

” Her story” in the COVID-19 era

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To COVID-19, which started in China in 2019, has left an unforgettable pain around the world over the past year and a half. Many countries have closed their borders and locked down businesses, companies, and even schools, and many have been confined within limited spaces. COVID-19 has left a lot of suffering, especially for women, through a closed society. The women had to live their lives in which work, housework, and childcare were not separated, and pregnant and lactating women had the fear of infection with COVID-19 along with domestic violence. According to the publication from *Nature*, the COVID-19 pandemic has especially affected the lives of female scientists. As the lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic began, female scientists had to work from home along with housework and childcare. On the pre-print papers in *bioRxiv* and *medRxiv* published during that period, the productivities of female scientists are significantly lower than those of male scientists. In addition, many biomedical scientists devoted themselves to COVID-19 research and support, but the percentage of female scientists applying for COVID-19 research and submitting papers was lower than that of male scientists.

The development of a COVID-19 vaccine has rewritten the history of vaccine development. Even though many female scientists are suffering from the pandemic, female scientists have still played significant roles in many kinds of vaccine researches against the current COVID-19. As women, moms, foreigners, and scientists, they still continued, despite all the obstacles, to dedicate themselves to developing mRNA or vector-derived vaccines and making them more practical.

We must again increase the role of female scientists whose positions and roles have been narrowed during the pandemic and create systems that can reconcile work and family and replenish their lost time of a year and a half. In addition, there is a need to inspire women scientists to take a bigger step in their respective fields by introducing as a “reference” those who played a major role in the development of the COVID-19 vaccine. This is the reason why we should spread the “Her story,” which is the narrative of all-female scientists in the COVID-19 era.