

Problems of Family Education in an Industrialized Society and Alternatives*

(The case of Modern Korean Society)

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I . Introduction

Education within the family and the problems of today's youth have emerged as areas of special concern in our era. Many highly industrialized and technologically advanced nations are experiencing great chaos and confusion in their traditional cultures, behavioral norms, and values. We are awaiting the establishment of a new family order and culture.

Since the 1970's, Korean society has been successfully dealing with the problem of poverty. There has been a marked increase in material affluence due to considerable economic growth which has been based upon the rapid development of science, technology and industry. The development of high technology and economic growth has resulted in a modern life style of increased leisure time and convenience.

At the same time, however, pollution problems, traffic congestion and urban concentration have expanded. Various negative factors such as excessive competition in college exams, the growing generation gap, neglected children's home education because of working parents, weakened family ties, juvenile crime problems, the breaking apart of the traditional extended family and expansion of non-traditional family concept, and weakening of parental authority, together are the making education of children within modern families increasingly difficult. Attempts to solve these growing problems by politicians, leading academics and various social organizations have met with little success.

In this context, I will attempt to define some of the educational problems confronting contemporary families and will suggest some positive alternatives.

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II . Reduced family size and a lack of opportunity for children to form multilateral human relationships

1. Changing family structure and the decrease of the family members

Up to 1945, most Korean parents had many children(7 to 8). A well defined extened family support system enabled children to have ample opportunity to develop affectionate relationships with other family members.

With industrial development and especially since the 1960's, the following phenomena have become conspicuous ; a) prominence of the nuclear family system at the expense of the expanded family b) an acceleration of the use of birth control and the increase of single child families c) the advancement of women into society and d) an increase in the level of education overall. Such fundamental changes in family structure and reduced family size have eliminated opportunities for children to develop diversified family relationships, leading to many problems in education within the family.

Over the past two decades, the number of three - generation families have decreased by half while single generation families and nuclear families with only parents and their unmarried children have increased rapidly.

2. Reduction of family size and the personality formation of only children

The increase of single - child families has considerably altered the personality formation process in children, giving rise to more educational problems. Parents very often satisfy all of the demands of only children and may over - protect them. Such a child is usually obstinate, has weak will - power, and may lack real independence. If an only child has not had the experience of sharing parent's love with other children, he or she may become overly egostic and may lack the ability to properly socialized with peers. This is because the child has only been close to adults and not siblings and friends as well. If a child has not been much exposed to challenges and conflicts through games or play activitiy, he is more apt to develop an extremely ego - centric personality and to experience greater difficulty in mixing with other people. Consequently, parents of an only child need to pay special attention to proper educational methods(Lee, Sung - Jin, 1986).

It is desirable for parents of an only child to encourage such positive aspects as intellectual curiosity and self - awarencess. Parents should try to complement such shortcomings as an ego -

centric attitude and lack of tolerance for others by helping the child to form close ties with relatives in the same age group.

III . Industrial society and mother deprivation

The changing from traditional extended families to nuclear families and the reduced birthrate have resulted in an increased rate of employment for women. Further exacerbating this problem is the rising divorce rate which is adding even more women to workplace. Extremely diverse working patterns are the result of these changes and many families are now in practice, broken families with a single working parents. Children of such families can not be properly protected, and this can result in mental and or physical disabilities. Many problems of juveniles – running away from home, criminal activity, etc – have emerged as serious social problems.

Rapid industrialization has led to a more diversified employment structure enabling women to advance en masse into the society at large. The rate of two parent working families has increased rapidly because of a greater demand for women in the workplace. With both parents employed full time, the educational function of the family has weakened. Children often cannot find the parental support they need to depend on psychologically and it is likely there may not be enough opportunity for the child to develop affection with the mother. In families where the mother has failed to play her role as mother the children can exhibit symptoms of mother deprivation.

Most progressive theories argue persuasively that children are best socialized in a home environment where the parents themselves act as proper role models, and reinforce or reject specific behavior in children. When one parent is absent in child rearing it causes problems in a child's personality formation, because a necessary role model for the child is absent from the home. In an industrialized society where working parents spend more time at the workplace than at home, not being able to share time and affection with their children, the educational function of the family is severely impaired.

IV . Absence of family education and the emphasis on education for college entrance examinations

As Korea has become more industrialized, there has been a very strong emphasis put on college education, which is making education within the family more difficult. This is seen most clearly in the education process to prepare students for examination. Without exception, parents try to

provide the best educational environment for their children to help them prepare for examinations.

When the total number of hours spent by students at schools and private institutes to prepare them for examinations are considered, it means that students stay only a few hours at home for sleeping and for a few meals. Often, parents and children have very different daily schedules causing them not to see each other during the day, making family life even harder.

In some cases, young people develop mental disorders or even commit suicide because of the accumulated and continuous psychological pressure and lack of dialogue at home. A 1991 YMCA report showed that 68.7% of students feel that advancing to upper level schools and career selection are their biggest problems. The survey result reflects the absence of successful education at home and the distorted nature of school only based education. It can be interpreted to be a common challenge that all societies in the process of industrialization must face. An ideal alternative must be created to restore the original position of education within the family in the near future.

V . Collapse of traditional family ethics and tragedy of broken families

Family ethics in Korea were founded on principles of Confucian thought. The Confucian value system was considered to be model of family order and values which was to expand from the family and into society at large. Unfortunately, the secular humanist values of modern industrialized society have come to dominate traditional values, bringing about a crisis situation in which we can see the dismantling of our society and our longstanding tradition of family. The ramifications of the weakening of the sense of filial piety, long the mainstay of order between parents and children, are being felt throughout our country's urban centers.

Secondly, the traditional value and order within the husband and wife relationship (difference between male and female in a couple) are being replaced by egalitarian values often resulting in the disruption of natural order.

Thirdly, materialistic values have come into a dominant position, and egoistic individualism is prevailing, disrupting ties between siblings and relatives.

These phenomenon are an indication of the breakdown of the family and of social disintegration resulting directly from the expansion of materialistic thought and overly severe competition. They have overwhelmed traditional values with egoistic human nature.

VI. Ideal personality type and child education

Let me summarize the problems of education within the family and suggest some alternatives.

The reduction of family size in an industrialized society has caused difficulty in the multilateral personality development of children. The increase in motherly deprivation and juvenile delinquency is attribute to broken families. Key factors causing these problems are lack of parent's affection, collapse of family order and unbalanced knowledge – centered education.

To solve these problems, let me make some suggestion for forming an ideal personality.

First, education must focus on the perfection of the indivisual personality. It is a truly human education aimed at the "integrity of conscience and actions". The true criteria of conscience here is the religious criteria. Parents themselves must be the model of perfected personality. Their attitute and behavior must offer children a concrete model to follow.

Second, education must be for the perfection of family. It is an education based upon family ethics and their implementation. The basic spirit of family ethics is to live for others and to lead a sacrificial life. Children must be able to experience and learn family ethics in an environment where love between parents and children, love between husband and wife and true brotherly love are fully expressed.

Third, education must be aimed at developing people's full intellectual capabilities. It is not simple knowledge – increasing education by memorization alone that we need, but one which focuses on the development of the full potential and diverse talents and capabilities of individuals. The goal of education must be to create an environment in which people can realized themselves and enjoy happy lives, according to one's individual talents and capabilities.

In conclusion, a home must be a place where parent's true love is implemented and family ethics are maintained. It must be an arena of education where the full original potential of all individuals is developed.

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産業社會에 있어서 家庭教育上の 問題와 그 對策方案 (現代 韓國社會를 中心으로)

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1970년 이후 우리나라는 산업화로 인하여 사회구조와 가정구조가 크게 변화 되었다. 도시집중화로 인한 각종 공해 발생, 교통난, 인구이동의 문제를 비롯하여 그리고 핵가족화로 인한 가부장적 권위상실 및 가정교육부재, 청소년 비행등 수 많은 문제가 야기되었다. 특히 핵가족화로 발생된 심각한 사회문제는 전통윤리의 붕괴와 가정교육의 부재현상을 발생 시켰다. 이와같은 문제발생에 관한 선행연구를 종합해보면

첫째, 핵가족화로 인해 발생한 가족규모의 축소현상으로 자녀들의 다면적 인격형성에 결손을 초래하여 성장후 독립심과 의지가 약하고 고집이 세며 이기적이고 자기중심적인 성향이 되어 사회생활에 부적용 현상을 초래하게 되었다고 한다. 그 이유는 다면적 인간관계의 결여로 상호 협조하고 사랑을 교환한 경험부족과 외동자녀에 대한 부모의 관심이 자녀의 욕구에만 집중되어 자녀종속적인 태도가 크게 적용하였기 때문이다.

둘째는 산업화 사회에서의 부부동시 사회참여가 자녀양육에 어머니와의 애착형성이 결여되어 모성실조를 겪게 된 문제를 들 수 있다. 어머니와 자녀간의 애착형성이 결여 됨으로 발생하는 문제는 지적 정체현상과 정서발달의 장애가 주 원인이 되어 감정 통제력이 약해서 공격적 행동이나 반 사회적 행동으로 확대되어 청소년문제 발생의 원인이 되고 있음을 시사하고 있다.

세째로 산업화사회와 경쟁력 조장을 들 수 있다 산업사회를 개방사회, 경제력사회 혹은 능력사회라 하여 교학력위주의 선발형태가 입시경쟁을 부추기고 있으며 그에 따라 많은 청소년들과 학부모들이 상위 지향적인 심리가 작용하여 자녀들의 입시경쟁에만 집중하게 되었다.

이러한 원인으로 인하여 인간교육 즉 가정교육을 외면하여 반도덕적, 반사회적 문제를 야기하게 하였다. 특히 전통적 가정윤리가 붕괴되어 부모에 대한 효관의 약화, 부부간의 애정약화 및 물질지향적인 사고가 이혼률을 증가시켜 가정붕괴를 가져왔다.

이상에서 논의된 자녀교육의 부재가 자녀들의 지적 정서적 문제로 확대되어 산업화사회의 모순점을 노출시키고 있음을 알 수 있다. 이와같은 문제를 해결하기 위한 대안으로 연구자가 제시하는 방안은 훌륭한 가정교육을 위해서 우선되어야 하는 것은 부모자신의 인격적 개인완성을 제안하였다. 인격의 완성 은 양심과 행동이 일체하는사람을 지칭한다. 다음은 서로 위하여 사는 삶을 영위하는 인격체가 되어 양심의 법에 따르는 삶, 타인을 위하여 사는 삶을 자녀들에게 보여줌으로서 반두라의 모델링 교육을 제안하였다.

마지막으로 오늘날과 같은 암기위주의 경쟁교육이 아니라 타고난 잠재성 개발에 주력하는 교육으로, 적성과 소질을 개발하는 창조적 산 교육장을 마련하여 주고 또한 그것을 뒷바침하는 가정윤리교육의 회복이 무엇보다도 이 시대가 절실히 요구하는 바람직한 교육이라 하겠다.