

## Two Protagonists of “The Old Man and the Sea,” Santiago and Manolin, Used as Metaphors for a Healthy Retirement Life of Husbands and Wives in Korean Society

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### Abstract

*In this paper, we examine the roles, mutual relationships, and guidelines for a healthy life as exemplified by the characters Santiago and Manolin in Ernest Hemingway’s novel “The Old Man and the Sea” and use this content to compare the happy home life of elderly couples in Korea. Through a metaphorical exploration of the lives of elderly husbands and wives in Korean society, the study examines their significance as the core of the family, particularly during their senior years. Ernest Hemingway’s “The Old Man and the Sea” portrays Santiago as a unique embodiment of virtue and humanity. As an elderly male fisherman, he symbolizes a profound connection with the sea, as well as qualities such as courage, patience, and unwavering passion. His story underscores the importance of pursuing new goals and maintaining hope even in old age. The relationship between Santiago and Manolin provides insights into the dynamics of elderly husbands and wives in their domestic lives. Manolin’s unwavering support for Santiago and his understanding of Santiago’s dreams exemplify the significance of mutual support and the establishment of common goals for elderly couples. These characters serve as exemplary models for understanding and supporting one another within a family setting. Within the context of family life, applying these exemplary models and relationship dynamics fosters mutual respect, collaboration, emotional expression, and effective communication. Supporting each other and working towards common goals can enhance the family atmosphere, resolve conflicts, and enrich domestic life. Furthermore, when elderly couples share common goals and enjoy activities together, they strengthen their bond and create a more fulfilling family life. These shared activities deepen the affection between elderly husbands and wives and contribute to a thriving household. Through the characters of Santiago and Manolin in “The Old Man and the Sea,” we present in this study a deeper understanding of the values and roles within the domestic lives and affection of elderly husbands and wives. Mutual respect, collaboration, emotional expression, communication, mutual support, common goals, hope, and shared domestic activities all play pivotal roles in maintaining a healthy family life and establishing happiness and well-being within the family. We expect this study to offer valuable insights into the fields of family studies, elderly welfare, and sociology.*

**Keywords:** *The Old Man and the Sea, Roles, Mutual Relationships, Korean Society, Family Life*

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Manuscript Received: october. 12, 2023 / Revised: october. 28, 2023 / Accepted: october. 31, 2023  
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

“The Old Man and the Sea” is a short story penned by American author Ernest Miller Hemingway (born on July twenty-first, eighteen ninety-nine, and passed away on July second, nineteen sixty-one) in 1952.

The novel was crafted between December 1950 and February 1951, narrating the tale of Santiago, an elderly fisherman. Ernest Miller Hemingway, a Nobel Prize in Literature laureate, crafted this 1952 novel featuring a Cuban elderly fisherman who ventures back to the sea after 84 days of fruitless fishing. Eventually, fortune smiles upon him, and on the 85th day, Santiago, an elderly fisherman, hooks a formidable marine creature. Subsequently, a series of intense confrontations unfold between humans, sea creatures, and the unforgiving forces of nature. Following a protracted struggle, they succeed in capturing a massive sea creature, only to lose it to ravenous sharks [1].

Upon its publication, the short story generated high expectations, resulting in a notable surge in sales. Initially, reviews were overwhelmingly positive, but subsequently, opinions on the work became markedly more diverse.

In the year nineteen fifty-four, the excellent writer was honored with the Nobel Prize in Literature, lauded for his literary excellence, innovation, profound influence on the world of literature, and his exploration of important human themes [2, 3].

Santiago and Manolin exemplify how they can provide mutual support and enhance each other's lives within the context of elderly marital relationships. In Ernest Hemingway's novel, “The Old Man and the Sea,” a touching and distinctive connection is portrayed between Santiago, an elderly fisherman, and Manolin, a young boy. Santiago's relationship with Manolin is rooted in the principles of mutual support and unwavering trust. While Santiago embarks on challenging solo fishing expeditions, it is Manolin's belief and affection that sustain Santiago's strength and courage. In the role of a dear friend, Manolin provides unwavering support and acts as Santiago's invaluable companion.

Their mutual support and profound understanding serve as the bedrock of their relationship, enabling them to conquer challenges and create a fulfilling life together. The story of Santiago and Manolin imparts a significant lesson in comprehending the dynamics of elderly couples' relationships. It offers profound insights into the nature of these relationships, underscoring the vital importance of mutual understanding and support within them. The novel underscores the significance of embracing and aiding each other within the context of elderly marital partnerships.

The household serves as the fundamental building block of our society, holding a pivotal role in the human experience. It represents a haven where individuals' physical, emotional, and social requirements are met. The standard of life within a family unit significantly influences the well-being and equilibrium of both individuals and the broader society [4]. The marital partnership shared by elderly husbands and wives within the household plays a vital role in upholding the stability and prosperity of the nation, with the quality of family life directly contributing to societal well-being. This study places significant emphasis on the relevance of marital relationships and family life in the context of Korean society, delving into their impact on the wholesome progress of the nation [5]. The bond shared between elderly husbands and wives thrives on interaction and mutual reliance within the household, constituting a fundamental aspect of marital relationships. During old age, the significance of these marital relationships heightens, as couples spend increasingly more time together. Consequently, just like in other life stages, thorough scrutiny and comprehensive research are indispensable when it comes to understanding marital relationships in old age. It's crucial to recognize that marital relationships entail interactions between spouses, making it essential to not only focus on their individual traits

but also on the qualities of their partners [6]. As individuals age, health issues become more prevalent, encompassing both physical and mental challenges. These conditions can significantly impact the dynamics between elderly couples. Therefore, gaining a comprehensive understanding of healthy aging necessitates a close examination of the interplay between health problems and marital relationships [7]. As individuals age, these relationships become increasingly vital, and elderly couples rely on one another to a greater extent. They cultivate a connection forged through years of shared experiences and affection, which significantly influences the quality of family life [8]. If couples possess a deep understanding of each other, demonstrate consideration, show respect, and offer mutual support, they can navigate through various challenges and relish a joyful life in old age. Prioritizing communication and satisfaction in conversations can lead to a fulfilling and successful old age, allowing them to overcome the natural obstacles associated with aging [9].

The bedrock of a marital relationship is built upon love, comprehension, cooperation, and mutual respect. These fundamental principles should be embraced by elderly husbands and wives as they work together as partners. They not only collaborate on significant family decisions but also provide mutual assistance in their daily routines, thereby sharing their life experiences and wisdom to enhance their family life in old age. Drawing parallels between the relationship of Santiago and Manolin and family life emphasizes the importance of mutual respect, understanding, support, and affection, fortifying the domestic environment and fostering greater stability.

The term "elderly age" encompasses individuals who have surpassed their life expectancy. These individuals are often referred to as "seniors," "elders," "senior citizens," or "older adults." The concept of "elderly age" lacks a precise biological definition and varies across different cultures and historical contexts. Various fields and disciplines are dedicated to the study of aging and the elderly, covering topics such as the natural aging process, medical research in gerontology, gerontological studies, strategies for supporting the elderly, and recreational and sports activities tailored to older individuals [10-12].

Consequently, instead of applying a uniform definition to all individuals categorized as "elderly," some gerontologists recognize the diversity of aging by defining distinct subgroups. In one study, these subgroups are identified as "young" (aged 60-79), "middle-aged" (aged 80-89), and the "very elderly" (aged 90 and over) [13]."

Through this perspective, Korean society recognizes the family as a vital social unit, making a significant contribution to the overall well-being of families and ensuring their healthy development. Subsequent sections will delve deeper into these themes, elaborating on the discussion.

As one of the objectives regarding our academic paper, we plan to offer a thorough comprehension of the crucial role that marital relationships and family life play in fostering the sound development and social stability of the nation.

## **2. BACKGROUND AND CHARACTERS OF THE NOVEL**

Hemingway, born in 1899, as an excellent American writer, commenced his work career as a journalist.

He also served as a driver in World War I. His career saw him actively engaging in Paris, where he interacted with renowned writers, and in nineteen fifty-four, the writer was bestowed with the Prize [14].

The novel, "The Old Man and the Sea," features the main characters Santiago and Marlin. Santiago fights the marlin for three days at sea and eventually captures it. In this novel, they serve as important symbolic

figures representing the contrast between man and nature, between virtue and courage. Their qualities and interactions enhance the narrative, aiding in the communication of Hemingway's central themes and messages. The novel underscores the significance of qualities like determination and endurance while delving into the value of human principles and bravery during Santiago's journey to reclaim his dignity and prowess as a fisherman. This is a recurrent theme in Hemingway's oeuvre, and the interplay between Marlin and Santiago lends the novel an even more poignant dimension.

Although the novel briefly alludes to various characters, it predominantly centers on Santiago's relationship with Marlin, with less emphasis on the other main characters. The central theme of "The Old Man and the Sea" revolves around the unyielding human spirit that confronts adversity with unwavering determination and courage, even when faced with the most extreme circumstances. The novel delves into the perpetual human struggle for both triumph and defeat, as well as the quest for self-discovery, delivering a message concerning personal growth and achievement. Furthermore, Santiago's fervor and deep sense of purpose in fishing serve as a symbol of self-actualization and the human spirit. The book prompts contemplation on life objectives and self-fulfillment, urging individuals to ponder the choices they make in life.

## **2.1 FISHERMAN SANTIAGO**

Santiago, the protagonist of the novel, is an elderly fisherman at the age of 84. In his youth, Santiago possessed an innate talent for catching enormous fish and had the ability to foresee the future. However, he endured a prolonged period of misfortune during which he was unable to capture such prized fish. This unfortunate streak left him in a state of poverty while his fellow fishermen thrived. Nonetheless, Santiago clung to the hope of returning to solitude and resurrecting his former glory. Santiago's relentless pursuit of regaining his dignity and prowess as a fisherman stands as a vital symbolic element at the heart of the novel's key themes.

His extensive experience as a fisherman underlines his competence and wisdom in the field, highlighting his remarkable patience and courage when he was addressing the hardships given by the marlin.

His unwavering determination remains a central feature of his character, a trait he holds steadfastly. Throughout his life as a fisherman, Santiago grapples with profound solitude, providing insights into his character and inner world. As the primary character in the story, he occupies a central role as an elderly fisherman in the twilight of his life. While pursuing the marlin, Santiago embarks on a grueling and tumultuous journey. Despite the hardships he encounters, he ultimately succeeds in reclaiming his humanity and rekindling his pride as a fisherman.

## **2.2 GIANT MARLIN**

The marlin is a massive and powerful fish that Santiago is attempting to catch. Its sides and belly are blue and silver colors. This can be often encountered in the Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans, thriving in both tropical and temperate waters.

Its dorsal fins span its entire length. The marlin serves as a central symbol in the story, representing the goals, pride, strength, and glory that Santiago aspires to achieve. It presents a formidable challenge to Santiago, symbolizing the pride, courage, and strength he seeks to regain. As an integral part of nature, the story underscores the themes of harmony and confrontation with the natural world. The marlin tests Santiago's perseverance and determination, and it reflects his inner growth and courage.

### **2.3 BOY MANOLIN**

Manolin, the boy, supports Santiago and waits for him, acknowledging his efforts. He symbolizes the harmony between couples who strive to overcome difficulties by relying on each other through their connection with Santiago. Manolin plays an important role, even though he doesn't directly appear in the story. He serves as a symbolic figure in Santiago's life, understanding and supporting his fishing work. I respect Santiago's passion and mission and want to help him. Manolin provides Santiago with spiritual support and courage, serving as a significant symbolic element to bolster his efforts. Additionally, Manolin helps alleviate Santiago's loneliness and eases his mind. Conversations and cooperation with Santiago occur in the realm of imagination, which is an essential aspect of Santiago's strong spirit and his ability to overcome adversity. Manolin plays a crucial role as a symbolic character representing understanding and mutual support throughout the story. He plays a pivotal part in mitigating Santiago's solitude and supporting his efforts.

## **3. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **3.1 THE THEME OF THE NOVEL**

One of the all-encompassing, primary, and overarching themes covered is the permanent and indomitable human spirit. The main character, Santiago, is a poor Cuban fisherman in old age who engages in a tremendous battle with an enormous marlin in the Gulf of Mexico.

Through his struggle with the marlin, Santiago represents the nature and endurance of the human spirit in adversity. Another important theme is the relationship between humans and nature. Santiago's battle with the marlin and the harsh, unforgiving sea often symbolize the complex and confrontational relationship between humans and nature. Hemingway portrays nature as a source of beauty and inspiration, while also depicting it as a powerful force that can be both magnificent and destructive. Additionally, "The Old Man and the Sea" explores the themes of finding meaning and significance in life.

Santiago's work is not merely about catching fish; it's a symbolic quest for self-discovery, personal triumph, and honor. The novel underscores the notion that the process and effort involved in reaching a goal can be just as significant as the outcome. Furthermore, the story delves into the themes of solitude and desolation. Santiago predominantly embarks on his fishing excursions in isolation, a state that is manifest both physically and emotionally. This isolation underscores the concept that individual achievements and heroism, often entailing personal sacrifices and loneliness, can come at a high cost. In essence, "The Old Man and the Sea" explores subjects encompassing the resilience of the human psyche, the interplay between humanity and nature, the quest for meaning in life, and the consequences of isolation and solitude on the journey. Hemingway's succinct and compelling narrative firmly situates these themes at the core of the novel's enduring allure.

### **3.2 PARABLE IN THE NOVEL "THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA"**

The relationship between Santiago and Manolin, the protagonists of the novel, "The Old Man and the Sea", serves as a significant metaphorical example of the importance of marital relationships and family life. Through Santiago and Manolin's story, we can establish an indicator of how elderly husbands and wives can support and enrich each other in family life [15]. These literature reviews will enhance our understanding of the vital role that marital relationships and family life play in promoting sound development and social stability at the national level. Consequently, Korean society considers the family an essential social unit, contributing to ensuring sound development and the well-being of families.

### **3.3. LESSONS FROM THE NOVEL, "THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA"**

Santiago, the protagonist of "The Old Man and the Sea," serves as a living testament to the significance of perseverance and determination. His enduring dedication not only highlights the example set by an elder but also serves as a beacon for maintaining a positive outlook and pursuing objectives, even in the face of adversity. This serves as a valuable lesson in confronting the challenges and hardships encountered by Korea's elderly population. By delving into the insights provided by "The Old Man and the Sea," Santiago, the central character of the novel, underscores the paramount importance of perseverance and determination. His unwavering resolve and fearless embrace of challenges further illuminate the role modeled by an elder, offering a template for maintaining a positive mindset and pursuing goals, even in challenging circumstances. Santiago's attitude holds considerable weight as a lesson in surmounting the difficulties and adversities confronted by Korea's elderly population [16].

Santiago's challenging fishing expedition imparts the lesson that we should maintain hope in any circumstances and persistently pursue our goals in old age. This illustrates the potential for elderly individuals to lead vibrant lives filled with new challenges and aspirations. Furthermore, Manolin's support and collaboration with Santiago underscore the significance of mutual support and cooperation in couples. Within Korean society, there is a pressing need for elderly individuals to support and cooperate with one another within their households, and marital relationships symbolize this crucial bond. Moreover, the novel symbolizes the struggle against the unforgiving laws of nature, prompting Korean society to seek ways to address the various challenges and life obstacles faced by the elderly. Confronting these challenges and adversities will allow Korean society to guide the lives of the elderly population toward a more positive direction. Lastly, Santiago's relationship with Manolin underscores the importance of emotional connections and mutual respect within couples. These values are applicable to marital relationships in Korea, where marital bonds among the elderly contribute significantly to the stability and happiness of family life. In summary, the narrative of Santiago and Manolin in "The Old Man and the Sea" imparts multiple lessons about aging and marital relationships. These lessons offer valuable insights for Korean society as it grapples with the aging population and seeks ways to enhance the quality of life for the elderly.

### **4. MANOLIN THE BOY AND SANTIAGO THE FISHERMAN**

The novel "The Old Man and the Sea" can be interpreted as a work that deals with human strength and persistence in the face of adversity, harmony with nature, and various aspects of love and sacrifice. This character metaphor is intended to emphasize the main theme and symbolism of the work, and it can be interpreted in various ways. In "The Old Man and the Sea," one of the themes is Santiago and Manolin's mutual determination and their ability to overcome adversity as they battle against sharks. Through this theme, sharks appear in the work as symbols of human adversity, hardship, or death. Santiago symbolizes this difficulty by venturing out to sea and confronting adversity with sharks, serving as a symbolic representation of Manolin's absence. Furthermore, Santiago demonstrates courage and persistence in his confrontation with the sharks, indicating patience and determination to overcome human adversity. Santiago's relationship with Manolin emphasizes mutual support and cooperation in marital relationships, highlighting the importance of overcoming difficulties while relying on each other. This underscores the significance of family and marital relationships. "The Old Man and the Sea" is about human persistence, courage, love, and the ability to overcome adversity, and the confrontation with sharks symbolically illustrates the power to overcome any difficulty in human life. Additionally, Santiago and Manolin in "The Old Man and the Sea" symbolically

represent the role of elderly husbands and wives in living a healthy life. Elderly couples can lead a healthy old age through mutual respect and cooperation, emotional expression and communication, supporting each other, sharing common goals and hopes, and engaging in activities within their home. These values and roles encompass what elderly husbands and wives need to enjoy family and social life.

#### **4.1 INDIVIDUAL ROLES**

When comparing or interpreting characters in literary works, the reader's interpretation can be subjective, and various meanings can be derived through individual interpretations. Santiago and Manolin are characters in the novel "The Old Man and the Sea." Let's compare Santiago to a Korean husband and Manolin to his wife in terms of personality, roles, consideration, perspectives on love, and social weaknesses. Santiago and Manolin in "The Old Man and the Sea" share a special relationship within the novel, symbolically representing the roles of elderly husbands and wives in Korean society seeking to lead healthy lives. Here is a conceptual metaphor for the roles that elderly husbands and wives should fulfill within their families and society: the central theme of the novel "The Old Man and the Sea" emphasizes that Santiago and Manolin, while facing sharks, rely on each other to overcome their difficulties.

Sharks symbolize human adversity, hardship, or even mortality, and Santiago's journey to the sea specifically symbolizes the challenges in his life, along with Manolin's absence. Santiago's incredible courage and determination in his battle against sharks represent a resolute willingness to overcome life's obstacles. Manolin's unwavering support and perseverance exemplify the harmony in a couple's reliance on each other to conquer challenges. Together, they endeavor to overcome difficulties through mutual support, underscoring the importance of family and marital relationships. The story symbolizes human perseverance, courage, love, and the power to overcome difficulties through battles with sharks. It is crucial to consider the subjectivity of interpretation in the analysis of literary characters, and Santiago's relationship with Manolin in "The Old Man and the Sea" figuratively exemplifies the roles required for husbands and wives in Korean society, encompassing personality traits, responsibilities, empathy, love perspectives, and social challenges. They symbolize the roles necessary to lead a fulfilling life within Korean society, which include mutual respect, cooperation, emotional expression, communication, mutual support, shared goals, optimism, and engagement in family activities. These values and roles are essential for elderly husbands and wives to maintain a satisfying family and social life.

#### **4.2 THE ROLE OF A KOREAN HUSBAND COMPARED TO SANTIAGO**

Santiago, the central character of "The Old Man and the Sea," and elderly Korean men represent distinct personas in separate literary works and real-world societies, each symbolizing different roles and characteristics reflective of their respective eras and cultures. In Ernest Hemingway's novel, Santiago embodies the endurance and resilience of the human mind, capable of achieving great feats, often through his battles with the sea. His story revolves around a journey of self-discovery and the pursuit of honor. In reality, it is imperative for older Korean men to fulfill diverse roles, actively participate in their families and communities, and make their old age meaningful. They strive to promote the well-being of their families and are esteemed as revered elders in Korean society. These two groups possess distinct characteristics and life experiences, and their narratives play pivotal roles within their particular cultural and environmental contexts.

#### **4.3 THE ROLE OF A KOREAN WIFE COMPARED TO MANOLIN**

Manolin doesn't make a direct appearance in "The Old Man and the Sea," but his absence profoundly influences the life of the protagonist, Santiago. While Manolin's character isn't explicitly portrayed, his

absence serves to underscore Santiago's solitude and accentuate his perseverance and determination. Manolin remains an absent presence throughout the story, underscoring Santiago's isolation and loneliness. His absence bestows a deeper symbolic layer to Santiago's struggle against the sea. Furthermore, Manolin's affection symbolizes Santiago's emotions and yearning for his wife, reflecting the situation of those socially marginalized, as Manolin's absence leads Santiago to experience social isolation. This absence of Manolin enhances the profound meaning and message of the work, emphasizing the central themes and symbolism within "The Old Man and the Sea."

Manolin indirectly plays a role in the novel, but the primary protagonist is Santiago, an elderly fisherman in Cuba. Elderly women in Korea have diverse backgrounds and life experiences, and they approach old age in their unique ways. They can fulfill a variety of roles within their families and society, with an emphasis on their relationships with family members. Female elders frequently contribute to domestic chores and childcare, playing a crucial part in society. Manolin and the Korean elderly woman in "The Old Man and the Sea" belong to different time periods and cultures, each embodying distinct roles and characteristics. They inhabit different narratives and environments, resulting in disparate stories and circumstances.

## **5. CHALLENGES POSED BY SHARKS IN VARIOUS SOCIETIES THAT MUST BE CONFRONTED**

The shark represents a challenge to Santiago, which also symbolizes the numerous social difficulties and obstacles he encounters in his life. For instance, sharks can be symbolic of poverty and economic hardship. Santiago, a humble fisherman, endeavors to support his household through fishing, but there are days when he returns without any catch, leading to financial difficulties. This situation can be allegorically depicted through Santiago's encounters with sharks, where he is portrayed as socially and economically vulnerable.

Additionally, sharks can signify a fear of the passage of time and the challenges of aging. Santiago, an elderly fisherman, embarks on increasingly arduous fishing trips as he grows older, a situation reflecting the gradual decline in his physical abilities over time. This can symbolize the social difficulties that come with old age and the isolation that often accompanies it. In another sense, sharks can be emblematic of Santiago's solitude and social isolation. Santiago spends the majority of his fishing trips alone, indicating his loneliness, which in turn implies social isolation and paints a picture of a solitary life in old age. Therefore, in "The Old Man and the Sea," the shark symbolizes the various social difficulties and obstacles that Santiago grapples with in his life, while the novel underscores the protagonist's determination to overcome these challenges through resilience and perseverance.

## **6. AN AGING REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

Korea's aging population is having a broad impact on society, offering a new perspective on marital relationships and family life. Older generations play a crucial role in sharing their experiences, knowledge, and wisdom with the younger generation. This role is of great significance in the transfer of knowledge within Korean society and the preservation of cultural heritage. Marital relationships serve as a platform for realizing this. If the elderly population collaborates with their partners to convey knowledge and values to the next generation, Korean society will thrive. The criteria that determine who qualify as elderly in Korea are mainly based on the standard age ranges established by government and social organizations. Presently, the primary age criteria for classifying the elderly in Korea are as follows: Gyeonggi-do and the Seoul Metropolitan



Government define the age at which individuals qualify for certain benefits related to elderly support policies as 65 years or older. South Korea's National Pension and Welfare for the Elderly primarily cater to senior citizens aged 65 or older. While the criteria for defining the elderly may vary from different perspectives, in Korea, individuals aged 65 or older are generally considered elderly. The legal standard age for 'elderly people' is set at 65 years old. This standard was established in 1984 and has been in place for 39 years. The proportion of the elderly population, which was 5.9% at the time of its introduction, had reached 17.5% as of November last year, and is projected to surpass 20% in 2025, just two years from now [17].

Santiago and Manolin's story illustrate the relationship of an elderly couple filled with love, courage, and hope, conveying an important lesson to us. Santiago's relationship with Manolin in the novel "The Old Man and the Sea" serves as an excellent figurative example that underscores the significance of marital relationships and family life. Through this exploration, Korean society can progress in its appreciation of marital relationships and family life, ultimately contributing to sound development and family well-being. Mutual respect, cooperation, emotional expression, communication, mutual support, shared goals, hope, and engagement in household activities all play pivotal roles in building a healthy family life and fostering family well-being and happiness. The psychological well-being of the elderly population is closely linked to marital relationships. The support and emotional stability provided by couples significantly contribute to a healthier and more positive life for the elderly. This is a crucial aspect in preventing depression and social isolation among the elderly, helping them connect and participate socially. Consequently, the relationship between couples is essential for supporting the psychological well-being of the elderly population. In Korea's aging society, a healthy family life between couples is intricately connected to the social welfare system. It involves an explanation of how family members collaborate and interact within the family structure, working together to make important decisions, offer mutual support, and promote family cohesion and growth by allowing seniors to share their wisdom and experience. This encompasses various dimensions of family interactions within the family structure [18].

If marital relationships are stable and healthy, couples can work together to solve more social problems, reducing the burden on the welfare system and providing assistance to older individuals in need of social support. Consequently, the strength of marital relationships contributes to fortifying the social welfare and safety net in Korean society. In a Korean society with a growing elderly population, maintaining healthy relationships between couples is a crucial factor in preparing for the future. To address these challenges, research and support for the elderly population and marital relationships are necessary. Such support should encompass policy development, welfare programs, and education, ultimately contributing to raising hope for the future of Korean society and fostering a secure community. Within an aging Korean society, a healthy family life and affection between couples play a pivotal role in promoting the nation's well-being. The mutual respect, cooperation, emotional expression, communication, mutual support, common goal-setting, and household activities exemplified by the characters in "The Old Man and the Sea" are worth emulating, and the lessons derived from these relationships will enhance marital relationships and family life in Korea's aging society. This study will further advance Korean society's appreciation for marital relationships and family life, contributing to sound development and family well-being.

These studies offer increased hope and stability for the future of Korean society. This intra-family cooperation plays a significant role in fostering strong bonds among family members and maintaining a happy and healthy family environment. While exceptions and variations exist, gender roles in general revolve around the concepts of masculinity and femininity [19].

## **7. AN AGING KOREAN SOCIETY AND KOREAN COUPLES AS MEMBERS OF THAT SOCIETY**

Korea is undergoing a transformation into an aging society, and these shifts in social structure are having multifaceted effects on the entire country. With the steadily increasing proportion of the elderly population, the roles, interactions, and social dynamics within families and couples are becoming important subjects of consideration. These changes underscore the significance of social connections and the psychological well-being of the elderly population. Therefore, through this study, we aim to gain a profound understanding of the role and social impact of marital relationships on the elderly population as integral members of Korean society. The connection between aging and marital relationships will offer vital insights for Korean society in crafting strategies and policies to address the ongoing aging phenomenon. The expanding proportion of the elderly population gives rise to intricate social, economic, and political challenges, and comprehending and responding to these trends necessitates close analysis and research [20].

Therefore, this study is expected to contribute to predicting the impact of the relationship between the elderly population and couples on the future of Korean society and to effectively planning policy and social support accordingly.

## **8. MARRIED LIFE IN THE HOME**

Married life in the home refers to the life of a married couple within their household, encompassing various aspects of their relationship, roles, responsibilities, interactions, and household management. The home is where spouses live together, sharing their daily lives, making the relationship between them a core element of married life. Key elements of married life include effective communication and understanding, emotional connection, household management and role distribution, financial management, child-rearing, time management, conflict resolution, and giving each other space for individual interests and personal growth. It's about nurturing a relationship based on mutual respect and support, which, in turn, allows couples to maintain a happy and healthy household, growing and evolving together.

### **8.1 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND DOMESTIC LIFE**

The family is a fundamental unit of society, playing a pivotal role in sustaining the well-being and stability of individuals and society. A family provides a space that meets people's physical, emotional, and social needs, and the quality of family life significantly influences the well-being of individuals and society. Those experiencing emotional recognition impairment may be inclined to avoid social interactions and may choose seclusion [21]. Marital relationships are a fundamental component of these families, and mutual support and interaction between partners define the quality of family life. Marital relationships hold even greater importance for older couples, as they rely on each other more, built on years of shared experiences and affection. Marital relationships between elderly husbands and wives become increasingly significant as they age, with their mutual reliance deepening over the years. Older couples rely on each other for support and assistance, strengthening their interdependence. This interdependence plays a pivotal role in the marital relationship between elderly husbands and wives, significantly impacting the quality of family life. Intimate partners continuously work to enhance their relationship. Couples in close relationships continuously work to strengthen their bond. They have various ways to bring happiness to their partner and strengthen the overall connection. How individuals behave significantly affects both the satisfaction and the duration of the relationship. Many approaches can be employed to enhance their partner's well-being and solidify the

relationship as a whole [22].

An essential aspect of marital relationships is mutual respect and cooperation. This becomes even more critical in the relationships of elderly husbands and wives, who must mutually respect and cooperate with each other. Mutual respect involves honoring each other's opinions, values, abilities, and individuality. This is crucial for reducing conflicts and enhancing the home atmosphere. Effective emotional expression and communication are vital for the well-being of marital relationships. It's crucial for elderly husbands and wives to candidly convey their emotions and engage in meaningful dialogue. This fosters greater intimacy, conflict resolution, and joint problem-solving within elderly couples [23]. Supporting one another and establishing shared objectives are crucial for elderly husbands and wives. Collaboratively defining household goals and working together to attain them enables them to share their aspirations and the contentment of accomplishing these objectives. This mutual cooperation is fundamental for nurturing a thriving family life and enhancing the family's overall well-being and happiness. Anthropologists have presented a variety of conflicting explanations regarding marriage in their attempts to encompass the wide array of marital traditions observed in various societies [24].

Elderly husbands and wives should find joy in participating in household activities and exploring each other's hobbies and interests. Engaging in activities like cooking, gardening, art, or cultural pursuits enables couples to share their passions and enhance their domestic life. These in-home activities contribute to the reinforcement of marital bonds and the deepening of mutual affection.

## **8.2 MUTUAL COOPERATION AND SUPPORT**

Manolin's support and collaboration with Santiago underscore the significance of their partnership. In a society that is experiencing the challenges of aging, the mutual support and cooperation between such couples become increasingly crucial. It is essential for couples to offer each other support, establish shared objectives, and collaborate to attain them. Collaboration between couples is pivotal for fostering a positive household environment and ensuring family stability. In light of Korea's progressively aging population, domestic interaction and cooperation have gained heightened importance. This collaborative effort between couples not only fortifies their love and trust but also enhances the domestic ambiance by mitigating household conflicts. It plays a crucial role in enabling elderly couples to relish a thriving and joyful family life. Furthermore, the act of establishing shared objectives and working together to attain them further bolsters the bonds between couples and sustains positive interactions.

By openly expressing their feelings and engaging in effective communication, couples can collaboratively pursue their shared objectives, subsequently experiencing the fulfillment of their aspirations and the joy of their achievements. This synergy and support system contribute to enhancing the social engagement and overall prosperity of elderly couples.

As the elderly population in Korea continues to expand, the collaboration and mutual support among couples will increasingly play a critical performance in elevating the wholeness and overall flourishing of both families and society at large [25].

## 9. RESULTS

The lesson derived from “The Old Man and the Sea” carries a significant message for elderly couples and an aging Korean society. The main characters, Santiago and Manolin, exemplify the importance of mutual support, cooperative endeavors, and shared activities and interests within their marriage, contributing to a healthy and contented life together. The consideration and collaborative engagement of elderly couples at home, along with their shared hobbies and activities, play a vital role in shaping their roles and social contributions within Korean society. The narrative of Santiago and Manolin underscores the significance of these aspects, illuminating the relevance of such connections in an evolving aging society. Korea is undergoing a transformation into an aging society, introducing fresh perspectives on family dynamics and roles. The steady rise in the elderly population places marital relationships at the forefront of their lives. Therefore, this study investigates how these relationships influence their roles and contributions within Korean society. Mutual consideration and home-based activities are particularly instrumental in this context. Santiago and Manolin, through their shared time and interests at home, exemplify the importance of these practices in reinforcing their emotional bond and fostering a positive atmosphere within their relationship. In addition, couples' cooperation and support are equally essential. Manolin, in his support and collaboration with Santiago, underscores the importance of mutual support and cooperation in the context of an aging Korean society. It is crucial for couples to extend support, establish common goals, and work jointly towards their attainment. Such cooperation is fundamental in sustaining a healthy family life, enhancing well-being, and fostering happiness within the family unit.

Moreover, home-based activities and shared hobbies are essential facets of maintaining a healthy life for the elderly population. These endeavors serve to strengthen the bonds between couples and elevate their quality of life. By dedicating time to these shared hobbies and interests within the domestic sphere, elderly couples enrich their emotional connection, leading to a more vibrant family life. These activities substantially contribute to the happiness and stability of family life and the overall well-being of the aging population in Korea. The role of marital relationships takes on increased significance within an aging Korean society. Mutual support and cooperation are vital for assisting elderly couples in overcoming challenges, offering each other support, and fostering hope. Engaging in home-based activities and hobby sharing enhances the emotional connection between couples, rendering family life more prosperous and livelier. Such marital relationships are pivotal factors in the pursuit of family and social stability. Consequently, Korean society must prioritize the marital relationships of the elderly population and implement policies and programs to support them. Encouraging mutual consideration, home-based activities, and the sharing of hobbies among elderly couples will yield positive effects for all members of Korean society. This support will aid the elderly population in social connection, self-realization, and in contributing to the advancement of Korean society.

So, the study of the elderly population and their marital relationships carries crucial implications for preparing for the forthcoming aging phenomenon in Korean society and for effectively devising policies and social support systems. Mutual consideration, cooperation, and shared activities and hobbies among couples hold pivotal values and roles in enabling elderly husbands and wives to lead healthy lives and enhance family life in Korean society

## 10. CONCLUSION

This paper underscores the vital role that healthy family life and affection between couples play in the development of an aging Korean society. Model relationships among couples offer responses to the new

challenges that Korean society encounters with the advent of an aging population. The values exemplified by the characters in "The Old Man and the Sea," including mutual respect, cooperation, emotional expression, communication, mutual support, setting common goals, and engaging in home-based activities, are anticipated to bolster marital relationships, enhance family life, and improve the quality of life for the elderly population in Korea's aging society. This study presents critical insights for preparing for the impending aging phenomenon in Korean society and effectively formulating corresponding policies and social support systems.

As the elderly population continues to rise, prioritizing interactions between couples and activities within the home facilitates social connection and the maintenance of a positive life for the elderly population. These studies will underpin the ongoing progress of the nation by instilling hope and stability for the future of Korean society. Marital relationships and family life will increasingly become prominent subjects in an aging Korean society, and this study, which underscores their importance, will contribute to shaping the future of Korean society. Mutual consideration, cooperation, home-based activities, and the sharing of hobbies among couples play indispensable roles in enabling the elderly population in Korea to lead a healthy life and enrich their family life. Through these endeavors, Korean society will positively address the aging phenomenon and provide support for the elderly population to lead a better life.

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