

Cultural intermediary in higher education based on ethical relation

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ABSTRACT

Preliminary studies on cultural intermediaries focused on social classes that mediate the production and consumption of culture. Therefore, this study determined the importance of the cultural intermediaries of migrant worker university students who popularize the values of higher education for the working class. Habitus and replication of meaning were used as analytical tools, with an alternative perspective proposed on cultural intermediaries using an ethical approach. The results showed that the cultural intermediary based on ethical relationships produces a new individual involvement of marginalized groups. Meanwhile, community relations with a similar social context are strengthened, enabling individuals to combine their allegiances and continuously generate values to suit certain social situations.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The argumentation in this article begins by looking back at Bourdieu's cultural intermediary concept. Bourdieu's notion of cultural intermediaries refers to the emergence of occupational groups that he considers petty-bourgeois [1]. The petty-bourgeois class is immediately attached to this group and adopts different orientations to their class identity, both in habits and routines of everyday life. This new class faction realized conventional differences. For example, the practice of workers in the media, arts, and entertainment industries, particularly in advertising and marketing, is central to capitalism in general [2]. This new class faction implies a particular connection between the middle class, education, and upward social mobility.

Furthermore, cultural-intermediary research focused only on the middle class. This phenomenon is related to the cultural capital owned by the cultural intermediary that produces the ability to evoke cultural symbols. In the early decades of the 21st century, the experiences of working-class and middle-class students and families are defined not by social mobility across generations but by social pitfall of opportunity [3].

These professionals affect other people's orientation in consumption practices through various strategies-first, building and profiling brands to attach the product's value [4]. The associated weight and appearance encourage specific target consumers, such as research universities, religious-based universities, cybersecurity-focused universities, and open universities. In this strategy, students are involved in various cultural intermediaries projects to promote the broader public and business interests [5]. Several studies on migrant workers focus on the issue of human rights [6], [7], gender relations [8], [9], government policy [10], [11], economy and poverty [12], [13], and identity [14]. These studies assumed that migrant workers are in a

lower social class. Therefore, they struggle to demonstrate their social existence materially and immaterially, such as through education.

Cultural intermediary studies that refer to certain professions sometimes ignore the analysis of individuals as actors. In this case, Bourdieu becomes ambiguous about his concept of habitus, which should be a tool of analysis for cultural-intermediary actors. Such a concept of cultural intermediaries privileges a specific group of middle-class jobs. This assumption gives certain workers an essential role in symbolic mediation, prioritizing the definition of narrow cultural. Of course, considering who might bridge this space or who might be involved in articulating production with consumption raises some critical questions about the sustainable distance between production and consumption. Bourdieu needs to expand his analysis of this group in more detail.

The main strength of a cultural intermediary is that it emphasizes the relationship between creative work and consumers. It also shows a shift from a unidirectional model of cultural production towards an approach that considers cultural intermediaries involved in establishing a point of connection or articulation between production and consumption on an ongoing basis. Cultural intermediaries have a role as a counterweight to the constraints and determination of the economy towards how culture shapes the economy [15]. This conception challenges us to consider the mutually beneficial interrelationships of what are often considered separate cultural and economic practices.

Bourdieu and other researchers focus on symbolic production as the core of the work of cultural intermediaries. Usually means the use of advertising imagery, marketing, and promotional techniques. Extending such output is essential for contemporary commodification. Preliminary studies of cultural intermediaries identified two common problems: the middle class is favorable to specific jobs; second, and the upper class or the bourgeoisie has a cultural establishment. This assumption creates a cultural intermediary research gap for other groups.

As the center of cultural intermediary studies, the middle class provides an opportunity to examine how these classes are categorized and formed. Field research on Indonesian migrant workers in Korea shows that groups of migrant worker-student carry out cultural-intermediary activities in various ways to popularize higher education values for groups of migrant workers [16]. Focusing on what the Indonesian migrant worker-students did in cultural intermediary activities, we offer an alternative to redefine cultural intermediary concept by using the ethical relation-based approach when the working class mediates consumption, lifestyle, and education.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This qualitative study was carried out from 2018 to 2020 using critical ethnographical methods with a multi-site and theoretical framework. Critical ethnography is an approach that draws on research and theory to critique hegemony, oppression, asymmetrical power relations, and the normalization of structures in society. Critical ethnography can drive social change directly or indirectly [17].

The primary informants were migrant workers between 20-35 years old selected based on background and area of origin, such as fishing, farming, and urban villages, regencies, or cities. Additionally, the background of their parents was also considered, as Bourdieu determines social origin by analyzing the class. The parents' backgrounds showed how informants could assess the value of higher education socialized in the family and social environment. Table 1 displays the number of informants and their social characteristics.

Table1. Social characteristics of the informant

Characteristic	No. of informant
Race/ethnicity	
Javanese	7
Non-Javanese	3
Previous level of study	
General high school	6
Vocational high school	4
Background of parents	
Farmer	7
Trader	3
University	
Indonesian Open University	5
Cyber Hankuk University of Foreign Studies	5

We took the data in several ways and techniques. Field observations were carried out in several locations. In-depth interviews were conducted to reveal the stories and journeys of migrant workers' lives. This life story helps examine historical stages of change with aspirations, desires, and hopes in the lives of migrant workers. This in-depth interview will also investigate how student-migrant workers define their lives and relate them to the past and the future. The data is organized based on relevant themes and follows the research focus. The authors followed the open coding method- axial and selective coding in data analysis.

The thematic analysis found salient and specific expressions, phrases, or explanations that describe how migrant workers gain experience as students. The authors tried to define and transmit the reality of the way informants speak and translate it into a series of messages for the audience. Consequently, the discourse in which the authors wrote the research results is as critical as the language of the notes analyzed. The essential goal of ethnography is to examine both the language of the data and the language of the researcher in which we talk about the data to identify traditions, norms, institutions, artefacts, and other characteristics.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Education is a significant sub-field inclined towards strengthening cultural capital to express positive qualities for individuals and families. This bias arises from cultural capital associated with high social status. Cultural capital realized in schools shows the impression of academic brilliance that leads to favorable treatment by teachers and educational success. Therefore, it creates a misrecognized impression of intellectual intelligence, which leads to tangible returns in educational success. Families in advantaged socio-economic positions tend to have more cultural capital than those in disadvantaged situations. Children tend to inherit capital from their parents, contributing to social reproduction and increasing the chances of successful institutionalization. The cultural capital of education and subsequent socio-economic success is because adulthood is highly dependent on educational credentials.

3.1. Habitus of Indonesian migrant workers in the field of higher education

The informants of this study were from middle-lower families who envisioned higher education as prestigious and far from wishful thinking. Therefore, their preference was no academic achievement, which led to a habitus analysis of the migrant worker in this study. Many respondents repeatedly mentioned changing people's perceptions since higher education leads to better jobs and an-established future. However, such an assumption is usually embedded through the internalization process received since childhood, which takes place in life from the family, people's experiences, and the school environment. They also witnessed the ability of uneducated parents to survive and work as farmers, which is more substantial than the possibility that higher education will open up opportunities for a better life. At this point, migrant workers are opposed to higher education despite its possibility to open opportunities for their welfare. Habitus appears in certain social conditions, and it is transposable.

Although higher education is not the preference of migrant workers in specific social settings, they believe it is essential and increases their chances for a better life. Habitus moves as a structure, even though people do not respond mechanically. In the migrant worker's context, it can be seen from their hesitant attitude to provide answers regarding the values of higher education.

Migrant worker-students sometimes hide their identity in the work environment because they assume it is inappropriate to take higher education. Some of their Korean supervisors expressed dislike when migrant workers go to college because they possess a working visa and not a student visa. The experience of distrust of the supervisor and condescending attitude illustrates Koreans' prejudice against migrant workers, whom they do not see as equals or part of their group. However, these migrants can build a self-image in the future through higher education. Obtaining higher education is becoming a significant transitional experience for migrant workers because it significantly impacts how they imagine, expect, and plan for their future [16].

The practice of higher education reflects an academic disposition rooted in the values of the middle class. Therefore, the expectations of migrant workers and students are placed as social conditions capable of forming habitus, which develops their motivation, resilience, and determination levels. When institutional habitus meets individual working-class habitus, their mediation is usually open to conflict. Working-class culture is often overlooked or misunderstood [18]. The reactions of migrant workers-students to a new atmosphere reflect their current habit of responding casually, optimistically, fearfully, hesitantly, and politely. The structures that characterize a particular class condition of existence produce habitus attributes that form the basis of subsequent perception and experience. In this study, migrant workers' social class is based on their capital accumulation and symbolic status views. Even though Koreans have amassed economic capital, the community's negative perception will not propel them to a higher social status. The new status as a student led to the use of higher education to build cultural capital as an alternative means to achieve a higher level of identity.

3.2. Reproduction of values of higher education by the migrant worker-students cultural intermediary

The complexity of the habitus in migrant worker-students resulted in different cultural intermediary practices. They want to change people's negative perception of their status as migrant workers. They realized that it could not be changed through individual struggles. This situation is used by migrant worker-student in Korea to do what Bourdieu [1] calls a cultural intermediary. Bourdieu asserted that this work is related to producer power for the benefit of capitalism. For Bourdieu, the sphere of control is a social universe with functioning laws. In cultural production, Bourdieu [19] found that this field is constituted by the opposition between the sub-elite of the limited output and the sub-field of large-scale mass production, which tends towards commercial production. Each subfield has its unique hierarchical principle. The hierarchical principle involves economic capital and market demand and is heteronymous, although mass institutions renew themselves over time by adapting ideas from the elite sector. Among the subfields are various intermediaries that combine principles that contradict legitimacy in varying degrees and circumstances of ambiguity [20].

The work of cultural intermediaries is closely related to reproducing the meanings formed in the various processes. This study combines two concepts, namely cultural reproduction and circuits, to understand how migrant workers accept the value of cultural reproduction. Bourdieu's theory of cultural reproduction provides a clear explanation in a study on social inequality and socio-economic outcomes, which persist from one generation to another. This theory describes a complex system in which parents transmit cultural capital to children, which is also exploited and acquired in the education system. Families with high cultural capital have advantages that help them reproduce their privileged socio-economic position [21]. Cultural reproduction is an important mechanism where social reproduction occurs. Society consists of different fields, namely subsystems in which different types of capital are fundamental.

Culture is the process of producing, circulating, consuming, and commodifying meaning in society [22]. When meanings are widespread, they change over time through use, sometimes due to different social groups with varying connotations. Language signifies particular cultural meanings, unwritten assumptions, and ways people think and act. This example shows how language, meaning, and culture are intertwined to create competing discourses or truths [23]. Culture is associated with rules and traditions described in anthropology and with the social practices and interrelationships of a group living in a region.

The researchers use the concept of cultural circuits to see the meaning production process. The cultural circuit consists of five moments, namely regulation, production, consumption, representation, and identity. These moments work together to provide a shared cultural space in which meaning is created, shaped, modified, and recreated. There is no beginning or end in the circuit because moments work synergistically to create meaning, which contributes to a particular part of the whole. Figure 1 shows the schema of a cultural circuit.

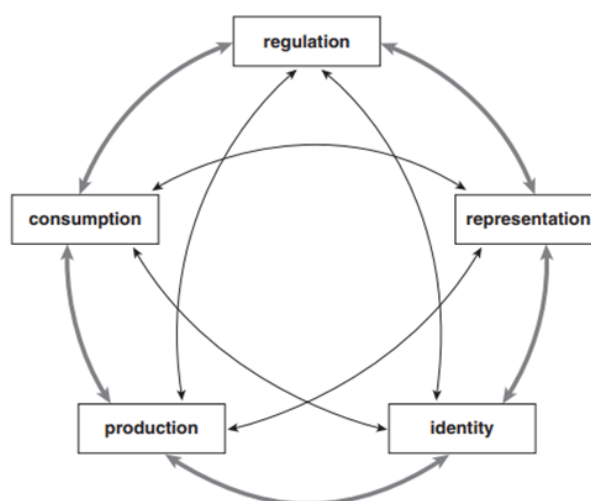


Figure 1. Schema of cultural circuit

The scheme of production gives migrant workers the power to attach a particular cultural meaning to a product or idea using language. They develop messages by choosing specific dictions and images that will resonate with the cultural context and the audience's target experience so that they can be more receptive. For example, they use a picture of the young migrant workers in class. The picture selected is a

group of migrant worker-student with a background of whiteboards that read Indonesian Open University-Korea; in addition, they put the words “labor go to college”. They tried to give meaning to the picture as young, intelligent, and optimistic. In addition, the diction “labor” and “go to university” were selected to confirm their status. The message uploaded in social media through the image seeks to create a subject that has a predisposition system. The meaning can guide adaptive actions to existing structures so that the structure can be reproduced.

The meaning value that is produced represents the meaning of products and ideas about higher education attached to the moment of production. At the moment of representation, migrant worker-student cultural intermediaries encode and construct meaning. The words “labor” represents the position of the migrant worker-students as manual workers, while the word college represents the educated class, middle class, youth, and intelligentsia. Pictures and words are used together to communicate specific messages. They want to share the message that migrant worker-students are young, optimistic, and able to study. The continuous interaction between migrant workers and migrant worker students allows them to form a habitus about a value system and represent the symbolic power of higher education.

The migrant worker-student cultural intermediaries shaped consumption by associating new products of education, such as student activities, new services, and experiences, with events or ideas that are historically meaningful to their audience. They articulate meaning regarding the cultural and social norms that circulate amongst them. Production and consumption do not exist in binary opposition to each other. However, they exist as part of an intermediation chain because consumers and their messages produce meaning.

The definition of the lifestyle of a highly educated migrant worker indicates a mechanism of social reproduction. The migrant workers not only feel the need to consume the product of higher education but also feels the need to regulate themselves related to the lifestyle classification of the high-educated migrant worker. This moment is called the moment of regulation. At this moment, the value of higher education has been produced (signifying practice) and arranged in such a way as to perpetuate the pre-existing social order. Migrant worker-students of cultural intermediaries try to control and discipline their minds to pass on a cultural heritage wholly owned by the community. The words “Labor to the college” becomes an instrument of reproduction of the structure by reproducing the distribution system of cultural capital.

The identity moment of the scheme refers to the meaning given to a particular object or group through the process of production and consumption and is inherently subjective. Migrant worker-students are involved at this moment in three main ways. First, the production of organizational identity, in what university they are studying. Second, consumer identity is constructed through the symbolic consumption of goods, services, and ideas. Third, the construction of audience identity through the practice of segmentation and targeting student-worker. As cultural intermediaries, migrant worker-students' identity is based on understanding consumer lifestyles, in this case, higher education to produce goods and consumption experiences. Migrant worker-students cultural intermediaries enter the arena of higher education. In This arena, the power agents compete for resources, status, or other exciting objects.

The cultural circuit shows migrant worker-student cultural intermediaries are personally involved in the production of consumption and consumption of production. They are helping to create experiences of certain goods and activities for others. They are also internalizing their productive roles, thereby legitimizing these goods and activities through the investment of personal trust. Migrant worker-students internalized the student lifestyle as a new habitus. Higher education is considered a modern lifestyle for them, and symbols of higher education for migrant workers continue to be created. The purpose of cultural intermediaries by migrant worker-students is promotion and marketing to connect a product with potential consumers and seek to forge a sense of identification. Here, migrant worker-student uses the image of students as the core of the representation through which efforts are made to link higher education and marginalized groups.

As short as participating in the intermediary cultural activities of migrant workers-students, they use at least three framings in cultural-intermediary activities. First, they use the themes of religiosity, using the arguments of the Quran and Hadith regarding the importance of science in Islam and how God will elevate the status of those who know. Second, migrant workers students use the spirit of regionalism or nationalism to invite their friends to college. Third, they choose the theme and diction of youth spirit who have many opportunities in the future.

3.3. Ethical relation-based cultural intermediary

Sharing experiences about being students by migrant workers becomes essential in disseminating information and recruiting new members. Sharing experiences is a virtue that provides positive motivation for migrant workers. Their experiences as students became enough material content to convince other migrant workers. They do mediation work those bridges higher education institutions and targets users of higher education services. The consciousness of the migrant workers-student is not the consciousness of the

petty bourgeoisie but the consciousness of the class struggle to reach the capital. The disposition of the capitals of the middle class, as Bourdieu's cultural intermediary concept, has not yet entirely existed in migrant workers-student. Taylor [24] endeavors to advance Bourdieu's conceptual framework by employing a social realist ontology within the domain of cultural-political economy. This scholarly effort specifically delves into the intricate dynamics of economic imagination, examining its pivotal role in generating and perpetuating significant relationships and contradictions within regional economies. Within this analytical framework, cultural intermediaries play a central role in the emergence of "agents", serving as focal points that facilitate the convergence and exchange between creative producers and consumers.

Cultural and economic relations in the cultural-intermediary concept reduce the roles of other groups that may perform the same function as the cultural intermediary but do not directly mediate culture and economy. To overcome this, we offer the idea of a cultural intermediary based on ethical relations. Ethical concepts refer to the relationships built in the cultural-intermediary activities of migrant workers-students. The concept of a cultural intermediary based on ethical relations is not coordinated by bureaucratic power or monetary obligation. However, it is directed by effective affinity and commitment to a productive network or community.

The impact of this ethical relationship-based cultural intermediary is the production of meaning and value motivated by the desire to garner respect and recognition from the community. Ethics refers not to standards of good or bad but to finding ways in which human beings are free, without a priori obligations to one another, either monetary or hierarchical. The term ethical is motivated by the fact that the source of value in this mode of production is often ethical, like a community, shared values, or values that are lived by an organization or sufficient intensity [25]. Ethical economics produces an ethical surplus in social relations, affective values, and passions that have never existed before [26], [27]. An ethical-based cultural intermediary strengthens existing social relationships, values, and affective intensity.

Bourdieu has explained two sub-areas of cultural production that are always in tension. They are the field of restricted production and large-scale production [19]. The limited-production arena does not aim to seek profit. Bourdieu calls it a reverse of economic law, where culture's primary interest is itself. The restricted production arena resists commercialization and short-term trade or profit.

Meanwhile, large-scale production is associated with the term mass culture. The sub-arena is based on a broad and complex industrial culture [28]. The sustainability of this arena depends on a broad audience. Large-scale production is directed at satisfying market appetites and accumulating economic capital. However, Bourdieu does not use this restricted production arena to analyze cultural-intermediary work; on the contrary, he seems to place cultural intermediaries in the chain of large-scale production arenas.

The orientation of migrant workers-student cultural intermediaries is building a network, making friends, showing off, being cool, or whatever. This ethical motivation guides their cultural-intermediary activities. Here, the ethical aspect is a more positive designation to exercises not oriented to purely economic factors. This ethical relationship continuously generates values to suit certain social situations.

Bourdieu's cultural intermediary is based on the accumulation of individual personal capital, for example, knowledge, skills, and credentials, organized by the market and motivated by private financial accumulation. The ethical relation-based cultural intermediary is more motivated by expanding social and communal recognition. Ethical relation-based cultural intermediary develops its measurement system, which is directly aimed at measuring the social, not monetary, values of people or products. Information and communication technologies take this to a new level by aggregating complex sets of produced data. Migrant workers-student cultural intermediaries do not work under a higher education bureaucratic system that imposes a code of conduct, quickly becoming a bureaucratic exercise. Instead, they are generated by themselves and therefore tend to provide a more realistic estimate of the social impact of a cultural product. Ethical relation-based cultural intermediary produces new forms of individual participation from marginalized groups. Community-based relationships with a similar social context somehow consolidate themselves, and individuals combine their allegiances.

Bourdieu's cultural intermediary concept discusses forming a new class that expands the middle class by utilizing more people to consume cultural products. Bourdieu is broadly concerned with a social class reproduced by confronting economic and cultural capital and pursuing social prestige [21]. He focused on how social classes are reproduced and validated through the notion of taste, as they are expressed and enforced through consumption [29]. The critical thing to note from the search in this study is that the concept of cultural intermediary is challenging to understand outside the class context.

The idea of a cultural intermediary based on ethical relations was offered to overcome this problem. This process is not coordinated by bureaucratic power or monetary obligation but by effective affinity and commitment to a productive network. This ethical relation-based cultural intermediary impacts the production of meaning and value motivated by the desire to garner respect and recognition from the community. Ethics is associated with creating ways for people to be free of one another. Under this production style, the source of value is frequently ethical, such as community and shared values.

The ethical relation-based cultural intermediary is more motivated by expanding social and communal recognition, thereby producing a measurement system geared explicitly for social measurement. The cultural intermediaries of migrant workers-student do not work under a higher education bureaucratic system that imposes a code of conduct, because it quickly becomes a mere bureaucratic exercise. In addition, an ethical relation-based cultural intermediary produces new forms of individual participation from marginalized groups. Table 2 shows a comparison of various cultural intermediary concepts. The table explains the position of cultural intermediary based on ethical relation in the debate on the intermediary cultural concept.

Table 2. The position of cultural intermediary based on ethical relation in the debate on the intermediary cultural concept

Concept 1 Referring to Bourdieu's initial concept	Concept 2 Cultural economic	Concept 3 Device and disposition	Concept 4 Ethical relation cultural intermediary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural intermediary as a tastemaker - Cultural intermediaries have high competence and populist culture - Cultural intermediary related to the emergence of a new middle class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural intermediary is an actor involved in market formation - Cultural intermediary as a market gatekeeper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural intermediary is a device and a disposition used to promote consumption - Cultural intermediary actors impose their meaning and value on others for consumption and pleasure practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural intermediaries play a role in mediating values - Cultural intermediary can be from any class and social status - Cultural intermediary carried out by marginalized groups does not necessarily give rise to new social classes

In this study, migrant workers' social class is based on their views regarding capital accumulation and symbolic status. Although Indonesian migrant workers in Korea have accumulated economic capital, it does not mean that it will bring them to a higher position due to the community's negative view of their status as migrant workers. Therefore, Indonesian migrant workers try another strategy: building cultural capital through higher education. However, they are outside the upper class. The migrant worker-students are always in a position of struggle over status or identity.

Class categories can be traced through the claims and struggles over the various types carried out in terms of gender, ethnicity/race, and class. This formulation makes it possible to include this categorical formation and class as an essential element of social class, i.e., determining the allocation of socially valuable resources and social place/location. A concept of the social class will be presented, which recognizes the existence of material and symbolism in all significant social divisions and argues that they are all aspects of social stratification [30].

Using Bourdieu's view of cultural intermediaries, they adopt the artistic tastes of the upper class. To legitimize a culture that is considered legitimate and then people who consume these cultural products will enter into specific classes. However, it may be more complex than it is. There should be a consideration of who they are (including age, gender and ethnicity, and family background), where they get their money, and how they consume cultural products - all of which are social divisions. People may consume certain cultural products, but they may not become a class group because the class dimension constantly moves. Other divisions that will determine the position of migrant workers in social class spaces must be considered, such as age group, health, gender, and ethnicity.

Regarding social relations, social division requires unequal hierarchy and allocation of resources. Hierarchy relates to how social divisions are involved in structuring social positions or sometimes in specialized roles, together with value allocation, the allocation of resources that does not occur when legitimized by socially constructed notions of value. For example, it appears in cultural intermediary student-workers who use cultural resources, namely ethnicity and religion, to produce and reproduce values about higher education. Many cultural intermediary studies need to consider this hierarchical process and resource allocation gaps.

4. CONCLUSION

Bourdieu and other researchers focus on symbolic production as the core of the work of cultural intermediaries using advertising imagery, marketing, and promotional techniques. These symbolic productions are essential for contemporary commodification. Bourdieu's concept of cultural intermediary is based on personal capital, such as knowledge, skills, and credentials, directed by the market and motivated by personal financial interest. Meanwhile, cultural intermediaries based on ethical relations are motivated by the accumulation of social and communal acknowledgement. They develop an appraisal system to measure the

social values of people or products. Examining the intermediate cultural concept is necessary to support a range of activities by marginal groups. The perspective of an ethical relations-based cultural intermediary was offered to determine the activities of these groups. This concept aims to determine the cultural intermediary and the economic and cultural relationships, which requires an analysis of the divisions that make up a more complex class. This concept is determined by the subject's job, capital, preferences, and social division.

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