When Asian Women Consider Career Options

Korea

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■ Major Factors Influencing Career Options
  - Education, Working Environment
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### Religion, Traditional Custom, Labor Environment and Career

#### Major Religion affecting culture

- **Confucianism:** Confucius’ Thought  
  - Dominated Lee Dynasty (1392-1910)
  
  - Young people respect elders. (still existing)
  - Be a good children to parents (filial duty) (still existing)
  - People are loyal to the country.
  - ‘Men are superior to women.’
  
  - Four important ceremonial occasions: coming-of-age ceremony, wedding, funeral, ancestral rites (partly existing)
    (ex. Ancestral rites by the eldest brother)

- **Buddhism:** spread to Korea in 372.
  
  - National Religion of Koryo Dynasty (918-1392)
  - Influenced in all aspects: Art, Architecture, Food, Economy, etc.

- **Christianity:** introduced to Korea in 1866.
  
  - Brought western culture
Traditional Custom in Social Life

■ Male-dominated Society

■ Regionalism – value-added factor to build up business relationship, Politicians are strategically utilizing it for election.

■ School Relations – important, especially in men’s society. Some universities are famous for its strong school network.

■ Seniority – respect seniors, ‘Senior first’

■ Blood Relationship

Korea is a homogeneous nation with over 4,300 years of history.

■ But radical changes of industrialization, economic growth, western culture penetration, western religion especially christianity have influenced current status of Korea during half century.

- Per capita income from $66 (1963) to $28,180 (2014)

■ More than 1 million foreign residents with 112 countries in Korea (as of April 2015) – Korea population is 50.6 million (2015)

■ Multicultural families increased

■ Increased Foreign workers . Foreign students . International Exchange of Students
Religion, Traditional Custom, and Labor Environment


  - Retirees are not fully prepared economically and socially for second life. Financial burden for Children's marriages
  - Extension of retirement age cause less jobs for youth.

■ Youth Employment (Age 15-29) (May 2015) – Employment rate 41.7%
  - Unemployment rate 9.3%

■ Transition period of criteria for recruitment from external career to capability

Major Factors Influencing Career Options

A. Education

■ Unless parents are sick, disabled, or very poor, most of Korean parents are responsible for living and want their children to go to college.
  - High school entrance rate: Girl (94.2%) Boy (93.3%)
  - College entrance rate: Women (74.6%) vs Men (67.6%)

■ Basically no discrimination between men and women (but lack of role model for women)

■ Go to college for better life and better career.
  - Women get higher score than men in examination to get certificate/license
Major Factors Influencing Career Options

A. Education

- Students have barriers to choose major and college:
  
  School record (63.6%), job selection by gender (1.5%), gap between parent’s expectation and student (7.8%), financial difficulty (3.4%), physical condition and appearance (4.1%), and short of information (13.4%), etc. (6.2%), - Dec. 2014
  
- Government reinforce Career Guidance System from middle school.

B. Working Environment

### Issues/concern for Women

- Frequent get-together & ‘drink culture’ after office hour are burdensome.
- According to survey, ‘Recognition of job by family’ highly motivates working women. Job spec. and working experience are more important than income.
- More non-regular staff than men
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary (2015)</th>
<th>Men</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular Staff – 100 vs 68.2</td>
<td>Utilize communication channel from frequent get-together and ‘drinks’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Regular Staff – 52.7 vs 35.9</td>
<td>Recognize Korean Women’s excellence in many fields such as sports, foreign language, etc. but</td>
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<td>Traditional bias –</td>
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<td>Men supervisor,</td>
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<td>women subordinates</td>
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### Men

- Utilize communication channel from frequent get-together and ‘drinks’
- Recognize Korean Women’s excellence in many fields such as sports, foreign language, etc. but
- Traditional bias –
  
  Men supervisor, women subordinates
Major Factors Influencing Career Options

B. Working Environment

Issues/concern for Women

- Focus to Balance between family and career. Has concern of resignation by marriage and child rearing

- Majority of young generation are seeking ‘stable and less stressful job’. (ex. Government workers are popular job. People say, best candidate for wife is elementary school teacher these days.)

- Challenge to break traditional male or female job such as factory job of heavy industry by women.

Men

- Focus to career itself

  Work and Life balance is concern for young generation

Major Factors Influencing Career Options

- Glass-ceiling Index – Korea 28th (25.6)
  OECD average (60)

- Registered Women Executives at Listed Enterprises in Korea: 1.9%

- High-ranking government officials - 3.7%

- Gender Equality Rank – Korea 117th/142 countries
  2014 World Economic Forum Report

- Male & Female Salary Gap : 37.4% (May 2015)
Major Factors Influencing Career Options

C. Marriage

- Interest in marriage reduced to 71.5% (2012) from 77.3% (2007) - 2014 Survey
- The mean age of females at first marriage – 29.8 years (2014), 24.8 (1990)
- Youth - ‘Having a Job is a MUST, marriage is a CHOICE’
- Majority of women want to continue to work after baby birth.

Major Trend – Young generation prefers working women as wife for dual income, due mainly to high price of house to purchase or rent.

Average Daily Housework (2014)
- Women - 2 hour 27 min.
- Men - 31 minutes

Major Factors Influencing Career Options

D. Baby Birth & Child rearing

Employment Rates of Women by Age Groups (2013)

Source: OECD Statistics
Major Factors Influencing Career Options

D. Baby Birth & Child rearing
Women’s career break reason (2013)

Source: Statistics Korea, “statistics of Women’s Career Breaks in 2013”

Married Women aged 15-54
- 9.7 million

Not employed, but ready
- 4 million (41.8%)

Employed women with career breaks
- 1.95 million (20.1%)

2-4. Career Issues – Career Break

Changes in the Distribution of Job Sectors after Career Breaks (2013)

Source: Ministry of Gender Equality & Family, “Survey on Women with Career Interruptions in 2013”

62.4% of women have more than 5 years of career-interruption period. 78.6% of women had worked less than 5 years before career breaks. Lower, often insecure, and downgraded position after career breaks.
### Major Factors Influencing Career Options

#### D. Baby Birth & Child rearing

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<th>Men</th>
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<td>■ School system to care children as working mom needs much attention to go to good college.</td>
<td>■ Traditionally men think that child rearing and child education are mainly mother’s responsibility.</td>
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<td>■ Mother’s support for working daughter’s child rearing preferred due to not sufficient childcare system.</td>
<td>Recently men involved more in child rearing, especially in Education.</td>
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Avoid Paternity Leave due to concern of late promotion by career break

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Thank you!

For more details, please contact Eunmee Hwang.

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