

Reformulating the Party-List Proportional Representatives to Proportional Future Generations Representatives: the Korean Case

Seo Yongseok
Korea Institute of Public Administration
Korea

Abstract

Although electorates and elected representatives have power over decisions, which can seriously shape future living conditions, future generations self-evidently lack capacity to influence present political decisions. To resolve this paradox, this study advocates for a new institutional approach by reserving some of the seats in legislative bodies to represent the rights of future generations. Examining the Korean National Assembly as a relevant sample, the study proposes the currently existing Party-List Proportional Representatives system—by reformulating or switching their function and role—to act as representatives for future generations.

Keywords: Intergenerational Injustice, Political Representation of Future Generations, Rights of Future Generations, Korean National Assembly

Introduction

Korea has been blindly chasing continuous economic growth in the last half-century. However, recently a tiny but quite notable change in Korean society has been observed that indicates an increase in public concern about future generations. There are many interrelated factors that have made Korean society increasingly attentive to future generations. At the bottom of public attention to future generations, the issues of “long-term fiscal sustainability” and “intergenerational inequity” are laid out. With low fertility rates and rapidly aging population, the current situation in Korea is such that the older generations are followed by the younger ones; this in turn creates problems for social security and health care for the senior citizens of the society. The public pension system of the country, which was created under the assumption of steady population growth, has not been able to cater the needs sufficiently. In addition, with the sluggish growth rate of taxes, public pensions are not financed enough as did

in the past. At this juncture, it is expected that the current pension system will pose a huge financial burden on future generations.¹

This visible and obvious aspect has triggered conversations on ‘intergenerational equity’ and notable pension reforms in Korea. Although the Korean government has acknowledged the situation and its importance, the discourses still remain at the palliative level. This is largely due to a structural problem in the current democratic system. In general, it is not easy to achieve political support for policies that will benefit the distant future under the current system. In addition, the current political system of Korea makes the situation even more critical. The Korean political system, which follows a five-year plan with a single-term presidency, is fuelling the government’s tendency to act with a vision for only short-term achievements. This often hampers development of long-term planning and discourages government officials from considering policies for future generations. The legislative body is not significantly different from the executive body. Although many elected lawmakers talk about future generations, their initial intention does not last long. This is not because they are less serious about future generations; rather the pressures from the current generation simply overwhelm the future generations (Dator, Pratt and Seo, 2006).

In this vein, this study attempts to suggest alternative ways to protect the rights of future generations at institutional level. More specifically, it proposes a political solution—through the Korean case—to realizing political representation of future generations in the legislature. This study consists of three parts. Firstly, it briefly investigates the future challenges and structural factors of intergenerational inequity Korean society is facing. Secondly, the existing practical and theoretical concerns are reviewed with regard to the protection of future generations’ rights, focusing on political representation within legislatures. Lastly, the study suggests an alternative institutional device, i.e., “Proportional F-Representatives” to represent the rights of future generations.

Future Challenges and Causes of Intergenerational Inequity in Korea

It is undoubtedly true that current-day Koreans are able to enjoy better and free lives both economically and politically, due to the efforts of the previous generation. However, the possibility that future generations may be unable to enjoy the benefits that the current generation does is becoming more and more realistic. The biggest reason for this is the shifting of demographics due to decreased birth rates and increased life expectancy. Increasing expenditures on pensions and medical care for the elderly are taking a heavy toll on Korea’s budget, and the demographic trend is pointing toward a world where the less populated young people are burdened with supporting the largely populated older generation. Concurrently, the older generation is likely to maintain political hegemony via overwhelming strength in numbers and their strong will to protect their own interests.

Demographic changes

According to the Statistic Korea (2014a), Korea’s fertility rate has dropped drastically from 5.6 in 1960 to 1.19 in 2013, far below the population replacement rate of 2.1 and the lowest rate among OECD member countries. As shown in <Table

1>, Korea’s total fertility rate has stuck around 1.2 since 2003. It is expected that if this rate is prolonged, then the nation’s total population will decline beginning around 2020 (Statistic Korea, 2014b).

Table1. Total Fertility Rate in Korea (2003-2013)²

Year	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Birth Rate	1.18	1.15	1.08	1.12	1.25	1.19	1.15	1.22	1.24	1.30	1.19

Above all, the population is aging faster than anywhere else in the world. Korea is expected to become an aged society in 2020 when 15.7 percent of the population will be 65 or older, and super-aged in 2030 when 24.3 percent will be in that category, and 40.1 percent will be elderly in 2060 (Statistic Korea, 2014b).

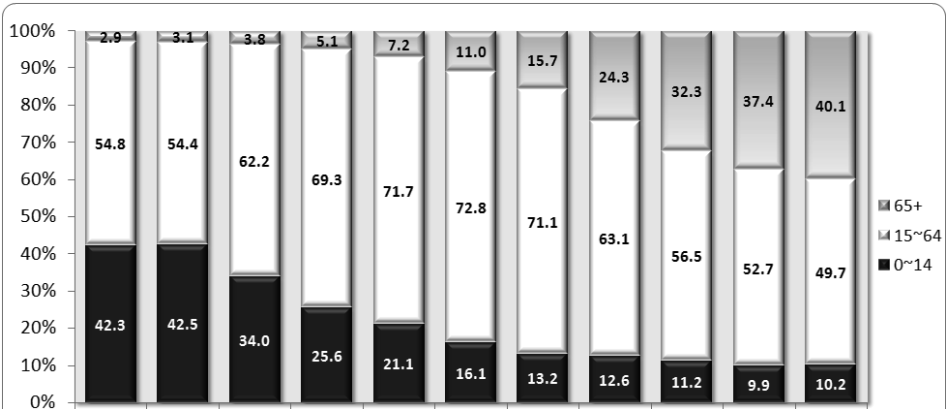


Figure 1. Increasing Ageing Population Proportion in Korea (1960-2060)³

The problem is that Korea’s birth rate is among the lowest in the world, and it is coupled with an unusually high rate of aging due to low fertility. Although developed countries also have been suffering from fertility and aging problems, Korea’s unusual speed has exceeded the norm.

Increasing demand for social welfare and growing government debt

Since the 2000s, the Korean welfare system has been through significant changes both in quality and quantity. The expenditure of government on social welfare has significantly increased because a number of new programs are introduced and coverage expansion of the existing programs. This expenditure has increased in recent years with a fast pace and it is continuously increasing with falling birthrate and rapidly aging population.

The welfare expenditure of Korean government as a percentage of total government spending has increased from 14.9 percent in 1987 to 28.5 percent in 2012, three times higher than the OECD average of 4.9 percent (Pyo, 2012). The portion of public expenditure in GDP is expected to grow to 37.8 percent in 2020 and 51.9 percent in 2025 (Kim, 2012b).

Table 2. Increase of Government Debt in Korea (2005-2015)⁴ (Trillion KRW, %)

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Government Debt	248	283	300	309	359	392	420	445	465	470	481
Percent of GDP	28.7	31.1	30.7	30.1	33.8	33.4	34.0	34.8	34.3	31.4	29.9

Under these circumstances, Korea is at critical crossroads and its national debt is reaching an alarming level. Historically, from 1990 until 2012, government debt averaged 20.09 percent of the GDP, reaching an all-time high of 34.8 percent in December of 2012. The amount of government debt compared to the GDP is forecast to grow to 218.6 percent in 2060 (Kim, 2012a). This indicates that Korea will be facing serious intergenerational inequity problem in the future. If this imbalance is not corrected, future generations will be saddled with a tremendous burden.

Practical and Theoretical Concerns on Representing Future Generations

This section examines theoretical and practical concerns on representing the rights of future generations. It investigates instrumental options by studying a few progressive institutional innovations that have been set up. Preceding studies have highlighted some important aspects concerning the rights of future generations that have to be secured by the existing democracy. In particular, it critically analyzes several models to assign some number of legislators as representatives for future generations (hereafter F-Representatives) to give a voice of future generations.

Practical concerns at national levels

Protecting the rights of future generations is always stated in constitutional laws and policies of numerous countries across the world. Respect for these rights is more reflected in policy decisions of many countries that aim at sustainable development as its importance as a legal and essential requirement gets more significant. However, the modus operandi and the level of authority of such a system vary among nations depending on their environmental, social, political and economic aspect, as well as history and culture. Therefore, attempt to set a new wave of experimental and novel designs intended to protect the rights of future generations have been made at a national scale. For example, Constitutional Preambles, National Parliamentary Commissions, and Ombudspersons have each been assigned for the preservation of the environment and also for a sustainable development. Although they may have their pros and cons based on factors such as authority, order, power, selection method of personnel etc., the role of protection offered seems unanimous and resonant.

Constitutional protections for the rights of future generations

One significant factor to protect the rights of future generations is reflected through their explicit references made in various national constitutions. Moreover, since the need to preserve the rights of future generations is specified in the Charter or Constitution itself, a more progressive system that is committed to serve the planet and its humanity can be justified. For example, the protection of future

generations’ rights was specified as one of the purposes for the creation of a Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms in the Czech Republic. Many such charters inspired by the rights of future generations are available like the French Charter for the Environment (World Future Council, 2010, p.5). Marie-Claire Cordonier Segger (2014), World Future Council Councilor, categorizes these constitutional approaches into five groups (see Table 3).

Table 3. *Five Constitutional Approaches to Protect the Rights of Future Generations*⁵

Approach	Contents	Countries
Preamble Approach	Recognizing the rights of future generations either directly or indirectly so that it is claimed to be the most important reason for the human existence on the Earth. This recognizing must be in form of a formal commitment in form of a Constitution or a Charter	France, the Czech Republic
Complementary Approach	One of the principles of the Constitution must relate to the protection of the environment of the country	Andorra, Ecuador, Argentina, South Africa
Responsibility Approach	Rights of future generations are formally recognized for two main reasons, firstly this recognition is consistent with the principles of the constitution and secondly for the State it also forms an essential public interest requirement.	Poland, the Ukraine, the Czech Republic, Switzerland
Practical Approach	One of the objectives is always a firm commitment for the development of the country, the future generations and provision of sustainability to the country’s pivotal institutions.	Belgium, Armenia, Bolivia, Burundi, Cuban, Germany, Sweden
Comprehensive Approach	The development of the country must incorporate the protection of the future generation as an essential ingredients of its development plan	Armenia, Estonia, Poland, Switzerland, the Ukraine

In the recent times, economic-fiscal aspect of intergenerational equity is becoming a primary issue of constitutional amendment. For an instance, a balanced-budget amendment is a constitutional rule that requires that the state cannot spend anything excess of its income. With a requirement of balance in between the projected receipts and expenses of the government income, this budget aims to limit the national debt for future generations. The countries such as Austria, Germany, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland have taken a step forward by introducing the provisions of balanced budget in their constitutions (Wikipedia, 2015). A balanced provision namely “debt brake” was introduced in the constitution of Germany in the year 2009. From 2016 onwards, the German federal government will be forbidden to run a structural deficit of more than 35 percent of GDP (Münchau, 2009). The Austrian coalition government even agreed to amend its constitution, introducing the German style “debt brake” in 2011. This system will force the government to reduce its debt level to 60 percent of GDP by 2020 (Bloomberg, 2011). The Slovenian parliament, in 2013, also approved a balanced budget amendment which will come into force in the year 2015 (Rousek, 2013).

Parliamentary commissions

Parliamentary Commissions have been set up in many countries to prioritize the rights of future generations, which can be witnessed through the encouragement provided for sustainable development, environmental protection, conservation of natural resources, and bio-diversity. As such, these commissions operate to conserve the interests of future generations as their primary objective. A few examples of these commissions are given below.

To conserve the diverse fauna and flora of Brazil, its varied ecology and extensive areas of environmental significance, the Brazilian House of Representatives have appointed a permanent wing under its banner, which is the Brazilian Commission for Environmental and Sustainable Development (World Future Council, 2010, p.8). In Chile, a similar commission operates as a permanent part of the Parliament for conserving the environment and natural resources of the country. This Chilean Commission governs the sustainable use of its natural resources while maintaining a balance with its environment protection (World Future Council, 2010, pp.8-9).

In Finland, a Parliamentary Standing Committee was created within the Parliament with the future in mind and the needs of the coming generations. Initially, the purpose of the Committee was to assist the parliament in evaluating and replying to the government's proposals on long term issues. This Committee for the Future now plans and oversees various affairs with futuristic views for the benefit of the coming generations (World Future Council, 2010, p.9).

The Knesset Law of the Israeli Parliament includes a chapter on the Commission for defending the rights of future generations, which is to operate as a parliamentary unit. Although it is viewed to be rather comprehensive in representing the concerns for future generations with regard to national policies and law making, it clearly centers its purpose in providing a vision for the future to be incorporated within the legislations of the Israeli State. This imperative platform of representing the voice of the future while making policies proves a certain challenge in the troubled region, but not one that is entirely impractical or unachievable. The Commission is empowered to influence laws and policies governing social, economic, environmental, and many other aspects of the region with a positively holistic approach (World Future Council, 2010, pp.10-11).

In Canada, the Environment and Sustainable Development Commissioner was set up in the interest of future generations, which had initially dealt with the conservation of the environment. But later, it was expanded to play more active roles towards socio-economic developments as well. The main responsibility of Commissioner, who is positioned under the Office of the Auditor General of Canada, is to assist the Auditor during his/her 10-year tenure period. Commissioner assists the Auditor by providing parliamentarians with objectives, independent analysis, and recommendations on federal government's effort, which aims to protect environment and foster sustainable development (World Future Council, 2010, pp.12-13).

The Hungarian Parliamentary Commissioner operates slightly differently by directly appointing an ombudsperson to oversee the rights of future generations, rather than functioning as a whole unit. According to their law, a Parliamentary Commissioner is to be selected such that they protect the fundamental rights of future generations leading towards a healthy environment. The Commissioner reserves the right to interfere, investigate and suspend or alter activities that affect

the interest of future generations and pose potential threats or alleged violations. This Parliamentary Commissioner can be viewed as a novel instrument and a futuristic innovation that has thrust the issue of the future generations to the forefront of its priorities (World Future Council, 2010, pp.13-14).

Theoretical models for political representation of future generations

When considering political representation, it is natural to think first of the legislature, whether it is for present or future generations.⁶ Therefore, the most effective attempt that can be considered in order to protect the rights of the future generations is by legislation.⁷ However, no serious work in this respect has been done by legislators concerning the rights of the future generations. Actually political rhetoric is replete with references to future generations, though often the actual content of the political agendas are often seen as self-serving. Nevertheless, the concept of political representation of future generations within legislatures is not new. Others have already advanced proposals for institutional devices to represent the rights of future generations.⁸ This can be practiced by a system in which by nominating/designating/electing a selected number of representatives to represent the future generations. There is a demand that “some numbers of seats should be reserved for the representatives of future generations” (Ekeli, 2005, p.2). This will enable the representatives of the rights of future generations to be more effective and the rights will be protected in within the norms of democracy (Kavka & Warren, 1983; Dobson, 1996; Ekeli, 2006).

Political scientists Gregory Kavka and Virginia Warren (1983) worked on the representation for the rights of future generations. Based on their research, they proposed a system in which they designated representatives from within the elected legislators for the rights of future generations. According to them, these representatives will work like all other legislators, but would also work for the protecting the rights of the future generations. They argue that this system would effectively negate the concern that future generations cannot be represented or even elected in any legislative assembly.

Robert E. Goodin (1996, 2003) elaborated a principle of “deliberative democracy”, which encapsulated or incorporated room for discussing the rights of future generations. Unlike Kavka and Warren, Goodin does not stipulate a new institutional device in legislative assemblies (for instance, proxy representation for future generations). Instead, Goodin advocates the *internalization* of the other’s interests as a process along with needs and perspectives – *imaginatively* present in thoughts that is considered as policy options and actions. It is an internal reflective process wherein the interest of future generations will put in ‘others shoes’ and imagine what their interests would be in that situation.

While Goodin advocates the internalization of the rights of future generations among the current electorate, Dobson (1996) proposes a unique concept of proxy representation and a proxy electorate. This means that a nominated person/candidate from a present generation would function in place of an elected legislator as the representative for future generations and function of proxy is same as existing electorate of democracy. Dobson argues that candidates for this role should be selected from the lobby that he termed the *environmental sustainability lobby*. As such, the right to represent future generations during electoral campaigns would be restricted to candidates from the lobby. This will restrict the nomination only

by the members of certain organization/groups that are already working for the protection of environment. The common citizen will have no right to select these representatives. The candidates that are to be selected will also be primarily from the environmental groups or organizations (Dobson, 1996). An obvious criticism would be where to draw the lines among other competing interests such as “cultural integrity” incorporated into the French policy deliberations via the *Académie française*.

Kristian Ekeli (2005) proposes a model even more expansive. Ekeli predicates his argument on a general concern that deliberative democracy cannot be considered legitimate without a voice for future generations, which would add value to contemporary decision-making. A substantive difference between Ekeli and Dobson’s respective models is that the former assumes that “all voters ought to have the right to elect F-Representatives” (2005, p.8), while the latter restrict the right to proxy representatives which consist of environmental organization or group members. Ekeli, therefore, labeled Dobson’s approach the *restricted franchise model* due to its failure to offer all voters the right to elect such representatives, granting it only to present-generation proxies. In this context, Ekeli calls his proposal an *extended franchise model* that “all citizens who have the right to vote would have two votes each” (2005, p.7). Ekeli also argues that “the right to serve as F-Representatives should be open to everyone who cares about interests of future generations” (2005, p.12), contrary to Dobson’s environmental sustainability lobby approach.

In sum, the above three proposals share the idea that representation of future generations’ rights should be legislated by representatives that are elected just to support and identify their interests. Among others, these proposals are provocative as they would require substantial changes in the present political theory – and practical application – of today’s liberal democracy. While Goodin insisted on protecting the interests of future generations through contemplating the ethical alternatives and “deliberate decision-making”, Dobson and Ekeli supported the political institutionalization of representing future generations within legislatures. The practical application of these proposals seems difficult to implement as the proposals have failed to suggest any practical steps for their implementation.

F-Representative Model as a Substitute

As reviewed above, there are considerable theoretical frameworks and institutional devices to protect the rights of future generations at the national level. There have been a number of arguments on how to promote and represent the rights of future generations in the actually existing democratic systems. Due to this importance, a few leading countries already reflect the rights of future generations in national constitutions. In addition with this, they also adopted new techniques and instruments for future generations to give them voices in law-making structures.

This section refers these lessons as starting point to suggest an alternative way to encourage legislators to consider the rights of future generations. The primary concern of representing future generations in the legislature, both in theory and practice, depends on how representation of future generations would be structured. In this context, this research proposes utilizing currently existing “Party-List Proportional Representation” (hereafter PLPR) system as a proxy F-Representatives.⁹ In this system more than one candidate is elected by the voters

through the electoral list. The party allocates the candidates for the election. Each party earns certain number of seats for the election based on the number of votes it gets in the election. There are a number of countries that are working on PLPR system of elections. However, the system each country follows differ in each case based on the political working of each country. There are three main systems within the PLRR system of election, namely close list, open list and the local list. In each of these systems the candidates get elected either by pre-determined method controlled by the respective party (closed list) or directly by the voters (open list) and the last elected by the district (local list) (Urban Dictionary, 2014; Noris, 1997).

Taking some of the examples of the current Korean PLPR system, this study attempts to supplement those theoretical and practical concerns of representing future generations in the existing legislature system.¹⁰ It suggests that the currently existing Party-List Proportional Representatives system in Korea—by reformulating their function and role—to act as F-Representatives. This would provide these representatives with the opportunity to question certain proposed laws, which could potentially harm or benefit the particular interests of future generations. In addition, these representatives could even request a referendum on issues that would seriously influence future generations' living conditions. Therefore, this proposition can be defined as the 'Proportional F-Representatives' model.

Scope of future generations and number of F-Representatives

The first concern involves determining the scope of future generations and how many F-Representatives there should be (in the legislative assembly). In fact, no one knows how many future generations will actually exist, or even for how many generations the nation will endure. Given the massive size of this generation's constituency, it is necessary to set a clear scope for future generations in order to make the representative system more feasible and effective. For representatives to represent all future generations, the size of their prospective constituency would vastly dwarf that of the present electorate (Wolf, 2008). Most of all, it is very doubtful that the present generation would allow F-Representatives to outnumber those representing their current interests. As such, compromise is required between future and present generations for political equality. If the electoral system produced a large number of F-Representatives, it would undoubtedly restrict the rights of the present generation. Yet, an insufficient number of F-Representatives would curtail the potential for their interests to influence or block policy decisions. In cases where the needs of the present generation and those of future generations conflicted with each other, a question may arise regarding how much take care of future generations should be done. Thus, without a compromise, which resolves the intergenerational competition for political power, the proportional F-Representative model would effectively be rendered untenable.

One possible solution is to decide the number of F-Representatives based upon the ratio of population ranges from 0~18 years old.¹¹ These young people compose approximately 20 percent of total population in Korea (Statistic Korea, 2014a). Coincidentally, this ratio is close to the current ratio of PLPR seats (18 percent or 54 seats out of 300 seats) in the Korean National Assembly. Limit the scope of future generations to the individuals aged between 0 to 18 years old—who do not have a right to vote now because they are still too young to have it—seems the most appropriate starting place for F-Representative system more practically feasible.

Accordingly, get the 54 out of 300 members in the Korean National Assembly to represent these young people and switch their role to become F-Representatives. The number of 54 might be small to represent the rights of future generations, but the ratio has been set down in the Korean National Assembly with unstudied ease. Thus, a practical and workable way to decide the number of F-Representatives, in the beginning state, is to maintain the current ratio of PLPR.

Remember that the rights of future generations can only be protected through a political system. A system that is able to highlight the path will facilitate the intended political actions in this regards. That will change the situation from status quo to active reforms. However, as Kavka and Warren put it, “it is likely to seem unacceptable to most people because it is novel, sounds radical, has never been tried anywhere, and because it is not clear how or whether it would work if put into practice” (1983, p.34). It starts to project a situation that enlightens a hope that citizens or the representatives in large numbers are considering to be part of such proposals in order to adopt them to start with. In this context, limit the scope of future generations to a group of individuals born and living contemporaneously—but who do not have a right to vote—is one way of accessible path to achieve the goal.

F-Representative candidates

The second concern relates to who will be entrusted to represent the future generations. If candidacy of F-Representatives are limited by electoral system with some specific qualities to individuals, there should be some assessment of which ideological characteristics best represent future generations. As a solution, Dobson (1996) advocates that F-Representative candidates should be selected from the environmental sustainability lobby. However, Dobson’s idea has a problem as it suggests giving all rights to only one particular lobby, the environmental sustainability lobby. This in turn will restrict all others groups or people who care for the rights of future generations. Consequently, a dispute will arise, which highlights that the system is biased towards a particular group. In addition to the F-Representatives drawing problem from pool of candidate, they might also start to share the same short-term concerns of politics that plague legislators of current generation.

The “F-Candidates” problem can be solved by the Proportional F-Representative system. For instance, PLPR system in Korea provides voters with an opportunity to vote for a political party, allowing the parties to earn their positions. It was originally intended to elect experts from various fields to help with the operation of the National Assembly. Instead of mere expertise, this research proposes that each party can draw up a list of candidates who can advocate the interests of future generations from various fields, such as financial experts, social-welfare experts, environmental experts, legal experts, futurists and so on.¹² Their function would be to expand the rights of future generations by participating in debates, proposing legislation, serving on committees, voting, etc. They can support a policy for future generations even if it is against the current generation’s interest as well as against policies devised by their own party.

Electorate for F-Representatives

The third concern is the constitution of the electorate for F-Representatives.

Dobson (1996) has proposed that these representatives should be elected by a group of/or lobby population random sample. However, as Ekeli (2005) pointed out, the constitutional concept of voting equality would be violated if we adopt Dobson's proposal. In Dobson's model, certain elites would end up exercising their right to vote twice, which contravenes one-man, one-vote principle of democracy. Thus, a solution may be to require them to temporarily suspend their right to vote for present generation representatives. As an alternative, Ekeli (2005) suggested that everyone must be provided with two votes in which one is for future one and other is for present representative. As Matthew W. Wolfe points out, "although this approach maintains political equality, it assumes that present generations will somehow be able to distinguish future-oriented concerns from their own short-term needs" (2008, p.1921). However, it is hard to say that current generations are mostly interested in the rights of future generations, especially with regard to issues of social welfare over which the interests of the current generation may conflict with those of future generations. Thus, it is questionable whether the current generation can properly account for the interests of future generations.

The PLPR can also solve the problem of how to constitute the electorate for F-Representatives. PLPR system in Korea, for instance, 246 members out of 300 seats are elected in 246 electoral districts.¹³ The remaining 54 are elected through a PLPR system. From the perspective of the voter, they cast two votes — one is for the representative for their own electoral district and the other is for the party that they support. The "party" votes are counted separately, and each party that wins more than three percent of the "party" votes receives seats based on that support. For example, if 10 percent of votes are won by a party then it will get 5 seats which are equal to ten percent of 54 available seats. These seats will be taken by the first 5 people on slate of party. Under this electoral system, the votes can be switched from "district" and "party" votes to "district (present)" and "future" representative votes. Then, each party lists their PR candidates as per the party's priority determination, i.e., determining best qualified peoples who can represent the rights of future generations by ranking order. To make this system feasible, each party must agree that 54 seats (out of 300) are to be reserved for F-Representatives.

Interests of future generations

The fourth concern is to determine the interests of future generations. However, it is very difficult – if not impossible – to figure out specific interests and subsequently represent those interests. This is because there is no definite knowledge of which present actions will affect the interests of those who come after current generation'. Another reason is that it is not known what effects current generation's actions will have on the state of the universe. In particular, it is possible that future generations will live their lives quite differently compared to the present generation. Therefore, their living conditions and desires may differ substantially. Additionally, people of future generations may not share the same desires; these will be diversified based on the stage of their lives, gender or where they live. As Ekeli (2005) indicates that attempts to determine what should be done for future generations is often grounded in questionable evidence. This is compounded by problems in identifying which values should be considered with how much weight, alongside other difficult political and moral concepts.

Focusing on sustainability or intergeneration inequity among generations is

probably a way to identify the interests of future generations. In particular, the rapid growth of national debt or fiscal sustainability is a widely recognized future issue in Korea that many consider the most visible, and a direct threat to the interests of future generations. Thus, fiscal sustainability with regard to intergenerational equity (at least in Korea) is a good starting point to measure the interests of future generations. It does not justify that the interests and requirements of future generations are not faulty, they cannot be considered to be perfect. This creates the need to test and check them for their long term effectiveness.

Accountability of the proportional F-Representatives system

The final concern is how to ensure accountability of F-Representatives. The added value of F-Representatives within legislative bodies is that they will make accountable for the right of future generations. Without this accountability, the ability of F-Representatives' effective operating will be ruined. Hence, it is crucial to establish accountability so that the proportional F-Representative fulfills its functions and roles. Particularly, discussions on what methods each party uses to select proportional representative candidate and how it can manage them should be realized together. That is because proportional representatives who were reassigned to present future generations can, to some extent, become political tools of long-term lawmakers or faction leaders. Although the Korean proportional representative system bans consecutive terms, they can stand for election again after standing down an election cycle after each completed term

To avoid the scenario in which the legislators selected as proportional F-Representatives without being swayed to serve the interests of present generations, it is necessary to limit proportional F-Representatives running for local elections representing present generations. Also, a "rotational-term" system of proportional F-Representatives would contribute to enhancing the accountability of the system. The rotational-term system would make proportional representatives having four-year terms act as lawmakers for two years and then retire. Two years after beginning their first term in office, they would be succeeded by the next highest ranking people on a list of proportional representatives; it makes the former lawmakers go back to their professions and enable them to act for future generations on the ground.

Table 4. *Comparison of Three Models of Proxy Representation for Future Generations*

Major Concerns	Dobson's Restricted Franchise Model	Ekeli's Extended Franchise Model	The Proportional F-Representative
Number of F-Representatives	Any present-generation representative could be a future representative	5% of total seats in the legislative assembly	The ratio of population ranges from 0~18 years old in total population (or 20% of total seats)
F-Representative Candidates	Selected from the environmental sustainability lobby	Selected from future party (F-Party)	Each party draw up a list of candidates who can advocate the interests of future generations from various fields
Electorate for F-Representatives	Lobbying group or a random sample of the population	Giving everyone two votes: one for a present representative and one for a future representative	Giving everyone two votes: one for a present representative and one for a party-list future representative
Accountability	Relying on moral commitments of F-Representatives	Limiting F-Representatives to one term in office	Ban proportional F-Representatives running for local elections or representing present generations (also 'rotational-term' for two years)

Conclusion

Korea has been facing long-range and structural future problems. These problems seem to cause a deeper inequality between generations by eroding the interests of future generations. Fortunately, there are growing concerns of the rights of future generations in Korea with the fact that it still remains at the level of normative conversation and lacks a concrete alternative.

After investigating established theoretical and practical concerns, this study suggested an alternative model to overcome those limitations to secure political representation for future generations. In particular, it considered the currently existing PLPR system in Korea to act as F-Representatives, defined as 'the proportional F-Representatives' model. Nonetheless, the issue of the qualifications of proportional F-Representatives still remains. Furthermore, there is also a matter of measurement of the range of rights of the future generations. The more troublesome issue is how to compromise and balance the interests of present and future generations. The alternatives in this study require further research to resolve the above problems. In addition, there needs to be a survey of the awareness of public officials, lawmakers and the general public, since these reforms can be institutionalized only on the basis of public awareness that the government should pay more attention to future generations.

Unless a sufficient level of public approval exists, arrangements for legislative representation of future generations will not be implemented. To raise public awareness about the effects of political decisions on future generations to the level

required to change the political system as this paper has suggested, combined efforts needed of concerned parents, educators, scientists, artists, etc., over a period of time. While the task is formidable, it should be remembered that, a mere century ago, the public was hardly accepted women's suffrage. This is pertinent since such concerns largely overlap with concerns for future generations. The more they are delayed to take care of future generations' needs, the more damages and costs will be faced.

Correspondence

Seo, Yongseok
Research Fellow,
Korea Institute of Public Administration
Room 919, Sangnok,
508 Eonjuro, Gangman-Gu,
Seoul, Korea (135-706)
Email: yongseoks@gmail.com

Notes

- 1 It is becoming more and more difficult to find the Confucian tradition of deference to the elderly in Korean society. Recent events have brought tensions between the older and younger generations to the surface. Ever since the presidential election of 2012, Korean cyberspace was inundated with articles pertaining to the abolition of amenities previously granted to the elderly, such as free public transit, basic senior pension and designated seats on public transit. These happenings have turned the generational divide into a social and political issue.
- 2 Statistic Korea (2014a).
- 3 Statistic Korea (2014b).
- 4 Kim (2012a).
- 5 Reconstitute Segger (2014).
- 6 When considering policy implementation, installing a device for the protection of future generations within the executive branch may be regarded as a more effective way. For instance, the Korean government has formulated the Ministry of Gender Equality in the year 2001 to promote the rights of women and plan relevant policies. It might consider setting up an equivalent ministry in the same context. The Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning (SIF) can also find candidature. The ministry of SIF was set up in 2013 to create a new motivation for economic growth by promoting science & technology. Although the ministry is based on techno-futurism, it can be an alternative to include a function to protect the rights of future generations within the ministry. However, when taking Korea's political reality into account, which reshuffles the executive branch every five-year, sustainability cannot be guaranteed. On the other hand, "institutionalizing political representation of the future generations" within the legislative body may need a great deal of discussion and time, but it can be sustainable.
- 7 Another possible tool for solving this conundrum is an independent constitutional institution, an example being the United States' Federal Reserve Bank. Such an institution would allow matters of resource allocation, and consequently fairness of distribution, between generations to be extricated from politics. However, this would require an amendment to the constitution, a difficult feat. In contrast, proportional

representation in the legislative branch is already institutionalized in the Korean National Assembly. The only change necessary would be for the incumbent and opposing parties to agree to have the majority representative stand for future generations. This would minimize the political discord that would arise as a result of trying to amend the constitution, in addition to saving time and cost.

- 8 See, for instance, Auerbach and Michelle, 2012; Beckman, 2013; Binder, 2006; Dator, Pratt and Seo, 2006; Dewar, 2006; Dobson, 1996; Ekeli, 2005, 2009; Eckersley, 1999; Elster and Slagstad, 1988; Fuerth, 2012; Goodin, 1996, 2000, 2003; Göpel, 2011; Jacobs, 2009; Kavka and Warren, 1983; McLeod, 2013; Thompson, 2006, 2013; Tonn and Hogan, 2006; Tremmel, 2006, 2013; Van Parijs, 1998; Urbinati, 2000; Vestergaard and Wade, 2012; Ward, 2011; Weiss, 1989; World Future Council, 2010, 2012, 2014.
- 9 Ekeli(2005) has proposed to establish political parties for the future generation. This proposal aims to protect the rights of generations yet to come. In the proposed system, the voters have a right to elect representatives for the future generations from future parties as well as the representatives for present generation from existing parties. However, Ekeli seems to be inclined to the legislators who depend on the voters of present generation for their political career. The disadvantage in this case is that the legislators cannot resist the oppressive influence of certain special interest groups from present generations.
- 10 A frequently mentioned solution when discussing the representation of future generations in the legislature is a bicameral system. As an example, the Senate could represent the future generations while the House represents the current generation. While this may be an ideal solution, this also carries the burden of a constitutional amendment. As mentioned previously, the proportional representation system institutionalized in the Korean National Assembly is a system familiar to Korean society. In the proposed setup, the current generation would vote for the party and candidates that best represent their interests. The party would then be awarded representatives in the Party-List who would represent the interests of future generations proportionate to the number of seats it won during the election. For such a system to be succeeded, the public must have an understanding of the problems facing future generations; more importantly, the representatives must possess a level of understanding and a willingness to cooperate.
- 11 The legal voting age of Korea is 19 years old.
- 12 It is still uncertain what kind of direction the Korean voters would prefer. Until now, they are interested in political positions such as progressive versus conservative politics, economic growth or environmental conservation as specific issues.
- 13 The Korean National Assembly electoral system represents the combination of proportional representation and majoritarian models that can be applied at the regional level as well.

References

- Auerbach, Bruce and Reinhart, Michelle. (2012). Antonin Scalia's Constitutional Textualism: The Problem of Justice to Posterity. *Intergenerational Justice Review*, 12, 17-22.
- Beckman, Ludvig. (2013). Democracy and Future Generations: Should the Unborn Have a Voice? In J-C. Merle (Ed.) *Spheres of Global Justice. Volume 2: Fair*

- Distribution - Global Economic, Social and Intergenerational Justice*(pp. 755-788). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.
- Binder, Sarah. (2006). Can Congress Legislate for the Future? John Brademas Center for the Study of Congress, New York University, *Research Brief*, No. 3.
- Bloomberg. (2011). Austria Goes for Debt Brake as Spreads Over Bunds Hit Record. Retrieved on January 8, 2015, from <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2011-11-15/austria-goes-for-debt-brake-as-spreads-over-bunds-hit-record-2>
- Dator, Jim, Dick Pratt and Yongseok Seo. (2006). *Fairness, Globalization, and Public Institutions: East Asia and Beyond*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press.
- Dewar, J. (2006). Improving Legislation on Long-Range Issues. John Brademas Center for the Study of Congress, New York University, *Research Brief*, No. 3.
- Dobson, Andrew. (1996). Representative Democracy and the Environment. In W. Lafferty and J. Meadowcroft (Eds.) *Democracy and the Environment* (pp. 124-139). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.
- Eckersley, Robyn. (1999). The Discourse Ethic and the Problem of Representing Nature. *Environmental Politics*, 8(2), 44-48.
- Ekeli, Kristian. (2005). Representative Democracy and Future Generations. Retrieved on July 25, 2013, from <http://people.su.se/~folke/Ekeli.pdf>.
- Ekeli, Kristian. (2009). Constitutional Experiments: Representing Future Generations Through Submajority Rules. *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 17(4), 440-461.
- Elster, J. and R. Slagstad. (1988). *Constitutionalism and Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fuerth, L. and E. Faber. (2013). Anticipatory Governance: Winning the Future. *The Futurist*, July-August, 42-49.
- Goodin, Robert. (1996). Enfranchising the Earth and its Alternatives. *Political Studies*, 44, 835-849.
- Goodin, Robert. (2000). Democratic Deliberation. *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 29(1), 81-109.
- Goodin, Robert. (2003). *Reflective Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Göpel, Maja. (2011). Shared Responsibilities and Future Generation: Beyond Dominant Concepts of Justice. In Council of Europe (Ed.), *Towards a Europe of Shared Social Responsibilities: Challenges and Strategies* (pp. 135-155). Council of Europe Publishing.
- Jacobs, Alan. (2009). *Governing for the Long-Term*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kavka, Gregory and Warren, Virginia. (1983). Political Representation for Future Generations. In Robert Elliot and Arran Gare (Eds.), *Environmental Philosophy* (pp. 21-39). University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Kim, Yong-ki. (2012). Confronting the Challenges Facing Korea's Economy. *The Korean Herald*. Retrieved on April 25, 2014, from <http://nwww.koreaherald>.

com/view.php?ud=20121113000908

- Kim, Duck-young. (2012). National Mid and Long-Term Financial Prospect according to Demographic Change. *Policy Paper*, 1-76, National Assembly Research Service.
- Koh, Kyeong-hwan. (2010). International Comparison of Social Welfare Spending. *Health and Welfare Issue & Focus*, 23 (1-8), Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.
- Münchau, Wolfgang. (2009). Berlin weaves a deficit hair-shirt for us all. *Financial Times*. 21 June 2009.
- McLeod, T. (2013). Governance and Decision-Making for Future Generations. Background Paper for Oxford Martin Commission on Future Generations, Oxford.
- Norris, Pippa. (1997). Choosing Electoral Systems: Proportional, Majoritarian and Mixed Systems. *International Political Science Review*, 18(3), 297-312.
- Pyo, Hak.kil. (2012). The Political Economy of South Korea under the New International Order. *Korea's Economy*, 7, 7-12.
- Rousek, Leos. (2013). Slovenia Moves to Restore Investor Confidence. *The Wall Street Journal*. 24 May 2013
- Segger, Marie-Claire Cordonier. (2014). Protecting the Rights of Future Generations through Sustainable Development Law & Policy. Retrieved on April 4, 2014 from http://jno.hu/hu/alk110214/4_Marie-Claire_Cordonier_Segger.pdf.
- Statistic Korea. (2014a). Population Statistics. Retrieved on March 14, 2014 from <http://www.index.go.kr>
- Statistic Korea. (2014b). Population Projection. Retrieved on March 14, 2014 from <http://www.index.go.kr>
- Thompson, Dennis. (2005). Democracy In Time: Popular Sovereignty and Temporal Representation. *Constellations*, 12(2), 245–261.
- Thompson, Dennis. (2010). Representing Future Generations: Political Presentism and Democratic Trusteeship. *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 13(1), 17-37.
- Tonn, B. and Hogan, M. (2006). The House of Lords: Guardians of Future Generations. *Futures*, 38, 115–119.
- Tremmel, Jörg. (2006). Establishment of Intergenerational Justice in National Constitutions. In Tremmel, Jörg (Ed.) *Handbook of Intergenerational Justice*(pp. 187-214). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Tremmel, Jörg. (2013). An Extended Separation of Powers Model as the Theoretical Basis for the Representation of Future Generations. Retrieved on June 1, 2015, from http://www.futurejustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Paper_Future-Branch_Tremmel.pdf
- Ward, H. (2011). Beyond the Short Term: Legal and Institutional Space for Future Generations in Global Governance. *Yearbook of International Environmental Law*, 22(1), 3-36.
- Weiss, Edith. (1989). *In Fairness to Future Generations*. Tokio/New York: Transnational Publishers.

- Wikipedia. (2015). Balance Budget Amendment. Retrieved on February 19, 2015 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balanced_budget_amendment
- Wolfe, Matthew W. Wolfe. (2008). The Shadow of Future Generations. *Duke Law Journal*, 57, 1897-1932.
- World Future Council. (2010). National Policies & International Instruments to Protect the Rights of Future Generations. A Legal Research Paper, Retrieved on August 19, 2013 from http://www.worldfuturecouncil.org/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/RepresentationFuture_Generations.pdf
- World Future Council. (2012) *The High Commissioner for Future Generations: The Future We Want*. Washington, D.C.: The Centre for International Environmental Law.
- World Future Council. (2014). *Global Policy Action Plan: Incentives for a Sustainable Future* Hamburg.
- Urban Dictionary. (2014). Proportional Representation. Retrieved on March 25, 2014, <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=proportional%20representation>
- Urbinati, N. (2000). Representation as Advocacy: A Study of Democratic Deliberation. *Political Theory*, 28(6), 758-786.
- Van Parijs, P. (1998). The Disenfranchisement of the Elderly, and Other Attempts to Secure Intergenerational Justice. *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 27(4), 292-333.
- Vestergaard, J. and R. Wade. (2012). Establishing a New Global Economic Council: Governance Reform at the G20, the IMF and the World Bank. *Global Policy*, 3(3), 256-269.