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Prospects of Family Changes and Policy Implications

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Prospects of Family Changes and Policy
Implications

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1. Necessity and Purpose of the Study
2. Content and Method of the Study



1. Necessity and Purpose of the Study

Outstanding changes in the Korean family are the trends toward small families and nuclear families. The average number of people per Korean household declined continuously due to the division of household by 1.93 people for the three-decade period from 4.62 people in 1980 to 2.69 people in 2010. In addition, the most common household type had been the four-person household since 1990, however, it was replaced by the two-person household in 2010 as the major household type.

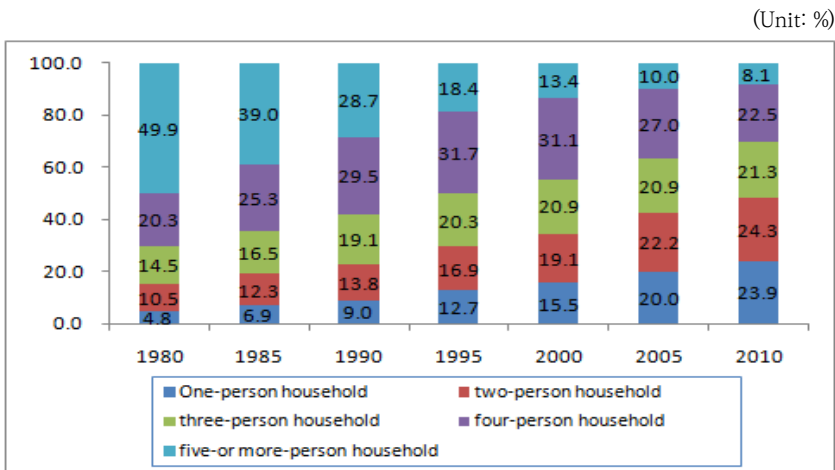
Meanwhile, the ratio of single person household increased five times for the three-decade period from 4.8% in 1980 to 23.9% in 2010 (see Figure 1-1). In particular, according to the age-based and sex-based proportions of single person households in 2010, a fifth of them, or 19.2% are the elderly who are 70 years or older and among them, females accounted for 53.5% and males for 46.5%. Also, males in their 30's and females in their 70's or older, respectively, have the greatest ratios of the single person households (Statistics Korea, 2010). In terms of local administrative division, the ratio of single person households in the eup and myoun is 27.1%, 4.0% higher than

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23.1% of dong and in terms of city and provincial area, the highest ratio of single person households was won by South Jeolla Province with 28.9% and the lowest by Gyeonggi Province with 20.3%(see Figure 1-2).

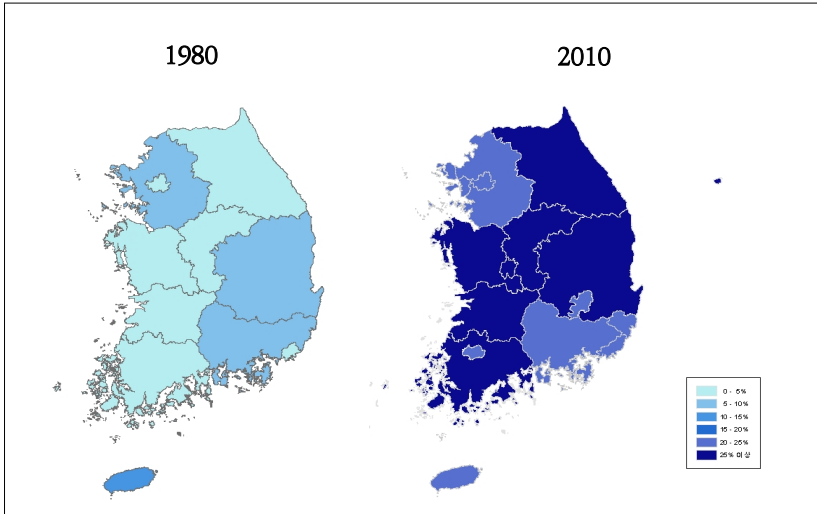
Another characteristic in the changes of Korean family is the simplification of the multi-generational households. One-generation households increased while two-or more-generation households decreased, showing continuous division of households. One-generation households doubled for the three-decade period from 8.3% in 1980 to 17.5% in 2010 and by contrast, two-generation households, the major household type, declined by 17.2% for the same period from 68.5% to 51.3%(Statistics Korea, 1980; Statistics Korea, 2010).

[Figure 1-1] Changes in Korean households ratios



Source: 1) Statistics Korea (1970~2000). Report on Population and Housing Census
 2) Statistics Korea (2005~2010). Population and Housing Census.

[Figure 1-2] Single person household ratio by region in Korea



Source: 1) Statistics Korea (1980). Report on Population and Housing Census
 2) Statistics Korea (2010). Population and Housing Census.

Regarding family types, the proportion of nuclear families centered around a husband, his wife and their children declined slightly by 6.7% for the three-decade period from 68.3% in 1980 to 61.6% in 2010 (Statistics Korea, 1980; Statistics Korea, 2010).

As shown above, although the household size and family structure swiftly changed toward small families and nuclear families primarily due to rapid industrialization and urbanization, most government policies, however, failed to reflect the characteristics of family changes, exposing limitations in pushing forward effective government policies.

Accordingly, it is necessary to provide basic materials to de-

velop proper national policies by identifying the changing phenomena of Korean family structure since the period of industrialization and analyzing the changes of family life therefrom.

This research study aims to analyze the changing phenomena of Korean families, predict changes and at the same time, draw a consensus on policies in order to provide basic materials for formulating national policies.

2. Contents and Method of the Study

This study consists of five chapters, namely, the four main chapters in addition to the introduction. The main concepts of those chapters can be outlined as follows: Chapter 2 describes theoretical background related to family changes. Chapter 3 analyzes the phenomena of family changes and draws policy implications. Chapter 4 provides a prospect of family changes and implications. Lastly, Chapter 5 draws a consensus on policies according to family changes centered around theories related to family changes, actualities of family changes, and prospects.

This study method contemplates various existing literature and references for analysis of the concepts related to household and family changes, causes thereof and study trends, and also analyzes the trends of household and family changes by

utilizing the population and housing census conducted by the Statistics Korea and other family-related statistics. In addition, this study analyzes the phenomena of household and family changes by utilizing the existing family-related research studies and conducting a phone survey of 2,000 people and also, provides a prospect of changes.





Chapter 2

Theoretical Background

1. Concept of Family Changes
2. Causes of Family Changes



2

Theoretical Background <<

1. Concept of Family Changes

1) Concept and Scope of Family

The dictionary definition of a family differs slightly by scholars, but can generally be defined as 'a group of blood related persons with husband and wife in the center, living together in one household.' A family includes a member of the family who lives separately from the family and in this sense, is distinctive from a concept of household, which is conditioned for its formation on a common dwelling residence and household. Families can be divided into a large family and a small family or alternatively, into a nuclear family, a couple family and an extended family (Naver Doosan Encyclopedia, June 10, 2013).

According to civil law, which prescribes a legal definition of a family, a family consists of a householder, the spouse of the householder, blood relatives and their spouses, and such other persons as are accepted to the family pursuant to the relevant provisions of the civil law. In other words, a family consists of those who are accepted to the family through the relationship of marriage, blood, and adoption. Single person households cannot be recognized as a family according to the above defi-

dition of a family, but can be identified as a household as a residence unit according to the definition by Statistics Korea.

In addition, as atypical households and families recently emerged with the rapid changes of households and families, the definition of household and family has been changed. Such changes of households and families are captured in such expressions as 'diversified family' and 'family diversity' and are used as a rationale for the need of exploring and expanding family policies and family support services (Family Policy Strategy Center at the Korean Women's Development Institute, 2012)

2) Concept and Scope of Family Changes

Family-related phenomena can be approached in three perspectives such as form, behavior, and value and as such, regarding family changes, it is imperative to consider the changes of type, behavior and value, mutual relationship among them and mutual relationship between the three factors, and other relevant variables(An, Ho-Young and Kim, Hyung-Ju, 2000).

Recently, the characteristic of Korean households is that a small family with one or two persons and a nuclear family with a couple and its unmarried children have high proportions primarily due to a trend of children moving out from parents' home according to individualization, increase of the elderly liv-

ing alone due to aging, a phenomenon of late marriage, increasing divorce rates, low birthrate, and a complex set of the above factors.

As such, household changes, namely the trends toward small families and nuclear families, curtailed the caring and support functions of Korean family; reduced reproductive function; weakened family relationship and family cohesiveness due to individual-centered values and loosened family bonding; accelerated family dissolution and family separation due to the increase in divorces and separations of husband and wife, which were driven by the expansion of norms tending to allow a divorce and improved gender equality. Such household changes triggered family changes such as changes of family life including family function and family relationship, and expanded various family types.

Accordingly, the concept of family changes in this study means a phenomenon of family-internal changes, triggered by structural and morphological changes of family, and also, the scope of family changes covers a family formation and dissolution changes due to household changes, and familial relationship and function changes.

2. Causes of Family Changes

According to the data of the Statistics Korea (2012), nowadays, 1,005 couples get married and 339 couples get divorced everyday in Korea. An increase in divorces brought about a rise of remarriages and in turn, the commonly seen divorce and remarriage means that a person's family may not be fixed. In addition, there are people who never get married or never produce a child or defer both. Also, there are people who got married but voluntarily choose not to have a baby. Such phenomena is interpreted that a marriage and a childbirth are now being accepted not as a mission to complete at an appropriate time, but as a matter of choice for one's own happiness. As such, to sum up, the background of various families emerging and the causes of family changes are grounded on economic environment and social structural changes, policy changes, demographic composition, and value changes.

As a start, let's look at economic environment and social structural changes. When women's participation in economic activities remained low, marriage provided economic stability to women. However, as women's participation in economic activities rose and men's job security diminished, the protective effect of a marriage lowered. Nonetheless, if the burden of housework and child care imposed on women remains unchanged greatly, women's tendency to defer or avoid a mar-

riage will expand inevitably. In case where job security lowers due to economic crisis or the impact from competitive capitalism, men also tend to defer an age for marriage or avoid marriage itself. In addition, as economic costs for childbirth and child care as well as social expectation and value for child care are rising, a tendency of deferring, avoiding or reducing childbirth increases. Industrialization and urbanization brought about simplification of generational structure while aging attributable to the extended average lifespan aggravated the family's burden of support. In addition, the integration of workplace and home, changes of everyday conversation styles, and loosened human relationship, all of which were driven by information age, brought about changes in family lifestyles and relationships. Also, information age and the advancement of communications and transportation enabled to maintain new family relationships such as weekend couples and goose fathers who are left behind in Korea to work while his wife and children live and study abroad (Koh, Seon-Ju, 2000).

System changes, for example, abolishing the patriarchal family system are brought about by reflecting various family changes and also can affect forthcoming changes. Also, a prospect was presented that as a result of abolishing the patriarchal family system, social prejudices against divorce and remarriage will dwindle and systematic discrimination against them will weaken, which will affect directly and indirectly a rise in di-

vorces and remarriages(Kim, Misook, 2008). Looking at the demographic composition perspective, a notion of preferring a son to a daughter resulted in a sex ratio imbalance at birth, which led to the imbalance between supply and demand in marriage market, consequently causing international marriages (Kim, Doo-Sup, 2006).

In addition, value changes such as the expansion of individualism and pluralistic values were attributable to the changes of family, which was pointed out as significant. Shim, Young-Hee (2011) classified the characteristics of family, which were shown in the 1st modernity¹⁾ and the 2nd modernity²⁾. The 2nd modernity, which appeared in the latter part of the 20th century, emphasizes a life for oneself rather than living for other people and is individualistic and independent rather than family-centered. In the past, heterosexual love and the union between persons with same ethnic group were a presumed fact and by contrast, the 2nd modernity does not discern heterosexuality from homosexuality and different ethnic groups.

1) Beck and Beck-Gernsheim pointed out that an individual should be responsible for oneself rather than depending on a family or a relative in consideration of instability, threats, and the characteristics of risk society, which appeared in the 1st modernity.

2) Anthony Giddens (1996) argued that the 2nd modernity disintegrated the family-oriented modern intimacy and brought about the intimacy based on an individual's autonomy and Zygmunt Bauman (2009) argued that almost all parts of life became fluid in the matter of time and space, and work and community, etc. and that marriage and family are also changing fluidly for an individual's self-realization and autonomy.

Among family functions, emotional relationship is valued as significant while the gender division of labor and inequality in the past is weakened. That is, a tendency toward individualism of the 2nd modernity affects the Korean society and triggers the appearance of various families and the changes of marriage and family.

Certainly, there are various ongoing discussions about values, which is one of the factors causing family changes. In particular, system changes and value changes do not necessarily coincide in the case of Korean families and as such, it was argued on one hand that “individualization without individualism occurs” (Chang and Song, 2010) and on the other hand, another argument was made that “familism-centered individualization” occurs (Kim, Hye-Kyung, 2013; Shim, Young-Hee, 2011). But a commonality is that a marriage and a family are still valued as important while familistic values weaken and individualistic values heighten. In the future, socio-economic structure, values, policies and demographic composition will continue to give or receive effects among themselves and trigger the changes of families and households.





Chapter 3

Actuality of Family Changes

1. Changes in Family Structure
2. Changes in Family Formation and Dissolution
3. Changes in Family Relationship and Function



3

Actuality of Family Changes <<

1. Changes in Family Structure

1) Changes in Household Size

The number of people per Korean household showed a continuously downward trend primarily due to children moving out from parents home according to individualism, increasing number of the elderly due to ageing, a phenomenon of late marriage, rising divorce rates and low fertility. In 1975, the number of households with five or more persons accounted for 58.4%, slightly above the majority, which is followed by four-person households, one- or two-person households, and three-person households. Households with four or more persons occupied 74.4%, hovering over two thirds of the total households. The number of people per household declined gradually and in 2010, two-person households has the biggest proportion of 24.3%, followed by single person households, four-person households, three-person households and five-person households. The proportion of households with one or two persons amounted to 48.2%, almost nearing a majority and that of households with four or more persons was merely at 30.6% (Statistics Korea, 1975; Statistics Korea, 1980;

Statistics Korea, 1985; Statistics Korea, 1990; Statistics Korea, 1995; Statistics Korea, 2000; Statistics Korea, 2005; Statistics Korea, 2010).

2) Changes in Generational Composition

Simplification of family generation, i.e., the transition from an extended family to a nuclear family, appeared due to the sharp increase of single-person or two-person households, which were created from individualism, low fertility, aging, late marriages and family dissolution; due to the expansion of one-generation households. In 1970, two-generation families accounted for 70.0%, hovering over two thirds of the entire families, which was followed by three-generation families with 22.1%. The proportions of single generation families and four- or more-generation families were insignificant. Since then, the composition of generational households showed a lot of changes due to a continuous trend toward nuclear families. In 2010, two-generation families accounted for 51.3%, slightly over a majority of total families, which was followed by one-generation families with 17.5%. The proportions of households with three- or four- or more- generation families were insignificant. Compared with the 1970's, the proportions of two-generation families and four- or more-generation families showed similar percentage numbers while those of single generation families rose and three-generation families fell

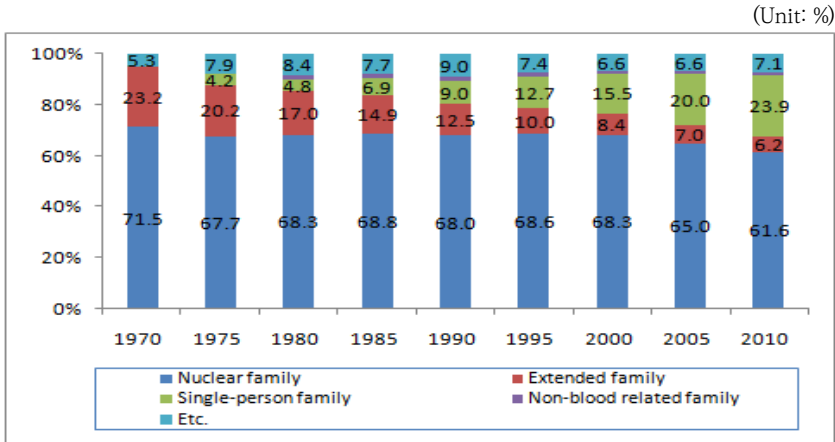
(Statistics Korea, 1975; Statistics Korea, 1980; Statistics Korea, 1985; Statistics Korea, 1990; Statistics Korea, 1995; Statistics Korea, 2000; Statistics Korea, 2005; Statistics Korea, 2010).

3) Changes in Family Types

Looking at the changes in Korean family types, in 1980, a nuclear family type with a couple only or with a couple and their unmarried children accounted for 68.3%, exceeding the majority of all families while an extended family type with at least three generations, that is, a couple, unmarried children and a couple's parent(s) occupied 17.0%, merely a fourth of nuclear families. In addition, single person households and households with persons unrelated by blood showed 4.8% and 1.5%, respectively. Family types went through changes due to a continues trend toward small families. In 2010, nuclear families accounted for 61.6%, a fall of 6.7% compared with that of 1980 and extended families occupied 6.2%, a fall of 10.8% compared with the same period. Single person households soared 5 times to 23.9% and households with unrelated persons remained at a similar level, compared with the same period.

As described above, the changes of household types were primarily concentrated to single person households and nuclear family types with persons with one or two generations due to the impacts from trends toward small families and nuclear families.

[Figure 3-1] Korean household type ratio by year



Source: 1) Statistics Korea (1970~2000). Report of Population and Household Census
 2) Statistics Korea(2005~2010). Population and household Census.

2. Changes in Family Formation and Dissolution

1) Changes in Family Formation and Cycle

A tendency to defer or avoid the formation of a family continuously grows due to various socio-economic factors and an intent to get married is on a downward trend due to the expansion of individualistic value (Ministry of Health and Welfare, 2011).

According to the result of social survey conducted by the Statistics Korea, looking at the values of a marriage and a re-marriage, the proportion of those saying that marriage is a mission to complete continuously lowered from 33.6% in 1998

to 20.3% in 2012. Compared therewith, the proportion of those responding that 'it is better to get married' and that 'it is both good to get married and not to get married' rose to 63.7% and to 76.0%, respectively, indicating that an attitude toward marriage has changed from a marriage as mandatory value to a marriage as a matter of choice. In addition, looking at attitudes toward remarriages, the proportion of those answering that 'a remarriage should be done' was significantly low and the proportions of those saying that 'it is better to get remarried' and that 'it is both good to get remarried and not to get remarried' rose from 69.6% to 79.2% for the same period while a negative attitude toward remarriages continuously dropped from 19.2% to 13.2%. In short, negative attitudes toward remarriages decreased while positive or neutral attitudes increased, indicating that an acceptance of remarriages has improved.

Ages of marriage are significantly important in that child-bearing is mostly via marriage in the Korean society and are closely related to family cycles. According to the result of the population and household census conducted by the Statistics Korea, males' age at first marriage increased from 27.1 in 1970 to 31.8 in 2010 while that of females rose from 23.3 to 28.9 for the same period, showing that the ages at first marriage are rising sharply.

In addition, for those couples who got married before 1979, the childless period of young couples was 1.06 years while for

those couples who got married after 2000, the childless period was reduced to 1.03 years. By contrast, the period of old couples alone lengthened from 12.05 to 16.7 years for the same period. Also, the period of child care was slightly curtailed from 34.2 to 32.7 years. In other words, the following characteristics are shown: the period of newly weds alone and the period of childbirth and child care are shortened due to the rising ages of marriage, having fewer children and spacing them apart and extended life expectancy while 「the empty nest period」, i.e., the period of old couple alone or elderly female left alone, after making their children marry, lengthened (Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs, 2012).

Changes in family cycles have implications: the vacuum of family support and care is expected according to the growing number of dual income couples thanks to the reduced child care period; the systematic mechanism is required to support healthy lifestyles of elderly people according to the sharp increase of elderly couples or elderly people living alone.

2) Family Dissolution and Appearance of Various Families

Nowadays, separation by death and divorces is rising sharply due to aging householders, weakening family values, and familial conflicts, facilitating family dissolution.

According to the result of the population and household cen-

sus, among total households with married couples, the proportion of households that experienced separation by death slightly rose from 9.8% in 1975 to 13.6% in 2010. The proportion of households having males with separation by death was insignificant with less than 3% while that of females with separation by death declined from 67.3% to 48.5%, still reaching up to a majority of percentage numbers. In addition, according to the social index of the Statistics Korea, the total number of divorces increased 10 times from 116,000 in 1970 to 1,269,000 cases in 2010 and the ratio of divorces to total number of marriages grew 9 times from 3.9% to 35.8% for the same period, displaying a pace of sharp increase.

Looking at the changes of dissolution time via divorce according to the dynamic statistics of population by the Statistics Korea, the average age of divorce for males is 45.9 years old in 2012, up 5.8 years from 40.1 years old in 2000 and that for females increased by 5.5 years from 36.5 to 42.0 years old for the same period. Similarly, the average cohabitation period for divorced couples lengthened from 10.9 years in 2000 to 13.7 years in 2012, which was affected by rising divorce rates among the elderly, suggesting that couples showed a higher tendency to get divorced at the end of child care and in the stable family period.

Due to the increasing single households according to individualism, family separation, and family dissolution attribut-

able to divorce and separation by death, various household types have appeared such as single households with single unmarried person or single married person, single households with single elderly person, single parent households, households with grandparent(s) and grandchild, etc.

Single person households increased 6 times for the period of 25 years from 6,609,000 in 1985 to 41,422,000 in 2010. Among them, unmarried single person households grew from 3,023,000 to 18,433,000 for the same period, showing a similar upward trend. Single person households generated due to divorce and separation by death increased 7 times from 2,571,000 to 17,649,000. Compared therewith, single elderly person households increased 9 times from 1,146,000 to 10,664,000, showing a significantly fast pace of rising (Statistics Korea, 1985; Statistics Korea, 2010).

Meanwhile, single parent households increased 2.7 times from 960,000 in 1995 to 1,594,000 in 2010 and for the same period, the number of single mother households outnumbered by 3.6~4.6 times that of single father households. In addition, the growing rate of single father households is 2 times, relatively faster than that of single mother households which is 1.6 times (Statistics Korea, 1970; Statistics Korea, 1995; Statistics Korea, 2010).

Households with grandparents and grandchildren living together increased 3.4 times from 352,000 in 1995 to 1,193,000

in 2010 and as of 2010, the number of grandmother (or grandfather) households exceeded that of grandparents households by 17,000 households.

3. Changes in Family Relationship and Function

1) Changes in Family Relationship

Husband and wife relationship lays the foundation for familial relationship. Let's look at the attitudes toward the division of roles between husband and wife showing structural aspect of marital relationship and actualities thereof.

Regarding attitudes toward the roles of husband and wife in a family, an opinion that 'a husband makes money and a wife does housekeeping and child care' showed similar percentage numbers at 38.6% in 2003 and 40.2% in 2009. An opinion that 'a wife of a double income couple is mainly responsible for child care and housework' remained at similar levels of 33.6% and 33.4% for the same period. In addition, an opinion that 'a wife should be mainly responsible for child care and housework regardless of whether the wife makes money' fell sharply from 18.4% to 10.8% and an opinion that 'anyone of husband or wife who is left behind at home should be mainly responsible' rose from a meager 1% to 5.8%.

Overall, the traditional model that a husband is the bread

winner and the wife is the housekeeper received a high rate of support. That is, regardless of double income couples or which spouse makes money, a tendency to adhere to the traditional model was high. As time passes by, nowadays, the opinion that regardless of the husband and the wife, any spouse who stays at home should take responsibility for child care and house-keeping gains a slight rise, signalling the changing roles between a husband and a wife in the future (Kim, Seung-Kwon et al., 2003; Kim Seung-Kwon et al., 2009; Kim Seung-Kwon et al., 2012).

Compared with the above-noted roles of a husband and a wife, looking at the actual pattern of housework division, the rate of wives who shouldered the burden of housework fell slightly from 88.9% in 2002 to 81.9% in 2012 and the rate of couples with equal sharing of housework grew two times from 8.1% to 15.5% for the same period. Also, the rate of husbands taking the burden of housework was insignificant from 3.0% to 2.6%. In other words, compared with the attitudes toward housework, actual burden of housework was mostly put on wives and the equal sharing of housework remained merely at a fifth of the proportion of wives bearing the burden of housework, although the proportion of equal sharing is growing (Statistics Korea, 2002; Statistics Korea, 2012).

Meanwhile, regarding the parent and child relationship, looking at the changes of parent's attitude toward the meaning

of child and the responsibility of child care, the followings are found: Regarding the value of child, an opinion that 'looking at how child grows is a lifetime enjoyment' earned 4.1 points in 2005 and 4.0 points in 2010, maintaining a positive attitude. Compared therewith the opinion that 'a child is required for a person's later years received 3.5 and 3.7 points, respectively, for the same period, showing a bit upward trend. Also, the opinion that "a child's success is equivalent to my own" declined slightly at 3.9 and 3.7 points for the same years, implying that parent's attitude to achieve through child is dwindling (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, 2005; Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, 2010).

According to the result of 2003 survey related to the scope of child care responsibility, the graduation of university and the marriage of children accounted for the biggest rate of 40.2% and 32.1%, respectively and similar rates were shown in the 2006~2012 period. Changes in the period of the recent 9 years indicate that the parent's responsibility for child care showed consistent increases until the child graduated from high school or university or until a job for the child is found but, from then on, turned into a downward trend until the child's marriage, which can be understood as a result of reflecting recent trends of late marriages and avoiding marriage itself (Kim Seung-Kwon et al., 2003; Kim Seung-Kwon et al., 2006; Kim Seung-Kwon et al., 2009; Kim Seung-Kwon et al., 2012).

In addition, the changes in the relationship between elderly parent and adult child can be described through the cohabitation types of elderly parent and the exchanges with child. Looking at the cohabitation types of Korean elderly parents, in 1991, cohabitation with child was at 49.2% and non-cohabitation with children at 50.8%, indicating similar levels. In 2011, the rate of elderly parents not living with their child grew two times, indicating on one hand that the elderly parents preferred the elderly couple-centered family type, no longer being dependent on child and on the other hand that the conception of child about supporting parents weakened (Chung, Kyunghee et al., 1988; Chung, Kyunghee et al., 2011).

Regarding the frequency of contacts with parents, the rates of almost everyday and one or two times per week increased from 74.5% in 1998 to 83.6% in 2011. Compared therewith, regarding the meeting with parents, the rate of almost everyday fell from 12.3% to 9.4% for the same period and the rates of one or two meetings per week or month rose sharply from 65.0% to 85.4%, indicating that the frequency of meetings dwindled (Chung, Kyunghee et al., 1988; Chung, Kyunghee et al., 2011).

2) Changes in Family Function

A. Reproduction Function

Reproduction function of family with a focus on the necessity level of child and the meaning of child care can be examined as follows: The rate of child necessity lowered from 58.1% in 2000 to 46.3% in 2012 while those responding that they do not care about having child slightly increased from 10.0% to 16.0% for the same period, indicating that the level of child necessity was significantly undermined due to various socio-economic factors (Kim Seung-Kwon et al., 2000; Kim Seung-Kwon et al., 2012). In 1992, the biggest reason for child necessity is a customary universality with 63.2%, followed by carrying on a family line and keeping harmonious family with 13~14%. By contrast, in 2012, mental satisfaction such as psychological satisfaction and harmonious family was the biggest reason, occupying 55~93%, followed by support for one's declining years and carrying on a family line with meager 7~10%, indicating that the meaning of child has changed from universal values or dependence in one's later years to mental or psychological meanings (Gong Sae-Kwon et al., 1992; Kim Seung-Kwon et al., 2012).

B. Support Function

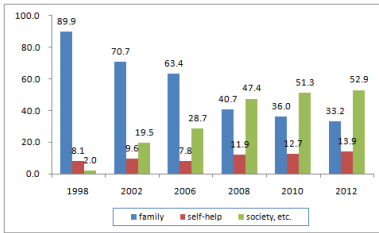
Family support function can be examined through attitudes toward the gender-based roles and support for parents as follows: In 2005, according to the result of the 2005 survey, regarding the gender-based roles toward family support, the opinion that 'a father should take care of child as a mother does' earned the highest 4.1 points, followed by the opinion that 'females are equally responsible for family support as males' with 3.8 points. Compared therewith, in 2010, both opinions lowered slightly to 3.7 points, indicating that a traditional notion of gender-based roles has not change significantly (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, 2005; Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, 2010).

In 1998, regarding who should be responsible for supporting parents, most of respondents chose family with 89.9%, followed by other choices such as self-help, society, and so on with a scanty 2~8%. Among those who selected family for supporting parents, the most capable child accounted for 45.5%, followed by the eldest son and all sons with 29.4%. In 2012, compared with the 1998 survey, those who chose family lowered by a third to 33.2% while those who chose self-help, society, and so on accounted for 66.8%, hovering two-thirds of the entire proportion. Furthermore, among those choosing family, those who said that all children should be jointly responsible amount-

ed to 25.0%, the biggest proportion, followed with other insignificant choices, indicating that the eldest son-centered or son-centered patriarchal system for supporting parents significantly weakened.

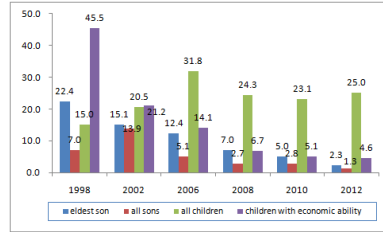
[Figure 3-2] Perception about supporting parents

(Unit: %)



[Figure 3-3] Primary care giver for parents

(Unit: %)



Source: Statistics Korea (1998~2012). Result of Social Study.

c. Economic Support Function

Economic support function of family intends to diagnose the changes of economic support function through economic activity, employment status, and changing patterns of household consumption, with a focus on householder primarily responsible for economic support for family.

According to the result of panel study conducted by the Korea Institute of Health and Social Affairs, regarding the status of a householder's economic activity, employment slightly increased from 74.0% in 2008 to 76.3% in 2012 and non-em-

ployment declined from 26.0% to 23.7% for the same years. In 2008, among those householders who were employed, full-time workers accounted for 53.0%, slightly over a majority, followed by employers and self-employed combined with 27.8% and temporary workers and dayworkers combined with 17.8% in the order named. Compared therewith, in 2012, the rate of full-time workers and that of employers and self-employed slightly fell to 49.0% and 26.3%, respectively while the rates of temporary workers and daily workers combined rose to 23.4% (Korea Institute of Health and Social Affairs, 2008; Korea Institute of Health and Social Affairs, 2012). In short, employment status, that is, productive activities of householders somewhat increased while the proportion of temporary workers and daily workers combined somewhat rose, indicating the instability of employment status.

Looking at the changes of household consumption sizes and its composition, in 2008, household consumption was 2,856,000 won per month and among them, miscellaneous consumption expenses occupied the biggest rate of 26.1%, followed by grocery expenses with 20.7%, transportation and communication expenses with 13.7%, and tax and social security burden with 10.6%. In 2012, compared with 2008, household consumption increased by 22.2% to 3,490,000 won and the composition of expenses was similar to that of 2008 (Korea Institute of Health and Social Affairs, 2008; Korea Institute of Health and

Social Affairs, 2012). For the recent four years, household expenditures increased. Specifically, looking at the consumption patterns, basic expenditures for grocery, rent, and utilities somewhat decreased while welfare and health expenditures, culture and entertainment expenses, and transportation and communication expenses increased, displaying changing trends in the consumption patterns of family.

4. Implications

Changes in Korean families showed characteristics of reduction of family size, i.e., the trend toward small families, and the simplification of familial generation, i.e., the transition from extended families to nuclear families and such characteristics were attributable to impacts from the sharply increasing single or two-person households due to children moving out from parents' home according to individualism, rising elderly population due to aging, late marriages, rising divorce rates, and low fertility; and due to the trend toward nuclear families primarily with single generation. Family cohesiveness weakened due to the trends toward small families and nuclear families, rising double-income families, increasing commuter families, divorces, and separation by death. Phenomena of family changes affect positively and negatively through various areas of family life from family formation to familial relationship to

family functions.

Marriage value, a critical factor relative to family formation, has changed from an absolute value to a relative value and people's conception about marriage is changing from a traditional mindset that everyone should get married upon reaching certain ages to another mindset that a marriage is a matter of choice, depending on individual needs. Ages of first marriage are on the upward trend due partly to the weakened perception about marriage necessity and partly to diversification of pre-marital gender-based roles such as higher education, joining mandatory military service, and employment. Such underlying causes greatly affect family cycles and so, a lot of changes are expected to occur throughout family life.

Nowadays, due to the unfolding changes of family cycle, the earlier phases of family cycle from family formation to the child rearing period to the period for making all children marry are curtailed whereas the later phases of family cycle are extended such as the period of the couple left alone upon completion of child's marriage and the period of only one spouse living alone due to the death of the other spouse. Accordingly, the implication is that different welfare policies should be developed according to the phases of family cycles.

Familial relationship, closely related to family changes, can be examined from husband and wife relationship and parent and child relationship perspectives. Patriarchal structure gov-

erns the husband and wife relationship in Korea and patriarchal values provide causes of conflict in the husband and wife relationship and the parent and child relationship. Although gender-based roles with 'the husband being the primary bread winner and the wife being the primary houseworker' greatly and actually undermined due to the increasing economic activities by married women, nonetheless traditional values still govern and as a result, it becomes difficult to flexibly respond to social changes.

In the meantime, family functions mean family behaviors, i.e., roles and behaviors displayed by family and are related to such matters as maintaining and continuing existence of society or satisfying family members' needs. Overall, family functions weakened from family care and support functions to reproduction to social security largely due to the trends toward small families and nuclear families and family dissolution. The implication is that the burden of social responsibility imposed on society, i.e., society instead of a family performs family care and support functions to some extent, is on the rise.





Chapter 4

Prospects of Family Changes

1. Prospects of Family Formation and Dissolution
2. Prospects of Family Relationship and Function
3. Implications



4

Prospects of Family Changes <<

1. Prospects of Family Formation and Dissolution

1) Marriage and Cohabitation

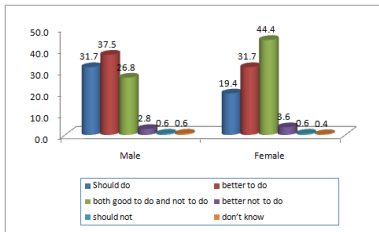
Declining rates of marriage and increases in age at first marriage are observed in Korea as well as in many developed countries. Such phenomenon reflects that the individual's value of marriage as necessary has weakened and marriage has become a matter of choice. Although those who lead a single life for the whole life are still very few in Korea (Kim, Doo-Sub et al. 2005), the overall trend and discrepancies by gender and age regarding the attitudes toward marriage are noticeable.

Based on the survey conducted by Kim Yukyung et al in 2013, 31.7% of males and 19.4% of females among 1,000 respondents responded that getting married is necessary, indicating males are more prone to get married than women. Different attitudes about marriage by gender reflect a reality of greater burden of marriage putting on women than men in Korean society. Depending on how gender inequalities in marriage are resolved, the future of marriage will be different. In addition, the different attitudes toward marriage by age, particularly distinct

from the age between 30

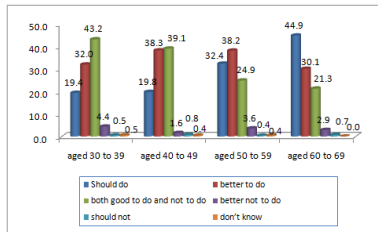
[Figure 4-1] Attitudes toward marriage by gender

(Unit: %)



[Figure 4-2] Attitudes toward marriage by age

(Unit: %)



Note: 1,000 people was surveyed for analysis.

Source: Kim, Yukyung, et al.,(2013). The Changes in the Family and Household Structures and Social Welfare Policies. Korea Institute for Health and social Affairs.

and 49, indicate further decrease in marriage.

However, weakening attitudes regarding the necessity of marriage does not necessarily lead to an objection or a negative opinion about marriage. The majority of respondents agree with the following statements, ‘it is better to get married’ and ‘it is up to personal choice to get married.’ Accordingly, despite decreasing rates of those who agree with marriage as necessary, those who deny the importance of marriage are still few.

Therefore, increases in ages at first marriage observed in Korea can be interpreted as a result of inevitable choice largely because of social circumstances unfavorable to marriage not because of denying or objecting marriage itself. If the circum-

stances are improved and gender inequalities in marriage are resolved, marriage will continue to stay as a crucial institution.

According to the book titled, "Going Solo: The Extraordinary Rise and Surprising Appeal of Living Alone," Eric Klinenberg (2013) argues that increases in those who do not get married or lead a single life do not necessarily mean an isolation from human relationship. That is, those who live unmarried and alone not only maintain romantic relationship or relationship with friends but also form various networks and communities via SNS (Eric Klinenberg, 2013). It represents the nature of human beings, continuously forming relationships with others. Such tendency of human beings can be partly explained by cohabitation observed in Europe and the U.S.

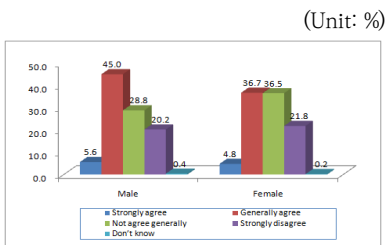
Many European countries and some states in the US consider cohabitation as a legal union same as marriage. In contrast, cohabitation is still stigmatized in Korea, which in turn no official statistics on cohabitation is available. Although rising trend of cohabitation in Korea is reported in mass media, it has been rarely confirmed through nationally representative surveys. According to a recent study on cohabitation (Lee, Yean-Ju 2008), among respondents aged between 20 and 59 in 2006 social survey, only 1.4% said that they cohabited. Cohabitation rates vary depending on marital status. Among those who remain single, it is 4% and goes up with increases in age.

Lee, Yean-Ju (2008) also argues that 2.1% of females aged be-

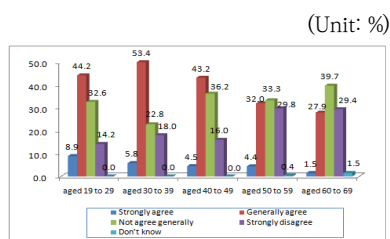
tween 25 and 29 and 14.1% of females aged between 35 and 39 experienced premarital cohabitation based on the analyses of vital statistics of marriage between 1997 and 2005. However, the result can be underestimated because it is limited to those who got married after experiencing premarital cohabitation, which excludes those who cohabited but did not get married.

If we look at the individual's attitude toward cohabitation (Kim Yukyung et al., 2013), among 1,000 respondents, 54% support cohabitation and 46% are against. Overall, males are more supportive than females and those who are aged below 40 are more supportive than those who are 40 years or older. Although cohabitation is still not socially acceptable in Korea despite increasing rates, the fact that younger people are supportive of cohabitation presents a possibility of changes in the future.

[Figure 4-3] Attitudes toward 'premarital cohabitation' by gender



[Figure 4-4] Attitudes toward 'premarital cohabitation' by age



Note: 1,000 people was surveyed for analysis.
 Source: Kim, Yukyung, et al.,(2013). The Changes in the Family and Household Structures and Social Welfare Policies. Korea Institute for Health and social Affairs.

2) Divorce and Remarriage

In 2012, the crude divorce rate (number of divorce cases per 1,000 persons) was 2.3 and the divorce rate for married persons (number of divorce cases for 1,000 married persons) was 4.7 in Korea (Statistics Korea, 2012). In the 1970s, the crude divorce rate was less than 0.5. It made a sharp upward turn from the latter half of the 1990s and then on a downward trend. Among those who got divorced in 2012, the average duration of marriage was 13.7 years. It is noticeable that both those who got married for longer than 20 years and shorter than 4 years show similar proportions. That is, the majority of divorce has been occurred both in childless couples or couples of middle ages and above.

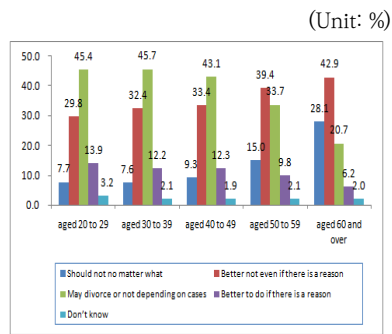
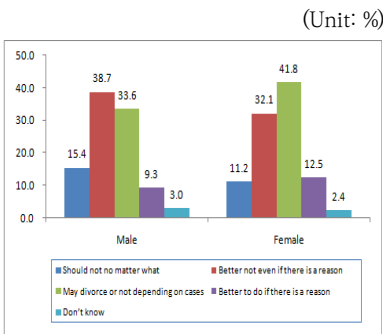
With increases in divorce rates, remarriage rates tend to rise. When we look at the data of 2000s, the proportion of remarriages accounted for 11% among total marriage cases and if the cases wherein one of the spouses gets remarried are included, the proportion reaches to 20%(Statistics Korea, 2012). Increases in divorce rates also lead to increases in single parent families. According to the report by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Women (2013), about 570,000 single parent families with unmarried children exist in Korea. The majority of single parent families is single mother families with children, who have tremendous burden with economic difficulties and

child care.

According to the social survey (2012), similar proportions of negative and positive attitudes about divorce are observed. Males are more likely than females to think negatively about divorce. Younger people tend to be less negative about divorce, whereas those who are older than 50s tend to be negative about divorce.

[Figure 4-5] Attitudes toward divorce by gender

[Figure 4-6] Attitudes toward divorce by age

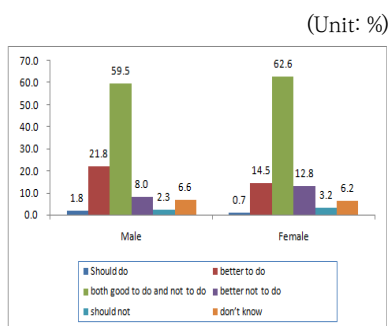


Reference: National Statistics (2012). Result of social survey.

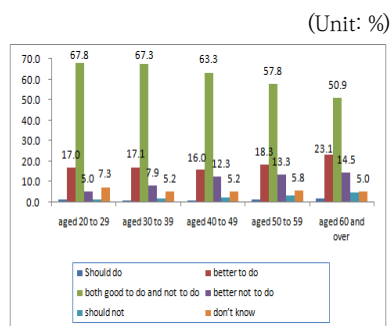
As for remarriage, neutral attitudes take up about 60% and positive views are relatively higher than negative views. In general, the individual's attitudes toward divorce and remarriage are relatively positive. However, respondents tend to be negative about the following statement, 'divorce is possible even if couples have a child,' reflecting a unique characteristics of Korean family centering on children instead of couples. Given

that younger people are more likely than older people to accept divorce and remarriage, we can assume that divorce and remarriage rates are likely to rise in the future.

[Figure 4-7] Attitudes toward remarriage by gender



[Figure 4-8] Attitudes toward remarriage by age



Reference: National Statistics (2012). Result of social survey.

Beck-Gernsheim(2005) argued that as social stigma attaching to divorce becomes weak, the divorce rate tends to rise which in turn leads to the active implementation of policies regarding divorce. Consequently, it may bring about 'the normalization of divorce.' He also argued that increases in premarital cohabitation can be partly attributed to the individual's desire to maintain relationship as well as to prevent from getting divorce.

As noted in the above, divorce and remarriage rates have increased and the individual's attitudes toward divorce and re-

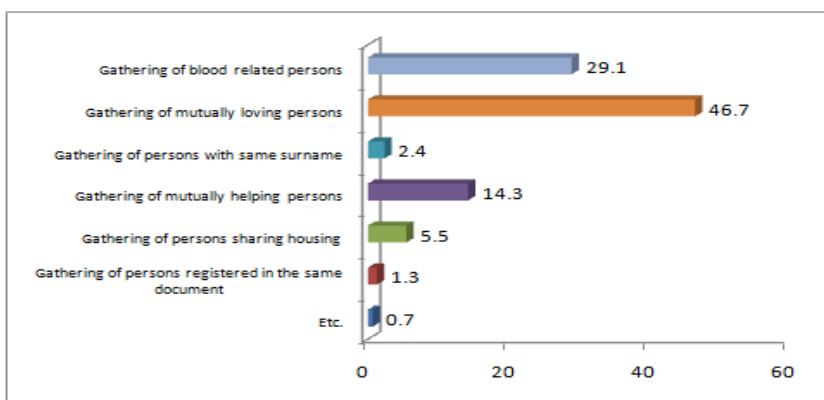
marriage have changed in Korea. Social support and policies to protect divorced families, such as abolishing patriarchal household system and legislation of the Single Parent Family Support Act are implemented. These changes have facilitated an escape from an unhappy marriage. However, despite a slight increase and social acceptance of cohabitation, premarital cohabitation as a preventive strategy from getting divorced as in western societies will not be prevalent in a near future in Korea.

The emergence of a complex family structure due to divorce and remarriage has provided an opportunity to reestablish the definition of family in the West. Affection and intimacy emerged as key factors for the definition of a family (Beck-Gernsheim, 2005). However, the emphasis on affection and intimacy does not necessarily mean an easy dissolution of family when affection and intimacy become weak. Rather, it allows people to decide whether or not they will maintain marital relationship based on intimacy or emotion instead of responsibility or obligation. Accordingly, a prenuptial agreement is frequently executed and signed in preparation for a divorce among the upper class in the West. That is, the definition of modern family based on affection and intimacy may develop into contractual relationship, which shows a paradox of modern marriage.

According to the survey (Kim Yukyung, 2013), 46.7% of re-

spondents agreed that a family is ‘a gathering of mutually loving persons,’ and 29.1% agreed that a family is ‘a gathering of blood related persons sharing same ancestry.’ It shows that the definition of family has gone through changes, although blood relationship still remains valued. As various family types have emerged, the definition of family is expected to become more expandable and inclusive.

[Figure 4-9] Perception about what ‘family’ is



Note: 1,000 people was surveyed for analysis.

Source: Kim, Yukyung, et al.,(2013). The Changes in the Family and Household Structures and Social Welfare Policies. Korea Institute for Health and social Affairs.

3) Various Family Types

In modern society, various family types have emerged, such as a single parent family and a complex family due to divorce and remarriages. Another examples include commuter families

wherein family members live apart and community families wherein people with no blood relationship live together. In some European countries and in the U.S., same sex couples legally form a family and have a child through a sperm bank, an egg bank, and a surrogate mother. In contrast, same sex marriage is not approved in Korean society. Therefore, in this section, discussion will be restricted on commuter families and community families.

Commuter families generally mean that married couples live apart. According to the social survey by Korea Statistical Office (2013), the proportion of commuter families in 2012 is 19.26%, which rises 4% compared with 2010. Major reasons of commuter families are for work and study. Specifically, 72.3% of commuter families said that they live separately for work.

Commuter families include those who live apart within country for a temporary period, and couples who live apart internationally in the short-term and long-term basis. A classic example of commuter families is a goose father emerged because of fervent enthusiasm for children's education in Korea. As for commuter families, the quality of relationship and the level of satisfaction among family members vary depending on the time period of living apart, geographical distance, and the quality of original relationship. In addition, the advancement of transportation, IT technology, and other communication devices enable people to maintain close relationship without severance.

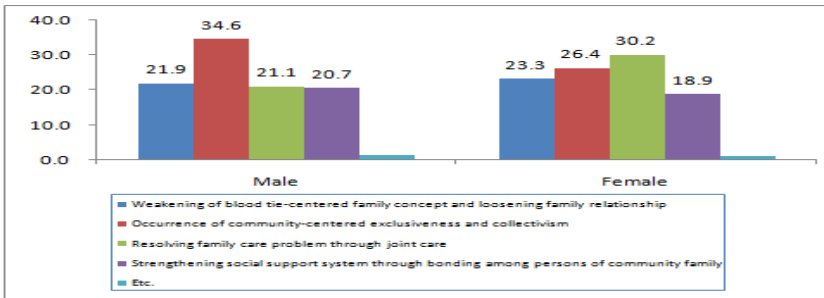
Community families are collective gatherings of individuals or families who are not related with kinship, which intended to resolve problems that cannot be addressed by an individual family (Park, Min-Sun, 1995). Some are formed to collectively share child rearing and care for those who are in need. Others are formed as an alternative family type when an original family does not function because of family dissolution or malfunction. Although mass media has depicted a few cases of community family, no official statistics are available.

[Figure 4-10] and [Figure 4-11] illustrate the results of survey conducted by Kim Yukyung et al (2013). About 30% of respondents are concerned that collectivism may rise because of increases in community families. About 20% of respondents are concerned that a traditional definition of family centering on blood-related kinship will be weakened. Overall, respondents show negative attitudes toward increasing trend of community families. Notable differences by age and sex are not observed. Thus, although community families are emerging as an alternative family type in the Korean society, more time will be taken until community families becomes or are accepted as a universal family type.

54 Prospects of Family Changes and Policy Implications

[Figure 4-10] Expected social changes by gender due to increasing community families

(Unit: %)

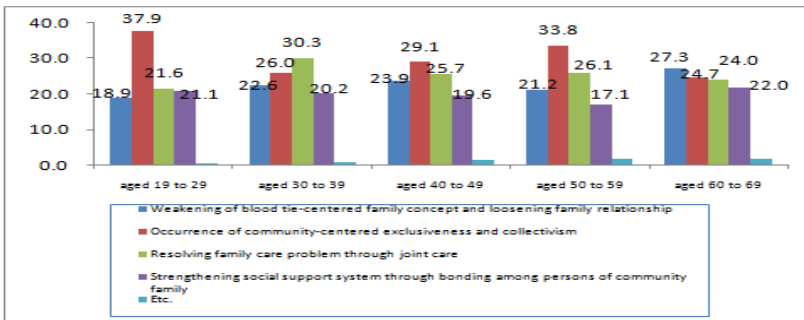


Note: 1,000 people was surveyed for analysis.

Source: Kim, Yukyung, et al.,(2013). The Changes in the Family and Household Structures and Social Welfare Policies. Korea Institute for Health and social Affairs.

[Figure 4-11] Expected social changes by age due to increasing community families

(Unit: %)



Note: 1,000 people was surveyed for analysis.

Source: Kim, Yukyung, et al.,(2013). The Changes in the Family and Household Structures and Social Welfare Policies. Korea Institute for Health and social Affairs.

2. Prospects of Family Relationship and Function

1) Prospects of Family Relationship

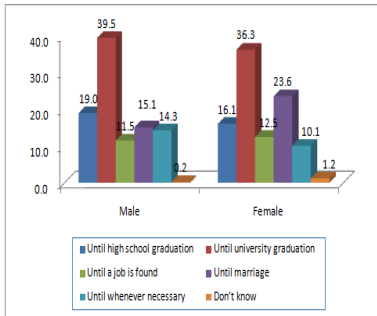
Nuclear family in Korean society centered around the parent-child relationship, which is different from couple-centered nuclear family in the West. Such difference is originated from a unique characteristic of Korea that marriage is centered around family rather than individuals. A marriage is a union of two families rather than two persons. Husband and wife are supposed to maintain cooperative relationships for the benefit of children, which in turn the relationship of couples is instrumental rather than emotional and affective. It is partly attributed to the patriarchal familism emphasizing carrying on a family lineage and the expectation of old-age support from children.

As an affection and intimacy between couples become important in marriage and attitudes toward old-age support become weak, however, couple-centered marriage begins to appear. With the expansion of a perception that one should prepare for one's later life instead of relying on children, unconditional investment in children has apparently weakened. Increasing tendency of investing in their own later life and solidifying relationships between couples is observed.

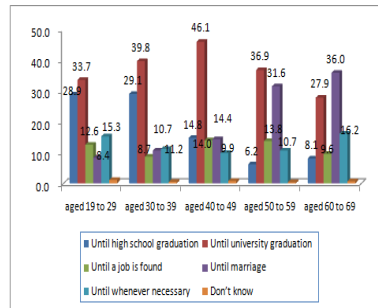
[Figure 4-12] and [Figure 4-13] present the result of survey by Kim Yukyung et al (2013). When asking "until when do you think that parents should provide support for children?" older people reply that parents should be responsible for their children until they get married. In contrast, younger people tend to think that parental responsibility ends with the children's graduation from high school or university. The following views, such as "parents should be free from unlimited parental duty" and "children should become independent of parents upon reaching to a certain age" are prevalent.

Changes in perceptions regarding support for children do not necessarily lead to actual behaviors. Some children live with and economically depend on their parents without getting married even in 30s and 40s. These people are called a parasite single. However, if changes in perception and attitudes toward support for children continue, parents will less depend on children and the husband-wife relationship will be more cherished than parent-child relationship in the near future.

[Figure 4-12] opinions about parental responsibility for children by gender (Unit: %)



[Figure 4-13] opinions about parental responsibility for children by age (Unit: %)



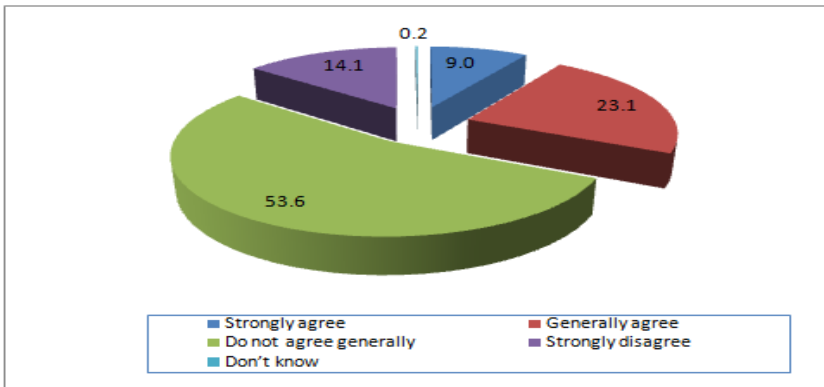
Note: 1,000 people was surveyed for analysis.

Source: Kim, Yukyung, et al.,(2013). The Changes in the Family and Household Structures and Social Welfare Policies. Korea Institute for Health and social Affairs.

[Figure 4-14] and [Figure 4-15] show that the majority of respondents do not agree with the following statements, such as ‘parent-child relationship is more important than the husband-wife relationship,’ and ‘children takes the most priority in life.’ It indicates that the husband-wife relationship becomes more important than parent-children relationship in the family.

[Figure 4-14] Opinion on 'the parent-child relationship is more important than the husband-wife relationship'

(Unit: %)

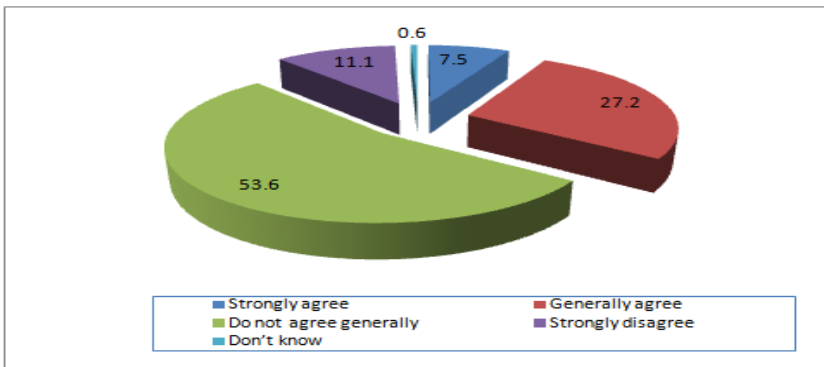


Note: 1,000 people was surveyed for analysis.

Source: Kim, Yukyung, et al.,(2013). The Changes in the Family and Household Structures and Social Welfare Policies. Korea Institute for Health and social Affairs.

[Figure 4-15] Opinion on 'children takes the most priority in life'

(Unit: %)



Note: 1,000 people was surveyed for analysis.

Source: Kim, Yukyung, et al.,(2013). The Changes in the Family and Household Structures and Social Welfare Policies. Korea Institute for Health and social Affairs.

Despite marriage postponement, rising divorce rates, increasing cohabitation and decreasing childbirth, the importance of marriage and family still remains in Korea. However, family relationship may change from centering around children to couples. Also, the individual's satisfaction and happiness may become more important than family obligation and responsibility.

2) Prospect of Family Function

A. Childbirth

Traditionally, one of the key functions of family is to produce a child in order to carry on the family line. However, in recent years, fertility rate has dramatically decreased in Korea. With the emergence of various family types, postponement of marriage, and increases in divorce, the key function of family, that is, producing a child, has weakened. Low fertility rates do not mean denial of childbirth or importance of children. Because only childbirth through marriage is legally recognized, childbirth remains as one of critical functions of family. Chang, Kyung-Sup (2011) argued that low fertility rate in Korea is not a result of rising individualism as in western countries but a paradox of strong familism. In Korea, children are still cherished and parents sacrifice themselves for the benefit of children.

Parents often tend to equate the child's success as their own. These features become a burden for parents, which consequently decreases fertility rates.

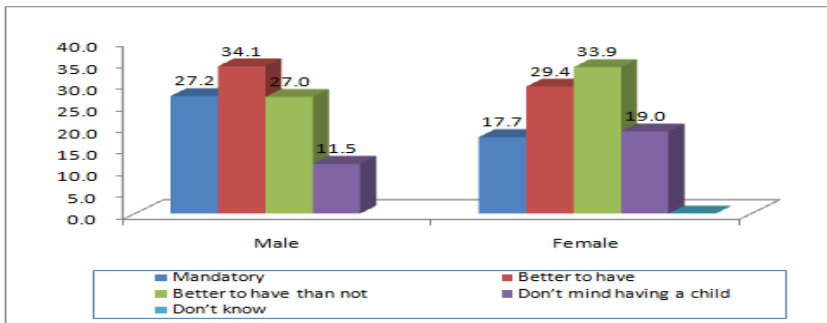
According to the survey (Kim, Yukyung et al., 2013), 85% of respondents agree with the statement, "it is better to have a child." It indicates that children are still important in Korea. As for the reason why children are needed, 42% of respondents agree with the statement, 'children are needed to strengthen family bonding,' and 37.5% respond that 'children are needed because of enjoyment of child rearing.' In contrast, only 6.7% respond that "children are needed to carry on family line," which used to be the main reason to have a child.

Similar results are obtained from National Survey of Marriage and Fertility 2012 (KIHASA). When people were asked about the reasons for having a child, psychological satisfaction and happiness were pointed out as main reasons rather than carrying on family line. These results show that the main reason and meaning of having a child has changed from carrying on family line to promoting the individual's happiness and satisfaction. Accordingly, whether or not having children, when and how many children will have can be determined based on its impacts on the individual's happiness and satisfaction. If child-birth impose a bigger burden on the individual and threaten the individual's happiness, it may lead to avoidance of child-birth, which is called 'risk aversion' by Chang, Kyung-Sup

(2011).

[Figure 4-16] Attitudes toward having children by gender

(Unit: %)

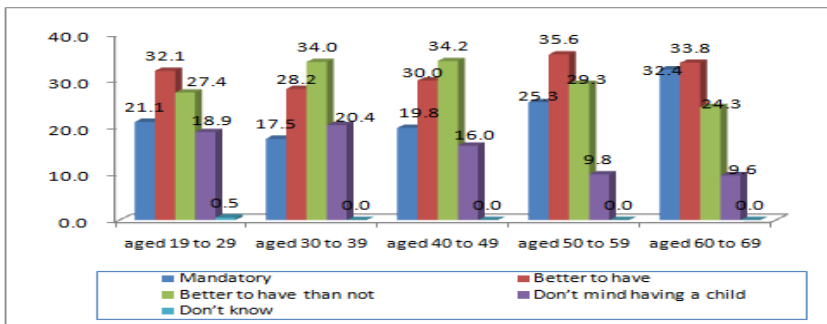


Note: 1,000 people was surveyed for analysis.

Source: Kim, Yukyung, et al.,(2013). The Changes in the Family and Household Structures and Social Welfare Policies. Korea Institute for Health and social Affairs.

[Figure 4-17] Attitudes toward having children by age

(Unit: %)



Note: 1,000 people was surveyed for analysis.

Source: Kim, Yukyung, et al.,(2013). The Changes in the Family and Household Structures and Social Welfare Policies. Korea Institute for Health and social Affairs.

Then, how will the function of childbirth in the family evolve in the future? As noted in the above, given that marriage and children are still considered important in Korea, out-of-wedlock childbearing will not easily be accepted for the time being. Low fertility rates despite the individual's positive attitudes toward having a child can be interpreted that social circumstances are not favorable to have and raise a child. That is, if we create social and policy environments that childbirth and child rearing become not a burden but a prerequisite for happiness, fertility rates will rise. To this end, it is imperative to improve the reality of imposing the whole burden of child care on women. Also, it is necessary to alleviate overly competitive investment in education and parents' excessive preoccupation with children. In addition, consistent policies with long-term perspective should be implemented.

B. Care work

Caring for children and elderly parents is one of the critical functions of family. In Korea, due to the lack of social support, responsibility of caring for children and elderly parents falls on the family, mostly on women. As women's participation in labor force grows, various child care policies have been implemented. Recently, in order to address low fertility, compatibility of work and family are emphasized. However, it is still

emphasized that mother's care of toddlers less than 3 years old is critical and the stable attachment between children and mother greatly affects the later development of child. Therefore, the mother assumes child care responsibilities. According to the analysis of time diary data, Korean fathers spend about 10 minutes in child care regardless of their wives' employment status (Statistics Research Institute, 2012).

Although the traditional division of gender roles, 'male as a breadwinner and female as a care-giver,' has weakened, people seem to internalize the division of gender roles and family as a main care giver for children. Consequently, although various child care policies are implemented, family still remains as a main pillar for child care and will continue to be so.

By contrast, care of elderly parents in the family seems to significantly change. According to the result of 2012 social survey, only 5% of respondents said that they live with elderly parents. Among those who only have elderly father is alive, 11.5% live with the father. Among those who only have elderly mother, 17.1% live with the mother. It shows declining old-age support for the elderly parents.

According to the report on the elderly (2012), one person household of those who are aged 65 and old takes 6.6% of total households in 2012, showing gradual increases compared with 3.3% in 2000. If the trend persists, the rate of one person household of the elderly is expected to rise to 15% of total

households in 2035. That is, people are less likely to live with elderly parents, even if the parent is left alone due to separation by death.

Certainly, living separately from parents does not mean the severance in relationship. There are many cases that children live separately but close to parents and make frequent contacts. According to the result of the social survey (2012), the majority of respondents said that they live separately from parents but meet them at least once or twice a month. Contacts via phone are more frequent and 90% of respondents said that they make phone calls at least once or twice a month.

When we look at the results of social survey, the proportion of those who agree with that 'the primary care giver of elderly parents is family' declined from 70% in 2002 to 33.2% in 2012. In contrast, the proportion of those who agree with that 'family, government, and society should jointly share the burden of caring for elderly parents' increased from 18.2% in 2002 to 48.7% in 2012. In addition, those who agree with that 'one should be responsible for oneself' rose from 9.6% in 2002 to 13.9% in 2012.

In the past, among family members, the eldest son was the primary care giver of elderly parents. In 2012, 74.5% of respondent agree with that 'all children, regardless of sons or daughters, should jointly bear the responsibility for old-age support.' Similar trends are shown in the result of survey by

Kim Yukyung et al (2013). For example, although family is recognized as the primary care giver of elderly parents, the eldest son or sons are no longer considered to be the primary care giver. Instead, all children are considered to jointly share the burden of care. In addition, the awareness that one should be responsible for oneself and that government and society should jointly bear the burden was found as well.

In sum, compared to the past, care functions of family have weakened. However, family still assumes main responsibility for child care and elderly care. Only the extent and sharing pattern will be changed.

c. Economic and Emotional Functions

Another key functions of the family are economic and emotional functions. In an agricultural society where home and workplace were not separable, family performed the major economic unit for production and consumption. With industrialization and the introduction of market economy, the production function in family weakened while consumption function remained critical.

Emotional function is one of the most critical functions and will continue to have great implications. It was mentioned earlier that various changes regarding marriage and family such as increasing rates of divorce, postponement of marriage, low

birthrate, weakening attitudes toward family, do not necessarily mean the weakening of people's desire to form relationship or emotional needs. It is even more so in Korea, where marriage, children, and family are still recognized as important and care functions in the family still remain strong. As shown in the survey (Kim Yukyung et al., 2013), the majority defined family as 'a gathering of mutually loving people,' indicating that family's emotional function is recognized more important than other functions. Therefore, it will continue to be more important than others.

3. Implications

Korean families will go through many changes in the future. If the current trends continue, postponement of marriage and low fertility will persist. As mentioned in the above, postponement of marriage and low fertility are partly due to the expansion of individualistic values and to the paradox of familism. For example, excessive burden on family, social atmosphere of equating a child's success with parents,' and imposing main responsibilities for child care and care for elderly parents on family can be main reasons (Chang, Kyung-Sup, 2011). Without changes in these factors, current trends will continue.

In the similar vein, strong familism and subsequent burdens

may lead to increases in cohabitation and childless couples. Although we can expect increases in social acceptance of cohabitation, however, it will take some time until cohabitation is recognized as equal as marriage. Childless couples are still few but expected to rise. Considering that most people have positive attitudes toward having a child, most childless couples are result of sterility rather than voluntarily not having a child. With increases in postponement of marriage, childless couples due to sterility are expected to increase. Single parent families and blended families are expected to rise due to continuous increases in divorce and remarriage. In addition, commuter families are expected to rise as well based on the advancement of transportation and IT technology.

Among family functions, a large part of care for children and the elderly will be transferred to society. In particular, the care for the elderly with chronic diseases will be taken by society. In contrast, child care will remain strongly within family functions despite share of society. As the care functions for the elderly and attitudes toward old age support have changed, there is a possibility that child-oriented family will change to couple-centered family as in the West. A recent trend emphasizing the extended period of empty nest and the importance of marital relationship after retirement will also affect the emergence of couple-centered relationship.

Based on changes in the individual's attitudes toward elderly

care and old age support, single person households of the elderly are expected to rise further. The elderly who are living alone may form community family in order to support one another. All these possible changes can provide various policy implications.



Chapter 5

Conclusion and Policy Implications

1. Conclusion
2. Policy Implications



5

Conclusion and Policy Implications <<

1. Conclusion

Nowadays, the Korean society has gone through significant changes through the implementation processes of the Industrialization and the entry into the post-industrial society. A future prospect is that scaling back of family size and the simplification of generational composition, which are major change patterns, will persist. In particular, the increase in single person households is expected to weaken the family function of reproducing society members and another family function of care.

In the meantime, the transition to the double-income family has intensified due to structural factors such as women's growing desire for social participation, deepening job instability, and labor shortage due to aging. In addition, social risks such as the loosening of familial relationship and the vacuum of family care have appeared due to the sharply increasing number of divorces and remarriages according to weakening family values, and the appearance of various family types including the increasing single person households.

It is imperative to endeavor on a policy level of several respects to promote family health and to secure the quality of life in response to the diversifying and complex family changes. Above all, family-friendly approaches are essential based on the principle of welfare state that maintaining healthy family and family welfare should be ensured through the engagement of government policies. In addition, comprehensive systematic mechanism should be developed to address diversifying and complex needs of family welfare. Also, policy-level framework should be prepared multi-laterally to promote futuristic familial relationship and to strengthen family functions for healthy development various family types and maintenance thereof.

2. Policy Implications

In relation to future family changes, the factors affecting family formation and cycle changes occur voluntarily and involuntarily and thus, depending on whether a choice is made or not, policy responses will vary. Accordingly, in order to respond to the voluntary deferment and avoidance of marriage and childbearing, it is necessary to formulate measures that protect and accomodate the result of an individual's choice and in order to respond to involuntary deferment and avoidance cases, it is necessary to create an environment that enables marriage and childbearing. From the same framework as

noted above, policy-level approaches should be made toward cohabitation, commuter families, childless families, single person households, etc. Also, regarding divorces, remarriages, and consistent increases in blended families and single parent families, it is imperative to provide policy-and system-level supports that can accommodate such families without discrimination.

Furthermore, it is necessary to open up and diversify the definition and perspectives of family in order to face up with the changes in family and to accommodate positive sides thereof. There have been consistent discussions in Korea and the West on the appearance of various family types and family changes, i.e., whether they mean 'the direction loss of society' (Chang, Hyun-Seob, 1994) or otherwise, the result of the expansion of new values such as pluralism and diversification. How family changes can be understood may vary depending on perspectives, but, generally are accepted in pluralism and diversification perspectives. In the West, an expression of 'family diversity as the norm' is used and a family is redefined flexibly rather than the traditional definition based on blood relation and marriage (Kim, Doo-Sup, 2005).

Ostner(2001) defined a family as all relationships grounded on intimacy, confidence, mutual obligation, and durability beyond a certain time period. It is not a rejection of a family but rather it is because although seeking emotional intimacy and

stability through relationship with other persons is a common human desire, there is no family type that can provide universally proper and gratifying family life.

Values, norms and goods incorporated into 'family' that individuals agree and share can be different and a family can be created through a 'choice' by individuals who share a particular type of commitments and roles. If a particular type of family is socially recognized and preferred by ignoring diversification of a reality, diversification of an individual's desires and situations, and diversification of seeking happiness, it then will lead to the social suppression and discrimination against families different from the particular type and individuals comprising such families.

Accordingly, various family types, currently existing, should be recognized as 'families' of equal standing and system-level mechanisms should be prepared to provide assistance resolving problems, in particular insurmountable problems that each family is facing but incapable of resolving through self-help. In addition, the flexible redefinition of family should be performed not only through discussions but on system and legal levels.

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