

## **A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS ON THE ROLES OF FARM WOMEN IN KOREA**

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### **I. Introduction**

Women's contribution to work is generally undervalued and women's work in farming is no exception. Korean agriculture is characterized as small-sized family farm system. Korean farm women undertake various significant roles (for example, agricultural production, self-employment in non-farm sectors, child rearing, cooking, cleaning, washing, community activities, and so on) in the sphere of production and reproduction. Most of farm women have been working hard in the farm land just like their husbands. Also a considerable number of farm women have been working in non-farm sectors. But the farm women's contribution has not been rightly evaluated. As a result, Korean farm women have been regarded as simple housewives or complementary farmers, at best.

In order to include women as a component in the mainstream of development, it is essential to know exactly what they are doing now, if they need help, and what structural constraints affect them. There have been many previous studies on the roles of Korean farm (rural) women. Most of previous studies, however, used structural functionalism or modernization theory as a theoretical model. As a result, their studies are very static and conservative. Also, these studies over-emphasize individual variables, and are lacking in the consideration of political economic conditions.

Farm women refer to the women of farm households, regardless of rural-urban distinction. The farm women consist of farm women in

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rural areas (county areas) and farm women in cities. Rural women consist of farm women and non-farm women in rural areas (county areas). According to the Group for Rural Development Measures (1996), in 1995, the proportion of non-farm population in rural Korea was 45.6%. Considering the sex ratio of rural population, it is reasoned that about half of rural women may be non-farm women. Many previous studies, however, identified rural women with farm women. That is, most of previous studies did not differentiate farm women from rural women. Also, most of previous studies did not explain how the structural characteristics of agricultural production and rural-to-urban migration affect women's farming and gender relation.

The main purposes of this study are as follows: 1) to investigate the roles of farm women in Korea; 2) to identify the problems in role performance of farm women; and 3) to suggest the direction of solution of the problems from a sociological feminist perspective.

## **II. Theoretical Consideration**

We can divide sociological theories of the roles of farm women into two major perspectives, the modernization perspective and the feminist perspective.

The modernization perspective, an outgrowth of functionalist sociology, shares many assumptions with the status attainment theory of stratification and the human capital school of neo-classical economics (Tiano, 1988:19). In general, modernization theorists assume that a man is the sole economic provider and a woman is the nurturer and homemaker. They argue that this division of labor between husband and wife is natural, universal, and complementary (Bould, 1988). They do not question the legitimacy of the existing economic system. Furthermore, the modernization perspective is a westerncentrism. Dichotomies, such as traditional-modern and public-private spheres have many limitations in explaining the real conditions of women in development. The modernization perspective emphasizes only men as a major target group in development. Women are either assumed to be attached to men, or are ignored.

The feminist perspective presents a generalized, wide-ranging

system of ideas about the world from a woman-centered viewpoint. The feminist perspective explains gender in terms of the political and socio-economic structure, in which it is constructed. The feminist perspective begins with the assumption that gender is essentially socially created, rather than innately determined. Feminists view gender, in part, as a set of social expectations that are reproduced and transmitted through a process of social learning. Also, they stress that gender is a social product that is generated within the context of a particular political and economic structure (Renzett and Curran, 1989). Feminists include gender as a fundamental category of analysis in their research. They are mainly concerned with the question of how specific social constructions of gender impinge upon the lives of women and men. They seek to develop effective means to eradicate gender inequality.

The feminists argue that the effects of capitalist development depend on a woman's social class, her race or ethnicity, and her society's links to the international economy. They argue that women's frequent loss of status in the course of economic development must be conceived in the context of an interweaving of class relations and gender relations. The feminists emphasize the negative aspects in gender relation effects of rural development, such as 1) increasing rural women's workload; 2) decreasing their resource base; 3) farm women's proletarianization; and 4) decreasing their opportunities (Boserup, 1970; Kim, 1994; Wade, 1983; Bryceson, 1988; INATRAW News, 1988; Brydon and Chart, 1989; Renzett and Curran, 1989). Feminists argue that the dearth of employment opportunities is particularly disadvantageous to women due to patriarchal norms which stress women's domestic roles that typically lead employers to reserve better jobs for men. Also, they argue that the impact of the state on gender is seen to be partly shaped by historically specific patterns of gender relations in society, and partly shaped by historically specific state leaders, policies, and definitions of ideologies (Everett and Staudt and Charlton, 1989:178).

We can divide the sociological feminist perspective into four major theories, liberal feminism, Marxian feminism, radical feminism, and socialist feminism.

The liberal feminism accounts for women's position in terms of unequal opportunity structures. Liberal feminists propose the following

strategies for eliminating gender inequality: 1) mobilization to use existing political and legal channels for change; 2) equal economic opportunities; and 3) efforts in individuals, family, school, and mass media to eradicate sexism.

The Marxian feminism accounts for gender relations within the structure of the contemporary capitalist class system. Marxian feminists argue that the causes of gender inequality lie in the organization of capitalism itself. They argue that gender inequality in the wage-earning classes is functional for capitalism, therefore the inequality is perpetuated by capitalists. Marxian feminists argue that the solution for gender inequality is the destruction of class oppression. They argue that the destruction of class oppression will come through revolutionary action by a united wage-earning (working) class.

The radical feminism affirms a woman's special worth in defiance of a universal system that devalues her. Radical feminists see all of society as characterized by oppression. They argue that the fundamental structure of oppression is the system of patriarchy. Patriarchy is, to radical feminists, the most significant structure of social inequality. They argue that patriarchy ultimately rests on the practice of violence against women. Radical feminists propose the following strategies for defeating patriarchy: 1) basic reworking of women's consciousness, so that each woman recognizes her own value and strength; 2) rejecting patriarchal pressures to see herself as weak, dependent, and second class; and 3) working in unity with other women to establish a broad-based sisterhood of trust, support, appreciation, and mutual defense.

The socialist feminism attempts to synthesize various forms and theories of oppression, using terms such as capitalist patriarchy and domination to explain the multi-faceted system of oppression based on arrangements of production, class, age, ethnicity, sexual preference, and global position, as well as gender. Socialist feminists seek to bring together Marxian and radical feminist thoughts. They focus on women's oppression and on understanding it in a way that brings together knowledge of class oppression and of gender oppression. Socialist feminists use historical materialism as an analytical strategy.

In this study, an eclectic approach combining the liberal

feminism with the Marxian feminism will be used as a main theoretical framework. But the revolutionary approach of Marxian feminism to destroy class oppression will not be adopted as a solution. Also, in this study, the radical feminism's unidimensional concern with patriarchy and socialist feminism's historical materialism will not be accepted. The status of farm women may depend on mixture of the mode of farm production in monopoly capitalism, patriarchal tradition, family type, and so on.

### **III. Research Method**

This study used the interview data that the Office of Rural Development (1994) collected from 76 rural villages in Korea as significant data on the roles of farm women. Some previous studies and my field observation experience on farm women were used as additional data on roles of farm women. Also, this study used statistical data from "Agricultural Census", "Annual Report on the Farm Household Economy Survey", and others.

Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentage, means were used to organize and summarize the data on roles of farm women.

### **IV. The Roles of Farm Women in Korea**

We can divide the farm women's roles into productive roles and reproductive roles. This classification was developed from the Marxist theoretical tradition to explain women's work (Sachs, 1988). In general, the productive roles of farm women include non-wage agricultural production, self-employment in either the formal or informal market sectors, and wage or salary work off the farm. The reproductive roles of farm women can be divided into biological reproduction, physical reproduction, and social reproduction. Biological reproduction comprises child-birth and lactation. Physical reproduction involves the daily re-generation of wage labor force through cooking, cleaning, washing, and others. Social reproduction refers to the maintenance of ideological conditions which reproduce

class relations and uphold the social and economic status quo (Haney and Knowles, 1988; Brydon & Chart, 1989)<sup>1</sup>. This classification (production and reproduction), however, is not entirely satisfactory. The problems of defining the boundaries between production and reproduction in rural environments are complicated by the existence of subsistence farming (Brydon & Chart, 1989: 12). Sachs (1989) argues that the Marxist categories of productive and reproductive labor must not be examined as separate activities but must be viewed in terms of their inter-connectedness. But, for the sake of convenience, this study uses this classification. In particular, this paper investigates more carefully farm women's productive roles than their reproductive roles because farm women's productive roles have been ignored.

### **1. The Productive Roles of Farm Women in Korea**

Table 1 shows gender composition of working population in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. In 1970, the proportion of female in the numbers of working population in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries was 41.6%. The proportion of female in the numbers of working population in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries has increased continuously. As a result, in 1995, the proportion was 48.6%.

Table 2 presents farm household labor hours by type. The proportion of women in farm household labor hours has increased from 27.5% in 1965 to 48.2% in 1995 (Kim, 1996). In family labor, the proportion of women has increased from 30.3% in 1965 to 45.9% in 1995. In employed labor, the proportion of women has increased from 17.5% in 1965 to 58.3% in 1995. In the reciprocally exchanged labor, the proportion of women has increased from 29.8% in 1965 to 62.1% in 1995. That is, farm women became more important farmers

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<sup>1</sup> Rural women consist of rural farm women and rural non-farm women. We can divide rural women's roles into productive roles and reproductive roles like farm women's roles. The roles of rural farm women may be very similar with general farm women's roles. But, the roles of rural non-farm women may be different from general farm women's roles. In particular, the productive roles of rural non-farm women may center on non-agricultural production, such as self-employment in market sectors and wage (or salary) work. The reproductive roles of rural non-farm women may be affected by non-agricultural production and the absence of agricultural production and so on.

**TABLE 1** Gender Composition of Working Population in Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries

Year	The Numbers of Working Population in Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries	The Proportion of Male(%)	The Proportion of Female(%)
1970	4,826	58.4	41.6
1980	4,433	56.2	43.8
1990	3,152	55.0	45.0
1995	2,424	51.4	48.6

Source : Economic Planning Board, Korea, 「Annual Report on the Economical Activity Population」, 1996 and various years.

in agricultural production.

Table 3 presents labor force participation rate by farm/non-farm and gender. The labor force participation rate of man in farm and non-farm have been stable and similar. However, the labor force participation rates of women in farm and non-farm have increased continuously. Increase in labor force participation of women has been universal phenomena. The labor force participation rate of farm women has increased from 48.2% in 1970 to 66.2% in 1994. The

**TABLE 2** Farm Household Labor Hours by Type

Unit = Hours, %

Year	Labor Hours	Family Labor		Employed Labor		Reciprocally Exchanged Labor		Total	
		Men (%)	Women (%)	Men (%)	Women (%)	Men (%)	Women (%)	Men (%)	Women (%)
1965	2,584.74	69.7	30.3	82.5	17.5	70.2	29.8	72.5	27.5
1970	2,154.83	66.2	33.8	74.0	26.0	65.2	34.9	67.4	32.4
1980	1,814.47	58.3	41.7	57.4	42.6	49.5	50.5	57.4	42.6
1990	1,592.69	55.4	44.6	44.6	55.4	36.5	63.5	52.7	47.3
1995	1,439.22	54.1	45.9	41.7	58.3	37.9	62.1	51.8	48.2

Source : Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 「Report on Farm Household Economy Survey」, 1995 and various years.

labor force participation rate of non-farm women has increased from 29.8% in 1970 to 45.4% in 1994. That is, the labor force participation rate of farm women has been higher than that of non-farm women. But the rate of increase in labor force participation of non-farm women has been higher than that of farm women.

Table 4 represents the production labor hours in rice farming households. At busy farming season, the production labor hours of farm men in rice farming households have increased from 11 hours and 28 minutes in 1983 to 11 hours and 35 minutes in 1993. At busy farming season, the production labor hours of farm women in rice farming households have decreased from 8 hours and 54 minutes in 1983 to 8 hours and 24 minutes in 1993. This may be due to the mechanization of rice farming. According to Chung and Others (1995), major works in recent rice farming such as soil preparing, tilling, transplanting, and harvesting have been done by men's utilization of agricultural machinery.

At slack farming season, the production labor hours of farm men have increased from 1 hour and 59 minutes in 1983 to 3 hours and 51 minutes in 1993. This may be due to the combined agriculture<sup>2</sup>. At slack farming season, however, the production labor hours of farm women have increased from 35 minutes in 1983 to 2 hours and 12 minutes in 1993. This may be due to the increase of

**TABLE 3** Labor Force Participation Rate Unit = %

Year	Farm		Non-farm	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
1970	75.2	48.2	75.1	29.8
1980	72.4	53.0	74.2	36.1
1990	74.5	61.8	73.9	44.1
1994	78.7	66.2	76.1	45.4

Source : Ministry of Labor, Korea, 「Yearbook of Labor Statistics」, 1995 and various years.

<sup>2</sup> The combined agriculture refers to the agricultural pattern that adds other farmings (such as fruit farming, livestock raising, facility gardening farming) to rice farming.



combined agriculture, like farm men. Yearly mean of the production labor hours of farm men has increased from 4 hours and 45 minutes to 5 hours and 18 minutes. That is, at busy farming season, the production labor hours of farm men has slightly increased on the one hand, that of farm women has slightly decreased on the other hand. Yearly mean of the production labor hours of farm men has increased from 6 hours and 43 minutes to 7 hours and 43 minutes. Yearly mean of the production labor hours of farm women has increased from 4 hours and 45 minutes to 5 hours and 18 minutes.

The major roles of farm women in rice farming are supplementary planting after machinery transplanting, rice seedbed flat arrangement,

**TABLE 4** The Production Labor Hours of Farm Women in Rice Farming Households

Unit = Hours: Minutes						
Year	Busy Season		Slack Season		Yearly Mean	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
1983	11:28	8:54	1:59	0:35	6:43	4:45
1993	11:35	8:24	3:51	2:12	7:43	5:18

Source : The Office of Rural Development, Korea, 「The Report on Life Times of Farm Women and Managers」, 1994.

sowing, sheaving, dry, and others (Kim and Chung, 1992; Kim, 1994; Korean Women's Development Institute, 1990).

Table 5 shows the production labor hours of farm women in fruit, livestock raising, and facility gardening farming households. In 1993, the production labor hours of farm men in fruit, livestock raising, and facility gardening farming households were 10 hours and 32 minutes, 10 hours and 18 minutes, and 10 hours 58 minutes, respectively. In 1993, the production labor hours of farm women in fruit, livestock raising, and facility gardening farming households were 8 hours and 25 minutes, 6 hours and 48 minutes, and 9 hours 38 minutes, respectively. The production labor hours of farm men/women in facility gardening farming households were longer than those of the

other two. We can recognize the fact that the production labor hours of farm men in fruit, livestock, and facility gardening farming households were very similar, but those of farm women were varied.

The major roles of farm women in fruit farming are thinning out, putting on bags, paving goods, harvesting, sorting goods, and so on (Kim, 1987 and 1994; Kim and Chung, 1992). We can find that farm women in fruit farming center on simple repetitive works.

The major roles of farm women in livestock raising farming are feeding, preparation of livestock feed, cleaning barns, and others

**TABLE 5** The Production Labor Hours of Farm Women in Fruit, stock Raising, and Facility Gardening Farming Households

Year	Unit = Hours: Minutes					
	Fruit		Livestock		Facility Gardening	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
1993	10:32	8:25	10:18	6:48	10:58	9:38

Source : The Office of Rural Development, Korea, 「The Report on Life Times of Farm Women and Managers」, 1994.

(Kim, 1987 and 1994). That is, most farm women participate in major works such as feeding and the preparation of feed. But only a small number of farm women in livestock raising farming households participates in buying and selling livestock (Kim, 1987 and 1994) because of the effect of patriarchy.

The major roles of farm women in facility gardening farming are weeding, cutting off sprouts, planting, sorting goods, paving goods, sowing, scattering agricultural chemicals, and others (Kim, 1987 and 1994).

We can recognize the fact that many farm women actively participate in the various processes of farming. Most farm women are not complementary farmers or simple housewives, but real active farmers. According to my field observation, middle class and poor farm women participate in more various fields than rich farm women.

The major agricultural machinery in Korea are cultivator, rice planting machine, electric sprayer, combine, binder, tractor, and so on.

The farm women's utilization of agricultural machinery is in a very low level (Kim, 1994; Kim and Chung, 1992). For example, Kim and Chung (1992) found that only 10% of farm women had the utilization experience of agricultural machinery such as cultivator and electric sprayer. Most farm women lack technical skills. Farm men are increasing their control over the production process in agriculture, taking advantage of increasing mechanization in the course of capitalistic integration of agriculture. Agricultural machinery became tools for men's control of women's labor. Women's roles in agricultural production center on working with their fingers and bodies, doing long, repetitive and hard works (Kim, 1994).

Off-farm employment of farm women has played a significant role in the well-being of farm families (Korean Women's Institute, 1990; Kim and Chung, 1992; Lee, 1994). That is, off-farm earnings supplement low farm earnings. According to Kim and Chung (1992), major reasons of farm women's off-farm employment are: 1) to earn their living expenses; and 2) to prepare educational expenses for their children. Major works of farm women's off-farm employment are factory works, domestic industry, paddling, self-employed services, gathering forest products/marine products, physical labor, and so on (Korean Women's Institute, 1990; Kim and Chung, 1992; Lee, 1994). The works are generally low-wage positions with little opportunity for advancement, like the case of general women. Many farm women hope to participate in off-farm employment. But most of them cannot participate in off-farm works because of: 1) shortage of adequate works; 2) lack of time to spare; 3) bad health; and 4) old age, and others (Korean Women's Institute, 1990). That is, off-farm employment opportunities for farm women are fairly limited.

## **2. The Reproductive Roles of Farm Women in Korea**

Farm women in Korea have primary responsibility for cooking, shopping, laundering, cleaning, and child care (The Office of Rural Development, 1994; Korean Women's Institute, 1990). These activities frequently overlapped. Also, many farm women are performing various reproductive roles while working their productive roles. For example, some farm women care for their young children while working in the vinyl plastic hothouse. Changing the gender

division of labor in farming by granting control of commercialization and production processes to men has also had an important impact on reproductive activities undertaken in both public and private spheres (Stratigaki, 1988). The major reproductive roles generally assigned to farm women are child care, washing dishes, washing clothes, cooking, food preparation, cleaning, and so on. That is, the majority of works involved in biological and physical reproduction tend to be assigned to strictly female (The Office of Rural Development, 1994)<sup>3</sup>. The number of farm men who are participating in domestic works is very small. In particular, most farm men are unwilling to do washing dishes, laundering, cooking, and so on. The favorite domestic works of farm men are child education, housing life management, cleaning, and so on (Korean Women's Institute, 1990). According to the Office of Rural Development (1994), in case of busy farming season, the average domestic labor hours of farm women have decreased from 4 hours and 52 minutes in 1988 to 4 hours and 34 minutes in 1993. In case of slack season, the average domestic labor hours of farm women have decreased from 5 hours and 56 minutes in 1988 to 5 hours and 30 minutes in 1993. That is, the domestic labor hours of farm women has slightly decreased. This may be due to the spread of living necessities, such as washing machine, electric rice cooker, and refrigerator.

Farm women's social reproductive roles, such as community activities are restricted by this over-work and the lack of time (Hong, 1988). Furthermore, the patriarchal structure of rural society is a serious obstacle to farm women's community activities. The major objective of indigenous farm women's organizations is mutual aid such as exchange of work. Historically, farm women's formal organization (for example, Saemaul Women's Association) activities have been maintained by the mobilization policies of the Korean government. As a result, the farm women's participation in formal organization is very passive (Hong, 1988). Chung and Others (1995) found that Saemaul Women's Associations have been in nothing but the name.

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<sup>3</sup> According to Haney and Knowles (1988), this tendency has been found in both developing and developed countries.

## **V. The Problems in the Role Performance of Farm Women**

The problems in the roles performance of farm women can be divided into the four major parts: 1) over-work, 2) the mechanization of farming, 3) patriarchal tradition, and 4) rural development policies.

### **1. Over-work**

Over-work is a very serious problem in the roles performance of farm women in Korea. The farm women undertake various significant roles in their farming. Also, many farm women work on other's farms. Furthermore, generally the majority of reproductive works are assigned to farm women. Participation in farm activities changes over time for most farm women. The major factors that contribute to changes in farm women's farming involvement are the presence of child, family type, changes in the farm operation, movement in and out of the labor force, and age. In particular, farm women groan under heavy work in the busy season for farmers (March~June, and September~November). The rural-to-urban migration of youths accelerates the aging of farm population. As a result, farm women take charge of more activities in production and reproduction. According to the Office of Rural Development (1994), the total labor hours (productive and reproductive labor hours) of farm women are more than that of farm men, regardless of seasons (busy or slack season). In case of busy season, the average labor hours of farm women were 12 hours and 58 minutes, and that of farm men were 11 hours and 56 minutes. In case of slack season, the average labor hours of farm women were 7 hours and 42 minutes, and that of farm men were 5 hours and 2 minutes. The decision for off-farm employment may be affected by factors such as the returns from farming, family life-cycle stage, the match between family members' employable skills and local employment opportunities, family goals, age, and so on. The off-farm employment of farm women may make worse their over-work problem.

### **2. The Mechanization of Farming**

When we consider small farmland and the shortage of capital,

the problem of over-work cannot be solved exclusively by means of capital-intensive agricultural mechanization. In general, a half-mechanized agriculture often seems to raise the demand for female labor (Boserup, 1970; Haney and Knowles, 1988). The farm men's monopoly of agricultural machinery is very serious. As a result, the total demand for farm women labor is enormous (Kim and Chung, 1992). The men's monopoly of agricultural machinery has been maintained by social prejudices, gender discriminating education policies, male-centered programs of extension service institutes, male-oriented size of agricultural machinery, and so on. Farm women should be helped to improve their farming practices, particularly the utilization of agricultural machinery, otherwise farm women's over-work problem would grow from bad to worse. In particular, the mechanization for dry-field farming may be very helpful to the mitigation of farm women's over-work problem.

### **3. Patriarchal Tradition**

The dominant religions in Korean rural society are Buddhism, Protestantism, Catholicism, and so on. According to the National Statistical Office (1995), religious population rates in rural area were: Buddhism (59%), Protestantism (30.5%), Catholicism (6.8%), and others (3.7%). Buddhism emphasizes that female should not be aggressive or active, and that female should keep her femininity. Protestantism and Catholicism present male-biased world view. These religions and the influence of Confucianism legitimize patriarchy, and prescribe subordinate status to farm women within the household. Women are socialized from young age to play the roles of wife, mother and daughter-in-law, and to lead a secluded life. The patriarchal tradition combined with religious norms is making matters worse. As a result, most farm women have been alienated from farm management and the distribution process of agricultural products. According to Kim and Chung (1992), major items which farm women took the initiative in decision making for their family were very few: 1) buying food, clothes, durable goods; 2) borrowing small money from neighbors; and 3) the education of their children.

#### **4. Rural Development Policies**

Historically, the Korean rural development policies have been mainly top-down approaches grounded in the modernization perspective. Women were considered as only wives or mothers, not as independent adults. Women were either assumed to be attached to men, or were ignored in rural development policies. It is assumed that women's position would improve as did the economic prosperity of their husbands. Women's invisibility in policy has been perpetuated by treating them as analytically indistinct from family. The rural development policies of Korea have primarily focused on men's activities. The formal sector is a male preserve while women remain invisible in domestic service and petty commerce activities in the informal sectors. Despite of some official recognition of the importance of farm women, decrees and laws did not alter the pre-existing forms of gender discrimination.

#### **VI. Conclusion**

Taking into account these problems, we can suggest the direction of solution from a sociological feminist perspective as follows: First of all, the Korean government should change the top-down development approach into a bottom-up development approach. Till now, the Korean rural development policies did not adequately consider regional characteristics, cultural constraints, the importance of participatory democracy, the basic needs of rural population, and so on. Farm women were neglected in the design and implementation of development schemes. As a result, gender inequality is intensifying. Therefore, it is inevitable to change the existing development policies into more balanced development policies. From the design stages of development, the participation of women should be guaranteed. The policies that secure farm women's social and legal status should be actively developed. Also, the farm women's individual right in the national welfare system should be acknowledged.

Secondly, it is necessary to develop the reform of consciousness movement in order to eradicate the patriarchal ideologies. To develop this movement successfully, the cooperation of religious associations

and the re-arrangement of gender relation education in various public institutes and social organizations are desirable. Particularly, it will be very important to socialize new generations into the gender egalitarians from their early days because patriarchal ideologies are the products of social learning in the socialization processes.

Thirdly, the importance of the spread of agricultural machinery should be emphasized in order to solve the over-work problem in farming. To diffuse the agricultural machinery effectively, the Korean government should assist farmers technically as well as financially. Various extension service institutes have to expand the agricultural education for farm women. At present, in Korean agriculture, woman farmers are increasing because of the shortage of manpower. We should eliminate gender discrimination in admission to courses and schools where modern agricultural methods are taught. Also, various small agricultural machinery which are suitable for woman farmers should be developed.

Finally, it is necessary to devise a comprehensive countermeasures to meet the situation of the busy season for farmers(March~June, and September~November). In particular, for transplanting and harvesting seasons in rice farming, it is necessary to make a permanent plan to help farmers. For example, the provision of regular child-care facilities and programs, joint cooking, the use of urban unemployed persons will be some good measures. Also, it is necessary to activate the farm women's organizations for mutual aids.

One limitation of this study is that the use of secondary data constrained the investigation of variation by family type. Another limitation of this study is that the data on off-farm employment of farm women were not enough.



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