

A Structural-Functional Approach of the Theory of the Korean Family

構造的-機能的面을 中心으로 본 韓國家族의 理論的 考察

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社會의 가장 基本的인 單位인 家族은 核家族에서 부터 시작된다. Hill (1957)에 依하면 家族에 對한 研究는 일곱가지 面으로 나누어 研究되어 질 수 있으며 그 中 하나인 構造的-機能의 面을 中心으로 韓國家族을 理論的으로 分析해 보려는데 本 研究의 目的이 있다.

家族에 對한 構造的-機能의 面의 分析은 社會學에서 中心의인 研究 分野이다. 社會가 變化, 發展함에 따라 家族의 構造와 그 고유한 機能도 變化되어 간다. 社會學的으로 死亡, 離婚, 別居, 結婚, 出産에 依해 家族의 構造와 그 機能은 變化되어 간다. 韓國家族의 構造는 父係 直係 확대 家族에서 점차 核家族으로 變化되고 있으며 그 機能도 따라서 變化되어 가고 있다.

I. Introduction

The family is the central unit of society and it starts with the nuclear family. A sociology of the family is interested in the organization of the family and in its structures, functions, and changes. The seven basic frameworks or approaches of family were defined by Hill and others in 1957: institutional-role analysis, structural-functional, situational-psychological habitat, learning theory-maturational, household economics-home-management, and the family development or family life cycle approach (Eshleman, 1978).

The structural-functional frame of reference, sometimes called functional analysis' is a major and dominant theoretical orientation in sociology today. Within the family area, the scope of the approach is very broad. Talcott Parsons mentioned that "We cannot yet develop a complete dynamic theory of action, and therefore, the systematization of theory in the present state of the knowledge must be in structural-functional terms." (Parsons, and Bales, 1955).

Function often means purpose or "final cause". The needs and requirements of the family are subjective: that functional or dysfunctional can often be translated "approved" or "disapproved" (Davis, 1959).

This frame of reference is organized around basic concepts such as structure, function, dysfunction, and manifest, lat-

ent, and functional prerequisites. The structural family patterns include the rules of residence and rules of descent. Nuclear family, polyandry, patriarchy, avunculocal family, bilineal family structure, primogeniture, exogamy, arranged marriage, or consanguine relationship are words that define specific structural arrangements of a given family system. The social structures of the family refers to the way in which the social unit is arranged, the interrelationship of the parts, and the patterns of organization (Eshleman, 1978).

The analysis of this theory deals with the family life in Korea and Jeju Island which is far from the mainland. This theory is in terms of a structural-functional approach to the family. It is in part a body of substantive sociological concepts and theories. This paper attempts to deal with the nuclear family, patriarchal family and arranged marriage only in Korea.

Assumptions:

1. Social change will influence the family life style, structurally and functionally.
2. Women's work outside the home will influence the family life style, functionally.
3. The change of household will influence the family life style, structurally.

II. Procedures

Basic Structure of the Family

The concept of structure refers to a number of units-molecules, individuals, social classes, that are related to each other in certain interdependent and recurring ways within some sort of bound whole: a cell, a family, or a society (Yorburg, 1973).

In the family, structure refers to the totality of socially recognized statuses or positions occupied by individuals who are engaged in regular recurring and socially sanctioned interactions and relationships. The traditional family refers to a group of two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption and residing together. Thus, if the son of the head of the household and son's wife are in the household, they are treated as part of the head's family. A family is different from a household, which consists of all persons who occupy a housing unit, even though they are unrelated to each other. According to the group of classification, the family is divided in the three groups, primary, secondary and subfamily (Eshleman, 1978).

A primary family refers to the head of the household and all other persons in the household related to the head by blood, marriage, adoption and husband-wife families. Primary group relationships are facilitated by face-to-face

contact, smallness of size, and frequent and intense contact. Much of the importance of marital and family groups centers around its function as a primary group. Perhaps more than any other source it is the family which provides each us with a general sense of well-being, companionship, ego worth, security, and affection. With no primary group relationship, it is doubtful that even survival itself would be possible.

A secondary family is a family that does not include among its members the head of the household. Members of this family may include persons such as guests, lodgers, or resident employees and their relatives living in a household. This group is basically goal oriented rather than person oriented.

A subfamily is a married couple without children, or one parent and children, living in a household and related to the head of the household or his wife. The most common couple of a subfamily is a young married couple sharing the home of the husband's or wife's parents. According to the family-type classification follows the nuclear or conjugal and the extended family. The nuclear and conjugal families are similar to each other. The term conjugal implies marriage, or the relations between husband and wife, as the basis of the structure. Thus a husband and a wife would be correctly termed either a nuclear or conjugal family. Those families are identifiable and functionally significant in all families, even the most extended. This group

is recognized as unique, beginning with the wedding ceremony and extending throughout life. The nuclear family is the smallest unit responsible for the preservation of the value system but is peculiarly suited for the task by virtue of the prolonged dependency of the human infant and the intensity and priority of relationships with the family (Eshleman, 1978).

This family is structurally isolated from extended kin solidarities and other functionally differentiated systems. But the nuclear family is not something characteristic only of U.S. society. The isolation of nuclear family is not the distinguishing structural characteristic. Nevertheless, the nuclear family ordinarily can be distinguished, and does function as a significant group (Parsons and Bales, 1955).

Extended family refers to family structures that extend beyond the nuclear family. As stated, within the extended family may be a multiple number of nuclear family groupings. The smallest variety of extended family type is the stemfamily. Normally the stemfamily consists of two families in adjacent generations, based on economic and blood ties. An example would be a father and mother living in the same household with a married son, his wife and children (Eshleman, 1978).

Basic Function of the Family

Function has been used in the preceding section to refer to the consequence of a given structure. If the structure and its

related consequences make for the adaptation or adjustment of a given system it is said to be functional. If the structure and its related consequences lessen the adaptation or adjustment of the system, it is said to be dysfunctional. But, the terms function and dysfunction are relative to the particular group or system being analyzed.

Functionally oriented sociologists generally distinguish between the functions which are intended and recognized and those which are unintended and unrecognized. These distinctions are termed manifest and latent functions. Manifest functions are those objective consequences, contributing to the adjustment or adaptation of the system, which are intended and recognized by participants in the system. Latent functions, correlatively, are those which are neither intended nor recognized. Similarly, manifest dysfunctions are those objective consequences which lessen the adaptation or adjustment of the system. Almost every pattern of social organization and aspects of marriage and the family, have both manifest and latent functional and dysfunctional consequences. The four basic prerequisites or functional imperatives are adaptation, goal attainment, intergration, and pattern maintenance and universal to all social systems including the family. Murdock postulated that the nuclear family was universal and that it had four essential functions: socialization, economic cooperation, reproduction, and sexual relations (Eshleman, 1978).

Ogburn stated that traditionally the family alone was adequate to provide all the basic functions essential for a society: reproductive, economic, educational, recreational, religious, and socialpsychological. Parsons and Bales suggest that the basic family functions have been reduced to two: the primary socialization of children so that they can truly become members of the society into which they have been born, and the stabilization of the adult personalities of the population of the society. Reiss argues that although functions such as those listed are necessary for, and performed in, all societies, only the function of nuclear family structure. That is, the only function basic to the nuclear family in all societies is that of nurturant socialization. The child is never socialized only for and into his family of orientation, but into structures which extended beyond this family, though inter-penetrating with it (Parsons and Bales, 1955).

Many of the functions of the family under went further changed during World War II. Some of family functions are transferred to social systems, i.e. economic, education, religious, recreation etc. Industrialization and the industrial revolution had influenced especially changed the economic function (Blankknship, 1976).

But one function of the family the -provision of emotional support and gratification becomes more, rather than less, important in modern societies. The family provides services that cannot be elsewhere (Yorburg, 1973).

The Characteristics of Two Types of Families

Burgess compares the historical approximations of these two types of families, indicating the differences between the larger extended patriarchal family and smaller, more nuclear form of democratic family.

The patriarchal family is authoritarian and autocratic, with power vested in the head of the family and with the subordination of his wife, sons, and their wives and children and his unmarried daughter to his authority. The democratic family is based on equality of husband and wife, with consensus in making decisions and with increasing participation by children as they grow older.

In the patriarchal family, marriage is arranged by the parents, with emphasis on prudence, on economic and social status, and on adjustment of son-in-law or daughter-in-law to the family group. In the small democratic family, selection of a marriage partner is in the hands of young people, and choice is on the basis of affection and personality adjustment to each other.

Compliance with duty and the following of tradition are major expectations of the patriarchal family, while the small democratic family are the achievement of happiness and personal growth of the individuals.

The primary historic function of the family-economic, educational, health, protective, and religious-found in their

fullest development in the patriarchal family. These historic functions have been greatly modified in the small democratic family (Eshleman, 1978).

In this paper the another chose to discuss a patriarchal family since it was characteristic of the Korean family.

Theory of Korean Family

Korea is a very conservative country and its tradition, culture, philosophy, values and standards are based upon Buddhism and Confucianism. Ethics is the best goal of the Buddhism and Confucianism. It influenced Korean family life style and all personal relationships.

The structurally traditional Korean family was the patriarchal, lineal, extended family till the 1950's. After that time Korean family change slowly to the patriarchal lineal family which means a three generation family rather than extended family. Korean family is when it is observed long time from past to future, of the "Jikke-Family" (Lineal Family) thpe, constituted by vertical connection of a few nuclear families, that is, "Jikke-Family" comprises family head, his married eldest son, eldest grandson and their wives who respect prosperity and continuance of "Jib". The traditional Korean family places the uppermost value on maintenance and perpetuation of "Jib" (Family) centered around the head of a family. Any assertion or deed on the part of individual members of a family that runs counter there-to is denounced, and components of a family

name to devote themselves to perpetuate "Jib". The "Jib" shows three concrete sides of its character; preservation of ancestor-worship ceremony, maintenance and expansion of family property, and having a son to succeed the family in the future. The nature of "Jib" is a patrilineal institution (Choi, Jai-Seuk, 1970).

The mate selection was arranged marriage and the ideal spouse was considered to be a person from one's own racial, lineage, social, economic, and birth-order background. Prior to marriage, women were ruled by their fathers, after marriage by their husbands, and after the husband died, by their children. The most common pattern of residence for the newlywed is patrilocal for the bride to change residence and live with the parent of the groom. The children are raised in the social traditions of their father's lineage and the patrilineal kinship continuity is maintained. The form of marriage was monogamy rather than polygamy but desire for male children occasionally resulted in polygamy when a wife had no son.

The household consisted of the three generations: grandparents, parents, grandchildren. It also include the husband's unmarried brothers and sisters and employee's family. The eldest son's family must live with and take care of his parents in his household or parents. They have the same unit of household tasks. Usually a daughter-in-law manages the tasks but decision-making depended on the mother-in-law. Sometimes, conflicts

and problems between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law were very serious, and married life was very difficult for women. A father-in-law's or husband's authority and patrimony were absolute in all major family decisions. By contrast, a wife's authority was exerted entirely by way of symbolism.

The rule of descent was through one line, the father's. This type of lineage provides continuity over time in property, authority, privileges, marriage control, and religious service of his ancestors. The absolute ties extend from grandfather to father to grandson. It was the right of primogeniture rule and had no exception to this rule. It almost mean if whoever is the eldest son he can not avoid this obligation. There is exist of family loyalty and justice. He was born of greater obligation and expectation, his father also has obligation and expectation from his grandfather and had to balance filial with parental obligations.

These multigenerational structure of expectations makes up the fabrics of loyalties and together with the accounts of actions, the ledger of justice. The term loyalty means trust, merit, commitment, action, and the ethical obligation component in loyalty is first tied to the arousal, loyalty-bound members, sense of duty, fairness and justice. Justice thus transcends the psychology of the individual and of his partners in relationship. Justice as a multipersonal homeostatic principle with equitable reciprocity as its ideal goal. It is based on a minimally

three generation content (Nagy and Spark, 1973).

Kinship ties were also strong and close together. The family relationships are face-to-face and very close like a primary family group. Their relationships were based upon mutual trust, human nature and intimate associations. Parent-child relationship has precedence over husband wife relationship. The parent-son relationship lays stress on unilateral absolute obedience on the part of the son, the relationship being that of blind submission to the authoritarian paternity (Choi, Jai-Seuk, 1970).

Not until early in this century when Western influences began to be felt in Korea did the traditional family system undergo modification. The recent trend is that the younger generation wants to take a new family life style similar to the nuclear family in Western society. Also, in urban areas, parents themselves appear to be convinced of the necessity to encourage the married children to establish their own familiar. On the whole, family relationships seem to be more democratic and the importance of kinship solidarity is declining. It means that the patriarchal authority of father and husband has substantially weekend, and consequently, the authoritarian relationship is becoming more democratic. This phenomenon is particularly true in middle and upper class urban families.

In rural areas, the traditional Korean family life style still remains structually and functionally. There has been an

increase in number of employed women. As women receive higher education, society offers increased opportunities for work and more women are combining the traditional role of wife and mother with an occupational role. Thus, women get their own lives more during the last two decades.

Theory of Jeju Island Family

The Jeju Island family is little different from that of the mainland even the same country. The Jeju family is constituted of two nuclear families one is the married son, his wife and children, the other is his parents. Sometimes his unmarried brothers and sisters live in two separate houses within the same fence. Both have their own houses, fields, private property and household tasks. It seems similar to the "stemfamily" but it's not quite same. Usually the eldest son lives with his parents, but if the parents choose otherwise, it means the other sons or daughters, may live with them. A daughter-in-law would not manage household tasks for husband's family. A mother-in-law does it herself while she could do work. If she could not manage household tasks herself, the daughter-in-law would manage it for her family. These are the main differences from the mainland family.

The division of the family property in Korea is characterized by the non-equal division among the sons. In a word, the unequal division of property in Korea is based the superiority of the first son.

But in Jeju family, the family property is divided almost equally among the sons even though the people in this island do not have a higher social status and are not rich (Lee, Kwang Kyu, 1971).

The Jeju family has one household even though there are two families. In spite of the two nuclear families, the external form is the patriarchal lineal family as on the mainland. Structurally, the Jeju family is the patriarchal lineal family but functionally, it's the nuclear family.

IV. Conclusion

The structural-functional analysis of Korean family indicates it is the patriarchal lineal family. It is called the "Jikke Family" type.

M. Mead said that if the people want to keep their own tradition and culture, it could be transmitted from generation to generation only through the three generations family because that family has contained the past, present, and future. But a modern system of industry and a rise in technological, economic development and urbanization have made changes in the family patterns. Extended kinship ties weaken, lineage patterns dissolve, and a trend toward some form of the conjugal system generally begins to appear. That is, the nuclear family becomes a more independent kinship unit.

Sociologically, with death, divorce, separation, marriage and child birth, family structure changed and recurs,

statuses are lost or added, roles are redefined or redistributed.

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