
Measures for increasing acceptance for and effectiveness of gender equality policies

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This research aims at developing measures to increase acceptance for and effectiveness of gender equality policies in South Korea. South Korea has succeeded in institutionalizing gender equality for a relatively short span of time. State feminism has been established within the last several decades and functioned as a political mechanism for promoting gender equality. However, gender equality legislations and policies have not been very effective in bringing about de facto gender equality in society. This is because social acceptance for gender equality is low and gender culture, which is still affected by patriarchal consciousness, does not support gender equality in general. To promote gender equality culture, it is required to develop policies for raising gender equality awareness tailored to different groups of people.

We analyze the processes of state feminism in six countries where the levels of gender equality are advanced to find out the factors which are critical to the success of state feminism and at the same time its social, political, and cultural backgrounds. Gender culture which determines people's consciousness and ways of behaviors concerning gender equality seems especially pertinent and suggestive. Six cases of state feminism are drawn from Norway, Sweden, France, Austria, the United States and Australia in the descending order of the strength of state feminism. Norway and Sweden have a high level of gender equality and their state feminism has been strengthening. France and Austria have consolidated their state feminism, however their gender culture is not always equality oriented. The state feminism of the U.S. and Australia has been weakening and their gender culture is not consistent with the strength of their state feminism. For example, gender culture of the U.S. is relatively more equal than that of Australia.

We propose two policy measures for mobilizing people's acceptance for gender equality policies and promoting policy effectiveness. One is educating students, public officers and general public about gender equality values and legitimacy. For example, strengthening institution of gender equality education and substantiating its contents are crucial for education within the public education system. Compulsory enforcement of gender equality education tailored to their status and fields is required for public officers. The other is increasing communication with public about gender equality. Establishing a communicable and persuasive gender equality vision, building and spreading gender equality discourse, drawing out messages with logical frame, and creating a concept of gender equality which people would feel comfortable with and attracted to are recommended.