

Policy Report 2019-04

A Comprehensive Analysis of Social Service Security in Korea



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【Publications】

Evaluation of the Community Investment Social Service Project in 2018, Ministry of Health and Welfare(MOHW)-Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs (KIHASA), 2018(co-author)

Social welfare delivery system for optimizing public service use(II): A focus on the local governance for welfare services, Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs (KIHASA), 2018(co-author)

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ISBN: 978-89-6827-591-3 93330

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I

Introduction



Introduction <<

Since the Korean Government in the mid-1990s launched its policy commitment to social services under the banner of social investment, a decade has passed, and new policy tasks have emerged. Social services have been promoted as a solution to a variety of “new” social problems, such as the declining birth rates, population aging, growing poverty among the working class, and collapse of families, which the conventional welfare paradigm (social insurances, public assistance for the poor, etc.) was ill-fitted to address.

The changes that these social services have wrought in Korean society over the past decade indeed merit much attention. Elderly care and activity support for people with disabilities, for instance, have been at the forefront of the movement to “socialize” the function of care that families traditionally handled. A system of universal services, going above and beyond simply guaranteeing a minimum income for the poor, has been established and expanded. The introduction of “electronic vouchers” for social services in 2007 has transformed the service infrastructure, including the structure of service providers and their personnel. Furthermore, they have increased the choices for service users and heralded the development of user-centered social services. Social services also

harbor great potential for job creation, particularly for the low-income class and minorities, who have been traditionally excluded from the job market. By creating jobs to help improve the lives of the working class, these vouchers have come to form a key mechanism for an active approach to welfare.

In the meantime, the demand for social services has been growing and diversifying over the last decade, and will likely continue to do so in the future. The growing demographic imbalance—plummeting birth rates on the one hand and the rapid aging of the population on the other—has intensified the problem of care. The diversification of household types—with the increasing numbers of single-person, unmarried/cohabitating, and immigrant households—has been giving rise to new service needs. Continuing recessions and the transformation of industrial structures have greatly increased the unpredictability of job prospects, particularly for young people, generating a variety of unemployment-related problems, such as housing and physical/mental health issues. There is also a growing need to find innovative solutions to a set of social problems that had been largely overlooked until recently, such as violence, abuse, and air pollution. In other words, Korean society is witnessing a constant rise in the diversity of policy problems that require social services as solutions. This implies the necessity for a nationwide and integrated system of social service security.

The Korean government recently responded to this situation

by articulating its commitment to establishing such a system under the Governmentwide Social Service Plan, an inter-departmental joint report that was submitted to the Social Security Committee (SSC) in February 2018. The plan espouses two main objectives, i.e., reinforcing the availability of social services for all age groups and shifting the paradigm of the system for the supply and use of social services. The six specific goals it adopted include expanding social services for different needs and age groups, ensuring the balanced growth of social services across regions, increasing and improving the quality of social service jobs, enhancing the publicness and control of social services, establishing an integrated system for the provision of social services, and designing social services in such a way that they ensure Koreans' social rights (Government of the Republic of Korea, 2018). The plan suggests that the growing awareness of the shortage of social services among Korean policymakers, regional disparities, and lack of public control and integration in the system of social service provision and use all stand in the way of improving the quality of life for all Koreans through social services.

The absence of a comprehensive perspective on policymaking has the potential to engender diverse problems regarding investment in and the supply and use of social services. As for investment, overlapping investments of resources for certain needs or in certain groups may occur due to the lack of a

comprehensive understanding of how well different needs are being addressed. As for supply, the lack of consensus among different agencies and departments on the scope and levels of social services to be provided can lead to significant increases in similar and overlapping services as well as shortages of other necessary services, intensifying the problem of equity. Regarding service use, the lack of in-depth consideration of the accessibility, integrity, and continuity of different services can lead to interruptions in the provision of user-tailored services.

In acknowledgement of these concerns, this study is intended, first and foremost, to render a comprehensive assessment of the wide range of social services provided by different governmental bodies. As the main emphasis of social services in Korea is to provide active and universal policy interventions for various risks to which all Koreans are prone at different stages in their lives, it is important to assess whether those in need of services are receiving appropriate and sufficient resources in a timely manner. In other words, our focus is on gaining a comprehensive understanding of the security of the social services being provided in relation to different service needs and age groups. Based on such assessment, we shall also explore policy implications regarding the establishment of a more effective and comprehensive governmentwide system of services.

II

Literature Survey

II

Literature Survey ‹‹

Policy measures necessary to strengthen the security of social services is a topic that has received little attention in the overall discourse on social service policy in Korea. Over the last decade, Korean policymakers have emphasized the need to foster a social service market and increase social services so as to create more jobs. However, little research has been done regarding how to improve the security of services for the sake of users. Furthermore, the absence of a widely accepted definition or concept of social services has made systematic discourse difficult. Before discussing the security of social services, we first need to establish a shared understanding of what specifically constitutes social services. The conceptual confusion and disputes over the exact scope of social services, however, has prevented such understanding from arising in both academia and policymaking circles. Even the statutes providing for social services adopt quite divergent definitions. These definitions are found in the Framework Act on Social Security (FASS), Social Enterprise Promotion Act (SEPA), and Act on the Use of Social Services and the Management of Vouchers (AUSS). Of these, the first two adopt a broader view of the concept of social services, while the last limits social services to welfare and medicine only.

Even the definitions rendered by these statutes have little use

when it comes to distinguishing between multiple areas of social services as subjects of policymaking. The FASS, for instance, defines social services as constituting an area of social security that is distinct from social insurances and public assistance for the poor. Given that income support and services form the two main pillars of social security in many states worldwide, services provided under social insurances or as part of public assistance may also be considered social services. The stated policy objectives of social services are “to guarantee humane living conditions” and “to improve quality of life,” which are abstract and can be said to be the guiding principles of social security in general. By contrast, social insurances have the clear objective of “securing the health and income of all Koreans,” while public assistance also aspires to “guarantee a minimum standard of living and provide support for the self-sufficiency of the poor” (Kang et al., 2018).

The concept of “security” has indeed been used mostly in discourses on social insurances and public assistance (e.g., the security of the National Pension, security of the National Health Insurance, and reinforcement of income security). Koreans have typically used the concept in emphasizing the need to eliminate the blind spots of these policy schemes. Although the specific applications of the concept differ from policy to policy, it has generally guided discussions on the scope of program coverage and the levels of benefits to be provided (Ku and

Baek, 2008; Shin, 2009; Kim, 2013; and Roh, 2016). The concept of “blind spots” in the scope of coverage refers to both citizens who are legally alienated from existing social security programs and others who are eligible for the programs but effectively excluded from them. “Blind spots” created by shortages of provided benefits refer to experiences of citizens who are eligible for and receive benefits under the given programs but still struggle to make ends meet due to the insufficiency of the benefits provided.

The discourse on security has had better luck in relation to social relations and public assistance than social services, owing mainly to the differences in the purposes and types of people the programs serve. Social insurances and public assistance are designed to serve certain groups of people, whether based on income or other criteria. It is therefore relatively easy to determine the sizes of populations not benefitting from those programs. Furthermore, because these programs either provide cash benefits (such as the National Pension and National Basic Livelihood Security Program (NBLSP)) or reduce the amounts of co-payments individuals are required to pay for the services they receive in light of their income levels (e.g., National Health Insurance), consistent sets of criteria can be applied to determine the quantities of benefits eligible persons are to receive. Social services, on the other hand, encompass quite a wide range of diverse population groups. The benefits they

provide are also diverse (cash, in-kind, and services) and apply to both the providers and users of services. In other words, it is difficult to apply a consistent set of criteria for determining how much these services provide and how wide their reach is. Also complicating the situation is the dearth of official statistics on the security of social services.

Despite these limitations, we can appropriate the concept of “blind spots” featured in the discourse on social security in general and better understand the security of social services by asking the question, “To whom, and to what extent, should social services be provided and guaranteed?”

First, we can refer to the provisions on social services in the FASS and identify how securely the service policy has been designed. The question of for whom social services are to be guaranteed has to do with the beneficiaries and scopes of social services. The FASS defines social service beneficiaries as “all Koreans in need of help from national and local governments as well as the private sector.” The law also requires the establishment of a lifelong social security network for all Koreans that reflects “the basic universal needs that arise in all stages of the lifecycle and the particular needs that arise in relation to specific risks.” That social services are to cater to the “universal basic needs” of all Koreans indicates that universalism is the central principle of social services. It is thus essential to uphold everyone’s basic right and access to social services.

Moreover, that services are also to be provided for “particular needs” associated with specific risks emphasizes the importance of designing selective and professional services tailored to address the vulnerabilities of certain groups.

Social services are not confined to welfare and income support; rather, they encompass a variety of areas essential to overall quality of life, such as health and medicine, education, housing, culture, and the environment. The proviso that they be provided for people “in need,” however, puts the burden on policymakers to devise the criteria for measuring and satisfying such needs. The availability of fiscal resources also necessarily affects the extent to which such services can be provided. This structure of social services reflects the application of selective or residual principles within the larger universal framework (Thompson and Hoggett, 1996).

Second, we need to ask and answer the question as to how much of social services (quantities or levels) are being provided. Any answer to this question would have to reflect the ultimate objectives of social services, i.e., guaranteeing humane living conditions and improving the quality of life for all. Humane living implies that social services are needed to guarantee more than bare existence. The appropriate standard of living, however, is abstract, while needs associated with maintaining it vary from time to time and place to place. How much of social services are needed to ensure such standard of living thus in-

volves some arbitrary decision-making. Unsurprisingly, there are no fixed rules regarding how much of social services are to be provided. Neither is it possible to measure and determine, with clarity and objectivity, the needs to which such services are to be tailored.

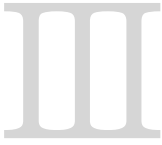
Perhaps it is due to these difficulties that research on the security of social services has been so limited. Some, nonetheless, sought to address the problems of universalism and blind spots in social services. Roh (2016) drew upon the raw data of the 2013 Survey of Social Service Demand and Supply and analyzed the blind spots of social services in terms of the comprehensiveness of the scope (target beneficiaries) and sufficiency of the benefits provided. Roh's study sought to measure the comprehensiveness of services based on the demand-to-use ratio and the sufficiency of the benefits provided based on the disparity between the actual numbers of hours of services used and the desired hours. The author concludes that there are significant gaps in social services concerning health and medicine and employment support that need to be closed. Kim and Kwon (2013) focused their attention on elderly care services, which are the most systematic of all social services provided today, and assessed how universal they were in terms of policy design, enforcement, and outcomes. Upon closer examination, we can see that the authors' conclusion overlaps to a significant extent with Roh's conclusion on blind spots. Kim and

Kwon evaluate whether the current services are designed to ensure and protect all eligible persons' basic right or entitlement to services. The answer to this question depends upon how inclusively the target beneficiaries of the given service have been defined. Furthermore, the authors rank the services designed in such a way that administrative discretion plays a role in their enforcement, i.e., in deciding whether a person can receive such services or not, low on the universality scale. Yun et al. (2010) examined care services for children, people with disabilities, seniors, and women and families with the goals of identifying the types of services needed by these groups and determining the minimum quantities of services to be provided. They specified the actual extents to which services are provided (in terms of both target beneficiaries and types of services) and the minimum amounts of individual services that should be provided.

The existing literature on the security of social services nonetheless fails to account for the breadth and diversity of the services provided. The authors also forego general summations of the social services available in Korea and discussion on the means by which they assessed the processes. This tendency has prevented the discourse on social service security from expanding beyond care services. To promote a more productive and effective discourse on social services and policy, we first need to survey the overall status of the social services currently being provided.



Research Method



Research Method ‹‹

Based on the foregoing survey of the existing discourse, we shall examine the security of social services in Korea in terms of the target beneficiaries, scope of application, and sufficiency of benefits. We should also assess each of these factors from the perspectives of both policy and the user.

We can assess the security of social services by examining their policy designs and outcomes. Policy design assessment involves examining whether the social services provided by central government agencies cater to all age groups with service needs. It also involves determining how inclusive the scopes of target beneficiaries are. As for outcome assessment, we can examine the number of people who actually benefit from services and the amounts of funds allocated to those services. This process is based on the assessment methodology of the Social Protection Indicator (SPI), which was developed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). As a measure of the effectiveness of social protection policies, the SPI is used to examine the effectiveness of each nation's social programs and conduct international comparisons (ADB, 2016). Equation 1 below shows how the SPI is calculated. As the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita serves as the denominator, the equation allows us to compare the effectiveness of a society's social protection pro-

grams to the wealth of that society. The SPI also helps us conduct time series analysis on whether government spending on social programs in a given society increases or decreases in proportion to the society's economic growth (ADB, 2016).

$$\text{Equation 1) } SPI = \left(\frac{\sum \text{Social protection expenditures}}{\sum \text{Potential social protection beneficiaries}} \right) \div \text{GDP per capita}$$

The SPI can also be disaggregated into the breadth and depth of coverage of social protection programs. Equations 2) and 3) below measure the breadth and depth, respectively, while multiplying the two yields the SPI score.

$$\text{Equation 2) } Breadth = \frac{\sum \text{Actual social protection beneficiaries}}{\sum \text{Potential social protection beneficiaries}}$$

$$\text{Equation 3) } Depth = \left(\frac{\sum \text{Social protection expenditures}}{\sum \text{Actual social protection beneficiaries}} \right) \div \text{GDP per capita}$$

$$\text{Equation 4) } SPI = Breadth \times Depth$$

The SPI is mainly used to analyze the effects of social insurance, public assistance, and active labor market policies. It may be applied to social services for which the necessary information is available, namely the number of beneficiaries, target beneficiaries, and budgets. The process by which the SPI was applied to our analysis is described in detail in Section IV,

along with the results. The security of Korea's social services is analyzed herein not in terms of individual service programs, but in terms of lifecycle-specific programs or service functions, with the objective of evaluating the effectiveness of social services in protecting common target beneficiaries.

To determine whether social services in Korea satisfy the actual needs of target beneficiaries, we should also assess the inclusiveness of the scopes of the target beneficiaries they serve by dividing the number of actual user households by the number of households in need.

Two different types of data are used in our analysis. First, our analysis of the security of social services in policy design draws upon the data of the interdepartmental social service administration survey of 2018. The administration survey was conducted, with the assistance of the Social Service Policy Division of the Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW), from April 18 to June 20, 2018, involving officials in charge of social services at 18 agencies of the Korean national government. For this analysis, we define social services, pursuant to the FASS, as those that provide counseling, rehabilitation, care, information, facilities, capability development support, and social participation support for users in the areas of welfare, health and medicine, education, employment, housing, culture, and the environment. Specifically, income-security programs, technical programs (for the expansion/renovation of facilities, etc.), re-

search and development programs, and infrastructure development programs have been excluded from the range of social security programs considered. On the other hand, policy programs that provide services directly to individuals and households, enable target beneficiaries to access and use the available services, and subsidize private-sector or nongovernmental service suppliers were included in the analysis. To determine the list of government programs to be analyzed, we also examine the details of expenditures, budgets, and financial management plans that form the Tax Revenue and Expenditure Budgets for 2017/2018. Based on this survey and consultations with researchers and experts, a total of 313 government programs were chosen for analysis. Following the advice of public officials in charge of social services and the coordination of some of these programs, 269 of these programs were finally included in the analysis. Research was conducted on these programs in terms of their stated objectives and functions, target beneficiaries (based on age, income, or other factors), types of benefits provided, and scales of the budgets involved.

Second, our analysis of the security of social services from the perspective of the user draws upon the raw data of the 2015 Survey of Social Service Demand and Supply. The survey, which has been conducted every two years since 2009, is the only source of comprehensive information on the use of diverse social services and the dynamics of their supply structure.

Because the survey has been designed specifically to match the scope and target beneficiaries of the Korean government's social service policy, the data can be easily used in our framework of analysis. The 2015 survey data include 4,078 households as potential users of social services, and the survey provides data on 10 categories or areas of social services, i.e., counseling, rehabilitation, adult care, child care, health and medicine, education and information, employment, housing, culture, and the environment. Given the fact that many environmental services overlap with those of housing, we merge housing and the environment together into a single category. Our analysis of the inclusiveness of the target beneficiaries of services acknowledges the limited nature of the existing literature, which is focused on only certain age groups and neglects the changing needs of diverse households. We therefore examine services provided for different types of households in detail.¹⁾

1) As the survey is conducted every two years, we may also rely on the raw data concerning 2017. The original plan was to compare the data from 2015 and 2017, as the surveys conducted in those two years are based on much the same sample and questionnaire, and examine the changes in the security of services from the user's perspective. However, given the problem of representativeness in the 2017 data (e.g., the excessively small percentage of single-person households included in the sample compared to the target population), we decided to use the 2015 data only.

IV

Findings

1. Security of Social Services from the Policy Perspective
2. Security of Social Services from the User's Perspective

1. Security of Social Services from the Policy Perspective

As of the end of 2017, 18 agencies of the Korean government were operating 269 service programs, with a total budget of KRW 15.7 trillion. The MOHW operated 88 (32.7 percent); the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family (MOGEF), 45 (16.7 percent); and the Ministry of Employment and Labor (MOEL), 38 (14.1 percent). These three ministries, in other words, together operated 63.5 percent of all the surveyed programs. The MOHW also had the largest budget (KRW 6.9 trillion), followed by the Ministry of Education (MOE; KRW 4 trillion) and the MOEL (KRW 2.3 trillion).

<Table 1> Social Service Programs of the National Government and Its Agencies

Agency	Number of programs		Budget
	N	%	
Overall	269	100.0	15,714,361,342,000
National Policy Agency (NPA)	1	0.4	24,082,000,000
Ministry of Employment and Labor (MOEL)	38	14.1	2,349,658,000,000
Ministry of Science and ICT (MSIT)	4	1.5	12,808,000,000
Ministry of Education (MOE)	13	4.8	3,962,974,080,000
Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs (MPVA)	16	5.9	658,254,000,000
Ministry of Economy and Finance (MOEF)	1	0.4	20,468,000,000

Agency	Number of programs		Budget
	N	%	
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA)	10	3.7	567,599,000,000
Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST)	17	6.3	323,651,000,000
Korea Communications Commission (KCC)	1	0.4	2,858,000,000
Ministry of Justice (MOJ)	9	3.3	94,317,000,000
Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW)	88	32.7	6,873,464,781,000
Korea Forest Service	3	1.1	50,222,000,000
Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy (MOTIE)	7	2.6	190,264,000,000
Ministry of Gender Equality and Family (MOGEF)	45	16.7	524,735,281,000
Ministry of National Unification (MNU)	7	2.6	28,569,200,000
Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries (MOF)	5	1.9	19,401,000,000
Ministry of Public Administration and Safety (MOPAS)	1	0.4	216,000,000
Ministry of Environment (ME)	3	1.1	10,820,000,000

Note: The apparently service-centered programs of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transportation (MOLIT) and Ministry of SMEs and Startups (MSS) mostly involve providing finance and loans for housing projects and entrepreneurship. As they depart from other service programs in terms of orientation, these programs were excluded from the analysis.

Source: MOHW-Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs (KIHASA) (2018). *Governmentwide Social Service Administration Survey 2018* (raw data).

A. Policy Design: Inclusiveness of Target Populations and Program Scopes

Let us first examine how universal and inclusive the target populations and scopes of the analyzed service programs are. To this end, we can divide the programs according to the age of the clients they are meant to benefit, i.e., young children (under the age of seven), children and youth (aged 7 to 24), adults (aged 15 or older), and seniors (aged 60 or older). Programs serving more than one age group can be divided on the basis of

the main age group they serve. Programs for adults were categorized according to the definition of the working age population (15 or older), as they are mostly related to employment.

Programs that do not serve particular age groups made up the largest proportion (38.3 percent), followed by those serving adults (27.1 percent), children and youth (21.9 percent), seniors (8.6 percent), and young children (4.1 percent). In terms of budget, however, programs for young children occupied the greatest proportion (46 percent, or KRW 7.2 trillion), followed by non-age-specific programs (18.3 percent), programs for seniors (8.3 percent), those for children and youth (6.5 percent), and adults (2.2 percent). In other words, young children are the main focus of Korean social service policy and investment.

(Table 2) Distribution of Social Service Programs by Target Population Age

	Young children	Children and youth	Adults	Seniors	Non-age-specific	Total
N	11 (4.1)	59 (21.9)	73 (27.1)	23 (8.6)	103 (38.3)	269 (100.0)
Budget (million KRW)	7,174,733 (45.6)	1,016,620 (6.5)	3,338,463 (2.2)	1,308,087 (8.3)	2,876,457 (18.3)	15,714,361 (100.0)

Source: MOHW-KIHASA (2018).

Table 3 shows the distribution of social service programs by target population type, defined in terms of age and particular needs. It shows how universal or selective the given category of service programs are. The income requirement varies from program to program. Included in the analysis are programs that

explicitly limit beneficiaries' eligibility on the basis of income, such as those for the NBLSP and near-poverty groups and others for households earning less than 120 percent, 140 percent, or 160 percent of the median income. Overall, the majority of programs (74.3 percent) impose no such income criterion. There are, however, some differences across the age categories of programs. Programs for seniors, in particular, impose fewer income restrictions than programs serving other age groups.

Programs that serve populations with specific needs aside from income restrictions, such as people with disabilities, veterans, immigrants and foreigners, single parents, women, and people who sustained work-related injuries, are also selective in their design. Note that programs for young children are not such selective programs. The percentages of selective programs noticeably increase among programs serving adults and non-age-specific programs. The percentage of programs that are free of both income and particular-needs restrictions tends to decline as the age of the target population rises. Universal programs make up 40 percent or so of programs intended for adults and seniors.

(Table 3) Distribution of Social Service Programs by Criteria

Criterion		Young children	Children and youth	Adults	Seniors	Non-age-specific	Total
Income restrictions	Applied	4 (36.4)	18 (30.5)	11 (15.1)	11 (47.8)	25 (24.3)	69 (25.7)
	N/A	7 (63.6)	41 (69.5)	62 (84.9)	12 (52.2)	78 (75.7)	200 (74.3)
Particular needs	Applied	0 (0.0)	12 (20.3)	34 (46.6)	6 (26.1)	37 (35.9)	89 (33.1)
	N/A	11 (100.0)	47 (79.7)	39 (53.4)	17 (73.9)	66 (64.1)	180 (66.9)
Income and/or particular needs	At least one applied	4 (36.4)	24 (40.7)	42 (57.5)	14 (60.9)	54 (52.4)	138 (51.3)
	Neither applied	7 (63.6)	35 (59.3)	31 (42.5)	9 (39.1)	49 (47.6)	131 (48.7)

Source: MOHW-KIHASA (2018).

Do the existing social service programs in Korea cover all the areas of services needed? To answer this question, we can again categorize programs on the basis of nine functions, i.e., care, education/training, physical health, mental health, safety and rights protection, housing, employment, culture and leisure, and integrated service support. Care programs made up the largest number (18.2 percent), followed by those for physical health (16.7 percent), safety and rights protection (15.2 percent), and employment (also 15.2 percent). Care programs also occupied the largest portion of the social service budget, at KRW 9.6 trillion. For the rest, there was no such match between the number of programs and their budgets. Programs for safety and rights protection, for instance, are numerous, but receive very little fiscal support.

(Table 4) Distribution of Social Service Programs by Function

Function	Number of programs		Budget
	N	%	
Overall	269	100.0	15,714,361,342.000
Care (for children and adults and including assistance for daily activities)	49	18.2	9,590,653,000.000
Education/training	13	4.8	68,706,080.000
Physical health	45	16.7	1,412,646,781.000
Mental health	21	7.8	223,117,000.000
Safety and rights protection	41	15.2	282,483,560.000
Housing	14	5.2	703,562,145.000
Employment	41	15.2	2,415,523,200.000
Culture and leisure	26	9.7	380,186,000.000
Integrated service support (including support for using services and family support)	19	7.1	637,483,576.000

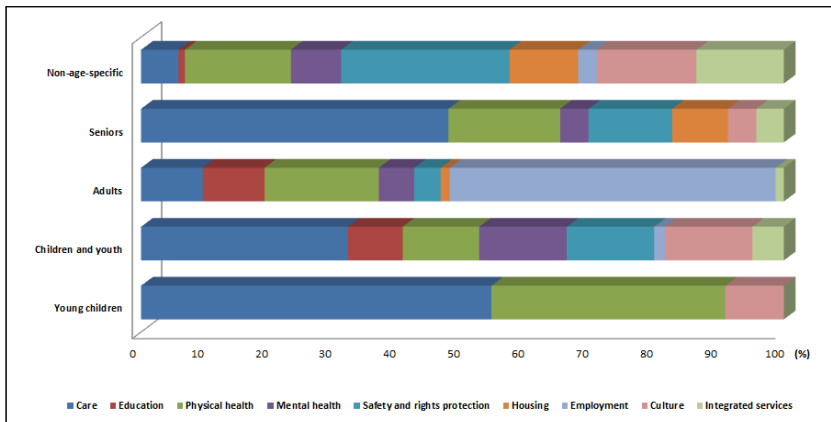
Source: MOHW-KIHASA (2018).

Programs are concentrated on functions needed to help specific age groups combat likely risks or satisfy needs. For example, programs for young children, children and youth, and seniors focus mostly on providing care, while those for adults focus on providing employment and related support.

A problem arises when there are age groups who have particular needs and for whom no services are provided, or when existing programs target populations so narrowly defined that people in need are denied services. Consider the fact that the needs for employment and education/training are growing rapidly among seniors because of the dramatic increase in average lifespan and growing unpredictability of the labor market. Figure 1, however, shows that there are few programs specifi-

cally providing employment and education for seniors. Non-age-specific programs should be redesigned to provide the necessary services for these groups.

[Figure 1] Distribution of Social Service Programs by Function and Age Group



Source: MOHW-KIHASA (2018).

B. Policy Outcome: Breadth and Depth of Services

We now need to examine the breadth (i.e., percentages of actual beneficiaries of programs in the target populations) and depth (i.e., amount of each program's budget spent on each beneficiary) of social service programs in Korea.

The number of beneficiaries and budget for each program, as indicated in the administration survey, were entered into our analysis. The potential number of users or the target population size of each program was estimated using the data of

Statistics Korea according to the program's eligibility criteria (demographic, financial, household, disability, and other particular-need variables). For example, the target population of the Emergency Safety Alarm Service for seniors living alone and people with severe disabilities would be the sum of seniors aged 65 or older living alone and people with disabilities of Grades 1 through 3. The target population size for a universal program, such as the Hope Welfare Support Group's Integrated Case Management Program, would be equal to the resident-registered population in the given age group that the program is meant to serve.

In using this method, we must be aware of the possibility of either overestimating or underestimating the number of beneficiaries. Overestimation may occur with respect to programs on which available statistics are limited, and whose actual target population sizes cannot therefore be estimated with reasonable accuracy. For example, the At-Risk Family Support Program should serve families at risk, but it is impossible to get a good estimate of how many such families there are in Korea. The target population size for such a program is therefore based upon the resident-registered population. Underestimation, on the other hand, may occur with respect to programs that leave a significant portion of their target populations unattended, despite their needs, due to their narrow eligibility criteria. An example would be a program providing activity support for peo-

ple with disabilities. Although all people with disabilities may need such service, the program is meant to benefit only people with severe disabilities. Accordingly, the target population estimate used in our analysis is based on the number of people with severe disabilities. A total of 212 service programs (roughly 80 percent of the surveyed programs) were subjected to the SPI analysis. This is because it was necessary to exclude programs whose numbers of actual beneficiaries are unknown and whose actual beneficiaries outnumbered the target populations (because they keep track of usage based on the number of services provided rather than the number of people using such services) from the analysis.

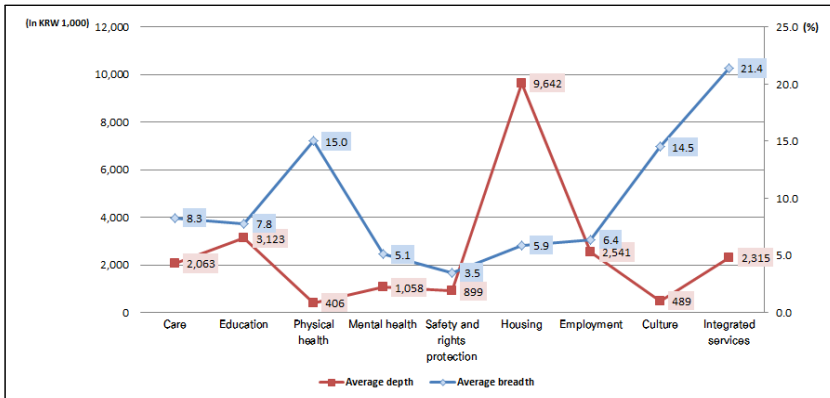
The results of the SPI analysis are the breadths and depths of the programs analyzed. Because the purpose of this study has nothing to do with either international or time-series comparison of the social services provided, we need not apply the GDP per capita variable to estimating the depths of services. As dividing programs by target population age runs the risk of shifting the focus of analysis to comparison of the security of programs by age, we need, instead, to divide programs by function. Equations 5) and 6) are used to estimate the average breadth and depth of programs serving each function.

$$\text{Equation 5) } \textit{Average breadth} = \frac{\sum \left(\frac{\textit{Number of actual beneficiaries}}{\textit{Number of potential beneficiaries}} \right)}{\textit{Number of programs (each function)}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Equation 6) } \textit{Average depth} = \frac{\sum(\frac{\textit{Service budget}}{\textit{Number of actual beneficiaries}})}{\textit{Number of programs (each function)}}$$

The average breadths of the programs, divided by function, were generally low, ranging from 3.5 percent (safety and rights protection) to 21.4 percent (integrated services). The disparities between the programs by function were also significant. Whereas programs for integrated services, physical health, and culture/leisure offered relatively high degrees of breadths, safety and rights protection and mental health programs offered quite low degrees of breadths at below five percent. Housing programs far outperform the other programs in terms of average depth per capita, because housing programs largely involve providing financial support for repairing housing and living environments. Physical health and culture programs were noteworthy for their relatively high average breadths and low average depths. Safety and rights protection and mental health programs, on the other hand, performed poorly in terms of both breadth and depth.

[Figure 2] Average Breadths and Depths of Social Service Programs by Function



Source: MOHW-KIHASA (2018).

2. Security of Social Services from the User’s Perspective

The security of social services from the user’s perspective can be analyzed using the raw data of the Social Service Demand and Supply Survey (2015). Table 5 shows the distribution of households by demographic variable and experience with using social services. As for the age makeup of social service users, households with seniors (aged 65 or older) made up the largest proportion (21.9 percent), followed by households with or without grownup children (21.2 percent), unmarried households (either living alone or with parents/siblings; 20.7 percent), households with children aged 7 to 18 (18.5 percent), and households with young children (under age seven; 8.9 percent), and married households that have not yet

borne children (8.8 percent). As for income distribution, households earning 51 to 100 percent of the national monthly median household income made up the greatest proportion (40 percent), followed by households earning 101 to 150 percent of the median income (32.3 percent), and households earning 50 percent or less of the median income (11.6 percent). Single-person households made up 27.1 percent of all households. Of these, 37.5 percent were young (aged 19 to 39); 34.5 percent, middle-aged (aged 40 to 64); and 28.0 percent, elderly (aged 65 or older).

Of all the households surveyed, 49.8 percent had used at least one of the surveyed social services. Households with young children, households with children aged 7 to 18, and households that have not yet borne children were especially well-represented among service users over the past year (67.2 percent, 58.2 percent, and 53.2 percent, respectively). Elderly and unmarried households, on the other hand, used social services relatively less. Households with low income (50 percent or less of median income) were the least likely to have used social services. Single-person households, too, had relatively little experience with receiving social services. Among single-person households, however, young and middle-aged ones used social services more than elderly households.

(Table 5) Distribution of Households and Use of Social Services

Household type	N	%	Service use rate (%)
Composition (n=4,078)			
Unmarried	777	(20.7)	45.1
Married, pre-childbirth	260	(8.8)	58.2
With young children	344	(8.9)	67.2
With children and teenagers	845	(18.5)	53.2
Living with/without grownup children	925	(21.2)	49.2
Elderly	927	(21.9)	41.4
Income (n=4,078)			
50% or less of median income	501	(11.6)	45.7
51 to 100%	1,688	(40.0)	51.6
101 to 150%	1,302	(32.3)	49.8
Over 150%	587	(16.1)	48.0
Single-person households (n=1,046)			
Young	444	(37.5)	44.9
Middle-aged	291	(34.5)	44.4
Elderly	311	(28.0)	36.9

Source: MOHW (2015). *Social Service Demand and Supply Survey 2015* (data files: internal data re-analyzed).

Next, we need to examine how inclusive the programs for each function are, in light of the characteristics of households. Here, inclusiveness refers to the percentage of households that have actually used services among all households in need of such services. It can be operationalized as the need satisfaction rate.

The need satisfaction rates of unmarried and married households that have not yet borne children were relatively high compared to all households, particularly with respect to services for health and medicine, employment and related support, and culture. Relative to households with young children, households with older children had low need satisfaction rates in general, except for employment-related services. The need

satisfaction rate of households with older children with respect to child care services, in particular, was only two-thirds that of households with young children, suggesting the need to expand social services for schoolchildren. The need satisfaction rates of elderly households were generally higher compared to all households, particularly with respect to services for rehabilitation, health and medicine, and employment and related support. Nevertheless, with a need satisfaction rate of only 12.1 percent, elderly households definitely had far less care services available to them than households with children. It is thus necessary to enact policy changes to make more care services available to seniors.

(Table 6) Household Types and the Inclusiveness of Social Service Programs

(Unit: percentage)

Function/household type	Unmarried	Married, pre-childbirth	Young children	Older children	With/without grownup children	Elderly	Overall
Counseling	6.5	11.9	8.8	8.3	30.4	17.1	14.6
Rehabilitation	25.3	17.3	31.3	31.0	24.3	30.6	27.6
Adult care	15.3	6.7	7.0	8.2	2.9	12.1	10.6
Child care	n/a	n/a	68.6	42.8	n/a	n/a	44.3
Health and medicine	35.8	40.8	37.8	34.1	37.7	46.9	39.9
Education/training/information	12.8	5.6	33.7	14.5	17.3	14.3	18.1
Employment and support	38.1	48.5	9.6	20.0	27.9	37.2	30.7
Housing and environment	15.1	44.7	32.4	20.6	30.8	19.6	24.2
Culture	84.8	82.6	79.1	81.6	89.0	67.8	82.0

Source: MOHW (2015).

Table 7 shows the need satisfaction rates by household income. No consistent patterns are apparent. Interestingly, households earning more than 150 percent of the median income were the ones with the lowest need satisfaction rates across the board, whether concerning services for care, health and medicine, or employment. The care need satisfaction rates of these households, in particular, fell below 50 percent of the rates of other households. This suggests that Korean social services, despite their growing universalist aspirations, have failed to serve households above the median income line.

(Table 7) Household Income Levels and the Inclusiveness of Social Service Programs

(Unit: percentage)

Function/income level (relative to median household income)	50% or below	51 to 100%	101 to 150%	Over 150%	Overall
Counseling	17.9	11.8	11.9	20.4	14.6
Rehabilitation	40.1	23.9	21.8	33.3	27.6
Adult care	14.0	10.0	7.4	5.7	10.6
Child care	37.2	48.9	47.8	15.3	44.3
Health and medicine	44.3	42.0	36.1	35.3	39.9
Education/training/information	3.8	21.0	18.5	14.3	18.1
Employment and support	30.1	26.9	37.6	23.6	30.7
Housing and environment	19.0	28.6	20.1	24.6	24.2
Culture	81.6	81.3	83.1	81.9	82.0

Source: MOHW (2015).

Among single-person households, young households had low need satisfaction rates with respect to services for care, health and medicine, and housing and environment; middle-aged

households, with respect to services for rehabilitation and employment and related support; and elderly households, with respect to education/training, information, and culture. Middle-aged single-person households lagged far behind the average need satisfaction rates with respect to all service programs, except for care, employment, and related support. This suggests the need to develop and introduce new services specifically tailored to the needs of middle-aged single-person households.

(Table 8) Single-Person Households and the Inclusiveness of Social Service Programs

(Unit: percentage)

Function/ single-person household type	Young	Middle-aged	Elderly	Overall
Counseling	-	9.5	24.2	14.6
Rehabilitation	44.6	13.9	38.4	27.6
Adult care	11.4	14.5	17.1	10.6
Child care	28.4	37.9	45.0	39.9
Health and medicine	11.1	15.2	8.2	18.1
Education/training/information	43.8	31.4	51.3	30.7
Employment and support	5.0	20.9	13.8	24.2
Housing and environment	91.6	77.0	48.1	82.0

Source: MOHW (2015).

V

Conclusion and Policy Implications



Conclusion and Policy << Implications

Our analysis affirms the disparities in the security of social services among different age groups and needs. Care services, by far the most important among social services, have grown dramatically in recent years, particularly thanks to increases in support for households with young children. Yet social services serving different age groups in Korea focus on only one or a few particular needs dominant in the given age group (care for children and seniors, employment support for adults, etc.) and fail to satisfy all the diverse needs that can be found in each age group. Furthermore, the need satisfaction rates remain low across service programs for all functions. Certain households have difficulty accessing and receiving social services to satisfy their core needs.

The policy implications of these findings can be summarized as follows. There are three main questions to answer: for what needs social services are to be increased and made more secure, for whom the services should be strengthened, and how the services are to be strengthened.

The first question pertains to the areas of social services. The FASS states that social services are to be provided to satisfy “basic universal needs across age groups” as well as “particular needs in relation to specific risks.” The social services that have

been introduced thus far have aspired to meet common needs concerning welfare, health and medicine, education and training, employment, culture, and living environments. The needs surrounding social services can be divided into unmet needs and unidentified needs. Social service programs in Korea have evolved largely in response to the former. Our analysis of the current status of these programs, however, reveals that the rates of needs actually satisfied by the services still remain quite low. To strengthen the security of social services in order to serve more unmet needs, policymakers need to establish a standard for guiding their decisions on which areas of services are to receive increased investment, and prioritize investment needs accordingly. The Korean government may base its decision to increase investment on the critical nature of the needs, urgency of the required response, and estimated returns on investment. Consider the example of cultural support services. The needs for these services do not involve risks and are therefore uncritical. Nevertheless, there is a universal need for these services, which will likely generate higher returns on investment. Safety and rights protection and mental health services, by contrast, involve highly critical needs but relatively small demand and are therefore unlikely to generate returns on investment. When faced with the choice of which of these two contrasting types of services are to receive greater investment for greater security, the state may decide to prioritize the latter over the

former. To justify such decision, however, policymakers should gain a good grasp of the relative security of existing social service programs on the basis of objective data.

On the other hand, it is also important to search for unidentified needs more actively, and to start building a societal consensus on serving these needs as well. The needs of young and middle-aged single-person households and cohabitating (unmarried) couples—traditionally insignificant in, or alienated by, the social security system—are growing increasingly important as deserving of social services given the changes in Korea's demographic and industrial structures and Koreans' value systems. There is also an emerging societal consensus on the validity of spending public resources on providing support for these households. Discovering unidentified needs is crucial in strengthening and innovating social services.

The second question asks the state to decide for whom it should strengthen social services. This question pertains to the two main aspirations of social services, i.e., publicness and universality. Universalism has become an important aspect of Korean social services, with 75 percent of social services today not imposing any income restrictions on eligibility. The scope or breadth of social service programs nonetheless remains dependent upon the fiscal conditions of the given state. It is therefore inevitable that disparities will arise between the actual and intended scopes of a service program. It is thus the re-

sponsibility of the state to determine whose needs are to be prioritized, given the limited resources. In the short term, the Korean government may organize interdepartmental and multidisciplinary discussions on how to decide the target populations of service programs in light of the extents of socialization in relation to the given needs. For instance, as care services have become largely socialized in recent years, they can be provided through a universal public program, whereas policy makers may consider taking a more selective approach to such less socialized areas as culture and housing, prioritizing services to low-income classes. In the long term, it would be ideal for the state to foster conditions so that all Koreans can freely receive social services that satisfy their diverse needs.

Finally, different areas of services require different security-strengthening approaches. The overall amendment of the FASS in 2012 introduced a broader concept of social services, making social services a major focus of diverse agencies. Yet the quality and maturity of social service programs vary widely from area to area. Care services, for instance, form the core of Korea's new social service policy, and the Korean government is concentrating its efforts on expanding care services for different groups. Elderly care services, activity support for people with disabilities, and postnatal and neonatal care services that were introduced with electronic vouchers in 2007 have since become representative social services in Korea. With the addi-

tion of domestic help and home nursing services, in 2008, and child care services, in 2017, to the electronic voucher system, Korea's social service structure now provides care services for all age groups, at least on the surface. Now that the scope and reach of these care services have expanded so much, there is a growing discourse on specific and diverse measures for improving their quality. By contrast, mental health and safety and rights protection services, although part of the traditional discourse on social welfare, lack comparable infrastructure and delivery systems, because they seemingly serve particular and not universal needs (mental disorders, violence, abuse, etc.). It is therefore futile to adopt the same approach to mental health and rights protection services as that taken to care services in order to reinforce the security of the former. Housing, living environments, and culture were only belatedly recognized as areas of social security circa the late 1990s, which is why there is a dearth of even normative research and discourse on how inclusive services in these areas should be. In designing policy measures to strengthen the security of different social services, policymakers should divide the existing programs into stages according to their maturity (e.g., introductory, growth, and advanced stages) and tailor security-strengthening measures accordingly. Services in the introductory stage, for example, would primarily require stable budgets for providing minimum services and the expansion of infrastructure and personnel.

Services in the growth stage would require funds for providing appropriate services, extensive supply infrastructure, and greater personnel. Services in the advanced stage would require the diversification of programs and establishment of a governance system to ensure service quality.

Social services, along with income security, forms one of the two main pillars of a lifelong social security net. As people's needs grow more refined, diverse, and complex, it is becoming increasingly challenging to design these services, while the demand for social services continues to rise. To devise effective policy measures for strengthening the security of social services, it is most important to enhance interdepartmental coordination and collaboration on social service policymaking. Therefore, an interdepartmental social service policy council should be assembled and permanent bodies set up to organize policy discussions on different types of social services. Although these tasks have been identified since social services were first introduced, they have yet to be carried out (Lee, 2012; Kang et al., forthcoming). It is also important to establish a system for collecting and managing empirical data on the supply and use of social services. Measures to strengthen the security of social services can be legitimized only when they are based upon accurate and objective understanding of the status of services.

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