

RAPID POPULATION AGING AND THE PROBLEM OF ELDERLY PEOPLE IN SOUTH KOREA*Ozodkhon Tulanboeva**Third-year student of Tashkent state university of oriental studies*

Annotatsiya: mamlakatda past tug'ish darajasi va uzoq umr ko'rish kabi omillar aholi strukturasi o'zgarishlariga olib kelmoqda. Natijada, qariyalar soni ortib bormoqda, bu esa ijtimoiy va iqtisodiy tizimlarga katta bosim yaratmoqda. Maqolada qariyalar uchun xizmatlar va resurslar ta'minlashdagi qiyinchiliklar, ijtimoiy izolyatsiya muammolari hamda yosh avlodning migratsiyasi kabi masalalar tahlil qilinadi.

Kalit so'zlar: aholi qarishi, qariyalar, uzoq umr ko'rish, iqtisodiy ta'sir, sog'liqni saqlash tizimi, hukumat siyosatlari, qariyalar uchun resurslar, ijtimoiy xavfsizlik, past tug'ish darajasi.

Аннотация: такие факторы, как низкая рождаемость и высокая продолжительность жизни в стране, приводят к изменению структуры населения. В результате увеличивается число пожилых людей, что оказывает серьёзное давление на социально-экономические системы. В статье анализируются такие проблемы, как трудности в предоставлении услуг и ресурсов пожилым людям, проблемы социальной изоляции и миграция молодого поколения.

Ключевые слова: старение населения, пожилые люди, продолжительность жизни, экономические последствия, система здравоохранения, государственная политика, ресурсы для пожилых людей, социальное обеспечение, низкая рождаемость.

Abstract: factors such as low fertility and long life expectancy in the country are leading to changes in the population structure. As a result, the number of elderly people is increasing, which is putting great pressure on social and economic systems. The article analyzes issues such as difficulties in providing services and resources for the elderly, problems of social isolation, and migration of the younger generation.

Key words: population aging, elderly, longevity, economic impact, health care system, government policies, resources for the elderly, social security, low fertility.

According to research conducted by the World Bank, South Korea is currently experiencing a demographic crisis. The country, which has the fourth-largest economy in Asia, saw its population decline for the first time last year. The research reveals that South Korea's population is aging rapidly and birth rates are continuing to fall. Already holding the record for the world's lowest birth rate, South Korea saw a further decline in 2023. Despite government efforts and spending nearly \$270 billion to address the issue, the problem persists without any significant improvement. According to The Guardian, South Korea, with the world's lowest fertility rate, reached a new record low in 2023. The country's population has been shrinking for the fourth consecutive year. Preliminary data from South Korea's Statistics Office show that

the total fertility rate—the average number of children a woman is expected to have in her lifetime—was 0.72 in 2023. In comparison, it was 0.78 in 2022, 0.81 in 2021, and 0.84 in 2020. This is far below the replacement level of 2.1 children per woman needed to maintain the current population of 51 million. As of 2018, South Korea was the only member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) with a fertility rate below 1. Additionally, the average age of South Korean women at the birth of their first child is 33.6 years, the highest among OECD member countries.

According to experts' projections, if the current low birth rate continues, South Korea — Asia's fifth-largest economy — could see its population shrink by nearly half, dropping to around 26.8 million people by the year 2100. Since 2006, the South Korean government has allocated nearly \$270 billion to address the problem of declining birth rates. However, these measures have not yielded the desired results. Incentives have included financial subsidies for couples, childcare services, and support for infertility treatments. Couples cite several obstacles to having more children, including the high cost of raising children, soaring real estate prices, lack of well-paying jobs, and fierce competition in the education system, according to The Guardian. Experts also highlight the role of cultural factors, including the difficulties women face in balancing professional careers with motherhood, and the traditional expectation that women are primarily responsible for household duties and child-rearing. If the trend of extremely low fertility continues, South Korea's population may decline to just 26.8 million by 2100, reinforcing concerns about the country's long-term demographic and economic sustainability. South Korea has one of the lowest birth rates in the world. In 2020, the fertility rate was 0.84 children per woman. This situation is linked to young generations increasingly avoiding marriage and family life due to economic hardships and the rising cost of child-rearing. At the same time, advancements in healthcare and the promotion of healthier lifestyles have led to a rise in life expectancy, which reached an average of 83 years in 2021. As a result, the number of elderly people in South Korea is growing rapidly. Many older adults face social isolation and loneliness. Changes in family structure, urban migration by younger generations, and the decline of traditional family values are aggravating this issue. The aging population is having a negative impact on the economy, as a growing number of elderly individuals puts increasing pressure on the social welfare system, requiring more resources to care for them. Elderly people need more healthcare services, which places an additional burden on the healthcare system. There is an increasing need to develop specialized medical care and rehabilitation programs for seniors. Many of them rely heavily on the public social security system, which reduces their economic well-being. To support families and encourage childbirth, the South Korean government has implemented various programs, including financial support and parental leave policies. However, further development of social services and rehabilitation programs for the elderly is essential. Initiatives that promote self-reliance and social engagement can help integrate the elderly into society. Organizing various activities to encourage social participation among seniors can reduce their isolation and improve their quality of life. The issue of an aging population and elderly care in South Korea is a serious challenge that affects the country's socioeconomic development. To address this, collaborative efforts are needed from the government, society, and families. By improving the quality of life for the elderly and ensuring their integration into the community, South Korea can work toward overcoming these demographic and social challenges.

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