

민주화와 삶의 질의 변화

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최근에 민주화에 대한 관심은 정치학자나 사회학자 사이에 점증되고 있다. 기존의 이론적이고 경험적인 연구들은 주로 민주주의 이행의 기원과 유형 그리고 이행전략에 치중되어 있다. 따라서 민주화의 결과 특히 대중의 삶의 질에 미친 영향에 대해서는 거의 알려져 있지 않다.

본 연구는 민주화가 일반국민의 삶의 질에 미친 영향을 알아보기 위한 것이다. 이러한 영향을 살피기 위해 총 5개의 문항으로 된 두가지 기본적인 질문을 하였다. 첫째가 일반대중이 개인적인 수준에서 경험한 개인적인 삶의 질에 관련된 것이다. 둘째가 공동체로서 국가의 구성원으로서 일반대중이 경험한 공적인 삶의 질이다. 즉 일반대중들이 개인적인 차원에서, 그리고 그들이 살고 있는 국가적인 수준에서 경험한 삶의 질에 대한 인식에 민주화는 어떠한 영향을 주었는가? 어떠한 정치변동이 개인적, 공적인 삶의 질의 개선에 기여하는가가 본 연구의 주요한 문제이다.

본 설문조사의 결과 분석을 통해서 다음과 같은 발견을 할 수 있었다. 지난 6년 동안에 진행된 한국의 민주화는 개인적인 그리고 공적인 삶의 질에 중요한 개선을 가져왔다. 그리고 앞으로 민주화가 더욱 진전된다면, 삶의 질은 향상될 것으로 기대되었다.

현재 진행되고 있는 민주화의 물결이 대중적이고 강력하더라도, 이것이 사회의 구성원 모두에게 영향을 주지는 않는다. 또한 동일하게 인간의 삶의 모든 영역에 영향을 미치지도 않으며, 반드시 삶을 향상시키는 것도 아니다. 즉 민주화는 다양한 부류의 사람에게 다르게 영향을 주며, 또한 다양한 삶의 영역에서 다르게 영향을 미친다. 본 조사에 따르면, 응답자의 대다수(71%)가 민주화로 인하여 그들의 삶의 질의 개선을 경험한 반면에, 소수인 13%는 삶의 질이 떨어졌다고 응답하였다. 또한 민주적인 정치변동으로부터 삶의 질이 개선되었다고 응답한 국민들 중의 반 이상이 개인적인 복지와 국가적인 복지 모두에서 삶의 질이 개선되었다고 하였다.

이러한 복지와 정치변동의 유형과는 어떠한 관련이 있는가? 민주화의 진

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전이 국민들이 원하는 정치변화임이 분명하다. 이러한 민주적인 정치변동은 국민들의 삶의 질을 개선하는데 크게 기여할 것이다. 국민들이 가장 원하지 않는 정치변동은 민주주의로부터 권위주의 통치로 후퇴하는 것이다. 이러한 변화는 국민들의 복지를 매우 악화시키는데 기여할 것이다.

Democratization and the Changing Quality of Korean Life: In the Eyes of Mass Public Opinion

"The end of the state is not mere life, rather, a good
quality of life." (Aristotle)
"The care of human life and happiness, and not their
destruction, is the first and only legitimate object
of good government." (Thomas Jefferson)

Even as recently as a few years ago, Korea was known chiefly as the rising economic powerhouse in East Asia which hosted one of the most successful Summer Olympics in 1988. Indeed, this natural resource-poor country has achieved in a single generation the level of economic development which took other industrial powers almost a century (Sakong, 1993). Despite such an enviable record of economic growth and social development, Korea remained a politically backward country constantly plagued by constant streams of political repression, disorder, violence, and corruption (M. Lee, 1990).

For nearly three decades, the military ruled the country uninterruptedly with iron-clad control over its people's lives. Unlike their counterparts in democratic states, the Korean people were not allowed to freely exercise a variety of civil liberties and political rights. Under the pretense of protecting the state from the Communist forces in the North and ensuring national prosperity, the military government severely restricted civil liberties and often abused political rights, even to the extent of torture and killing (Cotton, 1992; Khil, 1983). In attempting to overthrow such heavy-handed authoritarian rule, thousands of college students and factory workers continued to demonstrate violently for more than a decade.

Since the collapse of authoritarian rule in 1987, Korea has rapidly become a politically new state. In the 1987

presidential election, for example, rocks and tear gas were frequently exchanged both to express and suppress political opinions. In marked contrast, no rocks were hurled and no tear gas stung the air five years later when Koreans were given the opportunity to elect the first civilian democrat as their president in nearly three decades. The presidential candidate who could not submerge his personal ambition for the cause of democracy in the previous presidential election, accepted his defeat this time graciously and retired permanently from politics, opening the way for a new generation of democratic leadership. These are remarkable signs that democracy is rapidly making itself at home in this country whose Confucian culture is often regarded in the West as obstructing the democratization of authoritarian rule (Huntington, 1991; Scalapino, 1993).

More remarkable is a series of sweeping reforms which President Kim Young Sam has recently been able to carry out in order to build "a New Korea" (Kim, 1993; Kil, 1993). Upon his inauguration in February, 1993, he declared "the Severance of Political Money" to the nation, and has thereafter refused to accept any political contributions from the big business conglomerates known as *chaebol*. Until this was declared, making such contributions to curry favor with the presidential office had been the common practice of the business community. President Kim has also enacted the Public Servants' Ethics Law, which obligated more than 7,000 elected officials and ranking civil servants to reveal their wealth on a yearly basis. More recently, he has introduced a new financial transaction system requiring all individual citizens and corporations to use in all financial dealings their real names which were often hidden behind aliases in the past (Shim, 1993).

The democratic political reforms under the leadership of President Kim Young Sam are creating a new cultural and socio-economic foundation conducive to the functioning of democratic politics in Korea. His democratic reforms not only have severed the collusive ties between businessmen and

politicians but also have blocked the flow of "black money" into politics. The reforms, moreover, have firmly established civilian supremacy by purging generals from politics, attacking military corruption, and disbanding secret societies within the military institution (Shim, 1993). The same reforms have also expanded civil liberties and political rights by downsizing and overhauling the various security agencies which for nearly three decades meddled in every important decision of government agencies and private organizations, and which constantly monitored the every movement of political dissidents (Shim and Paisley, 1993).

Over a relatively short period of six years, Korea has achieved remarkable success in establishing democratic political institutions and creating a democratic political culture (Cotton, 1993; Han, 1991, 1992; H. Lee, 1993; *The New York Times*, 1992; Shin and Chey, 1993a). Korea can no longer be viewed as a politically backward authoritarian state where political corruption and repression are rampant. Its political leaders have been considerably disengaged from the age-old, corrupt and unfair practice of business-government collusion. Its people have been freed from governmental interference in the way in which they want to live their private and public lives. As citizens of a democratic state, Koreans are now freely pursuing the qualities they value for their private and public lives.

Now, with implementation of democratic reforms, Korean transition from heavy-handed authoritarian rule to a democratic state is rapidly becoming a success story. The country began its transition to democracy toward the end of the current, or "third" wave of democratization which began to spread from Southern Europe in the middle of the 1970's. However, it has been more successful than many of its "third wave" predecessors in transforming authoritarian culture and institutions. In the Western journalistic and scholarly community, Korea is often seen as having made "huge strides toward establishing democratic culture" and "the living example which challenges directly the notion that

Confucian societies don't really want democracy" (*The New York Times*, December 28, 1992; *The Wall Street Journal*, December 22, 1992). The country, which has long been regarded as a model of economic development for the Third World, is increasingly being considered these days a possible model of democratization for emerging post-authoritarian countries in other parts of the world (Gibney, 1992; Han, 1992; Johnson, 1993; Pae, 1993, Scalapino, 1993; Sigur, 1993).

This study is not for an analysis of democratic changes in Korea's authoritarian political culture and institutions. Without doubt, this has been the main theme of previous research on the country's democratization. There is little need to repeat this type of research concerning the sources and processes of those cultural and institutional changes. What needs to be done now is an analysis of their consequences, especially regarding the quality of life among ordinary citizens who have demanded those changes, even to the point of risking their own lives. This study seeks to explore the human meaning of democratization in Korea from the perspective of ordinary people who have personally experienced the regime change.

How have the democratic reforms over the past six years affected the country as a place for ordinary Koreans to live in? How have those reforms affected the quality of life which they experience on a daily basis? Has the private or public sphere of life has benefitted most from the reforms? Have the democratic reforms equally enhanced the quality of life among the various segments of the Korean population? If not, which segments have benefitted most and least? This inquiry will address these questions with a new set of public opinion data collected in Korea during the month of November, 1993.

Three premises underlie the present study. The first is that democratization is much more than the political process involving the replacement and creation of governmental institutions and leadership; it is an affair which transforms

the meaning of human existence. Unlike other types of political change, it brings about fundamental shifts in the nature of the relationships among fellow human beings and of their basic orientations toward life itself (Drakulic, 1992). The second premise is that the true meaning of democratization can be understood only by those experiencing it on a daily basis. Furthermore, the very meaning they personally attach to the process is assumed to reshape their attitudes toward it. Those who understand its meaning in a positive light will work to become authentic democrats. Those who fail to do so will soften or withdraw their support for democratic reforms. Personal meaning of democratization, therefore, must be adequately revealed in order to account for the dynamics of mass support for it.

PRIOR RESEARCH

Recently, the study of democratization has become "a veritable growth industry," as the number of professional conferences and publications focusing on the subject has risen sharply (Mainwaring, 1992, 295; Shin, 1993, 5). The theoretical and empirical research to date, however, has been concerned primarily with democratization's sources, patterns, and strategies. It has addressed the following questions: What has made it possible for democratic regimes to be installed in countries with long records of authoritarian rule? How have democratic transitions been crafted in those countries where socio-economic and cultural values were widely regarded as inhospitable to the birth of democracy? What can and should be done to allow nascent democracies to survive and persist? Which actions should national and international government organizations take in order to facilitate democratic consolidations in newly democratizing countries? How can nongovernmental organizations in industrialized democracies encourage democratic reforms in those countries which still remain undemocratic? All of these have drawn a great deal of attention in prior research.

In addressing these questions, recent scholarship has emphasized the importance of human choices and other deliberate actions in overcoming the problems and challenges of democratization (Collier and Norden, 1992; Higley and Gunther, 1992; Mainwaring, O'Donnell, and Valenzuela, 1992). The human actions valued and studied most in prior research are those of political leaders or strategic elites, not of the masses. Samuel P. Huntington (1984, 212) observed that "democratic regimes that last have seldom, if ever, been instituted by mass popular action." Juan Linz (1990) also argues that much of the success in consolidating new democracies depends upon the leadership. The specific role played by the mass public in and for democratization is largely overlooked in much of the literature (Diamond, 1992b; Tarrow, 1992).

Though survey research on mass politics in newly democratizing countries has increased dramatically in the past several years, national sample surveys in these countries, however, have dealt primarily with public support for democratic reforms or mass commitment to the basic values and procedural norms of democratic politics such as freedom, equality and tolerance (Dalton, 1991; Finifter and Mickiewicz, 1992; Gibson and Duch, 1992; Gibson, Duch and Tedin, 1992; McDonough, 1992; McDonough, Barnes and Pina, 1993; Miller, Reisinger, and Hesli, 1992; Moises, 1992; Muller and Seligson, 1992; Seligson and Booth, 1992; Seligson and Muller, 1992; Shin and Chey, 1993b; Shin et al., 1990; Simon, 1991; Weil 1991). Little is known from these surveys about how the advent of democracy has actually affected the quality of life among the various segments of the public.

So far, human consequences of democratization have been explored exclusively by comparing the different types of political systems in terms of availability of or access to the resources necessary for the satisfaction of human needs. Some scholars, for example, have sought to determine whether or not democracies are more successful in achieving

economic development than nondemocracies (Inkeles, 1991; Kohli, 1986; Remmer, 1993). Others have sought to determine whether or not democracies are more peace-loving than nondemocracies (Sorensen, 1993, ch. 4). Still others have sought to determine whether or not the citizenry of the former are healthier, live longer, and are more literate than the latter (Moon, 1991; Sen, 1993; Shin, 1989).

In short, these studies have focused on cross-regime comparisons of human resources rather than on changes in the same resources during the transition to democracy. Or they have been concerned merely with changes in the physical environment or objective conditions of life attributable to democratic rule. However, as recent research on quality of life suggests, improvements in such life conditions do not necessarily mean a national experience of greater well-being, i.e., greater happiness among a larger proportion of the citizenry (Andrews, 1986; Campbell, 1976, 1981; Campbell and Converse, 1972). Consequently, much of empirical research to date, whether based on public opinion surveys or aggregate data, has failed to determine whether or not democratization actually enhances the quality of life as perceived by the people themselves.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Democratic theorists of various persuasions have long argued that a democratic political system contributes to a better quality of life among its citizenry (for a review of this literature, see Caney, 1992; Dahl 1989; Gastil, 1992; Warren, 1992). G. Bingham Powell, Jr. (1982) summarizes this argument by claiming that the citizens of democracies, unlike those of nondemocracies, are free to pursue what they privately cherish in their own lives. In the public sphere of their lives, moreover, competitive and periodic elections provide ordinary citizens with opportunities to take part in the political process and allows them to express a variety of their needs and preferences. The same mechanism also

works to fulfill those needs and preferences by requiring political leaders to be responsive to them, especially when they are expressed by a majority rather than a small minority.

What specific needs and desires of the citizenry can be fulfilled by the transformation of authoritarian rule into a democracy? Democratic theorists have recommended democracy for the fulfillment of various human needs and desires, including a desire for self-enhancement (Lane, 1962; Pateman, 1979; Sniderman, 1976), altruism (Laswell, 1951; McClosky and Zaller, 1984; Schwartz, 1986), moral virtue (Dahl, 1989), self-interest (Schumpeter, 1976), and social recognition (Fukuyama, 1991; Rousseau, 1950).

Advocates for democracy make it clear that democratization can serve both personal and social welfare functions. On a personal level, it can contribute to the personal interests and well-being of individual citizens. Socially, democracy can also promote the welfare of the community in which citizens live. These ideas give rise to several questions. Does democratization actually serve the personal desires of all citizens? Does it serve the social needs of every community? Does democratization serve individual citizens' personal desires or their communal needs more effectively? If so, why? These and other important questions concerning the significant meaning of democratization for the human lot have not been systematically addressed in the large body of existing theoretical literature.

In the literature, considerable disagreement exists over the specific roles which democratization would play in the private and public spheres of human life (Caney, 1992). Jean-Jacques Rousseau, James Madison, Max Weber, and other theorists of communitarian democracy have argued that democracy maximizes the public good by aggregating and reconciling conflicting interests among divergent groups of citizenry. Conversely, John Stuart Mill, John Dewey, Carole Pateman, and other theorists of participatory democracy have emphasized that democracy maximizes

opportunities for individual self-growth and self-governance. Neither of these two democratic theories has not been subjected to empirical testing by political scientists or other social scientists.

CONCEPTUALIZATION AND MEASUREMENT

In assessing the impact of the democratic transformation of authoritarian rule on the private and public spheres of citizens' lives, the present inquiry distinguishes democratization from democracy by viewing the former as the movement toward the latter (Mainwaring, O'Donnell and Valenzuela, 1992; Shin, 1993). Moving "two steps forward and one step backward toward democracy" (Huntington, 1991), the process of democratization is a dynamic one. Democracy, on the other hand, is by and large a static situation in which the process of establishing democratic political institutions is essentially completed and only gradually evolves. For this reason, attitudes toward democratization, as compared to the ones toward democracy, are more subject to rapid and extensive change. The substantive focus of this research is on the dynamic process of attitude changes toward democratization.

To explore the dynamics of those changes, this study does not equate democratization solely with a movement supportive of democratic political institutions, including competitive elections, a multi-party system, and the free press, as has been the case in prior survey research. In the minds of people who lived most or all of their lives in political repression and violence, economic deprivation, and social injustice, democratization involves much more than the transformation of repressive political institutions and the replacement of political leaders, a dimension of regime change which can be easily and quickly completed. Naturally, they are tempted to load many expectations into the very process of democratic change (Finifter and Mickiewicz, 1992; Karl, 1990; McIntosh et al., 1993;

Schmitter and Karl, 1991).

Moreover, the meaning of democratization varies a great deal from one segment of the public to another within the same country in democratic transition. And, even to the same group of citizens, the meaning of democratization may not be static—it can change over time with perceived successes or failures in the actual practice of democratic politics. In view of the fact that democratization is really an ongoing process, one which lends itself to varying definitions, this study address how citizens themselves characterize what it means to them. The categories which arise, therefore, will accurately reflect citizen perceptions rather than the preconceived notions of those engaged in the research.

Quality of life, like democratization, means different things to different people. To some, it means more money; to others, increased free time. Thus, equating life quality with any particular type of a valued resource for human life does not permit a comprehensive and balanced assessment of the impact of democratization on the human lot (Campbell, 1981; Diener, 1992; Glazer and Mohr, 1987; Headey, Holmstrom, and Wearing, 1985; Szalai and Andrews, 1980). In an attempt to make such an assessment, therefore, this study encourages respondents to define and assess quality of life both as they perceive it and as they anticipate it.

The impact of democratization on both the perceived and envisioned quality of life will be measured according to Hadly Cantril's (1965) "self-anchoring striving scale," which has been widely used in studying life quality around the world (Andrews and Withey, 1976; Campbell, Converse and Rodgers, 1976). This device, unlike others, directly asks individual respondents to imagine "the best life" and "the worst life" and to place themselves at that point where they stand presently on a scale ranging between these two extremes. This device also asks them to assess their past and future quality of life on the same scale running from the worst to the best life which they can imagine. By comparing the numeric ratings across different points in time,

researchers have frequently measured experienced and expected changes in the quality of life (Andrews, 1986; Barnes, 1982; Barnes et al., 1979; Gallup International Institute, 1976; Szalai and Andrews, 1980).

To measure the results of democratization on the quality of life, we first asked respondents two questions: (1) where they stood on the scale in the past when they were living under an authoritarian regime; and (2) where they stand at the present time under a democratizing regime. In addition, we asked them where they would stand presently if the authoritarian regime had continued to rule. These three separate ratings are considered together in order to measure the experienced impact of the democratic change on life quality.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The basic data for this study were collected by the Institute of Social Sciences (ISS) at Seoul National University during the month of November, 1993. The ISS selected a probability sample of 1,198 adults designed to represent the adult population of South Korea living in households at the time of survey. The sample was selected on the basis of a multi-stage stratified sampling technique from residents of Seoul, four other major cities, and all other provinces with the exception of Cheju, an island province. The distribution of respondents was determined according to the proportions of the Korean population residing in the sampling units chosen for the survey.

All those in the sample were 20 years of age or older. One-third of them were personally interviewed at their residences by university students trained for survey research. The rest answered a 24 page questionnaire on their own for a later pickup by the students. Over 90 percent of respondents spent from 30 to 70 minutes to complete it.

Males accounted for 52 percent of the sample, a figure which is close to the 50 percent for the general population

reported in the 1993 Population and Housing Census conducted by the Economic Planning Board. The proportion of respondents with college education, however, was found to be nearly twice the figure reported in the same Census. The proportion of old respondents in their 60s was less than a half of the census figure.

This sampling problem could be corrected by assigning proper weights to the demographic categories which were improperly represented in the sample. The weighting procedure, however, was not employed in the present analysis. As reported below, respondents' age and educational attainment were found to have little effect on their perceptions of how democratization has affected and would affect the quality of life. The procedure, therefore, would not alter the major substantive conclusions of this paper regarding the experienced and expected impact of democratization on personal and national well-being.

MAJOR FINDINGS

This study seeks to assess the experienced and expected impact resulting from democratization on the quality of life in Korea. For a comprehensive and balanced assessment of such impacts, respondents were given two separate sets of five questions. The first set concerned the quality of private life which ordinary Koreans experience on an individual basis. The second one deals with the quality of public life which they experience as members of the national community. The responses to the questions concerning both the personal and national spheres of Korean life are considered together in order to ascertain the four distinctive dimensions--amount, direction, depth, and pattern--of impact from the democratization of Korean politics.

The Experienced Impact from Democratization

In appraising each of the two spheres of Korean life, respondents were first asked to mark on a 10-step ladder

scale what they had experienced during the period of authoritarian rule headed by President Chun Doo Whan (1980-87). Then they were asked to indicate on the same scale what they were experiencing nearly six years later as a citizen of the democratic regime under the leadership of President Kim Young Sam. Table 1 displays the distribution of their responses to each of these questions across 10 steps on the ladder scale.

The most notable feature of the data in the table is that three out of every four (75 percent) respondents chose the bottom five steps on the life ladder in order to indicate the quality of their private and public lives for the period in which they lived under the harsh and repressive authoritarian regime of president Chun Doo Whan. These life ladder steps chosen by a large majority of the sample indicate varying degrees of ill-being rather than well-being. Only a quarter of those surveyed are shown in Table 1 to have chosen the top five steps of the ladder indicating some degree of well-being. In the minds of its citizenry, authoritarian Korea was not hospitable to a good life, and the quality of personal life among a sizable minority (13 percent) was the worst which they could imagine for

Table 1. Public Perceptions of the Quality of Korean Life in Authoritarian and Democratic Eras

Life Ladder Scale Points	Political Eras			
	Authoritarian		Democratic	
	Personal Life	National Life	Personal Life	National Life
1 (worst life)	4.6%	2.4%	1.0%	0.3%
2	8.4	6.0	1.5	0.8
3	14.5	16.8	4.3	4.2
4	19.1	22.1	8.2	7.7
5	28.8	28.1	25.7	23.1
6	11.5	14.3	25.4	30.7
7	7.7	6.4	22.1	24.4
8	4.0	3.0	8.9	7.6
9	0.8	0.6	2.2	1.0
10 (best life)	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.3

themselves or very close to it.

With the collapse of the military dictatorship and the restoration of civilian supremacy, the same Koreans appear to live far better than before. As shown in Table 1, a majority of them give themselves and their country positive ratings, choosing the top five rather than bottom five steps of the life ladder. Those who chose its top three steps, moreover, outnumber those who chose the bottom three steps. These findings contrast sharply with the findings for the authoritarian period, strongly suggesting that the quality of Korean life has shifted from the negative to the positive with the establishment of a democratic regime.

In an attempt to determine the exact nature of such a shift in life quality, Table 2 reports the two summary statistics of average ladder scale ratings and percentages reporting positive experiences. According to the mean statistic, the quality of personal life has changed for the better by 1.3 steps of the ladder from 4.5 to 5.8. The quality of national life has also improved by the same, 1.3 steps from 4.6 to 5.9. The upward shift of 1.3 steps on the ladder scale represents a truly significant level of progress in building a nation of well-being. This much progress has never been reported previously in survey research conducted in the United States or elsewhere. It appears that Koreans have transformed their country into a nation of well-being while transforming its political system into a democracy.

According to the percentage figures reported in Table 2, the relative number of Koreans satisfied with their personal life

Table 2. Experienced Changes in the Quality of Korean Life During the Course of Democratization

Life sphere	Means on ladder scale			Percentage Reporting		
	Auth. (A)	Demo. (B)	Diff. (B-A)	Auth. (C)	Demo. (D)	Diff. (D-C)
Personal life	4.5	5.8	+1.3	24.6%	59.2%	34.6%
National life	4.6	5.9	+1.3	24.7	64.0	39.3

has more than doubled from 25 to 59 percent during the course of democratization. Over the same period, the comparable number of those satisfied with their country has expanded further by as much as 2.6 times from 25 to 64 percent. When the percentage of increase is annualized, we find that personal well-being has grown at an annual rate of 23 percent while national well-being has grown at the rate of 27 percent over the past six years. These figures suggest that Korea is a newly democratizing country where the quality of life among its citizenry has been improving rapidly.

One naturally wonders whether or not rapid improvements in the quality of life in Korea in recent years are attributable solely to the democratization of its authoritarian rule. To address this concern, we asked respondents to locate on the ladder scale the steps on which their personal and national lives would have been today if the authoritarian rule of President Chun Doo Whan had been allowed to continue in their country. Their responses to the questions were taken into account in order to more accurately estimate the impact of democratization on the quality of their personal and national lives.

Table 3 presents the data describing the direction and the amount of change which would have occurred in personal and national well-being if the authoritarian rule had continued until the time of the survey. The mean ladder

Table 3. The Continuation of Authoritarian Rule and the Quality of Korean Life

Life sphere	Means on ladder scale			Percentage Ratings					
	Auth. (A)	auth. (B)	Diff. (B-A)	Negative			Positive		
				Auth. (C)	auth. (D)	Diff. (D-C)	Auth. (E)	auth. (F)	Diff. (F-E)
Personal life	4.5	4.5	0.0	75%	71%	-4%	25%	29%	+4%
National life	4.6	4.7	+0.1	75	66	-9	24	34	+10

Auth: Authoritarian rule experienced in 1980-87.

auth: Authoritarian rule, if allowed to continue to 1993.

ratings in the table make absolutely clear the popular view that people believe the authoritarian regime would have brought little or no improvement to the overall quality of Korean life. The Korean people as a whole believe that they would have remained as dissatisfied with their personal lives as they were prior to the installation of a democratic regime six years ago. Their country would have remained as undesirable a place to live in as it had been before.

A careful scrutiny of the percentage ratings in Table 3, however, suggests that the levels of personal and national well-being might have changed considerably at the individual level even without the successful implementation of democratic reforms. The continuation of President Chun's authoritarian regime might have contributed to a greater sense of well-being among some segments of the Korean population while detracting from it among other segments. These positive and negative changes which might have occurred at the individual level, therefore, are taken into account in order to accurately estimate the impact of democratization on Korean life.

Table 4 presents the index scores which measure the direction and the amount of the net impacts from democratization on the quality of Korean life. These scores are calculated by subtracting individual respondents' ladder ratings, indicating the quality of life they would have experienced without the democratic transition, from their ratings for what they were actually experiencing with the democratic change. As displayed in the table, the index scores run from a low of -9 to a high of +9. The lowest score of -9 means that democratization has transformed the best quality of life into the worst one. The highest score of +9, on the other hand, means the opposite pattern of transforming the worst into the best quality of life. Positive scores indicate that democratization has contributed to a good quality of life while negative ones indicate that it has detracted from it. The higher the scores, the greater the extent of democratic impact on the quality of life, whether positive or negative.

Table 4. The Extent to Which Democratization Has Affected the Quality of Korean Life

Impact index score	Life		Spheres	
	Personal life percent	(N)	National life percent	(N)
-9	0.2%	(2)	0.0%	(0)
-8	0.1	(1)	0.1	(1)
-7	0.0	(0)	0.0	(0)
-6	0.2	(2)	0.1	(1)
-5	0.6	(7)	0.3	(4)
-4	0.9	(10)	0.7	(8)
-3	2.1	(25)	1.9	(22)
-2	3.6	(42)	4.4	(51)
-1	6.0	(70)	7.8	(92)
0	19.2	(224)	19.3	(226)
+1	22.1	(246)	23.2	(272)
+2	20.6	(240)	18.7	(219)
+3	11.9	(139)	10.9	(128)
+4	7.6	(88)	7.5	(88)
+5	3.8	(44)	3.7	(43)
+6	0.9	(11)	1.1	(13)
+7	0.9	(11)	0.3	(3)
+8	0.3	(3)	0.1	(1)
+9	0.1	(1)	0.0	(0)

In Table 4, we see that democratization itself has affected over four in every five Koreans, yet it has rarely brought about the complete transformation of their life quality. Of the entire sample, for example, only a total of three respondents reported that it had led to a drastic transformation of their life quality all the way from the best to the worst or from the worst to the best. In addition, less than 10 percent of the sample felt that the democratic political change moved their life quality ratings upward or downward by five steps or more on the ladder scale. A large majority of the sample experienced a movement of only one or two steps on the scale measuring the quality of their personal and national lives.

In Table 5, we see that the democratization of Korean politics to date has contributed to the qualities of citizens' lives far more than it has detracted from those. With respect

Table 5. The Direction and the Amount of Impact from Democratization on the Quality of Korean Life

Life sphere	Means on Life Ladder Scale	Percentages Experiencing		
		positive change (A)	negative change (B)	Difference (A-B)
personal life	+1.3	67.1%	13.6%	+53.5%
national life	+1.3	65.4	15.3	+50.1

to personal life, 67 percent have benefitted from the change while 14 percent have lost as a result of democratization. In national life, 65 percent perceive a gain while 15 percent sense a loss from the same change. In both spheres of Korean life, those who have gained from the democratic change far outnumber those who have lost by a margin of over four to one. This is the most significant finding supporting the participatory and pluralist theories of democracy which hold that democratization, if managed well, would improve the human lot. The democratic transformation of authoritarian rule does bring about improvements in the quality of citizens' lives.

Another notable finding is that the advent of democracy does not necessarily bring about greater well-being for everyone. Over one in seven (15 percent) reported that the quality of Korean life had worsened rather than improved during the course of democratization. When the percentage figures in Table 5 are compared across the two spheres of life, moreover, it becomes apparent that the democratic change does not affect the two spheres of citizens' lives equally. In Korea, democratization has improved private life more than it has public life. Indeed, the meaning of democratization varies a great deal from the positive through the neutral to the negative across the different segments of the population. The diversity of its meaning is more clearly evident when the nature of its impact on personal well-being is compared with that on national well-being.

Nine distinctive patterns of impacts on life quality resulting from democratization emerge through this comparison. Table

Table 6. Patterns of Democratic Impact on the Quality of Korean Life

Patterns of Impact		Distribution	
personal life	national life	percentage	(N)
negative	negative	7.6%	(87)
negative	neutral	2.3	(26)
negative	positive	3.7	(43)
neutral	negative	3.3	(38)
neutral	neutral	8.2	(94)
neutral	positive	7.7	(88)
positive	negative	4.3	(49)
positive	neutral	9.0	(103)
positive	positive	54.1	(622)

6 shows the distribution of respondents across these patterns. The most notable feature of this table is that respondents fall into all patterns, including the two extremes of completely positive and negative impact. In each and every pattern, we see from a low of 2 to a high of 54 percent of the respondents placed. Their presence in all of these patterns can be interpreted as suggesting that democratization in Korea carries on as many as nine different meanings.

In Table 6, we see that 8 percent of the sample reported that the installation of a democratic regime has affected neither of the two spheres of life surveyed. Just over one-fifth (21 percent) stated that it has affected only one sphere. Of those respondents who are partially affected, 11 percent are affected only in personal life and 10 percent only in national life. Over two-thirds (70 percent) have experienced changes in both the spheres. Of those affected in both spheres of life, 8 percent have been negatively affected; 8 percent have been both positively and negatively affected; and 54 percent have been positively affected.

What can be said about democratization on the basis of these findings concerning its disparate impact on the human lot? First, it can be argued that the current wave of democratization, although massive and powerful, is unlikely to affect all members of the society. It does not uniformly affect every sphere of the human lot. It does not necessarily

enhance life. As a human phenomenon, democratization affects various sorts of people differently. And it affects various spheres of their lives differently.

Table 7 summarizes the data presented in Table 6. It highlights the direction and the depth of change in the overall quality of life which Koreans attribute to democratization. According to the data in this table, a large majority (71 percent) of the Korean population has experienced an improvement in the quality of their lives while a small minority (13 percent) has experienced a decline. This means that, for every one person who has lost from the democratic regime change, more than five persons have gained from it. Of those who have gained, more than a half (54 percent) have gained in both their personal and national well-being. Among those who have lost, on the other hand, those losing in both spheres of well-being comprise one-twelfth (8 percent) of the total population. Six years of democratization in Korea have produced seven times as many absolute gainers as absolute losers.

The Expected Impact from Further Democratization

Korea has yet to become a fully democratized country. Although it has successfully completed the first stage of democratic transition from authoritarian rule, it still has a long way to go before all the democratic reforms still in progress become fully consolidated. As shown in the recent parliamentary elections of Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and

Table 7. The Overall Depth of Democratic Impact on the Quality of Korean Life

Index score	Distribution	
	percentage	(N)
-2	7.6%	(87)
-1	5.6	(64)
0	16.2	(186)
+1	16.6	(191)
+2	54.1	(622)

Russia, the prospects for democratic consolidation in countries like Korea with long histories of authoritarian culture and politics depend a lot upon what its citizenry expect from the very process of democratic change in the future (Dalton, 1988; Inglehart, 1990; Nash, 1994). For Korea's nascent democracy to be consolidated into a fully stable democracy, therefore, the mass public must be convinced of the virtues of democratic politics (Sorensen, 1993, 41). In addition, they should see it as "the only game" in town (Mainwaring, 1992, 309-312) and be willing to halt any reversal to authoritarian rule (Inglehart, 1990, 24).

Are ordinary Koreans fully convinced of the virtues of democratic politics and in favor of further democratization? Or are they in favor of less democracy and even desire to restore the type of authoritarian political order under which they once lived? Or would they rather continue to live in the current regime, a limited democracy or *democraduras* still suffering a high degree of institutional carry-over from the previous military-bureaucratic regime? These questions are explored in this study by estimating and comparing the extent to which the Korean people expect each alternative political system to contribute to and detract from their personal and national well-being.

To estimate gains and losses in well-being, we asked our respondents two sets of questions. We first asked them to indicate where on the 10-step life ladder they and their country would stand five years in the future if President Kim Young Sam ends his tenure with complete success in all his efforts to further democratize Korean politics. We then asked them where on the same ladder they and their country would stand five years in the future if those democratic reform efforts fail completely and the military comes to rule the country again as it did before. Table 8 displays the distribution of their responses to the two sets of questions across the ten steps of the life ladder.

Table 8 illustrates two contrasting patterns of distribution: one for the alternative of a fully democratic state, and the

Table 8. The Quality of Korean Life Expected by the Mass Public When Democratic Reforms Are Successfully Completed and When Military Rule Is Restored

Life Ladder Scale Points	Type of Political Change			
	Military Rule		Democratic Advance	
	Personal Life	National Life	Personal Life	National Life
1 (worst life)	15.3%	14.2%	0.9%	0.0%
2	11.7	12.4	0.9	0.4
3	14.9	13.1	1.9	1.2
4	15.7	17.6	2.6	2.3
5	22.2	21.1	10.6	7.5
6	8.0	9.7	12.7	13.4
7	7.3	7.0	27.0	29.3
8	2.8	3.5	27.9	31.2
9	1.6	0.8	12.6	12.3
10 (best life)	0.5	0.3	3.2	2.4

other for that of an authoritarian political system ruled by the military. In the first pattern, most of respondents are clustered around the steps on the top fourth of the ladder, which indicate considerable degrees of well-being. In the second pattern, however, most of the same respondents are clustered around the steps on the bottom fourth of the ladder indicating considerable degrees of ill-being. These two patterns also contrast sharply with the one shown in Table 1 for the current, limited democratic system in which most respondents are clustered around the steps in the middle part of the life ladder. To most Koreans, more democratization means a life of considerable well-being; less democratization, a life of considerable ill-being; and the status quo of limited democracy, a life mixed with well-being and ill-being.

Table 9 summarizes the data presented in Table 8. The most striking feature of the data in this table concerns the gaps existing between the mean and percentage ratings for the two diametrically opposite political situations. Visions of a fully democratized situation yield personal and national well-being ratings average 7.0 and 7.2, respectively. The corresponding mean scores for an authoritarian situation are

Table 9. The Democratic and Authoritarian Transformations of the Existing Regime and the Quality of Korean Life

life sphere	Democratic Consolidation				Authoritarian Reversal			
	mean on ladder scale	percentages			mean on ladder scale	percentages		
		pos. (A)	neg. (B)	dif. (A-B)		pos. (A)	neg. (B)	dif. (A-B)
personal life	7.0	84%	17%	+67%	4.0	20%	80%	-60%
national life	7.2	89	11	+78	4.0	22	79	-57

4.0 and 4.0. The mean scores for the political situation requiring more democratic reforms are all significantly higher than the midpoint of the 10-point ladder scale used in this study. The scores for the situation requiring the end of democratic rule and the restoration of military rule are all lower than the midpoint. With more democracy, the Korean people as a whole anticipate that they would feel satisfied with themselves and their country. With less democracy, in sharp contrast, they believe that they are likely to feel dissatisfied with both their personal and national lives.

Regime effects on the quality of Korean life become clearer when the percentage ratings in Table 9 are compared across the two types of political change our respondents were asked to judge. As democracy matures in Korea, an overwhelming majority of its people see themselves more satisfied with their lives and their country. The satisfied would be more than four out of every five people. If Korea reverses its current political path and moves toward a military regime, however, nearly as many anticipate becoming dissatisfied with both their own personal lives and with their country. According to our respondents, with more democracy, Korea becomes a nation of the satisfied; with less democracy, it becomes a nation of the dissatisfied.

In Table 10, we explore how much the Korean people expect to gain and lose if the current, newly born democratic regime is transformed into a fuller democracy or an authoritarian regime. The further democratization of the

Table 10. Expected Impacts on the Quality of Korean Life Resulting from Democratic and Authoritarian Transformations of the Existing Regime

Life spheres	Mean ratings		Percentage ratings					
	authoritarian	democratic	authoritarian			democratic		
			gain (A)	loss (B)	diff. (A-B)	gain (C)	loss (D)	diff. (C-D)
personal life	-1.8	+1.2	11%	72%	-61%	75%	4%	+71%
national life	-1.9	+1.3	10	77	-67	83	3	+80

current regime is expected to contribute to personal well-being among 75 percent and to detract from it among only 4 percent. The same change is expected to contribute to national well-being among 83 percent while detracting from it among 3 percent. On balance, gainers lead losers by 71 percent in personal well-being and by 80 percent in national well-being. Indeed, a vast majority of the Korean people equate more democratization with greater well-being. Such an overwhelming sense of optimism about the democratic change appears to suggest that Koreans are well convinced of the virtues of democratic politics.

From the data in Table 10, it is also clear that the Korean population as a whole is overwhelmingly pessimistic about the restoration of a military dictatorship in their country. This type of regime change is seen to detract from personal well-being among 72 percent and from national well-being among 77 percent of the population. This reversal is expected to contribute to the quality of personal life among 11 percent and to that of national life among 10 percent. Losers from the authoritarian political change lead gainers by 61 percent in personal well-being and 67 percent in national well-being. Clearly, the Korean population is strongly convinced of the vices of authoritarian politics.

In Table 11, we consider together the ratings of both personal and national well-being for each type of political change considered in the study for more comprehensive

Table 11. Overall Impacts of Authoritarian Reversal and Democratic Consolidation on the Quality of Korean Life

Overall index scores	Types of Regime Change			
	authoritarian reversal		democratic advance	
	%	(N)	%	(N)
-2	64.4%	(737)	0.9%	(11)
-1	13.6	(156)	1.1	(13)
0	12.5	(143)	11.3	(131)
1	4.6	(53)	20.2	(234)
2	4.9	(56)	66.4	(770)

assessment of its impact on the quality of Korean life. Table 11 shows that nearly nine out of ten Koreans feel that they are likely to gain from the blossoming of democracy in at least one of the two life spheres surveyed. This proportion (87 percent) is over nine times higher than that of those who envision gains from the restoration of authoritarian rule (9 percent). In terms of those who expect to gain in both spheres of life quality, those gaining from the democratic change lead those gaining from the authoritarian change by an even greater margin of 66 to 5 percent. As for those who expect to lose in one or both spheres, losers from the authoritarian change outnumber those from the democratic change by a large margin of 75 to 2 percent. In terms of those who lose in both spheres, authoritarian losers lead democratic losers by the highest margin of 61 to 1 percent.

For every person in Korea who expects to gain from the authoritarian transformation of the current political system, nearly 10 Koreans expect to do so from the further democratic transformation of the system. For one Korean who anticipate losing from the democratic change, as many as 35 Koreans foresee a loss from the authoritarian change.

What can be said about the types of political change which would be most and least conducive to the well-being of the Korean population on the basis of these findings? The findings, when considered together, make it clear that the advancement of democratization is the political change the

Korean people want for their country. They anticipate that this type of regime change would contribute most to their well-being and least to their ill-being. The least wanted type of political change is the movement away from democracy toward authoritarian rule. Koreans believe that this would contribute most to their ill-being and least to their well-being.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND REGIONAL VARIATIONS

This inquiry needs to address the distribution of democratic gains and losses across the various regions of Korea and the different segments of its population. Which population segments have gained most and least from the process of democratization? Which regions have gained most and least from the same process? These specific questions are explored in this study by considering respondents' gender, age, educational attainment, family income, and region of residence. Percentages of respondents who reported past and future improvements in their well-being from the democratic change are displayed for each category of these five demographic and regional variables.

The most notable feature of the data in this table is that, in every listed population category, more than a half the respondents reported positive experiences with democratization. From a low of 51 to a high of 81 percent judged themselves or their country to have benefitted from the change in the past six years. Even greater percentages, from 59 to 93, felt that they would benefit more from the change in the next five years. These figures indicate that democratic benefits -both experienced and expected- are not concentrated in a few privileged segments of the Korean population, but they are widely dispersed throughout the population. In the eyes of the mass public, democratization has worked and will work not only for the rich and the powerful but also for the poor and the powerless.

Equally notable in the table is the widely-shared belief

Table 12. Demographic and Regional Differences in Percentages Reporting that Democratization Has Improved and Would Improve the Quality of Life

	Past Improvements Life Sphere			Future Improvements Life Sphere		
	private	public	both	private	public	both
Entire sample	65%	64%	57%	73%	81%	64%
Gender						
Male	65.9	62.8	56.9	76.2	86.4	69.3
Female	68.6	68.5	60.3	76.7	80.0	64.6
Age						
20-29	73.5	69.1	61.0	75.1	83.3	65.9
30-39	67.5	65.8	57.3	78.3	84.8	69.5
40-49	62.5	61.7	60.9	76.0	81.4	65.3
50-59	60.0	61.9	51.3	76.1	82.4	67.4
60+	65.5	65.6	62.3	72.9	88.1	65.5
Education						
Ele. School or less	58.9	67.2	56.9	80.7	78.6	69.4
Mid. School	64.1	63.5	57.6	74.1	78.0	57.6
High School	66.4	65.0	58.2	76.8	84.3	69.1
Jr. College	62.3	56.1	50.5	75.4	83.3	63.7
College	74.7	69.5	62.5	76.0	87.5	69.7
Family Income*						
< W 499	65.4	57.0	52.4	70.9	75.0	59.5
W 500-999	63.4	64.8	55.8	78.5	83.2	67.7
W1,000-1,499	67.2	69.9	61.3	78.6	85.0	70.3
W1,500-2,499	71.8	66.8	63.1	76.6	86.1	68.9
W2500+	68.9	56.6	53.7	70.6	80.8	62.0
Region						
Seoul	69.2	64.0	57.4	74.5	82.0	65.7
Kangwon-Kyenggi	61.9	64.7	54.1	74.0	83.8	64.8
Chungchung	81.3	78.7	77.5	86.7	92.9	84.0
Chunla	80.8	76.1	66.9	75.7	81.3	62.9
Kyongsang	57.6	57.7	51.2	76.2	82.0	65.4

*In thousands.

among ordinary Koreans that democratization will do more good for themselves and their country in the future than it has done in the past. Except for those in Chunla province,

considerably more people in every category expect their private as well as public lives to benefit from the advent of democracy in the future than from the democratic movement in the past. An increasing number of Korean people are accepting democratic politics as positive influence on themselves and their country.

This sense of optimism about the future of democratization is much more pronounced in the public sphere of life. With the exception of the least educated, people in all other categories expect further democratization to contribute more to public well-being than personal well-being. Such a sense of democratic optimism about public life is more shared among a larger proportion of the population than the sense of progress that democracy has contributed to it in the past.

It is also noteworthy that the sense of democratic optimism as well as progress varies a great deal more across the categories of region than those of other personal characteristics considered. As many as 24 percent more people from Chunla province than from Kyongsang province reported that democratic reforms have contributed to the improvement of public life. Twelve percent more people from Chungchung province than from the city of Seoul expect those reforms to do so in the future. These regional differences are of greater magnitude than those associated with education and family income, the two variables often found in prior research to shape most powerfully mass orientations to democracy. In the case of Korea, the region where people live has played a more powerful role than their socio-economic or biological characteristics in their acceptance of the virtues of democratization and rejection of the vices of authoritarian rule. This finding testifies that the authoritarian governments headed by Presidents Park Chung Hee and Chun Doo Whan systematically discriminated especially toward the region of Kyongsang and against that of Chunla.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The study of democratization has recently become a growth industry among political scientists and sociologists. Much of their theoretical and empirical research efforts to date have been concerned with questions concerning the sources and patterns of democratic transitions from authoritarian rule and effective strategies for promoting such changes. But very little is known about the consequences of democratization, especially for the quality of life among members of the mass public who have demanded it. This inquiry is intended to fill this void in the vast quantity of the literature which has accumulated over the past two decades.

This study has sought to address a number of specific questions which are often asked among an increasing number of ordinary citizens, especially in those countries where the euphoria following the democratic transformation of repressive rule has faded. How has democratization affected perceptions of the quality of life which ordinary citizens experience on a personal and a national basis in which they live? What type of political change would contribute most to the quality of their personal and national lives in the future? Would more or less democracy do so?

To explore these questions systematically, this study asked a cross-section of the Korean population two sets of five questions concerning the past and future impacts resulting from the democratic transformation of authoritarian rule on the personal and national spheres of Korean life. Analysis of the public opinion data collected in Korea three months ago reveals that, on the whole, the democratization of Korean politics over the past six years has brought about perceptions of significant improvements in the quality of private and public life. In addition, the further expansion of democracy in the country is expected to improve the quality of life in the future. The experienced and expected impact of democratization, nonetheless, are not found to be uniformly

positive across the entire population. Nor are they equally positive across the different spheres of life. Why do people attach different meanings to the same type of democratic change? This is an important question which future theoretical and empirical research on democratization should address.

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