

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59294/HIUJS.VOL.5.2023.555>

South Korean unmarried single women's images in the 2000s through major South Korean newspapers

Nguyen Thi Hanh Dung

Hong Bang International University, Vietnam

ABSTRACT

South Korean women's images mostly connect with the ideal women's images of "good wives, wise mothers". However, the number of single women in South Korea population has been increasing significantly in recent years. Various media outlets such as television and newspapers have been mentioning and discussing the lifestyles and mindsets of Korean single women, often using hot keywords such as "Gold Miss", "unmarried single women (Bihon)", and "single women (Mihon)" in both positive and negative contexts. This study aims to explore the most popular and representative characteristics of South Korean single women and figure out the transition of single women's images in the 2000s since the Asian financial crisis in South Korea. Based on literature reviews and newspaper reference sources, this research also aims to find out what people think about the most popular images of South Korean single women nowadays, then summarizes the similarities and differences in the popular images of South Korean unmarried single women described by Korean newspapers's discourse and existing literature reviews.

Keywords: South Korean Unmarried Women, Korean Single Women's images, Bihon Women, Mihon Women, Korean Unmarried Women's images

1. INTRODUCTION

"In general, Korean women follow a standard life trajectory. After completing their education, they enter the labor market. They quit their job and become full-time homemakers in marriage and childbearing, while their husband provides the economic resources to the household. They may resume work when their children need less of their concern, but the jobs they get are usually temporary. Others do not return to the labor market at all." [1]. However, the Asian financial crisis in 1997 created a noticeable change in South Korean women's lifestyles, mindsets, and behaviors. To deal with the financial challenges, women became more active in entering the workplace as breadwinners. As a result, they also have to struggle with three options for their future lives: staying single to pursue their professional careers and job promotion, becoming perfect working mothers or giving up their jobs to become "good wives, good mothers" after childbirth. In recent years, especially during the past 15 years, South Korea has had a big rate of single women increase in population. Media, televisions, and newspapers usually mention about single women,

their lifestyle, mindset, etc in various issues and hot keywords in both positive and negative views such as "Gold Miss" (골드미스), "unmarried single women (Bihon – 비혼)", "single women (Mihon – 미혼)". We also can see those changes clearly through the statistical reports. According to Statistics Korea, in 2015, there were around 1.4 million single women in the ages of 30-40, increasing more than twice from 2005 to 2015, single women households also accounted for 50.2% of all single-person households in South Korea [2].

Most research on women's images in South Korea usually focused on the ideal women's images of "good wives, wise mothers" between the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The recent research from the 2000s onward almost focused on analyzing the single women's images through Korean dramas or commercial films but those researches usually analyzed a few dramas or compared South Korean dramas with other countries' dramas so that those findings were less realistic and objective. Some researchers focused on single women's lifestyle,

Corresponding author: MA. Nguyen Thi Hanh Dung
Email: dungnth@hiu.vn

fashion, and consumption or focused their images through interviewees' viewpoints based on the existing stereotypes that contained critical points of survey objects. Other research also was limited on the connection between economic change and women's strong participation in the labor force during and after the crisis in 1997. There were just a few studies that analyzed the South Korean unmarried single women's images in the 2000s that focused on various discourses from South Korean newspapers or magazine articles sources, which share more objective points of view about relevant issues.

This research intends to explore the most popular and representative characteristics of South Korean single women, and figure out the transition of single women's images in the 2000s after the Asian financial crisis in South Korea. Based on literature reviews and newspaper reference sources, I'd like to find out the two research questions: What is the most popular image of South Korean single women nowadays? Is there any difference in the popular image of South Korean single women described by newspaper's discourses and by recent literature reviews?

Vietnam is currently facing a decline in birth rates, with an increasing number of young Vietnamese people showing disinterest in getting married or having children in recent years. As a Vietnamese researcher delving into Korean culture and society, I have noticed many similarities in the socio-economic development of the two countries. Learning about the perceptions of single Korean women is a way for me to gain a broader and more specific perspective on this phenomenon in South Korea. This knowledge will help me build a reference point and form viewpoints for comparative analysis of the phenomenon in Vietnam and Korea in my future research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

South Korean women's images mostly connect with the ideal women's images of "good wives, wise mothers". Nowadays, they are young wives who usually negotiate with a 'patriarchal perception' in which they have to respect or follow their husbands' opinions to keep their family's harmony. They also negotiate contradictory and compelling ideologies around conjugal love and equality within a nuclear family, patriarchal gender, and family roles based on parental responsibility, filial piety, and consumption-

oriented middle-class lifestyles [3]. They also are "perfect mothers", and "scientific mothers" who continuously improve their knowledge and expertise in scientific childrearing not only in education but also in healthcare and nutrition [4]. In common, most existing research tend to set "women" as passive objects, passive victims rather than active subjects of their decisions, consumption, and behaviors, therefore their images usually connect with passive characteristics which are settled under the social, economic, and political background.

Jee Eun Regina Song (2014) also argued about the Doenjangnyo (soybean paste girls) phenomenon in which those women were seen to consume items to flaunt their money as blind followers of Western lifestyle and material goods rather than as having an acquired taste for luxury good or a status to make their own cultural distinctions [5]. On the other hand, Featherstone (2010) also argued that one's body or image can be objectified but it is not merely an object or 'subject-object', it is not a thing with a fixed image [6]. Therefore, we have to operate it in a complex set of relations, and spaces around it instead of just operating it as an object in which we have a clear image. Based on this view, it is necessary to review "women's images" in both object and subject's perception.

About the image of unmarried single women, existing researchers usually approached single women in the age of 30 and 40 as the main research target and distinguished "unmarried single women" (비혼) and "single women" (미혼) as two different objects. "Single women" (미혼) are women who didn't have any experience of marriage in the past, they are not in a marriage status now but "can" or "must" get married in the future, and this group's single background was put in passive and unfinished status. "Unmarried single women" (비혼) refer to women who are not in a marriage status both in the past and present, positively refuse marriage life, and tend to stay single life without marriage in the future [7]. Nowadays, "unmarried single women" (비혼) also include women who stay single after divorce or single mothers. But in common, they have different social experiences and characteristics compared to other unmarried single women, therefore, almost studies of unmarried single women consider them as another separated group and exclude them from those concern studies. On the other hand, because unmarried single women

between the ages of 30-and 40 also are the main target of critical viewpoint of unmarried status, those concerned studies usually choose them as the main research target.

The discourse of single women in South Korea started in the 1990s and there were three periods of those discourses' trend transition. In the 1990s, most of the discourses focused on single women as a new phenomenon, a new consumer group occurred from the economic growth in South Korea. Discourses in this period were almost on economic topics or consumptive viewpoints. In the early the 2000s, single women were mentioned as a new family type besides the most popular nuclear family type, and most newspapers also described them based on the traditional values or modern values of family. Therefore, critical attitudes about single women that referred to them as losers in marriage, love, and jobs also appeared from this time. From 2003, under the hot issue of low fertility, unmarried women or single women were described negatively as the main factor of the low birth rate in South Korea, selfish and problematic objects. On the other hand, there were also various viewpoints and different topics mentioned them as successful consumers, successful career women, highly educated and high-income women etc [8].

South Korean single women's image in recent studies was described in four popular descriptions: "Negative images: selfish, individualist, sensitive women", "Busy career women don't have enough time for leisure life and deny their long-term unmarried status" [8 - 9], "Positive images: intelligent, highly educated and high income, responsible, highly self-regulated women focus on career and self-improvement", "Knowing how to enjoy freedom"[7, 10].

"Negative images: selfish, individualist, sensitive women".

From 2000, the birth rate in South Korea decreased to 1.4 and this low fertility rate was 1.19 in 2003, then it was 0.67 in 2022 [11 - 12]. From 2003, most discourses indicated unmarried single women as the main factor of this low birth rate and they were described as too selfish individuals who just focused only on their own lives and work even the national crisis of low fertility and they destroyed the traditional family system. Major newspapers and media insisted the increasing of unmarried single women number was the main problem, and

to solve this state of emergency, there was no method but those women had to get married.

In some research conducted by interviewing various objects, unmarried single women also were referred to as the problematic group have a very strong and clear view of the value of individualism, egocentric minds, and self-assertive minds that made them always put their lives, their needs in higher priority than everyone. Because unmarried single women are too self-assertive and too egocentric, they usually tend to be stubborn, and not flexible to solve their interpersonal relations problems.

On the other hand, because of unmarried life, unmarried single women usually choose to live alone then they would feel empty or lack love, which makes them more sensitive than others. To fill this empty feeling, they often intend various hobby activities, dating, working harder, or focusing on self-improvement work but all of those works can not solve all of their loneliness or anxiety. They work hard to be more successful but they also face so much stress both in work and life that puts them in anxiety state and sensitive emotion.

"Busy career women don't have enough time for leisure life and deny their long-term unmarried status".

Most unmarried single women are between the ages of 30 and 40 and they have to face with hard time focusing on their career skill improvement and their promotion in the company. This makes them too busy to enjoy regular leisure time as they want and usually spend free time at home or a short time hanging out or watching movies with friends. They also feel anxious about their unstable status and worry about their future lives. Regarding the "unmarried status", they deny their unmarried status in the present and insist on their marriage in the future.

"Positive images: intelligent, highly educated and high income, responsible, highly self-regulated women focus on career and self-improvement."

Despite the dominant negative viewpoint about unmarried single women, through the success of many dramas and movies concerned with single women such as "Bridget Jones's Diary" (2001), "Singles" (2003), "My Name is Kim Sam Soon" (2005) etc there were also many positive discourses started to support those women and describe them in positive images. In social discourse, they were described as women have high education and high income, most of them

were responsible in work and daily life, and some were highly self-regulated. In most dramas and movies, the characters of single women were described a little bit differently, they also always work hard to improve their work skills, to be more successful. They work hard and they feel satisfied with their single lives. On the other hand, they also desire to have a romantic or beautiful love and think that they will get married someday, so that they always have to face with inner conflict between love, family and work.

"Knowing how to enjoy freedom".

According to some studies based on interviews, unmarried single women were considered as the independent group that actively controlled their own choice and freedom of forming a family, being a single mom by natural childbirth, baby adoption, or not depending on their own will. They also can create various interpersonal relationships and enjoy the freedom of meeting or dating so that enjoy more happiness and more various feelings of love. Also, they become active consumer subjects who can liberally invest expenses for themselves and enjoy their leisure life as long as they want. They also were strongly independent in financial aspects which allow them to invest freely in their hobbies, and various leisure lives and live in a satisfied environment without any anxiety.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This research paper uses literature reviews and articles from major South Korean newspapers (Jungang Ilbo, Donga Ilbo, Hankyoreh, Chosun Ilbo, etc) that include various keywords of single women's life such as "ideal women" (이상적인 여성상), "single women" (미혼), "unmarried women" (비혼), "Gold Miss" (골드미스), etc to explore the most notable characteristic of single women during the 2000s period after economic crisis experiences. I also used those keywords to search relevant articles on Naver and Google websites. On the other hand, I conducted relevant literature review in order to compare if there was any different view between existing research and popular discourse in newspapers. Articles using for this research limited on Korean articles and discourses.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1. Large majority of negative viewpoint

Negative viewpoints of unmarried single women are still dominant. Most of the articles that I approached still mentioned unmarried single

women as a problematic group and passive objects, they choose to stay unmarried not because of their own free will but because of the economic crisis. And those women were formed as objects who needed help to get married to create normal families. Therefore, unmarried single women were not considered as a group that did not get married but the group that failed to get married.

"Single women with high education, high income in their 30's and 40's blamed that they can not find "suitable men" for marriage. So who are the ones considered as "suitable men"? The men have to be in better condition than women in some way. Such as he is taller at least 5cm than her, graduated from a good university or have "acceptable" income at least in the future... Almost unmarried single women in 30s, 40s have a really good income or education base. It is really hard to find the good partner that fix their conditions." (Donga Ilbo, 2014.12.28).

"The more they get older, the more they feel anxious and exhausted in their life. When they get older, they not only cannot get richer or higher income but also have to pay more for many kinds of expenses. Since almost unmarried single women are living with their parents, they have to pay more to take care of their parents' in later years. Even if they live independently, they have to prepare for their old age life alone. Unmarried single women, have to work and earn money alone, so it is very difficult to buy their own houses alone... They enjoy their happy life and freedom now but they also have to face big anxiety about their later years." (Chosun Ilbo, 2017.09.17).

"Unmarried single population increasing will connect to lifelong singles increasing and the birth rate will decrease more. As the reduction in the young population that contributes taxes, annuities and insurance premiums for the country, the national economy will be down as a result. Experts point out that it is very urgent to prepare policies to encourage marriage." (Chosun Ilbo, 2011.10.25).

A woman who lives alone is mostly described as Gold Miss. On the internet, 'Gold Miss' are unmarried women in their 30s or older who can earn more than 40 million won per year. But in fact, there are not many of them fit into these conditions... The monthly average income of female households in the 20s to 30s in Seoul is 2,117,000 won (regular workers 2,385,000 won, non-regular workers 1,627,000 won). According

to Statistics Korea, 40.3% of female wage workers are non-regular workers and the monthly average wage is 62.8% less than male workers. The income of non-regular workers is less than 40% of male regular workers. With these income levels and poor status, we can see how far the term 'gold miss' is far from actual women's lives." (Ohmynews, 2016.10.25).

Media channels also usually refer to unmarried women who are living as 'one-person households' as a new trend of the consumption market, calling them as 'big-handed' or main a target of marketing, while also lists them as the symbol of poverty and loneliness and showing a contradictory attitude to describe how miserable their lives are. Besides this, society does not consider unmarried women as independent individuals. This is the main reason why women find it difficult to live independently and it makes women strongly desire to be more independent and more individualistic. In South Korean society, where the manner to respect for private life is low, women are always considered as fragile and immature beings who always need "guardians" or "protectors".

4.2. Big rise of positive viewpoint

According to Statistics Korea in 2019, just 22.4% of South Korean single women replied that they think they have to get married, and this result was much lower than the rate of 30% in 2017, 38.7% in 2014 and 46% in 2010. In recent years, many discourses also recorded the rise of positive social acknowledgment of "unmarried single women" as active subjects that choose unmarried status of their own free will. Those discourses also supported that society needs to accept and understand this phenomenon more liberally.

"At this time when I'm doing well in my career, getting married is not the best choice or best help for my life. I don't say that I will not get married, I just don't want to do it in a hurry." (Jungang Ilbo, 2017.07.06)

It is also true that marriage makes people more mature. However, many people are still immature and selfish after marriage and many married women are often unable to confront or have good relationships with parents in law. Those who originally don't have the basic knowledge or understanding of interpersonal relationship will be unchanged even after they get married. Therefore, the attitude toward people is more important to appreciate someone than their marriage status.

Because of this, it is unreasonable to evaluate that unmarried single women or men are selfish. (Hankyoreh, 2012.03.01)

According to the Macromill Embrain survey, 44.8% of the respondents said that the stress of childrearing was the reason for choosing a single life. Ham (32) said: "I don't think that the traditional parental role of devotion is the right one, even if people say it is right, in my case, I'm not confident that I can do well. And I also don't like children. I don't want to feel guilty about not having a baby." (Hankook Ilbo, 2017.08.17)

In the past, the opposite of the married person was "single". However, when marriage is not a duty but an option or individual choice, "unmarried single" is not an "incomplete status" and "unmarried single group" and "single wedding" occurred as a result. Nowadays, as a result of the single-person household, this is no longer a unique phenomenon. Choosing to be unmarried single is not because of fertility duty or economic status but because of individual career, hobby activities, and personal values of young people in modern life. On the other hand, the perception of stopping blaming unmarried single women as the main reason for the low fertility rate also increased widely than in the past. The low birth rate in South Korea included many complicated problems and reasons that come from all the social, economic, and political issues. To solve this, not only South Korean government need to do the action such as researching more policies and analysis, but also many experts and relevant organizations need to take part in many campaigns and activities to understand the problem exactly.

There are many opinions of worrying about the low fertility and fast aging society. Some people blame these problems on unmarried single women... There is no basis for unmarried women to adopt a child. Only families whose parents born a child are called 'normal'. Our society doesn't have enough infrastructure to adopt or raise children, but why do people blame and ask unmarried women for their responsibilities? We are living in a period of both difficult childrearing and childbirth, and it is unreasonable to put the critical arrow on unmarried women, we need to ask the government and society. The direction of the critical finger itself was wrong. (Pressian, 2011.02.03).

"In South Korea, most of the social welfare roles have been carried out by the "families" and

women have to take care of the main work in the family. However, the recent rise in the number of single-person households in the ages of 20s and 30s shows that this family system has reached its limit. The existing policies which focused on the 4-person family model don't match with the reality now. We need to stop the attempt to put women into the family system such as setting up many disadvantages called 'single tax', and we have to set up new policies based on respecting and supporting the individual independence. (Ohmynews, 2016.10.25).

4.3. Major consumers and trend leaders

Nowadays, with the growth of unmarried young people, many new economic and cultural phenomenon occurred and both unmarried single women and men are described as the main target of those new trends. They were considered as the minor consumers in the consumption market in the past, but now they are both the leaders and major consumers of the existing market and new trends in various consumption and production. They are not only the majority of customers who buy the products but also actively create consumption trends and cultural trends to serve and satisfy their needs and their lifestyles. They also spend more time and are willing to pay more expenses than their income just only for their lives and needs.

According to Statistics Korea, the single-person household's consumption rate in 2014 was 80.5%, exceeding the 73.6% rate of all household types. A report of the LG Economic Research Institute also showed that consumption of single-person households is 8% higher than the per capita consumption of two-person households. Many companies also are focusing on new products of furniture, appliances, kitchen appliances, and home décor for those targets. (Jungang Ilbo, 2016.07.10).

Unmarried single women are also the main consumers of the new trend called "single wedding", in which they choose to dress as beautiful brides, wear their "unmarried ring" and take "unmarried photo album" to save their young moments, their beauty and save the day they choose to live single life. There was a huge amount of various SNS hashtags (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc) concerned with "single wedding" from 2015 until now.

"I don't want to get married. Honestly, I hate to do this. I'm very happy and satisfied with my life and

my comfortable time now... I think that it is a manner for myself to leave a best album when I'm most beautiful. So I decided to take a single wedding shoot." (Yonhapnews, 2017.05.01).

Many of them also choose to become Jokhababo (조카바보) – niece/nephew fool. Instead of being stressed because of childrearing or childbirth, they invest large of expenses and put all their love into their nieces.

The lecturer Kim (33) has a 4-year-old niece. She spent about 400,000 to 500,000 won a month for her niece. Kim usually takes her niece to various meetings and buys hairpin or shoes for her niece. Kim said "She is so pretty... I don't feel wasted when I invest money for my niece. People said that it is wasteful to give to much love for niece/nephew because they will forget all when they grow. But I like to do that and feel happy to do that." (Asia Econmics, 2016.08.08).

"Even it is expensive, there is no problem because it is for my nieces/nephews. The Joka-babo (niece/nephew fool) overtook the market. Niece tangers won daughters/ sons targets in the rankings of a children's day gift market. According to a survey held from April 19t to 25th, about " Gift Trends on the Children's Day of this year", nephews/nieces (39%) were mostly the gift receivers rather than daughters/sons (36%)." (Asia Economics, 2016.08.08).

The infant/children's products industry market grew steadily at 10% every year, and the size of the domestic children's products market has grown from 1.2 trillion won in 2009 to 1.5 trillion won last year. In the same period, the number of visits to baby fashion stores by unmarried customers in their 30s increased from 4.2 times in 2010 to 2016, 5.4 times. Lee Hyeok, marketing manager of Hyundai Department Store, said, "As the phenomenon of low fertility continues, there are '8-Pocket Kids' phenomenon lead by the aunts and uncles." (Jungang Ilbo, 2016.07.09).

Unmarried single women are willing to pay more to serve their needs and satisfy their single life, and this takes to many new consumption trends. One of those trends is Naseongbi (나성비) consumption, where all consumption is for oneself, matching one's own style and satisfying one's own needs. Additionally, the increasing number of single-person households has led to a rise in the demand for small-sized furniture, furniture for single households, single-person household apartments,

shared houses, single-use products, and services etc. Especially, unmarried single people also spend money generously for home décor or “Do it yourselves (DIY)” home décor. They also invest more time and money on hobbies activities and self-improvement to enjoy more freedom and single life's values.

According to Chang Hyun-seon (2008), who analyzed women's consumer lives, Gold Miss travel abroad about three times a year, enjoying their own cars, skiing, yoga, and golfing. They are also known to have a major impact on real estate, automotive, travel, and luxury markets [13].

5. CONCLUSION

There is both similarity and difference in the popular images of South Korean unmarried single women described by Korean newspapers' discourse and by existing literature reviews. Unmarried single women are still described as problematic targets and the main critical target of the low birthrate phenomenon in South Korea. Compared to the images of women who have high income, and high education levels in the most existing reseaches, the images of unmarried single women in South Korean newspapers' discourse nowadays are a little bit different. They can be anyone, both highly educated women in high-income or just middle-class women and low-income women. There is also a big change in social perception of unmarried single women and they also get a strong perception by themselves about their single status. Therefore, marriage is not a duty but an option or individual choice, and “unmarried single” is not an “abnormal phenomenon” or “incomplete status”. They also have strong individualism and independent consumer culture determined by themselves actively. They are not the minor targets of consumer culture anymore but the major consumers and main marketing targets in consumption culture. And the most different point is the active subjects' status rather than the image

of passive objects in most existing studies. Unmarried single women are appreciated as active subjects of their behaviors, their choices, and active social campaign creators concerned with their issues now.

Nowadays, South Korean prefer to use “unmarried single” (Bihon –비혼) instead of “single” (Mihon –미혼). It is a status whose word's meaning also refer to the voluntary choice by the individual's free will, and it should be acknowledged as one of various form of life, especially when we are living in an open and modern era nowadays. However, in South Korea, both unmarried single women and men still be formed as an “abnormal” phenomenon. The low fertility rate is not because of unmarried single women or the unmarried population, it includes many complicated problems and reasons which need more policies and deep surveys, analysis from experts, and relevant organizations to solve.

In both Korean and Vietnamese society, women face numerous challenges when it comes to achieving gender equality and respect. It is essential to actively promote campaigns through various media outlets, including online and offline newspapers, that aim to increase positive understanding and reduce negative perceptions of women. This can involve raising awareness of the unique issues that women face in both their personal and professional lives. This may involve raising an open awareness about gender roles and stereotypes. In addition to promoting positive understanding, it is equally important to respect women's choices. This means recognizing that women have the right to make their own decisions concerning their careers, families, and personal lives. It also means creating an environment where women feel supported and empowered to pursue their goals and aspirations without fear of discrimination or backlash. By working together to promote positive understanding and respect for women's choices, we can help create a more equitable and inclusive society for all.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ma and Li, “Female Employment and Fertility Change in South Korea”, *Stockholm University Demography Unit – Dissertation Series 11*, 2014.
- [2] 김효정, “30~40대 미혼여성 138만명의 그늘”. 09/2017. [Online]. Available: http://news.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2017/09/15/2017091501699.html?Dep0=twitter (Accessed: 10/23/2023)

- [3] Y.J. Kang, “Love and Money: Commercial Postpartum Care and the Reinscription of Patriarchy in Contemporary South Korea”, *Journal of Korean Studies 19*, No.2, 379-397, 2014.
- [4] Y.B. Jeong, “Scientific Motherhood, Responsibility, and Hope: Umbilical Cord Blood Banking in South Korea”, *New Genetics and Society 33*, No.4, 349-369, 2014.

[5] J.E.R. Song, "The Soybean Paste Girl: The Cultural and Gender Politics of Coffee Consumption in Contemporary South Korea", *Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol.19, No.2, 429-448, 2014.

[6] M. Featherstone, "Body, Image and Affect in Consumer Culture", *Body & Society*, Vol.16(1), 193-221, 2010.

[7] K.H. Ryu and S.S. Wang, "The Images of Unmarried Single Women as seen from the Viewpoint of Married Men and Women - Focusing on Stereotypes of Unmarried Single Women", *Korean Home Economics Education Association* 22(3), 37-54, 2010.

[8] 김소라, "고학력비혼여성의독신문화에 관한 연구: 새로운 생애단계의 사회적 구성 - *Social Construction of New Life Course = A Study on the Single Culture of the Highly Educated Never-married Women*", Master's Thesis, Seoul National University, 2007.

[9] S.S. Wang, "The Image of the Single Women with University Students from a view of the Lifelong Education", *The Journal of Educational Research*, Vol.8 No.3, 261-287, 2010.

[10] 신소연, "잡지광고에 나타나는 '여성상'의 사회반영에 관한 연구: 2000.1~2002.9 여성잡지광고 중심으로 - (A) Study on the effect of social values on 'Women's image' in magazine advertisements: Focused on 2000.1~2002.9 female magazine advertisements", Master's Thesis, Ehwa Women University, 2002.

[11] Wikipedia, "Demographics of South Korea".[Online]. Available: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_South_Korea (Accessed: 10/24/2023).

[12] Statista Research Department, "Pregnancy and childcare in South Korea - statistics & facts ", 10/12/2023.[Online]. Available:<https://www.statista.com/topics/11567/pregnancy-and-childcare-in-south-korea/#topicOverview>(Accessed: 10/23/2023).

[13] 김경자, "골드미스, 리얼맘, 新노년여성... '진짜지갑' 손에 든 여성의 친구가 되라". 10/2011. [Online]. Available: https://dbr.donga.com/article/view/1202/article_no/4536/ac/magazine (Accessed: 10/24/2023).

Hình ảnh phụ nữ độc thân Hàn Quốc những năm 2000 qua góc nhìn báo chí Hàn Quốc

Nguyễn Thị Hạnh Dung

TÓM TẮT

Hình ảnh phụ nữ Hàn Quốc phần lớn gắn liền với hình mẫu phụ nữ lý tưởng "hiền mẫu lương thê (mẹ hiền, vợ tốt)". Nhưng trong nhiều năm trở lại đây, Hàn Quốc ghi nhận tỷ lệ phụ nữ độc thân tăng cao trong cơ cấu dân số. Các phương tiện truyền thông, truyền hình, báo chí thường đề cập đến hình ảnh những người phụ nữ độc thân, lối sống của họ hay tư duy của nhóm đối tượng này trong rất nhiều vấn đề và khía cạnh xã hội, cũng như miêu tả họ bằng từ khóa mang đậm hơi thở thời đại theo cả góc nhìn tích cực lẫn tiêu cực, có thể kể đến những ví dụ từ khóa điển hình như "Gold Miss", "phụ nữ độc thân không kết hôn (Bihon)", "phụ nữ độc thân (Mihon)". Nghiên cứu này nhằm tìm hiểu những đặc điểm phổ biến và tiêu biểu nhất của phụ nữ độc thân Hàn Quốc, tìm hiểu những thay đổi về hình ảnh phụ nữ độc thân được phác họa qua báo chí Hàn Quốc trong giai đoạn những năm 2000, sau cuộc khủng hoảng tài chính châu Á tại nước này. Dựa trên các nguồn tham khảo tài liệu học thuật và báo chí, nghiên cứu này nhằm mục đích tìm hiểu góc nhìn của báo chí Hàn Quốc, suy nghĩ của người Hàn Quốc về hình ảnh phụ nữ độc thân Hàn Quốc phổ biến nhất trong giai đoạn gần đây, từ đó tổng hợp những điểm giống và khác nhau về hình ảnh phụ nữ độc thân và phụ nữ độc thân không kết hôn trong góc nhìn của báo chí Hàn Quốc và góc nhìn đánh giá của các nghiên cứu học thuật hiện có.

Từ khóa: phụ nữ độc thân không kết hôn Hàn Quốc, hình ảnh phụ nữ độc thân không kết hôn Hàn Quốc, hình ảnh phụ nữ độc thân Hàn Quốc, phụ nữ Bihon, phụ nữ Mihon

Received: 07/11/2023

Revised: 10/12/2023

Accepted for publication: 11/12/2023