Women in North Korea from 2000: An Analysis of Changes to Gendered Norms since the Economic Crisis and Famine

By

Olivia Anne Radford

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Abstract

There has been considerable research on women's new economic roles since the famine of the 1990s in North Korea. These previous studies have provided less analysis of women in education and their roles in the formal economy. This work intends to contribute to knowledge by presenting an analysis of whether women's new economic roles represent a change to gendered norms in multiple areas of women's lives. Gendered norms are defined as the societal expectations that in this context are placed upon women. This study is important as it offers an understanding of the current state of gender relations within the DPRK and how the situation can improve for women. This study focuses on North Korean women's roles within the family, education participation and both informal and formal work roles since the year 2000. This study first analysed data from before the famine including the speeches of Kim Il Sung and work statistics to conclude that while women were officially equal with men, women continued to shoulder domestic responsibilities and dominate in lower-paid work fields. The study then analysed census data, North Korean media articles, United Nations gender reports and interviews with North Korean defectors which suggests that there have been some changes to gendered norms. Women are becoming more financially responsible in the home and there are some indications that men are beginning to support women in the home. Other areas have shown fewer improvements. The data shows that women's formal work roles continue to follow similar trends to before the famine. Women continue to make up the majority of those in light-industry and primary teaching roles, and significantly less managerial, science and political roles. The number of women in higher education has also shown limited growth. These findings suggest that both the economic crisis and the limited efforts by the state may have restricted the ability of women to perform outside the informal economy or limit their progression within the formal economy.

Contents

Introduction

The topic of this research is gendered norms in North Korea. Over the past two decades, research in this field has focused on how the economic crisis has had an effect on the roles of women in North Korea. Studies have focused on why women began to participate in the informal economy, that occurred as a result of the economic crisis and famine of the 1990s. There has been an under-examination of how the economic crisis affected areas such as women in education and the formal economy. It is important to understand these areas, as they provide a greater understanding of the factors that can influence changes in gendered norms. In order to address this problem, this thesis aims to measure changes in gendered norms in three major areas; women's domestic roles, women's work roles and women's education.

The North Korean government has attempted to alter gender relations since the end of the country's colonial rule by Japan in 1945. The DPRK began to introduce new government policies, such as the Law of Land Reform, the Law of Sex Equality and the Labor Law (Park, 1992: 533). The Law on Sex Equality 'intended to transform the old feudal relations of the sexes and to encourage women to participate fully in cultural, social and political life' and appeared to be successful in some ways. (ibid.) Women did experience equality in many aspects of life due to these laws. Examples of equality included property rights, such as receiving equal quantities of land as men during a redistribution of land to the poor and the right to inherit property (ibid.). These laws also gave women rights to free marriage and the end to many 'feudal' practices such as arranged marriages, the buying and selling of women, and prostitution (ibid.).

The government began to encourage women's participation in the workforce. The government supported this through attempting to relieve women's domestic duties through increasing day care services and amenities such as launderettes and easy to prepare food (Smith, 2015: 180). Despite these efforts, jobs continued to be gender segregated. Women made up the majority of those in low-paid jobs

in the service and light industries (Kim, 2010: 765). It appeared that there were clear gendered norms around the idea of what was acceptable 'women's work' and women as responsible for domestic work.

Official statements from Kim Il Sung presented the idea that it is the mothers who should be in charge of educating their children in the home (Kim, 1961, cited in Ryang, 2000: 335). Kim (ibid.) stated himself that it is the mother who gives birth to children and is the one to bring them up. Despite an emphasis on women's participation in the workforce, certain ingrained notions of what it is to be a woman have manifested as rigid gendered norms. Conceived notions that it is a woman's 'natural duty to give birth and raise and educate children' have restricted women's activities (Ryang, 2000: 335). These restrictions are reflected in the statistics of the types of work most women undertook, generally being lower paid, and the continued assumption of women as responsible for the domestic work in the home (ibid.). Women were expected to participate in the labour force and take on all aspects of domestic life (ibid.). The expected domestic and working roles for women remained largely unchanged until the economic crisis and famine in the 1990s, which Jung and Dalton (2006: 745) argue introduced both 'crisis and opportunity for North Korean women'.

Women's roles from the 1990s were shaped by the need for survival. It was during the 1990s when the DPRK began to face an economic crisis and famine (Haggard & Noland, 2013: 52). Reliable research estimates there were between 600,000 and 1 million famine-related deaths from 1995 to 2000 (Goodkind & West, 2001: 220). Several events triggered the cause of this crisis. One of these was the demise of Soviet aid with the collapse of the communist bloc in 1989 - 1990 (Lankov & Kim, 2014: 75). With the DPRK losing the majority of its foreign aid, this resulted in many in modes of production no longer able to function (Smith, 2015: 197). The majority of the heavy industry and construction sector collapsed (ibid.). The DPRK needed to provide 5.5 million tonnes of grain to feed the population; in 1996, the harvest had produced only around 2.5 – 2.8 million tonnes (Lankov, 2013: 78).

Alongside the economic difficulties came a series of natural disasters which exacerbated the economic and agricultural crisis (Lim, 2005: 4). These consisted of cold weather in 1993 and 1998, floods from torrential rain in 1995 and 1996, both tsunami and drought in 1997 and poor rains in 1999 (ibid.). The Public Distribution System which supplied food to the population could no longer function correctly, and after the floods in the mid-1990s rations ended entirely for the majority (Lankov, 2013: 79). By 1995, the state began to appeal for assistance with food from major economic powers such as the USA and Japan and humanitarian organisations such as the World Food Programme and various United Nations organisations (Smith, 2015: 201). The DPRK received several million tonnes of food aid (Smith, 2015: 201 and 206). This amount could not sustain the entire population and North Koreans were forced to survive by engaging in informal economic activity to survive (Haggard & Noland, 2013: 51). Informal economic activity is defined as fulfilling at least one of three aspects; production and exchange that is for private gain, in contravention to existing law and operates outside the planning structure (Kim & Song, 2008: 363).

The informal economy has been cited as an area where women's roles have changed. (Jung & Dalton, 2006; Kang, 2008; Lankov & Kim, 2014; Lim, 2005; Park, 2011). While there has been a great focus on women's role in the informal economy, the aim of this research is to look at gendered norms across all aspects of women's lives since the economic crisis. The literature review discusses how this aspect has not been greatly explored within the current academic literature. The purpose of this research is to explore how far gendered norms have changed in North Korea since the famine of the 1990s, focusing on the year 2000 to 2017. This is due to the worst of the famine taking place during the 1990s (Lankov, 2004: 859). Thus, the focus will be on how North Koreans have adapted since this period. Gendered norms are defined as the social expectations of certain societal groups. In this context, the thesis focuses on the gendered expectations placed upon women in the DPRK. In particular, the thesis focuses on women's work roles, women's responsibilities for domestic tasks and women's education. This is due to there being enough existing data in these areas to compare data and draw conclusions. While there is a possibility to focus on women as defectors into

South Korea or crossing the border into China, due to the scope of this project the focus remains on the daily lives on women within North Korea.

The main thesis of this work is that gendered norms following the famine showed changes to some extent. Women began to participate in the informal economy and this appears to have created an expectation for women to be more financially responsible in the home. The nature of these changes from below has meant that there have been minimal changes to other areas of women's lives. The economic crisis has meant that women have been less able to improve their roles in the formal economy, as they have been forced to focus on survival. Lack of government efforts to increase the number of women in education or increase their participation in political and economic areas where they are underrepresented also appears evident. Within the home, women still hold the main responsibility for domestic work and men are often continued to be regarded as the head of households.

The main research question of this thesis is 'to what extent did gendered norms in North Korea change following the famine of the 1990s?'. The methods used to answer this question is largely an analysis of secondary data. This method is considered the most appropriate due to the greater accessibility of these types of data sources. The approach to answering the main research question is to first answer 'what were the existing gendered norms in North Korea before the famine?'. The steps to answer this question includes discussing the historical context of the DPRK such as the legacy of Confucian ideals and the influence had from Japanese colonisation. This is important as gendered norms are social beliefs that are deeply ingrained within a society (Smith, 1999: 9). Focusing on the history of beliefs around gender enables an understanding of how these types of norms originate and leads to understanding which factors which can influence changes to these types of norms. The data used here is existing secondary research. This is due to this section covering a greater time-period. Using existing research means there is more readily available data covering a greater period of time, which would take significant time to collect through primary methods. Following this, the research goes on to focus on the period following the creation

of the DPRK state. This involves looking at the newly implement laws and speeches focusing on women and the apparent effects these had.

Using data from the earlier years of the North Korean state presents some challenges as there are fewer accessible publications from this time. Publications such as the Korean Women magazine or other North Korean media articles are often not accessible outside the DPRK. There are, however, sufficient existing data sets to explore this research question. One of the main pieces of data used is the speeches of Kim Il Sung which provide an idea of the attitudes and expectations of the North Korea state. The speeches of Kim may not necessarily reflect the realities of day-to-day life in North Korea so there is also the use of early census data which is used as a means to corroborate this data along with the limited interview data from this period. There are also references to existing secondary research that may provide translated Korean data that would be otherwise inaccessible.

Following the discussion of the early years of the DPRK is a focus on the main research question. The approach to answering the research question looks at three main areas in North Korean women's lives; their home lives, education and working roles. Several different data sources are used to look at these areas. North Korean media articles are analysed to provide an idea of the government's idealist view of the lives of women and the messages that are projected towards the public. The reports by the United Nations as a part of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) provide an analysis of the kind of gender issues that still exist in the DPRK. The DPRK responses also offer an insight into how the government views women's issues and how they intend to respond to them. The extent to which certain actions proclaimed by the government have occurred is not always clear. Existing interview data with defectors is used, however, this is not often accessible in its original form. Thus, interview data has often had to be referenced from existing secondary data. The data from the North Korean 2008 population census is also greatly used. While the census data does not acknowledge informal market activities, it still provides specific data on the kinds of roles and positions men

and women have in other areas of life.

The nature of this topic does present some difficulties in terms of the types of data that are available. Certain data was unable to be obtained. This includes specific empirical data such as first-hand interview data. While these types of data would be beneficial to this research, a number of factors restricted the types of data that could be collected. This research on the DPRK is being conducted in a country where there are few opportunities to contact North Korean officials or defectors. Thus, interview data is lacking due to the difficulties in carrying out this type of research. This is exacerbated by the scope of this project which means that there are limitations in the type of research that can be conducted. This does present some weakness as the lack of empirical data can make the triangulation of data more difficult to carry out.

The research compensates for these setbacks by using a significant amount of secondary data from varying sources to ensure that the data is valid. While there are fewer primary data sets available for triangulation, the data sets that are available are compared with each other when possible. The use of secondary data can also be justified due to its accessibility. This is of particular importance in this project due to there being greater challenges in obtaining first-hand research from North Korea. Secondary data is also useful in a project which has limitations in the time for research to be conducted, therefore, ensuring that there is enough data to compare and draw conclusions. The secondary data that has been selected has been critically analysed within the literature review to ensure that the data is valid as possible. The amount of secondary data is also significant, meaning that the available data is up to date and there is enough information to support answering the research question. The data has been collected during the time-frame that is being analysed and reflects the sample focused on. The approach to this project also means there is a possibility to expand upon this research at a later date when there is more accessibility to primary sources to explore this subject matter further.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Introduction

Much of the existing literature on women in North Korea has found that women's work roles changed following the famine of the 1990s (Jung & Dalton, 2006; Kang, 2008; Lankov & Kim, 2014, Lim, 2005, Park, 2011). The main purpose of this review is to analyse the existing literature in the field and establish a gap in the literature. The review is divided into two main sections. The first part of this thesis analyses gender relations before the 1990s famine. This is so the then established gendered norms can be identified. The literature review firstly addresses the existing literature that focuses on how women's roles in North Korea were developed. The second part of the thesis analyses if gendered norms appeared to change. Thus, there is an analysis of the existing arguments of the extent women's roles changed in North Korea.

The literature identified for review consists of academic works, so the existing methods for studying women and the theories that currently exist can be analysed. This will present areas which could be open to debate and areas that are unsubstantiated. The topic of gender in North Korea is a small, developing field, hence the scope of data available begins from the early 1990s. The literature consists of the major academic works relating to the roles of women in the DPRK. The chapter will be organised by the wider themes of pre-famine and post-famine focused works. Within these wider themes, the works will be grouped and analysed in terms of the methods used, the main arguments and the conclusions that are drawn.

Gender in North Korea: 1945 – 1995

The chapter begins by looking at the methods used in the literature which concentrates on the roles of women from around 1945 to the early 1990s. This time period aligns to the foundation of the North Korean state and to the beginnings of the economic crisis. Later research benefits from the ability to use refugee interviews and data from international organisations. Thus the methods and data of these works have more limitations. (Park, 1992: 528) Researchers including Halliday (1985), Park (1992), Ryang (2000) and Kim (2010) all examine the speeches of Kim Il Sung and various government publications. Park (1992), Ryang (2000) and Kim (2010) each refer to the major women's magazine of the time. Finally, there is the lesser used technique of interview by Halliday (1985). The review outlines each of the methodologies used, the strengths and weaknesses of each and the methods which can be applied to this study.

One of the principal methods for understanding the formation of women's roles is through analysing the speeches and publications of Kim Il Sung. Potential weaknesses can occur with how the speeches and publications are understood and interpreted. Ryang (2000: 324) addresses these issues well by critiquing earlier work by Moon Seung-Gyu. Moon assumes that the gender equality law would be drawn up by Kim himself and thus Kim himself was committed to gender equality. (ibid.) The key argument by Ryang (ibid.) in regards to using Kim Il Sung's work is as follows:

'Kim Il Sung's works provide a useful source of data, not as raw, quantitative data, but as a body of discourse that needs to be further analysed in connection to wider aspects of the society […] and to the social effects that are produced'.

Ryang's argument summaries the importance of triangulation methods in research. Kim's speeches are an important piece of primary data which can be used in conjunction with other sources such as interviews with the general public and work statistics.

Another form of data used by Park (1992), Ryang (2000) and Kim (2010) is the women's magazine of the time. *Chosŏn Yosong* which was a publication produced

by the North Korean Democratic Women's League to educate women (Kim, 2010: 754) *Chosŏn Yosong* offers an idea of how the magazine was used to educate and potentially influence women's roles as wives and workers outside the home. *Chosŏn Yosong* presents a data source that may have educated women and potentially shaped their social roles. Kim (ibid.) critically analyses the reliability of the magazine as a source from both her perspective and a 1947 report. Kim (2010: 754 - 755) recognises that it is not clear how the journal was distributed and to which North Koreans were exposed to the magazine, as well as acknowledging a 1947 report that brought attention to the lack of target audience and failure to reach workers and peasants. It would be unreliable to take the magazine as a means that influenced all women. The magazine still provides a useful insight into attitudes towards women's roles. While these magazines in their primary form are inaccessible to this project, there will be references to the translated elements cited in these previous works.

The final method used is interviews of women in North Korea. This technique has rarely appeared in women's studies in North Korea. Halliday's (1985) interview with the Korean Democratic Women's Union (KDWU) stands out as an exemplary piece of literature in regards to women's status in the DPRK. Many of the facts given by the representatives are unsubstantiated, such as their claims that women make up the majority of management committees and that there had been 'no circumstances stances so far' of rape (Halliday, 1985; 52 and 54). Halliday (ibid.) notes the inconsistencies in these statements: taking note of the contradictory information from Kim Il Sung on women in management roles and reported cases of rape. While this does present some methodological issues, this project can make use of the information by cross-examining some of the facts presented in areas liable to inaccuracies, such as employment. Data such as the 1993 North Korean census is a potential means to verify the validity of such information (Adlakha & West, 1997).

In terms of the methods and sources used in studies of North Korea before the 1990s, there is little room to introduce new methods. This thesis will make use of the speeches and documents from Kim Il Sung and use what limited statistics

and census data exist. The purpose of the third chapter is to answer the research question 'what were the existing gendered norms in North Korea before the famine?'. This section of the literature review focuses on the existing arguments on the status of women before the famine.

Kim (2010: 743) argues that from 1945 – 1950 the North Korean government attempted to create 'the figure of the revolutionary mother'. Kim (2010: 766) argues this image was emphasised in post-colonial Korea as women and mothers were the embodiments of the Korean nation. Women were encouraged to participate in the public sphere, but traditional roles as wives and mothers continued to be reinforced (Kim, 2010: 743). Kim (2010: 765 – 767) argues that gender roles were reflected in labour statistics, with women taking on jobs as caretakers and light industries, thus, resulting in unequal pay and unequal status. Kim (2010: 746) disagrees with the idea of the tradition of Confucianism as an explanation of the continuation of traditional gender roles, due to the significant revolution and social upheaval which occurred. Rather, Kim (2010: 767) argues that the state's emphasis on mothers as the ideal citizens have tied women to the idea of motherhood and left women unable define themselves outside of this framework.

Within Kim's work there are several arguments introduced; some of which are better expanded upon. The core argument of Kim (2010: 743) is the state has emphasised the view of women as revolutionary mothers which are supported by referencing the Korean Woman magazine and various government pronouncements. Kim (2010: 751) also uses the labour law and the law of equal rights for men and women as evidence of the state defining women's roles as workers and mothers. This interpretation assumes the state expected women to be mothers, rather than the state allowing mothers to enter the workforce, which is not made clear by the laws themselves. Ryang (2000: 335) provides a better interpretation of the laws put forward by the government by noting that men were never encouraged to share or maintain any responsibility for housework, thus contributing to women's double burden of economic activity and domestic work.

Another element unsubstantiated by Kim (2010: 745) is her stance on the role played by Confucianism on women's role in North Korea. Kim (ibid.) describes how the state never denounced Confucianism or tradition. Yet Kim goes on to criticise those who cite Confucianism as the cause of persistent traditional gender roles in the country due to revolutionary North Korea being a 'time of social upheaval aimed at discarding the past' (ibid.). This view does little to acknowledge the resistance of gender roles that have been influenced by Confucianism and traditional thought. (Smith, 1999: 9) Smith asserts the persistence of gender roles as they are 'pervasive and naturalised as normal, acceptable and appropriate' (ibid.). Kim's argument here lacks further exploration of the role Confucianism may have continued to play asserting gender roles.

The strengths of Kim's study are the in-depth analysis of the sources used. In terms of its contribution to this thesis, Kim's argument shows how women were expected to be mothers and workers as both a reaction to colonialism and a reflection of wider global trends (Kim, 2010: 761). The analysis of *Chosŏn Yosong* provides solid evidence for the pressure put on women to take on the mother/worker position. Kim's study is somewhat limited in its scope but succeeds in proving its key point that is particular to that context. In terms of the relevance of this article to the wider thesis, it provides a solid grounding of how women's roles were formed in the early years of the North Korean state. The argument by Kim (ibid.) of the construction of women's roles as mothers in a post-colonial context is an interesting perspective of how states establish the roles of women in times of revolution.

Park (1992: 542) argues that the problems of 'organising women as women' are two-fold. Using evidence from the women's magazine, speeches of Kim Il Sung, newspapers and other government publications, Park (1992: 541) argues firstly, that traditional Confucian culture continues to divide household labour. Secondly, Park (ibid.) emphasises the state's adherence to a Marxist theory which says that class issues should be prioritised over issues around women. Park (1992:

543) argues that women's issues were seen as 'selfish' and discouraged a movement focused solely on the emancipation of women in North Korea.

Park's key arguments can be divided into two areas. Firstly, Park (ibid.) argues that while women experienced significant social improvements, they continue to lack certain powers. This is the stronger argument. Park (1992: 532) provides an in-depth analysis of gender relations before the North Korean revolution; providing adequate context to support her argument that women's status has somewhat improved. Park's use of sources also supports how women's status has not improved as she uses a variety of government pronouncements that reinforce childcare and housework remaining the duties of women. Park's argument also benefits from a well-structured argument. Park assumes the three aims of the state regarding women as 'liberation from the patriarchal family and social systems, liberation through social labour; and the creation of a socialist woman' (Park, 1992: 532). Park uses government sources to define these and by analysing the successes of these goals creates a coherent argument for understanding the situation for women in the DPRK. Park (1992: 540) also bases her conclusion within a well-defined theoretical framework by using Lenski's theory of social inequality and is based on a broader theoretical context.

The less successful area of Park's argument, is her attempts to explain why childcare and housework remain duties of women. The first of the explanations for this is attributed to a legacy of Confucian culture (1992: 541). While this is an often referenced topic, Park's efforts to justify this is lacking. One example of this is when Park (1992: 542) states that women are 'expected to follow Confucian virtues by obeying their husbands and sacrificing themselves for men' but provides no real evidence to support this. The second part of her argument focuses on the role of Marxist ideology as a reason for a lack of women's movement (ibid.) Ryang (2000: 325) explicitly disagrees with this, arguing how there is no reference to a Marxist debate in the North Korean's state's policies regarding women's issues, meaning it is difficult to justify as a factor in a lack of woman's movement. Overall, Park's argument contributes to this thesis by offering a perspective as to how successful the state was in addressing women's

issues; particularly by acknowledging areas where the government was successful.

Ryang (2000: 323), like Kim, focuses on how motherhood has been projected; arguing that the term 'women' is barely recognized, instead the focus in on the idea of 'mother'. Ryang (2000: 342) takes the stance that it was the construction of gender that resulted in the effect on women's economic and social roles: the state created 'motherhood' and 'worker hood' and abolished the idea of being a 'woman'. Rather than ascribing this entirely to Neo-Confucian traditions, she credits this to the 'the distinct cult of leadership and patriarchal discourses' (Ryang, 2000: 323 cited in Kim, 2010: 335). Her ideas of patriarchy compliment Kang (2008: 55) in which they both argue that it was the continued patriarchal society that imposed a specific social order (Ryang, 2000: 342). Ryang (2000: 336), however, focuses on the discourse enacted by the patriarchal system that regarded women as either 'youth or mothers' in official works and speeches. Ryang (2000: 323) emphasises that women as a category have become obsolete, disallowing women to have a voice. Ryang (2000: 332 – 337) makes this argument through reference to government publications that emphasise women's roles as mothers, as well as the way revolutionised female figures are depicted in the DPRK.

The strengths of Ryang's work is the analysis of speeches by Kim as a way of understanding the expectations placed on women. Ryang refers to Einhorn (Einhorn, 1993: 31 cited in Ryang, 2000: 335), who argues that family and women's oppression are somewhat linked. Ryang (2000: 334) uses speeches from Kim to show how the family unit continues to be projected. There are limitations to Ryang's work as there are only brief references to wider issues such as women's education and jobs. The work focuses heavily on the ideas that the state projected onto women, but provides less analysis of how they affected women.

Kim and Ryang's attitudes do differ in various respects; Ryang (2000: 341 – 342) describes the way in which the state created a 'fetishized' image of Kim Il Sung, describing North Korean people as playing 'a stereotypical "female" part in old-fashioned romantic tales' in their love towards him. This perception encompasses

the idea that the state brought Kim into every aspect of their lives; their apparent love and loyalty to him creating a 'feminization' of the population, and this concealed inequality as all people played a 'woman's part' towards the leader (Ryang, 2000: 341 – 342). Ryang (2000: 341) takes a generalised view on how North Koreans see themselves and their surroundings; passive and conditioned, as Ryang compares the power he has over them to George Orwell's dystopian *1984*. Kim (2010: 766) gives a stronger argument, in that she establishes that women were 'not without ambivalence regarding [motherhood]', as she shows with evidence from her article that women did question some aspects of their roles.

While both arguments have similarities, they both see the state's emphasis on motherhood as the reason women were unable to lose their domestic expectations and reach economic equality entirely. Kim (2010: 757 – 758) has a framework that takes into consideration the likely ambivalence women may have towards their roles, women may not have been able to improve their status entirely, but their questions and uncertainty existed. Ryang, in comparison, concludes that women were 'deprived of the language to discuss themselves, and, therefore, forced to be silent' (Ryang, 2000: 343). In the context of North Korea, therefore, it is important to take into account opinions of individuals when possible.

Kang (2008: 58 – 59) has a similar dynamic to Park (1992) that the principles such as 'wife serving the husband' as moral conduct was not challenged by the socialist reform. Kang argues that the revolution 'never tried to break up the family unit' or 'the basic patriarchal order' (Kang, 2008: 59). Kang particularly notes the state's emphasis on the 'family [as] the cells of society'. (Kang, 2008: 60) As the patriarchal family order was never challenged, the traditional ideals of the family hierarchy continued to be reinforced and hindered women's ability to have equal economic participation (ibid.). Both Ryang (2000: 334) and Kang (2008: 62) contribute to this thesis by demonstrating how the family system contributes towards gender inequality. Kang (2008: 61) builds upon Ryang's research by demonstrating the inequality in women's work roles.

Within the literature focused on women before the famine, it is agreed that women's status was not as equal as state rhetoric portrayed it to be. Debate exists as to why exactly women's status was unequal, but generally, the way the state continued to emphasise women's roles as mothers is cited (Kang, 2008: 64; Kim, 2010: 767; Park, 1992: 539; Ryang, 2000: 343). This area of the study enables fewer opportunities to fill a research gap. However, through analysing the available data, this study will draw its own conclusions particularly relating to what the 'gendered norms' were of the time.

Women following Economic Crisis

The main research question of this thesis is to understand the extent to which gendered norms may have changed following the economic crisis and the famine of the 1990s. Several studies have focused on the effects the famine had on women; all of which cite the failure of the state economy which changed the types of work women engaged in (Jung & Dalton, 2006; Kang, 2008; Lankov & Kim, 2014; Park, 2011). In terms of the methods used in these studies, both Lankov and Kim and Kang's work is based on interviews with North Korean defectors. Lankov and Kim's study uses a survey of 23 North Korean refugees and Kang interviewed 32 North Korean refugees. Lankov and Kim (2014: 71) acknowledge that the refugee community is overrepresented by those from the North, an area which was hit worse by the crisis. Jung and Dalton draw attention to the fact interview data may be unreliable or unrepresentative as it prevents views 'of those disenchanted enough to leave their country' (Jung & Dalton, 2014: 744). Thus, comparing interview data both with itself and other data sources is important. Interview data still provides important, first-hand data from the population that would be otherwise unobtainable. Both studies based on interviews come to similar conclusions in terms of the effects on the roles of women. It is found that women were better able to engage in informal activity and thus made the majority of their families' income (Kang, 2008: 66; Lankov & Kim, 2014: 80).

In terms of the major arguments surrounding women's new economic roles, Jung and Dalton (2006: 741) argue that the capitalist processes that have occurred have created both new opportunities and challenges. In discussing economic change, Jung and Dalton (2006: 757) argue that the economic crisis meant that men could not support their families, quoting one female refugee who states how 'in 1997-98 men became useless'. They cite Lankov (2005, cited in Jung and Dalton, 2006: 758) who notes in 2004 how women are overrepresented in the marketplaces at the lower levels. Jung and Dalton (2006: 760) argue that these forms of activity have empowered women as the improvement in women's economic status may mean an improvement of women's social standing. Written in 2006, they conclude that over time these areas warrant further research (ibid.). Data such as the 2008 census was not yet published so this offers an area to pursue further research. Compared to other research on women's new economic roles, Jung and Dalton's work lacks in its sources. While they use evidence to show that women participate in this new economy, the evidence to demonstrate how women were 'empowered' by these roles is lacking.

Park (2011: 171) argues that the new economic roles taken on by women could lead to both 'positive and negative consequences'. Park (ibid.) argues that new economic opportunities have led to increased dual burdens of workload, increased sexual violence and further family breakdowns. Positive effects include the possible changes into the sexual division of labour in the home (ibid.) Park refers to interview data that suggests that men have begun to help more in the home which is supported by Kang (2008: 65) and Lankov and Kim (2014: 86).

The main strength of Park's argument is the argument that while the financial crisis began to give women stronger voices and self-awareness, women currently do not have the ability to form a critical mass as they lack 'economic, social, political, and organisational resources to collectively voice their discontent' (Park, 2011: 174). Park (2011: 172) uses the evidence of the Chongjin protest of 2008, a rare spontaneous women's protest against age restrictions to market vendors. Park argues that the unorganised and sporadic nature of this protest represents a lack of organised women's movement (ibid.). Park uses this evidence well to suggest that as women are focusing on survival, it is unlikely that

organised rebellion will be a priority (ibid.).

Kang (2008: 66) finds that there were changes to strict gender roles and the sexual division of labour but 'this did not significantly undermine the consolidated patriarchal system'. Like Park, and Jung and Dalton, Kang notes that 'economic empowerment of North Korean women has not been matched by similar improvements in the cultural realm and social status' (Kang, 2008: 66).

Kang (ibid.) uses interview data to show that despite some visible changes, women still respected the authority of their husbands. Kang (ibid.) also supports Park's argument by noting that women's economic activities were for economic livelihood as opposed to self-realisation. This argument supports the idea that the reasons for the economic activity must also be considered, as opposed to assuming women's economic engagement automatically equates to empowerment in all areas.

Finally, Lankov and Kim (2014) study the transformation of gender roles since the early 1990s which bases itself on 23 in-depth interviews with North Korean defectors. Lankov and Kim (2014: 85 – 86) bring attention to the significant increase in women's economic power, particularly noting some changes to societal norms regarding women's sexual behaviour and marriage. Lankov and Kim use Caroline Medved's theory that 'increases in a woman's marital earnings do not necessarily and neatly translate into greater relational power' (Medved, 2009: 141 cited in Lankov & Kim, 2014: 85). This provides a framework to understand the situation for women in North Korea. This is demonstrated through interview data that shows how women continue to see men as dominant within the family and that women are naturally responsible for housework (Lankov & Kim, 2014: 88).

Conclusion

The main issue with the existing literature in this area is its central focus on women's roles in the informal economy. The main discussions focus on these

changes and the effects this had on women's domestic duties and role within the family. While this is an important aspect of women's roles, there is a lack of discussion on how women's roles have changed over time in the state economy. There is also limited discussion of women in higher education and political participation. This study hopes to fill this research gap by analysing women's roles outside the informal economy.

There are also gaps in the forms of data used; North Korea's engagement with the UN through gender reports provides an insight into government perspectives on women's roles. The 2008 census data does not appear to be analysed in these works. The census data presents figures including the breakdown of reported heads of households, hours spent supporting economically within the home and statistics of women's participation in education and the formal workforce. The thesis now goes on to the theoretical framework, which defines gender and gendered norms, the way gendered norms are learnt and the ways in which they can change.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework

Introduction

This chapter establishes the theoretical framework for the thesis. This chapter outlines and analyses theories and concepts surrounding gender and gendered norms. The chapter begins by deconstructing the term gender, defining the term and its relation to the ideas of masculinity and femininity. Following this, the chapter delineates the concept of gendered norms. This begins with defining gendered norms. There is then an analysis of the learning of gendered norms through socialisation and institutions, such as the workplace and schools. Finally, the chapter addresses some of the existing theories of how gendered norms may change or persist. There is also a focus on the global nature of gendered norms; including how similar norms are learnt on a global scale and how changes are often seen at similar rates.

This thesis studies the extent of change in gendered norms in North Korea since the famine of the 1990s. These theories support the thesis by providing a clear definition of gender and how norms become gendered. The various theories of the learning of gendered norms provide a framework to understand gender relations in North Korea. Finally, the theories of how gendered norms may change pinpoint areas of analysis to measure a change in gendered norms.

Peterson and Runyan argue that 'no society treats its women as well as its men' (United Nations Development Programme, 1997: 39 cited in Peterson & Runyan, 2010: 4). The 1997 UN development index shows that women perform the majority of world's work hours including three-quarters of unpaid family work (United Nations Development Programme, 1997: 39 cited in Peterson & Runyan, 2010: 4). A 2011 survey of 46 countries found that 28 percent of women and 6 percent of men spent three to five hours a day undertaking household work (United Nations Development Programme, 2016: 24). The 2016 UN development index argues that social norms embed gender disparities (United Nations

Development Programme, 2016: 58). Understanding how these social norms continue to shape the lives of women is a primary reason for investigating gender. Investigating gender enables an assessment of how these norms influence the roles of men and women.

Conceptualising Gendered Norms

To analyse the construction of gendered norms and their persistence, this chapter begins by differentiating between the concept of sex and gender. As stated by Beauvoir (2011: 330) 'one is not born, but rather becomes, woman'. Butler (1986: 35) argues that this encapsulates the feminist argument that aims to 'debunk the claim that anatomy is destiny' by stating the distinction between sex and gender. Beauvoir's quote is a feminist argument as it explains how societal expectations contribute to the inequality of the sexes as opposed to being biologically destined. The main facet of this argument is that sex and gender are two distinguishable parts of the self. Sex is the biological features of a person whereas gender is the 'cultural meaning and form that body acquires' (Butler, 1986: 35). Modestly put forward by Lindsey (2015: 4); sex makes us male or female; gender makes us masculine or feminine'. Gender denotes a complex, socially-constructed identity. The chapter goes on to explore the concepts of masculinity and femininity and how this relates to gendered norms.

Zalewski (1995: 341) emphasises the socially constructed nature of masculine and feminine traits which 'inform and impinge upon everyday practices at all levels, personal, public and international'. Zalewski (1995: 344) explains that these beliefs have resulted in how we create different roles and expectations for women and men. Zalewski's argument is useful as it acknowledges that there are biological and to some extent social differences between men and women (ibid.). To ignore these differences would reduce the factual accuracy of this thesis. It is important to show how the differences between men and women are interpreted and the results of this (ibid.). As argued by Enloe (2014: 68 – 69) it is often considered a 'natural' part of being a woman as having the ability to clean, wash

and cook, despite there being no biological evidence for this. Zalewski's argument shows how our perception of the biological differences between men and women impact on our beliefs of masculinity and femininity.

To define masculinity and femininity, Zalewski draws attention to Peterson and Runyan's definition that the two work in oppositional relation to each other (Peterson & Runyan, 1993: 7 cited in Zalewski, 1995: 341). They argue that 'to be feminine is to be not masculine', and vice-versa (ibid.). This distinction between femininity and masculinity creates a stigma to those who may display traits that are not socially acceptable (Peterson & Runyan, 2010: 11). It creates a hierarchy, where there is a tendency for masculinity to be given greater value than femininity (Zalewski, 1995: 341). For example, a typical 'masculine trait' is strong leadership, whereas the interpretation of a woman is often as being 'bossy'. These gendered expectations also affect men. If a man shies back and lacks control in the workplace, he can be deemed un-masculine, in a derogatory manner (ibid.).

Peterson and Runyan emphasise the discernible differences between men and women, whereas Connell (1987: 183) argues that there are diverse and unequal ranked forms of masculinity. Connell's concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' argues that there is a global dominance of men over women by a particular 'hegemonic masculinity' (ibid.). This kind of masculinity dominates over women and other subordinated forms of masculinity, such as homosexuality (ibid.). Connell defines hegemony as a means of ascendancy over other men not through violence but by ideas 'embedded in religious doctrine and practice, mass media content, wage structures, the design of housing, [and] welfare/taxation policies' (Connell: 1987: 184). Connell (1987: 186 – 187) has a stronger argument relating to masculinity, as they acknowledge the role sexuality may play in perceptions towards masculinity.

Connell (ibid.) refers to femininity as 'constructed in the context of overall subordination of women to men'. Connell (1987: 187) argues that due to the social power of men there is limited scope for women to power over other women. Feminine traits rarely promote power, so women are unlikely to dominate over other women as men do (ibid.). Connell puts forward the concept of 'emphasised

femininity'(ibid.). Connell (ibid.) argues compliance of femininity is visible through marriage and childcare. Often these are not compatible with the workforce, so women may choose to accept taking a role as a housewife and child bearer (ibid.). Feminine roles are emphasised through the mass media, which has a strong culture of highlighting femininity in women's magazines, and women's pages in newspapers (ibid.). There is far less emphasised masculinity in the media compared to emphasised femininity (ibid.). Women, therefore, are more likely to take on 'emphasised feminine' roles (ibid.).

Peterson and Runyan's argument focuses on the polarising differences between masculinity and femininity. Connell takes this argument further emphasising that it is certain forms of masculinity that dominate over femininities. Both of these arguments support this thesis by providing a definition and explanation of the relationship between gender and masculinity and femininity. Connell's argument provides a more in-depth understanding of how certain forms of masculinity (eg. heterosexuality) come to dominate in societies.

From looking at definitions of gender, and how these form ideas of masculinities and femininities, these frame the thesis in the following ways. Primarily this is through establishing what it is to be masculine and feminine in the DPRK. In chapter three, there is a discussion of how gendered norms were established before the famine. In doing so, there is a discussion of how the state implicitly defines feminine roles. Connell's concept of 'emphasised femininity' helps explain how the state's discourse around women has influenced the roles they take.

Having established a definition of gender, the chapter now goes on to understand how social norms become gendered. Pearse and Connell (2016: 34) understand norms as 'values, attitudes, preferences, conventions, assumptions, ideologies, traditions, customs, culture, rules, laws, beliefs or even rights'. Narrowing these ideas down, they identify norms as the expectations of a certain social group (Pearse and Connell, 2016: 35). Lindsey (2015: 2) demonstrates how societies work through the idea of social structures which establish the dynamics of social interaction. We give one another a status, and this defines the treatment of that

person in society (ibid.). Social cognition studies illustrate how we automatically categorise any person we interact with by sex (Ridgeway, 2009: 148). This process of sex categorising forces us to differentiate between men and women and we expect different conduct for each (Pearse & Connell, 2016: 35).

This section focused firstly on how we define gender and how gender relates to masculinity and femininity. Gender was defined as a socially constructed identity which is influenced by biology. Masculine and feminine traits are the associated expectations that come with being labelled as male or female. Following this, gendered norms were defined as the social expectations of a particular social group. This differentiation between social groups means that we come to expect different behaviour from each.

Learning Gendered Norms

The following section analyses how gendered norms are learnt, particularly focusing on how these norms are learnt on a global scale. Gender refers to socially and culturally constructed forms of masculinity and femininity (Zalewski, 1995: 341). There are several key theories of how gender is learned. Ridgeway and Correll (2004: 510) argue 'that gender is not primarily an identity or role that is taught in childhood and enacted in family relations'. Rather, they see gender as a system that categorises men and women differently and organises 'social relations of inequality on the basis of that difference' (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004: 510). Peterson and Runyan (2010: 65) discuss the role of socialisation and institutionalised social practices as the way we learn gender roles.

Peterson and Runyan (ibid.) describe socialisation as the way 'individuals are taught and internalise culturally appropriate gendered ways of identifying, thinking and acting'. Peterson and Runyan (ibid.) argue the importance of socialisation which precedes and shapes one's birth. They stress that the emphasis of sex difference on individuals causes them to internalise gender ideas from birth (Peterson & Runyan, 2010: 65). These ideas then continue to be

enacted in socialisation from families, schools, religious institutions and the media (ibid.). By contrast, Ridgeway (2009), Ridgeway and Correll (2004) and Pearse and Connell (2015a; 2015b; 2016) place a greater emphasis on the role of institutions. Pearse and Connell (2015a; 2016: 31) critique socialisation as it underestimates 'the agency of social actors'. They claim that children are flexible in their learning and can often rebel against the taught gendered norms from childhood (ibid.). Instead, they argue that it is gender segregation in work and schools and different levels of pay which 'embed gender values' that are independent of one's individual beliefs (Pearse & Connell, 2015a).

Both arguments hold merit when discussing the way one learns gender. Pearse and Connell's critique argues that socialisation from birth undermines an individual's agency (ibid.). Yet this can be contradicted as it discounts those who do not rebel against gendered norms from childhood. Indeed, both arguments can be flawed by each's logic. Thus, analysis of socialisation should have awareness of the agency of individuals, while not discrediting the power it may have over certain people.

An important aspect when discussing gendered norms is how certain trends have developed across the world. Gender inequalities are a characteristic of all societies. Boudet et al. (2013) found in their study across 20 countries that there are reoccurring social ideas about the appropriate roles for men and women. They found in each of their research locations that all generations identified the dominance of women's domestic role and men as a breadwinner as the core to female and male identities (Boudet et al., 2013: 210 – 211). Gender divisions are embedded in societal institutions such as legal frameworks, religion and traditional cultures (Boudet et al., 2013: 20).

There are several theories relating to how all societies experience gender inequality. Often biological factors can influence the perception of appropriate behaviours of men and women. Alesina et al. (2013) discuss the idea that gender roles originate from the division of labour in agriculture, with the conceit of their argument is that countries that used plough agriculture have less equal gender

norms than other countries. Their overall discussion focuses on the role agriculture plays in the origins of gendered norms (Alesina et al., 2013: 476). This theory is similar to Zalewski (1995: 341) that distinguishable biological characteristics can influence gendered norms. With plough agriculture requiring significant upper arm strength, Alesina et al. (2013: 471) argue that men would work outside while women would be left to take on domestic activities. This division of labour has since generated norms about the appropriate role of women in society (ibid.).

Alesina et al.'s theory contributes to this thesis by arguing that gender roles originate from traditional agricultural practices (ibid.). The theory supports arguments by Ridgeway and Correll (2004: 510) on the role of institutions as a means that influence gendered norms. Alesina et al. (2013: 473) suggest the long-term effects of plough based agriculture may have developed institutions, markets and policies that are 'less conducive to the participation of women in activities outside the home'. A weakness of this argument is the explanation of short-term factors that may impact on gender roles. The authors acknowledge the role that factors such as economic and medical development may have in the change of gender roles (Alesina et al., 2013: 474). An explanation of how these factors affect gendered roles is unsubstantiated. The study does contribute to an understanding of how different societies have similar origins in gendered norms.

Inglehart and Norris (2003: 49) cite the role of religion in the formation of gendered norms. Inglehart and Norris (2003: 50) argue that across many religions there has been active aim to reinforce social norms of women as mothers. They argue that these have involved 'buttressing traditional policies and the legal framework regulating marriage and divorce, abortion and contraception, family and childcare policy' (ibid.). Religion may have contributed to gendered norms as societies throughout history are governed or shaped in some way by religious practices. This argument does have weaknesses. Boudet et al. (2013: 61) note the role of factors such as geography, culture and history having a far greater influence on women's work roles. Using the example of Islamic beliefs; areas such as Gaza has far lower levels of women's employment compared to countries such

as Indonesia (Boudet et al., 2013: 61). This is one example that may reflect the greater impact of factors such as the economy and local cultural values (ibid.). Boudet et al's. discussion helps to explain gendered norms in North Korea as it acknowledges how significant social changes may have impacted gender relations. While persistent neo-Confucian social ideas can be cited as an influence on gendered norms, there must also be an awareness of the roles that changing social and cultural factors have on gender relations.

Studying gendered norms in the DPRK requires an understanding of the origin of gendered norms. Analysis of the theories outlined has established the main theoretical arguments on how gendered norms are learnt. Analysing both theories of socialisation and institutions, both theories are used as a framework for understanding the learning of gendered norms. There has also been a focus on how gendered norms occur on a global scale. Gendered norms may originate from traditional agricultural methods influenced by perceptions of biology (Alesina et al., 2013: 471). Theories also suggest the role of religious practices that have shaped institutions (Inglehart & Norris, 2003: 49). These ideas can be considered along with the role an individual country's culture and history may have on gender relations (Boudet et al., 2013: 61). Chapter three draws on these ideas when looking at the neo-Confucian era of Korean history.

Understanding Changes in Gendered Roles and Norms

This final section explores some of the major theories of how gendered social norms may change. Certain scholars are more optimistic that gendered norms can change. Connell and Pearse (2015a) argue that norms can change, as they are 'not fixed and unassailable' and are dynamic. They argue that resistance from marginalised women and men fight these norms (Connell and Pearse, 2015a). Enloe (2014: 12) supports this by arguing that it is women's collective resistance to feminised expectations which 'can upset the gendered norms and roles on which the current global system has come to rely'. Boudet et al. (2013: 213) also argue

that at an individual level 'education, self-efficacy, and the ability to aspire', are the crucial factors for potential change.

Peterson and Runyan (2010: 53 – 54) argue that culture mediates human behaviour rather than biology, so culture can change. They argue gender inequality is maintained through psychological mechanisms such as sexist humour, socio-cultural practices such as sexual harassment, structural discrimination such as denial of equal rights, job segregation, and direct violence (Peterson and Runyan, 2010: 62 – 63). Boudet et al. also refer to Ridgeway and Correll's argument that showing women counter-stereotypical images and changing specific thinking can change gendered norms (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004 cited in Boudet et al., 2013: 26). It is possible to see changes in gendered norms and roles through both women and societies' resistance to this kind of ideology.

While personal resistance and awareness of gendered norms can influence change, the extent to which this occurs is limited. Boudet et al. (2013: 24) argue that gendered norms are resistant to change as these norms are held and practised in daily life. This strong resistance to change can be attributed to the role of institutions and socialisation methods that contribute to our learning of gender. What is of particular importance is the idea that women and men's opportunities to achieve are reliant on outside factors; such as social and political structures (ibid.). Pearse and Connell (2016: 42) add to this argument by emphasising how changes are consciously resisted by the men who benefit. This aspect of the argument is difficult to measure. Pearse and Connell conclude that gendered norms can change through external means such as the economy, technology and modernisation and through interpersonal interactions (Pearse and Connell, 2016: 43 – 45). The idea that women's opportunities to achieve are reliant on outside factors helps to explain how the economic crisis forced more women to participate in the informal economy, as other areas in the formal economy provided far lower levels of pay (Harris, 2017).

Gendered norms require external means to influence their change. Global efforts have increased to improve gender relations. International efforts focusing on female empowerment have increased over the last twenty years and have played a role in changing gender attitudes. The United Nations Eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have marked a significant drive for change throughout the world, with the third MDG being 'to promote gender equality and empower women' (World Health Organisation, 2018).

Increasing efforts to improve gender relations can be attributed to modernisation. Ingelhart and Norris (2013: 13) discuss the impact of modernisation on gendered norms globally. Their argument is that modernisation has resulted in changing gender relations by a 'two-stage modernisation process' (ibid.) from agrarian to industrial and industrial to post-industrial societies. They argue that in post-industrial societies more women can enter the paid workforce, fertility rates are reduced and opportunities for education are improved (Ingelhart & Norris, 2013: 1). This argument supports Pearse and Connell (2016: 43 – 45) and Boudet et al. (2013: 213) on the importance of education to change gendered norms. This argument also helps to explain how the North Korea economic crisis appears to have set back this type of modernisation, as there is evidence (United Nations, 2005b; 2017) to suggest that fewer women have been able to enter higher education or enter the formal workforce.

Pearse and Connell (2016: 43 – 45) also suggest the role of the economy in changing gendered norms. Seguino (2007) investigates the macrostructural theory that explains gender inequalities due to women's ability to participate in the economy. Through examining data from the World Values Survey, Seguino (2017: 22 – 23) concludes that not only are global gender norms and stereotypes 'shifting in a gender-equitable direction' but can be somewhat attributed to women's increased employment. With women's increased employment stemming from policies that allow women to both work and take on caring responsibilities, Seguino (2017: 24) concludes that this begins to break down existing gendered norms and stereotypes. Seguino's argument reinforces

Inglehart and Norris (2013: 1) on modernisation improving gendered norms as modernisation results in more women entering the workforce.

While Seguino's focus lies in the role of economy, several arguments (Boudet et al., 2013; Duflo, 2012; Elson, 1999) exist that downplay the role of the economy. Elson (1999: 615) criticises the idea that earning a wage automatically empowers women. Empowerment can be defined as the 'expansion of freedom of choice and action as a result of a process of gaining power' (Narayn & Petesch, 2002 cited in Boudet et al., 2013: 20). Elson refers to Agarwal who concludes from a study of women in South East Asia that there must be an acknowledgement of wider issues around women's increased employment such as the community attitudes around gendered norms, the level of earnings and the way in which women's earnings has increased (Agarwal, 1994: 71 cited in Elson, 1999: 615). This argument is important for analysing the roles of women within the informal economy, as it makes note of other factors to consider when looking at women's economic roles.

Rather than dismissing the role of the economy, Duflo (2012: 1060 and 1076) argues that while evidence has shown that economic development correlates with women's legal rights, that neither economic development nor women's empowerment can bring about equity alone. Duflo (2012: 1058) emphasises how the expectations of how women are supposed to spend their time play a large role in gender inequality. She argues that appliances that reduce household activities, as well as the availability of contraception to reduce birth rates in younger women, can give women more time to engage in other activities (ibid.). Duflo (2012: 1058) argues that gender equity can only be brought about by implementing policy actions that favour women over a long period. While Duflo's argument does not focus on gendered norms, her argument offers criticism to arguments that place a great emphasis on the role of the economy in changing gendered norms.

Understanding changes in gendered norms require an understanding of how these occur at the individual level as well as the wider, global movements. Gendered norms can change through female empowerment and education

(Boudet et al., 2013: 213). These changes at the personal level are shaped by government policy and the economy. While the two work with each other, a correlation may not always lie between the two. As noted by Boudet et al. (2013: 148), simply observing changes in female labour force participation does not always help us recognise how this relates to gendered norms. The majority of scholars agree (Boudet et al., 2013: 24; Pearse & Connell, 2016: 42) that while there is a determination to change norms at an individual level, the current social structures that are in place create a difficulty to do so. All of the arguments acknowledge change is entirely possible, however; it is slow and difficult to implement. Boudet et al. (2013: 26) summarise this idea as 'movement in one area does not always mean movement in other areas or for everyone'. Changes may occur in reaction to certain events and backlashes can also occur (ibid.). This argument supports the idea that the changes seen from the economic crisis occurred in only certain areas due to the social structures in place.

Conclusion

Gendered norms operate on two levels. On a macro-scale through means such as socialisation and institutions, and a micro-personal level where we perform the expected gender norms and therefore reinforce them. It is these socially constructed gendered norms that influence the expected behaviours of both women and men and shape our societies. Gendered norms can change through a number of ways, but the key aspect, outlined by Boudet et al. (2013: 26) is by observing a change to the 'normative framework'. Using the theories analysed within this chapter, the normative gender framework within North Korea can be identified. Once this normative framework is recognised, the possible changes following the famine can be determined.

From looking at both the literature review and theoretical framework, the approach to answering the research question is as follows. The first research question 'what were the existing gendered norms in North Korea before the famine?' is answered using the theories of how gendered norms are learnt. The

way in which gender is discussed by the state and how these ideas are projected are analysed in conjunction with the effects they had on women. Understanding the existing social ideas around gender in North Korea enables there to be a basis of comparison to measure the extent of changes following the famine. The theories discussed within the theoretical framework are used to decide which factors are analysed to measure change. From the discussion within the theoretical framework, there is an understanding that multiple factors must be analysed together to measure the extent of changes to gendered norms such as the opinions of both women and men, work statistics, government policy and influence and access to education.

The existing literature does not directly explore the idea of 'gendered norms'. Rather, the current literature focuses on discussing the changes to women's lives since the famine and some of the more immediate effects that came about as a result of these. Thus, this research will contribute to the field by, firstly, focusing more closely on the long-term effects following the famine, with the time frame of the study focusing from the year 2000 to the year 2017. Discussing these changes in terms of gendered norms also presents a different perspective on studying this area. This perspective draws on ideas discussed in the review of current literature. Park (2011) discusses Lenski's theory of social inequality to discuss the position of women. This theory does not acknowledge specific gendered aspects to these arguments, whereas, the theories used to frame this research focus on the causes of female inequality which may be more appropriate for this type of research. There are few references to theories of women's inequality in the existing literature (Kang, 2008: 56; Lankov and Kim, 2014: 85), however, there is limited discussion of the extent that 'gendered norms' may have changed, creating a research gap in this field. Thus, the theoretical framework is built from the literature review by understanding what is known about the situation for women in North Korea and uses theories that can help explain whether the changes that have occurred have affected the social expectations of women in the DPRK over time, an aspect which is not greatly discussed in the current literature.

Chapter Three: Origins of Gendered Norms: Confucianism, Colonialism and Revolution

Introduction

Having established the theoretical framework of the thesis, this chapter will now begin to answer the central research question: "to what extent did gendered norms in North Korea change following the famine of the 1990s?'. This chapter intends to, firstly, demonstrate the origins of certain gendered norms during the Chosŏn dynasty (1392 – 1910) and how these norms changed following the period of colonisation by Japan (1910 – 1945). These periods of time are significant as they contribute to both an understanding of gender relations within the Korean peninsula as well as contextualising the DPRK state's approach to women's issues. The experiences of women throughout the Chosŏn dynasty and colonised Korea seemingly play a part in the way the DPRK government chose to approach these issues.

The second section of this chapter aims to answer, firstly, what the state said about women's roles in the home, as mothers and as workers. Secondly, the chapter focuses on how these policies were disseminated and analyses how successful these changes were. Finally, the chapter summaries the accustomed gender relations of the Kim Il Sung and early Kim Jong Il period in North Korea.

The Chosŏn Dynasty: Neo-Confucian Korea

The first section of this chapter analyses the Neo-Confucian understanding of the relationship between men and women and the roles for which they were responsible. The chapter focuses on the Chosŏn period due to its long duration and the major ideological upheaval that occurred during this time. Social change from the adoption of Neo-Confucianism did not occur immediately. Deuchler (1977: 4) argues the 'Confucianisation' of Korean society took over a century as

traditional practices continued to dominate. The government, therefore, began to implement not only increased indoctrination and propaganda but legal sanctions in regards to social legislation (Deuchler, 1977: 4).

The term Neo-Confucianism comes from a revaluation of traditional Confucianism (Pratt & Rutt, 2012: 88). During China's Song dynasty (960 – 1279) Chinese scholars began formulating philosophical arguments of Neo-Confucianism (Pratt & Rutt, 2012: 436). During Korea's Koryo Dynasty, Buddhism and Shamanism were the dominant ideologies (Pratt & Rutt, 2012: 88). Following the end of the Koryo dynasty, the new rulers restored relations with China and began to reemphasise this form of Confucianism (ibid.).

The key arguments used in this section are from Deuchler (1977; 1992), Seth (2016) and Yoo (2008). The choice of these works is due to their authoritative arguments using historical documents charting both Korea's Confucian and colonial periods. The purpose of this section is to establish the origins of conservative social norms in the Chosŏn dynasty and the relationship these have to later reforms undertaken in the DPRK.

Deuchler (1977: 281) argues that Confucian ideology allowed women to only have status within the home. The upper classes are the focus of Deuchler's work which she justifies by arguing that elitist Confucianism provided behaviour patterns that influenced the lower-classes (Deuchler, 1992: 5). Deuchler (1992: 45) argues that contemporary Korea was similar to the original Confucianisation of society in 1392, where traditional values were still rife, and it was a gradual process of legal and social standards that mobilised change. Her analysis of Korea under Japanese colonisation is that women's social and legal position was 'little affected' by Japanese social policies and that these were 'effective on paper only' (Deuchler, 1992: 42).

Seth (2016: 171) argues that women's status declined during the Chosŏn period due to the Neo-Confucian emphasis on male lineage. Seth (2016: 304 – 305) argues that colonialism resulted in the modernisation of Korean society which

allowed women to embrace 'new ideas and opportunities'. He argues, however, that traditional gendered norms assuming women as subordinate in the colonial period remained supported by Japanese ideology (Seth, 2016: 306). While there were certain groups of women who 'led lives daringly defiant of tradition', Seth (ibid.) argues that this was largely considered 'too radical' for Koreans.

Yoo (2008: 27 - 28) argues that in Neo-Confucian society, Confucianism did not entirely restrict women. His work takes into account the possible powers and freedoms women had, such as being able to leave their homes late at night for socialising; an activity illegal for men (Yoo, 2008: 28). Yoo (ibid.) also questions the degree of severity of laws such as the 'seven evils'. Yoo (2008: 30) argues that women 'retained residual forms of power', such as their complete control over household affairs over their husbands. He also notes the authority held by female shamans (ibid.). Yoo's (2008: 139 – 40) central argument surrounding gender in the colonial period is that it opened up both new possibilities for women but also forced them to be colonial subjects. Yoo (2008: 141) understands that Korean women began to improve their ability to define their role in society but the pressure of both colonialism and male reformers forced women to continue to perform traditional gender roles publically.

During the Chosŏn dynasty, the Korean state adopted a Neo-Confucian ideology with evidence suggesting that women's status declined from that of the previous Koryo period (Yoo, 2008: 20). Previous Buddhist influence offered women religious roles outside of the home and recognised women's rights to marry and inherit property (Yoo, 2008: 22). The new society formed under the influence of Neo-Confucianism was a largely hierarchal stratified society ordered by gender and social status (Ryang, 2000: 326). With Neo-Confucian scholars citing 'the unordered family as the root of all social chaos in Korean society', there was a shift from a matrilineal to a patrilineal line (Yoo, 2008: 22). This form of ideology created new gendered norms for women influenced by class. The class system consisted of aristocrats at the top, followed by commoners and finally, slaves. (Ryang, 2000: 326). According to Ryang (ibid.), women were always secondary to

men in each class. Both gender and class, therefore, became the key to interpreting one's status (ibid.).

Neo-Confucianists emphasised the idea of male descent and the subordination of women to men: the principle of 'virtuous conduct' (Kang, 2008: 58; Seth, 2016: 171). Virtuous conduct emphasised significant power relations of the dominant male that was reflected by such ideas as 'wife serving the husband' (Kang, 2008: 58). Particular teachings of Confucius involved the 'seven evils' which theoretically allowed the expulsion of a wife from the household for committing the following: 'disobeying parents-in-law, bearing no son, committing adultery, jealousy, carrying a hereditary disease, garrulousness, and larceny' (Park, 1992: 528). Yoo (2008: 28) argues that accusations relating to this law required high corroboration. These laws may have been hard to implement, yet the existence of this rhetoric can still shape gendered norms. These ideas reflect not only a double standard but women as entirely subordinate. Neo-Confucian ideology emphasised women's roles as wives and mothers, with women throughout their lives urged to 'obey their fathers in youth, their husbands in marriage and their sons in old age' (Seth, 2016: 171). The socialisation of women into these roles occurred throughout their lives.

From a young age, there was a great emphasis on the gendered expectations for both Korean men and women. A daughter was not given a name before marriage (Cumings, 2005: 49). From the age of seven; girls were forbidden to be around males (Park, 2016: 4). With the separation of the sexes came the emphasis on what a woman's role was within society. Women received little education and of those women who did, largely from the upper class, received a restrictive education concentrated on specifically gendered tasks (Ryang, 2000: 327). The education they received focused on socialisation into typical 'Confucian norms and virtues' (Cumings, 2005: 60). Confucian virtues involved preparing girls and young women for married life; to be wives and mothers (Park, 2016: 4). This training would occur through being taught domestic duties from their mothers and grandmothers or through textbooks (Deuchler, 1977: 257 – 258). Many instructive texts were produced to teach specific behaviour to women. One

particular work was the 1475 *Naehun* (instructions for women) (Deuchler, 1977: 257). *Naehun* taught 'the four basics of womanly behaviour': moral conduct, proper speech, proper appearance and womanly tasks (Deuchler, 1992: 5 – 6). These strong presumptions resulted in women having to explicitly perform gender roles. The expectations placed upon women became a strong indicator of the moral and social status of a family (Kim, 2014: 131). Marriage was the key area where women enacted their expected roles.

Marriage in the Chosŏn dynasty served entirely as a means of survival: to birth a son and continue the patrilineal line (Deuchler, 1992: 7). Indeed, marriage was considered to not be about love but a 'bond of love between two surnames' (Cumings: 2005: 61). Deuchler (1992: 13) argues that to be unmarried was 'socially inconceivable'. Women had minimal autonomy in the marriage process, with it being considered an affair between families (Deuchler, 1992: 10). Once an upper-class woman was married, their role in the home was clearly defined. Women were addressed by their relationship to the men within the family (Seth, 2016: 172). Unlike men, women could not seek divorce or remarry if widowed (Seth, 2016: 173). Deuchler (1992: 25) argues that woman's most important role became birthing a son: her position within the family became insecure otherwise. Women became subordinate in almost all facets of life. Yoo (2008: 29) argues that women did have significant power in the home over men. Within the home, men were not permitted to be involved in household affairs; including the education of the children (Yoo, 2008: 29).

Social class played a certain part in the gendered expectations placed upon women. For rural women and those from poorer families, they often had additional roles than that of just a wife and mother. Rural women would work in the fields, undertaking most tasks (Seth, 2016: 174). Ploughing and threshing, however, were still considered 'men's work' (ibid.). Indeed, Yoo (2008: 29) notes how poorer Korean women were seen wearing less restrictive clothing and had far more freedom in being seen by men than those of the upper class. Certain women also found themselves undertaking different work as shamans and *Kisaeng* (Seth, 2016: 174).

Female shamans, or *mudang*, were the antithesis of Neo-Confucian ideals (Yoo, 2008: 29). Female shamans were considered 'the mediator of the spirit world', and despite efforts to end these sorts of customs, *mudang* continued to be called upon even by Korean kings (Yoo, 2008: 30). Yoo (2008: 30) argues that *mudang* 'occupied a female space that was alien to the spirit of Neo-Confucianism'. Thus, showing the resilience of traditional practices to newly enforced gendered norms. Women trained as *kisaeng,* or female entertainers, also became an exception to the gendered expectations of women. Often selected from the lower social classes, *kisaeng* were specially trained to entertain men (Seth, 2016: 174). The female *kisaeng* was trained to read, write, and perform musical instruments (ibid.). Despite having educational opportunities unavailable to most women, the goal of their role still focused on their relation to men.

For women during the Chosŏn dynasty, Neo-Confucian ideology had a profound effect on their roles. The ideas of what a woman was supposed to be were taught from a young age and therefore, became the norms of how they were expected to act. Deuchler (1977: 258) argues that education for women served as a means of indoctrination to prepare them for married life. Education served as a means to fulfil their roles as mothers and wives and resulted in little independent freedoms, confining them to the domestic sphere (Deuchler, 1977: 260). Yoo (2008: 27 – 28) argues that women were not entirely restricted, with women having full control in the domestic sphere over men. Regardless of these limited freedoms, the dominant theme of Neo-Confucian ideology teaches women as subordinate to men. These ideas developed into gendered norms through the laws that favoured men, as well as the limited literature and education available to women that served as socialisation mechanisms (Deuchler, 1992: 4).

Colonised Korea

Within the final decades of the Chosŏn dynasty in the nineteenth century, several outside influences began to reshape Korean society (Deuchler, 1992: 41). Firstly, Christian missionaries began to set up schools for boys and girls (ibid.). This new influx of Christian missionaries resulted in Christianity reaching certain areas of society (ibid.). Deuchler (ibid.) notes, however, that Christianity did not influence a re-examination of traditional Confucian values due to its limited reach. The majority of new influence came from the Japanese; first by pressuring the Koreans to enact the 1894 Kabo reforms (ibid.). These reforms involved 'restructuring society and enhancing the position of women' and included the abolition of slavery, the prohibition of early marriage and allowing widows to remarry (ibid.). Once again, however, according to Deuchler (ibid.) these reforms had 'no immediate effect on the traditional way of life'. It was Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910 that resulted in more drastic changes.

With Japan's colonisation of Korea from 1910 to 1945, new changes occurred for women (Ryang, 2000: 328). Japanese colonisation contributed to the process of modernisation in Korea (ibid.). Many new laws came into place that contrasted greatly with the traditional laws associated with women. These new laws included the abolition of polygamy and concubinage and reconfirmation of widow's rights to remarry (ibid.). Park (1992: 530) argues that with new legislation and changing ideology; new women's movements emerged which emphasised women's education. Yoo (2008: 136) argues, however, that the focus of women's education encouraged women to teach at home. With Korean women being able to teach within the home, this enabled Koreans to teach themselves as opposed to education from the colonial authorities (ibid). Yoo (ibid.) argues that this could be considered a nationalist goal rather than a goal for women to receive an education. Park (1992: 530) supports this by arguing that women's organisations such as the Patriotic Women's League and the Korean Patriotic Women's Society's primary goals were associated with anti-Japanese sentiment and Korean independence. Park (1992: 530) argues that the women's movement

focused more on 'gaining the nation's independence rather than to feminist concerns'.

Occupational roles for women during this time did begin to change; new roles included telephone operator, postal worker and bank clerk (Yoo, 2008: 138). Women in factories were positioned in basic, low-skilled work and were often paid unequally and explicitly told this was due to the biological differences of their sex (ibid.). During World War Two, the Japanese government conscripted huge numbers of Koreans, who made up one-third of the industrial labour force in Japan by the end of the war (Yoo, 2008: 141). Korean women were also conscripted as 'comfort women' in Japanese military brothels, with estimates placing numbers of women at around 80,000 – 200,000 (ibid.).

What the colonial period can tell us about gendered norms is that traditional facets of thought from the Neo-Confucian period showed persistence, with Deuchler (1992: 42) arguing that Korean social norms 'showed a remarkable propensity for survival'. While women did have opportunities for new working roles and the creation of women's organisations, both their work and home life continued to reflect the power relations of male dominance. Slogans continued to reconfirm the traditional expectations such as 'wise and prudent professional wife' (Yoo, 2008: 138). Despite new possibilities for women to receive education, Yoo (2008: 138) argues that 'male reformers wanted to contain the new woman within the boundaries of domesticity, where she could be controlled and directed'. The struggles for independence during the colonial period displaced the possibility for significant change in gendered norms.

Revolutionary Korean Women

Following an analysis of both the Chosŏn and Colonial era, the thesis goes on to concentrate on how the North Korean state addressed women's issues. This can be interpreted as the state's attempts to construct a new 'normative gender framework' following Japan colonisation. A 'normative gender framework' is

defined as the presumed structure of gender relations within a society. The following section analyses government documents and speeches relating to gender and available statistics of women's work roles following the formation of the DPRK.

In 1945, with the end of World War Two and independence from Japan, the Korean peninsula was split into Northern and Southern zones (Ryang, 2000: 330). The North was occupied by the Soviet Union and the South by the American Military Government (Pratt and Rutt, 2012: 468). The Soviet Union appointed Kim Il Sung as the Communist leader in the North (Seth, 2016: 330 – 331). Following the formation of the Republic of Korea in Seoul, the North was established as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the 9th of September, 1948 (Ryang, 2000: 323). The government then focused on dismantling the ideology of the past. At the first conference of the Democratic Women's Union of North Korea in 1946, Kim (1973: 7) declared how the government would 'wipe out all the remnants of Japanese imperialism [...] the evil practices left over from them [and] grant the women completely equal rights with men'. The state began to actively proclaim laws that supported women having equal rights with men. These laws began in 1945 with the abolishment of the traditional household registration system that identified the oldest male as the head of the household (Jung and Dalton, 2006: 749). The government introduced the Law on Land Reform on the 5th of March, 1946 which resulted in women being able to become landowners equally as men could (Kang, 2008: 58). The Law on Land Reform also led to the confiscation of land owned by institutions and clans from the previous regime (ibid).

On the 24th of June, 1946 the government announced the Law on Labour which resulted in equal pay for men and women (ibid). This law also included full maternity rights for women including paid maternity leave and feeding breaks during work (Park, 1992: 533). The final key policy relating to women was the Law on Sex Equality which was declared on the 30th of July, 1946 (Kang, 2008: 58). The law provided equal rights for women in all areas including politics, economy and culture (Ryang, 2000: 330). The law granted women an equal right to vote, equal

rights to labour, pay and education and free marriage and divorce (Kang, 2008: 58). It also abolished many of the 'feudal practices' from the Chosŏn dynasty such as forced marriage, the sale of women, polygamy and concubinage (ibid).

Kim Il Sung began to make many pronouncements and speeches surrounding the role of women in the new society. These speeches give a strong insight into how women were now expected to behave. During the first conference of the Women's Union in 1946, Kim (1973: 1) declared how Korean women were 'maltreated both in society and at home for ages in the past because of the out-dated feudal idea of 'male supremacy''. Kim acknowledges many of the restrictions of the past such as women's lack of freedom and the ability to leave their homes. The state explicitly abolishing practices such as forced marriage and the selling of women represents an active change to change gender relations within North Korea.

The state emphasises how pre-revolutionary roles of women left them in the home and 'do nothing but look after their children' (Kim, 1971: 66). It is made clear in the speeches of Kim (1971: 66) that the state had no intention for women to simply remain in the home. Women who remain in the home are explicitly criticised by Kim, who stated at the 1966 National Congress of Nursery School and Kindergarten Teachers, that women are unable to make progress if they stay only at the home looking after their children (ibid). The state appeared to try to distance itself from the colonial past and forge a new environment for women to engage in society.

Women were expected to enter the workforce equally with men. The Law on Labour attempted to enable women to work while also giving birth to children. In addition to the laws relating to women's engagement in the workforce, the state began a 'domestic revolution' which sought to free women from the burden of housework and enable greater economic participation (Kang, 2008: 61). The movement particularly focused on introducing the socialisation of housework (Park, 1992: 536). The state was deemed responsible for childcare, and this resulted in childcare options to increase exponentially (Jung & Dalton, 2006:

750). Kim (1973: 15) states that in the past women were excluded from political activities and the only roles for women were cooking, washing and childcare. Thus, Kim stresses that for 'women to join society, we must take measures to bring up children under public care' (ibid.). Officially, claims are that between 1956 and 1960 that the number of nurseries and kindergartens rose from 12 to 7,600 and 116 to 4,500 respectively (Ryang, 2000: 332 – 333; Park, 1992: 536). This increase resulted in nurseries being able to accommodate 700,000 children (ibid.). These services continued to grow and by 1978 nurseries were able to accommodate 3.5 million children (Kang, 2008: 61). The DPRK also aimed to 'produce plenty of produced foodstuffs and kitchen utensils' with the aim to reduce women's domestic chores (Kim, 1974: 9).

While these actions by the state represent a positive change to ease the duties of women, there is little evidence to show a change in the attitude towards women as responsible for domestic chores. The speeches of Kim convey these typical attitudes. Women's roles as mothers are primarily prioritised, as women 'by nature [...] bring up children' (Kim, 1971: 52). Despite Kim's discussion of how in the past women were only able to focus on domestic tasks, he goes on to say that while women should not be excluded from state affairs, that 'of course, women should do housework' (Kim, 1973: 15). Ryang (2000: 335) congruently, notes that men were never encouraged to share or maintain any responsibility for housework, thus contributing to women's double burden of economic activity and domestic work. During Halliday's interview with the Women's Democratic Union, the women themselves state that women are traditionally the ones who cook, and it is their 'natural duty' (Halliday, 1985: 50 – 53). A later 1990 survey found that 80 percent of North Korean men regard housework as a women's job (Park, 1992: 542). Domestic duties were being eased by the state, but nevertheless, the evidence suggests that domestic duties were still principally the responsibility of women.

All facets of life have reinforced women's responsibility in the home. Kim's study of North Korean women magazine *Chosŏn Yosong* (Korean Woman) shows that childcare and housework remained the duties of women entirely (Kim, 2010: 765).

The magazine's topics included home economics, kitchen management, nutrition, health and hygiene and child-rearing practices (Kim, 2010: 755). A typical schedule for a woman is laid out in the magazine; from 5 am – 10:30 pm, it includes housework, going to work and late night study (Kim, 2010: 765). The education system is also considered to contain gendered divisions (Smith, 1999: 14). Schools teach boys to drive and work machinery, whereas girls are taught sewing and cooking, these roles reflecting the traditional 'feminine' and 'masculine' gendered roles (ibid).

The easing of these domestic duties was an attempt to bring women into the workforce. As of 1956, women only made up 20 percent of the workforce (Park, 1992: 538). Kim (1971: 30) highlights the importance of women's engagement in the workforce stating that 'the state did not give [women] a college education for the purpose of having them look after children and cook meals at home'. The state promotes women as workers, however, it's reasons for doing so are contentious. In Kim's 1965 speech at the Third Congress of the Democratic Women's Union, he addresses the idea that women are being brought into the labour force due to a lack of manpower (Kim, 1971: 41). Kim denounces this, arguing that 'enlistment of women in economic construction rather acquires a greater significance in arming them with the ideology of the working class' (ibid). Indeed, this suggests that there were ideological reasons for emphasising women's participation in the workforce.

Evidence for this can be found in the 1961 speech 'The Duty of Mothers in the Education of Children' (Kim, 1971: 41). Kim (ibid.) describes how mothers should participate in labour 'for educating their sons and daughters, the future builders of communism, also in the spirit of loving labour'. Women are encouraged to work and receive an education, but often for the purpose of being able to educate and raise their children with the correct ideology. Kim (1971: 16) states that mothers are largely responsible for the education of children as it is 'she who gives birth to children and brings them up. Mother is the first educator of children'. Women's participation in the labour force is seen as congruent with their roles as mothers who educate their children.

Statistically, the state was successful in bringing women into the workforce. Compared to the 20 percent in 1956, women made up 49 percent of the workforce by 1964 (Park, 1992: 537). To put these statistics in context, in South Korea the percentage of females aged 15 and over in the labour force in 1960 was only 25 percent (Choe et al., 1994: 287). It was not until 1990 that women in South Korea made up approximately 46 percent of the workforce (ibid.). This data suggests that the efforts made by the North Korean government did allow more women to enter the workforce. The extent to how far this changed social ideas about women as workers is unclear. The data from South Korea shows that women between the ages of 25 – 29 had far lower rates of participation in the workforce (Choe et al., 1994: 288). For example, the statistics from 1975 show that 42% of women aged 20 – 24 entered the labour force, but for women aged 25 – 29 this dropped to 29 percent (ibid). The authors attribute this to women leaving the labour force to raise children and then returning as their children aged; in 1975 the participation rate rose to 49 percent of 35 – 39-year-old women (ibid.). This data suggests that the DPRK provided better conditions for women to remain in the workforce while raising children. These statistics alone, however, cannot convey whether this changed public perceptions of women entering the workforce, as well as the kinds of work the women were undertaking.

When looking more closely at the type of work women in the DPRK were taking, women largely made up the agriculture, light industry, public health and education sectors (Halliday, 1985: 52). By 1976, women made up 70 percent of the workforce in light industries, 15 percent in heavy industry, 30 percent in forestry, and 20 percent in mining and some heavy labour (Kang, 2008: 61). In particular, women made up 80 percent of primary school teachers, nurses and nursery school teachers (ibid). Kim (1971: 54 – 55) actively encourages women to take on the roles of nursery school and kindergarten teachers at the 1966 National Congress of Nursery School and Kindergarten Teachers. While this itself is not inherently negative, Kim (1971: 54 – 55) goes on to acknowledge in relation to the pay of these roles that 'those who feel no sense of honour and pride in their work because their remunerations are somewhat lower than others, cannot be called

true revolutionaries who work for the people'. Women are actively encouraged to take on these roles due to the idea that 'by nature' women bring up and educate children, and thus this resulted in more women being placed into low-paid roles (Kim, 1971: 52).

The state rhetoric of women entering different areas of the workforce varies. On the one hand, Kim (1973: 13) expresses that women are physically weaker than men and have heavy burdens as mothers, thus reinforcing women to take on certain types of work roles. Later, Kim (1974: 18) states that men who work in light labour should be replaced by women, so men can do 'difficult and toilsome work'. Certainly, the physical differences between men and women and the roles they are suitable for appear supported by Kim and are largely reflected in the statistics of women's work roles.

Kim does comment on the role of women in leadership positions. During the 1971 Fourth Congress of the Democratic Women's Union, Kim (1974: 10) states how if 'the working women account for one half of the total working population, the women cadres should naturally make up one half of the total number of cadres'. There is little evidence to suggest that the state provided means for this to be a reality. Kim Won-hong (2014: 54) discusses how 20 percent of the 687 seats of the Supreme People's Assembly are assigned to women. Kim (2014: 56) argues that 'the high ratio of female members in the Supreme People's Assembly does not have a significant political meaning' as more often these roles simply serve as a rubber stamp for Party decisions. Indeed, the 20 percent ratio has remained the same over time and this, Kim (2014: 57) argues, displays little effort by the state to increase women's representation.

Since the formation of the DPRK state, the government endeavoured to change the role of women. Legally, women now had many of the same opportunities as men. The state encouraged women to join the workforce and for the state to take on the responsibility of women's domestic duties and childcare (Kang: 2008: 61). The efforts made during this time represent a shift in the roles of women, and as

the data shows, for some time the DPRK far outweighed the South in its ability to bring women into the workforce (Choe et al., 1994: 287; Park, 1992: 537).

While women had far greater opportunities than previously, there is little to suggest that typical attitudes surrounding women's responsibilities for motherhood and domestic chores showed signs of change. The stance of the state on women marrying and having children does not seem to differ from the norms of the time. Women marrying and having children is described as a 'natural and good thing' (Kim, 1971: 31). While the workforce began to make up almost 50 percent of women, the roles taken by women tended to be focused in light industries, caring and elementary teaching jobs (Halliday, 1985: 52). This suggests that while the state did attempt to improve the status of women, these attempts were not necessarily focused on specific women's issues.

The way that the state addresses the roles of women can be seen as a means of educating women with state ideology and how this will influence the wider population. Many of Kim's speeches advocate the education of women, but seemingly suggest this for ideological purposes. In a discussion of the Women's Union, Kim (1971: 44) states that 'above all, you should strengthen class education among the women's union members and all the women to arm them with a hatred for the enemy'. This supports the idea that the state ideology was greatly prioritised over a focus on women's issues. Kim (1974: 3) also discusses the idea that if women are not revolutionised, 'they will ruin themselves and, in the long run, their husbands and children'. Women's education is concentrated on due to the long-term influence they may have on their families. This can be related to the previous discussion of women as the educators of children (Kim, 1971: 41). Kim (1974: 4) states how 'women play a very important part in their homes, and their mentality as housewives greatly affects their families'. Indeed, this indicates that women continued to be seen within the context of the home as housewives, who must be educated to be a good influence on their families.

The focus on the roles of women appears to come as a way of dismissing Confucian ideals and remains of colonial rule, seemingly as a way to support new

government principals. Kim's speeches continually emphasise the poor way women were treated in the past. The state's focus on eradicating these 'bourgeois, Feudal-Confucian ideas' seems to come as an angered reaction to colonisation Kim (1974: 3). Kim (1973: 13) describes how 'wicked those capitalists' were in colonial times, as women were supposedly afraid of marriage due to being unable to work if they had children.

A level of nationalism is reflected in the way women are discussed. In a discussion of the education of children, a heroic son is described who could have only been given birth to by a Korean mother (Kim, 1971: 18). The education of women is also described as a way to 'develop the beautiful moral qualities inherent in the Korean women' (Kim, 1973: 67). This could suggest that the emphasis on improving the status of women came as a reaction to colonialism to emphasise the 'beautiful qualities' of Korean women and thus bolster the new regime.

The evidence shown suggests that the state did not fully commit to resolving women's issues, rather using these laws and movements to strengthen the regime. This supports an argument made by Lim (2005: 46), that the North Korean population have been taught to see themselves as 'one in a collective' as opposed to independently leading their own lives. Lim (2005: 46) defines this as existing for the country rather than for themselves, which results in a lack of demands for individual rights. Referring to women as 'one wheel of a wagon' in the work of nation-building, which reinforces this collective thinking (Park, 1992: 535). With women lacking the ability to discuss their own rights, the capacity to improve their status was unlikely (Pearse and Connell, 2015a).

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to understand gender relations within North Korea before the famine of the 1990s. The chapter explored the root of gendered norms on the Korean peninsula to enable an understanding of how these later influenced norms in the DPRK. To some extent, cultural ideas about the roles of

women have persisted. While women no longer remained solely in the home, there is evidence to suggest that women continue to be framed as mothers and as being responsible for the home (Kim, 1971: 16 and 31; 1973: 15). This may have been as a result of the persistence of social ideas from the Confucian era; which may have remained in place due to ideas based on biological differences. The North Korean government made discernible efforts to improve the status of women. By law, women had the same rights as men and were provided with greater means to receive an education and join the workforce (Kang, 2008: 58). It could be argued, however, that the institutional division of labour and the possible socialisation measures in place did little to change gendered norms, rather just to change the roles of certain women. To some extent, women continued to receive 'gendered' learning and be encouraged into 'gender-appropriate' roles (Kim, 2010: 755; Smith, 1999: 14). The efforts made by the government to improve women's status can also be seen as a response to the experiences of colonisation and as a way to disregard the ideology of the past (Kim, 1974: 3). The thesis will now go on to concentrate on the extent to which gendered norms changed following the famine of the 1990s. The theoretical framework will be used as a basis for understanding both how and why gendered norms may change.

Chapter Four: Women's Roles Since the Famine

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to look at data since the famine and measure the changes in gendered norms compared to before the famine. Change is measured by looking at the statistics of women in various work sectors, investigating the opinions of North Korean defectors and the government's attitude towards women. Potential changes to gendered norms are measured through analysis of publications and articles from the DPRK, reports by the United Nations as a part of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and responses to questions by the DPRK representatives, existing interviews with defectors and data from the North Korean 2008 population census. This chapter examines three major areas. The chapter begins by looking at how far women continued to be expected to perform domestic duties. The following section focuses on women's education. The final section of the chapter looks at women's roles in both the informal and formal work sectors.

Women and Men in the Home

Chapter three demonstrated how the DPRK viewed the domestic roles of women. The North Korean state attempted to take responsibility for domestic duties (Kim, 1973: 15). Yet there is evidence to suggest that domestic duties continued to be considered the primary responsibility of women (ibid.). There is evidence to suggest that the economic crisis may have affected women's roles in the home. This section begins by looking at government documents to understand if the state's views have changed. Following this, both census data and interview data are used to gauge how far women continue to be responsible for domestic activities.

North Korean media publications reflect few changes in the state's attitudes towards domestic duties. These publications continue to emphasise the state of

women's lives in the past. One KCNA Watch article (2016) states that women lived a 'worthless life shackled by feudal fetters' during the military occupation. The continued reference to the past appears to attempt to emphasise the changes enacted by the government towards women. Publications state that women now 'exercise their independent rights to the full, freely taking an active part in State and social life' (KCNA Watch, 2016). These articles continue to reinforce this idealist viewpoint. There appears to be a disparity in the attitudes presented in North Korean media compared to the government's engagement in international discourse.

The CEDAW is an international bill of rights for women adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979 (UN Women, n.d.). The DPRK acceded to the CEDAW on the 27th February 2001 (United Nations, 2002). The convention expects countries to undertake measures to end discrimination against women. Countries submit reports every four years to measure their compliance with the convention (UN Women, n.d.). CEDAW reports show that the North Korean representatives have a better understanding of the lives of North Korean women. They admit that discrimination which sees the man as a head of the family still exists and acknowledge the gendered division of labour (United Nations, 2002: 16). North Korean publications do not admit to these instances. The North Korean representatives attribute this behaviour to factors such as 'prejudice and custom' as well the current economic situation (ibid). The government acknowledges the 'customary discrimination of women' but states this is not an issue of great social concern, considering no further action necessary (ibid.). These responses suggest that the government is willing to admit to gender issues in an international context. It also displays a lack of response to these issues.

The government appears to continue to emphasise women's roles as mothers. One KCNA Watch article (2016) discusses how Korean women 'were called mothers [...] the most precious and sacred name for them'. This statement gives the impression of women's roles as mothers as their primary role. The roles of 'Korean women' are described as women who are 'affectionate sisters, kind wives and meticulous mothers [which] add to the fragrance of the flowers in life that

makes families happy and society harmonious' (KCNA Watch, 2009). This seems to continue to emphasise these particular traits relating to women's roles as mothers and in the home. This is supported by the United Nations (2017: 6) who report their concern that the party's approach to women's issues 'reinforces cultural and social values, ascribing a particular role to women as caregivers and subservient to men'.

Responses to the committee's questions provide further insight into the state's awareness of gendered norms. The representatives acknowledge the customs that see women as responsible for household chores (United Nations, 2005a: 4). They assert that the division of labour is changing and that husbands now did some cooking, household chores and took care of the children (United Nations, 2005a: 8). They provide little evidence to support this statement. Representatives claim that 'every effort was being made to eliminate the remnants of "outmoded customs"' (ibid.). The evidence for the state's efforts in this regard is also debatable. Representatives claim that the women's union and the youth league 'educate men to discard the outdated idea of taking no care of household chores leaving them only to women' (United Nations, 2005b: 4). There is little evidence of the scope or even existence of these activities. Interviews with North Koreans defectors conducted by the Human Rights Watch (2017) found that women thought of gender equality as only female participation in the workforce or government. While this was a small sample of 21 defectors, it reflects how North Korean women possibly lack awareness of gender equality meaning women's status being equal to men. This lack of awareness can be attributed to minimal government efforts to change these attitudes.

Census data (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009) suggests that women continue to shoulder domestic responsibilities. Zero men aged between 20 and 59 list housework as their usual activity (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009: 176). This can be explained by working laws that mean men must be employed (Lankov and Kim, 2014: 77). However, only one percent of men aged 60 and above list housework as their usual activity compared to ten percent of women aged 60 and above (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009: 176). This indicates a large division in

labour of older generations who are retired. Analysing this data shows that the number of women who list housework as their usual activity increases from 6.95 percent of 20 – 29-year-olds to 14.92 percent of 30 – 39-year-olds (ibid). While the data is not substantial, this data suggests several outcomes. One perspective is that this could present a change in attitudes of the younger generations who may be less likely to only perform domestic duties. This data could also show that women over 30 are more likely to have children and they may leave the workforce to remain in the home.

Census data (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009: 215) also shows the number of hours spent in the last week spent doing 'household economic activity'. This data shows the number of hours spent in the last week engaging in household economic activities listed as fruit/vegetable gardening, fishing/raising livestock and/or poultry, gathering firework and fetching water. The number of males and females doing less than 3 hours of household economic activity do not appear to differ with 73.4 percent of men and 72.3 of women (ibid). The imbalance occurs with the increase in hours. The census lists 5.15 percent of men have done over 4 hours of household economic activities in the past week, compared to 15.21 percent of women (ibid). The biggest difference can be seen between those who have done over 9 hours of household economic activity. There are 5,544 men listed compared to 32,088 women (ibid). This data indicates that women continue to take on more hours of domestic duties than men.

Reports by the DPRK (United Nations, 2005a) assert that the expectations of women performing domestic duties are changing and that the government is promoting these changes. Evidence for the state's efforts in this regard is lacking. Census data (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009: 215) also suggests that women continue to shoulder greater domestic burdens. Defector interviews can build a greater picture of how far norms have changed in regards to domestic activities. Many North Koreans engaged in market activity to survive the famine and continue to do so due to due to the economic situation (Kim & Song, 2008: 363). Particularly more women working in the informal economy could present a shift in men and women's roles in the home. Men would often be working without pay

or even unable to work, so women began to take on more economic responsibility (Lee, 2015). Some defectors have said that men have begun to help more within the home. One interviewee discussed how men now do much more housework (Kim, 2015). Lee Mi-Kyung's study of forty-four North Korean female defectors found that two-thirds disagreed with the idea of serving their husband and the strict gender roles in the housework (Lee, 2005: 163). Another ten women interviewed by Kang (2008: 66) stated that many men helped their wives and 'did not feel ashamed of such behaviours'. These are small samples that may be difficult to generalise. This viewpoint, even so, does present a change in how some women viewed traditional gender roles.

There are also defector interviews which emphasise how women are still expected to perform domestic duties. One interviewee stated that it is 'natural for women to cook and clean' (Lankov & Kim, 2014: 87 – 88). Another stated that women did both household work and business and it was 'mandatory and natural that they should do such work by themselves' (Kang, 2008: 66). Another defector supports this by explaining that men are expected to work, even without pay (Lee, 2015). This results in 'women, and not men, [being] expected to take care of everything that happens within the house' (ibid.). Lee's survey (2005: 162) found that twenty-eight out of forty-four defectors stated that wives were wholly accountable for family affairs and caring the same as before the crisis. The existing interview data does not always corroborate with one another. There are certainly indications that changes have occurred, but the data is not substantial enough to draw major conclusions.

The evidence presented in this chapter suggests that some men are beginning to contribute more in the home. The government have continued to project (KCNA Watch, 2016) to the public that women take part in society without the burden of housework. In reality, it appears the famine generated several effects. Before the famine, the government reinforced alleviating domestic duties from women, but the economic crisis caused many of these services to end (Park, 2010: 167). Women's activities in the informal economy have in some cases led to more men supporting women in the home. For other women, their responsibilities have

increased. Kim Won-hong (2014: 96) summaries how North Korean women often 'think that men help them with household chores out of kindness and consideration. They don't regard it as task-sharing due to the social ideas of women as responsible for housework'. As shown in chapter three, with support from the government, women have been assumed to be responsible for domestic duties. There is little evidence of government intervention to change these attitudes, implying that the norms of women as responsible in the home have persisted. The attitudes of men who perform domestic domestics in the home require further research to understand how far they view their roles as temporarily supporting their wives or whether men performing domestic duties has gradually become normalised. Further research into how women's attitudes have changed towards the division of labour in the household would also be beneficial. The chapter now goes on to look at women in higher education.

Women and Education

The purpose of this section is to analyse how far women's engagement in education may have changed since the economic crisis. The DPRK has promoted female education with the 1998 UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (1998: 3) finding that education for children age 7 – 16 years was universal with school enrolment close to 100 percent. While the state encouraged women to be educated, women's education was often discussed in relation to their roles as mother's to educate their children (Kim, 1971: 41). This section focuses on attitudes towards women's education and the statistics of women in higher education following the famine.

There is some evidence from interviews conducted by the Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights (2009: 14 – 15) that suggests that during the famine, some children were forced to quit school due to malnutrition or financial reasons. A later survey (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2010: 77 – 81) found that school attendance at primary and secondary levels continues to be close to 100 percent, finding no significant sex differentials in attendance. While the data is

not clear, this would suggest that the famine had no detrimental long-term effects on school attendance.

Further analysis is required on women in higher education. North Korean representatives discuss how parent's attitudes have changed towards education. They state that 'parents are now convinced that women need higher education not only for their social activities but also for the management of family and education of children' (United Nations, 2005b: 10 – 11). This statement follows a similar tone to past discussions of women's education. While women in higher education may be more accepted, there are suggestions that parents continue to discuss women's roles in relation to their roles as mothers. This was a dominant theme in the speeches of Kim Il Sung, suggesting a persistence in old attitudes.

In 1988, reports state (Edberstadt & Banister, 1992: 76) that men made up 421,000 university graduates compared to 171,000 women, thus women equated to approximately 29 percent of graduates. The DPRK reports (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009: 123) in 2005 that women make up approximately 25 to 30 percent of those at universities. The data available in the 2008 census (ibid.) states that at the time of the census, men made up 312, 028 of those in tertiary education compared to 120, 103 women. The population by highest educational attainment shows that men made up 61.41 percent and women 38.59 percent of those in higher education (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009: 148). The different definitions of higher/tertiary education may create minor discretions in figures. Yet, it appears that a major increase in the number of women in higher education is negligible.

The CEDAW committee (United Nations, 2017: 9) has continued to raise concerns about the low numbers of women entering tertiary education. They have shown particular concern about the number of women in 'non-traditional fields of study' (ibid.). Census data (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009: 170) shows that women outweigh men the in the study of teaching training and education science, mathematics and statistics, public health, social services and welfare services. CEDAW representatives (United Nations, 2017: 9) note how this division

in education limits women's access to certain job opportunities. The work of women is analysed later in the chapter.

Comparing North and South Korea, the number of males and females attending university in South Korea has remained consistent since 2009 (Statistics Korea, 2016: 5). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2009: 97) analysis of tertiary education in South Korea acknowledges that the country shows greater gender inequalities than other OECD countries. This is attributed to the 'traditional views of women' (ibid.). The Korean peninsula has a long, shared history and thus has a legacy of traditional thoughts and ideas. The OECD (ibid.) discuss how the South Korean government have taken steps to improve gender equity. These steps include career counselling, supporting female scientists and engineers, and specific targets to increase women in subjects where they are underrepresented (ibid). The UNICEF situation analysis of children and women in the DPRK (2016: 73 – 74) reports there is no evidence of strategies, policies or programmes 'designed to promote gender awareness or the empowerment of women'. This would suggest that these types of strategies support changes to women in education. These changes appear to not be happening in the DPRK.

In 2015, the UN (United Nations Statistics Division, 2015) reported that female participation in tertiary education currently 'surpasses male participation in almost all developed countries and in half of developing countries'. The evidence suggests that the DPRK is struggling with bringing more women into tertiary education. Women's underrepresentation in certain subjects continues to be an issue across the world. Globally, women continue to be underrepresented in science, engineering, manufacturing and construction (ibid.). This suggests that in this regard the DPRK is not unique. The famine and economic crisis as a mechanism for change appear to have had minimal effects on the norms surrounding women's education. While it is likely women's roles in the home and the workplace have been affected, education has shown little progress and it is likely to have been hindered by the economic crisis. The final section of this chapter explores women's work within the economic sectors.

The Informal Economy and its Influence on Women's Work Roles

The final section of these section discusses how women's work roles changed following the economic crisis. Before the famine, the roles of women in the DPRK have followed typical global patterns where women dominate in the education, health and social work sectors (United Nations Statistics Division, 2015). Many previous studies of the DPRK have discussed how the famine changed gender relations as women began to take on roles in the informal economy (Jung & Dalton, 2006; Kang, 2008; Lankov & Kim, 2014; Lim, 2005; Park, 2010). This chapter focuses on these changes, but also the effects that were had on women's roles in the formal state economy following the crisis.

Since the economic crisis, women have become involved in the informal economic activities as men were tied to official workplaces (Lankov & Kim, 2014: 73). Married women had the 'right to be unemployed' so could take part more freely than men in the informal economy (ibid.). Haggard and Noland (2013: 54) found in a survey of 300 refugees that married women and housewives were 50 percent more likely to engage in market activities than men. Women began to engage in commerce, cultivating small fields and gardens, raising cattle, working domestically or running small businesses (Cho et al., 2009: 32). Bae Young-ae (Bae, 2010: 107 – 8 cited in Kim, 2014: 76) reports that one of the most common types of activity was trading goods such as selling homemade foods and home-grown vegetables at market stalls, illegal purchase of goods from the Korean-Chinese border and selling goods from backpacks around the country. Despite the state efforts to hide this fact, evidence shows that since the economic crisis North Koreans have used the informal economy to survive. Byung-Yeon Kim and Dongho Song (2008: 363) report that the informal economy generates approximately 78 percent of the total income of North Korean households.

The DPRK does not officially acknowledge women's activities in the informal economy with DPRK representatives stating (United Nations, 2005b: 12) that 'there is no informal sector in the DPRK'. The stance of the government has

changed over time. Several unsuccessful reforms have been undertaken in attempts to undermine the private economy (Lankov, 2016: 10). Lankov (2016: 10) reports that the government 'still does not officially acknowledge the existence of a private sector, but it makes no attempt to enforce laws aimed at stifling private enterprise'. It is estimated (Lankov, 2016: 13) that the private sector now accounts for between 30 and 50 percent of the country's GDP. This reflects the reliance the North Korean population have on the informal economy.

The long-term reliance on the informal economy suggests that activities in these areas are normalised. The extent to which this has altered the normative gender framework is debatable. Elson's argument (1999: 615) that earning a wage does not automatically empower women can be applied here. The economic crisis resulted in an informal economy which, Kim and Song (2008: 382) argue, the 'dominant motive for [...] participation is to escape from poverty'. Activities based on avoiding poverty may not be considered empowering. Professor and North Korean defector Dr Hyun In-ae argues (38 North, 2011) that women's market activities should not be regarded as empowering. Hyun (38 North, 2011) states that despite women's activities both at work and in the home 'little value is placed on what the women are doing'. Not all women seem to agree with this view. North Koreans interviewed by Lankov and Kim (2014: 83) state how they no longer saw shame in market activity, often expressing 'pride about their achievements and their ability to take care of their families'.

The data as to how far these roles are 'empowering' is limited. Boudet et al.'s theory (2013: 213) that at an individual level, women's 'self-efficacy and the ability to aspire' can change gendered norms can be applied here. The reliance on the informal economy suggests that women will have become more independent and self-aware in their ability to earn money. Yet, census data (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009: 66) shows that the majority of men continue to be regarded as the head of households. The census (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009: 7) defines the head of household as the person who is 'responsible for all members, who make the major decisions about family affairs and who is usually the economic provider for the family'. The census (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009: 66) shows

that women make up around 8 percent of the head of households. Yet interview data (Lankov & Kim, 2014: 83; Dalton et al., 2016: 514) is unanimous in stating that women have become the major or the sole breadwinners. Interviews with female defectors have found that they have agreed with the idea that 'supporting their husbands as masters of their family was the best way of keeping the family at peace' (KINU, 2007: 228 cited in Park, 2010: 173). Another interviewee (Lankov & Kim, 2014: 87) stated how even when women earn all the money and supported in the home, that 'when all is said and done, the husband is a man, so he has to be treated well'. Further interviewees agree with this, with a defector stating how 'I do believe that many women respect their husband's authority and status. A woman is only a woman and a wife is only a wife' (Lee & Ku, 2005: 176 – 178 cited in Kang, 2008: 66). It may be persistent social ideas that mean men continue to assume this role as 'head' of the family despite women often being the main breadwinner.

The nature of informal activities must also be considered. Seguino's analysis of global gender norms (2007: 22 – 23) shows that women's increased employment play a part in shifting gender norms. Employment in the formal economy stemming from policies that allow women to both work and assume caring responsibilities 'break down existing gendered norms and stereotypes' (Seguino, 2007: 22 – 23). The informal nature of many women's economic activities means that support for their caring responsibilities is not a guarantee. As discussed earlier in the chapter, there is evidence to suggest that men's support in the home has in some cases increased; while in other cases, women have been left with increased responsibilities.

The specific roles of both men and women within the informal economy would benefit from further research. The current data is limited but Lankov and Kim (2014: 83 – 84) report that there continues to be a 'proverbial glass ceiling' within the unofficial economy. The interviewees report how men continue to play 'decisive roles in large-scale private businesses' (Lankov & Kim, 2014: 84). It also reported (ibid.) that the majority of high-ranking cadres are men, thus having greater business connections to run larger businesses. Reports have also stated

that women who have received International Fund for Agriculture Development loans have 'demonstrated considered acumen in developing relatively complex, financially successful sideline businesses' (IFAD, 2001 cited in Jung & Dalton, 2006: 758). The skills required and gained from women's engagement in the informal economy is unclear; however, this suggests that some women have gained entrepreneurial skills.

As women engage in the informal economy, it is suggestible that their roles in the formal economy are affected. Kim and Song (2008: 361) find that workers who have secondary jobs reduce their working hours in the formal economy. Women continue to make up almost half of the formal workforce: as of 2017, this is around 47.8 percent of the workforce (UNICEF, 2016: 16). The roles women have in the formal economy do not appear to differ greatly from the pre-famine statistics. The census data (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009: 203) shows that men make up 83 percent of senior officials and managers. Choson Exchange is an organisation that provides business training for North Koreans. Choson Exchange (2012) have found that women are 'highly capable and excited about growing the business they own', but participation in the higher echelons of businesses falls to around 10 – 15 percent of women. Thus, there appears to still be barriers for women in management roles.

Analysis of women's political participation shows little change from before the famine. As of 2013, the OECD Gender Index (OECD, n.d.) reports that women account for 15.7 percent of parliamentary seats. Contextualising this number, the worldwide average of women in parliament has increased from 11.7 percent in 1997 to 23.3 percent in 2017 (Inter-Parliamentary Union, n.d.). Thus, globally, the DPRK appears to be below average. The OECD Gender Index (2013) also notes how the 'assembly delegates serve only symbolic purposes; these numbers do not reflect actual power'. Consequently, few women hold 'political and administrative powers and responsibilities' (ibid.).

Women also make up 96 percent of restaurant service workers, 97 percent of child-care workers and 97 percent of market salespersons (Central Bureau of

Statistics, 2009: 200). The high numbers of women in these professions present a clear gendered division of labour. Women also continue to dominate certain areas of teaching professions. UNICEF (2016: 64 – 65) reports that women make up 57 percent of all teachers. Yet, broken down this is 99 percent of kindergarten teachers, 89 percent of primary school teachers, 50 percent of secondary school teachers and 24.15 of teachers in universities (ibid.). UNICEF (2016: 63) discusses the educational system which streams children into specific tracks. They suggest further study into social norms that might encourage females into certain career tracks.

North Korean media appears to be bringing more attention to the achievements of women. One article (KCNA Watch, 2000) discusses women as marathon champions, scientific researchers and upper-management. Another article (KCNA Watch, 2009) discusses how women are 'deputies to the Supreme People's [...] officials of people's government bodies, working people's organizations, industrial establishments and co-op farms, heroines, professors, doctors, famous stars and ace athletes.' Ridgeway and Correll suggest that exposure to counter-stereotypical images can 'change the status of expected behaviour' (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004 cited in Boudet et al., 2013: 26). Using Ridgeway and Correll's theory, by drawing attention to these 'counter-stereotypical images' this may contribute to a change in gendered norms and a change perceptions of women. Yet, women continue to be considerably unrepresented in certain academic areas and job sectors (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009: 200; United Nations, 2017: 9).

There continues to be evidence of the state viewing certain roles as more suitable for women. One CEDAW report (United Nations, 2005b: 21) sees representatives describing how women making up large numbers of the health, commercial and light industrial sectors, is due to 'such sectors [corresponding] with the characteristics of women'. Further evidence is seen when women entering the fields of 'medicine, commerce and light industry' and such 'caring professions' are described as being 'related to the nature of women' (United Nations, 2005b: 2). These views contradict the articles which bring attention to women in certain

roles. Representatives state (United Nations, 2005b: 2) that 'the government was striving to ensure equality between men and women at all different levels of employment and administration'. Yet these conflicting statements and lack of evidence of these behaviours appear to reflect in statistics of women's work.

Changes in women's working roles since the economic crisis have been mixed. Work in the informal economy came as a way of surviving the famine and it is widely held to have become a part of life in North Korea (Lankov, 2016: 13). The present study suggests that women's roles in the informal economy have increased the number of women as breadwinners in the home. The skill level of these roles is mixed (Bae, 2010: 107 – 8 cited in Kim, 2014: 76; IFAD, 2001 cited in Jung & Dalton, 2006: 758; Lankov & Kim, 2014: 83 – 84). There is also little evidence to suggest that women have been able to improve their positions in the formal economy, with statistics not showing major growth of women in different roles (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009: 200). It is likely that this lack of growth stems initially from the economic crisis. Professor Kim Byung-Yeon estimates that the average monthly income from the informal economy is around 80 times that from official state jobs (Harris, 2017). Thus, it is assumed that if women must choose, they will take on work in the informal economy that will earn them more money. The prevailing attitudes of the government that seem to suggest women are more suitable for certain roles and the lack of initiatives to improve this also seem to limit progress for those within the formal economy (United Nations, 2005a; 2005b).

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to measure changes in gendered norms since the economic crisis by analysing three areas; women's responsibility for domestic duties, women in education and women's work roles. In doing so, it appears that the economic crisis has played a role in changing gendered norms primarily through more women becoming the breadwinner in the home. While it seems that women's increased responsibilities have meant that women are assumed to be more financially responsible for their families, there is still evidence that

appears to show that other spheres of life remain unchanged. The number of women in higher education has not appeared to have greatly changed since the 1980s (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009: 123; Edberstadt & Banister, 1992: 76; United Nations, 2005b: 11). Women's positions in the formal economy also remain alike to their pre-famine roles (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009: 200). The economic crisis has created a system where more money can be gained in the informal economy. Thus, it appears this has caused more women to enter the informal economy and enabled less growth for women in the formal sector. It also seems that there have not been initiatives to encourage more women to enter higher education, take on managerial positions and enter politics.

As women have taken greater responsibilities in the informal economy, there are suggestions that there have, in some cases, been changes to the household division of labour (Kang, 2008: 66; Kim, 2015; Kim & Song, 2008; Lee, 2015). The current data is unclear as to how men helping in the home has become a social norm or rather it is considered as supporting women as opposed to becoming a shared responsibility. Indeed, the reports that state women have had to continue to be responsible for domestic duties and that many women still consider men as the heads of households would suggest that these changes have not yet become normalised.

Changes to gender relations before the famine came about due to specific government laws and policies. More women entered the workplace, became educated and had their domestic duties relieved to some degree. These changes can be characterised as coming from above, whereas changes from the economic crisis can be seen as coming from below. The changes that have been identified occurred largely as a result survival; women were forced to engage in informal activities. This has had some effect on gendered norms. It is likely that wider changes that see more women in higher education, politics and progress further in the formal economy can only occur as the economy improves and more active policies by the government that enable women to enter different areas of work.

Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to answer the research question 'to what extent did gendered norms in North Korea change following the famine of the 1990s?'. This question was answered by, firstly, establishing the gendered norms of the pre-famine period. Analysis of the government laws, Kim speeches and census data showed that women gained legal equality with men. Despite these laws and speeches appearing to advocate for women's equality, it appeared that women were still expected to shoulder most domestic responsibilities and there appeared to be a gendered division in the workforce.

The changes to gendered norms following the famine were measured by analysing multiple data sources relating to three major areas; women as responsible for domestic duties, education and work roles. From this analysis, this thesis argues that to a small extent there were changes to gendered norms. As women have engaged in the informal economy, there has become a greater expectation for women to provide for their families as it has become necessary to have income from these secondary roles. There are also suggestions that men have begun to support women in the home as a result of women's activities, but the results here are less conclusive. Women may also have built up entrepreneurial skills and further independence through their roles in the informal economy.

From the data analysed, the thesis concludes that this is the extent to which gendered norms have changed. Domestic activities appear to still be the responsibility of women albeit men may provide more support. Women still do not enter higher education at the same level as men. The higher levels of pay available in informal roles appears to be disabling women from progressing in the formal economy. As women make up more of the informal economy they have become underrepresented in higher positions in the formal economy or in political positions. Thus, societal expectations of women may consider that women must participate in the informal economy to support their families, while men are still considered as the heads of households.

There were some limitations to the research as only existing data could be analysed. The research still contributes towards a greater understanding of the factors that influence changes in gendered norms in North Korea. The results of this research could lead to a further study on this issue; reports (Dagyum, 2017) state that North Korean plans to conduct a 2018 census. Updated census data, analysed with other factors, can provide a greater understanding of changes that may have occurred in areas such as women's education. Potential further research could also occur in a larger project through conducting interviews with more recent defectors. Areas that would benefit from further research include looking at the specific roles of women within the informal economy and the attitudes of men and women of how they see their roles.

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