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Gender and agency in careers: the work-life experiences of women employed by Japanese and South Korean firms

Beekman, C.H.

Citation

Beekman, C. H. (2024, February 14). *Gender and agency in careers: the work-life experiences of women employed by Japanese and South Korean firms*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3717568>

Version: Publisher's Version

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Macro-contexts gender equality in employment in Japan and Korea

Main Factors	Japan	Korea
Gender Equality Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equal Employment Opportunities Law (1985) - Major amendments in 1997 and 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equal Employment Act (1987) - Major amendments in 1989, 1996, and 2004
Work-family Support Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on childcare leave provisions with relatively low wage replacement - Measures to support flexible work (reduced working hours, flexible start- and finish times, telework, etc.) - Overtime ban for working mothers with children under the age of three - Employment protection of women after marriage, childbirth, and return from childcare leave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on childcare leave provisions with relatively high wage replacement - Measures to support flexible work (reduced working hours, flexible start- and finish times, telework, etc.) - Overtime ban for working mothers with children under the age of three - Employment protection of women after marriage, childbirth, and return from childcare leave
Welfare Regime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welfare through work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welfare through work
Government Implementation Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Soft law approach - Positive Action - Reliance on voluntary cooperation by employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring and correcting - Affirmative Action - Combination of incentives and penalties
Labor Market Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dual labor market (regular-irregular employment and large firms-SMEs) - Strong ILMs (firm internal labor markets) - Higher wages and more protection for both regular and irregular employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dual labor market (regular-irregular employment and large firms-SMEs) - Erosion of ILMs (firm internal labor markets) and reliance on irregular employees as buffer - Lower wages and less protection for all employees irrespective of employment status
Female Labor Force Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flattening M-curve - Decline women with interrupted careers since the mid 2000s - Lower unemployment of university educated women in recent years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Persistent M-curve - High career exit of women irrespective of educational attainment - High unemployment of university educated women
Women's Overall Employment Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Predominantly in irregular employment (part-time work) - Prominent in occupations like service workers, clerks, and professional workers but not in managerial jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Predominantly in irregular employment - Mainly in occupations like professional workers, clerks, and service workers but the least found in managerial jobs
Women's Labor Market Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower wages than men with equivalent education or work experience - Predominantly in entry-level managerial jobs - Lower promotion rates and slower pace of promotion within firms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower wages than men with equivalent education or work experience - Predominantly in entry-level managerial jobs (increase female section heads in recent years) - Lower promotion rates and slower pace of promotion within firms
Employment System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long-term employment with job security - Seniority-based promotion with ability-based elements - Dual career tracks for women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexibility without security - Seniority-based promotion with performance-based elements and financial incentives - Women in male career tracks

	- Collectivistic, relationship-oriented organizational culture, focus on harmony and attachment	- Collectivistic and hierarchical organizational culture, paternalistic leadership, focus on work ethic
HR Practices	- Recruitment of college/university graduates - Development of firm-specific skills - Promotion and policy uptake decisions delegated to individual managers - Subjective performance evaluations and selection of managerial candidates	- Recruitment of entry-level and mid-career professionals - Extensive training, more focus on specialist skills - Promotion and policy uptake decisions delegated to individual managers - Subjective performance evaluations and selection of managerial candidates
Role of HR Departments in Large Firms	- Centralized and powerful	- Declining
Collective Bargaining	- Firm-specific - Limited role of unions in supporting gender equity measures	- Firm-specific - Limited role of unions in supporting gender equity measures

Sources: (Froese et al. 2018; KOSTAT 2020; Nishimura and Kwon 2016; Statistics Bureau Japan 2021a)

Appendix 2: Interview guide

1. Can you tell us about when you first entered the company? Was this your first job after graduation?
2. What was your major in university?
3. Was it difficult to find regular employment at a major firm?
4. Did you have any particular ambitions or aspirations at the time you started work life?
5. Was it a straightforward decision to choose the career track or did you have any doubts?
6. Were you concerned about being able to combine having a family with your responsibilities as a career track worker in the future?
7. What was the working environment like when you started as a young female professional and how has it changed throughout the years?
8. What are your regular workdays like?
9. What period of the day are you most productive? What interferes most with getting your daily work done?
10. Do you think work can be organized more time efficiently at your department and other divisions? If so, how?
11. Do you feel the workload is manageable within an eight-hour workday?
12. Do you feel free to leave at 6PM? How is the atmosphere in the team regarding leaving on time?
13. Are there unspoken rules about appropriate time to leave the office?
14. Do you regularly stay in the office even when you finished your work for the day?
15. Do you feel the personal relation with your supervisor somehow influences the performance evaluation you receive?
16. Do your male co-workers spend more time outside the office socializing with superiors? If so, do you think that it gives them an advantage in performance evaluations and promotion decisions?
17. Do you as a female manager/career track worker feel you have to work twice as hard as men to prove your worth to the company?
18. Have you experienced or witnessed male or female co-workers work together to bring down a female in the competition for promotion?
19. Have you worked under female supervisors? How was that?
20. Did you feel supported by your supervisors in your career development? Have they taken an interest in helping you navigate company life?
21. Did you have any female role models that inspired you in your career?
22. Was there anyone male or female in the organization who took you under your wing and help you in your career choices?
23. How many times did you transfer jobs and how was that?

24. Have your aspirations and career outlook changed throughout the years?
25. Are you married or do you plan to get married?
26. Did your mother work when you were young? Did your parents influence your choices in major and career?
27. Do you have children? If so, how did childbirth change the way you think about your own career?
28. Can you describe what a normal working day looks like from the time you wake up until you go to bed?
29. Who takes care of your child when you go to work?
30. Is your spouse also a regular employee at a company?
31. How do you manage emergency situations with your child such as sickness or accidents?
32. Do you find the work-life balance services offered by your employer useful?
33. Do you feel an obligation as a female manager to set an example for junior career track women and help them in advancing their careers?
34. What do sogoshoku women need the most in terms of policies and practices to advance their careers long-term?
35. Do you consider childcare to be a matter that needs to be solved by the women and men themselves or do you also see a responsibility of the company/employer in facilitating it?
36. How high is work-life balance and D&I on your list of priorities when managing your team? Is it sometimes hard to reconcile those policy objectives with meeting other hard team performance targets?
37. Do you feel D&I and work-life balance are valued more by employees at all levels of the organization in recent years? How is this reflected in their behavior on the work floor?
38. Do you feel free to utilize the full period of leave?
39. Do you feel that your supervisor cares about the personal situation of team members and respects their personal life?
40. Does your supervisor lead by example when it comes to work-life balance? For instance, does he leave the office on reasonable times to make it easier for subordinates to leave as well?
41. Do you think he will be supportive when employees request three-year leave?
42. What is the average length of leave that women (and men) take in the departments you worked?
43. How do co-workers respond to leave takers when they are away for extended periods?
44. Are you able to use your days off as you wish or do you generally take them one by one depending on your team's situation?
45. How many vacation days in a row do you usually have per year? Are unused days off compensated financially?
46. Do you have any female subordinates? Is it different to manage females and males?
47. Have you noticed a difference in productivity between men and women without children vis-à-vis working mothers in the career track?
48. What is the highest position you realistically think is possible to achieve in your organization? Do you think it is attainable for you personally and why (not)?
49. Do you aspire to climb that high?
50. What personal sacrifices are necessary to achieve a position in top management?
51. Do you feel you have any control over how your career develops?
52. If offered a promotion, would you decline it if it meant having to relocate, taking on a risky project, or having an increased workload?
53. Were you ever approached by a headhunter? Did you consider to move elsewhere?
54. If it were unable for you to get promoted higher in your current company, what would you do? Would you stay regardless or consider to find a job elsewhere?
55. Were there times when you felt your supervisor evaluated you based on other reasons than actual work performance?
56. Do you think strategically about your own career development? Can you give examples of some steps you have taken or plan to take?
57. Were there times you wanted to quit or change to the general track? What kept you going?
58. Are you in favor of flexible work arrangements? Do you allow individual members to start and leave when they want or sometimes work from home?
59. Do you feel more visible as a female navigating middle- upper management?
60. Do you spend a lot of time expanding your network within and outside the organization?
61. Looking back on your career decisions so far, do you have any regrets? Are there things you would have done differently in hindsight?

62. Where there times you felt unsure about having a future at this company? If so, what was the main reason?
63. When you think about your future at this company, do you clearly see possibilities to develop yourself further or is your outlook more obscure?
64. How many years do you think you can survive in this company?
65. Do you have any particular strategies to increase your chances?

Appendix 3: Background characteristics Korean interviewees

No	Age	Marital status	Dual earner	Children	Tenure	Job rank	Current occupational field	Industry
1	47	Married	Yes	2	2	Department head	Human Resources	Fashion
2	30	Single	-	0	6	Assistant manager	Technology planning	Manufacturing (chemicals)
3	31	Married	Yes	0	7	Assistant manager	Business division	Manufacturing (chemicals)
4	34	Married	Yes	2	10	Assistant manager	Corporate planning	Manufacturing (chemicals)
5	33	Married	Yes	1	9	Assistant manager	Sales	Manufacturing (chemicals)
6	33	Single	-	0	11	Section chief	Sales	Manufacturing (chemicals)
7	32	Married	Yes	2	9	Assistant manager	Merchandising	Fashion
8	31	Single	-	0	8	Assistant manager	Marketing	Fashion
9	31	Married	Yes	0	6	Assistant manager	Visual merchandising	Fashion
10	37	Married	Yes	0	3	Assistant manager	Business planning	Fashion
11	34	Single	-	0	11	Section chief	Technology planning	Manufacturing (chemicals)
12	35	Married	Yes	2	12	Section chief	Purchasing	Manufacturing (chemicals)
13	37	Married	Yes	2	13	Section chief	Sales	Manufacturing (chemicals)
14	33	Married	Yes	0	10	Section chief	Corporate planning	Manufacturing (chemicals)
15	38	Married	Yes	2	15	Deputy general manager	Educational development/HRD	Manufacturing (chemicals)
16	37	Married	Yes	0	13	Section chief	Design	Fashion
17	39	Married	Yes	2	17	Deputy general manager	HRD	Fashion
18	36	Married	Yes	0	8	Section chief	Marketing	Fashion
19	37	Single	-	0	10	Section chief	Sales	Fashion
20	33	Married	Yes	1	10	Section chief	Human Resources	Holding company/ group HQ
21	38	Single	-	0	5	General manager	Legal	Manufacturing (chemicals)
22	31	Married	Yes	0	9	Section chief	HRD	Software/IT

23	34	Married	Yes	0	7	Assistant manager	HRD	Pharmaceuticals
24	44	Single	-	0	10	Vice president	Legal	Manufacturing (chemicals)

Appendix 4: Background characteristics Japanese interviewees

No	Age	Marital status	Dual earner	Children	Tenure	Job rank	Current occupational field	Industry
1	55	Single	-	0	20	General manager	D&I/HR	Manufacturing (chemicals)
2	28	Single	-	0	3	Staff	D&I/HR	Manufacturing (chemicals)
3	43	Married	Yes	3	22	Section chief	Office support	Beauty/lifestyle products
4	49	Single	-	0	28	General manager	D&I	IT services
5	32	Married	Yes	0	10	Staff	D&I	Beauty/lifestyle products
6	59	Married	Yes	1	26	Senior manager	D&I	Manufacturing (electronics)
7	49	Married	Yes	0	25	Staff	D&I	Manufacturing (electronics)
8	48	Married	Yes	2	20	Staff	D&I	Manufacturing (electronics)
9	50	Married	Yes	3	28	Senior manager	Marketing	Manufacturing (electronics)
10	48	Married	Yes	1	26	Senior manager	D&I/HR	Aviation/hospitality
11	40	Married	Yes	1	18	Senior specialist	Management process transformation	Technology provider
12	49	Single	-	0	29	Senior specialist	D&I	Technology provider
13	50	Single	-	0	26	Section chief	HRD	Technology provider
14	45	Married	Yes	1	21	Section chief	Engineer product development	Technology provider
15	54	Married	Yes	1	32	General manager	HRD	Technology provider
16	48	Married	Yes	1	26	Section chief	Engineer R&D	Technology provider
17	56	Married	Yes	2	-	General manager	Finance	Technology provider
18	42	Single	-	0	1	Assistant manager	HRD	Technology provider
19	27	Single	-	0	5	Staff	D&I	Aviation/hospitality
20	56	Married	Yes	1	14	Department manager	HRM	Technology provider
21	38	Married	Yes	0	18	Assistant manager	Human Resources	Technology provider

22	56	Single	-	0	27	Section chief	Human Resources	Oil/gas
23	51	Married	Yes	1	30	Manager	IT business division	IT services
24	48	Single	-	0	11	Manager	Account management	Technology provider
25	40	Single	-	0	-	Manager	Human Resources	Insurance
26	43	Single	-	0	17	Deputy general manager	HRD	Insurance
27	44	Single	-	0	18	Manager	Operation support	Technology provider
28	50	Single	-	0	27	Section chief	Sales	Manufacturing (beverages)
29	50	Married	Yes	2	30	Manager	HR	IT services
30	51	Married	Yes	2	29	Section chief	Editing	Newspaper
31	40	Married	Yes	1	19	Section chief	Agency management	Insurance
32	48	Single	-	0	25	Section chief	Project management	IT services
33	43	Married	Yes	1	-	Deputy general manager	Internal audit	Insurance
34	45	Married	Yes	2	24	Deputy department head	Sales	Insurance
35	52	Married	Yes	2	30	Section chief	Systems Engineering	IT services
36	51	Married	Yes	0	28	Section chief	Business promotion	IT services
37	53	Married	Yes	0	30	Senior executive director	Corporate management	Cosmetics/beauty products
38	43	Married	Yes	2	20	Senior engineer	Project management	IT services
39	58	Married	Yes	0	30	Director	HRD/D&I	Beauty/lifestyle products

Appendix 5: Background characteristics participants of panel sessions in Japan

No	Age	Marital status	Spouse's employment	No. children	Years of tenure	Rank	Current no. subordinates	No. job transfers	Education	Longest childcare leave
1	53	Married	Corporate employee	1	30	Senior manager	150	2	University degree	18 months
2	55	Married	Corporate employee	3	11	Manager	3	4	University degree	4 weeks

3	51	Married	Corporate employee	1	30	Manager	2	5	University degree	12 months
4	48	Single	-	0	25	Manager	6	3	University degree	-
5	52	Married	Self-employed	2	30	Manager	19	3	College degree	9 months
6	51	Married	Corporate employee	0	28	Manager	0	3	University degree	-
7	43	Married	Corporate employee	2	20	Manager	0	3	University degree	12 months

Appendix 6: Background characteristics senior male managers in Korea

No	Age	Marital status	Wife's employment	No. children	Years of tenure	Rank	Occupation (industry)	Internal transfers	Recruited
1	47	Married	Unemployed	1	22	Department head	Management planning (chemicals)	3	Graduate recruit
2	46	Married	Unemployed	2	16	Department head	Business planning (chemicals)	2	Graduate recruit
3	41	Married	Unemployed	2	8	Deputy dep. head	Sales (fashion)	2	Mid-career
4	50	Married	Part-time	2	23	Department head	Accounting (fashion)	1	Graduate recruit
5	47	Married	Full-time	1	24	Department head	Business planning (fashion)	6	Graduate recruit
6	42	Married	Full-time	4	18	Deputy dep. head	Business planning (chemicals)	2	Graduate recruit
7	46	Married	Unemployed	1	21	Department head	Purchasing (chemicals)	2	Graduate recruit
8	46	Married	Unemployed	2	10	Department head	Business Planning (chemicals)	1	Mid-career
9	50	Married	Unemployed	2	12	Department head	Customer relation management (fashion)	0	Mid-career
10	45	Married	Full-time	Expecting first	21	Department head	Business planning (fashion)	7	Graduate recruit

Appendix 6: Profiles of HR informants in Korea

No	Age	Gender	Marital status	Children	Years of tenure	Rank	Job title	Company
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1	46	Male	Married	n/a	20	General manager	Team manager Human Resources Management	Group HQ
2	53	Male	Married	n/a	27	Vice president/ executive	Head of Human Resources	Group HQ
3	30	Female	n/a	n/a	7	Assistant manager	Assistant manager Human Resources Management Team	Group HQ
4	31	Female	Married	Expecting first	9	Section chief	Women's Policies officer	IT
5	34	Female	Married	1	7	Assistant manager	Women's Policies officer	Pharmaceuticals
6	47	Female	Married	2	3 (mid-career recruit)	General manager	Team leader Human Resources	Fashion
7	33	Female	Married	1 Expecting second	10	Section chief	Manager Human Resources	Group HQ

Appendix 7: Profiles of HR informants in Japan

No	Age	Marital status	Children	Years of tenure	Rank	Job title	Industry
1	48	Married	1	26	Senior manager	Senior manager Diversity & Inclusion HR Strategy	Hospitality
2	49	Single	0	29	Manager	Manager Diversity & Inclusion	IT
3	50	Single	0	26	Manager	Manager Human Resources	High-tech
4	54	Married	1	32	Department head (executive)	Manager Human Resources	High-tech
5	55	Single	0	20	Manager	Manager Diversity & Inclusion Development	Chemicals
6	28	Single	0	3	Assistant manager	Staff member Diversity & Inclusion Development	Chemicals
7	27	Single	0	5	Non-career track position	Staff member Diversity & Inclusion HR Strategy	Hospitality
8	38	Married	Expecting first	18	Assistant manager	Human Resources Chief	Space technology
9	40	Single	0	-	Manager	Manager Human Resources	Insurance

10	43	Single	0	17	Deputy general manager	Deputy General Manager Training & Development	Insurance
11	50	Married	2	30	Manager	Manager Human Resources	IT
12	58	Married	0	30	Manager	Manager Human Resources	Lifestyle/beauty
13	49	Single	0	-	CEO	Diversity Producer	Business consulting
14	32	Married	0	10	Assistant manager	Staff member Human Capital Development Diversity & Inclusion	Lifestyle/beauty
15	59	Married	1	-	CEO	Founder & owner Wellness systems (D&I)	Business consulting
16	49	Married	0	15	Staff	Staff member Diversity Promotion Human Resource Department	High-tech
17	48	Married	2	20	Section chief	Section Chief Diversity Promotion Human Resource Department	High-tech

Appendix 8: Mixed-methods used in Korea

After the individual interviews, I distributed an employee survey through an anonymous on-line link to all employees of the two companies. The response rate was less than ten per cent but yielded 180 records that were useful to corroborate whether the issues that surfaced during the interviews were experienced by others in the two companies (*triangulation*). The survey gauged employee attitudes regarding the working environment, perception of policies, fairness of performance evaluations and promotion decisions, and awareness of gender diversity with sets of statements (on a 5-point Likert scale). The numerical survey data only served a descriptive purpose to establish a normative baseline of how the policies were received by employees organization wide. The survey also included two open questions that were useful for in-depth analysis. One asked about reasons why they could not (or would not) exercise their rights to parental leave. A total of 104 respondents (38 women and 66 men) answered this question. As could be expected, the men did not perceive going on leave to be a realistic option for several reasons. They frequently mentioned financial consequences (loss of income), negative attitudes

of superiors towards fathers' uptake, and too much work to take time off. For the women, the matter was not whether they could go on leave (this seemed evident to them) but if they could use the one year they are entitled to (this remained extremely difficult). They were constrained in their choice freedoms by concerns about delayed promotions, burdening their coworkers with transferred workload, and negative attitudes of their superiors. The answers of men and women indicated parental leave was gender coded in that it was acceptable for mothers to use (some of) it but not for fathers.

The other question asked respondents to leave any comments about the change initiatives in their organization. 54 respondents (28 men and 27 women) shared personal views and critiques that illustrated gender differences in how innovative policies targeted at women workers were perceived. Most men were not against policies to support women but generally believed gender inequality was no longer an issue in their organizations. Their notion of fair practices stressed individual merit without special consideration of gender at work. The women appreciated corporate efforts to improve the working conditions for its female workforce but thought much more needed to be done before individual women could really feel the effect of the policies and use them freely. The survey data confirmed the common perception of the women and HR informants interviewed that policy use was not fully normalized yet in either organization, especially among male team managers. In both companies, there clearly existed a wide gap between policy and practice with middle managers acting as gatekeepers of individual's work-life balance.

The final method used to collect data was direct observation with a passive presence. I decided to add this naturalistic method for two reasons. First, by drawing the researcher into the complex world of subjects while they interact as they go about their daily business, it allows one

to witness connections, correlations, and causes, and how they unfold, thereby producing “hard evidence” that individual interviews or surveys cannot yield (Adler and Adler 1998). Second, when the technique is combined with other in-depth methods it allows for cross-checking that enhances consistency and validity (Ibid.).

Therefore, I attended a corporate meeting hosted by the centralized HR department with representatives of each member company in charge of disseminating the policies in their organizations. I sat quietly in the back of the room next to my company liaison who briefly introduced me as an external researcher. My presence was noticed by the meeting participants but did not seem to interfere with their natural interaction. All ten women’s policies officers were relatively junior female employees (assistant-manager/section chief) and married. This, on its own, was telling as it indicated that the work-family policies were officially framed as “women’s issues” to be implemented and practiced by women themselves. The meeting started with a formal address by the head of HR (senior male department head) that emphasized the owner’s wishes to improve the women’s policies and make them more effective and summary of a recent meeting with CEOs to address these issues. After he left the room (and a younger female section head took over), the atmosphere became more relaxed. The women’s policies officers had lively discussions about the issues they faced when persuading middle managers to follow company policies and shared views on what type of support female employees needed the most. This collective brain-storm session indicated that the policies were finetuned in-house through a democratic bottom-up process (attuned with the practical needs of working mothers) while also matched to the practices of other major corporations. The scope of services and support systems offered for young female employees and working mothers under the umbrella of women’s policies by far exceeded that of the companies in the Netherlands and USA I surveyed in

preparation of the fieldwork in Korea. The communal nature of (future) measures (e.g., safe, affordable housing for young female recruits, personalized messages/gifts after childbirth, in-house daycare center, messages through the internal news channel, etc.) reflected an implicit understanding of the firm's broader responsibility to support its female workforce beyond offering the minimal according to national law to individual women.

During the three-hour meeting the women came up with innovative ideas to diversify (the already very generous) support systems but did not speak about a more pressing issue, how to normalize policy uptake and change the negative attitudes of male supervisors when subordinates express their wishes to use policies. My overall impression was that the policies, although well-intended and sophisticated on paper, lacked internal legitimacy largely due to the "soft approach" in dissemination without accountability structures for middle managers to respect company regulations. Besides, the women's policies officers' junior status granted them too little power or social capital in their organizations to persuade male authority figures so they could not do much more than hope for their voluntary collaboration. This corroborated the common stance and predicaments (being expected to produce "soft" gender quota without the organizational status to persuade middle managers) of the women's officers and HR informants I interviewed individually.

Appendix 9: Panel sessions in Japan

The first panel session took place in a conference room at the company with six female managers. The six women were members of a female leadership network (private initiative organized by themselves). They had periodic gatherings to learn leadership skills from speakers they invited from outside. The atmosphere among the women who were close in age (between 48

and 55 years) and rank (mid- to senior managers with subordinates) was amiable. Their relationship was clearly more than collegial as they talked freely about intricate details of their personal lives. The session lasted three hours and touched upon difficulties they faced earlier in their careers juggling family and work responsibilities, declined and missed promotion opportunities, and exclusionary practices by senior males in their current position. The second session was more casual and took place in a restaurant. Five of the women from the first session and one new member attended. Over dinner (several hours) the women spoke about resistance they encountered from male managers, navigating office politics, glass ceiling, and vision on female empowerment. During the two sessions, I witnessed collaborative relations and interactions among women cutting across hierarchical lines that could qualify as casual “mobilization of femininities.”

The two panel sessions also provided two interesting new insights about the different interaction between women’s agency and gender diversity policies depending on if they are “added on” or fully integrated in the overall human resource management system. First, the women displayed more agency in career advancement after their first (delayed) promotion but missed their window to be promoted further once they were ready for greater challenges. These shared realities indicate that the formal seniority-based promotion system tailored after the linear career path of men and unofficial tendency to phase out older managers (for cost reduction reasons) worked against senior women managers who otherwise could have qualified for executive positions based on their accumulated skills and long years of tenure. Second, the women shared the belief that the “voluntary nature” of the initiatives (relying on the goodwill of male middle managers) hindered meaningful progress. They were personally in favor of stricter enforcement to curb undesired behaviors and speed up the normalization of policy use. It was the

interaction between the women that revealed their positions on this matter were much stronger than the individual interviews let me believe. These additional insights were eye-opening in that they suggest more bureaucracy (regulating individual behavior) and top-down pressure (with accountability structures) can lead to less oppressive practices on the work floor by mitigating resistance from male middle managers in Japanese (and perhaps also Korean) firms.

Appendix 10: Work trajectories of Korean women interviewed

No	Age	Tenure	Recruitment	Career interruption	Job changes (internal)	Employer changes	Current rank
1	47	2	Mid-career	None	None	1 (Previously employed by another conglomerate in the same industry)	Department Head (<i>bujang</i>)
2	30	6	Graduate recruit	None	None	None	Assistant manager (<i>daeri</i>)
3	31	7	Graduate recruit	None	1	None	Assistant manager (<i>daeri</i>)
4	34	10	Graduate recruit	None	3 (3 different occupations)	None	Assistant manager (<i>daeri</i>)
5	33	9	Graduate recruit	None	2 (returned to previous position after husband resigned)	None	Assistant manager (<i>daeri</i>)
6	33	11	Graduate recruit	None	1	None	Section chief (<i>kwajang</i>)
7	32	9	Graduate recruit	None	3	None	Assistant manager (<i>daeri</i>)
8	31	8	Graduate recruit	None	1	None	Assistant manager (<i>daeri</i>)
9	31	6	Graduate recruit	None	None	None	Assistant manager (<i>daeri</i>)
10	37	3	Mid-career	About 4 years (Quit first job after 5 years to study abroad)	None	1 (Previously worked at a mid-size company)	Assistant manager (<i>daeri</i>)
11	34	11	Graduate recruit	None	3	None	Section chief

					(moved from factory to HQ, changed occupational field)		(kwajang)
12	35	12	Graduate recruit	None	1	None	Section chief (kwajang)
13	37	13	Graduate recruit	None	1	None	Section chief (kwajang)
14	33	10	Graduate recruit	None	1	None	Section chief (kwajang)
15	38	15	Graduate recruit	1 year (Quit after childbirth)	1	None (Rehired by the same company)	Deputy dep. Head (chajang)
16	37	13	Graduate recruit	None	None	None	Section chief (kwajang)
17	39	17	Graduate recruit	3 years (Quit after childbirth)	1	None (Rehired by the same company)	Deputy dep. Head (chajang)
18	36	8	Mid-career	None	3	1 (Previously employed by a large company in a different industry)	Section chief (kwajang)
19	37	10	Mid-career	None	1	1 (Previously worked for a mid-size company in the same field)	Section chief (kwajang)
20	33	10	Graduate recruit	None	1	None	Section chief (kwajang)
21	38	5	Mid-career	None	None	1 (Previously worked at a law firm)	Department Head (bujang)
22	31	9	Graduate recruit	None	1	None	Section chief (kwajang)
23	34	7	Mid-career	2 years (Quit first job after three years to pursue a MA degree)	1	1 (Previously worked at an educational institute)	Assistant manager (daeri)
24	44	10	Mid-career	None	None	2 (Previously worked at two different firms abroad)	Executive (sangmu)

Appendix 11: Work trajectories of Japanese women interviewed

No	Age	Tenure	Recruitment	Career interruption	Job changes (internal)	Employer changes	Current rank	Track
1	55	20	Irregular worker (first hired as contract worker, changed to career track after 6 years)	None	1	3	Department Head (<i>bujou</i>)	Generalist
2	28	3	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	1	None	Regular staff (<i>shunin</i>)	Generalist
3	43	22	Graduate recruit (career track without relocation)	None	1	None	Manager	Generalist
4	49	28	Graduate recruit (first hired as a specialist)	None	1	Resigned to start her own company	Department Head (<i>bujou</i>) Last position in firm	Generalist
5	32	10	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	1	None	Assistant Manager (<i>shunin</i>)	Generalist
6	59	26	Mid-career (career track)		4	2 Started her own company after retirement	Senior manager	Generalist
7	49	25	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	3	None	Assistant manager (<i>shunin</i>)	Generalist
8	48	20	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	4	None	Assistant manager (<i>shunin</i>)	Generalist
9	50	28	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	3	None	Department Head (<i>bujou</i>)	Generalist
10	48	26	Graduate recruit (first hired in general track, changed to career-track after 15 years)	None	6	None	Department Head (<i>bujou</i>)	Generalist
11	40	18	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	0	None	Section chief (senior specialist)	Specialist

12	49	29	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	1	None	Section chief	Generalist
13	50	26	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	3	None	Section chief	Generalist
14	45	21	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	1	None	Section chief (senior specialist)	Specialist
15	54	32	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	3	None	Department Head (<i>bujou</i>)	Generalist
16	48	26	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	None	None	Section chief (senior specialist)	Specialist
17	56	30?	Graduate recruit (changed to career track after 10 years)	None	2	None	General manager (<i>bujou</i>)	Generalist
18	42	3	Mid-career (rehired by previous company)	None	None	5	Assistant manager (<i>shunin</i>)	Generalist
19	27	5	Graduate recruit (non-career track, considering changing to career-track)	None	1	None	Regular staff (<i>shunin</i>)	Generalist
20	56	14	Mid-career (approached by vice-president other company)	Worked part-time until her child entered elementary school	1	1	Department Head (<i>bujou</i>)	Generalist
21	38	18	Graduate recruit (first hired as specialist, changed to generalist track at age 27)	None	1	None	Assistant manager (<i>shunin</i>)	Generalist
22	56	27	Mid-career (worked 7 years as a police officer before starting corporate career)	None	3	1 (dispatched to other group company)	Section chief (<i>kacho</i>)	Generalist

23	51	30	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	2	None	Section chief (<i>kacho</i>)	Specialist
24	48	11	Mid-career (career track)	None	1	2	Section chief (<i>kacho</i>)	Generalist
25	40	10	Mid-career (career track)	None	None	2 (4,5 years at large business group, 3 years at a small company, before joining current company)	Team leader/manager (<i>kacho</i>)	Specialist
26	43	17	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	3	None	Deputy general Manager (<i>kacho</i>)	Generalist
27	44	18	Mid-career (career track)	None	2	1 (worked 4,5 years at another large firm before joining current company)	Section chief (<i>kacho</i>)	Specialist
28	50	27	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	1	None	Section chief (<i>kacho</i>)	Generalist
29	50	30	Regular staff (no dual career track system)	None	3	1 (worked 2 years at a smaller company before joining current firm)	Section chief (<i>kacho</i>)	Specialist
30	51	29	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	5	None	Deputy branch manager	Generalist
31	40	19	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	4	None	Section chief (<i>kacho</i>)	Generalist
32	48	25	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	3	None	Section chief (<i>kacho</i>)	Generalist
33	43	21	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	2	None	Section chief (<i>kacho</i>)	Specialist
34	45	24	Graduate recruit	None	3	None	Section chief (<i>kacho</i>)	Generalist

			(career/area track)					
35	52	30	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	3	None	Senior specialist/manager (<i>kacho</i>)	Specialist
36	51	28	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	n/a	None	Section chief (<i>kacho</i>)	Generalist
37	53	30	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	5	None	General manager/executive (<i>bucho</i>)	Generalist
38	43	20	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	1	None	Senior specialist/manager (<i>kacho</i>)	Specialist
39	58	30	Graduate recruit (career track)	None	5	None	Director (<i>bucho</i>)	Generalist (changed from specialist at the age of 45)

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