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The Integrative Conceptual Model: Ecological Risk and Protective Factors for East Asian Immigrant Fathers' Psychological Well-Being in the United States

Kwangman Ko, Counseling and Human Services, East Tennessee State University
Sun-A Lee, Sociology, Anthropology, and Child & Family Studies, University of Louisiana
Jaerim Lee, Child Development and Family Studies, Seoul National University

ABSTRACT. In response to the dearth of research focusing solely on immigrant fathers, we propose the Integrative Conceptual Model to investigate the psychological well-being of recent immigrant fathers from East Asia to the United States. This model addresses how multiple factors in the society (e.g., policy), work and community (e.g., employment), family (e.g., father-child and couple relationships), and individual (e.g., education) levels in the host and home countries are linked to East Asian immigrant fathers' adaptation to their new environment. More specifically, we focus on the unique risk factors and protective factors to their adjustment, which are vital to the psychological well-being of recent immigrant fathers from East Asia. The Integrative Conceptual Model contributes to the limited fatherhood literature to help understand the multifaceted nature of immigrant fatherhood. Implications include creating culturally sensitive education and intervention programs for East Asian immigrant fathers.

Keywords: ecological risk-protective framework, immigrant fathers from East Asia, psychological well-being, Integrative Conceptual Model, fatherhood

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Direct correspondence to: Kwangman Ko, Ph.D., Counseling and Human Services, 303 Warf-Pickel Hall, East Tennessee State University, TN 37614; e-mail: kokm01@etsu.edu



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The Integrative Conceptual Model: Ecological Risk and Protective Factors for East Asian Immigrant Fathers' Psychological Well-Being in the United States

A new image of fathers (Lamb, 2000) is that of fathers actively involved in nurturing and caring for their children beyond the traditional role of being economic providers for their families. To understand this new image of involved fathers, numerous studies have examined how active father involvement (e.g., Lamb, 2000), the father-child relationship (e.g., Palkovitz, 2019), and interpersonal relationships, such as coparenting (e.g., Marsanić, & Kusmić, 2013), are related to positive child development (e.g., Sarkadi et al., 2008). However, few studies have focused on fathers' psychological well-being (e.g., Schindler, 2010) from a father-centric perspective (Palkovitz & Hull, 2018). A focus on immigrant fathers in the literature has also been minimal (Chuang & Moreno, 2008). Most studies on immigrant families have focused on other family members, especially mothers and children, or, at most, on the father's role as part of the parental team (Strier & Roer-Strier, 2010).

Immigrant families, including fathers, need to adapt to multiple challenges in their new environment in the host country. Immigration disrupts immigrants' sociocultural and family systems (Ward & Geeraert, 2016), including the introduction of new family roles and identities (Choi & Thomas, 2009). This adaptation process often leads to increased stress, which could lead to outcomes such as depression, alcohol consumption, and eating disorders (Shuval, 2001). However, immigrants' adaptation process may vary depending on the country of origin and what role they assume in the family. In addition, the ecological context of the immigrant's home country often shapes how immigrants interact with and adapt to their new environment (Ward & Geeraert, 2016). Immigrant fathers may bring unique backgrounds from their past ecological context due to their roles and identities as a man and parent in their home country.

East Asian immigrants are an important ethnic minority in the United States. Of the 325.7 million residents in the United States in 2017, 6.8% (22.4 million) were Asian Americans. Among the total immigrant population, 38.4% were East Asians, primarily from China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). This group of East Asian immigrants are unique because of the strong historical influence of Confucianism, which highlights a hierarchical order based on age and gender (Au, 2017; Kanatsu & Chao, 2008). Confucianism also embraces familism, prioritizing family's interests over the individual's (Shwalb et al., 2010). East Asians may tend to be reluctant to use mental health services due to the influence of Confucianism (Kramer et al., 2002), as mental illness has traditionally been shameful to a family in a Confucian culture where "saving face," or not embarrassing the family, is important. Given East Asian immigrant fathers' (EAI Fs) status as head of the household and the stigma of mental health in East Asia, fathers may be even more reluctant to seek mental health treatment (Au, 2017).

This paper focuses on immigrant fathers with young children who recently immigrated from East Asia to the United States. These recent East Asian Immigrant Fathers, hereafter referred to as EAI Fs, may be distinct from previous immigrant fathers from East Asia, given the rapid societal and cultural changes in East Asia such as declines in marriage and fertility rates and an increase in women's labor force participation (Ji, 2015). EAI Fs may also be different from immigrant fathers from other regions, given the Confucian tradition that has had an overarching influence throughout East Asian countries. While this paper views EAI Fs as a singular group, it is necessary to acknowledge the within-group variance that may affect fathers' roles, behaviors, and adaptation due to differences in family relationships, work and employment, women's roles, and public policy (Shwalb et al., 2010). For instance, Chinese immigrants may have adopted more egalitarian attitudes toward the division of household labor compared to Japanese and Koreans, while Koreans may still hold traditional views on

women's employment and the traditional division of household labor (Oshio et al., 2012). However, similarities among EAIFFs are notable due to their shared values, history, and traditions (e.g., Confucianism and patriarchy; Kanatsu & Chao, 2008). Under the umbrella of Confucianism in East Asian countries, families remain an important socio-economic unit; despite some variation across countries, patriarchy is still influential (Yeung, 2013). Fathers in East Asia strongly focus on their economic activities as well as their children's academic achievements (Shwalb et al., 2010).

We propose an integrative conceptual model to explain the ecological risk factors and protective factors that contribute to EAIFFs' psychological well-being. In this study, psychological well-being includes both positive aspects (e.g., self-esteem, life satisfaction) and negative aspects (e.g., depression, anxiety) (Au, 2017; Bryant & Veroff, 1982; Shuval, 2001). The model shown in Figure 1 was developed in response to the lack of research on fathers' psychological well-being (e.g., Schindler, 2010) and particularly the dearth of studies on immigrant fathers (Strier & Roer-Strier, 2010). Using an ecological risk-protective framework (Bogenschneider, 1996), we first address how ecological environments in the host country affect EAIFFs' adaptation, which is vital to their psychological well-being. The integrative conceptual model suggests that specific environments, such as policies in societal contexts, can be a risk factor (e.g., anti-immigrant policy) or protective factor (e.g., respecting diversity). Next, we discuss how characteristics that recent EAIFFs bring from their home countries can be a risk factor and protective factor to their adaptation and psychological well-being. In this paper, we aim to (a) introduce an integrative conceptual model grounded on an ecological risk-protective perspective, (b) discuss the potential that an environmental context can be both a risk factor and a protective factor to EAIFFs' psychological well-being, and (c) shed light on the uniqueness of recent EAIFFs compared to previous EAIFFs or immigrant fathers from regions other than East Asian countries.

Ecological Risk-Protective Framework

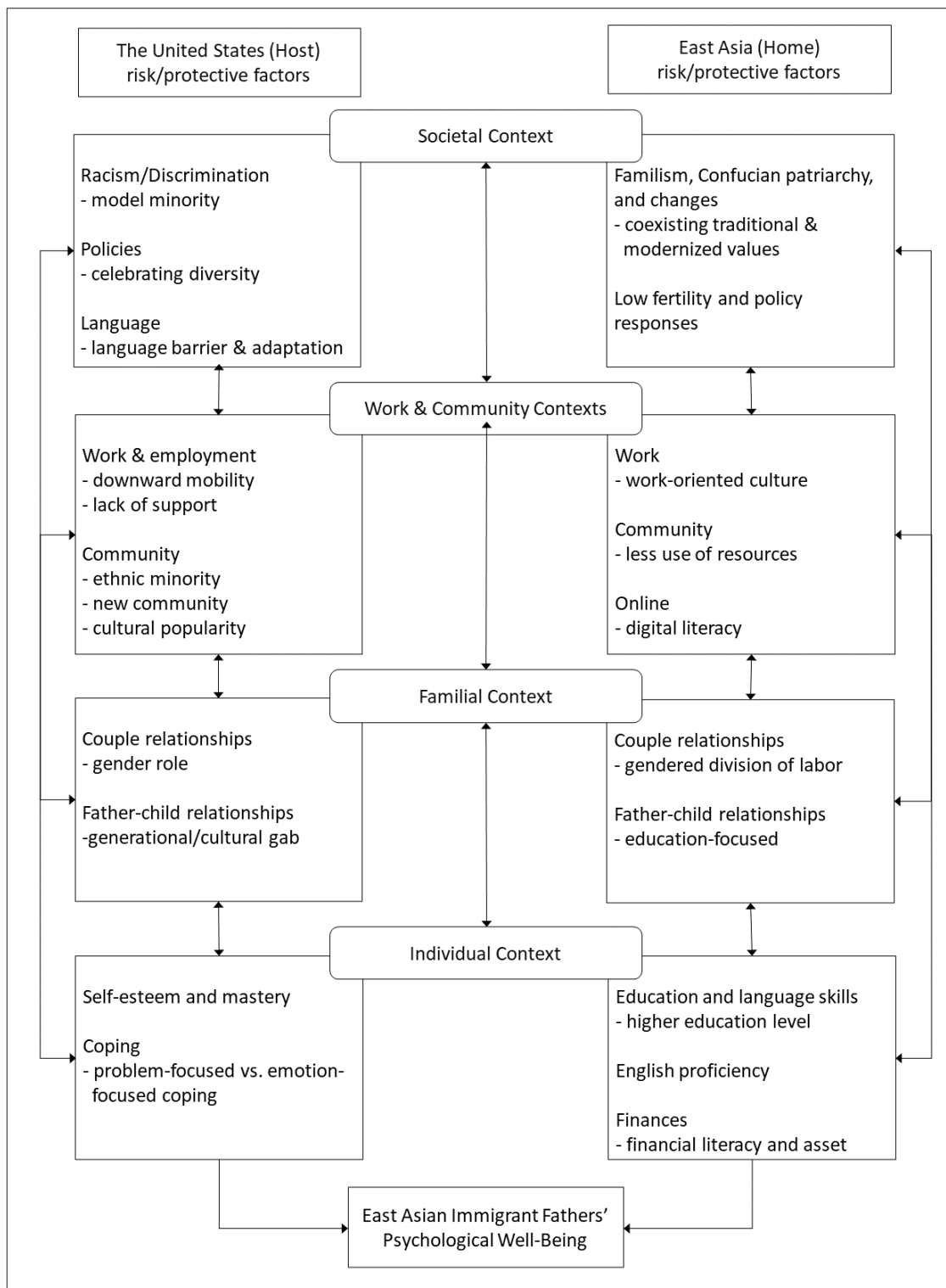
The integrative conceptual model in Figure 1 is based on Bogenschneider's (1996) ecological risk/protective framework. Bogenschneider developed this framework by integrating ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and risk-focused and protection/resilience-focused perspectives. Bogenschneider stressed the need to reduce risk factors and strengthen protective factors at the individual, family, work, and community levels to promote healthy individual development.

The risk-protective approach can help identify the factors that could deteriorate or support EAIFFs' adaptation to the United States, which, in turn, could impact their psychological well-being. In this study, we define risk factors as ecological factors that may harm EAIFFs' adaptation, which, in turn, could increase negative psychological outcomes (Duncan & Goddard, 2017). We use the term "risk" instead of similar terms, such as vulnerability, because risk factors are more comprehensive for multiple levels of environments.

Protective factors are defined as ecological factors that buffer the negative impact of adaptation stress on EAIFFs' psychological well-being. Protective factors are similar to "resources" in the stress process model (Pearlin et al., 1981) and the contextual model of family stress (Boss, 2002). Within the integrative conceptual model, EAIFFs are described within ecological contexts at the individual (e.g., coping, education), family (e.g., the couple relationship, father-child relationship), work-community (e.g., employment, online community), and society levels (e.g., model minority, policy) to better capture the factors embedded in the specific domains of EAIFFs' lives.

Figure 1

Ecological Risk-Protective Model of East Asian Immigrant Fathers' Psychological Well-Being



The ecological risk/protective framework is applied and extended in two important ways. First, we illustrate EAIFFs' ecological risk and protective factors in both the host country and East Asian home country. Acknowledging the home country environment is crucial to understanding EAIFFs' adaptation and psychological well-being since their home country-specific environments contribute to unique risk and protective factors as they adapt to the host country (Ward & Geeraert, 2016). Second, special attention is given to the possibility that certain ecological factors can be both risk and protective factors for EAIFFs' well-being. A limitation of the literature using a risk-protective perspective is the dichotomous approach to risk and protective factors when, in reality, some factors are too complicated to play a one-sided role in psychological well-being. For example, social support has both buffering and reverse-buffering effects on the relationship between stressors and psychological difficulties because social network interactions involve both positive and negative aspects (Revenson et al., 1991). In this paper, EAIFF-specific factors, such as how the "model minority" stereotype and Confucian familism may be both a risk and a protective factor. These EAIFF-specific factors make EAIFFs a unique group of immigrants that deserve special attention in the literature.

Risk and Protective Factors at the Societal Level

This section discusses the risk factors and protective factors of EAIFFs' psychological well-being at the societal level. The host country context includes racism/discrimination, model minority, policies, and language. The home country backgrounds of EAIFFs are familism, Confucian patriarchy, demographic characteristics, policy, and recent related changes.

Host Country Context at the Societal Level: The United States

Racism and Discrimination. Asian Americans, including EAIFFs, have never been free from discrimination and racism in the United States. They experienced debilitated human rights until the late 1800s, faced anti-Asian sentiment in the 1920s, were labeled a model minority in the 1960s, and have recently been subjected to mixed public perceptions and negative attitudes towards Asian Americans (Gover et al., 2020; Lee & Waters, 2021; Zhang & Hong, 2013). EAIFFs' perceived discrimination can be considered a risk factor because higher perceived discrimination is related to adverse psychological outcomes (e.g., higher depression) (Gee et al., 2007).

The link between discrimination and negative psychological outcomes over multiple generations may imply that they are not accepted as insiders but are seen as "forever foreigners" (Shih et al., 2019). However, studies on the relationship between discrimination and East Asian Americans' psychological well-being are still limited, possibly due to the social myth that East Asian Americans are the model minority.

Model Minority. The term model minority portrays Asian Americans, including EAIFFs, as successful ethnic minorities who have overcome social hurdles, such as oppression and discrimination, thanks to their strong work ethic and adherence to laws (Shih et al., 2019). These perceived characteristics seem like a protective factor because people may believe that Asian Americans are free from the effects of racism (Zhou & Lee, 2004) and are on the same socioeconomic status level as whites because of their high education levels. However, this model minority stereotype can also be a risk factor based on how this concept was created. Was this concept centered on Asians' true successes and high achievement or because they have not been perceived as a "threat" to main society? It could be that the concept of model minority started from the perception of Asians as a "non-threat" to main society. For example, Shih and the colleagues (2019) pointed out that Asian employees, in general, are more prone to work hard, be loyal to rules, and not complain or raise their voices. The following two questions would support the idea that the model minority is not favoring Asians: (a) Would EAIFFs reach the same

socioeconomic status as white fathers who have the same high level of education? And (b) What images of this model minority are shown in the media, and how do these images shape people's attitudes toward EAIFs?

Attaining a high level of education can be both a protective factor and a risk factor for EAIFs' psychological well-being. Having a good education has been seen as a protective factor for immigrants so they can succeed and enter the mainstream of society (Choi & Thomas, 2009). However, education can also be considered a risk factor, especially for EAIFs, because many are educated in their home countries and that education may not be recognized in the host country's job market (Choi et al. 2021). Thus, EAIFs may feel more deprived when they compare themselves to others with a similar level of education either in their home country or in the United States (Zhang & Hong, 2013).

The depiction of Asian American men in the media may also be a risk factor for EAIFs' well-being. While these portrayals are not always negative, Asian men in the media are often viewed as feminine, nerdy, subordinate, and "not sexy" (Galinsky et al., 2013; Zhang, 2010). These cultural stereotypes created by the mass media may affect the interpersonal dynamics between Asian men and others at work and in the community. Constant media exposure to these stereotypes may result in people accepting the stereotypes as a social reality (Zhang, 2010). Thus, how Asian men are portrayed in the media could be a risk factor for EAIFs' psychological well-being.

Policies: Color Blindness vs. Celebrating Diversity. Public policies related to immigrants could also impact EAIFs' psychological well-being because multicultural policies and the public's acceptance of diversity in the host country could affect immigrants' adaptation (Ward & Geeraert, 2016). The United States may be a better place to live for ethnic minority groups, including EAIFs, since many Americans strive to embrace diversity. For example, the United States government encourages organizations and institutions to endorse an internal culture of "color blindness" (Braddock, 2021; Plaut et al., 2018). Color blindness is the belief that individuals should not be evaluated based on racial or ethnic differences; if people or institutions do not notice race, they cannot act based on racial bias or discrimination (Apfelbaum et al., 2012). However, recent research has shown that the color blindness policy is not successful as many organizations and institutions still discriminate against people based on race and justify their discriminatory hiring decisions with vague terms, such as "more suitable standards" (e.g., Pager & Qullian, 2005).

Interestingly, the policy of endorsing multiculturalism has more successfully reduced racial discrimination, which acknowledges and celebrates racial differences and diversity (Cox, 2022; Plaut et al., 2018). For example, when white employees supported multiculturalism, non-white employees were less likely to experience bias (Apfelbaum et al., 2012). Hence, the policies of recognizing and celebrating diversity could be a protective factor for EAIFs' psychological well-being.

Language. Language also impacts adaptation for EAIFs. Studies have found that immigrants who spoke a different language in their home country faced more difficulties adapting to the new English-speaking environment (Choi & Thomas, 2009). Thus, language can be a significant risk factor for EAIFs whose native language is not English. Specifically, Au (2017) found that language barriers in the host country caused communication problems, which could cause EAIFs to have a lower sense of control and self-confidence. Language barriers could also prevent immigrants from accessing available resources, such as health care (Au, 2017). Language barriers can also prevent EAIFs from being involved with their children's lives and communicating (Kramer et al.2002), which may harm their parent-child relationship and psychological well-being.

Home Country Context at the Societal Level: East Asia

Familism and Confucian Patriarchy. Familism, family-oriented collectivistic values, is a central focus in East Asian cultures (Lee & Son, 2018). East Asian familism prioritizes the family's interests over the individual's interests. Research has shown that familism can be both a protective and a risk factor to individuals' psychological well-being (Kwon, 2012). For example, Korean emerging adults who endorse familism are more likely to report higher levels of psychological adjustment with conformity to parental expectations (Lee & Solheim, 2018). However, familism may lead to psychological distress for immigrants by adding a sense of familial obligation (Knight et al., 2002).

Confucianism is patriarchal in that it recognizes the father as the head of the household and the father-son relationship as the center of the family system. Confucian patriarchy grants a father considerable power and authority over his family, but he also bears the obligation to continue the patrilineal family line through the father-son relationship (Kanatsu & Chao, 2008). Men in East Asia have been socialized to take male privilege for granted as a son and later as a father (Shwalb et al., 2010). Thus, when EAIFFs move to the United States, they are likely to experience a discrepancy between the male privilege they had in their home country and the minority status they face as non-white immigrants (Chua & Fujino, 1999). This confusion is a unique risk factor for EAIFFs, which may be linked to lower levels of psychological well-being.

Although Confucian patriarchy is still strong, notable changes have taken place in gender relations. In China, gender equality has been a national goal since the establishment of the socialist state, and in other East Asian countries such as Korea, women's employment has become inevitable since the financial crisis in the late 1990s (Yoon, 2015). Social awareness of gender equality has also increased due to feminist movements. The new image of the ideal father is an involved father, portrayed in Japan as "ikumen" (childrearing fathers are cool and attractive) and in Korea as "frienddy" (friend-like daddy).

While the Confucian patriarchy ideals and the new image of an involved father coexist in East Asia (Choi et al., 2016; Jang et al., 2016), EAIFFs with strong aspirations to be involved fathers may have chosen to move to the United States because workplaces and communities are relatively more family-centered. This motivation could be a psychological protective factor for EAIFFs if their expectations are met in the United States. However, it could also be a risk factor if they have to focus on their breadwinner role after immigration due to financial challenges (Choi et al., 2021).

Demographic Changes and Policy Responses. The most striking demographic trend throughout East Asia is the lowest fertility rates in the world. The total fertility rates in 2018 were 0.98 in South Korea (Statistics Korea, 2019a), 1.06 in Taiwan (Statistics Bureau of the Republic of China, 2019), and 1.42 in Japan (Statistics Bureau of Japan, 2019). China abolished the one-child policy in late 2015 to address national concerns about low fertility rates. The literature has shown that gender inequality, particularly the gendered division of labor for childcare, is one of the main reasons for low fertility (McDonald, 2000). Thus, public policies encouraging and supporting fathers' involvement in childcare (e.g., expanding paternity leave) have been developed or expanded by the governments of China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan (Robila, 2013). These policies have heightened East Asia fathers' awareness of the importance of gender equality and paternal involvement in their families' lives (Chin et al., 2013) and can be a protective factor as EAIFFs adapt to the United States, where gender relations are relatively more egalitarian.

Risk and Protective Factors at the Work and Community Level

This section discusses EAIFFs' work environments, employment issues, neighborhoods, and online communities in the United States and East Asia. For example, the ethnic community and new neighborhoods are both critical for EAIFFs in the United States. Before moving to the United States, EAIFFs likely experienced East Asia's unique heavy work-oriented culture.

Host Country Context at Work and Community Level: The United States

Work and Employment. Work and employment for immigrants significantly affect adaptation and their psychological well-being (Strier & Roer-Strier, 2010). If immigration involves lower job mobility and a lack of support at work, EAIFFs' employment in the United States is more likely to be a risk factor. For example, immigrant fathers are likely to experience downward job or career mobility because of the host country's language barrier or license verification issues (Kramer et al., 2002), which may deteriorate immigrant fathers' psychological well-being (Strier & Roer-Strier, 2010). The higher cost of living in the United States and Canada may also lead fathers to work longer hours and force mothers to work to support the family (Lamb & Bougher, 2009), which can undermine the traditional fathers' role as the primary breadwinner. While it may be true that this may be a significant issue for EAIFFs who align with more conventional gender roles, such as being a head of the household (Shwalb et al., 2010), many East Asians are navigating transitions of traditional family gender roles into more egalitarian ones (Ji, 2015).

The lack of respect and support from coworkers can also be a risk factor for EAIFFs. If they are accepted and respected at work, it will likely help them adjust to the new environment. Nolan and Morley (2014) found that when immigrant employees had better relationships with and received support from their coworkers at work and outside of work, they adjusted better to the new environment at work and in the community. Similarly, Zhuang et al. (2014) found that when mentors at work showed more support for and understanding of the immigrants' cultures, the immigrants were likely to adjust to their new environment better, including their workplace. Thus, the context and environment where EAIFFs work can buffer or strengthen their stress while adapting to the new land.

Ethnic Minority Community and New Community. Immigrants usually experience a loss of social support from their former social networks, which can negatively affect their psychological well-being by increasing their adaptation stress (Au, 2017). In general, immigrants try to connect to and seek support from their ethnic community due to either language or cultural barriers, which can be a protective and risk factor to their adaptation. Social support from their ethnic community can be beneficial since it buffers adaptation stressors (Noh & Avison, 1996). However, support from the ethnic community may also hinder their adaptation since immigrants may be less likely to feel the need to adapt to the host country. The connection to their ethnic community may also be more common among EAIFFs as they seek the comfort of their community due to a language barrier and other cultural factors, such as ethnic food.

Another challenge for EAIFFs is connecting to the new community. Living in a community that accepts immigrants is a protective factor for immigrants' adjustment. In contrast, negative reception or rejection of immigrants in the community is a risk factor and could lead to negative psychological outcomes (Schwartz et al., 2014). Generally, ethnic groups that are similar or regarded as positive to host culture groups are more likely to be accepted (Ward & Geeraert, 2016). Considering the growing popularity of East Asian culture in the United States, recent EAIFFs may experience better reception from the community, which can be a protective factor. For example, Chinese and Japanese food is popular in the United States, and more recently, Korean pop culture (K-pop) has become well-known and part of

mainstream culture. This positive view of East Asian cultures could help immigrants from East Asia adjust to the new environment.

Home Country Context at Work and Community Level: East Asia

Work-Oriented Culture and Changes. Workplaces in East Asia are unique because of the collectivistic organizational culture that demands long work hours and closer ties at work. Spending long hours at work has been praised as an indicator of hard work and a strong work ethic (Chin et al., 2013; Jang et al., 2016). In 2016, the percentage of workers who worked 60 hours or more per week in their main job was 12.8% in Korea, 8.2% in Japan, and 5.8% in China, compared to 3.7% in the United States and 3.4% in Canada (OECD, n.d.). More importantly to the family, it is not unusual for fathers in East Asia to go out with coworkers after work to build and maintain close relationships; many believe this connection is an extension of their work. Burnout and workaholism are prevalent and somewhat encouraged in East Asian workplaces (Morrone & Matsuyama, 2012). These workplace culture characteristics in East Asia are considered *risk factors* for fathers who want to spend more time with their families, particularly their children. However, EAIFFs' commitment to hard work is a protective factor in the United States because their strong work ethic helps them obtain and maintain secure employment, which is crucial to their adaptation. These work-oriented attitudes also can be a risk factor for EAIFFs' well-being (Molenda-Kostanski, 2016) if they perceive a significant mismatch between what they value (work) and what their family or American workplace values (family and leisure).

The increased social awareness of work-family balance after dramatic economic developments in East Asia has started to change the once-prevalent organizational culture that kept fathers' involvement in the family to a minimum (Chin, 2012). Thus, for some recent EAIFFs, exposure to a more family-friendly organizational culture in their home countries can be a protective factor in helping them change their expectations as they adapt to workplaces in the United States where work-family balance is valued.

Community Environment. Local communities where EAIFFs previously lived are also important ecological contexts. Although many EAIFFs are accustomed to urban communities that offer facilities and services for families, such as community centers, health services, and leisure facilities, only a small number of fathers use these community services in East Asia (Lee & Son, 2018). In general, East Asian fathers do not feel comfortable sharing their psychological struggles with relative strangers, so many of them hesitate to use these services due to the cultural taboo of men sharing their feelings or using mental health services (Au, 2017). This reluctance to utilize community services can be a risk factor for EAIFFs' psychological well-being after they immigrate to the United States because they do not have the informal resources (e.g., support networks) they used to rely on in their home countries.

Online Environment. Online communities are strong among young fathers in East Asian countries. Since most East Asian countries are global leaders in information technology, many recent EAIFFs are comfortable using information and communication devices (e.g., smartphones and tablet PCs) (Pick et al., 2015). These skills may help them to find reliable, up-to-date information on the Internet, communicate with their families and friends in their home countries, and build new social networks online. Recent EAIFFs' digital literacy is a protective factor because they can maintain their former social networks and receive social support even after they move to the United States (Suh & Hsieh, 2019). These EAIFFs are also competent in searching for the information and resources they need to adjust to their new living environment, which is a crucial resource for immigrants (National Immigration Forum, 2016). However, over-reliance on online media and social networks in their home country can be a risk factor for EAIFFs to adapt to their new communities (Suh & Hsieh, 2019). They may not have enough

opportunities to interact with their neighbors and to improve their English competency due to their over-reliance on online media in their native language.

Risk and Protective Factors at a Family Level

At the family level in the host country, the potential changes that EAIFFs experience in their couple and father-son relationships can be both a risk factor and protective factor. Couple and father-son relationships in East Asian immigrant families in the United States will be explored followed by the familial contexts in the home country, including the overarching characteristics of the couple and father-son relationships in Confucian cultures. In addition, the recent changes the new groups of EAIFFs may have experienced before they moved to the United States will be considered

Host Country Context at the Family Level: The United States

Couple Relationship. While numerous studies have examined the general impact of the quality of immigrants' couple relationships on each partner's well-being (e.g., Schindler, 2010), the main focus of these studies on immigrant couples has been changes in gendered division of labor after immigration. The critical question is: What happens to EAIFFs' psychological well-being when they experience changes in gendered division of labor, which can lead to different dynamics in the couple's relationship? Due to patriarchal Confucianism expectations in East Asian societies (e.g., men should be financial providers and the head of the family), EAIFFs are more likely to feel insecure when these traditional gender roles change (e.g., women become financial providers, and may even make more money than their partners) (Kanatsu & Chao, 2008; Strier & Roer-Strier, 2010). Therefore, gender role changes following immigration may be a risk factor for EAIFFs.

Father-Child Relationship. While immigrant fathers see their roles as economic/financial providers, moral leaders, teachers, and guides to their children (Strier & Roer-Strier, 2010), immigration itself can cause stress as they may not meet these role expectations and may need to restructure their expectations to be more in line with the new context. In particular, the downward employment shift following immigration is likely to force EAIFFs to work longer hours because of lower wages, which decreases the time spent with their children (Lamb & Bougher, 2009). This limited time with their children can be a risk factor for EAIFFs since highly involved fathers are considered "idealized" fathers in the United States (Kim & Chung, 2011).

The cultural and generation gap between fathers and children could also be a risk factor for EAIFFs' psychological well-being. The differences in cultural values between first-generation EAIFFs (i.e., obedience to parents) and their second-generation children (i.e., independence) make it more difficult for EAIFFs to communicate or get along with their children (Lee, 2011). Additionally, since most second-generation children in the United States prefer to speak in English, it is not easy for fathers to communicate with their children when English is not their preferred language (Lee, 2011). However, recent EAIFFs' characteristics, such as being highly educated, having less hierarchy in family relationships, and being willing to have more equal relationships with their children, may be protective factors for their psychological well-being.

Home Country Context at the Family Level: East Asia

Couple Relationship. In contrast to Western cultures, where the couple relationship is emphasized as the core relationship in the family (Thomas et al., 2017), the focus of the couple relationship in Confucian cultures is the father-son relationship (Jang et al., 2016). Confucianism teaches that women and men play different roles; the husband is the head of the family while the wife is the caretaker and manager of the family (Kanatsu & Chao, 2008). If the wife expects a more equal

relationship in the United States, it may pressure the couple's relationship (Au, 2017). Thus, these traditional attitudes toward gender roles may be a risk factor for EAIFFs in the United States, where egalitarian gender roles are expected.

During the transition to parenthood, the parent-children relationship becomes the focus of family relationships in East Asia due to the cultural emphasis on a strong parent-child bond (e.g., a good parent makes a good partner) (Jang et al., 2016). This reduced emphasis on the couple's relationship in the family after childbirth can be a risk factor and a protective factor among EAIFFs. The instrumental nature of their couple relationship may become problematic when they are exposed to the mainstream culture in the United States, where there is a continued emphasis on romantic love after parenthood (Lawrence et al., 2008). However, the new generation of couples in East Asia is more likely to value the couple relationship as much as the parent-child relationship (Jang et al., 2016).

Father-Child Relationship. In East Asia, the parent-child relationship can be portrayed as parental support and sacrifice for the children's success. Jang et al. (2016) when explaining family relationships in Korea, states that being a successful parent often means having children who are successful in school given that the Confucian tradition underscores educational achievement. Parents often sacrifice their couple relationship and individual well-being to support their children's education (Cho, 2015). Couples work together as a team to support their children instead of enriching their relationship as a couple (Jang et al., 2016). In this "team," fathers are expected to focus on their breadwinner role to earn money for their children's education (Cho, 2015). However, this emphasis on earning money could isolate the father from family interactions led by mothers who are generally closer to their children (Jang et al., 2016).

The high value of children's education in East Asia can be a risk factor and a protective factor for individual outcomes (Ma et al., 2018). Because East Asian families tend to invest in and even sacrifice considerable family resources for their children's education (Jang et al., 2016), children's academic achievements are likely to boost EAIFFs' sense of accomplishment, which could lead to a higher level of psychological well-being. However, although children's education is a useful resource for moving up the social ladder, too much emphasis on children's education may inevitably create stress for the immigrant family and is likely to have an adverse impact on EAIFFs' well-being. When children spend most of their time studying, they have little family time to build an affectionate parent-child relationship, which can result in a distant or even conflict-filled father-child relationship (Choi et al., 2016). When children's academic achievements do not meet EAIFFs' expectations, they may feel they are not successful fathers, which threatens their psychological well-being (Choi et al., 2021).

Risk and Protective Factors at an Individual Level

At the individual level, EAIFFs' psychological factors, such as self-esteem, mastery, and coping, may be critical for their psychological well-being in the United States. The education, English proficiency, financial resources, and literacy that EAIFFs develop in their home country and bring to the United States are each factors at the individual level.

Host Country Context at the Individual Level: The United States

Self-Esteem and Mastery. Studies have shown how personal resources, such as self-esteem, confidence in one's ability, mastery, and a sense of control over one's life (Pearlin et al., 1981), are associated with lower psychological distress. Noh and Avison (1996) reported that higher levels of self-esteem and mastery were associated with lower levels of depression among Korean immigrants, which can be a protective factor. However, immigrant fathers are likely to experience lower self-esteem

and mastery (Au, 2017) due to insufficient language proficiency and less familiarity with the host country's culture and institutional systems, which can be a risk factor.

Coping. Individuals use coping strategies to avoid or lessen the impact of life's challenges (Pearlin et al., 1981). These strategies can be categorized into problem-focused and emotion-focused coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Using an emotion-focused coping strategy, which is in line with collectivistic culture, can be a risk factor since it mainly attempts to reduce negative emotional feelings associated with stress from an issue rather than dealing with the issue itself (Noh & Kaspar, 2003). Instead, a problem-focused coping strategy directly targets removing the source of stress, which can be a protective factor for immigrants who face many issues during their adaptation process (Elsouhag et al., 2014). Noh and Kaspar (2003) found that a problem-focused coping style was more efficient than an emotion-focused style in reducing the impacts of perceived discrimination on depression among Korean immigrants. However, these coping styles can interact with other factors, such as social support and acculturation. For instance, Lee et al. (2012) found that Chinese immigrants with a problem-focused coping style experienced lower stress levels. Korean immigrants with a problem-focused coping style also reported lower levels of depression (Noh & Kaspar, 2003).

Home Country Context at the Individual Level: East Asia

Education. Fathers in East Asia were most likely raised to pursue higher levels of education. As of 2018, the college enrollment rates were 71.03% in Taiwan (Ministry of Education of the Republic of China, 2019), 67.6% in Korea (Statistics Korea, 2019b), and 54.6% in Japan in 2016 (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan, 2017). These rates are higher than in other regions around the world. This high level of education is a protective factor for EAIFFs' well-being as educated fathers are likely to have previous experience and knowledge that can help them adapt to the United States. However, higher education in their home countries can be a risk factor if their education does not lead to a prestigious or well-paid job in the United States as expected.

English Proficiency. Another significant factor is the English ability of recent EAIFFs in the new country. Students typically now learn English in East Asian school systems as a core subject in secondary and sometimes postsecondary institutions since English proficiency is crucial for educational achievement and the job market. As a result, recent EAIFFs have better English proficiency than their older counterparts (Hu & McKay, 2012). While stronger English proficiency is considered a protective factor, being a non-native speaker remains a risk factor for the adjustment of many EAIFFs as non-native speakers of English in the United States. (Espenshade & Fu, 1997).

Finances. Thanks to the more developed economies in East Asia, EAIFFs typically have higher incomes and greater financial assets than those in less developed countries (Dent, 2017), which is a crucial protective factor when they immigrate to the United States. Most recent EAIFFs are Generation Xers or millennials who were raised when East Asia was relatively affluent compared to the past (20s Lab, 2019). Because banking and financial investments are common throughout East Asia, many EAIFFs also have sufficient financial literacy. For example, an OECD international survey reported that Hong Kong had the highest financial literacy score and Korea's score was also higher than the average (OECD, 2020). Financial literacy can be a protective factor when adjusting to the United States economy.

Discussion

In this article, we propose an ecological risk-protective model to examine risk and protective factors for EAIFFs' adaptation and psychological well-being in the United States. We argue that factors in

different ecological contexts in the host and home countries can be risk and protective factors for EAIFFs' immigration adaptation process and psychological well-being. The Integrative Conceptual Model has important implications for research and interventions.

Implications

The first implication is that the model provides an integrated framework across the two opposing approaches: the deficit perspective and the generative/resilience perspective. The former highlights the negative effects of immigration on fathers and the latter focuses on the positive outcomes of immigration by reflecting on the resources available to immigrants. The model shows various aspects embedded in immigration, including risk and protective factors for EAIFFs' adaptation and psychological well-being. For instance, immigrants may lose the social connection to their home countries and have difficulty receiving support from the new host country community. EAIFFs' digital literacy enables them to maintain their former social connections and to identify and seek social support, a protective factor for their adaptation and psychological well-being. However, overreliance on online resources may make EAIFFs feel less of a need to adapt to the new environment.

The integrative conceptual model also describes the complexity and multifaceted nature of EAIFFs' immigration adaptation and psychological well-being. We discuss the contexts at the societal level (e.g., policy), work and community level (e.g., job mobility), familial level (e.g., the father-son relationship), and individual level (e.g., educational level) in both the home country and host country. Those contexts may interact across the levels and the home-host countries. For instance, EAIFFs' higher education level at the individual level can be a protective factor for EAIFFs' immigration as they can use their acquired knowledge to secure employment. However, the downward job mobility due to lower English proficiency, even with higher education, can be a risk factor for EAIFFs' psychological well-being. Working long hours following downward job mobility and the high cost of living in the United States can also be risk factors for EAIFFs' psychological well-being since it may reduce the quality of the father-child relationship.

Another key implication of the model is that it can guide quantitative and qualitative research to understand better the complex, multifaceted characteristics of EAIFFs' experiences and psychological well-being. The model can be used quantitatively as a platform to develop statistical models to test the direct, indirect, and moderation effects of the multifaceted characteristics in the Integrative Conceptual Model. For example, researchers can examine (a) the direct and indirect effects of the couple relationship (e.g., changes in gendered division of roles); (b) the father-child relationship (less time with the children) at the familial level; (c) the relationship between EAIFFs' job characteristics (e.g., income, work hours) at the work level; and (d) their psychological well-being (e.g., depression) at the individual level. Researchers can also test the moderating effects of EAIFFs' digital literacy in the association between the adaptation stress they experience in the community and their psychological well-being. Moreover, the Integrative Conceptual Model can qualitatively help researchers document how EAIFFs perceive the risk and protective factors in various contexts between the home country and host country and how these factors influence EAIFFs' adaptation and psychological well-being.

The model can also be referenced to develop culturally sensitive education and intervention programs for ethnic minority fathers, including EAIFFs. Given that "knowing your audience" is a key consideration in Family Life Education programs (Duncan & Goddard, 2017), family life educators can benefit from the Integrative Conceptual Model as it reflects recent EAIFFs' unique characteristics compared to former EAIFFs or immigrant fathers from other countries. The model can also help

educators and therapists understand EAIFFs' risk and protective factors to help them cope with adaptation stress and boost their well-being.

Finally, the integrative conceptual model can provide a platform to study other immigrant fathers in the United States and within-group differences among EAIFFs. Researchers can modify and adapt the integrative conceptual model to other cultures to empirically understand the unique characteristics of other groups of immigrant fathers, such as Latino and Southeast Asian fathers. The integrative conceptual model can also be used to examine potential differences within EAIFFs by testing multi-group path models, for example.

Limitations & Areas for Future Research

This study's limitations provide opportunities for future research. First, we focused on fathers in two-parent families, the most common family structure among Asian Americans. According to the 2010 American Community Survey, Asian Americans were more likely to be currently married than the overall United States population (59% vs. 51%), and two-thirds (67%) of foreign-born Asian Americans were currently married (Pew Research Center, 2012). The same survey revealed that only 10% of foreign-born Asian American mothers were not married. Additionally, we aimed to address both the father-child relationship and the couple relationship at the family level because they are the core relationships in the entire family system. This approach was important for the Integrative Conceptual Model that considers the significant role of partners in fathers' psychological well-being (Lamb & Bougher, 2009; Schindler, 2010). However, given the rise of single-parent families in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2019), future studies need to explore the adaptation and psychological well-being of EAIFFs in single-parent families.

This study also regarded fathers from East Asian countries (i.e., China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong) as one group, given the strong overarching influence of Confucianism on East Asian cultures and particularly families. However, there are notable differences among these countries in their historical, political, and economic backgrounds that may affect EAIFFs' adaptation and their psychological well-being (Chuang et al., 2018). For instance, rapid industrialization and westernization in Japan and South Korea compared to rural China may have affected family life differently (Ji, 2015). Therefore, future studies should consider the differences in EAIFFs' backgrounds and contexts when studying their adaptation to the United States.

Finally, we focused only on the risk and protective factors unique to EAIFFs who recently moved to the United States. Future studies should also consider other risk and protective factors related to the immigration contexts that were not discussed in the current study.

Conclusion

The current study contributes to the teaching and practice of family science in two ways. First, the Integrated Conceptual Model of this study highlights multiple factors at the society, work and community, family, and individual levels in the home and host countries. This model suggests that instructors and practitioners dealing with immigration should acknowledge the complexity of the immigration adaptation process for East Asian families. Second, the Integrated Conceptual Model also focuses on immigrant fathers and their psychological well-being, which has rarely been studied even though fathers play an important role in the immigration adaptation process. The current study will help instructors and practitioners in family science broaden their perspectives on immigrant families.

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