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DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION AND POPULATION AGING IN KOREA

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This paper describes the process of population aging in conjunction with the demographic transition in Korea. Korea has recently experienced rapid decreases of both mortality and fertility, which have brought about the rapid process of population aging. The speed of the population aging in Korea is projected as one of the fastest in the world. Population aging brings about changing patterns of family composition, especially new trends of living arrangements of the elderly. Since the process of population aging in Korea, the proportion of living alone and that of living with spouse only have significantly increased.

INTRODUCTION

Korean population was more or less stationary until the end of the 19th century . Korea has witnessed a series of population changes since the beginning of the 20th century (Kim, I.K. 1987). The first sign of changes was on mortality. Korea entered the first stage of mortality transition in the 1910s (Lee 1980). The crude death rate (CDR) that was around 34 per thousand in the 1910s consistently declined until the Korean War period, 1950-53. On the other hand, fertility did not show any significant pattern of change during the same period. The crude birth rate (CBR) was around 40 per thousand. The gap between fertility and mortality had increased over time and resulted in unprecedently rapid population growth.

The decade 1945-55 was a period of disturbance in demographic situation, along with the political, social and economic turmoil (Kwon et al. 1975). The liberation of Korea in 1945 from the Japanese colonization came together with the partition of Korea into two Koreas, North and South. The liberation and partition of the country brought about a vast redistribution of the Korean population all over the country. During the period of the Korean war, there were a large number of war casualties, particularly among young men. There was also a massive flow of refugees from North to South after the Korean War.

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The population trends after the Korean War differ in many respects from those of earlier periods. Korea entered the second stage of mortality transition. In the mean time, Korea experienced a new era of "baby boom", which was peaked in 1959. South Korea experienced a major population transition, from a rapidly growing population to a moderately growing one after the beginning of the 1960s.

Since the 1960s, while population growth became moderate, Korean society has been undergoing vast demographic changes including the rapid increase in both the proportion and the absolute number of the elderly in Korea, that is, aging of population. The rapid process of demographic transition in Korea was facilitated by the interaction of rapid socioeconomic development (industrialization and urbanization) and full-scale adoption of family planning programs (Kim,I.K. 1987). During the period of the first five-year economic plan, 1962-67, the Gross National Product (GNP) grew at an annual rate of 7.0 percent. The GNP growth for the next five-year economic plan was even higher, 11.4 percent. Since then, Korean economy has consistently grown over time.

Sociological theorists of structural functionalism and modernization argue that with industrialization, urbanization, and overall economic development, household structure will shift generally from an extended to a nuclear form (Cowgill and Homes 1978; Martin 1989). They argue that industrialization requires a flexible, mobile, and nuclear family because it is functionally more adapted to the new mode of production (Kim, I.Y. 1993). Modernization theorists have also argued that the status and well-being of the elderly are closely linked to their living arrangements, implying that modernization means the transformation of living arrangements from the type of living with children to that of living alone or living with spouse only (Cowgill 1986; Cowgill and Holmes 1978).

This paper examines the process of population aging in Korea within the context of demographic transition. More specifically, this paper will deal with the changes in the characteristics of population and family structure, process of population aging, changes in the demographic status and living arrangements of the elderly. This paper concludes with socioeconomic implications of the population aging and some comments on modernization theories.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION

Demographic transition is defined as changes in the fertility and mortality of a specific society in the process of transition from an agrarian state to an

industrialized and urbanized state (Coale 1973). According to this definition, modernization brings about demographic transition, that is, the reduction of both fertility and mortality. Thus, for the modernization perspective, one of the most important features of the demographic transition is to forecast the population trends of developing countries through the demographic model of developed countries.

In Korea, mortality continued to decline after 1960, but the reduction rate has been lowered. On the other hand, the level of fertility for the period of 1955-60 was record high in the recent demographic history of Korea because of baby boom that followed immediately after the Korean War (Kim, I.K. 1987). . The fertility level slowly declined after the peak year (1959) up until 1965. Until this time, effective methods of fertility control were not widely practiced. Korean government launched a five-year economic plan and adopted family planning program as a national policy in 1962. In this sense, the demographic transition in Korea started in the mid-1960s (Kim, I.K. 1987). Thus, this paper will focus on the demographic transition since 1960s.

The year 1960 marks a decisive turning point in the mortality trend. Korean War had great impact on Korean population, especially on mortality. War casualties were estimated to be 1.6 million and the crude death rate rose sharply during this period (Lee 1980). The crude death rate in 1955 was record high at the level of 33 per thousand. Since then, mortality level of Korean population has slowly but consistently declined. Table 1 shows mortality trends in Korea during the period of 1960-90. The crude death rate in 1960 indicates 16 per thousand, which is decreased by 17 per thousand, compared to 5 years ago. The crude death rate continuously declined and reached 5.8 per thousand in 1990.

TABLE 1. MORTALITY TRENDS IN KOREA, 1960-1990

Year	CDR[1]	Life expectancy at birth[3]	
		Male	Female
1960	16	51.1	57.3
1965	15	54.9	61.0
1970	13	57.2	64.1
1975	7.3	59.8	66.7
1980	6.7	62.7	69.1
1985	6.2	67.1	73.6
1990[2]	5.8	68.2	75.0

Source: (1) Kim, I. K. 1992, P.52.
(2) Kim, T. H. et al. 1993, P.6.
(3) Suh, M. K. 1992, P.109.

In accordance with the continuous decline of the crude death rate, life expectancy at birth has substantially increased over time. Life expectancy at birth in 1960 was 51.1 years for males and 57.3 years for females. Life expectancy has consistently increased both for males and females. Life expectancy for males increased from 51.1 years in 1960 to 57.2 years in 1970, 62.7 years in 1980, then to 68.2 years in 1990. Life expectancy for females increased at the same speed from 57.3 years in 1960 to 64.1 years in 1970, 69.1 years in 1980, then to 75.0 years in 1990. Continuously increasing life expectancy has brought about consistently increasing proportion of the elderly, that is, population aging.

Table 2 shows fertility trends in Korea during the period of 1960-90. The crude birth rate in 1960 was as high as 45 per thousand. Since then, however, the rate has continuously declined over time. While the crude birth rate declined only by 3 per thousand during the period of 1960-65, it declined sharply from 42 per thousand to 32 during the period of 1965-70. The reduction of the crude birth rate by 10 per thousand for the five year period is record high. Since then, the fertility level has steadily declined without interruption. The crude birth rate declined to 23.4 per thousand in 1980, then to 15.6 per thousand in 1990. Combining the crude birth rates and the crude death rates, the growth rate of Korea population declined from 2.9 percent in 1960 to 0.98 percent in 1990. Such a sharp reduction of the population growth rates brings about the rapid process of population aging.

During the period of demographic transition, Korea experienced a rapid urbanization process as well (Kim, I. K. 1987). In 1960, only 28 percent of the population lived in cities. The urbanization rate increased to 41 percent in 1970, 57 percent in 1980, then to 74 percent in 1990. Much of this growth has been concentrated in a few large metropolitan areas. As of 1990, Seoul, the capital of Korea, contains 24.4 percent of the total population. In the same

TABLE 2. FERTILITY TRENDS IN KOREA, 1960-1990

Year	CBR[1]	CBR difference
1960	45	-
1965	42	3
1970	32	10
1975	24.6	7.4
1980	23.4	1.2
1985	19.7	3.7
1990[2]	15.6	4.1

Source: (1) Kim, I. K. 1992, P.57.
(2) Kim, T. H. 1993, P.6.

year, Seoul Metropolitan area contains 42.8 percent of the total population (Choi et al. 1993).

Since the 1960s Seoul has dominated the urbanization scene in Korea. Internal migration was dominated by the centripetal movement of population towards Seoul from all over the country (ESCAP 1980). During the decade of 1960 the annual growth rate of population in Seoul was 8.2 percent, whereas that of total population was 2.3 percent. In contrast to the rapid increase of urban population, the rural population growth rate has continuously declined over time. The loss of rural population is totally due to the heavy out-migration. Such a heavy out-migration, especially of working age population has resulted in a severe imbalance of the age distribution between urban and rural population. The imbalance of the age distribution again results not only in different proportions of the elderly population but also in different patterns of the living arrangements of the elderly.

Migration to cities, in conjunction with the process of industrialization has broken down the traditional family system of agricultural society and thus expanded the nuclear family system (Bae 1987). This transformation may be due to the fact that urban industrial system is usually more compatible with the conjugal family which is centered on the married couple rather than on large stem family. Nuclear family system with the reduced family size is more flexible to mobility and more adaptable to changes.

Table 3 shows the changing patterns of family structure in Korea. The proportion of nuclear family has consistently increased with the exception in 1970, whereas that of stem family has continuously decreased over time. The proportion of nuclear family increased from 66.6 percent in 1966, to 72.9 percent in 1980, then to 76.0 percent in 1990. Although the numbers are not shown in this table, the proportion of single household family has also consistently increased over time. This trend is parallel to the increasing

TABLE 3. CHANGING PATTERNS OF FAMILY TYPES IN KOREA, 1966-90

Family Types	Year					
	1966	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
Nuclear family	66.6	71.5	70.5	72.9	75.3	76.0
Stem family	21.4	21.9	14.7	14.1	13.7	12.5
Others	12.0	6.6	14.8	13.0	11.0	11.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Kim, T. H. et al. 1993, P.30. (Population census data)

proportion of single household among the elderly.

TRENDS OF POPULATION AGING

The rapid process of demographic transition has brought about the increase of both the absolute number and proportion of the elderly in Korea. Those aged 60 and over increased from 1.5 million in 1960 to 3.3 million in 1990, and are projected to increase to 9.9 million by the year 2020. This shows that the number of elderly population aged 60 and over doubled within the past three decades and is expected to increase by almost three times of the 1990 figure and more than six times of the 1960 figure. Table 4 shows the proportions of the elderly since 1960. The proportion of those aged 60 and over was 6.0 percent in 1960; it decreased to 5.2 percent in 1966, and then it consistently increased. However, it dose not show notable changes until the 1980s. The proportion of those aged 60 and over was still 7.6 percent but it is projected to reach almost 20 percent in 2020.

The decreased proportion of those aged 60 and over between 1960 and 1966 may be the result of exceeding rate of increase in the young population than any other component of the population. It is speculated that the increased share of young population would be caused by the baby boom cohorts after Korean War (1950-1953) and sustained high fertility before the effective implementation of family planning program by the Korean government in the beginning of 1960s.

Table 5 shows both dependency ratio and aging index in Korea since 1960. The dependency ratio has also increased since 1960. It did not change much

TABLE 4. PROPORTIONS OF THE ELDERLY IN KOREA, 1960-2020

Year / Age	1960	1966	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
0~14	40.6	43.5	42.1	38.1	33.8	29.9	25.7	23.2	21.2	20.3	19.1	17.5	16.0
15~59	50.6	53.2	52.5	56.3	60.1	63.3	66.7	67.8	68.2	67.6	67.1	66.6	64.5
60~64	2.3	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.5	2.7	3.3	3.9	4.0	4.3	5.2	7.0
65~69	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.6	1.7	1.8	2.1	2.3	2.9	3.4	3.5	3.9	4.7
70~74	1.2	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.2	2.5	2.9	1.7	1.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.4
75~79	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.4	1.8	2.2	2.3
80+	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.1	1.3	1.7	2.1
60+	6.0	5.2	5.4	5.6	6.1	6.8	7.6	9.0	10.7	12.1	13.7	15.9	19.5
65+	3.7	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.9	4.3	5.0	5.7	6.8	8.2	9.4	10.7	12.5
70+	2.1	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.2	2.5	2.9	3.4	3.9	4.8	5.9	6.8	7.8

Source: Rhee, K.O. et al. 1993, P.48.

TABLE 5. DEPENDENCY RATIO AND AGING INDEX OF THE POPULATION AGED 60 AND OVER IN KOREA

	1960	1966	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Dependency ratio(1)	11.3	10.1	10.3	10.0	10.1	10.8	11.5	13.3	15.6	17.9	20.5	23.9	30.2
Aging index(2)	14.8	11.9	12.9	14.7	17.9	22.8	29.8	38.8	50.3	59.6	71.8	91.1	121.8

(1) Dependency ratio = Population aged 60 and over / population aged 15-59 × 100
(2) Aging index = Population aged 60 and over / population aged 0-14 × 100
Source: Rhee, K. O. et al. 1993, P.51. and P.52.

up to the 1980s. The dependency ratio of those aged 60 and over was 10.1 in 1966 and 11.5 in 1990 but it is projected to almost triple in the future, increasing to 30.2 in 2020. The aging index of those aged 60 and over also shows a drastic increase. The index was 11.9 in 1966, increased to to 29.8 in 1990, and is projected to reach 121.8 in 2020. The aging index indicates that in 2020 the population aged 60 and older will be larger by 20 percent than the population aged 0-14.

The dramatic demographic transition within a short period of time has accelerated the population aging in Korea. Korea, which has already experienced large declines in fertility and mortality, has a tremendous momentum for further population aging. With respect to this phenomenon, Grigsby (1991) argue that even if fertility and mortality remain at the 1985 levels, the elderly population will grow substantially. The projected declines in fertility and mortality will thus add to the momentum for even further population aging in Korea.

According to Choe and Lee (1990), the aging speed of the Korean population is apparently faster than that of developed countries. The year when the proportion of those aged 65 and over reached 7 percent of the total population was 1930 in England, 1865 in France, 1970 in Japan and 1945 in the United States. The time required to double this proportion from 7 percent to 14 percent was 45 years for England and 115 years for France. It is projected to take 26 years for Japan and 75 years for the United States. The proportion of those aged 65 and over in Korea is expected to reach 7 percent by the year 2000. It is estimated to take 25 years to double the proportion of those aged 65 and over.

CHANGES IN THE DEMOGRAPHIC STATUS OF THE ELDERLY

This chapter examines the changes in the demographic status of the elderly in conjunction with the aging process. Table 6 shows trends in the sex ratios among the elderly in Korea since 1966. The trends in the sex ratios

TABLE 6. SEX RATIOS AMONG THE ELDERLY IN KOREA, 1966-2020

Year / Age	1966	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Total	101.4	100.8	101.2	100.5	100.2	100.7	101.4	101.4	101.6	101.7	101.8	101.7
60+	70.7	69.8	68.9	67.3	65.7	64.8	67.4	72.2	75.9	79.2	82.2	84.4
65+	64.9	62.1	61.3	59.5	59.4	60.0	59.4	62.5	68.1	72.3	75.7	78.5
70+	59.6	55.8	52.5	51.0	50.7	52.6	53.6	53.4	57.4	63.9	68.0	71.2

Source: EconomicPlanning Bureau, Population and Housing Census, 1966, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990.
Statistics Bureau, Future Projected Population (1990-2020), 1991.

of old population during the past few decades and projected trends through the year 2020 indicate that the sex ratio has constantly been less than 100 and is much lower among older elderly. The sex ratios have decreased until 1990 and then are expected to increase. One plausible explanation for this pattern is an echo effect of the Korean War (1950-1953). Those cohorts aged 60 and over during the period of 1975-1990 were born before 1930. A substantial proportion of males who were born before 1930 were at the risk of being killed in the battle during the War. The disproportionate number of deaths which occurred to those males during the War might have left a high proportion of female widowed, leading to significantly low sex ratios among those aged 60 and over during the period of 1975-1990.

Table 7 illustrates the proportions of currently married among the elderly during the period of 1966-90. For both sexes, the proportions have slightly but consistently increased over time. The proportion of currently married for the population aged 60 and over was slightly smaller than 50 percent in 1966, but increased to slightly more than 50 percent in 1990. The proportions have also increased as going to the younger cohorts. In 1990, the proportion for the population aged 70 and over was only 38.6 percent but that for the population aged 60 and over was 54.9 percent. One notable thing in this table is that there have been big differences in the proportions of married between male elderly and female elderly. The proportions have been much lower for females than for males all through the years.

Table 8 contains the urbanization rates of elderly and proportions of the elderly population in urban and rural areas. While population in Korea has experienced rapid urbanization, the urbanization rate for old population has been lower than that for total population. Among the total population, the proportion of urban residence was 28 percent in 1960. This proportion continued to increase during the following three decades and reached 74.4 percent in 1990. For those aged 60 and over, however, the proportion of urban residence increased from 19.1 percent in 1960 to 54.7 percent in 1990.

TABLE 7. PROPORTIONS OF THE CURRENTLY MARRIED ELDERLY IN KOREA, 1966-1990

Age \ Year	1966	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
Both Sexes						
60+	48.0	50.3	52.0	53.0	55.9	54.9
65+	41.3	41.6	44.6	45.0	47.0	47.2
70+	32.0	33.5	35.3	36.1	39.2	38.6
Male						
60+	77.5	80.3	83.3	84.7	86.5	86.3
65+	71.0	73.5	77.6	79.9	82.2	82.6
70+	62.4	65.7	69.5	73.0	76.1	77.1
Female						
60+	28.7	29.4	31.0	31.6	35.2	34.5
65+	22.0	21.7	24.3	24.3	27.4	26.0
70+	15.4	15.5	17.3	17.3	20.4	18.3

Source: Economic Planning Bureau, Population and Housing Census Report, each year.

TABLE 8. URBANIZATION OF THE ELDERLY AND THE PROPORTION OF THE ELDERLY BY REGION, 1966-90

Age group \ Year	1966	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
Total pop.	33.5	41.1	48.3	57.2	65.4	74.4
Age 60+	23.3	27.2	33.1	39.1	46.5	54.7
Age 65+	22.4	25.6	31.7	38.0	45.3	53.6
Percentage of elderly						
Urban						
60+	3.6	3.6	3.8	4.1	4.9	5.6
65+	2.2	2.1	2.3	2.7	3.0	3.6
Rural						
60+	6.0	6.7	7.3	8.6	10.5	13.5
65+	3.8	4.2	4.6	5.6	6.8	9.0

Source: Economic Planning Bureau, Population and Housing Census Report, each year. Cited from Rhee et al. 1990, P.57.

A closer examination on the differences in the share of old population in rural and urban areas reveals that, throughout the past three decades, the proportion of old people in rural area constantly outnumbered the corresponding proportion in urban area.

Table 9 shows the trends of living arrangements of the elderly from 1981 to 1988. Two major features of the changes during this period are the increased proportion of those living alone and the decreased proportion of

TABLE 9. TRENDS OF LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OF THE ELDERLY IN KOREA, 1981 TO 1988 (%)

Living arrangements	1981 (%)	1988 (%)	Rate of increase
Living alone	4.3	7.7	3.4
Living with spouse	52.7	53.4	0.7
Living with married sons	54.7	41.8	-12.9
Living with married daughters	4.5	4.3	-0.2
Living with sons-in-law or daughters-in-law	52.7	37.5	-15.2
Living with unmarried children	31.5	26.6	-4.9
Living with grandchildren	58.0	47.0	-11.0
Living with relatives	2.3	1.8	-0.5
Living with others	0.8	0.5	-0.3

Source: Korean Gallup, (based on surveys in 1981 and 1988). 1990.
Cited from Kim, I. K. et al. 1992, P.94.

those living with family members. The proportion of the elderly living alone was only 4.3 percent in 1981, but increased to 7.7 percent in 1988. The proportion of the elderly living with their spouse increased only slightly. However, the patterns of living with married sons, sons-in-law or daughters-in-law and grandchildren have changed significantly between 1981 and 1988: the proportion of the elderly living with married sons decreased from 55 percent in 1981 to 42 percent in 1988; the proportion of the elderly living with sons-in-law or daughters-in-law decreased from 53 percent to 37.5 percent; that of the elderly living with grandchildren from 58 percent to 47 percent. The proportions in all these types of living arrangements decreased by more than 10 percent in 7 years, whereas the proportion living with married daughters, relatives and others decreased only by less than 1 percent.

Living arrangement is a very important mechanism to the elderly because it is closely related to the support for them. Co-residence with family members seems to be the best way of supporting the elderly because most types of support (financial support, emotional support, assistance in activities, etc.) are possible with co-residence. Of course, living alone does not necessarily mean a lack of support from family members. However, the elderly living alone or with their spouse only normally have a limited access to these types of support.

Table 10 illustrates the living arrangements of the elderly by region in 1994. One of the most notable feature in this table is the sharp increase of the proportion living alone among the elderly. The proportion of the living alone in 1994 is 11.9 percent, which is increased by 4.2 percent since 1988. The proportion of living alone or with their spouse only is 41.0 percent, which is greater by 21.3 percent than that in 1984 (Eu 1991). The proportion

TABLE 10. LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OF THE ELDERLY BY REGION, 1994 (%)

Living arrangements	Region		
	Whole	Urban areas	Rural areas
Living alone	11.9	9.6	15.0
Living with spouse only	29.1	21.6	39.0
Living with children	53.8	64.1	40.1
Living with others	5.2	4.7	5.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
	(2,056)	(1,170)	(886)

Source: Rhee, K.O. et al. 1994, P.38.

of the elderly living with children is 53.8 percent, which is decreased by 24.0 percent since 1984 (Kim, I.K. et al. 1992). Another notable feature in Table 10 is the big differences in living arrangements between the urban elderly and the rural elderly. The proportion of the elderly living alone is 9.6 percent in urban areas but 15.0 percent in rural areas. The proportion of the elderly living with their spouse only is 21.6 percent in urban areas but 39.0 percent in rural areas. On the other hand, the proportion of the elderly living with children in rural areas (40.1 percent) is less by 24.0 percent than that in urban areas. This is due to the massive out-migration of children from rural areas.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals several characteristics of Korean elderly over the past three decades as following: increase in the size and share of the old population; increasing proportion of the old people in the dependency ratio and aging index; increasingly imbalanced sex ratio; and substantial differences in the proportions of currently married elderly between male and female. In addition, it is noted that the urbanization rate for the elderly is lagged behind the rate for the total population, and that the share of elderly in rural areas increased greatly due primarily to the heavy out-migration of young people from rural areas.

It is also observed that the proportions of the elderly living alone have sharply increased while the proportions of those living with family members have consistently decreased. Several projections indicate that the elderly population will continue to grow and the share of old people in the dependency ratio will become greater than that of children by 2020.

Thus, an increasing number of Korean elderly would suffer from financial difficulties because of their children's avoidance or inability to provide

financial support (Choi 1992). The emergence of this problem is reflected in rising demand for social welfare for the elderly and increasing government's responsibility to support the elderly.

Although Korean government recently established various types of services for the elderly, the scope of the services is very limited. The 1994 Elderly Survey in Korea shows that the proportion of the elderly receiving public assistance is only 4.6 percent of the total, and those receiving pension benefits account for 4.1 percent (Rhee et al. 1994). A broader array of services and better access to them by a larger segment of the elderly population are necessary.

As mentioned earlier, modernization theorist argue that industrialization and urbanization would shift household structure from an extended to a nuclear form and shift living arrangements of the elderly from the type of living with children to the types of living alone or living with spouse only. Some data in this study seem to prove that the modernization theory is applicable in Korea, that is, the aging process in Korea is following that of developed countries in the West.

Nevertheless, there remains a question whether convergence theory will be adequate in explaining the family changes in Asian countries including Korea. For instance, Japan has reached demographic transition and socioeconomic development similar to those of developed countries in the West, but its family structure and elderly living arrangements are similar to those neighboring developing countries in Asia (Kojima 1992). Besides the theoretical argument against the convergence approach, there is some empirical evidence that ethnic differences in living arrangements of the elderly in the U.S. persist even after socioeconomic factors are controlled (Kim, I.Y. 1993).

As is widely known, Far East Asian countries including Japan, China, Taiwan, and Korea have shared the ideas of filial piety (Hyo in Korean; Hsiao in Chinese; Ko in Japanese) for many generations (Sung 1990). Respect for the aged has strong roots in Korean culture; it is a value based on filial piety which has not yet been undermined by socioeconomic and demographic changes. Despite the forces of industrialization and urbanization, the family still retains its role as the backbone of old age support (Kim et al. 1992; Liang et al. 1992; Martin 1988; Sung 1990; Tu et al. 1989).

Thus, it is predictable that although the proportion of extended family and that of the elderly living with children have declined over time, the proportions would remain at higher levels than are expected in the developed Western countries. For instance, the proportion of the elderly

living with children in Korea would be much greater than that (14%) of the U.S. in 1975 in any period of time (Knodel et al. 1992).

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