

Committee: World Health Organization

Topic: The question of global strategy and action plan on aging and health

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Introduction

The World Health Organization aims to promote universal health coverage, keep the world safe, and strengthen the health system. As technology is getting more sophisticated and developing day by day, most people can live at least more than 60 compared to decades ago. The development of medical fields has prolonged the average living year, and currently, people expect men to live 79.9 years on average, and women to 85.6 years old. Some countries have similar birth rates compared to the past, but they have higher populations. This is because people don't die as much as people are born. In a few countries, the birth rate has decreased, but the death rate has reduced where the country has more elderly than those younger.

The aging society could affect the whole country's economy in different ways. The pattern of work and retirement, how a family works, the government's welfare towards the elderly, and pensions cause economic changes. In most countries, there is a welfare system where the government provides pensions for the living of the elderly through the tax paid by workers. However, the number of taxes the government is receiving is reduced by the lack of young workers, but the elderly who retired from work are increasing, so it is difficult to fulfill the need for a pension. The economy inevitably has to focus on the elderly.

There are several reasons for aging. Firstly, the declining fertility rate, which is the number of live births in a year per woman. Usually, the recommended rate is 2 per woman, replacing their mother and father each. However, if the rate is less than 1, then the population couldn't increase as their parents are dying, but only one child is left. The population of the country will decrease in decades, as well as the number of children. The government needs to keep the fertility rate high, especially in low economically developed countries for economic growth. The increase in population later means an

increase in young workers, as well as tax for economic growth and infrastructural development. On the other hand, the decrease means the economy will enter an aging society, where most of the countries are putting an effort not to.

By 2030, more than one in six people will be over the age of 60. This means there will be 1.4 billion people aged 60 in 2020 and older. As early as 2050, the number of people aged 60 and over is expected to double that of young age - estimated at about two-thirds, with a population likely topping out at around 2.1 billion or more than one-fifth (22%) of its market share currently. Moreover, the number of persons aged 80 years or older is expected to triple from now until 2050, with around four hundred and twenty-six million.

Definition of Key Terms

Population Aging

Population aging is a word that refers to a process of society getting older. The proportion of individuals in a population increases over time.

Aging Society

Aging society is a term used when the country has over 7% of 65 old people living. This demographic shift typically occurs due to a combination of longer life expectancies resulting from advancements in healthcare, nutrition, living conditions, and declining birth rates. When the number of births decreases but the number of elderly increases, society gets worse, and since the age distribution is not in order, the economy could fail.

Age Composition

The age composition means the number of people in different age groups. It could influence the consumption, needs, goods, and services the people require. For example, if the age composition of children is big, the economy will focus the consumers on children as well as increase in schools, education, and playgrounds.

Fertility rate

Fertility rate means the number of children that would be born to a woman if she were to live from age 15 through the end of her childbearing years and bear children at each speed by these ideal specific age-certain numberlessness rates.

Background Information

Aging Society Comparison Between Countries

The aging society can be divided into four levels: the ratio of people over 65 years old is over 7%, which is called an aging society, the ratio exceeding 14% is called an aged society, and when the ratio is over 20%, it is called a super-aged society. For instance, South Korea is currently an aged society, with the ratio classified as 17.5%. It is expected to continue to increase until 2025, with a record of 20.6% entering a super-aged society. Japan is a super-aged society, where the number of elderly people is around 26%, as well as Italy at 22% and Germany at 21%. From an aging society towards a super-aged society, Australia is expected to take 53 years, the United Kingdom will take 60 years, the United States of America will take 15 years, Japan will take five years, and the Republic of Korea will take seven years.

Asia is ahead of the other continents, especially Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Hong Kong, which are ahead of the other countries. These countries are expected to have the highest share of people aged 65 and older compared to other countries. By 2050, roughly 40 percent of the population in Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong is expected to be 65 years old, which will make alternation and economic changes.

The Economic Impact of Aging

Economically, when an aging society continues, there will be a decline in the working-age population. This means there will be a lack of workers, leading to difficulties for businesses in filling in-demand roles. Although the elderly have a demand for the product, the lack of supply can't fulfill all those demands since there are a limited number of people who can work. This causes a decline in productivity, higher labor costs, and reduced international competition. This could eventually cause a push in wages to hire people, which could result in inflation and create a price spiral.

Furthermore, technological improvements will increase the gap between the elderly and young generations. As life expectancy rises and technological enhancements are made, the elderly will have difficulty adapting to changing technology, whereas younger people require more comfortable and fast interactions. The elderly could not keep up with the market, which would result in products that target the elderly. Those improvements toward younger people will be delayed, and most of the new

institutions will also target the elderly, such as senior citizen centers, rather than playgrounds for children. The economic focus will alter in a few decades.

The Impact of Aging on the Healthcare System

As people grow older, they are easily affected by even a small disease or cold. The aging population is a burden on the nation's healthcare system as they are requiring more medical care. The government has to fund medical care, as older populations require better health facilities. The institutions for healthcare, such as hospitals, health centers, or other health-related institutions, will be required. Moreover, social care, state pension, education, and training for the elderly will increase. The younger generation who pay taxes is reducing, but the aging population is increasing, so the burden on younger generations is increasing. The spending on the elderly will be focused more compared to the younger, which causes a structure where the new generations live in a severe welfare system.

Based on data from the UK Department of Health, providing hospital and community health services to an individual aged 85 years or more will be approximately three times as costly per person in a target group than for persons aged 65-74.

Social Impact of the Elderly

Aging society is not just impacting the economy, but they are also getting discriminated against by the younger generations. In some restaurants, there are no senior restaurants or cafes. Some seniors think age is their authority, and are bossy in some cases. Also in public transportation, the younger people have to concede their seat to the senior, since it is an implicit promise. For these reasons, the gap between the younger generation and the older people is getting bigger, resulting in polarization between them. If this situation gets worse, there could be abhorrent consequences. Some languages are made to degrade senior citizens, not recognizing the impact of that word. The discriminant the elderly are getting is not just their problem, but we become grandma and grandpa one day, so these problems need to be addressed.

Conflicts between younger and older are not all. 2 out of 3 elderly over 65 are getting a pension and income whereas 32% of the others find it difficult to live day by day with small money. Elderly over age 70's income range from their age, as well as their gender. If they didn't earn enough money when they were young, they are guaranteed a poor age. They paid tax when they were young, but they

couldn't receive it back. Abuse towards the elderly is also a serious problem. Physical abuse and psychological abuse toward them need to be improved.

As an example of the physical abuse and psychological abuse, a report from the Administration for Community Living indicates that about 10 million elderly are getting physical, financial, psychological abuse. Furthermore, sometimes the elderly are being blocked from social interaction and are restricted from making contact with the outside world. This could increase anxiety and depression towards the elderly. Financial abuse from their own child happens often. The family can access the financial information of the elderly to divert money or sign a fraudulent contract as they know the elderly are not familiar with laws.

Some descendants choose to send their parents to sanatorium when they have disease, or are unable to get treatment from the children. However, neglect in a facility is an issue that we need to consider. The majority are left without medical care they need, and are getting physical abuse, mental abuse and verbal abuse from the officials. The children pay money for the best healthcare from the institution, but actually most of them are left alone without any contact from the outside world. These problems are sometimes undercover, so it is difficult to report. This needs to be solved, as the elderly are part of our society.

Possible solutions

Extending the retirement age

The retirement age limit is currently 60 to 70, differentiating from country to country. In Japan, the long-lasting aging society increased the retirement age to 70, whereas in South Korea is 60, Germany and Sweden is 65, which is expected to increase. Life expectancy is increasing, so the age at which people can work has to be increased. The increased number of older people could extend productivity, and will also encourage the escalating GDP.

In some countries, they are planning to increase the retirement age, such as Vietnam and Indonesia. For Vietnam, the male was 60, while the woman was 55. It is now planning to increase to male 62, and women 60. Indonesia is currently 56, which is rated as too low as a retirement age, but is promoting a law to extend 3 years per year, which could lead to 65 years old in 2043. Originally, there were opinions on extending the retirement age, since it could reduce the workplace for younger generations. However, the opinion on raising the retirement age continues to come up.

Increasing Workplace Only for the Elderly

Providing a workplace that is specialized for the elderly is an idea. Since the elderly could feel difficulty following the production of the younger generation due to weak health, providing a workplace that only the elderly young are reluctant to have. For example, jobs such as security guards, sanitation workers, garden maintenance, and transportation drivers are not expertise and don't require special physicals. They are what the elderly could do reasonably well. Limiting these jobs to people aged over 60 could prevent the loss of jobs for the younger generations as well as provide job opportunities for the elderly.

If these workplaces are made, the elderly who can't carry livelihood without money can benefit. Since they can't get a job in old age, they have to depend only on the pension or money from their child. Not only the livelihood but also money to go to hospital, having clothes for different weather are needed. Providing jobs only for them can give them income, and the government can receive tax from them as well. For these reasons, making jobs and setting a law on the job that only the elderly could work could improve the lifestyle of the elderly.

Provide Benefits for having a child

One of the main reasons for the aging society is the reduction in fertility rate. This is often due to financial pressure and the high economic cost of raising children. To reduce those burdens, the government should provide childcare provisions, such as tax breaks, or provide support funds. Also, the company could provide flexible working hours and holidays for mom and dad, so they can focus on parenting.

In South Korea, the policy that is newly made is to provide parental benefits up to 100 million Korean won, and for the first kid, the government provides 200 million won, and for the second child, 300 million Korean won is provided. In Japan, the government focused on broadening economic aid for childbirth, as well as higher education. The child allowance program supports children through high school and has had an income limit abolished. The plan also includes steps such as making working conditions more family-friendly and enhancing the quality of nurseries. The cost could add up to about 3 trillion yen (\$20 billion) per year for three years. However, there are worries that this could cause huge debt to the administration.

In addition, building more public schools and providing academic support towards them where students can receive education without paying much will encourage people to have a child. Not just having a child is an issue, but as the children are growing up, the money on personal academies, additional education, and paying for physical education and art classes could make parents liability. Hence, paying about 20% of the academy from the government to children whose parents' income is low could help children to receive better quality of education and feel free to do what they want.

Support for Work-Family Compatibility

Although there were several efforts made to increase the birth rate, still, countries such as South Korea and Japan are still facing low birth rates. In order to support themselves financially, enhancing the stereotype toward pregnant women and improving working conditions for women could help. One of the main reasons why women are reluctant to have a baby is because of the high expense of bringing up children, the difficulty of reinstatement after childbirth, and keeping the balance between parenting and working.

In order to solve the problem, the government should mandate reinstatement of women after childbirth. Since the company wants people who could work without rest, when the woman is pregnant, they are often fired. Even after reinstatement, they are not getting suitable treatment. Social dignity is being ignored. This stereotype should be changed, and so leading society allowing women to feel easier to get back to their work after childbirth should be made. Also, enough maternity leave should be given to women. Some companies force women to get back to their work after short maternity leave. This makes people not have a baby, but rather choose to marry. Hence, the balance between work and parenting should be guaranteed for women's more comfortable pregnancy.

New Health Care Policies

Not only encouraging giving more birth to more children could help economic growth, but also offering healthcare to the elderly could help. Even though the ageing society is due to the overwhelming number of the elderly, the elderly play an important role in our society. The lack of young people can be replaced by the elderly, who still can work or those who are willing to earn money on their own. We need to provide health care policies for the elderly since they are the one who could improve the economy in the future.

In addition, there are negative attitudes towards the elderly. Most people are not familiar with the elderly and one negative opinion can affect the whole society. Currently, the gap between the young generation and the old generation is getting bigger. People who are close to fashion and technology are getting more assistance whereas the elderly hardly understand the use of technology. Likewise, the polarization between them is getting bigger. By making the elderly closer to our current society and by interacting together, this gap could be reduced. Especially in the healthcare system, simple self-diagnosis kits are well distributed in society, but the elderly are not familiar with this. By promoting these kits and temporarily taking care of the health of the elderly could lead to a better future.

Pension Adjustment

Pension adjustment is a policy that could solve the aging society. As the number of elderly is increasing, financial support towards pension welfare is getting heavier. By adjusting the amount of pension, the burden to the young generation could reduce, and gain the possibility of sustainability. Also, we need to consider the number of workers and the number of elderly, as well as the future where the current workers are getting older. But not just adjusting the pension could solve the aging,

but also encouraging the elderly of economic independence is important. Leading them to earn stable income and be a part of society can enhance the quality of life.

Besides, the adjustment of pension will allow the government to invest more in health care and prevention of diseases. Healthy adults may remain in the labor market longer than others, and increase production. Economic stability from pension adjustment improves the living standards of the elderly, which in turn has a positive effect on social participation and mental health. As pension adjustment can be adapted to different economic situations such as inflation, this policy can fortify the elderly's economic safety.

Major parties involved

The Republic of Korea

One of the nations that is heading towards a super-aged society is the Republic of Korea. The population of elderly over 65 is increasing every year, which is expected to be 40% of the aged population in 2050. In 2023, it was the second-highest life expectancy in the world but recorded the world's lowest fertility rate of 0.72 births per woman. This situation is expected to be deepened. The reason for this decline is the burden of money to raise a kid, intensifying property prices, and socially, pregnant women are not preferred in the workplace, even after the delivery. Hence it is difficult to carry out work after giving birth.

On the other hand, the number of elderly is surging. The number of people who need dependency is increasing, which means it becomes a strain for younger generations. The government's welfare towards the elderly, known as pensions, will be depleted in the next 30 years if the elderly continue to increase. This causes a vicious cycle, where the younger generations pay taxes to the government for their future, but once they become old, they don't have a pension to pay back.

The government made an effort to increase the fertility rate, and so far, they have invested about 200 billion U.S. dollars, but no significant enhancement has been made. Women are still reluctant to give birth due to insufficient funds provided by the government.

The People's Republic of China

China has the second largest population in the world, coming after India. Moreover, it has the fastest aging population. Like South Korea, the fertility rate is decreasing year by year, and an increase in life expectancy. Since China has a huge population compared to other countries, it is expected that the number of elderly will also be severe after a few decades.

The Chinese government once made an effort to reduce the population, known as the 'one-child policy' in 1979 and it was successful. Between 2000 and 2010, the fertility rate was reduced to 1.6 per woman. However, the fertility rate continued to decline, which resulted in the distortion of the population pyramid. In 2020, the population over 65 years old was 17.8%, which is forecasted to

inflate up to 32% in 2040. In addition to that, the retirement age of the working population is predicted to rise from 18% in 2020 to 66% in 2060.

State of Japan

Japan is the first country that recorded that 1 in 10 citizens is over 80 or older. Almost a third of its population is over 65 years or older, which is around 36.23 million people in the country. This altered the economic shape of Japan, as there was a lack of productivity. By 2040, the number of workers is estimated to shrink to 11 million workers. The reduction in productivity is creating tardy economic growth. In 2022, Japan recorded a fertility rate of 1.26, which is far behind the ideal rate of 2.07. This means the country is in an unstable situation, causing an unbalance in age composition.

The elderly employment rate in Japan is high to fill the lack of production, with 13% of the workers over age 65. The reason for the aging society in Japan is a financial burden, particularly in low-income households, where wage earners tend to be non-regular workers. It is 60 percent of that in a regular worker household with a non-regularity-income gap, revealed by the Ministry for Health, Labour and Welfare on income information. In addition, the marriage per 1000 people is falling from 10 in 1970 to 6.4 in 2000 and 4.1 in 2022. The wife feels difficulties raising the children on their own, while the husband earns income.

The Italian Republic

Italy has 24.3% of the population older than 65, which has continued to increase since 2009. The average age in Italy is 46.6, which is still rising. Italy also has a high life expectancy, with females of 85.2, and males of 81.1, and has a low fertility rate. The consequence of this worse situation is that the labor force growth stops, and the increase of GDP slows down.

The Kingdom of Norway

Norway is the top country with the super aged society. In order to solve this problem, Norway started a new project called “Aging Readiness and Competitiveness”(ARC). The ARC contains the aim to improve the quality of life of the elderly and provide economic opportunities. Increasing the retirement age for the elderly and providing incentives from the boss was carried out for the elderly, as well as providing new education. These educations are for giving more chances to get a better job in

different fields such as technology or professional work. By this, the competitiveness in the labor market will get stronger, even with the young.

As the elderly are less socialized as they are getting pushed by the young generations, the government enhanced caring services for the elderly. The connection between different people and being socialized is necessary for the elderly's mental health. The social interaction in the place provided from the government could help the young generations to have wider job opportunities and increase the workplace as well. By meeting different people everyday, the elderly could feel less loneliness.

Periodic medical services are being emphasized in this service. As the elderly meet different people everyday, it is more likely that their diseases or health issues are being noticed by others. The early detection and treatment is especially important for those elderly s they are easily exposed to various symptoms. This could allow the elderly to enjoy different services provided for them such as insurances, and the use of modern technology could make the curing much faster. By protecting the elderly, the Norwegian government could deal with an aging society better and work for the economic growth.

The Kingdom of Sweden

Sweden is a country with very high life expectancy, which is above 82. By 2070, it is expected to increase to men with 87 and women with 89. Sweden is the country with the second aging population index score, as well as a high fertility rate. However, the Sweden has tried to overcome this and make the economic to thrive by the following ways;

Sweden increased the welfare for the elderly. They provided health care services, assisted by improving living conditions and provided social activities opportunities. By doing this, the elderly could live longer with less help, and independently. Digital education such as using new phones, using kiosks and utilizing medical equipment faster than the hospital. Following the trend and sophisticated digital century could make the elderly live in difficult conditions without using what we made for comfort. The Swedish government has implemented these progressive policies to improve the lifestyle of the elderly.

Furthermore, the government is making an effort in increasing the retirement age, as they want more elderly to join the workforce. By this, the elderly could earn their income, experience and gain efficient labor. Also socially and economically the elderly could enhance the quality of life, as they

could have their own home and could live without their own child. This could also reduce the isolation of the elderly from society as well as reducing the gap between the younger generations. The stereotype towards the elderly could be enhanced in a better way as well.

Timeline Of Events

Date	Description of event
1978	oiewdhoew The World Assembly on Aging Proposal held by The United Nations regarding addressing aging and recognizing the growing importance of issues related to older populations.
1982	Vienna International Plan of Action on Aging. This was the first international agreement to address aging, focusing on the needs of older persons in areas such as health, nutrition, housing, and social welfare.
1983	The UN General Assembly Endorsement was held to mark the beginning of international efforts to improve the quality of life for the elderly.
1991	In the United Nations Principles for Older Persons, the UN adopted the Principles for older people, which outlined five key areas: independence, participation, care, self-fulfillment, and dignity for older individuals.
2002	Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) was held, emphasizing Older persons and development, advancing health and well-being into old age and ensuring enabling and supportive environments.
2016	The Global Strategy and Action Plan on Aging and Health was set by The World Health Organization (WHO). This strategy outlined five strategic objectives aimed at fostering healthy aging and promoting long-term care and supportive environments for older people.

UN Involvement, Resolutions, Treaties and Events

MIPAA(The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing)

The UN promoted a plan called MIPAA(The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing) in April 2002. The discussed issue was how to enhance policies for elderly people, and how to improve their lives. The conference included work and pensions for older people, as they should be enabled to work as long as they want. In health, older people should receive better healthcare, as they are more easily exposed to small diseases.

Vienna International Plan of Action on Aging

This is the World First Assembly on Aging, held in 1982. It was held to recognize the worldwide attention to the serious problems of aging, and decreasing population. It was meant to create an international program aimed at economic and social security for older persons. It included 62 recommendations for action in different areas, such as health and nutrition, elder consumer protection, house and country planning law enforcement, the status of home and family welfare, income security, and employment. The Plan of Action is intended to enhance the capacities of Governments and civil society for managing age-related population changes in development, as well as to meet older persons' developmental potentialities and dependency needs. This Strategy was also a collaboration of regional and international cooperation with 62 actions recommended in the areas of research data collection and analysis as well as training education.

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