

Coping With Foreign Wives' Special Needs in Korean Emergency Management

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Abstract

This article examines how Korea has to improve its current measures to meet the special needs of foreign wives by applying the principles of transnational emergency management. The current private-led approach and the future-oriented public-led approach are systematically compared in terms of four factors: the central government, local governments, volunteers, and family. For the methodology, literature review is utilized. The key finding is that Korea has to rapidly transform its private-led approach toward the ultimate purpose of having a public-led approach. The research is valuable because it studies, for the first time, the special needs of foreign wives in Korea from the viewpoint of emergency management.

Keywords: Potential hazards; International migration; Local governments; Volunteers; Family.



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1. Introduction

An increasing number of foreign women who are married to Korean men have come to South Korea (hereinafter Korea) in recent years and then they started their newlywed life as permanent residents in a different environment. Foreign wives have special needs that are not addressed fully, especially during emergencies, such as lingual barriers, culture shock, racial discrimination, cognitive problem, or any combination thereof. For example, several foreign wives committed suicide with their children after experiencing a series of emergencies including typhoon, house fire, economic trouble, or culture shock for the last 10 years, in particular resulting from related psychological stress.

Fortunately, one Filipino wife was chosen as a National Assembly woman via a quota system in 2012, and who then began to reflect what foreign wives have wanted in terms of policies of National Assembly. Nevertheless, some foreign governments, such as the Vietnamese government, have officially expressed their worry on the poor conditions of their native daughters living Korea. Similarly, mass media in Korea have started to report the problems of foreign wives' special needs (Cho, 2013). This is an indication that Korea has failed to take care of foreign wives' special needs in the viewpoint of emergency management.

The Korean government, both at the central and at the local levels, has recently maintained that it has tried to protect everyone from terrible emergencies, particularly since the Sendai earthquake and the Fukushima nuclear power plant leakage in Japan in 2011. However, foreign wives are still much more exposed to all kinds of emergencies in Korea. No official measures have ever been seriously taken in terms of emergency management for foreign wives in Korea, putting foreign wives in a very unequal position. Thus, it is time to study how Korea has coped with the special needs of foreign wives in terms of emergency management and how their situation, both in the present and in the future, can be improved.

This paper aims to examine how such improvement can be brought about, in practical terms, considering the special needs of foreign wives in Korea. Toward this end, it looks into how Korea has been addressing those needs and what should be done in the future. This paper borrows major principles from the field of transnational emergency management. Private-led and public-led approaches are initially suggested to address the special needs of foreign wives. At the same time, these two approaches are systematically compared in terms of four factors: the central government, local governments, volunteers, and family.

This paper maintains throughout that meeting the special needs of foreign wives entails a change from the private-led approach, which is supported by private units, including volunteers and family, to the public-led approach, which is supported by public units, including the central government and local governments. This paper subsequently describes background theories, the reality of the private-led approach, and the alternatives to shift to the public-led approach.

2. Background Theories

2.1. Foreign Wives and Their Special Needs in Korea

“Foreign wives” in this paper refers to foreign women who are married to Korean men via international migration. Before the mid-1990s, very few Korean women married foreign men. At that time, international marriage was a very rare event in Korean society. In fact, Koreans did not allow foreigners to become members of their family. Many Koreans used to believe that international marriage would prevent them from keeping their blood pure and would damage filial relations with their late ancestors.

Table-1. Statistics on foreign wives in Korea (As of September, 2018)

Major items/ Nationality	statistical	Number of foreign wives	Percent of foreign wives out of their total population	Percent of foreign wives out of the Korean population (50 million) total
China		45,812	34.715%	0.092%
Vietnam		40,399	30.613%	0.081%
Japan		12,421	9.412%	0.025%
Philippines		11,510	8.722%	0.023%
Cambodia		4,324	3.277%	0.009%
Thailand		4,150	3.145%	0.008%
Mongolia		2,264	1.716%	0.005%
Others		11,071	8.389%	0.022%
Total		131,965	100.000%	0.264%

Source: (MOJ, 2018: 27).

Since the mid-1990s, however, the number of international marriages in Korea has increased sharply. In particular, many Korean men have been willing to marry foreign women. During the 1990s, for instance, young farmers who were having difficulty in finding marriage partners in Korea showed a strong motivation to marry foreign women (Lee, 2008). At the beginning of the 21st century, as shown in Table 1, young men in both urban and rural areas resorted to international marriage, and thus, the number of foreign wives increased to about 131,965, representing 0.264% of the total population.

The “special needs” population may include many categories of people. One way of narrowing down the scope is by classifying special needs into five categories: children, the elderly, people who cannot speak the major language well, people who cannot speak the major language at all, and the non-institutionalized population with disability (Hook and Zhang, 2011; Kailes and Enders, 2007). The majority of foreign wives in Korea probably belong to the categories of people who cannot speak Korean well and who cannot speak it at all.

Another way of defining the scope of special needs is to classify them into several characteristics such as cultural, racial, cognitive, physical, medical or any combination thereof of Sorensen (2006). A considerable number of foreign wives in Korea also belong to these cultural, racial, or cognitive classifications, or any combination thereof. To elaborate, foreign wives who belong to different races or distinct ethnic groups and who have their own unique cultures from the native Koreans’ culture are intentionally or unintentionally ignored by the majority of Koreans in terms of cognition.

Nonetheless, no singular definition of special needs is available, as it would depend on individual perspective and research direction or that a person with special needs may have any number of characteristics in relation to emergency management (Federal Highway Administration, 2009). However, the term indicates different needs or isolated needs of foreign wives in many aspects. Several terms have been used repeatedly to replace the term special needs, including cultural needs, linguistic needs, and disability. In general, however, because the term ‘special needs’ reflects the complicated dynamics of foreign wives, the substitute terms have not been satisfactory.

During an emergency, many foreign wives may develop their own special needs, such as language barriers, culture shock, psychological needs, racial discrimination, evacuation refusal, higher mortality, domestic violence, low income, poor social status, cognitive impairment, the desire to run away, death wish, and others. Some of these special needs arise under stressful environments, whereas others have existed before an emergency and continue to exist during and after an emergency (Ezra and Kiros, 2001; Pekovic *et al.*, 2007). In spite of the difficulties in definition, the definition of special needs in this paper includes major characteristics such as lingual, cultural, racial, cognitive, or any combination thereof from the perspective of emergency management.

Before the outbreak of an emergency, foreign wives need to urgently identify potential hazards around their new environment than the native Koreans do. Because foreign wives have not yet stayed in Korea for a long time, they do not know what kinds of hazards could hit them in the near future or in the long run. Even though some foreign wives successfully carry out hazard identification, they still need to be trained to prepare for or to mitigate those hazards by understanding weather forecast, anti-crime information, the location of shelters, regional emergency networks, by developing communication skills and others.

It is true that although government policy and media reports have continued to emphasize the effects of emergencies during the period of emergency response, almost no attention has been given to the special needs of foreign wives in Korea. Thus, appropriate information should be urgently provided to foreign wives to enable them

to address their special needs (Truman *et al.*, 2009). Without knowledge of related information in their community such as psychological treatment, suicide prevention, multi-language services, and others, foreign wives in Korea would be more at a loss during emergencies.

During the period of emergency recovery, foreign wives clearly need to understand not only the structure of local emergency management but also the mechanism of national emergency management system. Without grasping those, foreign wives would face much more difficulty in initiating emergency recovery activity to save their lives. In addition, because each emergency has somewhat different management processes under the Korean environment, it takes much time and effort for foreign wives to utilize appropriate emergency management system in the region.

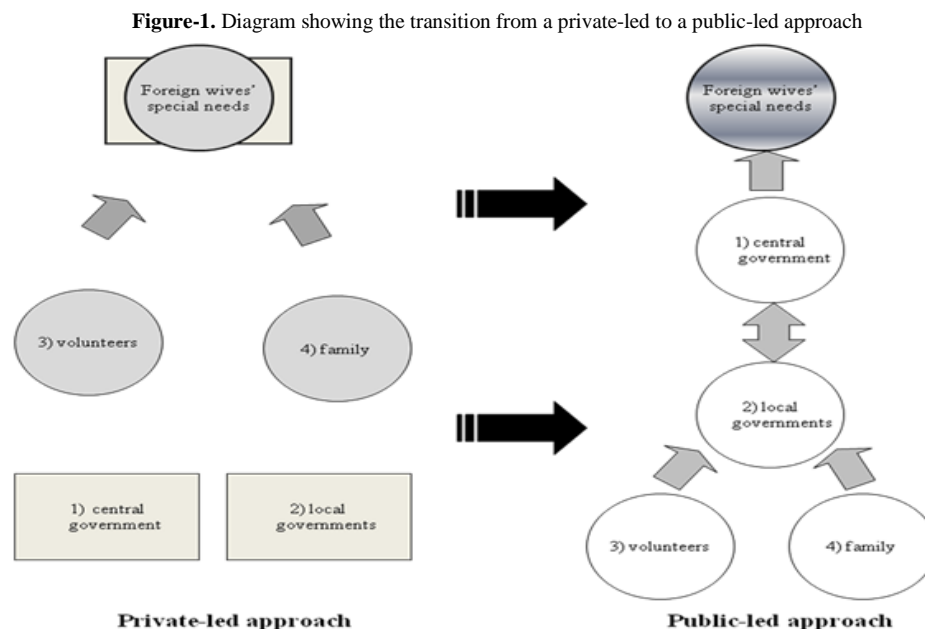
It is well known that transnational emergency management requires additional efforts, because international emergencies create more political, diplomatic, and social barriers among different people (Cavanagh and Malia, 2007; Edwards, 2009). Because foreign wives are originally from other countries, emergency management for them in Korea should take the nature of transnational emergency management. Similarly, the principles of transnational emergency management should be applicable to foreign wives in Korea without much difficulty. With these in mind, Korea has to reflect the diverse special needs of foreign wives in its emergency management measures, such as including foreign wives in its emergency operation plans (EOP).

2.2. Analytical Structure

In the West, diverse researches have been conducted on the matter of foreign wives. Their special needs have also been frequently analyzed in the field of emergency management via international migration (Brandt *et al.*, 1997; Reyes, 2010). Similarly, many academic areas, such as public administration, domestic economics, linguistics, education, and cultural anthropology, began to examine the subject of foreign wives in Korea at the beginning of the 21st century (Jung, 2011; Moon, 2011). However, almost no distinctive research has ever been attempted on the special needs of foreign wives or migrants in the field of Korean emergency management. Thus, the subject is clearly worth studying.

This paper initially proposes two approaches towards meeting the special needs of foreign wives. These are the “private-led approach” and the “public-led approach.” The former means that private units, such as volunteers and family, play more important roles than public units do in meeting the special needs of foreign wives. On the other hand, the latter indicates that public units, including the central government and local governments, play more vital roles than private units do in helping foreign wives meet their special needs in the future. This paper maintains throughout the need to change from a private-led approach to a public-led approach, as shown in Figure 1.

In terms of public and private relationship, the public sector has historically dominated its affairs compared to the private sector in Korea. Under the authoritarian culture, public organizations have continued to succeed in playing the field in many aspects of Korean society by occupying political power, personnel, and other materials (Kim L.-S., 1997). The field of emergency management is not an exceptional case. In addition, emergency management is part of government efforts to manage diverse emergencies to benefit the people in cooperation with close private partners.



Further, the subject of foreign wives' special needs is one of Korea's emerging or new concerns in the 21st century. In general, an emerging situation is surrounded by a high extent of risk and uncertainty, without a strong base. In addition, many complicated relationships are interconnected with an emergency (Choi *et al.*, 2011). To this point, the public sector has to initiate intervention or involvement toward foreign wives' special needs under the Confucian culture. Otherwise, the field of emergency management would miss the opportunity of dramatically

improving the foundation of foreign wives' special needs in the nation. In short, a public-led approach is necessarily applicable in Korea, compared with other nations.

Foreign wives' special needs have two aspects in terms of related implementation, an informal one and formal one. As long as private-led approach prevails in Korea, their special needs will not improve greatly in official terms as there are many obstacles. Volunteers and family will play a role in unofficially implementing related alternatives for foreign wives. Further, emergency management for foreign wives is a government effort, so appropriate alternatives have to be implemented via official means. By utilizing public-led approach, the central government and local governments will substantially implement official alternatives for foreign wives, in particular, in cooperation with volunteers and family, as the main strategy for overcoming obstacles.

To systematically compare the two approaches, this paper focuses on four important components: (1) the central government, (2) local governments, (3) volunteers, and (4) family. When consideration is given to the role of government in emergency management, which is to manage diverse emergencies for the people, with the support of close private partners, both public and private units equally have to be major components in the two approaches. The first two components are public units; the second two are private units. These four components have played or have to play many roles in addressing the special needs of foreign wives in Korea. All other components, if any, will be classified under these four for the sake of inclusiveness.

To elaborate, the central government is to lead public policy on the special needs of foreign wives, while local governments are the first line of defense against emergencies for foreign wives. Volunteers are friends, neighbors, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that assist foreign wives in adjusting to the Korean emergency environment. In addition, family members, as the closest partners, are destined to take care of foreign wives' special needs.

In the private-led approach, both the central government and local governments have done little to address the special needs of foreign wives during emergency management. In the figure, note that no arrow has been specified around these components. Furthermore, these two units are depicted as separate rectangles, indicating that their roles are not flexible but inelastic, especially compared with the two circles representing volunteers and family. Two arrows lead the two private units to the foreign wives' special needs, reflecting their conciliatory roles. In the end, the special needs of foreign wives are located at the overlapping area between a thick rectangle and a thick circle at the top, showing an aberrant shape and thus, indicating the need for much improvement. Each thick outline indicates common parts of the same two figures at the bottom or at the middle of the diagram.

In the public-led approach, each of the four components is represented by a flexible circle for effectively managing the special needs of foreign wives. At the bottom, two arrows guide both volunteers and family to local governments. In the relationship with the central government, local governments must be allowed to play an intermediating role by following a two-sided arrow. In other words, the central government should not be an outcast by empowering local governments regarding foreign wives' special needs. Rather, governments at all levels have to coordinate and resolve all complicated issues. The central government, as indicated by an arrow in the figure, continues to direct the efforts of local governments to the special needs of foreign wives. At the top, the ultimate target of special needs is shown as a single thick circle, formed with the common parts of the four circles below.

To delve into the two approaches, this paper relies on the literature in both Korean and English. In other words, literature review has been utilized as a major methodology in this paper. The literature in Korean is utilized heavily in the analysis of the difficulties faced by foreign wives in Korea. The literature in English, on the other hand, is used in applying transnational emergency management principles. Based on the literature review, this paper attempts to address two questions in the context of Korea: (1) Is a public-led approach needed or not? (2) "What alternatives will be needed to achieve the goal of having a public-led approach?"

3. The Realities of the Private-Led Approach

3.1. Central Government

Many organizations at the ministry level, such as the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Employment and Labor, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Ministry of Health and Welfare, and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy, as well as the Prime Minister's Office, have begun to play some role in dealing with the special needs of foreign wives (Ji *et al.*, 2009; Park and Lee, 2013). For example, the Ministry of Justice has become involved in dealing with the legal affairs for foreign wives.

Despite the diverse efforts of many ministries, each organization has not maximized its reach and own specialty to address the special needs of foreign wives. Institutions have worked with foreign wives not in terms of emergency management but in terms of their original mission and scope of work. For example, the Ministry of Employment and Labor has made efforts to work for the employment of foreign wives, without paying attention to their special needs. Therefore, the special needs of foreign wives remain an unfamiliar area for most ministries.

At the central government level in Korea, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) was a wide-reaching organization that takes care of problems related not only to natural disasters but also to manmade emergencies in Korea. The NEMA was officially transformed into the Ministry of Public Safety and Security (MPSS) at the end of 2014 and then the Ministry of the Interior and Safety (MOIS) in the middle of 2017. Even MOIS, however, has not implemented any significant policy concerning emergency management for foreign wives. In many aspects, MOIS has not recognized the significance of foreign wives' special needs at all, given that no official documents have ever mentioned them (MOIS, 2018). For the above reason, the central government, as a public unit, is not fully oriented toward the special needs of foreign wives.

3.2. Local Governments

Mainly, provincial (in the U.S., state government level) and city governments have tried to help foreign wives settle down in their respective administrative areas. After figuring out how many foreign wives have moved to their areas or what their life conditions are, the persons in charge at these local government units visit them to measure their knowledge of Korean language, to discuss the education of their children, and to provide alternatives to help them overcome their culture shock (Ahn, 2011). In short, foreign wives adjust to their new home and environment via several means.

Local governments have undertaken some activities for foreign wives. That does not mean, however, that they have done a wonderful job for foreign wives from the standpoint of emergency management. For example, local governments have not seriously considered teaching emergency terms or emergency management terms to foreign wives in language schools. To make matters worse, they have not provided them information on culture shock, racial discrimination, the matter of cognition, or a combination thereof from the viewpoint of emergency management (Kim Y.-H. and Kim, 2010).

Three sub-institutions work for emergency management in each local government: the section of emergency management, the fire station, and the maritime police station. The section of emergency management deals with natural disasters; the fire station deals with manmade emergencies; the maritime police station takes care of maritime incidents. However, none of these institutions makes a distinction between native residents and foreign wives. In short, local governments, as public units, have failed to consider or support the special needs of foreign wives.

3.3. Volunteers

After migrating and marrying or vice versa, foreign wives naturally develop their relationships with friends and neighbors around new homes in Korea. Although foreign wives cannot make many friends due to language barriers, they make some close friends or meet good neighbors particularly via religious activity. That way, foreign wives get much information on emergency management from Korean friends and neighbors in churches. Foreign wives also get related information on their special needs from friends who originally came from the same country (Kim O.-N., 2007).

Many NGOs, such as the Women Migrants' Human-rights Center, the Purun Citizen Community, the Seoul Global Migrant Center, and the Regional Support Center for Foreign Workers, have played diverse roles in providing information to foreign wives on emergencies or their management. Given that some NGOs have a national network, it is certain that their roles have been extraordinary in consolidating foreign wives' special needs. These NGOs have defined their own ways of delivering emergency information to foreign wives according to the foreign wives' native culture.

The above facts show that volunteers, as a private unit, have played many roles in managing foreign wives' special needs, not by relying on a formal relationship but by depending on informal relationships with friends and neighbors. In particular, it is somewhat true that many NGOs approach the special needs of foreign wives more systematically than the government does. Thus, the activity of volunteers has successfully shown the aspect of the private-led approach.

3.4. Family

Family ties, based on the principles of Confucianism, are very strong in Korea. Although a marriage is a union between individuals in Western society, it is cohesion between one family and another family in Korea. When a foreign woman marries a Korean man, she becomes a partner of a Korean family. This is particularly so after she successfully gives birth to a baby, when she is more allowed to maintain whatever she wants as a family member, such as the right of a wife, mother, and daughter in law (Han, 2006).

Under this environment, the family, as a basic life unit, has fundamentally provided related information on emergency management to foreign wives. Their husbands, mothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, or other members explain what potential hazards, intentional or unintentional, are around their homes or communities. Even though the majority of family members do not set up written EOPs for the family, many families maintain at least oral EOPs and then describe them to foreign wives. In general, foreign wives are satisfied with how their special needs are considered in family EOPs, however incomplete these may be.

Family ties are a typical informal relationship, like the relationship between foreign wives and volunteers. Thus, it is certain that much of foreign wives' special needs are informally addressed by family in Korea. In other words, family members, knowingly or unknowingly, play a very positive role in dealing with the special needs of foreign wives. Therefore, the activity of the family, as a private unit, induces a private-led approach to address the special needs of foreign wives.

4. The Alternatives to Shift to the Public-Led Approach

4.1. Central Government

In the United States, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) accommodates the special needs of foreign wives at the federal level. FEMA tries to eliminate related barriers to managing emergencies for foreign wives under the name of special needs population. In short, FEMA wants to reflect equality to the management of foreign wives' special needs. For examples, FEMA's helpline, which is a gender-neutral tool, provides services for foreign wives' special needs in 153 languages. When foreign wives apply for financial aids via Individual Assistance after a presidentially declared emergency, the multi-language phone line relieves their language barriers. In the case

of Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), volunteer translators often offer community languages with the support of FEMA. In addition, when many residents including foreign wives feel uncomfortable at speaking in or in understanding English, some communities let fulltime trainers or volunteers translate training materials in foreign languages such as the CERT program in the Bay Area of California that are also in Chinese and Spanish (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2005; FEMA, 2015). In this regard, the central government in Korea has to seriously consider becoming involved in the special needs of foreign wives, as in the case of FEMA, through a public-led approach.

To elaborate, MOIS, among many ministries, must realize why the central government needs to adopt public policy for the special needs of foreign wives. Without this understanding on the part of MOIS, it would be hardly possible for the nation to proceed with measures for transnational emergency management. If MOIS, despite its status, is unable to take concrete measures for the special needs of foreign wives, it is an indication that leadership is lacking in Korea.

To address the special needs of foreign wives, MOIS has to initiate a revision of the Basic Act on Emergency and Safety Management (BAESM), with the cooperation of the National Assembly. BAESM is a fundamental law that regulates emergency management in Korea. Specifically, considering that Article 2 of BAESM defines “the people,” MOIS must work to add a provision that the people shall include all minorities, including foreign wives. MOIS also has to include the special needs of foreign wives in the national EOPs. At the same time, MOIS has to classify foreign wives’ special needs under the Korean environment on the basis of extensive interviews with all stakeholders. Subsequently, MOIS has to provide those special needs for the other partners to serve as a guideline on emergency management.

In the meantime, MOIS should further empower local governments to directly provide support to foreign wives to address their special needs based on national coordination efforts, partially because the subject is so complicated that MOIS may not successfully handle it alone. Further, it is a principle that not the central government but local governments are the first line of defense against emergencies. Under the authoritarian and bureaucratic culture, empowering local governments would not happen without the central government’s concession or willingness. By supporting local autonomy, MOIS has to facilitate local governments to address concrete resource management to include personnel, finance, and other materials also to benefit foreign wives (Carrillo, 1997).

4.2. Local Governments

A migrant community in Germany consists of at least 100 ethnic groups. Among them, the majority is Turkish, if considering that the number of Turkish immigrants has increased to about 3 million. The majority of Turkish immigrants have Muslim religious background that is hugely different from a mainstream of German society. It is known that many immigrants have experienced more hardship to include the impacts of natural disaster, income inequality, poor health, emotional stress, and other socioeconomic factors compared to non-immigrant Germans (Aichberger *et al.*, 2012; Kilicli, 2003; Uslu *et al.*, 2013).

When local governments in Germany allow immigrants, including foreign wives, to settle down in the country, the policy is based not on nationalism, but on transnationalization. Many Germans recognize how dangerous nationalism was by experiencing World War II. In particular, when land space is given to foreign wives, local governments come forward to implement what foreign wives really want in the new space such as the location of emergency kits and fire extinguishers or decision makings on how to get to a shelter, in terms of emergency management. Thanks to this policy, foreign wives can start their lives in Germany with improved comfort and in safety. As another example, some places such as Hamburg have considered bilingual teaching for foreign wives not only to facilitate related learning but also to enhance Turkish identity and culture. In addition, the KOALA Project has taught foreign wives in multiple languages such as German, Turkish, Portuguese, and Serbian (Bingol, 2013; Caglar, 2011). Korean local governments must initiate their policy and then reflect the principles of transnational emergency management in meeting the special needs of foreign wives, following the case of Germany, as a public-led approach.

Based on coordination with the central government’s policy or on the basis of empowering local governments, the section of emergency management, the fire station, and the maritime police station in local areas have to provide certain alternatives for the special needs of foreign wives, as well as for native residents. One of the most effective alternatives should be systematic exercise and training for foreign wives regarding emergency management by enhancing foreign wives’ culture like the relationship between Turkish immigrants and Germans. Likewise, those three sub-institutions can use their own personnel, facilities, and other resources to train foreign wives at the local level. Alternatively, they could invite professional trainers or borrow training rooms from local motels or schools.

During exercise and training, the three sub-institutions must teach foreign wives such emergency terms as *jaenan* (emergency), *bulya!* (fire!), *domangayo!* (escape!), *dowajuseyo!* (help me!), *daepiso* (shelter), and others, with the support of volunteer translators, churches, and NGOs. While providing information on culture shock, racial problem, the extent of cognition, and others, in terms of emergency management, local governments have to deliver truthful and realistic information to foreign wives. Because many special needs are keenly sensitive or disgraceful (e.g., racial discrimination, the way of Korean cognition toward minority, poor socioeconomic status around foreign wives, high injury and suicide rate around emergency), local governments should not attempt to hide them, but systematically open them and discuss the same diplomatically. In doing so, local governments have to include foreign wives in their EOPs. Before starting to pay attention to foreign wives’ special needs, local governments have to trigger related emergency management at the community level.

4.3. Volunteers

In Pakistan, like in many developing countries, government support was insufficient in fulfilling the special needs of foreign wives. However, NGOs endeavored to fill the gaps between government deficiency and foreign wives' special needs. In other words, NGOs played a key role in supporting foreign wives. By conducting researches, influencing policy, and delivering emergency information, NGOs partner with the government. In particular, Pakistan developed a strong partnership between the public sector and NGOs for the goal of facilitating pre-hospital care for all residents to include foreign wives in Islamabad (Alia *et al.*, 2006; Ejaz *et al.*, 2011; Rosenbaum, 2006). In this context, Korean volunteers have to work closely with the government to meet the special needs of foreign wives through a public-led approach.

When friends and neighbors provide information on regional emergency management for foreign wives, they have to consider supplying information on domestic violence, suicide prevention, racial discrimination, and other thorny issues simultaneously. In the event foreign wives fail to find persons or places to get appropriate help in matters of those issues, friends and neighbors should deliver the related information they need, going beyond the role of family members. In doing so, friends and neighbors will obtain systematic information from local governments. Further, friends and neighbors must supply the information to foreign wives not only in terms of breaking the news but also in the viewpoint of emergency management, for example, friends and neighbors have to explain each issue also emphasizing the need for a short and quick period of emergency response.

It is a positive sign that NGOs have played many roles in helping foreign wives meet their special needs. However, NGOs still need more cooperation from both the central government and local governments. As in Pakistan, NGOs should forge a stronger partnership with government to enable more effective dealing with foreign wives' special needs. Without government support, the efforts of NGOs would still be limited under the Korean authoritative environment.

4.4. Family

By experiencing a series of emergencies including the Kobe earthquake in 1995, Japan included foreign wives' special needs into its EOPs in particular with the support of Japanese families. Japan tried to ameliorate support systems for foreign wives via diverse channels. EOPs are able to ascertain where foreign wives would go by implementing individual evacuation support plans. In doing so, Japanese authorities could anticipate issues that unregistered foreign wives could not go to hospitals to have their injuries checked as they may be unable to pay medical bills (Kazusa, 2011). In March 2011, Sendai was hit by an earthquake of 9.0 magnitude, following which the Fukushima nuclear power plant began to leak. The central government of Japan was strongly criticized, because its response was much worse than expected (Perrow, 2011). Nonetheless, creative cases were reported on how Japanese families responded to the catastrophe, including how Japanese families dealt with foreign wives.

To elaborate, the Japanese family played a systematic role in coping with foreign wives' special needs by listening to the guidance of local governments during the triple disaster in 2011 of earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear reactor leak. In addition, the foreign wives were able to respond and react to the triple disaster by following Japanese national media. However, in the case of those who could not understand the Japanese language well, Japanese families encouraged them to listen to international media, which were spoken in their mother languages or in English. Besides, some Japanese families came to utilize simplified and visualized diagrams to scientifically or efficiently distribute emergency information for foreign wives in the community (Minato and Morimoto, 2012; Shah and Murao, 2013). In the same context, the Korean family has to work systematically with close partners, following a public-led approach.

It is a very positive signal that the family has continued to provide information on emergency management for foreign wives' special needs under the Korean family structure. However, it is not always positive that family has unsystematically provided related information for foreign wives. Sometimes, the family supplies information to foreign wives by word of mouth. For example, families provide old style information on how to improve a household's socioeconomic status and how to control foreign wives' homesickness without investing money or financial means. In fact, many Korean families have tried to save money to improve their home economy and thus, have not allowed foreign wives to visit their home countries via airplanes. Without new and creative information and trial, foreign wives would not be able to move out of their poor conditions with their special needs not being addressed. Thus, the family needs to be more professional in distinguishing between scientific and unscientific information by relying on accumulated official data of diverse partners, as in the case of Japan.

Besides its relationship with local governments, national media, and others, the family has to maintain a more cooperative relationship with volunteers in the community. To improve its role, the family should stop delivering related traditional information and addressing oral EOP for foreign wives on its own. Instead, the family has to open communication channels not only with local governments but also with neighboring volunteers, while treating foreign wives' special needs not as family matter, but in terms of emergency management. In so doing, their psychological needs will be decreased, also as more substantial alternatives are provided to foreign wives. Without the close involvement of partners, the family will fail to facilitate a public-led approach to meet the special needs of foreign wives.

5. Conclusion

The goal of this paper was to analyze how to positively manage foreign wives' special needs in Korea by relying on the principles of transnational emergency management. Those principles are from many national cases, including

countries like the United States, Germany, Pakistan, and Japan. The paper has been successful in achieving this goal, in that it systematically compared the private-led approach and the public-led approach in terms of four components: the central government, local governments, volunteers, and family.

The key finding is that Korea has to change its current private-led approach to a public-led approach to address the special needs of foreign wives. At present, only volunteers and family, as private units, have played major roles in addressing such needs. This means that the central government and local governments, as public units, have not even raised emergency awareness for foreign wives nationally or locally. In other words, the private aspect of related alternatives for foreign wives has been mainly implemented, but the public aspect has not been done and thus, become clear obstacles. Considering that emergency management is a government effort that involves the participation of close partners, this paper maintains that the role of government must be dramatically increased to address the special needs of foreign wives. Not only the private aspect but also the public aspect of policy alternatives for foreign wives' special needs will be strategically implemented.

In particular, to implement alternatives leading to a public-led approach, both the central government and local governments need to trigger related alternatives under an authoritative environment. For example, MOIS should start getting involved in taking care of foreign wives in terms of emergency management, while local governments coordinate all complicated issues with the central government based on two-way coordination. Moreover, both volunteers and family must not be satisfied with their current activities, but must extend their activities toward government leadership. In doing so, related alternatives will be implemented in more practical ways.

As its most significant contribution, this paper has initially examined the status of foreign wives in Korea in terms of their special needs and future-oriented alternatives. Even though many academic fields have studied the matter of foreign wives in Korea, no distinctive research has been conducted on their special needs. Thus, this paper will be valuable by initially raising the importance of emergency management for foreign wives in Korea in an era of globalization.

In the near future, it will be necessary for Korean scholars to extend the studies on foreign wives in the field of emergency management. In addition, international scholars may investigate, via their own perspective, how foreign women have managed diverse emergencies in Korea after their marriage to Korean men. In doing so, foreign wives might come across unexpected alternatives for meeting their special needs. At any rate, such researches may ultimately contribute to the development of transnational emergency management.

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