F4.2: The Process of Organizing the Asian Women’s Health Research Network In South Korea

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**Presentation Preference:** Session Presentation

**Abstract Categories:**
Thematic Areas: Interdisciplinary Research
Thematic Areas: Women's Health

**Abstract:**

**Introduction:** As a counterpart of the US and Taiwan sides of the Asian Women's Health Research Network, Korean researchers initiated their efforts to develop its own body in Feb. 2008. Korean researchers in diverse areas including community health, women’s health, pediatric health, and geriatric health joined the group. This group defined urgent issues in Korean women’s health, and initiated collaborative research studies among the members. The purpose of this presentation is to describe the process of developing the organization in South Korea and make suggestions for future international collaborative efforts from the perspective of Korean side.

**Method(s):** The group had regular meetings, seminars, and group discussions through e-mails and conference calls throughout the past two years. During the process, written records of the discussions were made. The written records were analyzed to describe issues in developing the organization in South Korea.

**Results:** The Korean side organization was established by inviting several board directors and structuring the rules and membership of the organization. Then, a home page was opened (http://cafe.naver.com/asiawh) to develop a communication channel among the members. Then, the Korean side initiated to discuss current health issues in Korean women by their life cycle, including suicide, depression, low birth rate, and low economic states. For the past year, depression was chosen as the topic of the year, and a conference was held with 5 study groups by women’s life cycle (children, adolescents, university students, adults, and elderly). Each group worked on the research topic through face-to-face meetings and email communications. Currently, each group plans to conduct a preliminary cross-sectional survey on Korean women’s depression. During this process, the Korean side identified several research areas for future international collaboration such as health care for foreign brides and international workers, family issues in multi-racial/ethnic couples, parenting issues in bilingual children, health disparities, etc.

**Discussion & Conclusions:** The findings suggest that the Korean side collaborate with U.S. and Taiwan sides in order to approach to the current health care issues among Korean women. International collaborative efforts through discussion and consultation with experts in the U.S. and Taiwan sides would be essential to promote health and well-being of Korean women in South Korea.

**Abstract History:**
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.
Financial Disclosure:
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