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A study on how to improve the operation of Gender-targeted Public Funding for Political Parties in South Korea

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of Gender-targeted Public Funding for
Political Parties in South Korea**

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I . Introduction

The public funding for women's political development constitutes 10% of the ordinary subsidies among the total national subsidies provided to political parties. Established in 2004, the public funding for women's political development is dedicated to advancing women's political development¹⁾. However, apart from the simple provision that it shall be used for women's political development, the funding has been executed for about 20 years without any specification on its purposes. Therefore, it has remained unclear what it means to use the funding for women's political development, and criticisms have persisted on the improper use of the funding in the absence of investigations on the causes.

¹⁾ Political Funds Act, Article 28(2): A political party that is paid the ordinary subsidies shall distribute and pay at least 30/100 of such ordinary subsidies to its policy development institute and at least 10/100 thereof to its provincial-level party branch offices and shall use at least 10/100 thereof for the development of female politics and at least 5/100 thereof for the development of youth politics.
<Amended on Feb. 22, 2022>

In 2020 when the general election was held, the total national subsidies provided to political parties amounted to about 65 billion won (29.4 billion won for the People Power Party; 30.2 billion won for the Democratic Party of Korea; 5.6 billion won for the Justice Party, etc.). The amount was large enough to match the level of budget for a government committee or ministry. The actual amount of the national subsidies paid to each political party becomes smaller as the sum gets distributed to each party. However, in terms of the total budget for each party, the average proportion of national subsidies tends to be about 30%, and the proportion can reach as much as 50% or higher. This means that political parties' reliance on national subsidies can be substantial. Of the total ordinary subsidies paid to each political party, 10% are generally allocated to women's political development, with the average amount of about 1.3 billion won for the People Power Party, 1.4 billion won for the Democratic Party of Korea, and 300 million won for the Justice Party.

As the national subsidies constitute almost half of the political parties' total operating budget, national subsidies given to political parties should enhance transparency, accountability, and public impact. Thus, the question that prompted this study was whether the public funding for women's political development, which is intended to help nurturing women's political development, is being managed in accordance with those principles.

This study aimed to examine the main operating agency and purposes of the public funding for women's political development. In doing so, the study analyzed the recent management of the funding by party and also investigated the awareness and experience in the use of the funding through in-depth interviews with women politicians. In order to

understand the current status on the management of the public funding for women's political development, the political parties' accounting reports submitted to the National Election Commission were obtained through requests for information disclosure, and in-depth interviews were conducted with a total of 36 women politicians (members of the National Assembly, provincial councilors, municipal councilors, party executives). In the in-depth interviews, the participants were asked about their awareness of the public funding for women's political development and the subsidy for women's nomination, their experience in benefiting from these subsidies, and issues as well as room for improvements on the public funding for women's political development.

II. Theoretical Discussions on the Public Impact of Political Funds and Accountability

1. Basic Concepts of the Public Campaign Financing System and the Political Funds Act

- The public campaign financing system is "a scheme in which, in order to prevent the negative effects caused by non-interference on election campaigns, the state manages the elections and provides the election expenses, and thereby ensures balanced elections, reduces election expenses, and achieves fair elections." The system was introduced in earnest after the enactment of the Act on Public Official Election and Election Malpractice Prevention in 1994 (currently the Public Official Election Act) (Jung Hwan Lee, 2016: 1).
- The Political Funds Act was enacted to "guarantee the fair provision of political funds, ensuring the transparency of political funds

through the disclosure of the details of their revenues and expenditures and prevent irregularities involving political funds” (Article 1). The basic principles for revenues and expenditures of political funds should be in line with the Political Funds Act.

- National subsidies help to protect political parties’ activities, establish policy-oriented political parties, ensure fair competitions between political parties, and fulfill democracy within political parties (Sang Mook Lee, 2009: 127; Yeon Jung Jeong, 2021: 47-48).
- Meanwhile, there is a lack of practical mechanism for auditing the use of national subsidies (Yeon Jung Jeong, 2021: 57-58; Dae Geun Kim et al., 2015: 50; So Young Cho, 2015: 19-20).

2. Gender Inequality in Political Participation and Gender Differences in Political Fundraising

- Within politics, men have been especially dominant while women have been seen as insignificant participants. The gender quota system is part of an affirmative action designed to fill at least a certain proportion of legislatures with women to solve women's political under-representation (Hyun Ok Cho & Eun Hee Kim, 2010: 110).
- Among the causes of women's political under-representation, ‘funding’ is an important element (OSCE & ODIHR, 2014:76; Won Hong Kim et al., 2013; Mi Kyung Moon et al., 2018: 95-96; Soo Hyun Kwon, 2019: 98). The wealth of candidates running for elections can critically influence election results (Jeong Do Kim, Jin Ha Kim, Joon Pyo Jung, 2013; re-cited from Dae Sik Kim, Jin Man Cho, Ji Sung Yoon, 2020: 116-117), and women tend to experience

more difficulties in mobilizing assets or raising political funds compared to men (Jin Ok Lee et al., 2020: 213).

- Given the results of the research by Yong Ju Jeon and Seung Oh Nam (2020) which found a positive relationship between election expenditures and polling rates, gender differences in the mobilization of political funds can lead to gender differences in political participation.

III. Analysis of the Accounting Reports on the Public Funding for Women's Political Development

1. Categorization of Expenditure Details on the Public Funding for Women's Political Development

This section presents the analysis of the characteristics and trends on the execution of the public funding for women's political development based on each political party's accounting reports from 2016 to 2021 obtained through the requests of information disclosure to the National Election Commission. The political parties included for the analysis consisted of those that remained active in 2016-2021 such as the People Power Party, the Democratic Party of Korea, and the Justice Party. Considering the Political Funds Act's provision on the public funding for women's political development, which prescribes that at least 10% of total ordinary subsidies should be used for women's political development, the analysis focused on the expenditure details for the item 'the public funding for women's political development' within the 'ordinary subsidy' account from the accounting reports.

This study integrated the discussions by Eun Kyung Kim and others (2019), which categorized the expenditure items on the public funding for women's political development into personnel expenses, education expenses, policy development expenses, and organizational management expenses, with the discussions by Soo Hyun Kwon, Chae Young Yoon, and Hye Min Cho (2017), which categorized the items into personnel expenses, education and policy expenses, organizational management expenses, women candidates and election support expenses, and other expenses. Taking into account the intended purposes of the public funding for women's political development, the categories were structured into five groups including personnel expenses, education expenses, women candidates and election support expenses, policy development expenses, and organizational management expenses, and each category was further divided into sub-categories.

First, as the personnel expenses included only those for women party executives at the secretariats, the analysis identified the proportion of personnel expenses for the party executives at the secretariats in terms of the public funding for women's political development. Among the expenditure details, expenses such as rental fees, etc. were included in the items corresponding to relevant events. The education expenses, in accordance with education's contents, were grouped into the identification and nurturing of women politicians, awareness education on gender equality for party members, and sexual violence prevention education. The women candidates and election support expenses included only the parts that clearly stated relevant details in the accounting reports, such as the provision of support for election expenses for women candidates (Democratic Party of Korea), travel to election areas by women candidates for the general election (People Power Party), and the

provision of support funds for local candidates (Justice Party). For the analysis, the proportions used for election expenses were determined by excluding the expenses unrelated to elections. The policy development expenses were divided into those for meetings, seminars, discussions, and research as well as commissioned studies for the establishment of policies and election pledges. The organizational management expenses included management expenses for organizations (such as women's bureaus and women's committees), expenses for women's meetings, study meetings, learning groups, book purchases, the management of gender-based violence reporting and counseling centers, facilities and purchase of goods, contributions towards exchanges with external organizations and sponsorships, and so on.

〈Table 1〉 Categorization of the expenditure details on the public funding for women's political development

Main category	Sub-category	Note
Personnel expense	Personnel expense for women party executives at the secretariat	
Education expense	Identification and nurturing of women politicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratic Women's Academy, Women's Politics Academy, public contest projects (Democratic Party of Korea) • School of Feminism and Politics, 'Politics and Gender' seminars (Justice Party) • Debates, workshops, lectures, etc. to empower women party members
	Awareness education on gender equality for party members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement in gender sensitivity, human rights education, etc.
	Sexual violence prevention education	
Women candidates and election support expense	Direct funding for women candidates	
	Election-related expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including travel expenses for election support, etc.

Main category	Sub-category	Note
Policy development expense	Meetings, seminars, discussions on the formulation of policies and election pledges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including protests, sit-in demonstrations, etc. • Including production costs on policy documents, manuscript fees, pickets, banners, etc
	Research and commissioned studies	
Organizational management expense	Management of women's bureaus, women's committees, women's political participation committees	
	Women's meetings, study meetings, learning groups, book purchases	
	Management of gender-based violence reporting and counseling centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender-based Violence Counseling Center (Democratic Party of Korea) • Gender-based Violence Response Center / Department of Gender Equality (Justice Party)
	Facilities and purchase of goods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of equipment, repair of buildings, etc.
	Group exchanges and sponsorships	

Source: Re-cited from Eun Kyung Kim and others (2022: 72)

2. Expenditure Analysis of the Public Funding for Women's Political Development by Political Party

This study analyzed the execution details and amounts of 'the public funding for women's political development' stated in the 'ordinary subsidy' account according to the central parties' accounting reports submitted to the National Election Commission.²⁾ The ordinary subsidies

²⁾ The analysis excluded expenditures on the public funding for women's political development if the entry did not state any details and amounts in the accounting reports or did not come from the ordinary subsidy account, hence there may be discrepancies between the calculations by this study and those by the political parties.

and the public funding for women's political development from 2016 to 2021 are shown in the <Table 2>. An analysis on the execution proportions of the public funding for women's political development within the ordinary subsidy account by party illustrated that for the People Power Party, the proportions exceeded 10% except for 2018 and 2019, while for the Democratic Party of Korea, the proportions decreased from 11.0% in 2016 to 6.5% in 2021, and for the Justice Party, the proportions remained above 10% at all points of analysis.³⁾ Meanwhile, although it is important to see if the political parties executed at least 10% of their ordinary subsidies as the public funding for women's political development in accordance with the Political Funds Act, a focus should be on seeing if the funds were actually used for intended purposes, such as for advancing politics for women or expanding women's political participation. As described below, this study analyzed the expenditure characteristics on the public funding for women's political development for each party by applying the above-mentioned classification of expenditure details to the parties' accounting reports.

³⁾ The proportions of national subsidies in terms of the total budget for each party ranged from 20% to as much as 50% depending on the size of the political party. Of these proportions, ordinary subsidies represented the largest share. Ohman (2018) argued that when a political party is highly dependent on national subsidies, those that include regulations on gender equality tend to become effective. Not surprisingly, several overseas political parties had 70% or more of their budgets come from national subsidies. Nevertheless, the shares of national subsidies for Korean political parties are also considered substantial.

〈Table 2〉 Ordinary subsidies¹ and the executed amounts of the public funding for women's political development² ('the fund') by political party

(Unit: 1,000 won, %)

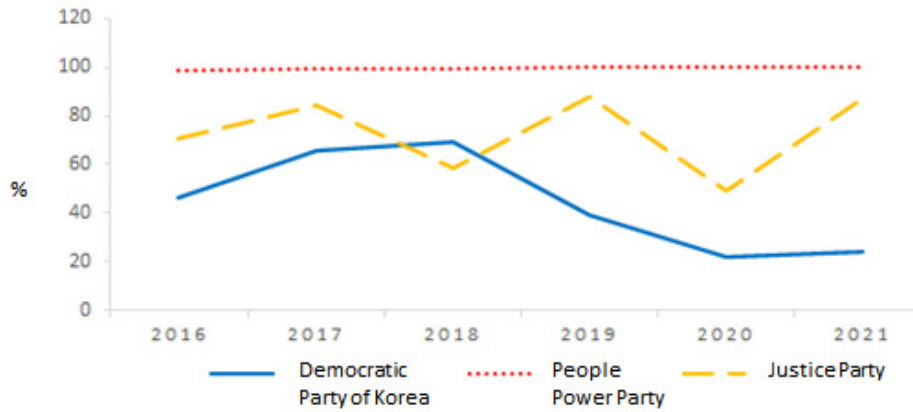
Party name	Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
People Power Party	Ordinary subsidy	15,980,990	12,598,314	13,329,411	13,593,317	17,920,498	18,500,577
	Executed amount of the fund	2,039,354	1,553,175	1,261,453	1,316,791	1,847,992	1,933,720
	Proportion	12.8	12.3	9.5	9.7	10.5	10.5
Democratic Party of Korea	Ordinary subsidy	14,604,560	12,607,973	13,279,409	13,822,254	17,966,113	21,059,840
	Executed amount of the fund	1,600,217	1,286,925	1,315,975	1,206,195	1,626,882	1,371,876
	Proportion	11.0	10.2	9.9	8.7	9.1	6.5
Justice Party	Ordinary subsidy	2,579,700	2,735,343	2,660,271	2,734,101	2,896,092	3,074,586
	Executed amount of the fund	261,746	273,763	266,991	284,522	340,439	324,471
	Proportion	10.1	10.0	10.0	10.4	11.8	10.6

¹ The figures were based on the details from each political party's accounting reports. The amounts carried forward were excluded from the analysis.

² The executed amounts on the public funding for women's political development were based on the details from the central parties' accounting reports, and the entries that did not state the amounts and details of use in the accounting reports were excluded from the analysis.

Source: Re-cited from Eun Kyung Kim et al. (2022: 75)

- For the personnel expense, the People Power Party exhibited the highest expenditure rates, while the Democratic Party of Korea showed an increase in 2016-2018 and then a decrease from 2018. For the Justice Party, the expenditure rates in personnel expenses fell in the years of the National Assembly elections and local elections and then rose again in other years.



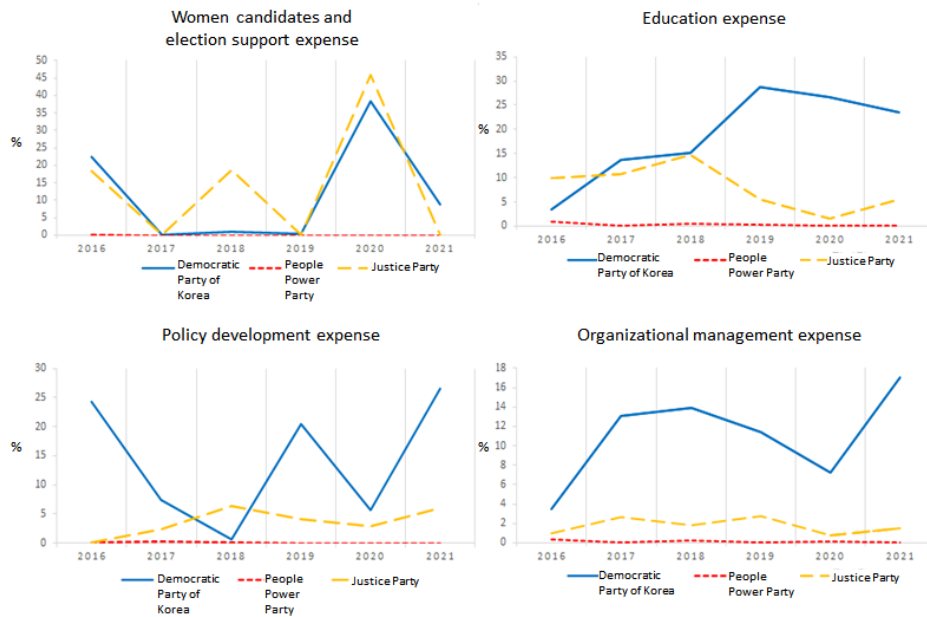
[Figure 1] Trends in personnel expenses by political party

- For the education expense, the Democratic Party of Korea showed an increase in expenditure rates from 2016. The People Power Party, while exhibiting the lowest expenditure rates among the three parties, did not have any expenditures on education expenses in 2017 and 2020. The Justice Party demonstrated an increase in expenditure rates for education expenses from 2016 to 2018 but a decrease later on.
- For the women candidates and election support expense, the Democratic Party of Korea showed an increase in expenditure rates during the 20th and 21st general elections. The People Power Party had the lowest expenditure rates and did not show any expenditures on this category after spending less than 0.1% on the category in 2016. For the Justice Party, the expenditure rates on the women candidates and election support expenses reached 18% during the 20th general election and the 7th local elections, and rose again to 46% during the 21st general election.
- For the policy development expense, the Democratic Party of Korea showed a decline in expenditure rates from 24.36% in 2016 to

0.61% in 2018, and the expenditure rates remained above 20% from 2019. The People Power Party, while displaying extremely low expenditure rates (between 0.05% and 0.25% from 2016 to 2018), did not have any expenditures on policy development expense from 2019 to 2021. For the Justice Party, the expenditure rates rose from 0.17% in 2016 to 6.33% in 2018, and then fell until 2020 before rising again to 5.96% in 2021.

- This study found that although there were separate expenditure items for personnel expenses in the accounting reports, the political parties were using the public funding for women's political development to pay personnel expenses. Especially, the People Power Party was using almost all of the public funding for women's political development to meet their personnel expenses. Therefore, there is a demand for clear regulations on the use of the public funding for women's political development.
- Despite receiving election subsidies and, in some cases, subsidies for women's nomination, the political parties made expenditures for the women candidates and election support expenses by using the public funding for women's political development, which is equivalent to the expenditure 'other than election expenses'. The details of the use were omitted in the accounting reports. Thus, expenditure details need to be stated as concretely and precisely as possible to ensure transparency for the execution of the funds.
- For the organizational management expense, the Democratic Party of Korea generally demonstrated higher expenditure rates compared to the other two parties. Spending on organizational management is inevitable, but an appropriate and balanced execution of the funds

is required in order to prevent disruptions in the expenditures for women's education or policy development.



[Figure 2] Expenditure trends on the public funding for women's political development by political party

IV. Awareness and Experience in Benefiting from the Subsidy for Women's Nomination and the Public Funding for Women's Political Development

1. Limitations in Access and Utilization

The experience of women politicians who responded to this study's in-depth interviews were divided into two main groups. The first included the majority of the respondents, in which they were unaware of the public funding for women's political development and had no experience

in utilizing it. They typically remained active in non-metropolitan areas, were newly elected or re-elected members of local councils, and belonged to the two major parties.

The second group consisted of those who were aware of the two national subsidies. However, being aware of the subsidies did not mean that all of those respondents had utilized them, and most had benefited from the subsidies only once or twice. Not surprisingly, a woman politician from the People Power Party had no experience in utilizing the two national subsidies as the party used most of the public funding for women's political development to pay their women party executives' personnel expenses. The Democratic Party of Korea executed their project expenses by receiving applications from local (women's) committees through public contests. Initiating public contests for local committees was considered an appropriate means of utilizing the subsidies. However, the amount allocated per local (women's) committee was only about 1 million won, and as this did not apply to all local (women's) committees, the women politicians ended up benefiting from the subsidies only once or twice if any at all. This meant that due to their limited amounts, the subsidies could not be granted to all the local committees, and thus the committees were not allowed to apply for the subsidies every year. The projects organized by local women's committees often ended up being one-off events centered around women party members.

In addition to the lack of awareness and limited experience in utilizing the public funding for women's political development, the bigger problem was that the final authority in making decisions about the funding was not women's bureaus or the heads of national women's committees. Instead, the chain of authority ran from the political parties'

secretary-generals to general affairs managers and finance managers. The Justice Party had a committee that determined the purpose and the use of the public funding for women's political development. However, the high-ranking party executives, mostly men, participated in the committee, while the persons in charge of women's affairs within the party participated not as decision-makers but as those whose recommendations needed to be reviewed. This made it impossible for the persons in charge to exercise full authority over the public funding for women's political development.

Also, even if the women politicians were informed about the public funding for women's political development, a complicated process ensued when compiling documentary evidence to prepare for the National Election Commission's audits. Thus, the women politicians were often reluctant to apply for the public funding for women's political development and spend the funding at all.

Moreover, the local public contests focusing on one-off events occurred sporadically in multiple regions instead of consistently in one region. Therefore, it was not surprising that those events failed to create meaningful impact on women's political development.

This study found that the women politicians, who are intended to be the main driver of the public funding for women's political development, were not only unaware of the funding but also could not claim the funding even if they were aware of it. These results confirmed that the organizational culture of the political parties were largely dominated by men and the parties did not judge that the public funding for women's political development was national subsidies designed to benefit women. Consequently, the public funding for women's political development lacked independent execution in the male-centered political parties

because the decision-making structure was controlled by high-level party executives in the name of fair procedures, and the women's bureaus/committees lacked final decision-making power in the name of accountability for national subsidies.

2. Purposes Other than Election Expenses and the Subsidy for Women's Nomination

Next, this study probed the issue of whether the public funding for women's political development could be used to support the personal activities of women politicians. Among the expenditure items on the public funding for women's political development, the purposes 'other than election expense' that define the public funding for women's political development imply that support for women candidates, or election support for women candidates, are inappropriate use of the expenditure items. Nevertheless, during the 2020 general election, most political parties actually financed election support expenses for women candidates by using the public funding for women's political development. The reason cited was that all of the subsidies for women's nomination were paid to the National Revolutionary Party during the 2020 general election.

This study also confirmed that it was possible to identify relevant expenditure items and the amounts of the public funding for women's political development by analyzing the accounting reports. By contrast, although the subsidy for women's nomination was separate from the election subsidy account, the detailed statements were often missing.⁴⁾

⁴⁾ Among the women politicians who participated in the in-depth interviews, only those from the Justice Party replied that they received the election subsidies and the subsidy for women's nomination. In contrast, none of the respondents from the major parties distinguished those two, and few were aware of the subsidy for women's nomination. Therefore, the results raised a question on whether the election

For example, in the Democratic Party of Korea's 2020 accounting report, details on the candidate subsidies spent as organizational activities from the election subsidy account were merely stated as 'support funds toward candidates running for the 21st general election'. The names of the candidates who received the subsidies were deleted, and the statements showed the total amount of payments made to dozens of candidates at a time, while some entries contained refund details on the deposits made to wrong accounts. Thus, it was impossible to work out which candidates received how much money. In the case of 2018 accounting report submitted by the Democratic Party of Korea which received the subsidy for women's nomination, the account on the subsidy for women's nomination showed the total amount paid to a person named Kim and other 499 people as the details of 'support on election expenses toward the June 13th local election for women candidates'. It was infeasible to specify the exact beneficiaries and amounts, and it was also challenging to discern candidate support details within the election subsidy account.

The Justice Party's 2020 accounting report included individual statements for a total of 155 'candidate subsidies' spent as organizational activity expenses, but the amounts were not uniform and the exact beneficiaries were deleted. Thus, it was hard to clarify which candidates received how much subsidies. The People Power Party's accounting reports contained no details on payments towards candidate support funds from the election subsidy account. In 2018, the Liberty Korea Party, which was the predecessor of the People Power Party, made expenditures under the item 'support fund' from the subsidy for women's nomination

subsidies, which are supposed to be provided to both men and women candidates, were not granted to women candidates; This segment was written by referring to the annual accounting reports of the People Power Party, the Democratic Party of Korea, and the Justice Party.

account, but the details were merely stated as a support fund, and the beneficiary was the ‘Liberty Korea Party’, not the candidates.

As illustrated so far, considerable limitations were revealed when analyzing the subsidy for women’s nomination through the accounting reports. Thus, this study investigated the awareness and utility of the subsidy for women’s nomination based on the in-depth interviews with women politicians. There was in general a severe lack of awareness on the subsidy for women’s nomination. For example, some respondents never heard of the subsidy for women’s nomination (Case 19), and even among those who were vaguely familiar with the subsidy, the process of receiving the subsidy varied substantially, including notifications through official documents or phone calls, deposits without any notification, and so on. Also, in some cases, the women politicians received the subsidy for women’s nomination after making inquiries to provincial-level parties which in turn made inquiries to the central parties, and this indicated that working-level staff at the provincial-level parties did not properly understand the system. The most crucial element of the subsidy for women’s nomination is its amount, but the majority of the respondents stated that the amount was not sufficient enough to provide meaningful help for women politicians.

Although the subsidy for women’s nomination helped cover some of the election expenses for women candidates⁵⁾, considering the size of the subsidy it is unlikely to have encouraged potential candidates deciding to run for elections, or to have provided the candidates substantial funds during election campaigns. In particular, the two major parties’ primary elections, which are held to select nominees within the parties, are

⁵⁾ For instance, during the 2018 and 2022 local elections, the Justice Party received the election support funds but not the subsidy for women’s nomination.

generally more competitive and expensive than final elections, yet the subsidy for women's nomination does not provide support toward primary elections. As a result, many women politicians did not feel confident to participate in primary elections ahead of final elections. The subsidy for women's nomination is designed to be provided during final elections after candidates get selected within their political parties. To participate in a primary election, a candidate needs tens of millions of won to cover the costs of reviews on nomination (primary election), public opinion polls, and the ensuing second/third primary elections after cut-offs. As the costs are solely borne by prospective candidates (Cases 2 and 7), the process makes it difficult for women politicians to run for elections if they struggle to mobilize funds.

It is necessary to raise awareness on the subsidy for women's nomination considering 18 years have already passed since its introduction. This study noted that the system did not even properly convey to the voters its symbolic meaning 'our party nominated women candidates as we strive to produce more women candidates'. It was revealed that although the subsidy for women's nomination is an incentive for women's candidacy and nomination, most women politicians were not aware of the subsidy, and the process of obtaining the subsidy was extremely informal. Another problem confirmed by this study was that as the amount of the support from the subsidy for women's nomination was inadequate, the political parties were paying their women candidates' election support expenses with the public funding for women's political development.

3. Personnel Expenses for Women Party Executives at the Secretariats and Personnel Dedicated to Women's Policy

In order to examine the issue of paying women party executives' personnel expenses from the public funding for women's political development, the scales of party executives responsible for women's policy affairs were surveyed. As of 2022, the numbers of the main political parties' personnel dedicated to women's policy were four at the People Power Party, six at the Democratic Party of Korea, and one at the Justice Party. Given the size of the public funding for women's political development, which takes up 10% of the annual ordinary subsidies, the current scale of workforce is especially insufficient in managing women's (bureau) affairs. It would be virtually impossible to manage the tasks on women's policy with the current workforce particularly under the inherent party structure in which all party executives tend to be mobilized for campaigns during elections. Considering the preparation for party conventions and party leader elections every two years, on top of the general elections, local elections, and by-elections that also occur every two years, it would be difficult to undertake a systematic and extensive budget execution while all party executives are committed to those election campaigns instead.

This study indicated that the key problem in utilizing the public funding for women's political development was that the funding was being spent on women party executives' personnel expenses.⁶⁾ An

⁶⁾ Most of the funding goes to the party executives at women's bureaus, but it was revealed that women party executives who were not affiliated with women's bureaus also got paid through the funding. Mediaus (June 7, 2018), "For the Liberty Korea Party, the public funding for women's political development is invariably being used for 'personnel expenses'." <http://www.mediaus.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=125792>; Media Today (June 5, 2018), "The Democratic Party of Korea spent the public funding for women's political development to pay personnel expenses for their party executives instead of the women's bureau." <http://www.mediatoday.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=143032>,

authoritative interpretation claimed that it was acceptable to use the public funding for women's political development as party executives' personnel expenses since the funding is part of the ordinary subsidies.⁷⁾ However, given the funding's intended purposes, spending the funding as personnel expenses is inappropriate. This is because not all women party executives work for women's political development, and in principle, the wages for party executives should be paid from the ordinary subsidies.

All the women politicians who responded to the in-depth interviews agreed that it was improper to use the public funding for women's political development as personnel expenses for women party executives, and they also expressed a need for improvement. The practice of using the public funding for women's political development as secretariat staff's personnel expenses has continued since 2004 and has also been publicized through newspapers, yet most of the respondents were not even aware of these facts. The respondents acknowledged that women's opinions on the uses and limits of the public funding for women's political development should be surveyed and relevant procedures need to be formulated.

retrieve on April 26, 2023.

⁷⁾ In February 2008, the National Election Commission made an authoritative interpretation that it was consistent with the Political Funds Act to pay personnel expenses for clerical staff working in departments that plan and execute activities necessary for women's political development. Amounts ranging from 1 billion won to as much as 2 billion won have been set yearly as the public funding for women's political development since its introduction in 2004. An issue was raised about using a significant portion of the public funding for women's political development as personnel expenses. The authoritative interpretation was the National Election Commission's response to the Grand National Party's then party leader who voiced concerns about the use of the funding. The then party leader claimed that the National Election Commission needed flexible and relaxed measures to address the issue. The Women's News (October 17, 2016), "Performance on the management of the public funding for women's political development - 'F' for the Grand National Party, 'D' for the Democratic Party of Korea" <https://www.womennews.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=98678>, retrieved on April 26, 2023.

The women's departments within the central parties that are tasked with managing the public funding for women's political development conveyed ambivalence toward the funding. They reported that it was unfortunate how in large political parties, women party executives or women politicians were often not allowed to voice their concerns, and even when women's bureaus managed the funding, the final decision-making power was not granted to the chairperson of the bureau. Nonetheless, since 10% of the ordinary subsidies was officially allocated to women's departments, the presence of the public funding for women's political development itself played a protective role in maintaining the status of the women's departments within the central parties.

Meanwhile, a fund use committee was sometimes set up to determine the use of the public funding for women's political development. However, contrary to what seemed to be a move to enhance fairness, women party executives responsible for women's affairs were unable to participate in the committee due to their low ranks within the parties, and the committee often attempted to use the public funding for women's political development when dealing with issues unrelated to women's political development.

To summarize the women politicians' responses from the in-depth interviews, the respondents, despite their long-standing political careers, were generally unaware of the availability of the subsidy for women's nomination or the public funding for women's political development. Also, they experienced difficulties voicing their opinions as there was no forum to discuss the management of those subsidies with the central parties. Moreover, they had limited experience in utilizing the public funding for women's political development, and most of them had no knowledge about the overall management of the funding. Ironically,

although a substantial proportion of the public funding for women's political development was spent on personnel expenses, there was actually a lack of workforce dedicated to women's affairs within the political parties. There was a severe shortage of salaried clerical party executives dedicated to women's affairs, and a majority of the workforce were serving without pay at provincial-level parties. In principle, personnel expenses for party executives at the secretariats must be paid from the ordinary subsidies, but not only the women party members but also the National Election Commission were unable to raise concerns about the breach of this principle.

V. Conclusion : Measures to Improve and Revitalize the Subsidy for Women's Nomination and the Public Funding for Women's Political Development

1. Measures to Improve the Management of the Subsidy for Women's Nomination

1) Introduction of the Subsidy for the Women Elected

- Regarding the subsidy for women's nomination, this study proposes a switch to the subsidy for the women elected that takes into account the proportion of those who actually get elected, not those who get nominated. Not unlike the subsidy for women's nomination, the subsidy for the women elected takes a form of an additional support among the national subsidies. The difference is that the subsidy for women's nomination is currently based on the number of women candidates, whereas the subsidy for the women elected is proposed

to be based on the number of elected women.

- Countries that provide subsidies based on elected candidates include Chile, Croatia, and the Solomon Islands. In Croatia, political parties receive an additional 10% of their existing subsidies, while in Chile and the Solomon Islands, political parties receive an addition of specified proportion of subsidies depending on the number of women elected. As with South Korea, political parties in Ethiopia and Romania receive additional subsidies depending on the number of women candidates, and this makes those subsidies less binding compared to other subsidies for women politicians (Ohman, 2018: 21).
 - Introducing the subsidy for the women elected is expected to improve the habit of political parties to nominate women candidates for districts that are unlikely to win elections.
- 2) Expansion in the Application of the Subsidy for Women's Nomination to the Local Government Leader Elections
- The subsidy for women's nomination aims to incentivize political parties' nomination of women candidates. Recognizing this, this study recommends that the subsidy for women's nomination include candidates for the local government leaders of metropolitan and municipality which typically show low rates in nomination of women candidates.
 - When considering the issues on women's political participation, women's communities have been paying relatively little attention in women's positions as local government leaders of metropolitan and

municipality. The proposed policy to restrict the subsidy for women's nomination to local government leaders would reinforce the argument that nomination of women candidates should expand to the local government leaders of metropolitan and municipality. The proposal would also serve as a new driving force for the ongoing discussions on the expansion of women's political participation.

3) Introduction of the Election Subsidy Reduction System (Financial Sanction)

- The current system on the subsidy for women's nomination takes a form of financial rewards in providing funds. However, as demonstrated by this study, the support provided through the subsidy for women's nomination has low utility, and some political parties do not actually pay the subsidy to women candidates. To address these issues, strong measures are required.
- It is necessary to introduce the most powerful financial sanction among the national subsidy schemes for political parties, namely the subsidy cut. This means that instead of granting additional funds when certain conditions are met, specified proportions of the election subsidies are deducted if certain conditions are unmet.
- Examples of the countries that adopt the subsidy cuts include Albania, Burkina Faso, France, Honduras, Ireland, Italy, and Portugal. These countries deduct government subsidies by 20% unless at least 30% of nominations consist of women (Ohman, 2018: 25).

2. Measures to Revitalize the Public Funding for Women's Political Development

1) Appointment of Dedicated Personnel for the Management of the Public Funding for Women's Political Development

- It is vital to appoint salaried party executives at the central party's secretariats as the solely dedicated personnel to manage the public funding for women's political development.
- This study recommends creating a plan to appoint the mentioned personnel separately so that they are not counted toward the incumbent salaried party executives.

2) Regulations on the Purpose of the Public Funding for Women's Political Development and the Establishment of Relevant Permanent Workforce Regulations

- In order to improve and revitalize the management of the public funding for women's political development, this study proposes a formulation of Article 28(2) of the Political Funds Act to address the purposes of the public funding for women's political development. It also suggests the revision in Article 30 of the Political Parties Act to prescribe the appointment of an adequate number of dedicated permanent salaried clerical staff to match the amount of subsidies provided.

3) Regulations on the Upper Limits for Each Expenditure Item

- This study found that the expenditure details of the public funding for women's political development varied considerably from party

to party and that all the parties were spending the public funding for women's political development without following strict rules. To address this problem, the detailed items of execution for the funding should be established so that the proportions of expenditure on each category and item are clearly documented.

- By expenditure item, the following upper limits are considered appropriate: 40% on personnel expenses, 25% on policy development expenses, 25% on education expenses, 5% on election support expenses, and 5% on organizational management expenses.
- When amending Article 28 of the Political Funds Act (The Public Funding for Women's Political Development), the first step to securing the effectiveness of the funding would be to provide guidelines for upper limits on each expenditure item.

4) Release of the Accounting Reports on National Subsidies

- The public funding for women's political development represents only 10% of the political parties' ordinary expenditures. It is therefore necessary to inspect the degree to which the remaining 90% of the ordinary expenditures are managed through transparent and democratic processes.
- Essentially, a transparent accounting report system needs to be instituted for all the national subsidies provided to the political parties.

5) Formulation of Mid- to Long-term Plans

- Not unlike elections, the public funding for women's political development is executed on a yearly basis at a short-term level. However, in order to support activities and empowerment of women politicians, mid- to long-term plans need to be devised and executed by incorporating elements such as awareness raising and education.
- Through setting up mid- to long-term plans and thereby providing the public funding for women's political development continuously through appropriate phases, the political parties would be able to implement diverse and significant projects.

Thematic classification of research performance catalogue: Women's Representation
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