



A Tentative Research Shaped for Creating Aging-friendly Villages in Gyeonggi-Do, Korea (ROK)

Recently, there has been a survey revealing a satisfaction with their public or community facilities in new towns newly built according to life-cycle of residents in 2012. Old people were not satisfied as well as younger residents were not.

Although old people did not satisfied with community facilities provided, there has been no aging-friendly villages initiated in Gyenggi-Do as well as the other cities or counties in Korea have not. Some of old people go to neighborhood centers for the elderly in their villages, others of them go to senior center in towns. The problem is the fact that the rest of them do not go to neighborhood centers for the elderly or senior centers. This problem indicates that senior programs provided through neighborhood centers for the elderly or senior centers are not sufficient. Further, the capacity of senior centers are not expected to hold future old people as well as the current elderly who would like to participate in various programs.

These main problems show that there should be alternatives for providing enough elderly services with future old people forecasted to suddenly increase. In fact, the capacity of senior centers is lagging behind of the number of old people over 65. Other neighborhood centers for the elderly

are being evaluated to be questionable in perspective of adequate roles for the elderly services. Considering these problems alternatives for increased old people in future should be formulated. One of alternatives is to create so called aging-friendly villages that residents in villages take care of their seniors as much as possible, letting alone elderly well-fare services from various governments.

The elderly survey shows that 84.4% of survey respondents prefers aging-friendly villages by selecting their houses for aging place to living at silver towns or nursing homes. In process of creating aging-friendly villages, there are many obstacles to overcome such as improving physical or social infrastructure. Further more, there should be self-governing councils or implementation committees for the action for issues, visions, etc on aging-friendly villages. What is more necessary is that governments should initiate the policy for progressing aging-friendly communities.

As challenges for aging-friendly villages, physical facilities must be improved in the current villages as well as social infrastructure, such as providing with more programs for walking, fitness, leisure activities, lifelong learning, meeting old people, sports, dancing, hobby, etc. What is necessary is that governments or public agencies would better support old people villages by dispatching community coordinators to find practical solutions or remove obstacles in process of progressing aging-friendly villages. The other policies are suggested for aging-friendly communities such as home sharing between old people, discounting day for groceries and clothing to the elderly, a joint survey of migrating-in-out, transportation, activities among cities and provinces in Capital Region metropolitan, cooperating among urban planners, welfare services providers for old people, healthy communities, officials responsible for these kinds of duties.

Key word active aging, aging-friendly community, home sharing between the elderly, sidewalk improvements for senior pedestrians, neighborhood center for the elderly