

What children should we bring up?

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I. Introduction

Our country is leaping into the highly industrial society now and anticipates the educational reform meeting the need of the times.

In the highly industrial society, which causes urbanization, brings about phenomenon of nuclear family as a result centralization toward urban areas in population, and increases greater participation of women in public affairs, the consideration for children can't be provided as much as the expects and enthusiasm for education of parents. In the modern industrial society, the affectionate relationship between parents and children is difficult to build, the educational function of family is more remarkably decreased than in the traditional society, and then few opportunities to absorb value or moral judgment which is necessary for social life occur.

In addition education for children in Korea has the problems of moral apathy due to economic affluence, confusion resulting from various values of international society, and friction between the generations in family whose educational function is weakened.

These impending problems must be overcome by active efforts.

According to the blueprint of reform for creating a developed country, education in our country should not be leaved as it is and educational revolution is the impending problem.¹⁾ It shows that in spite of high

1) Kim Young-Sam, 2000 New Korea, Dongkwang Publishing Company, 1992, P. 97.

aspiration for children by Korean mothers, the need of reform for the education which can't foster national capabilities in the age of information and of world economy is imminent.

Here it is pointed that the problems of our education are principle of uniform average, principle of rank, and rigid standardization, and the objects through educational reform are to raise the creator of new technology and new knowledge, to bring up the expert in specialized industrial society, and to normalize the abnormal education.

Judging from the blueprint of reform which repeatedly emphasizes that the most important thing is education and that education must be top priority in the national policy in the future society, it is anticipated that a Korean education of today will be greatly changed.

And so a question, which way educational facilities for young children, the first organ of education for the nation, should be reformed, occurs. Here by 'which way....should be reformed' I mean the most fundamental question, 'what children should we bring up?'

In this paper I try to inquire into the most desirable idea of young children, not only through the research of object and purpose of new curriculum which will be carried out in 1995 in order to establish the idea of young children Korean society wants, but also the study of opinions of both teachers and parents of young children.

II. The idea of children presented in the sixth curriculum

In the sixth curriculum which was reformed to notification No.1992-15 of Ministry of Education in September 30, 1992, the human conception of pursuit is defined as a healthy man, independent man, creative man, and moral man, and the objectives and purposes are described as follows.

1-1. Educational objective of the kindergarten (the Law of education No. 146)

Kindergarten should give the proper surroundings for educating young children and then foster the development of mind and body.²⁾

1-2. Educational purpose of the kindergarten (the Law of education No. 147)

Education of kindergarten, to realize the objective of No.146, should try to achieve the purpose of each number as follows.³⁾

- 1) To form a daily habit necessary for the sound, secure life, and to devise the harmonic development in every function of body
- 2) To make an attitude of gladly participating in the group life by experiencing it, and to set in the spirits of collaboration, independence and self-control
- 3) To make to bloom a good understanding and attitude for the surrounding social life and environment
- 4) To lead to use words rightly and to cultivate interest in fairy tales and pick-books
- 5) To foster an interest in creative expression by methods of music, game, painting, handcraft and so on.

In the new curriculum the existing sphere of development is reformed into the sphere of life - health life, social life, expressional life, language life, inquiry life - and purpose and content by sphere are suggested.⁴⁾

< Health life >

- (1) It is the sphere to develop mind and body harmoniously through various physical activities and healthy, secure life
- (2) To strengthen physical activities for strong body and control his body himself
- (3) To use with interest in the organ of body by giving lots of sensual stimulation like seeing, listening, touching, tasting and smelling
- (4) To form a habit to live healthfully and securely from the childhood
- (5) To know how to use transportations rightly and observance of safe rule, and cope with an accident or dangerous situation.

2) Ministry of Education, Outline of the sixth curriculum, Materials for training of curriculum 1-92, p.95.

3) Ibid, p.5.

4) Ibid, pp.21-23.

< Social life >

- (1) It is the sphere to learn the foundation of thought to control his idea and action in daily life, and form a knowledge and attitude necessary for the relation with other people
- (2) To keep an order and promise time, and know a life of manners
- (3) To form a way of living together with other people through adapting well to a group life, and understand the importance of the other even though I am important and proud
- (4) To try to do his own work for himself
- (5) To take pleasure in making way for a friend and helping the friend and teacher
- (6) To lead to preserve an environment, economize through life of temperation and regulate emotion and action
- (7) To have an interest in the other country including North Korea.

< Expressional life >

- (1) It is the sphere to foster a sense of security of emotion and a sense of beauty in order to express the thought and feeling of children voluntarily and originally through many-sided activities
- (2) To express the seeing, hearing, thinking things with body, painting, song and language
- (3) To recognize that the child himself is important and confident
- (4) To promote to feel the beauty in the nature and various works
- (5) To express his own opinion and feeling moderately.

< Language Life >

- (1) It is the sphere to further to have joyful language life with advancing children's capability of using language
- (2) To listen carefully and understand another man's word, and to foster ability and attitude to express his own opinion and feeling
- (3) To take an interest in writings and letters, and form a fundamental capability related to reading and writing
- (4) To listen carefully and understand rightly tales and limes, and express his own thought and experience in accordance with the subject or situation
- (5) To take an interest in books
- (6) To practice writing his name and close friend's name by utilizing the tools for writing.

< Inquiry life >

- (1) It is the sphere to foster the children to investigate having a curiosity and interest in many different things and phenomenon, and then to form the rational capability and attitude for solving the problem
- (2) To enable to find the natural phenomenon both regular and changeable, and experience the relationship or dependence of effect on cause within the phenomenon intuitively
- (3) To classify the things and understand the whole and the part
- (4) To express the various and unique thought naturally with interest in peculiar situation
- (5) To experience the process of thinking and the inquiry activities rather than to understand information, knowledge and conception.

As above in the purpose and content of curriculum, various and concrete items to promote the development of mind and body are contained, and in particular the sphere of social life has the most objects.

But as teachers refer to 'a collection of guiding materials for early childhood education' among the data published in the Ministry of Education instead of curriculum, it is very difficult to judge to what degree these objectives can take concrete shape in the real activities. It is necessary to reconcile each objective of curriculum with the content of the collection of guiding materials for early childhood education.

III. Opinions in the field of kindergartens

To establish in which direction of education for children should advance, it is needed to research the opinions of teacher who can be a leading role in the field of education for children. According to the viewpoint which bring up the children in, the level in quality of education and the method of teaching differs. The teacher's belief or ideal for education will be impossible owing to all conditions of the present, but most teachers try to achieve the objective or purpose of education which they established themselves. To find the principle teachers lay emphasis on, I looked into

the opinions of teachers who are the objects in the research.

Although the curriculum of kindergarten reformed in 1981 emphasizes the sphere of intellect, teachers respectively emphasized the development of sociality in the study of Lee Young-Seok and Kim Koung-Sook⁵⁾, the habit of daily life in the study of Lee Joo-Ok (1984)⁶⁾, and the independant spirit and relation between the children in the study of Choi-Sun-Hee(1987)⁷⁾. Even though the 1980s stressed the education for children as the national policies, the objective of system and the opinion of field show disagreement.

As the recent study in the 1990s there are a study about perception of teachers for educational objective of kindergarten by Chungsam Children Problem Research Institute (1992) and a comparative study of opinions of parents, teachers, and directors for educational objective of kindergarten by Kim Mee-Ja(1992). In the former, teachers had much stress on the sphere of sociality through 'helping children to understand and respect themselves and others', 'not to interrupt others and cooperate with friends', and 'to esteem the opinions or rights of friends and those around them'⁸⁾. In the latter, teachers regarded 'the cultivation of emotion and children's mutual interaction' as the most important objective.⁹⁾

From the viewpoint that in two studies most respondents are teachers graduated from the Department of Early Childhood Education, it is the result that they recognized by living together with children and experiencing on the basis of theory of education for children.

As these respects are pointed out in the introductory part, it is analyzed that the emotional development or social development of the children doesn't meet the expectancy of teachers, because the educational function

5) Lee Young-Seok and Kim Kyoung-Sook, "Analysis of teachers' perception on actual conditions of operating early childhood education", education thesis ninth collection, Teachers college, Busan University, 1983, p.31.

6) Lee Joo-Ok, "Study on operation of kindergarten curriculum", thesis for a degree of M.A., Graduate school, Hanyoung University, 1984, p.22.

7) Choi Sun-Hee, "Comparative study on opinions of parents, teachers and directors of institute about the objectives of kindergarten program", thesis for a degree of M.A., Graduate school of Education, Sookmyoung Woman's University, 1987, p.41.

8) Chungsam Children Problem Research Institute, "Study on the educational objectives of kindergarten", Chungsam Children Problem Research Institute, 1992, p.90.

9) Kim MeeJA, "Comparative study of the teachers and directors opinions about the educational purposes of kindergarten education", thesis for a degree of M.A., Graduate school of education, Sookmyoung Woman's University, 1992, p.24.

of home decreases remarkably resulting from greater participation of women in public affairs, phenomenon of nuclear family, and friction between the generations.

IV. Views of parents of young children

Under the respect that the sufficient education will be achieved when the educational institute and the home are mutually consistent, the research for the desirable idea of children parents want, is necessary. I looked for the studies which make Korean parents an object of study.

In the study of Lee Kyoung-Ja(1982)¹⁰, Lee Hyoung-Shin(1984)¹¹, and Choi EunMi((1988)¹², parents recognized that education of kindergarten has to stress on the object of developing the sociality.

The study of Han Jeong-Ja(1985)¹³ shows that parents took a serious view of humanistic education and education of etiquette or health, and the study of Yim Hye-Ryoung(1989)¹⁴ demonstrates that parents attached great importance to the intelligence development, emotion, and sociality by turns, and that they thought of the infant education as the end of the means.

All recent studies (Jeong Sook-Sim¹⁵, 1989, Yang Seol-Hee¹⁶,1990),

10) Lee Kyoung-Ja, "Study on expectation of parents from educational institute for young children", thesis for a degree of M.A., graduate school of education, Ewha Woman's University, 1982, p.29.

11) Lee Hyoung-Sin, "Study on parents' way of thinking about early childhood education", thesis for a degree of M.A. Graduate school, KyongHee University, 1984.

12) Choi Eun-Mee, "Study on mothers' educational need for their 3,4,5 year-old children", thesis for a degree of M.A., Graduate school of Education, Jungang University, 1988.

13) Han Jeong-Ja, "Parents' perception for kindergarten education", thesis for a degree of M.A., Graduate school of Education, Dongguk university, 1985.

14) Yim Hye-Ryoung, "Study on parents' thinking about early childhood education Sookmyoung Woman's University, 1989.

15) Jeong Sook-Sim, "Study on teachers or parents' perception for early childhood education", thesis for a degree of M.A., Graduate school of Education, Ewha woman's university, 1990.

16) Yang Seol-Hee, "Recognition of parents and teachers about the system and operation of kindergarten curriculum", thesis for a degree of M.A., Graduate school of Education, Ewha Woman's University, 1990.

however, emphasize various experiences to be helpful in growth whole personality, especially the education of sociality. It is natural in the present trend which women avoid giving birth to twice and only child increases.

Contrary to the result of these studies, clearly the reality of the field in our child education has a big problem, trouble with parents emphasizing the learning of human knowledge for their children to succeed in the late school life. In the inside of some parents, anticipating that the kindergartens make children repeatedly write the letters and number on the notebooks for pupil, probably the rigid standardization and the principle of rank, pointed out to the problem of our education, exist. To settle a sense of uneasiness related to the learning of human knowledge, many ways should be found.

Judging that the objectives of educational reform described in the blueprint of reform for creating new Korea are to raise the creator of new technology and new knowledge and to bring up the expert in specialized industrial society¹⁷⁾, it is appreciated that education will make too much of advancement of human knowledge again.

The side of advancement of human knowledge, the alienation problem in the modern industrial society, and the acquisition of value and attitude for the 'common good' in the society living together should be considered, and also in order that the educational objectives of development of sociality which parents pursue ideally, humanist education, education of etiquette or health, and development of the wholeman can be achieved without any seperation from the reality, the preparation of social climate must be included in the way of reform.

V. Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to discover the idea of children, Korean society of today wants, so as to establish in which direction education for children should advance.

In the new curriculum which will be acted upon in 1995, the human conception of pursuit is defined as a healthy man, independant man, creative man and moral man, and the kindergarten should give the proper

17) Kim Young-Sam, p.105.

surroundings for educating children and then foster the development of mind and body.

Judging that the teachers recognize the spheres of sociality and emotion are important in the educational objective. It is estimated that they try to form 'the quality of personal character'.

Out of consideration for the opinions of parents which emphasize various experiences helping the advancement of whole man and education of sociality, it is judged that parents value highly 'the child as a wholeman pursued in the curriculum of kindergarten, and the child having 'the quality of personal character', teachers regard as important. From this result it is felt that, with perception of abnormal climate of education making too much of the knowledge and the abnormal education for children, they can be normalized.

As stated above, now the field of our education has trouble with parents who ask the training of human knowledge extremely, and distributed in many cases and they can't solve such parents feeling of uneasiness.

Here we must think that although the belief of teachers or parents and the ideal of the Ministry of Education agree with each other in many parts, why the ideal and the real never coincide.

In the studies which apply the belief of teachers to the practice (Choi Yoon-Jeong¹⁸⁾, 1990 ; Heck & Williams¹⁹⁾, 1984), heavy work and duty, overpopulated number of children a class, poor physical surroundings and lack of finance cause a feud with the field, and the lower career of teacher and her educational background cause the deeper trouble.

The educational objective of kindergarten in the Law of Education No. 146 is that 'kindergarten should give the proper surroundings for educating children and then foster the development of mind and body'. Here the proper surroundings will contain not being pressed with work in which teachers, human surroundings, can carry out their role as a expert, desirable facilities and abundant finance.

Finally this study reveals that for desirable education for children we hope, the qualitative improvement in the field of education for them is the most impending problem.

18)Choi Yoon-Jeong, "Study on educational belief of teachers of early childhood education and the actual field", thesis for a degree of M.A., Graduate school of education, Ewha Woman's University, 1985.

19) Heck, S.F. and Williams, C.R., The complex of the roles of the teacher: An ecological perspective, N.Y. and London: Teachers' college, Columbia University, 1984.

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국문초록

본 연구의 목적은 한국의 현 실정에서 바람직한 유아상이 무엇인지 탐색해보는 것이다.

한국사회가 바라는 유아상의 정립을 위해 1995년부터 실시될 새 교육과정의 목적 및 목표의 검토, 유치원 현장의 견해와 부모의 견해를 조사한 연구들을 살펴보면 새교육과정의 추구 인간상은 건강한 사람, 자주적인 사람, 창의적인 사람으로 설정되어 있다.

유치원 교사들은 유아교육의 목표로 사회성 발달과 정서 발달을 중요하다고 인식하고 있다.

유아기 자녀를 둔 부모들은 전인 발달에 도움이 되는 다양한 경험과 사회성 교육을 강조하고 있다.

교육법의 추구인간상과 교사와 부모의 바램들이 현실에서 이루어지기 위해서는 유아교육현장의 질적 개선이 절실한 과제이다.