9 to 24 years completed the survey. The survey employed post stratification weights to correct disproportional data and adjust the collected data to represent the multiethnic family population in South Korea.

For this study, a subsample was extracted from the original data via a screening process. First, among all the multiethnic family respondents, only those comprised of Korean fathers, immigrant mothers, and their children were included. Second, immigrant mothers with Filipina nationality were excluded from the present study since their official language includes English (C.-A. Huh, & Chung, 2015), which is favored majority language in South Korea, and thus there might be difference between Korean fathers' attitudes toward other minority languages. Third, children aged from 9 to 12 years were selected from the original data based on the theoretical background of socialization process. To prevent selection bias and dependence of observation from families with more than one child, one child was randomly selected from each family. In total, 1,100 multiethnic families were selected for analysis.

The multiethnic children included in this study are consisted of 513 females (46.6%) and 587 males (53.4%). The mean age of multiethnic children was 10.54 years. Among Korean fathers, the largest portion of education status was secondary education

(53.5%), followed by post-secondary education (24.4%) and lower secondary education (22.1%). Similarly, more than half of mothers reported of having secondary education (50.2%). The mean level of monthly household income was 2.31, indicating that the monthly household income of the multiethnic families is between two and three million Korean Republic Won.

In the case of residential area, about 57.7% of the multiethnic families were found to be residing in metropolitan while 42.3% were residing in rural areas. As for length of residence in Korea, the mean was 13.7 years. In addition, the mean score of immigrant mothers' Korean proficiency was 3.93, which was above the median score. Also, more than half of the immigrant mothers (58.9%) reported that they have never experienced discrimination.

## Measures

Children's attitudes toward their mothers' culture (CA) can be explained in terms of three items directly named by NSMF: The first item is "How interested are you in the country of your foreign parent?". The item was measured by a 5-point Likert scale which ranges from 1 (not interested in at all) to 5 (interested in very much). The rest two questions include "I feel proud of my teachers and peers to know that my parent is from foreign country." and "I want to fluently speak in my foreign-born parent's native language as much as Korean.". Items were also rated on a 5-point Likert scales from *not true at all* (1) to *really true* (5). Items were summed and averaged; the coefficient alpha for this variable was .642.

Korean fathers' acceptance of immigrant mothers' native language (FTL) consisted of three items that assessed the extent to which Korean father accept immigrant spouse's native language. Sample items include "I encourage my foreign spouse to speak her native language.", "I have learned foreign spouse's native language.", and "I want to speak my foreign spouse's native language as fluent as Korean.". Respondents answered the questions on five-point Likert scales, ranging from *not true at all* (1) to *really true* (5). Higher scores indicate more acceptance of immigrant mothers' native language. This 3-item measure had an alpha reliability of .703 for the current sample.

Mothers' participation in home-country activities (MP), one of mediators, was assessed by a 4-item measure asked to immigrant mothers: "With whom do you discuss about your household

and yourself?", "With whom do you discuss about your work?", "With whom do you discuss about your children's education?", and "With whom do you do leisure activities?". For each question, respondents were asked to choose more than one answers from the following choices: "A person with the same nationality.", "Korean.", "other foreigners." and "none.". For the analysis, the answers were dichotomized (1 = 'A person with the same nationality,' and 0 = 'Korean', 'other foreigners' and 'None'). Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 (KR-20) revealed that the reliability of items was .816.

Parent-child relationship (PCR), the other mediating variable, consists of two items: "I am satisfied with the relationship with my father"; and "I am satisfied with the relationship with my mother.". The children indicated their answers with a Likert-type response scale, ranging from *very satisfied* (1) to *very unsatisfied* (5) on each item. For the purpose of analysis, each item was backwardly recoded. The reliability for this sample was .746.

Demographic controls are divided into two categories: socio-economic factors and immigrant mothers' migration factors. Socio-economic factors include children's age, children's gender, parental educational status, parental age, household income and residential area. Children's gender was coded as a dummy variable with female as the reference category. The age of each family member and household income were measured as continuous variables. Parental education status was measured with two dummy variables: "Below upper secondary" and "Upper secondary," individuals with "Tertiary" as a reference category. Residential area was dichotomized into "metropolitan area" and "rural area". Migration-related variables are consisted of mothers' years of stay in Korea, mothers' Korean language proficiency, and mothers' experiences of discrimination. Mother's years of stay in South Korea was categorized into four groups: '10 year or less', '11-15 year', '15-20 year', and '20 year or more.' Korean proficiency is consisted of self-reported four items asking proficiency in speaking, listening, writing and reading. For each domain, respondents could answer on a 5-Likert scale ranging from *very good* (1) to *very poor* (5), and these answers were backwardly recoded. The experiences of discrimination was dummy coded with immigrant mothers who have ever experienced coded as '1' and those never experienced coded as '0.'

**Table 1**  
*Descriptive Statistics for Demographic and Main Variables*

		<i>M (SD)/N (%)</i>
Korean fathers' acceptance of immigrant mothers' language	Encouraging to use as home language	3.30 (1.37)
	Interest in language	2.69 (1.42)
	Experience of learning language	3.03 (1.48)
Mothers' participation in home-country activities	Discussion about family matters	.49 ( .49)
	Discussion about work	.24 ( .42)
	Discussion about child education	.30 ( .46)
	Participate in leisure activities	.35 ( .47)
Parent-child relationship	Satisfaction with father-relationship	4.19 ( .93)
	Satisfaction with mother-relationship	4.45 ( .74)
Children's attitude toward mother's culture	Interest in minority culture	3.66 (1.08)
	Pride in minority culture	3.63 ( .97)
	Attitude toward minority language	3.93 (1.25)
Children's gender	Female (1)	513 (46.6)
	Male (0)	587 (53.4)
Children's age	9-12	10.54 (1.12)
Fathers' education status	Below upper secondary	243 (22.1)
	Upper Secondary	589 (53.5)
	Tertiary (1)	268 (24.4)
Mothers' educational status	Below upper secondary	128 (11.6)
	Upper Secondary	552 (50.2)
	Tertiary (1)	420 (38.2)
Mothers' years of stay in Korea	Less than 10- More than 21	13.7 (2.75)
Mothers' Korean proficiency	1-5	3.93 ( 9.7)
Mothers' experience of discrimination	Yes (1)	452 (41.1)
	No (0)	648 (58.9)
Household income (per month/Million)	< .999 million	19 ( 1.7)
	1-1,999	299 (27.2)
	2-2,999	359 (32.6)
	3-3,999	210 (19.1)
	4-4,999	77 ( 7.0)
	5-5,999	25 ( 2.3)
	6-6,999	25 ( 2.3)
	> 7	30 ( 2.7)
Residential area	Metropolitan(1)	635 (57.7)
	Rural(0)	465 (42.3)

*Note.*  $N = 1,100$ .

## Analytical Plan

The analyses were carried out in several stages using SPSS 19.0 (IBM Co., Armonk, NY) and Mplus 7.2 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2002). First, SPSS 19.0 was used to provide a descriptive analysis

of all variables and the correlations among them. We also tested for outliers, missing value, normality, and multicollinearity of main variables in the research model. For the next step, the theoretical model and its path analyses were conducted with structural equation modeling (SEM), which is known as a powerful statistical

**Table 2**  
*Correlation of Main Variables*

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Korean father's acceptance	—			
2. Mother's participation in home-country activities	.142***	—		
3. Parent-child relationship	.086**	-.08**	—	
4. Children's attitudes toward mothers' culture	.302**	.149**	.191**	—

Note.  $N = 1,100$ .

\*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

**Table 3**  
*Model Fit of Measurement Model*

$\chi^2$	<i>df</i>	GFI	CFI	TLI	IFI	RMSEA
118.73	48	.986	.956	.970	.957	.039

tool for examining the model with two or more mediator variables (Bae, 2011). Then, the measurement and structural model analyses were tested. Once the final model fit was assessed, the indirect effects of Korean fathers' acceptance of mothers' native language on children's attitudes toward mothers' culture were tested. The phantom model approach was utilized to examine the significance of the specific, indirect effects of mediating variables based on 1,000 bootstrap samples.

## Results

### Descriptive Statistics

In this section, results of descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1. The means of Korean fathers' acceptance of immigrant mother's native language, mother's participation in home-country activities, parent-child relationship, and multiethnic children's attitude toward minority culture were ranged from .24 to 4.45, and Standard Deviation (SD) of these main variables ranged from .42 to 1.48. Also, all of variables had less than 2% of missing values, indicating that the missing data are ignorable. The assumption regarding normality of the distribution of data was also tested by assessing skewness and kurtosis coefficients. If the absolute value of skewness of all variables is less than 2 and that of kurtosis is less than 7, it is regarded as meeting the assumption of univariate normality (Kline, 2010). In the present study, all values fell within an acceptable range (skewness = .002 to 1.28; kurtosis = .003 to 1.98). In addition, multivariate normality was inspected by

analyzing the multivariate value represented by Mardia (1974)'s coefficients. The multivariate kurtosis normality was 36.11, which was greater than the cutoff value of 3. Thus, Bollen–Stine bootstrapping was conducted with 1000 samples in order to handle the presence of non-normal data (Bae, 2011).

In addition to missing rate and normal distribution, another assumption that must be examined is multicollinearity. Multicollinearity occurs due to high inter-correlations among variables, indicating that variables may not be measuring different constructs (Gujarati & Porter, 2009). Thus, the bivariate correlations was conducted and the output was examined for correlations that are either equal to or exceeding .85 (Table 2). The result revealed that all of correlation coefficients were less than  $\pm 0.8$ , indicating that variables do not have high collinearity (Kline, 2005). In addition, the values of variance inflation factor (VIF) did not exceed the value of 10, indicating that the data did not have multicollinearity problems (Gujarati & Porter, 2009).

### Measurement model

The measurement model was estimated separately prior to the simultaneous estimation of the structural model (Table 3). The validity of the measurement models was assessed using five model fit indices: chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ), GFI (Goodness of Fit Index), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker Lewis Index (TLI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). Although the result shows a significant

**Table 4***Parameter Estimates of Measurement Model*

Variables		Path coefficients			C.R.	AVE
		<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>SE</i>		
FTL	← Encouraging to use language at home	1.000	.554			
	← Interests in minority language	.966	.742	.047	14.97***	.656
	← Experience of learning language	.710	.734	.061	13.98***	
MP	← Discussion of family matters	1.000	.729			
	← Discussion of work	1.190	.660	0.04	19.49***	.947
	← Discussion of child education	.888	.829	0.04	22.55***	
	← Leisure activities	1.120	.689	0.04	19.63***	
← Father-child relationship	1.000	.841				
PCR	← Mother-child relationship	.710	.749	.057	7.39***	.907
	← Interest in ethnicity	1.000	.644			
CA	← Pride in minority culture	.601	.500	.046	12.59***	.911
	← Attitudes toward language	.981	.725	.071	13.15***	

Note.  $N = 1,100$ . FTL = Korean fathers' acceptance of immigrant mothers' native language; MP = Mothers' participation in home-country activities; PCR = Parent-child relationship; CA = Children's attitudes toward mothers' culture.

\*\*\* $p < .001$ .

**Table 5***Model Fit of Structural Model*

$\chi^2$	<i>df</i>	GFI	CFI	TLI	IFI	RMSEA(LO90 - HI90)
247.14	153	.983	.982	.970	.983	.024

chi-square ( $\chi^2 = 118.73$ ;  $df = 48$ ,  $p < .001$ ), other fit indices (GFI = .986, CFI = .956, TLI = .970, IFI = .957, RMSEA = .039) provide sufficient proof of model fit.

The range of standardized factor loading coefficients was appropriate for each latent variable. Also, both standardized and unstandardized parameter estimates along with standard error (SE), critical ratios (C.R.), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were reported as fitted in the criteria (Table 4).

## Structural model

The same goodness-of-fit indices which were used to assess the measurement model were used to evaluate the structural model. The model fit indices for the structural model were  $\chi^2 = 247.14$  ( $df = 153$ ,  $p < .001$ ), GFI = .983, CFI = .982, TLI = .970, IFI = .983, RMSEA = .024. Overall, these indices suggested that the structural model also can be assessed as being adequate (Table 5).

The results of the full structural model with regression path

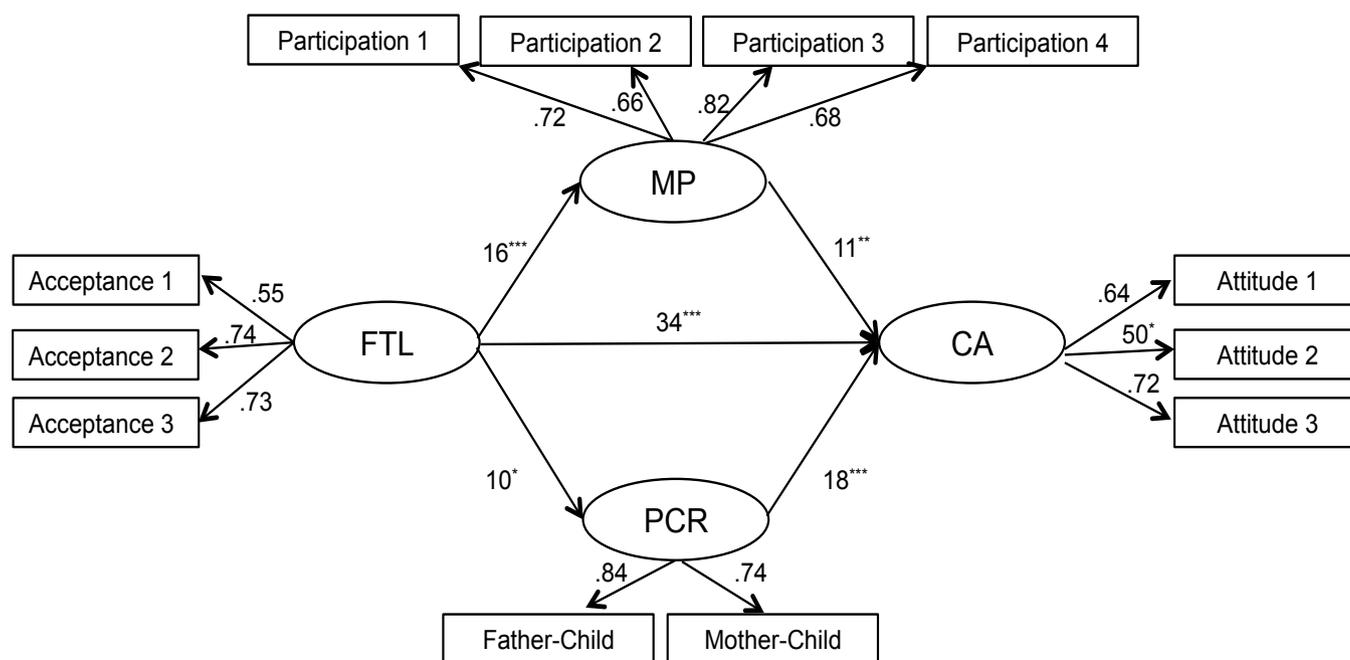
coefficients are also presented in Table 6 and Figure 2. The table shows that Korean fathers' acceptance of immigrant mothers' native language has a positive significant influence on mothers' participation in home-country activities ( $\beta = .16$ ,  $p < .001$ ), parent-child relationship ( $\beta = .10$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and children's attitudes toward mothers' culture ( $\beta = .34$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This means that Korean fathers' more acceptance of minority language can explain children's more positive attitudes toward minority culture, higher rate of mothers' participation in home-country activities and greater satisfaction of parent-child relationship. In addition, mothers' participation in home-country activities ( $\beta = .11$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and parent-child relationship ( $\beta = .18$ ,  $p < .001$ ) had positive influences on children's attitudes toward mothers' culture respectively. It was also shown that some of socio-economic status and migration variables are relevant to children's attitudes toward mothers' culture. Specifically, the influence of the Korean fathers' acceptance of mothers' native language on the children's attitudes toward mothers' culture was stronger for girls than boys ( $\beta = .10$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

**Table 6**  
Analysis of Estimated Parameters' Significance

Path coefficients		$\beta$	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	C.R.
MP	← FTL	.16	.05	.01	3.79***
PCR	← FTL	.10	.05	.02	2.30*
CA	← FTL	.34	.24	.03	6.48***
CA	← MP	.11	.24	.08	2.82**
CA	← PCR	.18	.27	.05	4.66***
CA	← Child's gender	.10	.16	.05	-3.13**
CA	← Child's age	-.07	-.05	.02	-2.04*
CA	← Mothers' education (upper secondary)	-.12	-.18	.06	-3.03**
CA	← Mothers' education (below upper secondary)	-.16	-.38	.09	-3.90***
CA	← Residential area	.07	.11	.05	2.20*
CA	← Discrimination experience	-.08	-.12	.05	-2.37*

Note. *N* = 1,100.

\**p* < .05. \*\**p* < .01. \*\*\**p* < .001.



**Figure 2.** The final model: Structural model of relationships among variables.

\*\**p* < .01. \*\*\**p* < .001.

Also, the children's attitudes toward mothers' culture become more negative as they get older ( $\beta = -.07, p < .05$ ). In regards to mothers' educational status, children whose immigrant mothers attained below upper secondary or upper secondary education are more likely to have negative attitudes toward mother's culture than those whose mothers attained tertiary education ( $\beta = -.16, p < .001$ ;  $\beta = -.12, p < .01$ , respectively). In the case of residential area, children

residing in metropolitan areas showed more positive attitudes than those residing in rural areas ( $\beta = .07, p < .05$ ). In terms of immigrant mothers' migration factors, children whose parents never experienced discrimination were reported to have more positive attitudes than those whose parents have ever experienced ( $\beta = -.08, p < .05$ ).

**Table 7**  
*Mediation Test of Research Model*

Variables	FTL		MP		PCR		
	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>SE</i>	
MP	Direct	.06** (.02)	.01 (.04)				
	Indirect	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)				
	Total	.06** (.02)	.01 (.04)				
PCR	Direct	.051* (.11)	.02 (.04)				
	Indirect	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)				
	Total	.05* (.11)	.02 (.04)				
CA	Direct	.24** (.34)	.05 (.05)	.25** (.12)	.09 (.04)	.27** (.19)	.07 (.05)
	Indirect	.03** (.04)	.01 (.01)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
	Total	.27** (.38)	.05 (.05)	.25** (.12)	.09 (.04)	.27** (.19)	.07 (.05)

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

**Table 8**  
*Indirect Effects Using Phantom Variables*

Pathway	Point estimate	<i>SE</i>	95%		<i>p</i>
			Lower	Upper	
FTL → MP → CA	.014	.006	.003	.035	< .05
FTL → PCR → CA	.014	.008	.006	.031	< .01

*Note.*  $N = 1,100$ .

## Mediating effect

The direct, indirect, and total effects of the each variable are illustrated in Table 7. The total effect of Korean fathers' acceptance of mothers' native language on children's attitudes toward mothers' culture ( $\beta = .270$ ,  $p < .05$ ) was positively significant. Also, the indirect effect was significant, which confirms that the mothers' participation in home-country activities and parent-child relationship act as partial mediators in the association between Korean fathers' acceptance of mothers' language and children's attitudes toward mothers' culture (indirect effect = .028,  $p < .01$ ).

The indirect effect calculated above is the sum of mothers' participation in home-country activities and parent-child relationship variables. It is essential that each specific indirect effect be isolated and tested to assess whether one or both of these variables can explain the association between fathers' acceptance and children's attitudes toward mothers' culture in the mediation model (Lau & Cheung, 2010). There are two methods widely used for examining the individual effect of mediator variable: Sobel

test and Phantom model approach. Whereas Sobel test can be used in merely a normal distribution condition, Phantom model is available in non-normal distribution, which satisfies with the condition of this study (Hong, 2012). For this reason, Phantom model approach was utilized in this study. The indirect effects of mothers' participation in home-country activities and parent-child relationship were statistically significant (Table 8). In other words, mothers' participation in home-country activities and parent-child relationship can work as partial mediators respectively in the relationship between Korean fathers' acceptance of mothers' native language and children's attitudes toward mothers' culture.

## Discussion

The objective of the present study was to examine the influence of the Korean fathers' acceptance of the immigrant mothers' native language on the multiethnic children's attitudes toward mothers' culture while assessing the mediating effects of the

mothers' participation in home-country activities and parent-child relationship. The discussion of the main results follows.

First, the results revealed that Korean fathers' acceptance of immigrant mothers' native language, immigrant mothers' participation in home-country activities and parent-child relationship positively influenced their children's attitudes toward mothers' culture. Of these three variables, Korean fathers' acceptance of mothers' native language was the strongest predictor of children's attitudes toward mothers' culture. This suggests that when Korean fathers have more open-minded attitudes toward minority language and encourage children to use it, children are better able to perceive minority culture positively. This finding is consistent with previous studies that examined the intergenerational transmission of attitudes toward minority culture from parent belonged to majority group and minority children using the concept of socialization and Berry's acculturation (Jung, 2014; Zhao, 2008). Taken together, it is evident that further research is needed to closely clarify the acceptance of minority language and culture among parents from a culturally majority group.

Second, the immigrant mothers' participation in home-country activities partially mediated the relationship between the Korean fathers' acceptance of immigrant mothers' native language and children's attitudes toward mothers' culture. Korean fathers' attitudes of positively accepting minority language can encourage immigrant mothers to participate in home-country activities, thereby maintaining the values of heritage culture (Yun & Chung, 2015; Kasuga-Jenks, 2012). Observing mothers' participation in home-country activities, multiethnic children are able to have strong beliefs in the value of minority culture and maintain positive attitudes toward mothers' culture (Bankston & Zhou, 1995; Karsen, 2015). This result also firstly demonstrates the significant role of mothers' participation in home-country activities as one of the significant cultural socialization practices. Thus, it would be important to promote home-country activities such as self-help groups and ethnic activities, where immigrant mothers can actively interact with people with same nationalities (Ciment & Radzilowski, 2015).

Third, parent-child relationship was found as another mediating factor in the relationship between Korean fathers' acceptance of immigrant mothers' native language and children's attitudes toward mothers' culture. This finding clarifies earlier research on minority

families that suggested as children are satisfied with the relationship with parents, they are likely to receive parental messages and form attitudes that the children desire to adopt (Crolley-Simic & Vonk, 2011; Joyce, 2012; Vonk, 2011). In addition to the SEM analysis, the result of regression analyses that differentiated the parent-child relationship satisfaction variable into father-child and mother-child dyad also revealed that both variables were significant partial mediators. Korean fathers with higher acceptance of minority language can improve the relationship with children in that children are more likely to feel connections in their birth culture. Furthermore, Korean fathers' encouragement of using immigrant mothers' native language may foster the communication between immigrant mother and children, which in turn, lead to children's positive attitudes toward mothers' culture. Given this result, the interventions offered to multiethnic families should be aimed at not only developing parent-child bonding but also improving Korean fathers' attitudes toward minority language.

Lastly, regarding demographic factors, our results revealed that the children's attitudes toward mothers' culture become more negative as they get older, which did not support the previous study (Stepney et al., 2015). A plausible explanation is that children who grow up in the mainstream society might negatively view minority culture due to being forced to assimilate into the majority culture. Also, our data suggested that children residing in metropolitan areas showed more positive attitudes than those residing in rural areas, which is not consistent with previous studies. This mixed result can be explained by the fact that the limited access to ethnic networks and services in rural areas deter immigrant mothers from engaging in home-country activities (R. M. Lee et al., 2006). Given that the majority of multiethnic families currently reside in provincial areas with a low standard of living, future studies should attempt to take these regional characteristics into account to produce more reliable results.

In addition, the finding of immigrant mothers' experience of discrimination did not support the previous study (Inman et al., 2007). The possible reason for this mixed result could be driven by the fact that discrimination can yield assimilation-based acculturation for immigrant parents. Once immigrants experience discrimination in the host society, they inevitably take extensive measures to adjust to the majority culture. Eventually, this circumstance might have resulted in their children's hostility

or apathy toward minority culture (Hughes & Johnson, 2001). However, since the discrimination experience variable was measured by a single item in this study, it is recommended that future studies use elaborate variables to reach a better understanding of discrimination experience.

Although the current study provides variable contributions that inform practice with multiethnic family members, there are limitations to be addressed.

First, the present study did not measure any type of socialization agent, beyond parents, that can affect children's attitudes. Other socialization agents, such as peers and teachers, should be considered in future studies. Given that school-aged children tend to imitate the attitudes and behaviors of their peers (Joyce, 2012), it is vital to examine these variables too, such as children's peer relationships and peers' attitudes towards minority culture.

Second, the main variables in this study were not measured precisely due to the limitations of using secondary data. For instance, immigrant mothers' participation in home-country activities variable was measured only by using dichotomous questions. However, it is also important to measure mothers' participation in activities using more concrete concepts such as participation frequency or perceived participation. In addition, parent-child relationship involves not only children's perceived relationship satisfaction with parents, but other important components such as children's attachment to parents and cohesiveness. It is advised that future research include these additional indicators, to fully measure the domain of the parent-child relationship and immigrant mothers' participation in home-country activities.

Third, this study did not control important variables regarding the immigrant mothers' cultural characteristics. For instance, the country of origin can have an impact on the depth of the mothers' acculturation and the degrees in which she participates in social activities (Barth, 1998). Moreover, it is not only the attitudes of the father but also those of the mother can greatly impact children to form attitudes toward heritage culture. Yet, this study focused only on the influence of the fathers' attitudes due to a lack of data. Future studies should include immigrant mothers' nationalities, attitudes, and beliefs to produce more reliable results.

Lastly, since this study used a cross-sectional design, it failed to examine the causal inferences and any relevant changes over a period of time. Although this study focused on multiethnic

children in the late childhood, but the result may have been different if they are in adolescence, a period that peer interactions arguably hold the greatest importance for social and behavioral functioning. Thus, future studies can employ longitudinal designs to examine how intergenerational transmission of attitudes changes over time from children's childhood to adolescence.

In spite of these limitations, the present study expanded the knowledge on a quickly growing multiethnic family group in South Korea. While the bulk of previous studies investigated immigrant or transracial families in Western societies, the present study has focused uniquely on multiethnic families and on finding the mechanism of how parental attitudes toward minority language influence multiethnic children's attitudes toward minority cultures. The unique contribution of this study is its examination of the important role of Korean fathers' acceptance of minority culture and its relationship with immigrant spouses' engagement in ethnic activities and children's perceptions of social support and development. The current study is also valuable in that it used socialization theory and verified its application to multiethnic families in South Korea. In addition, the current findings may serve to inform Korean fathers who wish to facilitate a more culturally sensitive approach to interventions and policies designed to promote optimal adjustment among Korean multiethnic children.

## Notes

This article is a part of the first author's master thesis submitted in 2016.

## Conflict of Interest

No potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported.

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Received December 31, 2017

Revision received February 26, 2018

Accepted April 5, 2018