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SEX DISCRIMINATION IN KOREAN NEWSPAPERS

By

Sooyoung Cho

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ABSTRACT

SEX DISCRIMINATION IN KOREAN NEWSPAPERS

By

Sooyoung Cho

This study examined sex discrimination that Korean women journalists have experienced and the factors associated with discrimination. This study also looked at whether Korean women journalists strive to cover more women and women's interest stories as well as supervisors' influence on journalists' efforts. A web-survey was conducted with all 259 Korean newspaperwomen at all the 10 national and three business newspapers in Korea. A total of 102 responses (41 percent response rate) was used for the research. This study found that (1) a significant proportion of Korean newspaperwomen have been discriminated against in promotions, beat/story assignments and male-centered newsroom culture, and (2) women having female supervisors reported less informational exclusion as well as more equal treatment by their managers than women having male supervisors. This study also found that (3) substantial proportion of women reporters strive to use more women as primary sources and subjects of their stories and try to write stories specifically for women readers, and (4) female supervisors place more importance on stories about women than their male counterparts do. Therefore, this research shows that having more female managers will not only help to create a more equal newsroom environment, but also help women and women's news be more visible in the newspaper pages. This study suggests that equal treatment of women journalists may contribute to regaining the declining number of women newspaper readers.

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Introduction

While making up half of the world's population, women are still relatively invisible in the news. Not only are they trivialized as a news subject, women are also a minority group as a news producer. Although the proportion of women journalists in America rose from about one-fifth of the profession in 1971 (Johnstone et al., 1976) to over one third in 2000 (ASNE Minority Employment Report, 2001), men continue to dominate U.S. newsrooms, especially as managers.

Walsh-Childers et al. (1996a) found in their 1996 national survey that many American newspaperwomen feel discriminated against in salary, promotions, and assignments. Respondents said they also feel they face a glass ceiling in their newsrooms. Other studies prove that few women occupy top management positions in U.S. newsrooms (Beasley, 1993; Beasley & Gibbons, 1993; Jurgensen, 1993; Mills, 1998).

In conservative societies like Korea, the degree of discrimination women journalists face may be higher than in the United States. Korean culture and society traditionally have attached importance to patriarchal authority and have upheld a male-centered social construct in almost every aspect of society. As a result, women's economic activity is low and women's right to work has never been a prominent issue in Korea. Recently, while women have become numerous in the nation's work population—as their educational levels become higher, the awareness and necessity for financial activity grew—they still remain in lower positions. For example, a report indicates that while the number of women passing the government official examination¹ has grown in recent years, almost all of them still remain in lower positions in

government (New women power series, 2002).²

Similar to other businesses, Korean journalism newsrooms are predominately male. As of 2001, women journalists accounted for 12.7 percent in their newsrooms (Newspaper and Broadcasting Journal, 2001).³ Compared to U.S. newsrooms (37 percent in 2000), this percentage is quite small. Moreover, there are few women editors or women in higher management positions in Korean newsrooms.

Two previous Korean studies (“Women journalists’ sense of values and perceptions,” 1995; “Sex discrimination and harassment in the newsroom,” 2001) regarding sex discrimination have shown that Korean women journalists felt sexually discriminated against in beat assignment and promotion, and had difficulties in their jobs because of the male-centered newsroom environment.

Sex discrimination is usually defined as “any instance in which female employees appear to have been denied opportunities or rewards because of their gender and not for any reasons related to their abilities or experience” (Walsh-Childers et al., 1996a).

Sex discrimination may be a detriment to news organization’s management and profits but also news content itself and the status of women at large in society. First, it costs news organization’s management. Walsh-Childers et al. (1996a) concluded that sex discrimination increases employee turnover and may lead to lower productivity.

A second problem resulting from sex discrimination may be the loss of women readers. Research and surveys have shown that newspapers have lost their women readers; moreover, women readers are diminishing at a greater rate than men (Mann, 1990; McGrath, 1993). The reason women readership has declined seems to result from women’s indifference to newspapers; female readers don’t see anything that relates to

them in newspapers (McGrath, 1993).

Feminists argued that women journalists would be less likely to exclude news about women and women's issues than would be male journalists who believe "our typical woman reader is a housewife who isn't interested in that lib stuff," (Pingree & Hawkins, 1978). Having more women reporters and female decision-makers appears to be one solution to having more women related issues in newspaper pages so that newspapers may win back women readers.

Nevertheless, if sex discrimination blocks female journalists from entering the profession, especially into decision-making positions, women and women's news would be marginalized. Walsh-Childers et al. (1996a) point out "the dearth of women in top management positions may even be contributing to newspapers' failure to appeal to women readers."

Furthermore, in the long run, newsroom unfairness against women may exacerbate the status of women in society: considering the power editors and managers have when deciding the news, the discrimination in terms of promotion and restriction of beats that bar women from high-positions would bring few stories regarding women's issues or create a poorer representation of women in the news. This trivialization in the news would make the status of women in society worse. In that sense, sex discrimination against women journalists may not only be a problem to a relatively small number of women who work for news organizations, but it has larger impact on women in society.

Considering the small number of women in Korean newsrooms, and the conservative societal mood against women, the status and discrimination of Korean

women journalists seems worse than in other counties.

Previous research shows there is sex discrimination in Korean newsrooms (“Women journalists’ sense of values and perceptions,” 1995; “Sex discrimination and harassment in the newsroom,” 2001). This research gauges the extent of sex discrimination. The purpose of this research is first, to find out the extent and types of sex discrimination Korean newspaperwomen believe they experience, and to examine factors associated with sex discrimination.

Second, this study looks at whether women journalists can make a difference in male-centered newspapers in terms of their efforts to cover more women and women’s news than male reporters do; that is, do they think that they strive to cover more women and women’s interest stories compared to male reporters? Do they think that they strive to use more women sources compared to male reporters?

Some media scholars claim that women journalists cannot make much difference in the news business because women are not different from men in their occupational norms or masculine concept of news (Drew & Miller, 1977; Gallagher, 1981; Merritt & Gross, 1978; Orwant & Cantor, 1977; Shoemaker & Reese, 1991; Turk, 1987; Whitlow, 1978,1979). This study will answer this longtime argument by responding to whether women journalists try to cover more women and women’s issues or conduct their reporting the same way male reporters do.

The third purpose of the study includes finding out whether supervisors’ sex and their opinions on stories about women are related to women journalists’ efforts to cover more women and women’s interests.

The study is important because it may help newspaper owners and managers find

out ways to improve newsroom environments for women. Furthermore, it may help newspapers appeal to both men and women: When sexual discrimination diminishes, more women can attain higher levels of authority in newspapers, and this may bring more fundamental changes—more women-related news—in news content, which may increase the number of women readers and cause progress in the status of women in Korean society. This study also may help contribute a solution to the problems Korean newspaperwomen and future generations may face by demonstrating the problems and giving newspaper owners the chance to think about their female employees.

There appear to be some signs of change. In 2000, some Korean national newspapers hired more women reporters than in previous years (Women power in the newspapers, 2000).⁴ Moreover, in 1999, Myungsoo Jang was elected the first female president and publisher of the Korean national newspaper, Hankook-Ilbo. Though previous Korean surveys (“Women journalists’ sense of values and perceptions,” 1995; “Sex discrimination and harassment in the newsroom,” 2001) dealt with a similar topic, this study is meaningful because it can be compared to earlier studies to examine whether the discrimination women feel has changed or remains the same in the recent changing mood within the Korean newspaper industry.⁵

In addition, unlike other media, newspapers are suffering from a decline in readership. By specifying its population as specifically women in “newspapers,” whereas the population of the two previous surveys was women journalists working for various media organizations, this study could provide one of the reasons newspapers specifically face this crisis.

More importantly, earlier surveys only described the kinds of sex discrimination

Korean women journalists felt without explaining the factors associated with it, so they didn't discuss the causal relationship between the variables. This study explains the correlation within them, showing the factors associated with sex discrimination.

Chapter 1

Background

Women Journalists in Korean Newsrooms

Korean journalism is an overwhelmingly male-dominated market. According to a 1999 report by the Korean Women Journalist Club, Korean women journalists accounted for only about 9 percent (427) of all Korean journalists (4,719).⁶

Another recent statistic shows almost the same result. As of 2001, the percentage of women journalists was 12.7 percent (*Newspaper and Broadcasting Journal*, 2001). The number of female journalists has somewhat increased compared to previous years: The same study illustrated that women journalists accounted for 9.5 percent in 1990 and 10.1 percent in 1999.

The percentage of Korean women journalists is smaller than in other countries. According to *Newspaper and Broadcasting Journal* (2001), while increasing slightly, the percentage of Korean women journalists ranked among the lowest in the world (See Table 1).

Despite their small numbers, Korean women journalists were the first targets of personnel reductions in the time of economic crisis. In 1998, owing to the national economic crisis, Korean news organizations had to cut their budget; as a result, news organizations cut the number of employees and many journalists were fired or left their jobs, especially women journalists. 1997 and 1999 statistics indicated that the number of Korean journalists was reduced 26.8 percent in 1999 (6,035) from 1997 (8,246). However, the women journalists' decrease was much steeper: the number of women journalists decreased 43.3 percent in 1999 (640) from 1997 (1,128) (*Korea Newspaper*

and Broadcasting Almanac, 1997, 1999). Women journalists may have been pressured by male managers or owners to leave their jobs, or women might have voluntarily left due to the great pressure placed upon them to do so. As a minority in overwhelming male-dominated newspapers, Korean women journalists reportedly have dealt with a great amount of discrimination.

In addition, sex discrimination and the preference for male reporters often blocks women journalists from entry into the newspaper business. Korea has a different journalist recruiting system from that of the United States—especially in 10 large national newspapers, some of the prominent business newspaper and three broadcasting companies. Generally, these news organizations select reporters through a very competitive examination. However, even in the case of receiving higher scores than men on the exam, women often are not hired because of the news organizations' implied restriction policy against women. One national newspaper reporter recalled, when she interviewed to get a job, she heard that her paper restricted the number of new female reporters to only one, regardless of examination grade or professional ability (Newspaper and Broadcasting Journal, 1999).

Two previous studies showed that Korean women journalists feel or experience various kinds of unfairness in their workplaces. According to a 1995 Korean Women Journalist Club survey (Women journalists' sense of values and perceptions)⁷, 71.5 percent of women journalists reported that they felt sex discrimination in their workplace. Women were most likely to report experiencing discrimination in beat assignments (30.9 percent): Women journalists usually worked for “soft news” beats such as culture,⁸ living and style or worked as copy editors,⁹ not in the hard news beats such as business or

politics. Meanwhile, many women journalists prefer to work in such departments: culture (27.2 percent), business (21 percent) and international (12.3 percent).

Women pointed out that two main causes for beat assignment discrimination are 1) male managers' sex-discriminatory prejudice (33.6 percent) and 2) male-centered newsgathering tradition (22.7 percent). Male managers seem to think women are not competent for a hard news beat because of its male-centered newsgathering tradition in hard news beats—networking and inner circle between male reporters and male sources.

Besides beat assignment discrimination, women journalists also reported that they have been discriminated in promotions (19.1 percent). There are few women in managerial positions in Korean national newspapers. However, a relatively low response rate (19.1 percent) in promotion discrimination may be due to the fact that many respondents are young reporters and have not had the chance for promotion.¹⁰ Therefore, it is not surprising that the percent of respondents reporting promotion discrimination is low.

In addition, women reported that when they wrote feminist-related stories, male managers 1) made sarcastic remarks on the stories (52.6 percent); 2) ignored the stories (43.6 percent); 3) forced them to shorten the stories (32.7 percent); and 4) forced them not to report the stories (17.8 percent). Not only did their women-related stories get ignored, but female journalists also experienced insulting remarks that are degrading to women from male supervisors and peers (59.6 percent).

A more recent survey of 36 women journalists conducted by *Newspaper and Broadcasting Journal* in 2001 (“Sex discrimination and harassment in the newsroom,” 2001)¹¹ shows that women journalists feel difficulties in 1) the lack of promotion

possibility (50 percent); 2) a job combined with family life (47.2 percent); 3) the male-centered news-gathering tradition (44.4 percent); and 4) a harsh prejudice toward women (41.7 percent).

In order to overcome the discrimination in the newsroom, respondents said 1) news organizations need more female managers (77.8 percent); 2) news organizations need to increase the number of female reporters (72.2 percent); 3) the Korean society needs to change its prejudice against women (47.2 percent); and 4) women journalists need to unionize (44.4 percent). Aside from the newsroom, female reporters also said they were discriminated against by news sources or employees of news sources (87.9 percent).

To make matters worse, more than half of the respondents (55.9 percent) said they have experienced sexual harassment¹² in the newsroom during the past year. Women were sexually harassed most by their supervisors (63.2 percent) and coworkers (31.6 percent) in the newsroom. In addition, nearly one in four women (24.2%) experienced sexual harassment from a source.

Literature Review

According to the Knight Ridder Women Readers Task Force report in 1991, “If the same proportion of women as men read the newspaper today, the nation’s newspapers would have nearly 4 million more readers today,” (cited in Mills, 1997).

U.S. newspaper research and surveys have shown that women read newspapers less than men. In addition, women readers have decreased: Newspapers lost 25 percent of their frequent women readers from 1983 to 1987 (Mann, 1990).

Moreover, the decline of women’s newspaper readership has become steeper and

women readers are diminishing at a greater rate than men: According to a 1991 U.S. national survey, the difference of readership between men and women was 13 points: 80 percent of male and 67 percent of women respondents said they read a newspaper everyday or a few times a week. In 1982, a national survey showed a difference of 2 points, and 5 points in 1972. For the 20-year period, the total readership difference was a drop of 6 points for men and 14 points for women (McGrath, 1993). The 1991 Knight Ridder report stated, "Had we maintained our appeal to women equal to what it was in 1970, we would have 17 million more readers."

One of the reasons that women readers are diminishing seems to be that they don't relate to newspaper content (McGrath, 1993). Studies show that newspapers are written mostly by and about men (Butler & Paisley, 1980), and women are generally invisible in the newspaper pages. Mills (1997) said, "Men were the people making the decisions, and men were the people being covered by the news media. In the past the idea that only men made news predominated."

Nancy Woodhull, a former *USA Today* editor and a marketing consultant told Ellen Goodman: "Women around the country really notice when the press doesn't report their existence. It's like walking into a room where nobody knows you're there. If you have a choice, you don't go into that room anymore,"(cited in Jurgensen, 1993).

Feminists contend that women and women's issues have been trivialized and stereotyped by male-dominated press. Betty Friedan (1963) stated that the media described women as "young and frivolous, almost childlike, fluffy and feminine, passive, gaily content in a world of bedroom and kitchen, sex, babies and home." There are studies showing that news about women, their issues and interests have been ignored or

stereotyped (Ellias, 1974; Molotch, 1978; Morgan, 1977; Schultz-Brooks, 1984; Simpson, 1979).

Mills (1997) shows one example of media sexism in the 1992 *Los Angeles Times* profile of former Republican Party co-chair, Mary Crisp. The paper described her as “an unlikely hell raiser. A 68-year-old grandmother, she wears pearls, gold earrings and a red, white and blue suit.”

In Korea, media’s sex discriminatory description about women is obvious when it comes to the news coverage of a few women government ministers. Newspapers often described women ministers’ personal background rather than their professional careers or achievements: Newspapers have called them “Old-maid Minister, Actress-Minister or Sob-Minister.” Moreover, newspapers used negative terms such as “depressed, anxiety, worry, outspoken dissatisfaction” when they report on the cabinet positions that women ministers are in charge of. At least, male ministers are not described by their appearance or sex. Media’s negative coverage of women ministers seems to make public opinion distrustful against those women ministers and seems to affect their tenure—on average, women ministers don’t stay in their positions more than one year.

Why have women been treated so insignificantly in the media?

Al Neuharth of Gannett said that too many male editors have been editing newspapers for themselves and their male friends (Mills, 1988, cited in Robinson, 1991). Scholars contend that media’s male-dominated news coverage and their ignorance and stereotyping of women is partly due to the male-dominated newsroom environment.

Though the proportion of women journalists in American newsrooms rose compared to the past, men have still dominated the newsroom, particularly, the decision-

making positions.¹³ When newspapers are dominated by male reporters and male editors, it is not a big surprise that the newspaper is seen as “men talking to men,” excluding females (Lacy et al., 1993).

Yanghee Kim, a researcher at the Korea Women Development Institute, stated that the small percentage of women journalists in Korean newsrooms brings an ignorance of women-related news and distorted images of women in the media. “Lack of female reporters or lack of power in the newsroom results in lack of women-related news. Also, in the male-dominated news, women are usually dealt with as victims not as main interviewees or news subjects,” (cited in Media Feminism).

A 1995 IWMF (International Women’s Media Foundation) survey, “Women in the media: Facing obstacles...changing attitudes,” showed the same sentiment. Sixty-four percent of the survey respondents said that they believe the media portrayed women inaccurately. According to the survey report, “Many of the survey respondents agree with the position that if women were in higher positions in the media, they would make decisions to portray women differently,” (Hernandez, 1996).

However, unlike feminists and women journalists’ claims, some researchers argue that the news content journalists produce does not strongly correlate with their personal characteristics (Bergen, 1991; Hirsch, 1977; Shoemaker & Reese, 1991). According to their claims, since most journalists work within the constraints of a news organization and organizational characteristics such as beat assignment, type and size of media organization and type of ownership, organizational and occupational norms are more influential to the journalists’ work than individual traits such as gender, political leaning and role orientation.

Some research shows that women's news decisions are not different from those of men (Drew & Miller, 1977; Gallagher, 1981; Merritt & Gross, 1978; Orwant & Cantor, 1977; Shoemaker & Reese, 1991; Turk, 1987; Whitlow, 1978,1979). Scholars argue that women cannot make much difference due to their professional training, socialization and low level of acceptance among their male colleagues. Since women journalists share the professional or occupational norm—masculine concept of news—that has been established historically by men (Allen, 1983; Molotch, 1978; Newland, 1979; Tuchman, 1977), social scientists explain that news about women often fails even to meet women journalists' definition of news. Some studies show that women share the cultural perceptions and stereotypes that their male colleagues hold (Beasley, 1989; Gallagher, 1981; Ogan, 1980; Ogan & Weaver, 1978,1979). Moreover, social pressures, tradition and punishment-rewards systems in the organization make the news reporters exemplify the values of their editors and managers (Breed, 1955; Tuchman, 1978).

Although within organizational constraints, it would not be accurate to say that journalists have no freedom to choose and produce news stories. Even though women are not much differ from men in some attitudes and traits, women in journalism can make a difference in news coverage of politics and many other areas as well (Mills, 1997 cited in Weaver, 1997).

In order to make a difference, Mills stressed the importance of certain numbers of women in the newsroom. As women have become more numerous in newsrooms, they have broadened the definition of news to include issues of economic and educational interests to women, childcare and women's health. "It was not until there was a critical mass in the newsroom—and until more and more women were in the work force, seeking

child care, speaking out about harassment, running for office—that women were able to make their different voices heard.”

Meanwhile, Mills (1997) argued that media sexism would continue because of the limited number of women in decision-making positions. Rena Pederson of the *Dallas Morning News* concurred. Pederson emphasized the need for women in editorial positions—higher positions: “Women absolutely bring a different perspective to issues addressed on the editorial page. Without women’s input, editorial pages would have been much slower to discuss battered women, child abuse, and rape. It isn’t that men didn’t care, but it wasn’t their primary interest,” (Pederson, 1993, cited in Otto, 1993)

Robinson (1991) found that as women in decision-making positions at newspapers increased, the number of stories, the amount of space and prominence of stories relating to women increased.

Considering previous studies and surveys, the “critical mass” as well as women in decision-making positions seems to be one solution to change the tone of newspapers. Specifically, more women in higher levels of authority are important in order to accelerate the effect. Meanwhile, to reach higher levels, first of all, they should not be discriminated against in the newsrooms in terms of promotions, beat and story assignments, salaries and many opportunities. However, in many cases, women remain blocked from mid or higher level decision-making positions.

In her study of the history of newspaperwomen, Mills told that: “There seems so far to be little room at the top for women in American newspapers despite their movement in increasing numbers into the newsroom since the mid-1960s. Male managers deny that there is a glass ceiling barring women’s advancement, but women

definitely are bumping their heads against something up here. It is not lack of experience, it is not lack of ability, and it is not lack of sheer numbers,” (Mills, 1996, cited in Walsh-Childers et al., 1996a).

According to an American Newspaper Publisher’s Association 1990 report, though women comprise 39 percent of newsroom staff, only 28 percent of women are executives and managers. In addition, only 10 percent are women at the highest levels of management-represented by the top newspaper editors who make up the membership of the American Society of Newspaper Editors (Jurgensen, 1993). Even worse, in 1987, the National Federation of Press Women found that women represented only 1.5 percent of top editorial positions in newspapers with 100,000 circulations or more (Wilson, 1989, cited in Lacy et al., 1993).

In 1993, Maurine Beasley (1993) criticized U.S. newspapers: “Clearly women are far from equal to men in American journalism, a field in which they have proved their competence for two centuries.”

U.S. women journalists are not the only people who perceive discrimination in their place of work. In 1995, the International Women’s Media Foundation conducted a survey of women journalists who attended the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and from IWMF members in more than 40 countries. The survey shows that 93 percent of the respondents said they experience obstacles their male peers do not.

Discriminations include being paid less than men for equal work and having fewer opportunities to cover more visible and newsworthy stories which could further their career progress. Respondents also stated that they felt frustration at being denied

chances to cover science, technology, politics and business: They often felt male colleagues got the best assignments while they were assigned to cover soft topics regardless of their expertise and interests. In addition, women journalists said their achievement and work was often downplayed because of the stereotype and social attitude toward women (IWMF (International Women's Media Foundation) Report, 1995, cited in Hernandez, 1996).

There is ample evidence showing that women journalists have undergone a significant degree of discrimination in the newsroom, including sexual harassment (Barret, 1984; Beasley & Theus, 1988; Byerly & Warren, 1996; IWMF Report, 1995 cited in Hernandez, 1996; Johnstone et al., 1976; Lynch, 1993; Walsh-Childers et al., 1996a, 1996b). Research indicates that sexual harassment as a kind of sex discrimination has a negative effect on women's work performance, as well as career advancement (Benson & Thomson, 1982; Flatow, 1994; U.S. Merit System Protection Board, "Sexual harassment in the federal workplace," cited in Walsh-Childers et al., 1996b).

In a study by Flatow (1994), many respondents reported that sexual harassment creates an environment of fear and intimidation at worst, and even at best produces distractions that keep women from performing at the top of their ability (Flatow, 1994, cited in Walsh-Childers et al., 1996b). Cook and Banks (1993) found that there is a strong relationship between job stress and burnout, and between job burnout and intention to leave the profession.

Walsh-Childers et al. (1996b) concluded that female journalists already face the same stresses male journalists face and sexual harassment may be additional stress.

That additional burden, sometimes, makes highly competent women journalists look for another job. “Even when they stay in newspapers, sexual harassment may distract women from the work on which they really want to be concentrating. In that sense, sexual harassment of women journalists does a disservice not only to them but to newspapers’ readers as well,” (Walsh-Childers et al., 1996b).

Sex discrimination including, in some cases, sexual harassment, may be one of the serious reasons making women journalists’ careers shorter. According to a survey conducted by the Korea Press Foundation in 2001, the percentage of women journalists over 35 years old was 26.8 percent compared to 62.5 percent of male journalists over 35. In addition, women journalists who have work experience over 11 years were 22.5 percent compared to 47.8 percent of male journalists (“Survey of Korean Journalists,” 2001).¹⁴ Women stay in their jobs fewer years than men.

There is an anecdote showing how vulnerable the status of Korean newspaperwomen is. A woman journalist working for one of the big-three national newspapers said that until 1983, women working for that paper had to quit their jobs after marriage (“Women journalist: Changing phase and role,” 1999). Under this harsh circumstance, it is no wonder that women’s reporting careers have been shortened.

Kyunghee Kim, mass communication professor at Hanrim University, accounted for the difficulties of Korean women journalists: “Due to the distorted prejudice towards women in which women are not professional, including pregnancy, childcare and housework, [Korean] women reporters could not root in as a core group in the newsroom,” (Kim, 2000, cited in Media Feminism).

Due to the decline in readership of newspapers in Korea (See Table 2) as in the

United States, finding the reason for newspapers' unpopularity is important. As the literature shows, sex discrimination could cost the newspaper industry. Thus, study of sex discrimination in newspapers has importance. A newspaperwomen's unhappiness caused by sex discrimination would be a double cost both to the newspaper industry and to the women in Korea.

Chapter 2

Research Questions

Previous research shows there is gender discrimination in Korean newsrooms. This research gauges the extent of sex discrimination. The purpose of this research is first, to find out the extent and types of sex discrimination Korean newspaperwomen believe they experience, and to examine factors associated with sex discrimination. Second, this study looks at whether women journalists can make a difference in male-centered newspapers in terms of their efforts to cover more women and women's news than their male colleagues do. The objective of the study also includes finding out whether supervisors' sex and their opinions on stories about women are related to women journalists' efforts to cover more women and women's interest stories.

Research questions include:

1. How much of a problem is sex discrimination for women journalists at Korean newspapers?
2. What kinds of sex discrimination do Korean women journalists experience frequently?
3. What factors are associated with sex discrimination among Korean women journalists?
4. Do Korean women journalists think that they strive to cover more women and women's interest stories than male reporters do? Do supervisors' sex and their opinions on stories about women impact women journalists' efforts to cover more women and women's interest stories?

Methods

Population

The population of this study was 259 Korean women journalists working for all of the ten national newspapers and the three business newspapers located in the capital, Seoul.¹⁵ Since a relatively small number of female journalists work for these 13 newspapers, all of the women journalists working for these newspapers were used for the survey.

In this study, women journalists are defined as full-time journalists who directly engage in covering, editing and managing news decisions: reporters, copy editors and managers. This study concentrates on women journalists working for editorial departments so women who engage in visual positions such as graphic designers and photographers were excluded.

Korea is a relatively small country in terms of its territorial size; therefore, local papers are relatively undeveloped, compared to United States. Generally speaking, most Koreans read one of these ten national newspapers, which cover the whole nation, instead of the local papers. All of the ten national papers selected in this study cover the nation's news and are circulated across the nation, having their headquarters in Seoul. Considering circulation, readership and influence on public opinion and policy, in general, media power is concentrated on the national newspapers instead of small local newspapers.¹⁶

Although the three business papers selected here specialize in economic or business news, they have a similar structure to the national newspapers and cover similar hard and soft news as the general-interest papers. They also cover the nation's news and

are circulated across the country.

The population was drawn from the 2001 Directory of Korean Women Journalist Club, a non-profit organization of women journalists working for various news organizations including those who populate this study. Women journalists in this study's population are automatically affiliated with this organization. Since the study specifically concentrates on discrimination in the newspapers, women in broadcasting and wire services were excluded.

Since KWJC made no book-format directory of women journalists, the researcher had to call the director of the KWJC to get the list, and for the five newspapers that were not on the list, the researcher had to send an email to reporters in five newspapers requesting a list. The list has the names of the journalists, their telephone numbers and email addresses.

Procedure

A web-survey was selected as the study method. A request cover letter (See Appendix A), which introduces the survey objectives and asks for participation was sent to 259 women journalists using email. The website address (www.msu.edu/~yunzeesu.survey.html), which contains the survey with multiple-choice questions was referred to in this request cover letter. When journalists responded to the web-survey and submitted it, their answers were delivered to the researcher's personal email account without the journalists' identities. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained because the responses were sent from a web site, not an e-mail account (See Appendix B for the web survey multiple-choice questions).

Due to technical problems (web site survey cannot receive Korean characters), two

open-ended questions couldn't be provided through the web. Therefore, respondents were urged to use their email accounts to answer the open-ended questions. They were told to set up an account such as Hotmail.com if anonymity for the two open-ended questions was a concern. Nonetheless, confidentiality continued to be maintained (See Appendix A for the two open-ended questions).

A telephone survey was prohibitive because of long-distance costs and the characteristics of journalists' work; it is hard to reach them by phone. A regular mail survey was also excluded because Korean journalists receive a lot of mail every day, and they hardly open it—especially a letter from someone they don't know. Moreover, in this case, a mail survey has another shortcoming: In order to return the questionnaire by international mail to the researcher in the United States, the respondents would have to visit the post office. This burden would significantly decrease the response rate. The web-survey is a new method allowing for inexpensive and convenient communication between the researcher and the subjects.

However, an email survey has some drawbacks. Given the subjects' everyday work burden, and large amounts of emails they receive from news sources, including junk mail, they could delete the email even before opening it. Again, the chance of discard increases when they are receiving an email from someone they don't know.

In order to prevent this disregard from happening, before sending emails, the researcher made prior telephone calls to several journalists in each newspaper, explaining to them the research purpose and asking them to tell their colleagues to participate in the survey. The researcher worked for different large Korean companies as a PR manager for five years, mainly dealing with newspaper journalists. It was hoped this fact would

positively affect the response rate.

After making phone calls to some of the women journalists in each newspaper, the request cover letters, containing the website address, were sent by email to 259 women journalists simultaneously. To increase the response rate, follow-up email letters were sent after one week of the first email. In case of regular mail surveys, follow-up letters are usually used after two weeks of the first mailing. However, considering the nature of email, in this case, follow-up letters were emailed after one week. Telephone calls to journalists between the first and second follow-up letters were made in order to increase the response rate. Second follow-up letters were also emailed after one week of first follow-up letters, including phone calls. Approximately, 100 phone calls were made. The survey was conducted during a one-month period.

For the purpose of this study, sex discrimination was defined as “any instance in which female employees appear to have been denied opportunities or rewards because of their gender and not for any reasons related to their abilities or experience,” (Walsh-Childers et al., 1996a).

Questionnaire Formation

Questions were designed to look at the following points:

1. How much women journalists feel sex discrimination is a problem for women journalists both in general and personally?
2. What kinds of sex discrimination do women experience frequently?

For example,

- How often they have been passed over for promotion?
- How often they have been denied assignments to a desirable beat or story?

- How often they have been denied a job assignment because they have children?
 - How often they have been not informed about newsworthy information from the beat?
 - How often they have been not informed about important decisions within their newspaper?
3. In their newspaper, who has the better chances in pay, promotion, desirable job assignment, and training/fellowships between men and women?
 4. Do their workplaces have equal environment for women journalists?
 5. Do women journalists believe having more women in managerial positions or employing more women reporters improve their work environment?
 6. How women journalists evaluate their newspapers' job covering women and women's issues?
 7. Compared to male reporters, do women journalists think they strive to use more women as primary sources or as subjects for their stories? Do they strive to write stories especially for women readers?
 8. Do their supervisors think the stories about women and women's issues are important?

Demographic and work-environment information

Each respondent was asked for her job title, the department she belongs to, years of experience as a journalist, the year of birth, her marital status, percentage of woman newsroom employees at her newspaper and her immediate supervisor's sex. The information was collected in order to measure how these personal or work-environmental factors affect the discrimination women have experienced and their efforts to cover more women.

In addition to these 27 multiple-choice questions and seven demographic, work-

environment questions, two open-ended questions were asked in order to listen to the vivid voices of women journalists about the serious instances of sex discrimination they have been through. In addition, respondents were asked about their plans to stay in journalism in the next five years in order to examine whether discrimination affects their future career plans.

Chapter 3

Results & Discussion

Among 259 emails, 11 emails were returned. Of the 248 emails that successfully reached the journalists, a total of 102 responses were collected from the web-survey (41 percent response rate). Sixty respondents out of 102 women who participated in the web-survey completed the two open-ended questions (59 percent response rate).

Demographics

The largest numbers of respondents were reporters (70.6 percent) and 10.8 percent of the respondents were copy editors. Another 10.8 percent were assistant-editors and four respondents (3.9 percent) were editors. Three people held some other position (2.9 percent) and one person gave no title (1 percent). The average respondent was 32.4 years old and had 8.28 years of experience as a journalist. More than half of the women were married (52 percent) and around 42 percent of them were never married. On average, respondents estimated that women accounted for 11.89 percent of all newsroom employees.

Not surprisingly, more than one-third of respondents were working for so-called soft news departments: 28.3 percent were in culture, 10.1 percent were in living/style department, and fourteen people were copy editors (14.1 percent). Consequently, more than half (52.5 percent) of women journalists work for traditional women's beats. Meanwhile, unexpectedly, a relatively large proportion of respondents were working for traditional hard news beats—business/economics (18.2 percent) and metro/city (8.1 percent). However, only one woman was in a politics department or a technology/science department, and eight women (8.1 percent) reported that they work

for other departments. About 89 percent of the respondents said their immediate supervisor is male and 11 percent said their supervisor is female.

Research Question 1

How much of a problem is sex discrimination for women journalists at Korean newspapers?

Each respondent was asked to answer how much of a problem is sex discrimination, based on the definition, for women as newspaper journalists in general and in her own journalism career. Answers were measured through seven scales from “no problem at all” (1 point) to “a very serious problem” (7 point).

No one answered sex discrimination is “no problem at all” for women journalists in general, and only two percent answered discrimination had been “no problem at all” for them personally. About 11 percent and 4 percent, respectively, responded discrimination is “a very serious problem” for women journalists in general and for themselves personally.

If assuming that respondents who marked from one to three believed sex discrimination is not problem, four as neutral, and from five to seven is problem, 73.2 percent believed sex discrimination had been a problem for women journalists in general, while 51 percent answered discrimination had been a problem in their own careers (See Table 3). Overall, respondents consider discrimination against women journalists in general is a more serious problem than in her own career.

Two question results are positively correlated with each other and the relationship is statistically significant ($r = .598, p < .01$): Women who regarded sex discrimination as a problem for women journalists in general also regarded it as problem in her own career.

Research Question 2

What kinds of discrimination do Korean women journalists experience frequently?

1) Promotion discrimination

Fourteen women (13.7 percent) reported they had been passed over for promotion “once” and “more than once” in favor of an equally or less qualified man, whereas, sixty-seven respondents (65.7 percent) reported that they had “never” been passed over for promotion.

Given that three-fourth (75 percent) of respondents’ careers range from one to 11 years and they don’t have a chance to be promoted, 65.7 percent of “never” responses was not surprising based on the promotion system in Korean newsrooms.¹⁷ On the other hand, demographics show that 25 percent of respondents have 12 or more years of experience and could have been promoted. Thus, 13.7 percent of responses mean that more than half of those women who are in the range of qualification for promotion have experienced promotion discrimination.

One reporter said, “There seems to be promotional disadvantage against women.” This remarks seems quite true: Among 13 newspapers, one paper has no female editors (managers) and another paper has only one female editor. The paper which has no female editors had one a few years ago, but she was fired during the personnel reduction in the 1998 Korean economic crisis.

A woman in a managerial position said, “In my case, a man who is as old as me, has less of a newspaper career and was suspended from his duties for three months due to making a serious mistake, was promoted ahead of me. Moreover, last year, in my newspaper, a man was promoted as a manager, putting aside a woman who excelled that

man in terms of ability and by years of experience. Promotion discrimination is ubiquitous at most newspapers.”

2) Beat/ story assignment discrimination

Answers were measured through seven scales from “never” (1 point) to “nearly always or always” (7 points). Approximately 80 percent responded they have experienced beat/story assignment discrimination at least once because of gender while only one in five (21.2 percent) reported that they had “never” been denied desirable beat/story assignments.

In addition, nearly one-third (32.4 percent) believed that the reason they were being denied a desirable beat or story assignment is because of the prejudice in which the assignment was deemed dangerous or not appropriate for a woman. On the other hand, one in five (19.6 percent) believed that the decision was not because of the prejudice.

3) Beats that denied

Women were asked to list all the beats that they have been denied. It is reported that women were denied beats such as metro/city (13.7 percent) – politics (12.9 percent) – business/economics (11 percent) – sports (6 percent) – other departments (12 percent). However, 42 respondents answered that they have never been denied a beat (36.2 percent).

The results show that women are still denied traditional hard news beats or beats where men are predominant. This also indicates that a considerable proportion of women journalists hope to work at the hard news beats.

Respondents’ answers to the open-ended questions revealed that an old tendency, which is to assign women to the soft news and men to the hard news beats, still remains

in Korean newspapers. A reporter recalled her experience: “After the first six month training, I applied to the business department. Regardless of my wishes, of course, a man was being assigned to business and I was placed with the culture department.” Another reporter also recounted a similar story. When her female colleague expressed her wish to work on the Internet team, a male manager “shook his head. I think he refused her because of her gender.” In addition to being denied hard news beats, women reported they have been assigned to trivial stories within the same department.

4) Denied a job/story/beat assignment due to the role as a parent

Women were asked how often they have been denied a job/story/beat assignment they wanted because of their role as a parent. Forty-nine respondents said they don't have children. Among 49 women who have children, 29 people (59.2 percent) reported that they have been denied an assignment at least once because of their role as a parent. The other 20 people (40.8 percent) said they have never been discriminated against because they have children. Moreover, a substantial proportion of women believed that male journalists would not be discriminated against because they are fathers.

According to respondents, even though they work for a hard news beat, pregnancy and delivery are deterring female reporters from staying in the hard news beats. One respondent accounted, “While I had worked as a city reporter, they transferred me [from the city department] to another department without notifying me during my maternity leave. Furthermore, another woman in my paper who worked for the political department was transferred to another department because of her pregnancy.”

5) Excluded from newsworthy information while on the beat

A majority of women journalists (86.7 percent) believed that, at least once, they

have not been informed of newsworthy information in which male reporters on the same beat from other newspapers were apprised. Only 13 people (13.3 percent) answered that they have never been excluded from the newsworthy information from their beats. Considering 14.1 percent of women work as copy editors who don't have beats to cover, nearly all female reporters seem to experience discrimination from the sources at least once.

Informational exclusion from their beats happens because, in many cases, public relations people, employees of beats and key sources who can give exclusives are males. These people often exchange newsworthy information with male reporters through the informal gatherings within their circles, excluding women reporters.

Specifically, the situations are even worse in the case of married female journalists because, in Korean society, married women are greatly responsible for childcare and housework even when they have their own professions. Therefore, married female journalists cannot join every informal gathering with sources or PR people after work. Given that 52 percent of the population of this study is married (53 respondents), and most of them are mothers (49 respondents), this personal situation seems to make women journalists informational exclusion from beats worse.

6) Excluded from information within the newsroom

Not only from their beats, but women journalists also have experienced informational segregation within their news organizations. They have been not informed about important decisions or issues that their male colleagues were informed of by their managers. Apart from 8.9 percent of women who said they have "never" been discriminated against by their supervisors concerning important decisions or information in their newsrooms, the remaining journalists have experienced this type of discrimination.

A respondent replied to the open-ended question that: “Most of the information within the newspaper is spread from the unofficial gatherings where women are alienated in most cases.”

7) Women’s perceptions of pay, promotions, assignments and training/fellowship equity

Women’s perceptions towards discrimination were reflected in their responses to questions about pay, promotion, assignments and training/fellowship equity at their organizations. Except for pay, significant percentages of women reported that if men and women have the same abilities and experiences, in general, men have better chances in promotion (75.5 percent), getting desirable job assignment (73.5 percent) and training/fellowship (58.8 percent).

A reporter working at a business paper said that when her female colleague applied to a training abroad program, her male supervisor sarcastically asked, “Where are you trying to go by yourself, abandoning your husband and children?” As a result, the training chance went to a younger male reporter instead of her. An editor also said that when she applied to training abroad conducted by the Korea Press Foundation (one of its functions is offering qualified journalists training programs) at her age of 39, a male reviewer made a sarcastic remark to her. “What’s good for your newspaper if we (KPF) fund a forty-year-old woman (like you) to study.”

However, when it comes to pay equity, nearly 70 percent (68.6 percent) of respondents said, men and women are paid equally at the same job. Compared to other chances, salary seems to be the most equal part in Korean newspapers. Nonetheless, one-fourth (24.5 percent) still responded that men are paid better than women. Furthermore, no one said women are paid better than men (See Table 4).

8) Sexual harassment

Aside from the previously noted kinds of sex discrimination, many respondents, in open-ended answers, vehemently reported sexual harassment by male supervisors, male colleagues and male sources. Sexual harassment ranges from telling sexual jokes to making uninvited physical contacts. Respondents recognized sexual harassment as a serious problem in the news business in Korea (See Appendix C for more open-ended responses).

Research Question 3

What factors are associated with sex discrimination among women journalists?

Eight hypotheses were presented in order to find the factors associated with various kinds of sex discrimination.

Hypothesis 1

The more years of experience women have, the more they have experienced promotion discrimination.

Result showed a large difference in years of experience, 7.17 years, between two groups that have “never” been passed over ($M = 7.97$, $SD = 4.41$), and have been passed over for promotion “once” and “more than once” ($M = 15.14$, $SD = 7.00$) by an equally or less qualified man ($t = -4.923$, $df = 77$, $p < .001$). It suggests that women journalists having more years of newspaper experience are more likely to experience promotion discrimination.

Hypothesis 2

Women working for soft news would have experienced more beat and story assignment discrimination than women working for hard news departments.

The answer is no. There was no difference of discrimination in beat/story assignments between women working for soft news and hard news.¹⁸ The mean of the soft news group ($\underline{M} = 3.05$, $SD = 1.59$) and the hard news group ($\underline{M} = 3.00$, $SD = 1.53$) was not significantly different based on seven scales--one as “never” seven as “nearly always or always,” ($t = .146$, $df = 73$, n.s).

Hypothesis 3

The more years of experience women have, the more they have experienced beat/story assignment discrimination.

Pearson correlation supported the hypothesis. Years of experience were positively correlated with beat/story assignment discrimination and the relationship was statistically significant ($r = .210$, $p < .05$). Women journalists having a longer newspaper career are more likely to experience beat/story assignment discrimination.

Hypothesis 4

Women journalists working for hard news are more likely to be not informed about newsworthy information from their beats than women working for soft news.

The answer is no. The mean of the soft news ($\underline{M} = 3.39$, $SD = 1.48$) and the hard news ($\underline{M} = 3.24$, $SD = 1.46$) groups showed no significant difference based on seven scales--one as “never” seven as “nearly always or always,” ($t = .446$, $df = 73$, n.s). It suggests that, regardless of their beats, women journalists have experienced discrimination in a similar degree regarding obtaining information.

Hypothesis 5

Women journalists working in newsrooms with few women are less likely to be informed of important decisions than women working in the newsrooms having many women.

Pearson correlation supported the hypothesis. The percentage of women journalists in the newsroom was negatively correlated with informational exclusion within their newsrooms, and this relationship had statistical significance ($r = -.230$, $p < .05$). It indicates that if the number of women journalists increase in the newsroom, women are less likely to be segregated from the information that male colleagues are informed of within their newspapers.

Hypothesis 6

Women journalists having female supervisors are less likely to be excluded from important information than women journalists having male supervisors within their newsroom.

The answer is yes. The mean of two groups whose immediate supervisor is man and woman were, respectively, 3.78 (SD = 1.43) and 2.18 (SD = .87) based on seven scales--one as “never” seven as “nearly always or always.” The difference of mean between the two groups was statistically significant ($t = 3.599$, $df = 95$, $p < .001$). Women having female supervisors seem to report a lesser degree of discrimination than women having male supervisors in terms of obtaining information.

Perceptions of managers and male colleagues' treatment of women in respondent's workplace

Two questions were asked to see if women and men are equally treated by their managers and if male colleagues treat women peers as equals within the newsrooms. Table 5 shows the distribution of respondents' opinions on equal treatment in the newsroom. Answers were measured on a seven-point scale from “strongly disagree” (1 point) to “strongly agree” (7 points).

If regarding four-point as neutral (neither agree nor disagree), nearly 60 percent of women journalists disagreed that managers treat women and men equally, while 22.6 percent agreed that managers treat both of them equally. A majority of women (58.9 percent) also disagreed that male employees treat women peers as equals in their workplace, while 23.6 percent agreed (See Table 5).

Hypothesis 7

Women journalists having female supervisors are more likely to be equally treated by their managers than women having male supervisors.

The mean of two groups whose immediate supervisor is man and woman were, respectively, 3.10 (SD = 1.46) and 4.09 (SD = 1.38) based on seven scales--one as "strongly disagree" seven as "strongly agree." The mean of two groups showed that there is a difference in equal treatment by their managers ($t = -2.118$, $df = 95$, $p < .05$). Women having female supervisors reported they have been treated more equally than women having male supervisors.

Hypothesis 8

Women journalists would be more equally treated by their male colleagues when there are more women in the newsroom.

Pearson's correlation showed a negative relationship between the percentage of women in the newsroom and women's perceptions on equal treatment by their male co-workers. However, this was not statistically significant ($r = -.009$, n.s). Therefore, it suggests that the percentage of women and equal treatment by their male co-workers are not greatly correlated.

According to respondents' self-reports, the percentage of women in the newsroom

ranges from five to thirty. Most respondents reported women consist of only 10 percent of newsroom employees, and merely four respondents answered their newsrooms have 30 percent of women in the newsroom. It seems that there is no difference in equal treatment by their male co-workers until women reach more than 30 percent of newsroom employees.

Research Question 4

Do Korean women journalists think that they strive to cover more women and women's interest stories than male reporters do? Do supervisors' sex and their opinions on stories about women impact women journalists' efforts to cover more women and women's interest stories?

This research question looked at 1) how women journalists evaluate their newspapers' job in coverage of women and women's issues; 2) whether women regard themselves more active than their male counterparts when it comes to coverage of women and for women readers; 3) what factors are associated with women journalists' efforts to cover women.

Perceptions of their newspaper's coverage of women and women's issues

A majority of women thought that their newspapers have insufficiently and unfairly covered women and women's issues compared to men's. If regarding four-point as neutral (neither agree nor disagree), 69.7 percent of women disagreed that their newspaper has sufficiently—in terms of numbers of stories and space, and 64.4 percent disagreed that their paper has fairly—in terms of objectivity—covered women and women's issues. More than one out of ten women “strongly disagreed” with each statement. On the other hand, respectively, only 13.2 percent and 12.9 percent of

women agreed that their newspapers sufficiently and fairly cover women and women's issues.

Women journalists' efforts to cover more women, women's issues and women's interest stories

Women journalists were asked to answer three questions regarding if they try to use more women as primary sources, cover more women as subjects, and write stories that specifically inform or interest women readers compared to male reporters.

A large proportion of respondents answered that they strive to do that. If assuming four-point as neutral, approximately half of the respondents agreed that they try to cover more women as subjects of their stories (51 percent) and write stories to specifically inform or interest women readers (50 percent): One-fourth (26.5 percent) gave neutral responses in each of the two questions, and approximately 20 percent disagreed with these two statements.

Furthermore, about 40 percent of respondents (42.8 percent) agreed that they try to use more women as primary sources for their stories: One-third (34.7 percent) gave neutral responses, while 22.5 percent disagreed with the same statement. Considering that most news sources in powerful positions who may be used as primary sources are men in Korean society, that over 40 percent of respondents who answered they try to use more women sources could be seen as substantial.

The mean of the soft and the hard news groups were compared to look at if there is a difference between two groups in their efforts to cover more women. Table 6 shows that there is not much difference between the two groups. Although the soft news group showed a slightly higher mean in all three categories, these didn't have a statistical

significance (See Table 6).

Pearson correlation showed that years of experience do not influence female journalists' efforts to cover more women and women's interest stories. While three dependent variables (journalists' efforts to cover more women as primary sources, subjects and to write for women readers) were correlated with each other, showing statistical significance ($p < .01$), the relationship between years of experience and three dependent variables didn't have statistical significance (See Table 7).

Supervisors' opinions towards stories about women and women's issues

Approximately half of these responding journalists (45.1 percent) reported that their supervisors don't think stories about women or women's issues are important. One-fourth gave a neutral response, and another one-fourth agreed that their supervisors regard stories about women as important.

Two hypotheses (H9 and H10) were presented in order to examine whether supervisor's sex and their opinions on stories about women impact women journalists' efforts to cover more women and women's interest stories.

Hypothesis 9

The more supervisors think the stories about women are important, the more women journalists' efforts to cover women would increase.

Generally, yes. Pearson correlation showed that supervisors' opinions and women journalists' efforts to use women as primary sources ($r = .250$, $p < .05$) and subjects ($r = .279$, $p < .01$) were positively related, having statistical significance. It indicates that when her supervisor thinks stories about women are important, journalist's effort to cover women seems to elevate. However, there is no statistical significance between

supervisors' opinion and stories for women readers ($r = .154$, n.s) (See Table 8).

Hypothesis 10

Female supervisors more than male supervisors would think stories about women or women's issues are important.

Respondents reported that their female supervisors think stories about women and women's interest are more important when compared to their male counterparts. The mean of two groups whose immediate supervisor is man and woman were, respectively, 3.46 (SD = 1.46) and 4.55 (SD = 1.38) based on seven scales--one as "strongly disagree" seven as "strongly agree. The mean differences between two groups were statistically significant ($t = -2.138$, $df = 92$, $p < .05$).

Chapter 4

Summary and Conclusions

This study was designed to look at 1) kinds of sex discrimination Korean women journalists have experienced; 2) the factors associated with discrimination; 3) women journalists' efforts to cover more women, women's issues and women's interest stories; and 4) supervisors' influence on women journalists' efforts.

A web-survey was conducted with all of the 259 Korean women journalists at the 10 national and three business newspapers. A total of 102 respondents (41 percent response rate) were used for the research.

Limitations

This study was limited in scope, using only women journalists at 13 large newspapers, all of which are about the same size. Although this study population consisted of a significant number of women journalists in the Korean newspaper industry and that a substantial number of study population reported sex discrimination they have experienced, the degree of sex discrimination for women at small newspapers might be different. Future research could focus on smaller newspapers to see if newsroom size affects the amount and type of discrimination.

The study method, web survey, may also have limitations in terms of its efficiency. While web survey is certainly a convenient and inexpensive method, conducting a survey via the web with journalists is not simple. Since journalists receive a large amount of email every day, they usually delete them without opening them. The researcher had to make large numbers of phone calls, approximately 100 phone calls, in order to induce women to participate in the survey. It seems hard to collect journalists' responses using

only a web survey without a kind of reminder--in this case, additional phone calls.

In addition, since women were not asked the precise dates of the discriminatory incidents they had experienced, it is not certain how well the data reflect the current newsroom environment.

Suggestions for future studies

This research examined general sex discrimination examples that newspaperwomen have experienced. This line of inquiry could be improved if it deals with some topics that this study did not explore.

First, several newspaperwomen, in the open-ended answers, described specific sex discriminatory problems that have frequently happened in Korean newsrooms. They mentioned informational exclusion from the news sources through informal gatherings with male reporters, and the male-centered newsgathering tradition. Often, this type of informational exclusion happens because most sources are men in Korean society. Therefore, further study should particularly deal with how women reporters are excluded from male sources and how this exclusion affects their news practices and careers. Moreover, it would be interesting if a further study would deal with how women reporters might differently interact with male sources and female sources.

Second, although this research did not look at sexual harassment, women reporters, in their open-ended answers, vehemently reported sexual harassment as a serious problem. According to a 2001 Korean survey, more than half of the responding journalists said they have experienced sexual harassment in the newsroom during the past year. There is no extensive previous research about sexual harassment in Korean newsrooms, yet substantial numbers of women regard it as a serious problem. Thus, conducting a study

about sexual harassment would be meaningful.

Finally, this research used only female subjects in order to examine their perceptions of their efforts to cover women and stories for women readers. A future study could use male subjects to show gender differences in the perception of journalists' efforts to cover women.

Conclusions

These study results strongly suggest that a significant proportion of Korean newspaperwomen have been discriminated against in beat/story assignments, promotions and (male-centered) newsroom culture. They know sex discrimination is a problem. More than half of the women journalists in this study reported that sex discrimination has been a problem personally as well as for newspaperwomen in general.

Showing results similar to the 1995 Korean Women Journalist Club survey, one of the most common discriminations reported by the study population was beat/story assignment discrimination. About 80 percent of women have faced this kind of inequity. Women with more years of experience are more often discriminated against for beat/story assignments. Years of experience as well as age seem to be a serious obstacle for women who want to work various beats and expand their careers.

In the open-ended question, a female editor recalled that when she had applied to the business department at the age of 34, the editor of the department said, "We will accept one female reporter but not a woman as old as you." Another women assistant-editor expressed a similar opinion. "In general, female reporters having over 10-year of experiences are considered behind in careers compared to men, because beats where most of those mid-career women have worked are treated as minor. Therefore, although hard

news departments easily accept young women, they don't want mid-career women reporters, saying these women are not competent and so forth.”

Beat/story assignment discrimination obstructs women to advance to the further higher positions, because, in general, newspaper journalists should have various experiences in different fields to reach higher positions.

Promotion discrimination is another serious problem women have faced in their newsroom. Similar to half of the respondents in the 2001 Korean study, who counted the lack of promotion possibility as one of the severe difficulties that women journalists frequently faced, the participants in this study confirm being left out of a promotion is a serious problem to newspaperwomen. The results show that more than half of the mid-career women who are qualified for a promotion have experienced promotion discrimination “once” and “more than once.”

This study surveyed all female journalists at 10 national and three business newspapers with 41 percent response rate. Yet, demographics indicated that only four respondents are editors (managers), and only about 15 percent of the study population was in managerial position including assistant-editors.

One reporter mentioned that, in some cases, women journalists who were left out of a promotion felt pressured to resign. Several other respondents told the story during the 1998 Korean economic crisis. At that time, women journalists, especially women having long-time careers and women who had been left out of a promotion, were being pressured to resign, so many women left their jobs. It suggests that when getting older, female journalists lose their places within the organization.

It appears that promotion discrimination gives women serious doubts in their

current job and impacts women's decisions to leave their newspapers. Fifty-eight percent of the open-ended question respondents wished to continue working as journalists in the next five years and expected themselves to be in higher positions in their organizations. Yet, the remaining 42 percent of respondents were skeptical about the possibility of further promotion and were not sure whether they would stay or had already planned to leave the newspaper in five years. Considerable portions of respondents in this group pointed out the lack of possibility in a promotion as reasons to have doubts about their profession or to leave their job.

A reporter stated that, "Relatively equal working conditions (both men and women) have been created in Korean newsrooms until women journalists reach a certain level. However, few women can expect a higher promotional advancement after the assistant-editor level." An assistant-editor's poignant self-mocking statement—"Can I, in my middle forties, stay here [in my newspaper] in five years?" tells us women journalists' agony about getting older.

Seeing the precedents in which many other women have been barred from further promotion and forced to leave the news business may discourage Korean women journalists from pursuing higher positions and make many of them look for careers outside of the newspaper. Especially, women in their over mid-careers are less confident in their present profession.

In addition to these two unfair situations—beat/story assignment and promotion discriminations, approximately 90 percent of women reported that they have been excluded from important information both from the sources and from their supervisors. Since information is so crucial to reporters, a lot of women counted this informational

exclusion through informal routes as a problem. “In Korean news business, where there are a lot of informal drinking gatherings between reporters and sources, male reporters and male sources exchange important information in personal ways, excluding female reporters,” an assistant-editor said. The discrimination is the same for soft news and hard news groups in terms of informational exclusion from the sources.

A majority of women also disagreed that they receive equal treatment within the newsroom. According to a reporter, one male manager at her paper once openly said, “One male reporter is better than three female reporters together.” Another woman added that when female reporters are successful, male colleagues usually don’t admit these women are competent. Instead, men show cynical attitude towards those women, saying, “They just have the newspaper owner’s favor.”

One of the more interesting findings of this study showed a relationship between supervisor’s sex and the degree of sex discrimination women journalists felt or experienced within the newsroom. Study results indicated that women having female supervisors reported less informational exclusion by the supervisor than women having male supervisors. The group having female supervisor was also more likely to agree that managers equally treat men and women.

A business reporter working at a national newspaper stressed the importance of a supervisor’s role and increasing number of women journalists in order to attain fairness in the newsroom. “I was the first female business reporter at my newspaper. At that time, my supervisor was a very open-minded person who didn’t discriminate against women. From the beginning, I was assigned to the core beat in the business department... I think the role of managers who don’t sexually discriminate is still very important in order

for women reporters to settle down in the organization... Women cannot exercise concerted power because of inferiority in numbers. So, increasing the number of women journalists, which still stays about 10 percent, is the most important matter to solve.”

According to the result, many women journalists believed that having more women managers and employing more female reporters would improve their workplace environment. Unfortunately, according to respondents’ self-report, women consist of only 11.8 percent of the newsroom employees. With this small number, discrimination is likely to continue. Meanwhile, recently some Korean newspapers have hired more women than in the past. According to a reporter, her paper has hired from 25 percent to half women reporters among new employees every year during the last seven to eight years.

Another important finding of this study is that a substantial proportion of women reporters answered they try to cover more women, women’s issue and women’s interest stories than their male counterparts do. Moreover, female supervisors also regard women’s news as more important than male supervisors do.

Some scholars (Bergen, 1991; Hirsch, 1977; Shoemaker & Reese, 1991) have argued that the news content a journalist produces does not strongly correlate with their personal characteristics, such as gender. According to their argument, women’s news decisions are not different from those of men because women share the professional, occupational norm and masculine concepts of news that have been established historically by men. However, this study shows that substantial numbers of women reporters try to use women as primary sources and subjects of their stories and try to

write stories specifically for women readers.

In addition, this study's results indicate that women's efforts don't much differ according to the department they work for—hard or soft news beat—or years of experience. As those scholars claimed, if women only follow professional, occupational norm and masculine concepts of news, women having more years of experience and women in the hard news beats should be different from neophytes and women in soft news. Nevertheless, women's efforts do not much differ according to department or years of experience. Therefore, this finding indicates gender can make a difference in the news practices.

This study also found that supervisors' opinions are related to journalists' efforts to use women as primary sources and subjects. Journalists seems to be affected by their editors' and managers' news values to some extent: Study hypothesis—The more supervisors think the stories about women are important, the more women journalists' efforts to cover women would increase—was supported by the result. Additionally, the study shows female supervisors place more importance on women's news than their male counterparts. Given that supervisors' influence on stories and different view on stories about women depends on their sex, having more female managers will bring more women, women's issues and women's interests to the newspaper pages.

Thus, this study showed that Korean female journalists do not have an equal environment in various chances and their treatment as an effective journalist. The discrimination seems to lead to a substantial percentage of women journalists wishing to leave the newspaper in the future or make them uncertain with their current profession.

It will be a significant loss for newspapers if the experienced and talented women

looked for other jobs because they are frustrated with unfairness at the workplace. Even if they would stay, discrimination-related obstacle and stress would discourage them and may lead to lower productivity and lower spirits.

Since the results indicate women journalists having female managers reported more equal treatment in the newsroom, having more female managers may help create a more equal work environment.

This study also found that substantial numbers of women journalists strive to cover more women, and female managers also regard women's news more important than male managers do. Through these findings, this study suggests that gender, to some extent, influences journalist's news decision, so gender could make a difference in conventional newspaper pages.

Scholars contend that media's male-dominated news coverage and their ignorance or stereotyping of women is partly due to the male-dominated newsroom environment. Mills also stressed the role of women in decision-making positions to decrease media sexism.

As this study shows, considering manager's influence on female journalists' efforts to cover women, female managers encourage journalists to more extensively cover women and women's interests. As a result, having more female managers will help women and women's news be more visible in newspaper pages, and may win women readers back.

However, a fair newsroom environment where employees are not discriminated against by their gender in promotion, beat/story assignments, various chances and information should precede in order to having more female managers in the newsroom.

This research confirms the importance of affirmative action in the newsroom, and importance of women managers' and women journalists' role to attain sexual equality in newspaper pages and to regain the declining number of women newspaper readers.

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- ¹ In Korea, people who want to work for government should pass its examination. The examination is different depending on levels.
 - ² Although the number of women working for government has grown in recent years 12.9% in 1998, 27.6% in 1999 and 37.3% in 2000, they remain in lower ranks such as eighth or ninth level. Women comprise only 4.4% in fourth-level or above high government office positions.
 - ³ The data is based on the number of journalists working for 10 national newspapers, business newspapers, local newspapers, four major sports-entertainment dailies, two English papers and three big broadcasting companies—KBS, MBC and SBS.
 - ⁴ In general, Korean national newspapers hire only one or two female newcomers each year. However, in 2000, Joongang-Ilbo hired five women among eight new reporters; Chosun-Ilbo selected four women among 16; Dong-A Ilbo admitted three women among eight.
 - ⁵ Though it is recent, 2001 survey “Sexual discrimination and harassment in the newsroom” has a small population of 36.
 - ⁶ Korea Women Journalist Club (May 1999).
The data based on the number of journalists working in 28 media organizations including newspapers, broadcasting media and wire service agencies.
 - ⁷ The survey was conducted on 277 women journalists working for 52 newspapers, one wire service and 13 broadcasting companies.
 - ⁸ Culture beat in Korean newspapers deals with movie, art, book review, music, travel, academia, entertainment etc. Some news organizations combine culture beat with the living & style beat which deals with women, childcare, education, food and fashion.
 - ⁹ Copy editors are defined as journalists who select headline and editing length of stories or photographs. In some cases, copy editors switch to the beat and work as reporters. Many of the women journalists work as copy editors in Korean newspapers.
 - ¹⁰ Generally, in Korean newspapers, journalists have their first chance to be promoted when they have work experience over 11 years. According to the survey conducted by the Korea Press Foundation in 2001, only 22.5 percent of women journalists have work experience over 11 years compared to 47.8 percent of men: Women stay in their jobs fewer years than men.
 - ¹¹ The survey was conducted on 36 women journalists working for newspapers, wire service and broadcasting companies.

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- ¹² Today courts have recognized two categories of sexual harassment, known as “quid pro quo” (“something for something”) and “hostile environment” discrimination. The former refers to a situation in which an individual promises a subordinate employee some sort of tangible job benefit, such as a raise, in exchange for sexual favors. Most cases the respondents reported under the latter category, “hostile environment” discrimination, which reflects circumstances in which an employee is subjected to a pattern of behavior – such as unwanted sexual advances, degrading sexual comments about the employee, or similar problems- that interferes unreasonably with an employee’s ability to perform his or her job or makes the workplace environment inhospitable, intimidating, or offensive. The definition of sexual harassment is from Walsh-Childers et al. (1996b).
- ¹³ According to ASNE 2001 Minority Employment reports, women comprise 34.4 percent of supervisor positions, 41.2 percent of copy/layout editors, 39.9 percent of reporters and 26.5 percent of photographers.
- ¹⁴ “Survey of Korean Journalists” (Korean Press Foundation, 2001)
Sample of this survey was 780 journalists working for newspapers and broadcasting companies.
- ¹⁵ The population of 259 represents all of women journalists working for the 10 national newspapers—Chosun-Ilbo, Danhan Mail, DongA-Ilbo, Hankook-Ilbo, Hankyerae-Shinmun, Joongang-Ilbo, Kookmin-Ilbo, Kyunghyang-Shinmun, Munhwa-Ilbo and Saegye-Ilbo—and the three business newspapers—Hankook-Kyungjae, Mail-Kyungjae and Seoul-Kyungjae. Each newspaper has 150 to 250 reporters and editors in the newsroom.
- ¹⁶ In this study local papers are excluded because, unlike United States, usually only local government and some local businesses, not many people, subscribe to local papers in Korea. In general, the media power and influence is concentrated on the national newspapers and three economic dailies in Korea, and most of Koreans read these papers instead of local papers.
- ¹⁷ In general, Korean newspaper journalists have their first chance to be promoted when they have work experience over 11 years. After 11 years, they are promoted as an assistant-editor (or assistant-manager) and after another four or five years, assistant-editor is given a chance to become editor (or manager). Journalists do reporting until the assistant-manager level.
- ¹⁸ Soft news departments were defined as culture and living/style departments, and hard news departments were defined as business, politics, metro/city, international and technology/science.

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TABLES

Table. 1 The percentage of women journalists around the world

Country	The Percentage of Women Journalists (Year)
Finland	49 (1993)
Germany	41 (1993)
Chile	40 (1992)
France	39.9 (2001)
Taiwan	38 (1994)
United States	37 (2000)
Canada	28 (1996)
Mexico	25 (1991)
United Kingdom	25 (1995)
Korea	12.7 (2001)
Japan	10.2 (1999)

Source: Newspaper and Broadcasting Journal (2001 October) <<http://www.kpf.or.kr>>

Table 2. Change of Korean newspaper subscription

	1994	1996	1998
National Newspaper	60.8 %	68.5 %	52.7 %
Local Newspapers	14.6 %	15.1 %	11.6 %
Special-interest paper	7.7 %	7.8 %	6.5 %
No Subscription	16.9 %	30.7 %	35.5 %
Total	100 %	122.1 %	106.3 %

Source: Korea Press Foundation (1999) <<http://www.kpf.or.kr>>

Table 3. Women’s perceptions of sex discrimination as a problem for women journalists in general and for them personally, means, standard deviations and in percent

	Sex discrimination for women journalists in general	Sex discrimination for them personally
No problem at all		
1	0 %	2 %
2	2 %	10.8 %
3	9.9 %	14.7 %
4	14.9 %	21.6 %
5	36.6 %	37.3 %
6	25.7 %	9.8 %
7	10.9 %	3.9 %
A very serious problem		
Total	100 %	100 %
<u>M</u>	5.07	4.26
<u>SD</u>	1.19	1.35

Table 4. Women's perceptions of equity in pay, promotions, assignments and training/fellowship in their newsrooms, in percent

Who is better paid for the same job?	
Men	24.5
Women	0
Men and women are paid equally	68.6
Don't know/no answer	6.9
Who has a better chance to be promoted?	
Men	75.5
Women	1
Men and women have equal chances	14.7
Don't know/no answer	8.8
Who has a better chance to get the desirable job assignment?	
Men	73.5
Women	2
Men and women have equal chances	11.8
Don't know/no answer	12.7
Who has a better chance to get additional training/fellowship?	
Men	58.8
Women	2
Men and women have equal chances	18.6
Don't know/no answer	20.6
N = 102	

Table 5. Perceptions of managers' and male co-workers' treatment of women in respondent's workplace, means, standard deviations and in percent

	Do men and women treated equally by managers?	Do male employees treat women peers as equals?
Strongly disagree		
1	14.7 %	2 %
2	18.6 %	27.5 %
3	26.5 %	29.4 %
4	17.6 %	17.6 %
5	16.7 %	14.7 %
6	4.9 %	9.8 %
7	1 %	3.9 %
Strongly agree		
Total	100 %	100 %
<u>M</u>	3.22	3.46
<u>SD</u>	1.48	1.41

Table 6. Women journalists' efforts to cover more women, women's issues and women's interest stories

	Dept	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>t</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>P</u>
Compared to male reporters;						
Do you try to use more women as primary sources for your stories?	Soft	4.45	1.70	1.029	74	N.S.
	Hard	4.08	1.40	1.029	71.36	N.S.
Do you try to use more women as subjects of your stories?	Soft	4.61	1.65	1.333	74	N.S.
	Hard	4.13	1.44	1.333	72.59	N.S.
Do you try to write stories that specifically inform or interest women readers?	Soft	4.58	1.64	.891	74	N.S.
	Hard	4.26	1.45	.891	72.88	N.S.

Table 7. Correlation between female journalists' efforts to cover more women and years of experience

		Dependent Variables		
		Women as primary sources	Women as subjects	Stories for women readers
Years of experience		.081	.085	.127
	Women as primary sources		.881**	.548**
	Women as subjects			.588**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 8. Correlation between female journalists' efforts to cover more women and their supervisors' opinions on stories about women

	Dependent Variables		
	Women as primary sources	Women as subjects	Stories for women readers
Supervisors' opinions	.250*	.279**	.154

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Request Cover Letter

Dear Journalist,

I am Sooyoung Cho, a journalism master's student at Michigan State University, and I am doing my master's thesis on "Sex Discrimination in Korean Newspapers."

This research aims to find out ways to improve the newsroom environment for women, and reduce sex discrimination by demonstrating the problems women journalists may have undergone.

As part of my method, I am asking Korean women journalists to answer some multiple-choice questions at a Web site and two open-ended questions by e-mail so that I can find out women's opinions and experiences about sex discrimination in newspapers.

I have two sets of questions that should take only about 10 minutes to complete.

1) The survey at the Website <http://www.msu.edu/~yunzeesu/survey.html> is made of multiple-choice questions. Your answers will be anonymous and confidential because there is nothing to connect you to your answers.

2) Two open-ended questions appear at the end of this request letter because the Web site survey cannot receive Korean characters. If you answer the questions from your e-mail, your responses will remain confidential. If you wish to also remain anonymous, then you can send your responses from Microsoft's e-mail system (<http://www.hotmail.com>). If you wish to answer only one set of questions and not the other, then whatever you do is appreciated.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and confidential. Please be assured that your responses will not be used for any other purpose than this study. Neither you nor your newspaper will ever be specifically identified in reports about this study. Please know that completing the questions and submitting them will be tantamount to consent to helping with this study.

If you would like to check my identity, you can search for my name (Sooyoung Cho) on the Michigan State University website www.msu.edu, or you can contact my thesis director Dr. Lucinda Davenport by e-mail ludavenp@msu.edu or by phone (517) 355-6574.

In case you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please feel free to contact Ashir Kumar, Michigan State University's Chair of University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects at (517) 355-2180, or through email at [<ucrihs@msu.edu>](mailto:ucrihs@msu.edu).

I appreciate your time and your understanding about my endeavor.

Thank you,

Sooyoung Cho

Directions:

1. Please participate in the survey by visiting website below:

<http://www.msu.edu/~yunzeesu/survey.html>

2. After answering the web-survey, please press “SUBMIT” button.

3. After finishing web-survey, please return to this request letter to answer the two open-ended questions below.

Open-ended questions: Please fill out these two questions after finishing web-survey.

1. Would you describe briefly the most serious or most disturbing instance of sex discrimination, if any, you or your co-workers have experienced while working for a newspaper?

2. What do you expect to be doing professionally in five years?

Thank you very much for your time, patience and cooperation.

Is there anything in your experience you would like to share that I haven't asked?

Appendix B

Web-Survey on Sex Discrimination Among Korean Newspaperwomen

This survey concerns your opinion and experience about sex discrimination. For the purposes of this survey, sex discrimination is defined as “any instance in which female employees appear to have been denied opportunities or rewards because of their gender and not for any reasons related to their abilities or experience.”

Direction: Please click the answer that best fits your response.

1. In your opinion, how much of a problem is sex discrimination for women as newspaper reporters or editors?

No problem at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A very serious problem

2. In your own career as a newspaper reporter or editor, how much of a problem has sex discrimination been for you personally?

No problem at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 A very serious problem

For questions 3-11, please tell me how often “during your whole newspaper career,” you personally have been subject to these types of sex discrimination.

3. How often have you been passed over for promotion in favor of “an equally or less qualified” man?

1 Never 2 Once 3 More than once 4 Don't know/no answer

4. How often have you been denied assignment to a desirable beat or story assignment because of your gender?

Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Nearly always or always

5. If yes, was the decision not to assign you to the desirable beat or story assignment based on the belief that the assignment was not appropriate or dangerous for a woman?

1 Yes 2 No 3 Don't know/ no answer

6. Among these beats, what beats have you been denied or not permitted?

Please list ALL the beats that you have been denied or not permitted.

1 Culture 2 Living/Style 3 Business/ Economics 4 Politics 5 Sports
6 Metro/City 7 International 8 Technology/Science 9 Copy Editor 10 Editorial
11 Others 12 I have never been denied.

7. How often have you been denied a job, story or beat assignment you wanted because those making the assignment said it would conflict with your role as a parent?

Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Nearly always or always
8 Don't have children

8. If yes, what would the decision have been if the reporter or editor was a man with children?

1 The same for a man 2 Different for a man 3 Don't know/ no answer

9. In your beat, because of your gender, how often have you been "NOT informed" about newsworthy information that male reporters from other newspapers were informed of by a source?

Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Nearly always or always

10. Within your newspaper, because of your gender, how often have you been "NOT informed" about important decisions or issues that male colleagues were informed of by your supervisor?

Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Nearly always or always

11. How often have you heard your male managers or colleagues make degrading remarks about women in general?

Never 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Nearly always or always

Questions 12-15 pertain only to people involved in news-related jobs at your newspaper.

12. If men and women had same abilities or experiences, in general, who is better paid for the same jobs at your newspaper?

1 Men 2 Women 3 Men and women are paid the same 4 Don't know/ no answer

13. If men and women had same abilities or experiences, in general, who has a better chance to be promoted at your newspaper?

1 Men 2 Women 3 Men and women have equal chances 4 Don't know/ no answer

14. If men and women had same abilities or experiences, in general, who has a better chance to get the desirable job assignments at your newspaper?

1 Men 2 Women 3 Men and women have equal chances 4 Don't know/ no answer

15. If men and women had same abilities or experiences, in general, who has a better chance to get additional training and fellowship at your newspaper?

1 Men 2 Women 3 Men and women have equal chances 4 Don't know/ no answer

For questions 16-20, please tell me the degree of agreement or disagreement with each of the following questions.

16. Do men and women treated equally by managers in your workplace?

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

17. Do male employees treat women peers as equals in your workplace?

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

18. Would you like to see some changes in your workplace to enhance the climate for women?

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

19. Would you say that more women in managerial positions would improve your newspaper work environment?

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

20. Would you say that employing more women reporters would improve your newspaper work environment?

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

21. During your career, if women in your newspaper requested changes in the workplace because of sex discrimination, that request was in what forms? Please select ALL.

- 1 Appeals by an individual woman to management
- 2 Appeals to management by two or more employees
- 3 Litigation by an individual
- 4 Litigation by two or more employees
- 5 No appeal, no litigation
- 6 Don't know/ No answer

Please tell me about your newspaper.

22. Would you say that your newspaper has sufficiently (in terms of numbers of stories and space) covered women and women's issues compared to men?

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

23. Would you say that your newspaper has fairly (in terms of objectivity) covered women and women's issues compared to men?

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

For questions 24-26, "during your whole career," please describe your efforts to cover women, women's issues and women's interest stories.

24. Compared to male reporters, do you try to use more women as primary sources for your stories?

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

25. Compared to male reporters, do you try to cover more women as subjects of your stories?

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

26. Compared to male reporters, do you try to write stories that specifically inform or interest women readers?

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

27. When you write a story about women or women's issues, does your supervisor think the story is important?

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

In a moment, I'd like to get some information about you and your experience as a journalist. This information will help me tabulate the results and will not be used to identify you in any way.

28. What is your position?

1 Reporter 2 Copy Editor 3 Assistant-editor 4 Editor 5 Editorial Desk 6 Other

29. In which department are you working?

1 Culture 2 Living/Style 3 Business/ Economics 4 Politics
5 Sports 6 Metro/City 7 International 8 Technology/Science
9 Copy editor 10 Editorial 11 Others

30. How many years have you worked as a journalist? () years

31. Approximately what percentage of journalists are women in your newspaper? () %

32. Is your immediate supervisor a man or a woman?

1 Man 2 Woman

33. In what year were you born? (19) year

34. Please indicate your marital status.

1 Never married 2 Divorced 3 Married 4 Other 5 No answer

Please click "SUMIT" button after finishing survey.

SUBMIT

Due to technical problem, open-ended questions couldn't be provided through the web.

Could you please return to my email and click "reply"?

Then, please fill out two open-ended questions attached to email and send me back.

Thank you again for your participation!

Appendix C

Open-ended question responses about the most serious or most disturbing instance of sex discrimination

1. Beat and story assignment discrimination

“One day, when a woman reporter for the living/style section quit her job, I was suddenly transferred to that beat without any prior notice while I was covering the international beat. I was upset not because I mind covering women’s news, but because they disregarded my opinion and didn’t consult with me about the decision. Also, I think that managers’ stereotype that only women should fill women’s vacancies is a problem.”

“After the first six month training, I applied to the business department. Regardless of my wishes, of course, a man was being assigned to business and I was placed with the culture department. ”

“Beat assignment discrimination. Women are also assigned trivial stories within the same department.”

“The old tendency, assigning only women reporters to the living/style section, still repeats in Korean newsroom. I protested it to the managing-editor and received poor treatment because of the complaint.”

“After a period of apprenticeship at the police beat, I wanted to stay at the police beat whereas other male reporters wanted to leave. However, men stayed there and I was assigned to the culture department. I have strongly expressed my wishes to work as a police reporter and after 10 months I came back to the police beat. From that time, my newspaper no longer hesitates to assign women to the police beat.”

“When my female colleague asked to work at the Internet team, a male manager of that department shook his head. I think he refused her because of her gender.”

“While I had worked as a city reporter they transferred me [from the city department] to another department without notifying me during my maternity leave. Furthermore, another woman in my paper who worked for the political department was transferred to another department because of her pregnancy.”

“When I applied to the business department at the age of 34, the editor of the department said, ‘We will accept one female reporter but not a woman as old as you.’ Later, a woman who is eight years younger than me became the first female business reporter of my newspaper.”

“In general, women reporters having over 10-years of experience are considered behind in careers compared to men, because beats where most of those mid-career women have worked are treated as minor. Therefore, although hard news departments easily accept young women, they don’t want mid-career women reporters, saying these

women are not competent and so forth.”

“I think women journalists less discriminated against than women in other profession [in Korea]. I have not undergone obvious discrimination yet. Nevertheless, core beats generally go to male reporters and men also have more chances to cover more visible and newsworthy stories. Given that women are discriminated against because of the small numbers, the fact that we can not have concerted power is a problem.”

“Although I have been discriminated against in beat and story assignments, I think sex discrimination in the newspaper is not that severe compared to other professions in Korea. In addition, since there are so few women in the newsroom, a woman could be more successful and more visible than men if she works hard. Although married women reporters have undergone difficulties due to balancing the family in parallel with her profession, this is a problem that applies not only to women journalists but also almost all Korean working women.”

2. Promotion discrimination

“A female assistant-editor who had been left out of promotion for a few times, finally, was forced to leave the newspaper.”

“My newspaper has only one female manager. We had almost 10 female senior reporters who were qualified to be managers but all of them left the newspaper due to the promotional disadvantage against women.”

“Due to the promotion discrimination, there are no women managers at my newspaper. Female assistant-managers have faced this type of discrimination when they have a chance to be managers. We had one [female manager] a few years ago, but she was fired in the 1998 personnel reduction.”

“Being left out of the promotion.”

“In my case, a man who is as old as me, has less of a newspaper career and was suspended from his duties for three months due to making a serious mistake, was promoted ahead of me. Moreover, last year, in my newspaper, a man was promoted as a manager, putting aside a woman who excelled that man in terms of ability and by years of experience. Promotion discrimination is ubiquitous at most newspapers.”

“There seems to be promotional disadvantage against women.”

“Relatively equal working conditions [both men and women] have been created in Korean newsrooms until women journalists reach a certain level. However, few women can expect a higher promotional advancement after the assistant-editor level.”

“I heard that women reporters who could be managers are pressured to be resign. In other words, there seems to be a promotional disadvantage [against women journalists].”

3. Informational exclusion from the beat and within the newspaper

“In Korean news business, where there are a lot of informal drinking gatherings between reporters and sources, male reporters and male sources exchange information in personal ways, excluding female reporters.”

“Most of the information within the newspaper is spread from unofficial gatherings where women are alienated in most cases.”

“Women are totally ignored as colleagues by men in the after-work gatherings.”

“Women journalists are often excluded from after-work gatherings.”

4. Pressured to leave the newspaper or laid off from the news organization

“During the 1998 Korean economic crisis [in the time of massive personnel reduction in the news industry] many women journalists left the newspaper. Particularly, in the case of couples working for same newspaper, wives were laid off or were overtly pressured to leave their jobs. Managers publicly said, ‘Your husband makes a living even though you don’t’.”

“Many senior female journalists left the job due to personnel reduction in the 1998.”

“Pressure for retirement towards female managers.”

“In the 1998 recession, five competent women reporters at my newspaper were pressured to leave the job because they married to co-workers. They were threatened ‘Your husband could be demoted unless you leave the job.’ So they had to leave the job, being afraid their husbands would be fired...”

5. Prejudice and degrading remarks towards women

“In the early 1980s, men in my paper insultingly asked a pregnant female reporter, ‘What kind of job does your husband have? What an incompetent man your husband must be to make a pregnant wife earns a living?’”

“One male manager at my paper once openly said, ‘One male reporter is better than three women reporters together.’”

“Some male managers dislike women reporters because they think women are weak or unsuitable to cover the ‘dangerous’ beats.”

“When female reporters are successful, male colleagues usually don’t admit these women are competent. Instead, men show cynical attitude towards those women, saying, ‘They just have the newspaper owner’s favor’.”

“Male sources say degrading remarks about women and insult female journalists in the informal gatherings.”

“Male co-workers spoke humiliating remarks towards women in the informal gatherings with women reporters.”

“At the time of massive personnel reduction in 1998, no women was laid off at my paper so male reporters protested, saying that ‘Why are women excepted [from the laid off]?’ Although company explained that reduction was being made according to personal ability, male co-workers still argue that that was sex discrimination against men. On the basis of their claims, it seems that they think that ‘Women don’t have responsibility as a breadwinner, so women should give way to men in difficult times’.”

“When women reporters are doing a side job like freelance writing, men usually think women do not devote their time to their job as newspaper reporters.”

“I personally object to smoking but understand the people who smoke to relieve the stress and pressure. One day, I heard the story from one of my colleagues that she was almost slapped when she smoked in front of a senior male reporter. This happens just because she is a woman.”

“I have no serious sex discriminatory experience because I have not stayed here that long. Despite the beat discrimination against women, I have worked for the business department from the beginning. But my male assistant-manager is reluctant to work with me within the same beat because I am a woman.”

“Some male reporters disregard their female managers’ speeches or decisions.”

6. Discrimination against additional training chances

“When my female colleague applied to a training abroad program, her male supervisor sarcastically asked, ‘Where are you trying to go by yourself, abandoning your husband and children?’ As a result, the training chance went to a younger male reporter instead of her.”

“When I applied to a training abroad program conducted by the Korea Press Foundation [one of its functions is offering qualified journalists training programs] at my age of 39, a male reviewer made a sarcastic remark to me. ‘What’s good for your newspaper if we [KPF] fund a forty-year-old woman [like you] to study.’”

7. Sexual harassment

“A male source made physical contact (holding her around her waist) to my female co-worker, pretending to be drunk. This incident shows that male sources think of women journalists as just ‘women’.”

“Male sources have often expressed ‘special interest’ to me that I don’t want. Many working women in Korea have to deal with this from the men. Fortunately, things are getting better.”

“A woman reporter at another newspaper was sexually harassed by a male reporter in the drinking gathering.”

“There are many occasions that men treat women reporters as just ‘female’ not as their colleagues. For example, male reporters tried to make physical contact, pretending to be drunk.”

“Unwanted physical contacts by the men in the drinking party.”

“A drunken male manager once made uninvited physical contact to a female reporter in the after-work gathering. She was upset about it and asked him for an official apology, but he refused an apology, saying that this can happen in drinking gatherings. After all, that man apologized to her and both of them work in the same department.”

“Sexual harassment is a serious problem. News organizations need a rule for sexual harassment that can make old male managers stop unconsciously telling sexual jokes to women, especially young women journalists.”

“A few years ago, a male manager assigned a female reporter to write male-genital-problem stories, saying that men readers feel more aroused when women write those kinds of stories.”

8. No experience of sex discrimination

“I haven’t experienced serious discrimination yet because I haven’t stayed in this job that long. I think women journalists are less sex discriminated compared with women in other professions in Korea.”

“I have no specific sex discrimination so far.”

“Sometimes I feel powerless in the newsroom as a minority, however, on the other hand, I have enjoyed a sort of privilege as a woman. If a woman works hard and well, she can easily get more attention compared to men who have similar abilities. I was the first female business reporter at my newspaper. At that time, my supervisor was a very open-minded person who didn’t discriminate against women. From the beginning, I was assigned to the core beat in the business department. I think the role of managers who don’t sexually discriminate is still very important in order for women reporters to settle down in the organization...Women cannot exercise concerted power because of inferiority in numbers. So, increasing the number of women journalists, which still stays about 10 percent, is the most important matter to solve.”

“I have no specific sex discrimination experiences. My paper has hired from 25 percent to 50 percent women every year during the last seven to eight years. I can’t say that women are more sexually discriminated against than men.”

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