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# Report on the 2018 Korean Longitudinal Survey of Women and Families

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## I . Background and Purpose of the Research

Changes in demographic and family structures that our society recently faces will bring a big change in the overall lives of its members. These changes will have a greater impact on women's lives than men's. Issues in women's lives are closely related to each other in various areas rather than restricted to particular areas. For example, issues in women's economic activity are not simply related to internal factors of the labor market, but they are also closely related to changes in external factors of the labor market, such as family type, the structure of decision-making in the family, and social and cultural rituals and practices.

In general, a database on women's overall lives was established through a cross-section survey so as to analyze them in time series based on

specific time points. However, because women's individual characteristics cannot be controlled when a database is built through a cross-section survey, it is difficult to exactly calculate the effects of variables concerned and thus the survey has limitations in establishing and evaluating women's policies. For this reason, a database on changes in their individual lives is established through a longitudinal survey to accurately identify policy effects and changes in their lives.

In order to accurately identify the characteristics of women's rapidly-changing lives and to establish a longitudinal database on them, the Korean Women's Development Institute began to conduct research in 2006. Through this research the Korean Women's Development Institute planned and performed the Korean Longitudinal Survey of Women & Families (KLoWF). The KLoWF is a nationwide panel survey that investigates changes in women's lives by life cycle, family structure, life course and daily living, family relations and values, and jobs. Although a longitudinal database was partially established in existing panel surveys, including the Korean Labor and Income Panel Survey, most of these panel surveys have not taken into consideration characteristics of men and women or lacked the number of women's cases. As such, they had limitations in conducting a meaningful analysis of women's unique experiences and sub-groups. Moreover, as these surveys were not equipped with diverse question structures to analyze women's lives, they had difficulty providing multifaceted and comprehensive information on changes in women's lives.

As the KLoWF was designed to overcome such limitations in the existing longitudinal surveys, it could produce essential data on the issues our society faces - including low fertility, aging, childcare, work-family reconciliation, and family friendly social environment - to establish

comprehensive policies on women and families. The KLoWF was conducted with the following purposes in mind. First, this survey aims to identify characteristics of women's economic activity and the actual conditions of work and family balance. Second, it is designed to empirically examine women's lives and to predict the present and future of families in Korean society. Lastly, by keeping track of changes in a wide range of important social issues in Korea, including low fertility, aging, child care, work-family reconciliation, and family-friendly social environment, this survey aims to provide rudimentary data for the overall process of establishing and evaluating policies on women and families.

Beginning with its first wave in 2007 to survey samples of 9,997 women, ages between 19 and 64 years old, in 9,068 households across the nation, the KLoWF completed its second wave in 2008, third wave in 2010, fourth wave in 2012, fifth wave in 2014, and sixth wave in 2016. Through these surveys, the KWDI distributed sectional and longitudinal databases “after” establishing the databases, and conducted the seventh wave survey in 2018.

## II. Overview of the Seventh Wave KLoWF

### 1. Subjects of the Survey

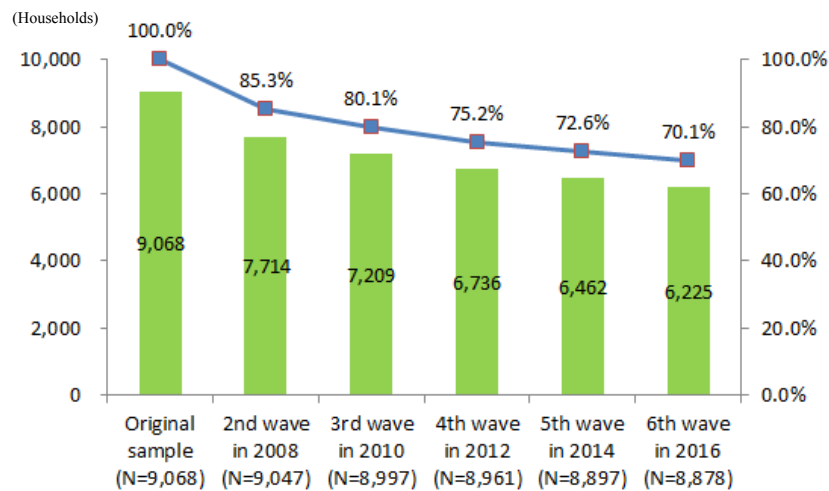
The subjects of the seventh wave KLoWF include the following:

First, they included 12,285 female eligible household members in 9,711 households surveyed from the first to sixth wave surveys. Specifically, the subjects included 10,446 female household members aged between 19 and 64, who lived in the original sample households of the first wave survey, 1,839 household members who were excluded

from the survey of existing original eligible household members, 259 new eligible household members who became 19 due to an increase in age in the sixth wave survey, 34 new eligible household members who entered the households in the sixth wave survey, and eligible household members among split-off households in the seventh wave survey. Second, they included 2,486 female original eligible household members in 2,049 households that were newly added in the sixth wave survey. New samples were added to the panel to secure representation of the 2017 KLoWF and to take into account the dropout level in the future surveys. This research conducted a survey of these panels while keeping track of the split-off households in 2018.

## 2. Retention Rate of Original Samples

The retention rate of the KLoWF is calculated based on the original sample households, excluding households that were impossible to survey for the reasons of death and missing, study abroad, long-term business trip, illness and accidents, and their request to drop out of the panel. The sixth wave survey was conducted of 6,225 households among 8,878 households, excluding from 9,068 original households 127 households that were impossible to survey and 63 households that requested to drop out of the panel. Therefore, the retention rate of original samples in the sixth wave survey was 70.1%. The retention rate sharply dropped to 85.3% in the second wave survey, to 80.1% in the third wave, and to 75.2% in the fourth wave, approximately 5 percentage point down every year. However, the retention rate fell by a mere 2.6 percentage point in the fifth wave and 2.5 percentage point in the sixth wave, showing that the rate gradually entered a stable phase.



Source: Jae-seon Joo, et al.(2016). 2016 Korean Longitudinal Survey of Women & Families. Quoted and revised from p45.

[Figure 1] Retention rates of household samples by wave

The KLoWF conducted the seventh wave survey in 2018, including the newly added panel surveyed in 2017. As such, beginning with the seventh wave survey, the research will manage the retention rates of household samples with integrated weights, including the original samples of 2017 and newly added panel in 2017. The goal of the retention rate of integrated samples is over 74% after completing the seventh wave survey. The retention rate of original samples will be managed at over 70% to maintain the quality of the longitudinal analysis of the panel above a certain level.

### 3. Improvements in the Seventh Wave Questionnaire

The seventh wave questionnaire was improved as follows: First, with the Questionnaire for Households, questions regarding the jobs of household members were added to identify the employment type of wage

workers (regular/ non-regular). Second, a question regarding the housing status was added to ask reasons for moving to the current housing. This aimed to enable more detailed analysis of job security and characteristics of the panel dropout.

〈Table 1〉 Revisions of the Questionnaire for Households

Area	Question number	Revisions
A. Household members and Family	Q1-7-2	(Wage workers only) Question added to ask whether they have regular or non-regular job.
	Q2-9-2	(Wage workers only) Question added to ask whether they have regular or non-regular job.
B. Housing Status	Q1-1.	Question added to ask the main reason for moving to the current housing.

In the case of the Questionnaire for Individuals, the seventh wave questionnaire expanded the scope of question from asking for a response depending on the respondent's marital status to asking for a response regardless of the marital status. In consideration of the use and appropriateness of questions, existing questions were rearranged. Also, the seventh wave questionnaire aimed to resolve the ambiguity of questions by specifying respondents to some questions. In the case of the Questionnaire for New Respondents surveyed when respondents enter the panel for the first time, the seventh wave questionnaire added a complementary survey because some of the areas and questions of the Question are not surveyed again afterwards.

### III. Rudimentary Analysis

#### 1. Marriage

The proportion of unmarried women who answered that they have intention to marry declined every year from 64.6% in the third wave to 63.1% in the fifth wave and 43.9% in the sixth wave, except for the increase in the fourth wave survey to 69.4%. Their affirmative answer to marriage intention decreased by 19.2 percentage point from 63.1% in the fifth wave survey to 43.9% in the sixth wave survey.

〈Table 2〉 Changes in unmarried women's marriage intention

(Unit: %)

Category	3rd	4th	5th	6th
Have	64.6	69.4	63.1	43.9
Do not have	19.0	17.0	16.7	22.6
Never thought of	16.4	13.5	20.1	33.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

#### 2. Housework

Changes in couple's time spent on housework show that the housework time on weekdays slightly fell with wives from 162.1 minutes to 152.6 minutes but rose with husbands from 17.1 minutes to 18.2 minutes.

The time spent on care work decreased with wives and husbands alike. The housework time on Saturdays dropped with wives from 150.4 minutes to 141.0 minutes, but increased with husbands from 21.9 minutes to 24.5 minutes. In the case of care work, the time decreased with both wives and husbands like that on weekdays. In the case of housework on Sundays, the time tended to reduce with wives and husbands as well.

In the case of care work on Sundays, the time fell with both wives and husbands.

〈Table 3〉 Changes in couple's time spent on housework

(Unit: minutes)

Category		3rd		4th		5th		6th	
		Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband
Weekdays	housework	212.6	18.4	162.1	17.1	152.0	17.8	152.6	18.2
	care work			60.5	8.6	49.5	8.4	41.7	7.2
Saturdays	housework	205.7	29.0	150.4	21.9	139.4	21.9	141.0	24.5
	care work			64.5	21.6	53.6	17.8	46.3	15.1
Sundays	housework	207.5	46.7	152.7	35.8	140.0	33.5	141.7	33.6
	care work			65.3	28.3	52.7	24.0	45.2	19.8

### 3. Values

According to the survey of changes in values, the proportion of agreement to the statements “Marriage is a must” and “It is good to marry young” went down. This shows that with the progress of the waves, more respondents tend to think that marriage is not a must or that it can be delayed. While there was a decrease in the proportion of agreement to the statements “It is good to have children early in marriage” and “Must have child/ren,” there was an increase in the proportion to the statement “Divorce is possible even if I have child/ren.” This proves that changes in values are taking place regarding children as well.

Regarding the awareness of gender role in the family, the proportion of agreement to the statement “It is ideal for men to get a job and for

women to make home” gradually dropped. This shows the awareness of gender role has changed.

#### 4. Women's Economic Activity

##### 1) Changes in Job

Current jobs are classified based on the work experience of the employed in the last week, while women with no work experience are classified into the unemployed or the economically non-active population depending on their job-search experience in the last month and ready-to-work state. This method of classification is used by Statistics Korea and International Labour Organization (ILO) as well. Statistics Korea classifies the population aged 15 or over based on the state in the last week, but the KLoWF surveys women aged 19 and over.

When women's economic activity status was examined in the third wave KLoWF, the proportion of the employed was 47.8%, and that of the unemployed<sup>1)</sup> 1.9%, and that of the economically non-active population 50.3%. When the changes in the proportion of women's economic activity status were examined, the proportion of the employed tended to increase gradually from 50.7% in the fourth wave to 51.6% in the fifth wave and 55.0% in the sixth wave. In contrast, the proportions of the unemployed and the economically non-active population tended to decrease gradually. The proportion of the unemployed slightly rose from 1.9% in the third wave to 2.0% in the fourth wave, but then gradually fell in the following waves, leading to 1.3% in the sixth wave. Also, the proportion of the economically non-active population steadily

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1) The proportion of the unemployed refers to that of the jobless among the KLoWF panel aged 19 or above.

dropped from 50.3% in the third wave to 43.7% in the six wave, showing a 6.6 percentage point fall compared to the third wave. These changes are the same characteristics as those in women's economic activity status surveyed by Statistics Korea. However, changes in women's employment rate<sup>2)</sup> and in the proportion of the economically non-active population surveyed by the KLoWF were slightly bigger than those surveyed by Statistics Korea.

〈Table 4〉 Changes in economic activity status

(Unit: %)

Category	3rd	4th	5th	6th
Proportion of the employed	47.8	50.7	51.6	55.0
Proportion of the unemployed	1.9	2.0	1.8	1.3
Proportion of the economically non-active population	50.3	47.3	46.7	43.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Based on job-search in the last month (4 weeks).

According to the changes in the main job of female workers by employment status, the proportion of wage workers tended to rise since the fourth wave survey, but that of non-wage workers tended to fall since the third wave survey. On the other hand, the proportion of workers in special employment types tended to increase from 2.6% in the third wave to 4.7% in the fourth wave and 4.8% in the fifth wave, but then slightly decreased to 3.8% in the sixth wave survey.

2) According to the Economically Active Population Survey by Statistics Korea, women's employment rate was 47.9% in 2010, 48.6% in 2012, 49.7% in 2014, and 50.3% in 2016, respectively.

〈Table 5〉 Proportions of workers by job type  
(wage/non-wage/special employment types)

(Unit: %)

Category	3rd	4th	5th	6th
Wage worker	64.7	64.1	67.9	69.8
Non-wage worker	32.6	31.3	27.4	26.5
worker in special employment types	2.6	4.7	4.8	3.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

## 2) Job Environment and Job Search

When the impact of work life on family life was examined, approximately 93% of the respondents in almost all wave surveys agreed to the statement “Working gives rewarding experience and vitality in my life.” A positive response to the statement “You can get recognition by working” remained just below 90% and another response to “Working made my family life satisfactory too” showed the similar level to the previous response. However, slightly more than half of the respondents showed a positive response to “Working has a positive impact on children,” which was a different result from satisfaction with my life.

When the impact of family life on work was examined, 52.0% of the respondents agreed to the question about the statement “I work harder because of responsibility for supporting family.” The proportion of positive response to this question continued to decrease from 62.7% in the third wave survey. Compared to other questions, the proportion of positive response to the question about the statement “I work harder because family members give recognition to my work” is high, with 76.0% of the respondents agreed to the statement in the sixth wave

survey, but it tended to fall from 78.4% in the third wave survey. Meanwhile, when asked if family life had a negative impact on work, not a high proportion, 26.0% and 26.4% each, of the respondents agreed to the statements “It was often difficult to balance work and family due to the burden of child care” and “It was often difficult to do work at company due to heavy housework.” With waves of the survey proceeding, the proportion of response that family life had a negative impact on work tended to decrease after the third wave survey.

The average job-search period of the unemployed among those without jobs was 4.1 months in the sixth wave survey, 0.6 month shorter than 4.7 months in the fifth wave survey. The type of work favored by job seekers was to get a job rather than to start a business in almost all cases. The proportion of those who hope to get a job went up from 92.8% in the third wave to 99.8% in the fifth wave, but then went down by 5.1 percentage point to 94.7% in the sixth wave survey. Meanwhile, among the reasons for difficulties of seeking a job, “No or lack of job” accounted for the largest portion of the response. This response to the question made up 55.8% in the third wave, steeply hiked to 70.2% in the fourth wave, then steadily increased to 75.8% in the sixth wave survey.

## IV. New Panel Additions and Comparison of Changes

### 1. Analysis of Panel Dropout and Impact of Sample Additions

This study was conducted with two goals: one goal was to examine characteristics of panel dropout, so we analyzed in which direction the panel dropout took place for each household and individual factor, then

presented directions for future panel management. The other goal was to examine changes in the quality of the KLoWF arising from the newly added panel in 2017. Then, we analyzed quality changes and characteristics by comparing the integrated panel of existing and newly added panels with representative data of Statistics Korea.

According to the result of panel dropout analysis, both individual factors, such as age, marital status, education, and employment status, and household factors, such as dwelling area, occupancy type, and housing type, had a statistically significant impact on panel dropout. On the other hand, household income and the number of household members among household factors did not have a significant impact on panel dropout.

We also conducted a comparative analysis of the integrated panel, existing panel, and Statistics Korea panel data to investigate changes in panel representation arising from the panel additions. According to the result of the analysis, demographic variables, such as age cohort, marital status, educational level, and distribution of household members, showed little difference between the KLoWF and Statistics Korea panel data. However, there was some degree of difference between the two data in housing type, household income, and employment status. Though the representation of the integrated panel was not greatly improved, it was slightly improved in the panel's individual data, including age, educational level, and marital status. However, there was almost no difference in the representation of items related to employment status or household data.

## 2. Comparison of Family Values between the 2007 and 2017 KLoWF Samples

This study aims to have a comparative analysis of demographic and sociological characteristics by age, family values, and marital life between the 2007 and 2017 KLoWF samples. According to the main results of the analysis, the proportion of unmarried women's marriage intention among family values declined. Concerning the attitude toward marriage, the proportion of agreement to the statement "Marriage is a must" increased with the respondents in their 30s, but decreased with those in their 50s and 60s. As for the awareness of gender role in the family, changes in the awareness were found among those in their 40s and older between 2007 and 2017 as there was a decrease in the proportion of agreement to the fixed idea of gender role with men getting a job and women keeping home. To the statement "Wife's getting a job makes the relationship with husband equal," the proportion of agreement went down in the age cohort of younger than 30, 40s, 50s, and 60s or older in 2017 compared to 2007, but there was almost no change in the 30s. To the statement "A working couple should share housework equally," the proportion of agreement dropped. This result is believed to have come from the awareness that not only should a working couple share housework but a couple under any circumstance should cooperate with each other in doing domestic work. Regarding the awareness of children, the proportion of agreement to the two statements "It is good to have children early in marriage" and "Divorce is possible even if I have child/ren" fell in 2017 compared to 2007. In other words, there was an increase in the proportion of those who think they may not have children early in marriage and children were no problem when they divorce.

Satisfaction with marital life decreased overall in all age cohorts in

2017 compared to 2007 except for the age cohort of 50s. On the other hand, the proportion of agreement to the statement “I share similar opinions with my husband” increased in all age cohort in 2017 compared to in 2007. Regarding couple’s decision-making, there was a change in that a higher proportion of the respondents made a decision separately on each of the couple’s own issues but together on children’s education, property management, and leisure activity. In couple’s activities, cultural activity and exercise increased, but meeting husband’s or respondent’s family tended to decrease. In other words, it was found that there was a change toward couple’s doing more activities together than meeting with their extended families in 2017 compared to 2007.

## V. In-depth Analysis

### 1. Study on the Career Retention of Married Women

This study analyzed the determinants of career retention of married women rather than focusing on the reemployment of career-interrupted women as in existing studies. The study also compared characteristics of women who retain their career and those who experience a career break and analyzed their wage effects.

According to the result of the analysis, factors that had the greatest impact on women’s career retention were respondent’s wage, college or higher education, and business size. Spouse characteristics and children effects had a statistical significance before respondent’s wage was included, but most of them disappeared when respondent’s wage and job characteristics were controlled. In particular, self-employment had a positive effect on the probability of career retention.

## 2. Gender Discrimination in Workplace and Female Workers' Changing Jobs

Using data from the KLoWF that surveyed wage workers' experience of gender discrimination in workplace, this study analyzed the actual experience of gender discrimination in workplace and the impact of gender discrimination on changing jobs and intention to change jobs.

The main results of the study can be summarized as follows: First, the awareness and experience of gender discrimination in workplace were statistically significant in job and organizational characteristics rather than individual characteristics. The result of descriptive statistics shows that individual women's age, education, and marital status corresponded with the result of existing studies on the experience or awareness of gender discrimination in workplace. However, this difference did not exercise influence at a statistically significant level when job and organizational characteristics were controlled. On the other hand, the jobs women workers had and their job experience, and organizational characteristics had a statistically significant impact on the experience of gender discrimination in workplace. Women who had a long period of continuous service had more experience of gender discrimination in workplace than those who did not. This implies that in the process of building their career, the respondents or their colleagues experience seriously accumulated gender discrimination in workplace. Second, gender discrimination in workplace was highly likely to have a positive impact on women's changing jobs and intention to change jobs. Gender discrimination in workplace had a more statistically significant impact on intention to change jobs than actually changing jobs. This has great implications for the productivity management of not just individuals but also organizations because their intention to change jobs may have a

negative impact on organizational commitment even if they do not take any action to change jobs.

## VI. Policy Implications

Based on the results of the rudimentary analysis and the characteristics of in-depth analysis of the KLoWF, the research presents policy implications as below:

First, monitoring policies and studies are needed to settle a gender equal culture in the family. According to the results of the KLoWF analyses, there have been changes, overall, in women's attitude toward and awareness of family life, but social and policy changes still fall behind. Moreover, social changes may probably be considered too slow for unmarried women who are highly likely to wish an equal culture in the family. Improving gender equality in the family will not only improve family culture but also change the awareness of marriage. This may also be connected to the issue of low fertility--the greatest topic of conversation in Korean society. Therefore, studies and policies on families and diverse policies need to be monitored and reviewed so that a gender equal culture in the family may lead to enhance women's economic activity and work-family balance.

Second, monitoring legal welfare and benefit policies for non-regular workers is needed to balance work and family. According to the results of the KLoWF analyses, the proportion of work places that provide maternity leave dropped from 29.3% in the third wave to 22.9% in the sixth wave survey, and the proportion of child care leave decreased during the same period from 26.1% to 24.8%. Even when their business

places provided leave, the possibility of the respondents' benefiting from the leave was lower than 80%, with maternity leave at 75.1% and childcare leave at 77.4% in the sixth wave survey. Also, though business places provided various welfare benefits, the proportion of each welfare benefit was not high. This is because the legal welfare benefit system is applied in a limited way to non-regular workers. Therefore, the welfare benefit system should be monitored and reinforced so that its benefits may be expanded to non-regular workers in the future.

Third, policies on career break need to concentrate in the direction of female workers' career retention rather than career-interrupted women's reemployment. According to the result of studies on the career retention of married women, what is important for their career retention, is, more than anything else, "a decent and good job" standing for a job at a large company with a high wage. In a way, this is so obvious a result. After all, the key to the issue of career interruption may be to approach it as the issue of labor market, with a career break being an opportunity cost. Female workforce has rapidly become highly educated and its attributes have changed a lot compared to a decade ago. Considering this, the opportunity cost for female workers' reemployment is too high compared to the past after they drop out of the labor market. The Korean government has so far concentrated on providing support measures for career-interrupted women's reemployment and career retention when they are reemployed. However, now is the time to concentrate on preparing specific policies in the direction of preventing their career break.

Fourth, affirmative actions for improving organizational culture need to be taken before counteracting gender discrimination in workplace. According to the result of this research, gender discrimination in workplace is highly likely to exist in large businesses where internal

labor markets are developed. This result implies that a quantitative increase of women in the labor market does not necessarily bring gender equality in the labor market. Occupational segregation by gender, which is to exclude women from particular duties based on the fixed idea of gender role, is solidly reproduced in the internal labor market of large businesses. Currently, affirmative actions are taken by large-scale businesses with 300 employees or more with a goal to raise the proportion of women in recruitment and manager levels. However, no measures are taken to solve the issue of occupational segregation by gender that recruits employees by dividing duties by gender into female and male duties even in the same organization in the early career stage. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the practice of gender discrimination in workplace affecting female workers' awareness of gender discrimination and career management and the causes for gaps occurring in the position and performance between women and men in the labor market. By doing this, a basis should be prepared to turn the quantitative growth of female workforce into qualitative career development as well.

Fifth, periodic and diverse studies should be conducted to control the quality of the KLoWF panel management, which has been implemented by taking into account the characteristics of the panel dropout. At the present, the panel management is divided into successful or unsuccessful response, and dropout reasons only, and has a largely survey-centered management system. However, this method of panel management cannot but have limitations in maintaining the panel retention rate at a certain level until the tenth wave survey in a situation where the survey environment worsens gradually. The KLoWF's dropout rate analysis needs to apply the result of analyzing the factors and environments for the occurrence of high dropout to future panel management. To do so,

metadata should be produced and managed more densely to continually manage the individual-unit panel, and diverse studies be conducted to continue the quality control of the KLoWF panel.

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