

KOREAN MILLENNIALS

Research Brief No.3

COMING OF AGE IN THE ERA OF INEQUALITY

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Who Are Korean Millennials?: Living Arrangement (Living Alone) *By Hyunjoon Park & Jaesung Choi*

One of the major demographic changes in Korea is the rapid growth in the share of adults living alone, particularly since 1980 (Park & Choi 2015). It is known that traditionally Korean young adults live with their parents until a comparatively late age. However, the recent rise of living alone may suggest some changes in the tendency. How has the living arrangement changed over time among young adults? To what extent do Korean Millennials live alone? In this research brief, we examine the share of young adults who lived alone over time, focusing on Korean Millennials who were aged 20 to 29 in 2010 (i.e., those mostly born between 1980 and 1990).

Figure 1. Percentage of Millennials (aged 20-29) Living Alone by Gender and Year

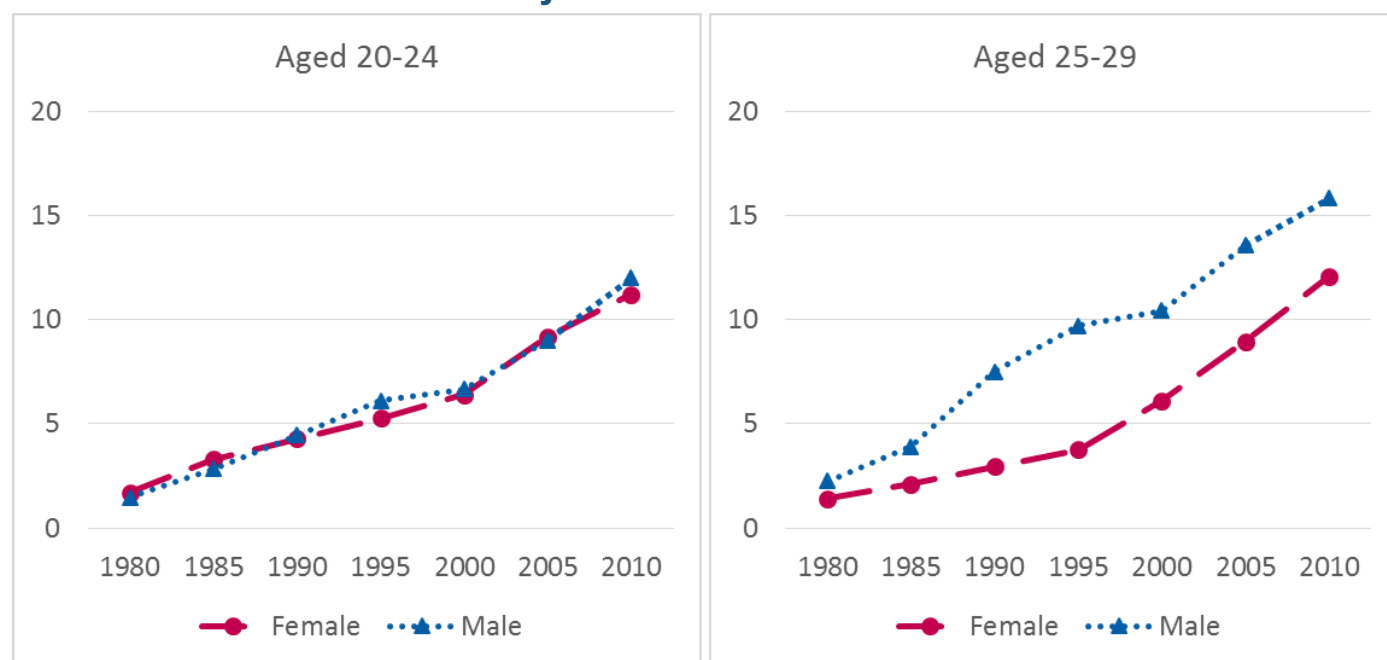


Figure 1 presents the percentage of those who lived alone in each census year for two age groups (20-24 and 25-29) by gender. Note that in this brief we refer to Korean Millennials as those who

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were aged 20 to 29 in 2010. The figure is based on our calculation using Korean Census 1% microsamples in each census year. The specific percentages presented in Figure 1 can be found below in Table 1.

Figure 1 clearly shows that the share of young adults who lived alone has steadily increased over time. In 1980, less than 2 percent of those aged 20-24 (1.6%; see Table 1) and 25-29 (1.8%) lived alone. Three decades later, 12 percent of 20- to 24-year-old Korean Millennials and 14 percent of 25- to 29-year-old Korean Millennials in 2010 lived alone. In particular, the share of those living alone is now 16 percent among Korean Millennial men aged 25 to 29. It is interesting that the gender difference in living alone is not evident among those aged 20 to 24. However, the difference is more substantial in the age group of 25 to 29 where men are more likely to live alone than women.

A more detailed analysis of living alone among Korean adults, particularly by educational attainment (although it did not specifically focus on Millennials), can be found in Park and Choi (2015).

Table 1. Percentage of Millennials (aged 20-29) Living Alone by Gender and Year

Year	Aged 20-29			Aged 20-24			Aged 25-29		
	Female	Male	All	Female	Male	All	Female	Male	All
1980	1.6	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.6	1.4	2.2	1.8
1985	2.7	3.4	3.0	3.3	2.8	3.1	2.1	3.9	3.0
1990	3.6	6.2	4.8	4.3	4.4	4.4	3.0	7.5	5.2
1995	4.5	8.2	6.2	5.3	6.1	5.6	3.8	9.7	6.7
2000	6.2	9.0	7.5	6.4	6.7	6.5	6.1	10.4	8.2
2005	9.1	11.7	10.3	9.2	9.0	9.1	9.0	13.6	11.2
2010	11.7	14.3	13.0	11.2	12.0	11.6	12.1	15.8	13.9

Sources: Korean Census 1% microsamples from 1980 to 2010

References:

- Park, H., & J. Choi. 2015. "Long-term trends in living alone among Korean adults: Age, gender, and educational differences." *Demographic Research* 32: 1177-1208.

