

**Thematic Session  
Gender Inequality in Housework**

**Realization of Social Value of Household  
Labors and Household Allowances**

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## 1. Household allowances, why is it needed?

○ In order for members of family to lead their daily lives, household labors to take care of food, clothing, and shelter, family life, and family caring need to be done repeatedly and maintained continuously by someone. Household labors entail multifaceted labors including physical and mental ones, and labors to take care of relations among family members and their emotions. When daily lives backed by household labors break down, overall school, working, and social lives of family members would be affected. Therefore, household labors are regarded being essential and related to public interests for the sake of maintenance and reproduction of community and society beyond just family affairs.

○ In the process of establishing capitalistic patriarchy, the boundary between work and family sector has been clearly divided and the role of male(focusing on work) and female(focusing on household labors) has been firmly recognized. With the trend, the labors at households mostly conducted by female have been underestimated or undervalued as something that could be done anyone or something like trivial house chores. Underestimation of household labors has led to low wages for workers of household labor in the official labor market.

○ Since 1930s, however, the productivity and values of household labors have garnered attention. In the 1970s and 80s, movements and campaigns calling for wages for household labors have been widely spread starting from the UK, France, Italy, and the US. Accordingly, activities of social evaluation and policy making started to be carried out in order to grant values to household activities as 'labors' and recognize them with 'values'. Recognizing the values of household labors has been presented as a major agenda in line with efforts to realize gender equality around the globe such as UN SDGs.

○ According to the '2019 Household Production Satellite Account (evaluation on unpaid household labor values)' by the Korea Statistics, the economic value of unpaid household labors was reportedly to account for 25.5% of the nominal GDP, recording KRW 490.9 trillion. Also, the value of unpaid household labors per person was KRW 9.49 million or a 33.3% increase from 5 years ago. Indeed, household labors include emotional, affective, and relational labors that could contribute to the

emotional stability and happiness of family members and community. In this regard, there have been some discussions on the non-material and social values that cannot be converted only to economic and material values.

○ The Household Allowance Initiative is a symbolic policy with the aim of spreading positive cultures of acknowledging values and promoting role division for household labors by coming up with a social reward system for the values of household labors. In order to adopt and realize Gwangju's Household Allowance Initiative, we have to fully understand the blind spot of the existing social welfare systems centering around allowance system and design target, amount, and scope of the allowance by collecting opinions from Gwangju residents. The Gwangju Household Allowance has a significance in that it has recognized the value of household labors for the first time across the nation at a time when there is no attempt made to recognize and reward the household labors. Also, it could make contribution to spreading culture of respecting social values of the household labors.

## **2. Current status and implication of allowance system of central and local governments**

○ After reviewing solutions to enhance the central and local governments' cash allowance, support system for household services along with the values of household labors, the following implications were identified.

- There are diverse customized allowance initiatives by life cycle and target such as parent allowance, childcaring allowance, child allowance, youth allowance, and the elderly benefits in place, however, the middle-aged people find themselves left in the blind spot of the system.

- Arguments on social welfare and in-cash support system, limits of household support service, SDGs and ways to realize the value of social labors, basic income and household labor division by gender, and launch of housewife pension were reviewed and the implications of the results are as follows.

Status of system	Implications
Social Welfare System	<p>Social insurance is a system to protect the right of workers and public assistance is a system to guarantee minimum life condition for the vulnerable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Social security system has to be more thoroughly and tightly designed in terms of targets and contents in order to provide an opportunity to bring positive changes for the life of the public.</li> </ul>
In-cash support system by life cycle	<p>The government's major in-cash supports focus on given targets and classes related to child birth, child caring, employment, maintaining employment, job loss and other crises, which could result in some blind spots.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ There is a lack of caring for the youth, adult children before their independence, and parents that is required to maintain family life such as economic, psychological, and emotional labors. Also, there is no system to support the middle-aged group.</li> </ul>
Household labor support service	<p>A support project to relieve stress from household labors was designed to enhance mental health and efficiency with regard to household labors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ But it is difficult to say that the project is based on the respect for the substantial values of household labors.</li> </ul> <p>It provides household service depending on income level for families with the pregnant, double income couple, and 2 children or more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ When the public support for household service expands, there are concerns over interests conflicts with private sector and absence of family caring of domestic service providers.</li> </ul>
Proposed system	Implication
SDGs and household labor	<p>The government plans to make 'respect to household labors' stipulated to develop ratio index for times between household labors and caring labors and a way of drawing statistics.</p>

	<p>☞ discussion on national responsibilities to realize social values of substantial household labors has not been specified.</p>
Basic income and role division by gender	<p>Arguing that the basic income could loosen or strengthen role division by gender regarding domestic labors(caring)(Park Subeom, 2019)</p> <p>☞ Household allowance is likely to address role division by gender by encouraging male to engage in household labors when coming along with cultural promotion on social values of household labors.</p>
Launching 'housewife allowance'	<p>With housewife allowance, we could contribute to realizing social values of household labors and addressing the issues of poverty among the female elderly.</p> <p>☞ Pension system is not possible to contribute to spreading culture of valuing household labors because it is more similar to a system for social safety net for the elderly. The household allowance needs to be designed in association with national pension system.</p>

### 3. The results and implications of awareness survey on Gwangju citizens regarding household labors and household allowance

○ The poll was conducted on 1,045 Gwangju citizens from 27th Feb to 23rd Mar 2023 regarding the awareness and status of household labors and adoption of house allowance scheme. The results suggest that most citizens appear to agree on the provision of household allowance worth less than KRW 100,000 a month for the households with of those in their 40s ~ 50s with low income level who provide for their parents or minor children.

- [Opinion about household allowance adoption] 80.5% agreed, 7.5% opposed, 12.1% have no idea. In summary, 8 out of 10 are in favor of the system.

- [What to consider when selecting targets of household allowance] 63.3% 'number of minor children', 56.7% 'income level', 47.0% 'whether having parent to provide for'

- [Awareness on target of household allowance] 92.2% 'primarily provide to households with member in need of caring', 64.7% 'exclude those who already benefit from caring allowance'. 62.6% 'provide only for full time household workers',

55.5% ‘consider providing for single-person households’.

- [Age group requiring household allowance] 89.6% ‘in their 40s’, 82.7% ‘in their 50s’, 54.9% ‘in their 60s’, 51.6% ‘in their 30s’

- [Income level of house allowance payment target] 33.7% ‘group of under 100% of median income’, 8.9% ‘group of under 80% of median income’

- [Adequate payment of household allowance] 40.8% ‘less than KRW 150,000’, 33.5% ‘less than KRW 100,000’, 19.3% ‘less than KRW 50,000’

- [Benefit of household allowance] 91.8% ‘contribute to revitalization of local economy’, 90.5% ‘spread cultures of respecting values of household labors’, 88.2% ‘helpful in addressing blind spot of social safety net’

○ The table below summarize the implications from the results of the survey.

	Results	Implications
Awareness on household labors	Gwangju citizens recognize household labors as ‘managing food, clothing, and housing’, ‘caring family’, ‘other household management’ in order.	There is not many people who recognize caring family members as household labors, so people tend to take caring family members for granted.
Current status of household labors	During weekdays, the average hours spent for household labors are 3.5 hours for female, 2.0 hours for male. During weekends and holidays, the figures are 4.7 hours for female and 3.1 hours for male.	Hours spent for household labors are longer for female. However, emotional labors and labor intensity are something that cannot be measured. ☞ Need to recognize emotional labors in household that cannot be measured in time.

<p>Attitude on recognizing social values of household labors</p>	<p>Identified positive attitude of citizens on recognizing social values of household labors</p>	<p>Granting just values to unpaid household labors could be positively affect on social status enhancement and treatment of household workers within households as well as outside the households</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Expected to have positive impact on household workers in and out of households</li> </ul>
<p>Opinion regarding household allowance adoption</p>	<p>The criteria for selecting recipients of household allowances were suggested as number of children, income level and parental support in order.</p>	<p>Identified public sentiment that the household allowance needs to be primarily provided to household with children and parents to provide for (under 100% of median income level)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ According to public sentiment, household allowance needs to be given to households with caring children and parents.</li> </ul>
	<p>Adequate amount of household allowance is less than KRW 100,00</p>	<p>Adequacy of household allowance amount felt by households could vary depending on their circumstances and individual conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ When the system is consistently implemented, efficacy and efficiency of the system could be enhanced.</li> </ul>
<p>Benefits of household allowance</p>	<p>Confirmed positive expectation of citizens on the benefits of household allowance</p>	<p>Confirmed the level of citizen's empathy on positive impact household allowance (local currency)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Confirmed citizens' expectation on in-cash support</li> </ul>

## 4. How to implement household allowance

### A. Identify beneficiaries of the allowance

○ Regarding the beneficiaries of household allowance, expert TFT meeting, survey on citizens' awareness, and various seminars confirmed that the groups needed to benefit were the ones expected to take a comparably excessive burden of household labors, not able to benefit any in-cash support system of the government, and comparably more engaging in household labors without economic activities. In conclusion, beneficiaries need to include those who engage in household labors (including male) living with adolescent or adult children (at the age between 9 ~ 24) or parents 65 or over among people in their 40s and 50s and not involved in economic activities.

### B. Direction of implementation

#### ○ Ground of household allowance

- Legislating the「Ordinance regarding provision of household labor support within household in Gwangju」(To be determined)

○ Discussing publicly in order to build public consensus in local communities on social responsibility of household labors

#### ○ Running pilot project to adopt Gwangju's household allowance scheme

- Evaluating the overall projects, assessing satisfactions among citizens, and identifying weakness to improve through pilot project and gradually expanding the scheme

#### ○ Measuring and monitoring social impact of household allowance

- Carrying out measuring and monitoring social awareness of household labors and status of role division within household



○ Promoting social impact and spreading Gwangju household allowance

