New Directions and Tasks of the Rural Educational Welfare Policy in Korea*

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ABSTRACT

This paper, based on the literature review, is to suggest the new directions and tasks of the rural educational welfare policy in Korea in terms of 'education as welfare', 'welfare as means of education', and 'welfare through education'. Educational opportunity for the rural students should be provided for the sake of its meaningful experience rather than just as a mere formality. It is also necessary to convert the policy from catching up with the urban schools to pursuing specialization by vitalizing the rural value in the course of developing the rural schools.

The government policy is also required to switch from securing the necessary number of teachers to work in the rural schools to increasing the number of those who want to serve at the rural areas. To modify the rural educational welfare system, organic cooperative system shall be established among the public and private sector, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and local office of education, educational administrative authorities and schools, schools, pertinent authorities and organizations at the rural community level. Then the legal foundation for stabilizing the rural educational welfare shall be expanded to guarantee its sustainability and stability.

[Key words] rural school, educational welfare system, rural educational welfare policy

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I. Introduction

Not a few countries in the world have been suffering from the educational issues for their rural areas along with the urbanization and industrialization. Korea may be classified into one of those that face serious problems in the rural education qualitatively as well as quantitatively. Problems of the school's becoming hollow in the rural area in terms of its quantity and the declining academic ability have been worsening. Seriousness of the issues rests on their rapid progress.

Above all absolute magnitude of the rural population has been continuously decreasing while the aging population is rapidly increasing. Accordingly number of school-age children decreases and schools become smaller. The number of schools with less than 60 students increased from 23.9% in 2005 to 30.5% in 2008 and more than 67% of the schools are expected to be such by 2020. Another issue is the declining academic achievement level of the students attending the rural schools, of which gaps are growing. The international comparison by PISA(2003, 2006) shows that the academic achievement level of the Korean students is regarded as high among the OECD member countries but their level in the rural area hits the bottom(Im et al, 2007b).

Relieving the educational gap between the urban and rural areas has been raised continuously so far. Currently, however, such an agony becomes nothing but a luxurious one and we are now standing on a critical point in which we wonder whether the existence of rural schools can survive or not themselves. We cannot run against the social trend of leaving the farm land for the urbanized area but we should render our best efforts in helping to revive the rural education. Therefore our view point is required to be converted. Admittedly, a lots of efforts were poured into developing the rural education to get good achievements but new attempt should be made based upon serious self-reflection in terms of the efficiency of the past behavior.

The "educational welfare system" is proposed herein as a new approach to developing the rural education. The educational welfare indicates all the educational services that enable individuals to reach their full potential in its broad sense, while in a narrow sense, the educational welfare means all kinds of educational services to relieve or release the disadvantage or deficit to be incurred by the social and economic status or the residing location of the individuals.
Approaching the rural education with the issue of welfare implies three kinds of significance. First of all, the rural education should recognize "education as welfare". Education as welfare is to regard the education as welfare itself and the rural education should aim at enhancing the quality of life of the students. Secondly the rural education shall treat the "welfare as means of education". The welfare as means of education implies to put emphasis on the welfare itself as a prerequisite to implement quality education. Thirdly the rural education shall be regarded as the "welfare through education". Welfare of the rural society shall be realized by education. The rural educational problems are caused by the problems of the rural communities. Farming and fishery industries occupy very minimal part of gross domestic products of Korea and they are further reducing. Farmers lead poor living and their settlement environments are extremely inadequate. Provision of opportunities and hopes to the farmers to improve the quality of their living through better educational services for their children is definitely required, which will eventually revive the farming area.

This paper, based on the literature review, is to review the current situations and issues of the rural educational welfare in Korea and to suggest the new directions and tasks of the rural educational welfare policy in Korea in terms of 'education as welfare', 'welfare as means of education', and 'welfare through education'.

II. An Overview of the Policy on the Rural Educational Welfare

1. The implementation of the rural educational welfare policy

The terminology of an educational welfare in Korea appeared since 1990s. 1990s achieved almost perfect school attendance at an elementary and secondary education and the attendance at a higher education recorded more than 50% to accomplish it universalized in Korea. Interests in the educational welfare can be said to commence

1) "Education as welfare" and "welfare through education" were adopted from the Three View Points on the Education and Welfare of Yun Jung II(1990).
by converting the quantitative growth of school education into qualitative development and the aspiration to restore the essence of education by breaking the entrance examination-oriented education.

In 1995 the Education Reform Committee (1996: 67) declared a state of educational welfare as its ideology of education reform (Edutopia) and the terminology of educational welfare was explicitly utilized by the committee. But its proposed education reform focused on strengthening national competitiveness of education through restoring the essence of education and the interests in the educational welfare for the vulnerable group of people increased since the foreign currency crisis occurred in 1997(Ryu et al, 2006: 15-23).

Ministry of Education established a Comprehensive Plan for Educational Welfare (1997-2001) in December 1996. Its comprehensive plan incorporated a special education development scheme, a comprehensive measure to prevent dropout at schools halfway, support for the retarded learning students, support for the home returning students from abroad (Ahn & Kim, 2009: 53). But a support plan for the rural education was not included in it.

Following the above policy, Ministry of Education and Human Resources established and promoted the Five Year Plan of Participating Welfare (in the educational welfare sector) in October 2004. The plan proposed relieving maladjustment to education, reducing unequal educational environment, establishing welfare friendly educational environment and build-up policy promotion of educational welfare as the policy objectives and the issue of rural education was included in the reducing unequal educational environment.

To improve the educational environment in the rural and fishery areas, following measures were established and promoted: operate various small schools suitable for the situations of each area(manage the schools by group and expand number of schools that integrate elementary, middle and high schools), enlarge autonomy in managing the rural schools(expand designating the schools of autonomy), strengthen basic academic ability of the rural students(support vacation camp, develop teaching material for a combined class, build-up e learning system, and prioritize allocation of English native speaking teachers), enlarge the opportunities of entering the university by the rural students(expand the entry of special admission to the university, intensive fostering of one excellent highschool per each county), expand inviting teachers(expand inviting a school principal, flexible management of service rotation of
teachers), positively promote local teachers, improve working environments for the teachers at the rural areas (ease working load, allowances for a combined class and visiting teachers, improve living environments for teachers).

Because former policy before 1990s on developing rural education did not adopt the word of educational welfare, nevertheless it cannot be called as non educational welfare policy. Im(2006: 29) divided the transition of the rural educational policy into 3 phases and the first one covered the period from the liberation to 1981 to promote the opportunity of education. Second phase was from 1982 to 2003 to officially commence the merging of the schools to implement the task and ensure its internal stability. Third phase was, according to his explanation, referred to the years after 2004 to legislate a special act on improving the living quality of the farmers and fishermen and execute the educational welfare plan that includes the rural educational policy. In a broad sense all the policies that were made after the liberation can be understood as an educational welfare policy.

2. Main rural educational welfare policies

Key features of the policy to cultivate the rural education can be analyzed from the view point of welfare as follows:

**Increasing Educational Opportunities for Rural Students**

Korean government has been pursuing the policy of expanding the educational opportunities of the rural students continuously. Such policy at the elementary and middle schools achieved rather early result in terms of the school attending rate of the rural students. The Six-Year Plan of Completing Compulsory Education System which was implemented after the liberation (1954-1959), Private School Act (1963), Introduction of Admission to Middle Schools without Examination (1969) and Applying Equalization of High Schools by Phase (1974) was not intended to promote development of the rural schools alone but also to contribute to the creation of more opportunities for rural students to attend schools because they just being scattered across the country.

Free compulsory education at the elementary schools and extending such education to the middle schools were tried in order to guarantee the school attending opportunity for the rural students. It is noticeable to find that the policy was
implemented in phases from the islands and remote areas in spite of financial burdens. Compulsory education at middle schools started in 1985 in the islands and remote areas to proceed with those at farmland villages and towns in 1992 and eventually the free compulsory education in middle schools applied to all the areas across the country in 2002, which was available not so long ago (Im, 2006: 39).

In the middle of 90s, not merely expanding the elementary and middle school attending opportunity, special entrance quota of universities out of the fixed number was introduced to increase the opportunity of the rural students’ education in the universities. Such admission system for the rural students was proposed along with the one for the disabled to guarantee the opportunity of entering the universities to certain extent for the neglected class of people (Im, 1992: 70) and it was institutionalized from 1996 while various disputes.

Improving Educational Environment of the Rural Schools

Policy of expanding the educational opportunity to accommodate the outpouring zeal for education of the people after the liberation contributed to the quantitative growth of the school education but it caused a lot of problems when it comes to the quality. Educational environment both in the urban and rural areas became inevitably worsened along with the increasing school attendance rate. Major policies for promoting the rural schools at the early stage focused on improving the relatively inferior conditions of the rural schools. They included improvement of school facilities and equipment, development and dissemination of various educational materials such as the teaching material for a combined class. Meanwhile most of the educational prescriptions for the rural schools were various supplementary and supporting programs to catch up with the conditions in the urban areas. In other words the government policy for the rural education was to narrow the gap between the urban and rural areas rather than maintain and develop the characteristics of rural education (Im, 2006: 40-41).

The promotion of the policy to merge small schools cannot be neglected as a policy of improving the educational environment of the rural schools. It was in 1977 when the urban population exceeded that of the rural areas. Since then the trend of leaving the farmland for the cities developed rapidly, which began to cause the number of rural schools to decline. The Korean government has been implementing the policy of merging the rural schools since 1982. Its primary object was to
guarantee the learning rights of the rural students and enhance economic efficiency.

Even though merging small schools conflicts with the policy of surviving and preserving small schools, it was inevitable to improve educational conditions through optimizing the size of schools. As full scale merging of schools started in the ‘90s, efforts for improving the educational environment and differentiated attempts became evident. Substantial investments in modernizing the facilities of rural schools were made as a measure of compensation, even if the investment was limited to merging some schools. Aside from the common school bus, rural schools were equipped with heating and cooling facility, gymnasium, swimming pool and ultramodern information devices.

As some problems of disposing the abolished schools were raised during the course of executing the policy of school merging in 1982, the government legislated Special Act for the Promotion of Utilization of Abolished School Properties. The purpose of the Act was to limit the selling or renting out of the abolished school properties to the educational application or the local community’s welfare because they may be sold to wealthy people or they may be used for other purpose rather than being appropriate for the environments of the village if they would be sold by competitive tender like the case of general public properties. On the other hand alternative operational model of the rural schools was developed and applied.

In order to emerge from the inferior educational conditions of small schools, the schools were managed as a group to jointed use of the facilities, human resources and educational programs. Also the farming type school of autonomy and school of specialty were implemented.

Securing Outstanding Teachers for the Rural Schools

Quality of the Korean school teachers catches up with the world top level. The government has been adhering to two policies for the quality of the teachers working in rural schools from lagging behind those who work in urban schools. The first one is to settle the system of rotating service. The rotating service system is to shift the teachers from the city to the rural area after certain period of service is over and vice versa. The quality gap of the teachers whether they work in the city or farm village is none.

Second policy is to add the points to the teachers serving the rural area for their
promotion. Incentive points for promotion have been very attractive benefits for the teachers under the situation of keen competition for promotion among the teachers in Korea. The merit system exercised its power to make the teachers apply for the post at the rural schools through competition. Unequal points were added depending on the extent of isolation from the urban areas. The system is judged to be more influential than the money wise allowances. In some instance teachers who committed troubles are sent to the rural schools as a light disciplinary action but the schools subject to the merit system exist for the teachers who want to be promoted.

Of course the rotating system and merit system have ambilaterality. Some people regard them as a necessary system for the development of rural education but others believe them to be a serious obstacle against the development. In spite of such controversy, it is evident that the two systems contributed to securing the teachers of the rural schools in a stable manner.

In order to improve the welfare of the teachers working at the rural schools, various allowances are paid and more school houses are provided. At a small school, teachers exclusive for a subject are provided at an elementary school and teacher’s visiting system is implemented to prevent the lesson by non majoring teacher of the subject. Also inviting teachers system and recruiting the principal by public notice are introduced to settle the responsible operation of the rural schools.

Fostering Rural Schools by Choice and Concentration

The Korean government has been rendering financing support for the rural schools with short and mid term scheme applying the logic of choice and concentration. The rural schools are supported discriminately more than the urban schools and outstanding rural schools are selected for financing and promoting. In particular since 2004 such financing package by choice and concentration tends to be expanded. It includes fostering outstanding school, boarding highschool, school of all year round care and school of landscape.

The Fostering Excellent Highschool Project(2004-2009) was executed to develop a high school of strategic position that may prevent outflow of outstanding graduates of a middle school in the rural area into the cities. By and large one high school was selected and operated in one county. Seven model schools in 2004, 7 more schools in 2005, 30 additional schools in 2006 and 42 schools in 2007 were
designated to make the total number of such schools as 86 for 6 years from 2004 through 2009.

Financing the outstanding schools reached Korean Won 1.6 Billion for each school (₩0.8 Billion from central government and more than ₩0.8 Billion from the local government) and 75% of the subsidies was used to build facilities or remodelling and purchase school equipment and material and around 20% was spent for developing educational program, scholarship and training. Core achievement of the scheme was remarkable increase of admitted outstanding graduates of a middle school, whose academic reports were within top 10%. For example the high schools selected to be of excellence in 2004 admitted the outstanding new students only by 8.9% of the total number of students but the rate increased to be 23.3% in 2009(Im et al., 2010: 92). Other schools selected yearly after 2004 showed consistent increasing trend with different extent by schools.

The Rural Boarding High School Project(2008-2009) was executed to guarantee provision of equal opportunity of education and relieve the educational gap between the urban and rural area by improving the educational environments of the schools located at depressed areas. Support for operating various educational programs along with the improved educational environments enhances the educational ability of schools and cultivates the self-leading learning ability of the students resulting in reduced rely upon a private education.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology selected 82 boarding public high schools at the county level in August 2008 then expanded the level to the composite urban-rural cities and private schools by adding 68 more schools for boarding high schools in 2009. The ministry selected and supported a total of 150 schools for boarding high school. The budgetary magnitude that was paid only for one year was ₩3.8 Billion per school in average and it was used for constructing infrastructures such as a dormitory. Boarding schools are expected not only to increase the academic ability of the students but also increase their special talent, cultivate upright character and virtue and perform consolidated functions including living guide of the students.

School of All Year Round Care(Yunjoong-Dolbom School) Project (Dec. 2008- Feb. 2012) proclaims 365 days educational welfare support for the rural students. It provides day care program for the babies and infants during the school term, weekend and vacation, basic welfare program such as school feeding and
transportation, cultural activities and psychology and emotion development program.

The project also supports internal stability of curriculum to enhance the educational ability, program for improving the basic academic ability of the students, characteristic education program to be appropriate for the condition and nature of each area. Then it supports the operation to be linked with the schools, and school/community to strengthen the educational ability.

It also supports joint utilization of the facilities among the schools, develops/operates joint programs and operates the program linked with enhancing the educational ability of the community. The School of All Year Round Care Project fosters and supports the common educational activities of each school, characterized educational activities of each school and joint educational activities of the community. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology selected 378 schools from 85 counties on December 24th 2008 (kindergarten 24, elementary school 222, middle school 126 and high school 6) as the schools of all year round care. In 2009 11 schools were relieved from the designation while 16 schools were added, making the total number of such schools reach 383. The Ministry recommended the criteria on selecting such schools to organize more than two schools at one myun (one of the smallest administrative units in the rural area of Korea) out of those located at myun across the country but total number of students should exceed 200. The total subsidy paid was W82.6 Billion for three years. The assessment on the learning achievements at a national level 2010 conducted by the Ministry (November 2010) showed that the schools of care achieved less rate of shortfall of basic academic ability in all the subjects of an elementary and a middle school while their enhancement was higher than the others.

The Excellent Rural Elementary and Middle School (Jeonwon School) Project (July 2009-February 2012) aims at supporting the following programs: educational environments harmonizing the nature and ultramodern (nature friendly facility, ultramodern e-learning class, subject oriented classroom), small school but with powerful program (characterized regular curriculum, diversified after school education, exchange program between the urban and rural areas), deploy and utilize outstanding human resources (principal and teacher invitational program, employ teaching assistants, program planning and assisting manpower), practical linkage with the local community (support educational and cultural activities of the local residents, operate residents participating program, support students' commuting to school,
vitalize internal power of the local community, link with the local development project), strengthen autonomy of school management (secure autonomy of unit school, allow autonomous rights in recruiting the students and improve rotating service system, provide incentives).

The Ministry designated 110 schools as those of landscape on July 16th 2009 out of the elementary and middle schools at myun in the composite urban-rural cities and county and they reach 10% of the schools with their students of 61~200. Budgetary support was recorded to be ₩139.15 Billion for three years and it was allocated by type of schools.

The schools subject to a comprehensive support (facility cost + program operation) are 55(50%) with the subsidy of ₩1~2 Billion per school, the schools receiving facility support are 33(30%) with the subsidy of ₩0.5~1 Billion per school and the schools under program operational support are 22(20%) with the subsidy of ₩100 Million~200 Million for three years. High technology classrooms were built at all the designated schools (110 schools) ('09, ₩22 Billion).

Assessment on the learning achievements at a national level 2010 conducted by the Ministry (November 2010) showed that the schools of landscape achieved less rate of shortfall of basic academic ability particularly at elementary schools while their enhancement was higher than the others.

Expanding the Institutional Foundation to Foster Rural Schools

Government legislated the Act on the Promotion of Education in Islands and Remote Areas in 1967 providing the opportunity of materializing and stabilizing the support for the teachers working at the islands and remote areas. But as it was limited to the islands and remote areas, not all the rural schools could be assisted for promoting their education. Nonetheless until the Special Act on the Elevation of Life Quality of Farmers, Foresters and Fishermen and the Promotion of Development of Agricultural, Mountain and Fishery Areas (hereinafter called the "Special Act") was legislated, no such legislation existed for the past 40 years to promote school education system in rural area comprehensively, except for the Act on the Promotion of Education in Islands and Remote Areas, which indicates insufficient institutional strategy to promote the rural school education.

The Special Act is inclusive of the Act on the Promotion of Education in Islands and Remote Areas which was the only one law in relation to rural education at the
time and the School Meals Act. But while the Act on the Promotion of Education in Islands and Remote Areas and School Meals Act stipulate the provisions related to the tasks of the national and local government as a mandatory injunction, even if the Special Act is inclusive of various supports, most of them are voluntary provisions. Accordingly in spite of its detailed and inclusive description, it may be nothing but nominal law without proper follow-up measures (Im, 2006: 44).

3. Main characteristics and issues

Korea have put emphasis on the formation and implementation of an urban-school-centered education policy. The main governmental policies such as school diversification policy, private tutoring expense reduction policy, and student selection policy are all targeted on the urban students. Educational welfare policies for rural students have been considerably related to the policies for low-income students, disabled students, low-performing students, dropout students, students who escaped from North Korea, multi-cultural family students. Rural school promotion policies have been continually implemented by taking consideration the characteristics of rural areas, that is, the reduction of the educational gap between rural and urban and the returning rural school2).

There are some characteristics of rural school promotion policies in terms of welfare. First, from the perspective of ‘education as welfare’, rural education policies have been focused on expanding the educational opportunity, remodeling school facilities, and optimalizing the school size. However, in a substantive sense, the policies revealed the limitations of the enhancement of academic, social, and cultural ability and the improvement of life quality.

Second, as far as ‘welfare as the means for education’ is concerned, it is noticeable to find the family deficit of the rural students is deepening and the elements of a family contributes to the key factor of broadening the educational gap between the urban and rural education. Meta analysis on the educational differential between the urban and rural areas shows that the family element among a family, school and student carries a bigger effect size of the gap and the social and economic element out of the family element has bigger effect size of such (Im et al, 2007a).

2) the returning rural school means the schools that rural students who entered to the urban schools for their good education conditions want to come back to their regional schools in rural areas.
Strengthening the educational functionality of the schools alone indicates the limit to developing the rural education.

‘Welfare as the means for education’ is that a rural school take care of disadvantaged homes by guaranteeing qualified teachers and staffs who love to help and support rural schools and students. However, Korean teachers used to move from a school to another school every four or five years according to the personnel regulation; so, it is hard to have affection and devotion to rural schools and students. Also, governments currently have provided financial grants and programs for taking care of rural schools and students on the principle of the selection and focus. So, all rural schools and students are not given financial grants and programs. Besides, the financial grants and programs are temporary.

Third, in terms of ‘welfare through education’, as a matter of fact the past efforts for fostering the rural education intended to duplicate the urban education. We should reconsider, however, whether the urban education is the desirable model which should be pursued by the rural education or not. Because rural education paradoxically helps students to going out of rural areas rather than to stay in them without closing the gap between urban and rural education. Although it is important to produce excellent human resources, it is more significant to educate them in order to keep their regions.

III. New Directions and Tasks of the Rural Educational Welfare Policy

1. Directions

Rural schools are threatened by the school closure due to reducing the number of students and the educational gap between urban and rural areas. Under this circumstance, new directions for rural educational welfare policy need to be reconsidered as follows.

Firstly, the educational opportunity for rural students should be provided for the sake of its meaningful activity rather than just as a mere formality. It is necessary to settle the system wherein rural students can get significant experiences from their
Secondly, so far the policy of fostering the rural schools was to catch up with the urban schools but it needs to change for the schools to raise the value of the farming villages. The rural schools are required to emerge from the past practices of imitating the conditions or programs of the urban schools under the alleged reason of reducing the educational gaps with the schools in the cities but it is necessary for them to develop and disseminate their own characterized operational model of rural schools. Making the urban schools as a model gives limit to the rural schools to compete against them.

Thirdly, so far the policy of recruiting the teachers at rural area focused on stable acquisition of teachers to maintain the rural schools within the framework of rotating service system and point add system for promotion. Cultivating, training and securing proper teachers for the rural schools were relatively neglected. High spirit service of the teachers is essential as many of the rural students are brought up at a single parent family, they need warm hands of help. Now the policy should be set to expand the teachers who want to serve at the village, communicate with the farming village and exercise the specialties at the rural schools. It is absolutely necessary to develop a strategy to break the practice that recognizes the rural schools as a rite of passage to go through by the rotating system of the teachers or school administrators.3)

Fourthly, promoting systems of educational welfare of the farming village should be modified. Further tasks to be accomplished are proper role division between the authorities and organizations related to the rural educational welfare and strengthening the ability to promote the rural educational welfare at the local community level. The government, private sectors, various departments of the government and devoted activists have exerted much efforts to revive the rural education. However, it is essential that such move is under way individually.

Finally, educational welfare support by the government should be secured by stability and sustainability. Even though the school support may be implemented by phase starting from the prepared school, it is necessary to arrange a device that can

3) Frequent transfer of the school principals is a serious obstacle against developing the rural schools. According to the investigation concerned, the principals whose term of office is less than 3 years during the finance support period for the outstanding high schools in the rural area were corresponding to 85%, and 64% for less than 2 years and what was worse than it was 2.5% for less than a year(Im, 2010: 31).
provide the support to all the students equally.

2. Tasks

Guarantee Meaningful Educational Opportunities for Rural Students

Establishing basic safety net for rural education: It is necessary to note that the rural schools have a high rate of accommodating the socioeconomically vulnerable students, single parent family students, physically or mentally disabled students and those of multi culture family. Customized care according to the needs of each student should be provided and in this regard the rural schools need to arrange strategies which enable to understand each student’s educational demand and treat their individual requirements. Safety educational networks should be established for them to reach the minimum level of basic education of the people.

Also differentiated support system by the life phases of the rural students should be built. Services should be differentiated in accordance with the nature of children’s day care from infants in the rural area to the elementary and middle school. And the services before and after daily work, over weekend and vacation are required to continue.

Student’s commuting distance to the school is long in the rural area and the transportation means is not convenient compared with the urban area. Benefits of providing a school bus are now available in some specific schools only but such service should be rendered to all the rural students. Either a critical commuting distance or commuting time system should be introduced for the low graders of the elementary schools not to waste too much time in commuting to their schools. Under such context, it is necessary to review to establish K-2 school model at an appropriate area that can accommodate the kindergarten children and the low graders of an elementary school (first and second grader).

Expanding the substantive opportunity of college entrance: Special admission system of universities out of the approved fixed number for the rural students plays an extremely favorable benefits for them. But in order to accomplish the principle objectives of the system, the university authorities are required to understand the government policy to promote the rural education and have a bond of sympathy with it.
The system should not act merely to guarantee the opportunity of entering the universities but provide supplementary education program for the rural students to be able to catch up with the college education after admission. Taking into account of the transportation expenses and boarding charges of the rural students that add the financial burden of the rural households, priority should be allowed for them to enter the dormitory.

**Establish School Images to Raise the Value of Farming Villages**

Developing and distributing successful rural school model: Establishing the school images to raise the value of the farm villages will be extremely difficult. It is deemed necessary to make continuous efforts in that regard. But some success model of the rural schools is very encouraging. Outstanding cases are showing up attracting students from other regions by operating the curriculum making use of the advantages of the rural schools such as the experiencing education that communicates with the nature. Namhansan Elementary School in Gyeonggi Province and Geosan Elementary School at Asan, Chungnam Province are the typically successful cases that increased inflow of the students from other areas. To enhance the educational ability of the rural schools that have difficulties in operating the curriculum normally due to the reduced number of students, it is necessary to cultivate vitalizing model of small schools to expand and disseminate them.

Facilitating transfer of urban students to rural schools: Kim(2009: 212) asserted that we had no option but promoting two paradigms at a time as the Korean farm villages are regarded to stand in the transition period when the farmers oriented paradigms go on to the space oriented paradigms. The space oriented paradigms do not regard the rural schools to be for agriculture or for the children of the farmers but the schools for every one with certain characteristics are required and accordingly the rural and urban areas will be combined according to their functionality without isolation by dividing the two areas to establish the educational policy of co-existence.

One of the models that deserved to be reviewed under the context is the Village Study, which was used in Japan. The concept of a village study is for the elementary or middle school students in the urban area to leave their parents for
more than a year or move to the farming village with parents to experience the nature or meet people the rural schools. As moving with family or parents is in fact difficult, they stay at a school dormitory or at the resident’s home without being accompanied by the parents to avoid relocating the parents’ job or changing their residency, which is the most usual case in the village study.

In Korea they have been promoting the activities of exchanging the students between the city and village or the rural schools int other places under the name of "Exchange learning between the urban and rural area". However nowadays a new type of study in the village is being settled attracting the city students by operating the curriculum making use of the advantages of the schools at the farming village. As a matter of fact some schools have been implementing the program various subjects(a school, local residents etc).

We should pay attention to the village study because of the two reasons as follows: Firstly number of students of the rural schools are rapidly decreasing. Reduced number of students is the basic cause of the school’s being small and becoming desolated. Reduction of students leads to difficulties in forming proper learning group, declining academic ability, accelerating outflow of the students into the cities and deteriorating the educational environments. At this time when the survival of the rural schools is threatened due to rapid reduction of the students, the city students’ study at a village could be a slight sign of hope to revitalize the rural schools.

Secondly alternative educational demand is generated trying to escape from the schools in the urban area. Although such educational demand is not systematically investigated, as the distinctive demand on leaving the urban schools exists, appropriate measures to absorb such demand into a public education is urgently required. Escape from the education of competition first focused on the university entrance and increased demand on the ecological learning can not be satisfied by short term experience learning at the village and therefore establishment of a school of landscape is required.

Increase Specialized Teachers Who Want to Serve at the Rural Schools

Introducing special employment of teacher for rural schools: The teachers at the rural schools should be able to understand the social and cultural characteristics of
the farming villages and the way of life of the rural students in order for them to create educational relation with the students and teach them successfully. Such understanding is a pre-requisite not only to form an educational relation with the student but also maintain linkage with the rural community. As the reality of the rural schools attempts diversified alternatives such as a small school, combined class, an integrated elementary and middle school and visiting teachers, specialized ability is required for the rural education (Kang et al, 2002: 99-100).

Incentive scheme has been implemented for the teachers serving at rural areas such as granting add points for promotion and increasing allowances to solve their avoidance of the rural schools. But some people point out that it may cause another supplementary adverse effect. The problems raised in that regard were that the teachers regarded the rural schools as a temporary railroad station where they stationed for a while for promotion or transferring to better urban schools and they stay there by themselves as a single status without family or commute long distance without cherishing affection towards their working place just killing the given time (Jung et al, 2002: 5).

Advancing further from recruiting the teachers for the rural schools in quantity. as one of the strategies to secure their quality, establishment of the certificate for the specialized teachers for the rural schools (Jung et el, 2002: 61) and introduction of special recruitment of the teachers for the rural schools (Im et al, 2005: 42) were proposed. Because the teachers of the rural schools should perform their duties as a support to develop the rural schools, it is necessary for the cultivating and employing system to be settled to guarantee the expansion of qualified teachers with specialty and property to be suitable for the rural schools.

The introduction of special fostering and employment of the rural teachers needs to be reviewed, in which the rural students are given the special admission to the college of education through the recommendation of the principal or the superintendent of education. These teacher are fostered as a specialized teacher of the rural education at the organization to foster other teachers. After obtaining the necessary qualification, they are assigned to the schools at the area where they are from and they should serve a compulsory period (around 10 years).

Employing educational welfare worker: Meanwhile in consideration that the rural schools are not assigned with sufficient number of teachers of non subjects such as a
school nurse, health and consulting as well as the teachers in charge of subjects and also the insufficient human resources serving in the local community, it is necessary to carefully review introduction of tentatively named an "Education Welfare Worker". The education welfare workers shall be assigned to the elementary, middle and high schools of key position in the rural area and perform the function to support the school life after school and dormitory life not only of the pertinent school but also those in the area.

As the educational welfare worker should perform the role of a counselor and social learner for the rural students, they should have the ability of understanding the rural schools and students, designing and operating the program and counselling. Unlike the current social workers or life long educating workers, the educational welfare workers are much different from them in their specialized field in terms of their performing the learning guide after school and counseling in parallel.

**Modifying the Promoting System of educational Welfare of the Farming Villages**

Establishing cooperation network among government, community and schools: The serious problems rest upon the inefficiency of input resources due to the redundancy and sporadic occurrence of efforts and low root striking. Fresh strategy should be developed to coordinate and condense similar financing programs in the public and private sectors and establish cooperative relation among a local office of education, local government, pertinent authorities and schools.

First of all the role of the central government should be set up to support the rural educational welfare efficiently. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is required to undertake the overall role of promoting the educational welfare for the rural students who are facing various disadvantages of education due to the geographic location. Because the rural education is a national issue of debate and the rural students are the priority target of welfare along with the socially and economically vulnerable students and the disabled students. The central government should not disregard the devastation of the rural education but should provide the foundation that the parents in the rural area can send their children to the school with relax.

It is judged that the Ministry should be responsible for establishing and evaluating
the rural educational policy at a national level, fostering the leading schools and strengthening the ability to promote the rural educational welfare of the community. Above all we should pay attention to the fact that the energy to propel the educational welfare in the rural areas is weak.

When the central government’s financing support program ends or the enthusiastic activists leave the relevant area or school, returning to the former status repeats over and over again. Unlike cities, farming villages unlike the cities have limited capacity to mobilize the specialized human resources to promote the rural educational welfare. The pertinent local community and schools should act as a principal agent to concentrate their own ability and promote the rural educational development through self-help efforts and unify the public services in relation to the rural education. Specialization of the rural school education should be realized respecting the autonomy and creativeness of local community.

Roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the Office of Education should be divided properly to promote the rural educational welfare. In particular the local office of education should take a note that the central government’s project of cultivating the leading schools such as the boarding high school, school of year round care and the school of landscape are applying to certain schools only according to the theory of selection and concentration.

It is presumable that the schools that were not included in the financing support program of the Ministry for the leading schools suffered greatly. Accordingly devastation of the eliminated schools might be accelerated. In this regard the local office of education shall support the designated leading schools to perform their functions through nominating them as a school of research and disseminate the model of a leading school to other schools and proliferate them by phases. It may not be appropriate for the office of education to implement its own financing program by selection and concentration.

Establishing and operating the research center of rural education: And the Support Center for the Rural educational Welfare is required to be organized at the Support Office of Education. The Center shall establish and develop the support plan for regional educational welfare according to the local needs in consideration of the regional situation. The organization shall integrate the local resources and various
programs concerned and render educational welfare services to small rural schools. Also it may be necessary to implement the role of providing the care services such as the protection of the students from the small rural schools, transportation, meal and health.

Legal Foundation for Stabilizing the Rural educational Welfare

Enacting special Act for rural education welfare promotion: The rural educational welfare should be implemented based upon the legal ground required. In other words the policy shall be performed by the legal foundation rather than the judgment or inclination of the ruler or key policy makers for the sake of its stability. It is necessary, therefore, to legislate the act on supporting the rural educational welfare. The temporary titled "educational Welfare Support Act" is legislated for all the vulnerable and the rural educational support may be implemented within such legal framework.

It is necessary to recall that the rural educational welfare support program led by the central government is promoted mostly as a short term project. For example the boarding high school is one year and the school of all year round care and the school of landscape are three-year projects. Especially for the boarding high school project, support for operating the program or maintaining the dormitory facilities is not considered except for expanding the dormitory facility, which gives financial burden to the relevant schools. It is also concerned whether the School of All Year Round Care and the School of Landscape Project which are performed under three year project can achieve sustainable development or not after the support period is expired.

Legal foundation should be obtained for the sustainable rural educational welfare support. Legal foundations should be provided for modifying the systems of promoting the rural educational welfare stipulating the duties of the pertinent authorities and organizations and securing stable financial resources to support the rural educational welfare by way of legislating the temporary titled Special Act for Supporting the Rural educational Welfare. The rural educational welfare support program shall be divided into the student support and the school support.
IV. Conclusion and Suggestions

It is deemed that schools in the rural area become devastated due to the outflow of outstanding students into the cities along with the natural reduction of the number of students, difficulties in forming appropriate learning group, deterioration of school facilities and the chilling effect by inferior working environment of the teachers. It indicates that the problems of the rural education can be resolved by comprehensive diagnosis, system improvement and systematical and sustainable efforts.

This paper, based on the literature review, is to discuss the characteristics and issues of the rural educational welfare policies in Korea and suggest the new directions and tasks of the welfare policies. From the perspective of ‘education as welfare’, rural education policies tend to be focused on expanding the educational opportunity, remodeling school facilities, and optimalizing the school size. In terms of ‘welfare as the means for education’, it is difficult to secure teachers who have affection and devotion to rural schools and students and to provide sustainable support because of temporary financial grants and programs. In terms of ‘welfare through education’, the policies are centered on duplicating the urban education and making students to going out of rural areas.

There are some directions and tasks for rural educational welfare policy. Above all, the rural educational welfare policy is directed to change from formal equality of education to "substantive" policy for students’ right of learning. Second, it is necessary to consider the specialization of rural education based on agricultural values and strengths rather than to imitate the urban education. Third, it is indispensible to use the professionals who hope to devotedly serve in rural schools rather than to secure teachers quantitatively. Fourth, it is necessary to building organic cooperation network system between public and private sectors, central and local governments, local educational agencies and schools. Fifth, it is important to establish the legal grounds for the continuity and security of rural educational welfare.

In these veins, there are some suggestions. First, the empirical or positive study is needed to explore the characteristics and issues of rural educational policies and to consider the applicability of policy tasks to rural schools. Second, it is important to find out their key successful factors as well as to develop excellent rural school
model. Finally, it is necessary to reinforce the roles of central government in order to promote rural educational policies because a local government is lack of a driving force for rural educational policy.
References


국문초록

한국 농촌 교육복지 정책의 새로운 방향과 과제

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세계 여러 나라들이 농촌지역의 교육문제로 어려움을 겪고 있다. 그 가운데 한국은 양적, 질적으로 농촌 교육의 문제가 심각하게 악화되어 가고 있는 나라에 속한다. 이 연구는 문헌고찰을 통해 복지 차원에서 농촌 교육 육성정책을 검토하고 새로운 방향과 과제를 제안하였다. 우리나라 농촌 교육복지 정책은 ‘복지로서의 교육’ 차원에서, 학생들의 취학기회 허용, 시설 개선, 학교 규모 적정화 등의 차원에서 이루어지고, 학생의 삶의 질 향상에 한계가 있다. ‘교육을 위한 수단으로서의 복지’ 차원에서, 학교가 전문성을 갖춘 인적 자원을 확충하고 모든 학생들에게 지속적, 안정적으로 복지 서비스를 제공하지 못하고 있다. ‘교육을 통한 복지’ 차원에서, 학교가 도시 학교 쫓아가기 정책을 추진해 왔으며, 결국 농촌을 지키기보다 떠나는 인재 양성을 추구해 왔다.

농촌 교육복지 정책의 발전 방향과 과제를 다음과 같이 제안하였다: 첫째, 농촌학생들의 교육기회를 형식적으로 허용하는 정책으로부터 실질적으로 보장해주는 정책으로의 전환이 필요하다. 둘째, 농촌학교 육성을 추진함에 있어서 도시학교 쫓아가기 정책으로부터 농촌의 가치를 살려 특성화를 추구하는 정책으로의 전환이 필요하다. 셋째, 농촌학교 교원을 양적 차원에서 안정적으로 확보하는 정책으로부터 농촌학교 근무를 의무화하는 정책으로의 전환이 필요하다. 넷째, 농촌 교육복지 추진체제의 정비를 위해 공공부문과 민간부문, 중앙의 교육과학기술부와 지방 교육청, 교육행정기관과 학교, 농촌 지역사회, 수준에서 학교와 유관기관 및 단체 등의 유기적 협력체제를 구축해 나간다. 다섯째, 농촌 교육복지의 안정성과 지속성을 담보할 수 있는 법적 기반을 확충한다.

주제어] 농촌교육, 교육복지시스템, 농촌교육복지정책