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## Lifelong learning in South Korea for Sustainable growth with Ageing Population

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### Introduction

Education is the major and unfeigned source of knowledge. In modern era, education has become an important part of our life and has achieved tremendous growth all around the world. Education impacts the social air and the financial development of a country. Relatively, South Korea is evaluated as an important nation of the East Asian region, which has been able to bring economic as well as industrial amplification within the country. It is also noteworthy that with the proper educational background the country has been able to achieve faster development in an efficient manner (Broadfoot, 2000). Korea's strategic and sustained investment in education (along with the private sector) has eventually helped the economy to soar (Uttam Gualee, 2016).

The Higher Education Reforms with the Lifelong learning initiative has been the major Educational expedient that has helped the country to revamp its overall educational qualification efficiently. Lifelong learning is a pronounced way whose major focus is on adult education and it influences people to take voluntary action for self-complimentary learning in the on-going scenario. Lifelong learning is prominently pursued by people in order to enhance their knowledge and gain new skills for performing personal and professional tasks. Apart from enhancing knowledge base among people, the adoption of lifelong learning will be beneficial for active citizenship, social inclusion, enhancing national competitiveness, employability, and bringing personal development along with self-sustainability.

The research paper will focus on give analytical facts related to the implication and impact of lifelong learning has on the people of Republic of Korea while talking about the higher education system of Korea and the reformation it has gone through over the years. The overall development needs to be highlighted with the proper elaboration of lifelong learning while looking at the Higher Education Reform that has taken place along with that.

### Korean Educational System

South Korea is considered one of the most influential nations in Eastern Asia. South Korea has been able to bring huge transformation in its educational structure efficiently as being one of the influential countries. South Korea is located in the most strategic position in the world from the development perspective and is a part of the one of the four economic tigers of Asia. It's been evaluated that the countries geographical position has been playing a significant role in its continuous development. The citizens of Korea are passionate about learning and education, which influences their academic domain conspicuously. From the traditional point of view, it is notable that the Korean people are highly inclined towards education, which mainly implies their respect for knowledge and belief towards continuous human development (Taylor, 2008).

Substantially, it could also be noted that the Korean Culture has characteristics, which are important for its governance system. The country and its administrative system have a wider perspective regarding education and its quality. As per the Korean culture, higher educated people are eligible for an important post that helps the country to pursue various development-related projects and initiatives at higher level. South Korea always appreciates the strong educational attainment and the worth of a person within the country. It is seen as an effective and essential instrument in nurturing the country's capabilities and national strength. Therefore, the government of South Korea has taken a strong interest in the country's education system and formed the Ministry of Education (MOE), which has become one of the most important executive branches (Taylor, 2008).

Significantly, Korea has been originally influenced by the Japanese model of higher education, which in turn was based on the German model and later shaped by the American model after the World War II (Shin, 2012). The introduction of the curriculum of Lifelong learning in higher education has been aiming towards fostering

the citizen of Korea to make them independent and creative in order to lead the globalized era i.e., the twenty-first century realm. This particular approach will be helpful in providing comprehensive and basic education to all the students and in enhancing their abilities as well as their aptitude. Principally, this education is essentially developed for highlighting the advantages of adult education. Besides, it also is fostering sound values and creativity for developing self-initiative features among students in this era of globalization and the information technology (Yang & Valdés-Cotera, 2011). This passion and appreciation for education are based on Confucian social value which, resulted in better human resources in all eras of development.

#### **Higher Education, Lifelong Learning System and Act**

Korean educational reforms have played a major role in influencing the country's economic, social, political and international growth globally to become one of the highest advanced technologically developed nation in the world. Education has always played an integral part and has been foremost within the core of Korean societies. Ever since the pre-modern education was established during the operation system of three kingdoms the upperclassmen were prepared for government services. Besides during Goryeo and Joseon dynasty private and provincial schools were set up in the countryside for the children of lower-ranking officials and commoners. Korea's great interest in Modern western-style education helped in the shift from isolation to open-door policy by offering new curriculum by introducing more new capable possibilities for the communal. Since 1940, Republic of Korea has experienced huge transformation in its educational system, which has also changed the entire system of the country. It could be eminent to elaborate that South Korea has been able to understand the actual importance of education and its contribution in the development of the country. With the time Korea has paid utmost importance over various phases of education i.e., from primary education to higher education and from adult education to skill development education. From a war-torn country to moving towards a "global knowledge-based service economy". Korea has marked its capability by training highly skilled manpower which has led to significant changes in many fields with rapid economic growth. For the Korean people, education represents an investment for the future. This high interest in their children's education was the foundation and driving force behind Korea's transformation into an economic powerhouse (KEDI, 2009).

It is also noteworthy that South Korea wanted to escalate its entire educational procedures by inventing New Educational Approach. It is also glaring that in the year 1982, the Republic of Korea for the first time included the lifelong study in its educational system. Korean government has aimed to bring national competitiveness as well as social equality within the country by doing the proper human resource planning and changes in their education system in all eras. It aims to spread wisdom and culture among the citizens of Korea. In this regard, to improve the living standard of the citizen of Korea, the government has initiated to bring lifelong learning for them. This lifelong learning may include various subjects and skills required to sustain in this ever-changing world. In Republic of Korea, the legal framework or lifelong educational act has changed over the past 30 years. Lifelong learning aims to shift the country towards knowledge-based society. There are three critical changes that have been observed by the government in its lifelong educational process (Yang & Valdés-Cotera, 2011).

#### **Importance of Lifelong Learning System in the Modern Scenario**

Lifelong learning is the most efficient investment for growth, including expansion of job and growth potential (NILE, 2018). The proper application of adult education reformation and policies especially lifelong learning has helped the country to overcome with its poor, unstructured as well as unregulated economic condition. The advent of new approaches regarding lifelong learning education system in South Korea has influenced the government for heeding up towards the country's proper development. Basically, the lifelong learning program has been reformed in order to enhance the industrial skill and qualification of the citizens of Korea. It will also be helpful in bringing rapid growth in country's economic structure. Therefore, lifelong learning session proved to be helpful in delivering the trained workforce to the government (Woo, 2011).

#### **Contribution towards the Reformation of Strong Economy**

Lifelong Learning program has been beneficial in enhancing the trained as well as skilled workforce within the country. The country will be able to achieve economic growth and will receive an effective contribution

in its economic activities with the help of efficiently trained workforce. This will help in encouraging the promotion of productivity and technological development, which are essential for inflating industrialisation. Moreover, this will also increase the economic and national competitiveness of South Korea on International platform. The results related to the economic development of South Korea have been showing an impressive graph in their performance (Lee & Shouse, 2011).

In the year 1993, the per capita income of South Korea was \$7,660, which is comparatively quite higher from 1962. Notably, the expansion of higher education has been able to bring a scope of enlargement and development in the academic domain. The demands for academic infrastructure such as teachers and faculties, school buildings and facilities as well as study materials, educational equipment also contributed towards the reformation of education system. It has also noted that since 1980-1993 the average growth rate of per capita income has increased by 8.2%, which directly indicates the economic growth of South Korea. Apart from this, gradually the country has decided to adopt an innovative approach regarding the upgrading of education system by adopting technological help for creating greater platform for the country for its industrialisation (Mori & Baker, 2010). Regarding this, the key policies have changed the whole structure of education system in South Korea and have resulted in economic growth, self-realisation and social cohesion.

#### **Shadow Education and its Impact over Society**

The government of South Korea has also initiated to established new educational polices, which has converted the educational system into public educational framework. There are several institutions of lifelong learning which has been established by the South Korean government for developing a knowledge-based economy within the country. The government of Korea mainly aimed at constructing an open, as well as new educational system, which can help everyone in accessing educational opportunities in an easier manner. The advent of open education system will be helpful for monitoring the self-actualization and capability to introduce their potential regarding any particular work (Taylor, 2008).

Basically, the government of South Korean has designed its educational policies by getting influenced with Western educational policies. Being inspired with western educational polices, the country has been able to attain achievement in its operational process. Development of open educational system within the country is pronounced as a revolutionary decision taken by Korean Government. People belonging to different backgrounds will be able to take admission in all kind of educational institutions as well as transfer their leaner in an easier manner (Woo, 2011).

In the latter part of the 1990s, the application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Korean education system entered a new level of development (C. J. Lee, S. Byun & Y. Kim, 2016). ICT has made a great contribution in Korean education with the establishment of the National Education Information System (NEIS), the Korean Education Research Information System (KERIS), the Educational Broadcast System (EBS), and in learning site operation by private education institutes. Specifically, NEIS has been in operation since 2003, bringing school administrators and educational agencies into an information network through which they can share information about students, administration, academic affairs, school management, and education financing (C. J. Lee, S. Byun & Y. Kim, 2016). Though, NEIS has faced strict challenges from the teacher's union in Korea due to its entire concerns over the confidentiality of individual students, but it has also supported the administration process of school's authorities through facilitating the sharing of information (Yang & Valdés-Cotera, 2011).

Education is considered as a major step towards the success for South Korea. A greater portion of Korean people were denied to take permission for accessing the facilities of higher education. After achieving democracy, the government of Korea was inspired by the educational policies from American education system and from a new educational policy named as Asian American Educational Achievement. This particular education achievement is mainly prepared for the common people of South Korea who were forbidden from accessing higher education system (Lee, *et al.*, 2010).

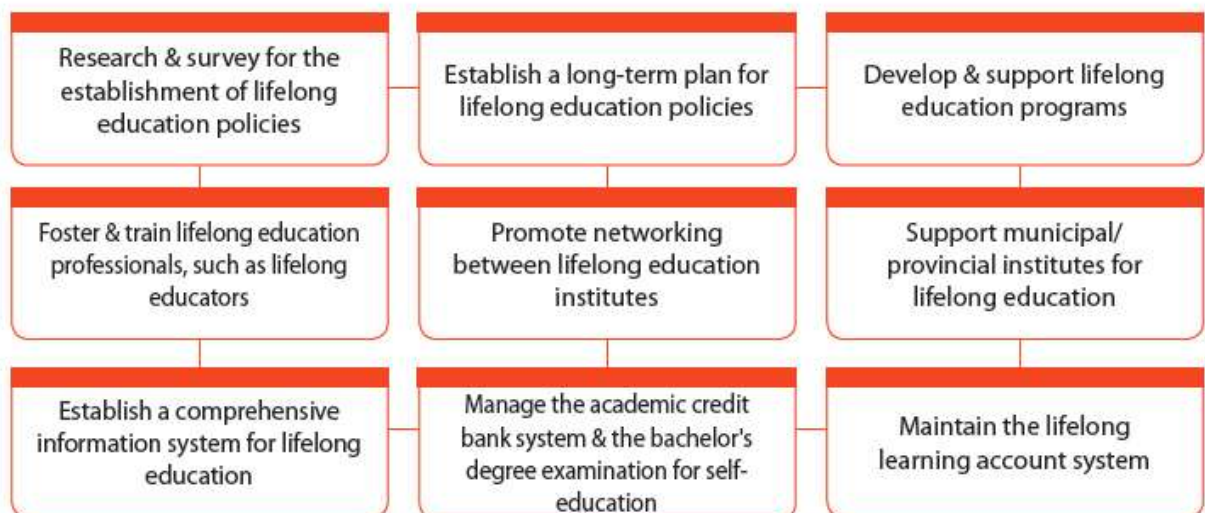
From the past two decades the growth of world economic activities are enhancing rapidly. The advent of globalisation has also influenced the scope of competition among several countries. Developing countries are recently showing quite impressive performance regarding their economic development. In order to promote

the open education system, the government of Korea has introduced several new facilities to ensure better scope for their population. A credit bank system is one such facility that was introduced by the government for common people. With the help of this particular facility people were able to save credits as well as were also able to receive diploma as per the level of educational policies. Colleges, social educational institutes as well as public universities are also providing several adequate facilities to its students regarding the credit facilities (Lee, 2001).

Since 1990s, the South Korean educational system has become more dependent on information and communication technology for enhancing its industrial as well as economic structure expeditiously. With the rapid expansion of digital involvement in the educational domain, the Korean government has initiated to expand its new policies that could build its academic background. Therefore, government has introduced a new learning society, which will enable everybody to receive education wherever and whenever by using information and telecommunication technology. Furthermore, the government of Korea has intended to establish e-learning facilities for the disadvantaged learners, who live in remote village areas as well as islands for equalized educational chance through the utilization of information and telecommunication technology (Kim, 2004).

Educational reformation is considered to be one of major concern for the development of the country. In this regard, the proper utilisations of modern techniques have played a significant role for its further development. The open educational policies will enable the education system to be public in nature. In order to develop economic condition of South Korea, the government has initiated to classify the higher educational institutions for controlling the additional characteristics of the institutions. Open education system is also, considered to be a significant toolkit that contributes in the economic development of the country. The open education system also helps to construct the social infrastructure of the country (Kim & Lee, 2006). Such open educational institute debates gave rise to National Institute for Lifelong Education (NILE) which was established in the year 2008. NILE aims at building a creative learning society.

### 9 FUNCTIONS OF NILE



Sources: (NILE, 2018)

Apart from this, free compulsory education also plays an important role for developing the foundation of a knowledge-based economy. It could be elaborated that the changing nature of the South Korean educational system will enable the country to raise its economic activities in a rapid manner. The government of South Korea has also paid attention towards the development of human resource training process, so that it could enable the practice of public education in a systematic manner. As the Korean government has paid a significant attention over the educational system of the country, therefore, the country has able to become one

of the recent educational hubs for higher studies in South Korea (Jeong & Armer, 1994). As the economy is moving further the government of Korea has introduced more policies to benefit the economy as well as the citizen of Korea.

The Lifelong Learning key policies aim at solving the drawbacks of previous policies by providing a better and bigger platform to everyone. It will cover people of all ages and will use technology as the basis of education. It will not create stress on people while completing its aim of providing education to one and all. In an ageing population like of Korea's lifelong learning plays the most important role of developing the country's economic conditions as well as social environment.

#### **Shadow Education and Society**

The Korean government is mainly dependent on the man-power planning for enhancing its economy. In this regard, the Economic Planning Board has played a critical role in creating the harmony between development of an efficient education system and proper industrialisation. The prime priority of the government of South Korea was to provide the primary as well as secondary education at its first stages that later on they turned towards more equal distribution of education among various people. The government of South Korea has taken various smart as well as efficient initiatives for making policies for developing the topology of the higher educational institutions. The advent of democratic educational policies has also influenced the country to enhance its economy growth in a proper manner (Dirkx, 1998).

The government of South Korea has implemented both the public as well as private education system, which can make a positive impact over the country's economic growth. Though the public education system has become more recognisable within the country but higher education in South Korea has been mainly funded by the private sector. In order to fund the higher education in diverse locations Korean government has focused over the scarce resources in primary and secondary education by ensuring the actual quality of higher education (Broadfoot, 2000). In addition, the Korean government has applied many strategies to control the quality of higher education during its expansion. The Korean government has also planned to enhance advanced science and technology through spending generously on scientific research and by attracting the Korean scholars from abroad. In this regard, it can be concluded that the reforms of education policy will serve as a strong pillar to support economic development, though criticism was raised in all phases to improve but South Korea gave a successful model of growth (Isan & Miron, 2005).

#### **Conclusion**

By analysing the entire study, it could be identified that education has been playing an important role in the formation of the country's economic condition. Therefore, the reformation of educational policies in South Korea has contributed towards the infrastructural growth. Lifelong learning is also notable as one of the major means for the country's infrastructural development along with its economic growth. The government support for the lifelong learning or the concept of adult learning has been with the intention of delivering adequate support to the industrial growth within the country by attaining sustainable development. Along with a renewed vision Korea is still advancing towards a Lifelong Learning society to meet its ceaseless demand for learning to prepare for a whole new future, Korea will continue to make strong efforts to achieve lifelong learning society. It could be concluded that the expansion of higher education was started with globalisation, for sustainable economic development, where government has issued the policies related with the compulsory enrolment of students in primary schools as well as in higher educational institutes. The higher rate of enrolment in primary and secondary education also encourages the economy to become more knowledge oriented and industrially developed in future.

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