

**A Study on the possibility of Haenyeo as a Sustainable Profession  
with Social Security  
to keep tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Haenyeo  
community**

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**Abstract**

The number of Haenyeo is steadily decreasing and the Jeju islanders value unique Haenyeo's community culture more than ever and try to register its tangible and intangible cultural heritage to UNESCO. This research is aimed at looking for any possibilities of sustainable profession by re-evaluating Haenyeo work as professionalism according to western traditional concepts of profession, and further suggesting what systemic approaches to take in order to establish Haenyeo as a sustainable profession group for the young generation and suggesting the alternative solutions like a social security system to recruit more of the young generation into the Haenyeo profession. To establish Haenyeo as a sustainable profession, first, professional Haenyeo theory and practice text condensed into "Haenyeology" should be written to educate the novice Haenyeo. Second, every Haenyeo community should establish a Haenyeo school to train the novice Haenyeo in their own community. Third, a Haenyeo school also should empower Haenyeos about their right, professionalism, management skill, social security and corporation management skill through community. Fourth, the Haenyeo community should be reformed into a Haenyeo corporation social enterprise. Fifth, the Haenyeo community should empower themselves to establish a Haenyeo social security system through a Haenyeo corporation social enterprise.

**Keywords :** Haenyeo theory and practice text, Haenyeology, sustainable profession, empowering Haenyeo, Haenyeo social security system, Haenyeo corporation social enterprise.

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According to the steady decrease in the number of Haenyeo to around 4,500 in 2014, the Jeju Islanders, local and national government attempt to designate Haenyeo community culture as UNESCO Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage in danger of the extinction of Haenyeo in the near future, because there is only one Haenyeo in her 20s. Can Haenyeo be sustainable or extinct? Previous literature has unveiled the Haenyeo's whole life from medical, historical, sociological, anthropological, linguistic, economic, folklore, public service, cultural heritage, etc. Yoo(2002) presented an article, "A Gatherer, A Vocational Class, a Commercial Diver, and/or a Free Diver?," in which he wrote, "A vocational class recorded as Jamnyeo existed in a tributary mode of production during Joseon dynasty. The fact that diving is a lifelong profession is unique to Jeju Jamsu and Japanese Ama(Japanese diver)." Yoo used the terms "profession" and "vocational class" but from a historical and anthropological approach, not a business and professional one. Jin's research (2004) about Haenyeo conducted from an economic point of view reflected well the Haenyeo labor's economic value all through Jeju local history. But there is no case of analyzing Haenyeo as a professional job.

This research is aimed at looking for any possibilities of sustainable profession by re-evaluating Haenyeo work as professionalism according to traditional and new concepts of professionalism. In spite of the Haenyeo's considerable economic contribution to eliminate poverty in each local community over a long time, why didn't the Haenyeo work develop into a professional job? First, whether or not the Haenyeo work can be classified as a professional job, can be analyzed by Greenwood's (1957) traditional definition of attributes of a profession and Middlehurst and Kennie's (1997) new concept of professional. The change of student beliefs about how professional Haenyeo are before and after intensive interview will be compared. And we can search for possibilities and obstacles to the sustainable profession of the Haenyeo. Fi-

nally, what polity system is required to develop the Haenyeo into a professional job group can be sought.

### What is a Haenyeo?

According to Yoo(2002), they are known as Haenyeo to outsiders, while they call themselves Jamsu or jamnyeo and sometimes Haenyeo[海女]. The words Jamsu and Jamnyeo are native or folk terms, while the word Haenyeo has become popular in everyday life as well as in academia as an analytic term. Yoo(2002) contends that the word Jamnyeo appears in various records during the Joseon period(1392-1910). It also appears in various records of Japan particularly from the 8th to 12th century(Kim, 1999; Yoo, 2002). The term Haenyeo was likely introduced to Jeju Island for the first time during the Japanese occupation(1910-1945). Yoo(2002) contends that at present in Korea, Jamsu is the official term in the law regarding fishery in a fishery cooperative. This paper will use the term Haenyeo because we have a Haenyeo museum, Haenyeo policy and Haenyeo house instead of Jamnyeo museum, Jamnyeo policy and Jamnyeo house, even in 2015.

Records show that Jamnyeo have been diving at least since the early Joseon dynasty, and the shellfish trading network with Japan and China can be traced to early in the Tokugawa period(1600-1868), seventeenth century Japan(Kalland, 1995; Yoo, 2002). In the Joseon period, there had once been a division of labor by gender regarding the dive fishery in Jeju Island. Male divers called Pojak(鮑作) collected abalone in deep water while female divers called Jamnyeo collected seaweed. During or after the 17th century only women began to dive. Why did only women begin to dive in those days? This question is very important to understand as now the breath-holding divers in Jeju Island are all women, but we don't have enough information or records to answer it (Yoo, 2002).

The doctrine of Korean Confucianism in the

Joseon Dynasty left Korean society with two undesirable legacies. These run against the ethical principles of universal equality. One is a social class system. The other is the belief that women are inherently inferior to men and must be treated accordingly. The male-oriented Confucian ideology segregates the worlds of men and women into domains of symbolic power, with the female domain markedly subordinate to the male. Women were relegated to the domestic chores of child rearing and housekeeping within the boundary of family, as one of the 'inside people'. In contrast to this Korean tradition, Haenyeos have built up their unique roles and voices through the challenges of working and diving in the deep sea. This is in spite of government regulations and measures that often prohibited women, partially clothed, from diving and sea harvesting because these activities violated Confucian norms. Through their skilled, high-risk work, dangerous adventures in the deep sea, and overseas travel beyond national borders, they created and maintained the original Jeju Women's occupation (WAIS, 2012).

According to Yoo(2002), commercial divers called Haenyeo in a capitalist mode of production appeared as an occupation along with Japanese colonialism and capitalism. The women divers whom we have in mind are not Jamnyeo in a tributary mode of production during the Joseon dynasty. They are Haenyeo as a laborer or commercial diver in a capitalist mode of production(Yoo, 2002). One of the vanguards of Japanese capitalism was a group of Japanese Ama that had dived in the sea near Bangeonjin and Pohang since 1883; Japanese and Korean fishery traders or brokers in mainland Korea who exported seaweed including agar to Japan began to hire Haenyeo in 1895. Since then, the Haenyeo became a typical seasonal laborer who used to leave from Jeju Island and stay for a considerable period in mainland Korea, Japan, and Russia. They could make a good sum, even though brokers exploited them. After Haenyeo went abroad to dive, the number of Japanese Ama decreased and they disappeared finally in

1929, because the cost of hiring Haenyeo was cheaper than that of hiring Japanese Ama(Mat-suda 1934). Haenyeo operate alone, but some of the Ama need a helper in a boat. The number of diving days for Haenyeo in a month is more than that of Ama, because the sea temperature in the southern coast of the Korean peninsular is lower than in Japan.

Economic profit was considerable and they made significant contribution to housing, clothing and food for the family. The Haenyeo's diving skill had influence on the condition of marriage(Kim, 1999:102). At the turning point of the 20th century, the local economic backbone of Jeju was in fishery business and the Haenyeo's harvest through diving skill made absolute contribution to an increase in the local income. The Haenyeo's goggles were helpful to income increase through professional harvest and exportation of the products to Japan. Increased demand of sea products caused Haenyeos to go out of Jeju Island to the mainland, Japan, and China to harvest more sea products. (Kim, 1999:542).

The Haenyeo's harvests were abalone, snails, sea cucumbers, and seaweed in the Joseon Dynasty, when the Haenyeo's harvesting activity was almost forced labor. But from around 1900 the advent of Japanese sea product traders surrounding Pusan and Mokpo in the mainland created more demand which required more marketing of sea products. It brought more cash income to the rural village through the Haenyeo's diving. Abalone, sea cucumber, seaweed, agar-agar, gamtae, gulfweed, and mome are harvest products of Haenyeo and trade products(Jin, 2004:151). According to Jin's research, the most important production factor for the survival and adaptation of the Jeju economy in the colonial economic system was the labor of women divers. To be specific, it was women divers who went to the Korean peninsula and Japan. They had a great role in making money for the rural society of jeju. Women divers' labor played a positive role in the labor market to create their income. As a result, the price of marine products increased from the 1900s. Creation of wealth

by the labor of women divers means that women divers were inserted into the labor market of Japan in accordance with the development of transportation between Jeju and Japan(Jin, 2004).

### **What are the Attributes of a Profession?**

Various approaches have been adopted to define the essence of what might be seen to constitute 'professionalism', some relying on a description of the traits that professional tasks might be seen to comprise. According to Earnest Greenwood(1957), all the professions seem to possess: (1) systematic theory; (2) authority; (3) community sanction; (4) ethical codes; (5) a culture. Greenwood's classic and traditional concept of attributes of profession is used to define the professional job even today.

According to Greenwood, the true difference between a professional and a nonprofessional occupation is not qualitative but quantitative. We must think of the occupations in a society as along a continuum. At one end of this continuum are bunched the well-recognized and undisputed professions(e.g., physician, attorney, professor, scientist); at the opposite end are bunched the least skilled and least attractive occupations (e.g., watchman, truckloader, farm laborer, scrubwoman, bus boy). The remaining occupations, less skilled and less prestigious than the former but more so than the latter, are distributed between these two poles. The occupations bunched at the professional pole of the continuum possess to a maximum degree the attributes about to be described. As we move away from this pole, the occupations possess these attributes to a decreasing degree. Thus, in the less developed professions, social work among them, these attributes appear in moderate degree. When we reach the mid-region of the continuum, among the clerical, sales, and crafts occupations, they occur in still lesser degrees; while at the unskilled end of the continuum the occupations possess these attributes so mini-

mally that they are virtually nonexistent(Greenwood, 1957).

### **New concept of professionalism**

The term 'professional' is neither uncontentional nor static. It is used to describe particular groups in society, but who is included in these groups varies over time and culture(Middlehurst and Kennie, 1997).

Watkins and his colleagues(1992) are helpful in identifying changes in groupings of professionals over time. Five groups of professionals are identified in the UK, developing from the sixteenth century: pre-industry(1500): divinity, medicine, law; industrial (1800) agricultural to industrial revolution: engineers, chemists, accountants; welfare state(1900-1948): teachers, social workers; enterprise(1980s): business and management specialists knowledge workers(1990s): information, communication and media specialists(Watkins et al, 1992; Middlehurst and Kennie, 1997). Wilson(1991) suggests that in the period up to the year 2000 'professional' and 'associate professional' roles in the UK economy would increase by 21 percent and 16 percent respectively while during the same period jobs in manufacturing would decline by a further 10 percent. The widening ranges of employment groups now regarded as professional may in time reduce the exclusiveness associated with the term professional, which in turn offers potential for developing some positive characteristics associated with 'being a professional'. As society changes, so the social and cultural context of professionalism alters and the meaning of the term has not so much to be redefined as reinterpreted(Quicke, 1998).

### **What attributes can make Haenyero work a professional job?**

By analyzing whether the Haenyero work has systematic theory, authority, community sanc-

tion, ethical codes, and a culture, by Greenwood's (1957) traditional definition, the possibility of Haenyeo work as a sustainable professional job group can be discussed.

### 1) Is there any systematic body of theory for Haenyeo ?

Haenyeos have no systematic body of theory yet. But there was an extensive collection on Haenyeos called *The Korean 'Haenyeo'* [한국의 해녀] by Kim (1999) from perspectives of research method, technology, clothing and tools, folk, Haenyeo sea, diving abroad, community culture, expatriot- Haenyeos in other areas out of Jeju, uprising against Japanese military oppression and everything general and specific involved with Korean Haenyeo. We can get extensive information about Haenyeo through this book though Kim didn't use "Haenyeology". There was also a concrete attempt to establish Haenyeo theory called Jamnyeology by Ko in 2002, as evidenced in the name of a conference entitled, "The First World Jamnyeology Conference," in 2002. In an interview with Ko, director of WAIS, on January 9, 2015, he said that "Jamnyeology" was a word he coined, though "Jamnyeo" can also be pronounced as a word meaning "bitchy remark" and is therefore said to be difficult to generalize Jamnyeology because Haenyeo became more generalized than Jamnyeo. But since that time, there has been no attempt to establish or write a systematic body of general theory in spite of various papers or articles about Haenyeo from many different perspectives.

Greenwood(1957) contended that the chief difference between a professional and a nonprofessional occupation lies in the element of superior skill. Haenyeos have a well-trained superior breath-hold free-diving skill for 2 minutes without any oxygen tank, learned through the experience of the elder generation for the collection of seaweed, abalone and topshells.

Because the understanding of theory is so important to professional skill, preparation for a

profession must be an intellectual as well as a practical experience. Orientation in theory can be achieved best through formal education in an academic setting. Hence the appearance of the professional school, more often than not university affiliated, wherein the milieu is a contrast to that of the trade school. There are, of course, a number of freelance professional pursuits(e.g. acting, painting, writing, composing, and the like) wherein academic preparation is not mandatory. Nevertheless, even in these fields various "schools" and "institutes" are appearing. We can generalize that as an occupation moves toward professional status, apprenticeship training yields to formalized education, because the function of theory as a groundwork for practice acquires increasing importance(Greenwood, 1957:47).

Haenyeos have learned their free-diving skill from their mother, grandmother or neighbors out of school, which we can generalize as apprenticeship without any academic education. There if we attempt to establish Haenyeo as sustainable professional job to conserve Haenyeo community culture, a systematic body of theory called Haenyeology or Jamnyeology as Ko coined in 2002 should be written as a pilot project from Introduction into novice Haenyeo through special theory and technology into expert Haenyeo for education. This text development for theory and practice should precede anything else. As an example, social work was developed into a professional job just after Mary Richmond(1917) wrote *Social Diagnosis*, the first classic text for social work.

### 2) Is there any authority for Haenyeo ?

Extensive education in the systematic theory of his discipline imparts to the professional a type of knowledge that highlights the layman's comparative ignorance(Greenwood, 1957:47). A nonprofessional occupation has customers, while a professional occupation has clients, so this paper cannot apply Greenwood's client concept to the Haenyeo profession. The client's

subordination to professional authority invests the professional with a monopoly of judgment. When an occupation strives toward professionalization, one of its aspirations is to acquire this monopoly(Greenwood, 1957). This paper can suggest the Haenyeo's authority as "Unique Marine Ecology Stewardship"<sup>2</sup> which I, as general secretary(2011-2013) of Jeju Women's Governance Forum, coined with Dr. Anne Hilty in the Proposal submitted for RESOLUTION by Jeju Women's Governance Forum at the 5th World Conservation Congress of IUCN in 2012:

*(1)CONSIDERING that for centuries the Haenyeo free-divers of Jeju Island, Korea, a community-based and almost exclusively female profession of controlled marine harvesting in a system of collective economics, have maintained their profession;*

*(2)FURTHER CONSIDERING that their skills, tools, labor songs, shamanistic belief system, practice of collective economics, community reinvestment, apprenticeship and mutual aid, and above all, their unparalleled knowledge of marine ecology represent a unique body of indigenous wisdom and both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and render them "traditional wisdom carriers"*

*(3)NOTING that their practices include such environmental sustainability as reseeded the ocean's shellfish population, controlling their harvest by diving without breathing apparatus and limiting the days and hours that they dive, and dedicating specific dives each month to cleaning the seabed of refuse, rendering them a 21st century conservation model of benign human cohabitation with nature;*

*(4)RECOGNIZING the uniqueness of their marine stewardship and the contribution they have been making to the world's ecology for centuries as "ocean sustainability managers," with minimal acknowledgment to date on the*

*global stage....*

The Haenyeo can be re-evaluated to have professional authority as marine steward and ocean manager. Text development for theory and practice for education through school or systematic curricula and the process for a Haenyeo Certificate can be helpful to grant authority to them. That's why Haenyeo school should be run at every fishing village. Haenyeo school should be the center of various education including right, professionalism, management skill, social security system and corporation skill etc.

### **3) Is there any Sanction by the Community for Haenyeo?**

There is sanction by the community for Haenyeo. According to Greenwood, every profession strives to persuade the community to sanction its authority within certain spheres by conferring upon the profession a series of powers and privileges(Greenwood, 1957: 48). Among its powers is the professions' control over its training centers. The Haenyeo has control over the sea field. The profession also acquires control over admission into the profession(Greenwood, 1957:49). The Haenyeo also acquires control over admission into the Haenyeo community called Jamsuhoi. According to Greenwood(1957) this is achieved via two routes. First, the profession convinces the community that no one should be allowed to bear a professional title who has not been conferred it by an accredited professional school. The Haenyeo is allowed to wear the Haenyeo title if the association conferred it to the skilled person. Secondly, the profession persuades the community to institute on its behalf a licensing system for screening those qualified to practice the professional skill(Greenwood, 1957:49). The Haenyeo has qualification for membership: (1)

<sup>2</sup> I got the Korean proposal of Haenyeo sent to Cho Sun Hee in local government by Dr. Choa, Hye Kyong in Jeju Development Institute in April, 2012 and I transformed the proposed Korean proposal in English according to the format that Chung Keun Sik in WCC promotion office in Jeju Local government suggested by referring to resolution no. 49 and no. 55 of 3rd IUCN congress and no. 46 of the 4th IUCN congress for me to write Haenyeo resolution proposal and I made it for the first time based on Dr. Choa's as Chung Kuen Sik. I met Dr. Anne Hilty at my office in Donam-dong to revise all the first English resolution proposal draft follow-

Everybody living in village can be qualified to do the diving work (Muljil); (2) Jamsu who are married and move into a village are qualified to join the Jamsuhoi automatically; (3) If someone resides in the village and wants to perform Muljil, she can do it in the village sea after she has membership through a procedure of review; (4) If someone moves into the village after she lived in another village, she is regarded as a foreign person; if she completes the same procedure as in #3, she can restore her membership(WAIS, 2012:42).

Among the professional privileges, one of the most important is that of confidentiality. Standards for professional performance are reached by consensus within the profession(Greenwood, 1957). The lay community is presumed incapable of comprehending these standards and hence of using them to identify malpractice. It is generally conceded that a professional's performance can be evaluated only by his peers(Greenwood, 1957:49). Haenyeo community has hierarchies called Sanggun (Superior), Junggun(Median), and Hagun(Novice; Elderly), which are categorized according to their diving skill mastery. Haenyeos decide their peer's position according to their diving mastery skill.

The powers and privileges described above constitute a monopoly granted by the community to the professional group. Therefore when an occupation strives toward professional status, one of its prime objectives is to acquire this monopoly(Greenwood, 1957:49). Haenyeo has a monopoly on a certain sea field, as granted by the local community. Nobody without a Haenyeo certificate in the same village is allowed access to their sea field without the Haenyeo's permission. The Haenyeo certificate is issued by Jeju local government.

#### **4) Is there any regulation of ethics for the Haenyeo?**

The profession's ethical code is part formal and part informal. The formal is the written code to which the professional usually swears upon being admitted to practice: this is best exemplified by the Hippocratic Oath of the medical profession. The informal is the unwritten code, which nonetheless carries the weight of formal prescription. While the specifics of their ethical codes vary among the professions, the essentials are uniform(Greenwood, 1957:50). Concerning the Haenyeo, the regulation of ethics can be described in terms of ocean-professional and colleague-to-colleague relations. The Jamsuhoi has unwritten rules of membership qualification, expiration of membership, and general principles and decision-making criteria. For colleague-to-colleague as well as ocean-profession relations, every member has obligations: mutual work to do away with coarse sea weeds and grass; taking care of the marine resources of the village sea, such as the reproduction of brown seaweed; public village work such as funding for construction of a public school, village road and so on, that the Jamsuhoi decided to do in general meeting; projects to help other members. If somebody does not do her best to keep her obligations, she can lose her qualifications by the decision of a Jamsuhoi general meeting because of violation of its regulations(WAIS, 2012:42). The Haenyeo Association called Jamsuhoi is an autonomic organization existing for more than 100 years. There are more than 100 Haenyeo community associations presently.

#### **5) Is there any professional culture for Haenyeo?**

There is a professional Haenyeo community culture surrounding the meeting fireplace called Bulteok(Haenyeo House), a democratic decision-making process. It has principles such

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ing the format of the prior IUCN. I expressed "Marine Ecology Guard" for Haenyeo but Dr. Anne Hilty suggested Marine Ecology Guardianship instead of Marin Ecology Guard. And we revised Marine Ecology Guard into "Marin Ecology Guardianship". The Resolution Proposal was discussed and revised by WCC committee's 3 more workshops and submitted in the name of Jeju Special Self-governing Province to IUCN in May, 2012.

as, every Jamsu lives honorably according to the hierarchical order composed by the Jamsu society in the Bulteok; if one member falls on hard times, everybody helps her voluntarily; decision-making includes aspects such as, one person who has the highest skills and also the best quality of virtue among Jamsus in the village becomes chair of the Jamsuhoi through procedures of unanimous recommendations in a general meeting, and represents her Jamsuhoi as she was elected by direct voting of all members in a general meeting after the association was founded and activated in the village; members of the Jamsuhoi have the right to freely speak their opinions to the Jamsuhoi about the work of the village. Though Sang-Jamsu(the group with the highest quality of diving skills) have priority to speak over Jung-Jamsu(the group with a medium quality of diving skills). Jung-Jamsu are preferred to Ha-Jamsu(the group with the lowest quality of diving skills) in their turn of speaking about issues; all decisions are made by the unanimous voting of all members. If there are difficult situations because of disputes or disagreements about special issues, the chair makes the final decision(WAIS, 2012:42).

In addition, Haenyeos have created, shared, and preserved their experiences and lifestyle through their songs, rituals, and customs(WAIS,2002). Originally, the women divers' songs were songs of fishing labors, sung by groups of Haenyeos as they carried out muljil (diving work) with the sea as the background. They expressed their hard labor and their sentiments about their tired lives through songs(-Choa, 2002).

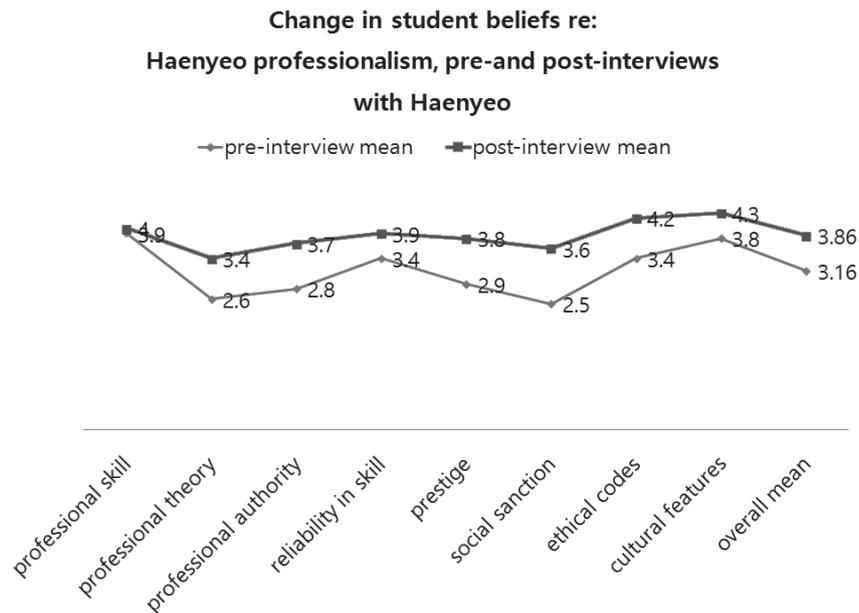
### **How professional do Jeju National University students think Haenyeos are?**

BPW(Business and Professional Women) Jeju Club in Korea coordinated a Haenyeo workshop in the 28th BPW International congress in Jeju, 2014. Marie-Claude Machon, a BPW International UN Representative to UNESCO

who attended the BPW International congress in Jeju, persuaded BPW Korea Jeju club to attend the UNESCO NGO Forum in Sofia and Sozopol, Bulgaria, so that I can make a presentation on "The Role of Youth for the Safeguarding of the Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Haenyeo(Women Divers) Community." The presentation was prepared by Professor Ko, Chang-Hoon and Dr. Im, AeDuck for the 2nd plenary session of the UNESCO NGO Forum held September 28-30, 2014, in Sozopol, Bulgaria. And BPW Korea Jeju also conducted a project entitled, Haenyeo Healing Academy, from November 1 to December 10, 2014. This project was motivated and promoted for data accumulation by Marie-Claud Machon for the next UNESCO NGO Forum on the role of women in the fight against poverty, where the Haenyeo can demonstrate a very good example against poverty.

By requiring the 45 sophomore and senior students enrolled in my social work practice lecture at Jeju National University to participate in class in intensive semi-structured interviews of 20 Haenyeos regarding their lives, this Haenyeo Healing Academy program had two aims; one, to heal Haenyeos by allowing them to vent their negative feelings about their sorrowful lives, by telling their sad experience, in addition to the joy of overcoming poverty through diving and harvesting, to the young generation; and two, to empower the depressed university students, who feel anxious and restless about their employment after graduation, through learning of the Haenyeo's strong spirit by listening to the old Haenyeo's life history. All the students taking part in the interviews had learned Greenwood's attributes of profession in advance of the interviews. Pre- and post-interview, they were given the same 8 questions on a 5-point Likert scale about how professional they think Haenyeos are.

By comparing the mean of student beliefs pre and post interview shown in the graph above, we can observe the mean of student beliefs toward Haenyeo professionalism increase after the interview with Haenyeos. Even before the interview, students demonstrated a high belief



that the Haenyeo is a professional with professional skill(3.9), ethical rules(3.4), and cultural features(3.8). But they exhibited a low belief that the Haenyeo is likely to have professional theory(2.6) professional authority(2.8) and social sanction(2.5). But after their interview they showed the changed belief that Haenyeo is likely to have professional skill(4.0), theory(3.4), professional authority(3.7), an social sanction(3.6), ethical rules(4.2) and cultural features(4.3).

Through analyzing the Haenyeo according to Greenwood's attributes of a profession, and pre-and post-interview measurement of the change in student belief regarding Haenyeo professionalism, the Haenyeo work demonstrates sufficient attributes to be categorized as a professional job, if there is a systematic body of theory authority. However, though the Haenyeo work has a long history as a local professional occupation, it has been categorized not as a professional job but as simple labor. Why was this so?

### **Why didn't Haenyeo work develop into a traditional profession beyond simple laborer despite its historical and economical contribution to local community?**

In spite of the Haenyeo's historical economic contribution to Jeju local development, why didn't Haenyeo work develop into a professional job beyond simple laborer?

This paper will point out two obstacles theorized to have prevented Haenyeo work from developing into a professional job. As the first obstacle, it can be considered that they didn't empower themselves into developing their job at all in spite of improvement of women's status in most fields in Korea.

Ko(2002) demonstrated multiple portraits of the Haenyeo. According to Ko(2002), in 1932, they had organized and conducted the Jamsu Uprising against Japanese military imperialism based on their common interest for protection of their survival rights and justice. However, they have since been alienated and transformed from living myth at the center of Jeju Island history to a weak and old-fashioned household style of life at the periphery of the unknown deep sea of Jeju Island(Ko, 2002).

The question of why and where they failed in empowering themselves should have been

raised. Empowering Haenyeos should have been driven by community leaders, local or national government, and the fishery cooperative which managed the Haenyeo's harvest for a long time. The Haenyeo's decent income was not independent but dependent on the fishery Cooperative in charge of marketing and exporting their harvest.

According to Yoo(2002), the Haenyeo sell their produce daily through their local fishery cooperative, which takes a handling charge or a commission for each sale. The fishery cooperative controls the divers by selling the entire catch at a single daily price, controlling diving and non-diving days, and outlawing technologies other than wetsuits, flippers, glass face masks called keun-nun, and weights. Before the Jamsuhoi became a part of the local fishery cooperative, the Jamsuhoe directly controlled the Jamsu. Nevertheless, they are still autonomous with regard to many aspects of diving and catching(Yoo, 2002). Then what did fishery cooperative do for Haenyeo?

Choi, Hwang, and Um(2005:135) contended that there have been no policies or attempted pilot projects of the fishery cooperative to improve the status for women in the fishing village. The Haenyeo is no exception. The role and influence of the fishery cooperative on the Haenyeo is a subject for further study. Nevertheless, self-empowerment of the Haenyeo is very urgent for the sustainability of the profession, in order to retain the Haenyeo community culture. Empowering Haenyeos should be the primary pilot project, prior to any other policy for the conservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the Haenyeo community. Haenyeo School program was started in 2008 for the first time. Every Jamsuhoi should establish Haenyeo School to empower them including rights, women empowerment principles[WEP] by UN Women, social security system, management skill, corporation and etc.

The second obstacle to prevent the Haenyeo work from developing into a professional job might be attributed to a failure in establishing the Haenyeo as an employee. The Haenyeo has

been under-evaluated as a simple manual laborer even after liberation from Japan, though they have had a long history of considerable economic contribution to local development. Their occupational status as a simple manual laborer was not evaluated as equivalent to the mineworker, who received social security from the time that the Korean government first launched the Industrial Accident Insurance Act in 1964(Kim, 2011). The insurance was initially applied to 64 mining and manufacturing companies with more than 500 employees. Over the past 47 years, the applicable workplaces for Industrial Accident Insurance have been extended up to 25,000 times more than those of 1964(Kim, 2011). Social insurance was applied only to full-time employees. However, the unpaid domestic worker was not categorized as an employee and didn't receive Industrial Accident Insurance coverage(Oh, 2009). Haenyeo work is not much less life-threatening during diving than that of the mineworker. Over the last 50 years, the Korean security system has advanced sufficiently for all citizens to receive medical insurance. Even a one-employee business could be assured of receiving unemployment insurance, national pension, and industrial accident insurance benefit. However, as the Haenyeo was not categorized as a paid employee for social security but as a self-employed laborer without any tax registration, the Haenyeo is not insured for industrial accident insurance to this day though they have got special medical benefit only for diver's disease only in some hospitals of Jeju appointed by Jeju local government according to the local ordinance for diver's disease since 2002. Sin (2011) discussed income improvement through tourism and Yoo, Lee, and Yeo(2009) discussed improvement of Haenyeo welfare through a tourism industry of Haenyeo. Kim and Hwang (2012) demonstrated the Haenyeo's social needs of diving suit, cultural exchange support, fitting room, sea products market, welfare center, and medical treatment for diver's disease, but didn't suggest any fundamental social security system for them.

Why the Haenyeo didn't develop into a professional business with a well-organized social security system is a subject for later study, but we can look for the possibility of a sustainable Haenyeo profession as a professional job with a well-organized social security system. It is suggested that a Haenyeo corporation social enterprise serve as an alternative to the professional business, in order for all Haenyeos to have a social security safety net. Every fishing village has a well-organized Haenyeo community called Jamsuhoi as well as a common working and meeting place called Bulteok. The Jamsuhoi and Bulteok can be reborn as a social enterprise through incorporation of each Jamsuhoi or of one umbrella Jamsuhoi to include all of Jeju. It can open many possibilities for a sustainable Haenyeo profession including social security, and maintain both tangible and intangible cultural heritage through a dynamic and productive business community without any extinction, thereby allowing the young generation to gain access to this job including social security. The Haenyeo usually make money through diving of 15 days a month. Over 60 working hours per month according to Korean Employment Insurance Act in 2015 meets the insurance coverage requirement. A concrete concept of Haenyeo Corporation Social Enterprise is a topic for further research. At the least, empowerment of the Haenyeo and reorganization of the Haenyeo association into a social enterprise with a social security system can be suggested as an alternative solution to the sustainability of the Haenyeo profession, in order to preserve the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the Haenyeo community.

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