
Women's Role in the Future

Seoul School of Integrated Sciences & Technologies (aSSIST) /
World Women Inventors & Entrepreneurs Association

The world's economy is shifting toward a system that relies on intangible assets rather than tangible ones, and is ready to face an era where intellectual property is the driving force of the economic society. Korea is at a point where a creative economy is being emphasized, and in this session, we explored how the creativity of women, which remained relatively obscure up to this point, is leading the future of the new economy.

Moderator

Han Miyoung (President,
World Women Inventors &
Entrepreneurs Association)

Presenters

An Kyoungmi (CEO,
Kosigongbang)

Kim Eun (CEO, Arumaru)

Kim Myungsook (CEO,
Onelinesun)

Ahn Oe Sun (President,
SpaceCharmI)

Woo Gyehee (CEO,
Danafood)

Yang Hyosook (CEO,
4DLAND)

Rapporteur

Ko Young-Hee (Seoul
School of Integrated
Sciences & Technologies)

An Kyoungmi: I run a company that designs and manufactures instruments related to gugak (Korean traditional music), such as percussion instruments that can be used to perform the traditional *samulnori* dance. Our main product is the *sangmo*, which is the world's only hat instrument, and we are the owners of the original design needed to manufacture it.

We sell our products globally, but back in the day, sales were low and we needed to find a solution to the low demand and low profits. But after the 1988 Seoul Olympics, there was an increased demand for traditional instruments, and we started mass producing them, and have made a patent application relating to this. Due to sustainability issues regarding the wood we use in our products, we obtain our wood from China, but in order to produce

instruments consistently, we have made traditional percussion drums from recycled paper and have also made improvements to the design of traditional instruments. Our business is also expanding upon our main product line by coming up with a tourism package centered on the *sangmo*. Being the recipient of an award from the Korea Women Inventors Association has benefited our business, and being committed to corporate social responsibility, we are planning on running traditional *samulnori* classes through the Korean Traditional Music Research Institute.

Kim Eun: The company's name is comprised of two words, with *aru* referring to a low place and *maru* referring to a high place. Our company focuses on providing a means of learning about and appreciating Korea's cultural heritage. We publish educational texts and run educational programs that allow people to make art pieces that are based on Korean designs, which they can then take home and use. We also provide educational material, such as the curriculum for art class programs aimed at kindergartens, schools and community welfare centers, along with cultural programs and hands-on experience programs for children.

We run a display on *najeon chilgi* (lacquerware inlaid with mother of pearl) in Namyangju-si, Gyeonggi-do, where visitors can learn about traditional games. Those interested in *najeon chilgi* can also opt to enroll in our specialist course. We also run programs and professional art classes at the local volunteer center, as well as participating in "talent donation" by providing traditional Korean artifact classes in countries such as Thailand, India and Myanmar.

Kim Myungsook: We came up with our line of bath products for pets that don't contain artificial scents, based on the fact that pets are sensitive to smell. On top of this, we then branched out to make our Chun Ha Chu Dong (four seasons) shampoo and essence, along with other organic, all-natural products. We've won numerous awards at events such as the Seoul International Invention Fair, and are acting on our vision to produce environmentally friendly products through our new biotechnologies. I wish to play my part in the future as a female entrepreneur by designing and manufacturing environmentally friendly products that don't contain 10 key chemicals, and exporting them to the world.

Ahn Oe Sun: The 21st century welcomed the dawn of Space Age, and space sciences influenced all aspects of life, from politics, the economy, and the military to broader culture and everyday life. Even if it doesn't end up at the manufacturing level, various ideas related to space can be used as business items. To discover young talent who will lead the future of the space age, we must find and nurture those with exceptional creative ability, and such textbooks and curricula are being worked on and implemented in countries such as Russia. We live in an era of convergence where the life expectancy is 100, and in order to keep up with these sorts of changes and strengthen our capabilities, we must come up with an educational system that augments creativity and originality. To reach these goals, it is crucial that we implement educational programs that focus on vision, experience, communication, and empathy, or being able to relate with values across social and cultural boundaries.

Woo Gyehee: Our business has made a point of always maintaining our vision when it comes to planning out and implementing our future based on our goals and dreams. As such, we will continue to improve upon conventional natural processing and packaging methods and increase the competitiveness of packaged seafood products. Given that consumers have become more active in seeking out natural and environmentally friendly goods, the pursuit of more natural processing methods has become increasingly important. We have applied for a patent for our current process, and are striving to continually improve upon these methods. We have invested in the modernization of our current strategy, and research for new product development is underway. Although we are still working through the financial aspects of production, our company is working on growing gradually and continually over time.

Yang Hyosook: Our vision is "Free to Imagine: Endless Possibilities," and based on this message, we came up with innovative educational materials for both math and science. This work led to us receiving awards such as the Education Minister's Award, the Gold Award, and the Silver Award.

We invented and provided an educational system based on creative problem solving, and came up with an educational tool called a 4D Frame, which is rooted in traditional wooden architecture in Korea. We took on the role of providing educational workshops

to the teaching staff at various institutions, and thus contributed to the expansion of creative education. The effectiveness and ingenuity of our educational programs and material are being acknowledged, and we have been contributing materials and tools to the Math and Science Creativity Competition (in which winners receive the Minister of Education Award) since 2008.

Our business also focuses on promoting our products through a variety of channels, one of which being company-initiated contests. This approach opens up pathways that allow us to reach a wider audience with our knowledge and tools. We have succeeded in breaking into the international market by presenting our material to the National Science and Technology Center in Sweden and running research studies in Europe, China, and other parts of the world. Our efforts are being acknowledged by the international community, and we are actively promoting our products by both entering and winning international competitions. The eye for detail held by a female entrepreneur is playing a large role in our company's success in tapping into the global market, and I believe I must take pride in the fact that I have played a role in nurturing future talent as a female entrepreneur here in Korea.

Policy Implications

- Women's artistic, creative and empathetic abilities played a huge role in this era of creative economy, which will contribute toward the development of the future economy.
- Only 50 percent of women in Korea currently participate in economic activity, and this figure must be gradually improved upon for future economic growth.
- Korea has seen a positive outcome in relation to its active support of female inventors, and between 2001 and 2011, saw an increase of 122.4 percent of female inventors applying for patents, out of a total 28.2 percent increase in patented inventions.
- Increasing educational programs for women will affect the creative educational environment for children.