Current Status and Challenges of Lifelong Education Projects for Low-income Groups

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Abstract: In the past, the Korean government's lifelong education policy aimed to bridge the national education gap to resolve social polarization and build a fair society. However, according to the 2018 National Lifelong Learning Participation Rate Survey, educational inequality at the level of education and income remains. This study attempts to grasp the reality of lifelong education for low-income families and propose directions. To this end, the previous research review, the analysis of the current status of lifelong education programs, and the results of the survey of national and local governments were analyzed according to the purpose of the study.

The following suggestions were derived as measures to revitalize lifelong education for alienated groups. First, proper indicators are needed so that the central and local governments' annual lifelong education white papers and survey reports can present the characteristics of survey subjects according to each background variable. Second, it is necessary to identify the causes of the low rate of participation of low-income groups in lifelong education. Third, it is necessary to provide customized programs for low-income groups. The results of the comparative analysis show that the low-income group and the other group with an average or above-average income have very different tendencies in terms of participating in programs and programs desired to participate in. Fourth, different standards for the outcomes of lifelong education for low-income groups are needed. Organizations that provide lifelong education programs are likely to focus on programs that link education and employment because they try to assess the outcomes with immediate, visible results.

Keywords: Low-income Groups, Educational Alienations, Vulnerable Class, Lifelong Education

1. Introduction

Lifelong education, a concept rooted in the idea that it is impossible for all the roles of education society, requires to be fulfilled by school education, supports the right to learn as a fundamental right for all to ensure that anyone can learn, at any time, anywhere. The rapid development of science and technology and fast-changing knowledge demands that members of society constantly learn new things and cultivate greater competencies. However, those who are excluded from formal education are not in a condition that allows them to benefit from continuous learning, and this education gap acts as a mechanism that further widens other social gaps.

As is well known, the core factor in socioeconomic gaps is an education gap; this has been proven by one study[1], which reported that the possibility of escape from poverty is very low when the householder's education level is below secondary education. In the past, the Korean government's lifelong education policies have aimed at bridging the national education gap to resolve social polarization and build a fair society, but according to the national lifelong learning participation rate

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survey of 2018, the rate of lifelong education participation among college graduates or higher was 52.3%, 1.8 times higher than among middle school graduates or lower (27.9%)[2]. This indicates that inequality in education distribution among educational and income level groups is evident in lifelong education as well. An education gap, which represents a state wherein one is alienated from education and continuously deprived of educational opportunities throughout their life, is a major factor that damages social equity. It not only impedes social mobility within a generation but also acts as a mechanism that makes the structure of social inequality persist by strengthening the inheritance of poverty. To identify the challenges of lifelong education that can minimize education gaps and guarantee the individual's right to pursue happiness through learning by providing education that anyone can participate in, at any time and from anywhere.

This study aims to understand the characteristics of low-income groups' participation in lifelong education and to suggest ways to revitalize lifelong education for low-income groups. To this end, an analysis of related prior studies, a review of projects for low-income families that the government has conducted, a review of projects for the low-income groups among the continuing education promotion plans, and an analysis of the current status of projects for the low-income groups in one of the local governments were conducted. It also analyzed the government's survey of lifelong education and the results of local government's participation in lifelong education. The statistics used in this study are based on the 2018 Continuing Education White Paper and the 2018 Continuing Education Survey Report. To analyze the government's low-income projects and the local government's continuing education programs, the case of D City was investigated. D city is a metropolitan city, and the city's institute for lifelong education conducts a survey on the status of lifelong education for citizens every two years, using a sample of 2,000 citizens. According to the 2018 Lifelong Education White Paper, the city had 23.7 lifelong education programs per 10,000 people, ranking it second among Korea's 16 cities and counties, surpassed only by Seoul (87.7 programs per 10,000 people)[2].

2. Lifelong Education Projects for Alienated Groups

The Korean government has tried to tackle social polarization through approaches centered around education and welfare. In particular, to narrow the economic gap that was aggravated following the foreign exchange crisis, since 2001 the government has implemented a project to support lifelong education for alienated groups to alleviate their relative sense of deprivation, and to provide lifelong learning opportunities for low-paid workers who do not enjoy other education benefits. During the period of the 1st Comprehensive Plan for the Promotion of Lifelong Education (2002-2006), four policies focused on narrowing education gaps between regions and between income groups, guaranteeing educational opportunities for alienated groups, and closing informational gaps were implemented to build an education safety net connecting education and welfare[3]. While the project to support the alienated was suspended in 2011, with the adoption of the 4th Comprehensive Plan for the Promotion of Lifelong Education (2018-2022), which establishes the status of lifelong education as the most efficient investment for national growth including increases in jobs and growth potential and as a key connecting link in the cycle of growth, employment and welfare to resolve polarization, a lifelong education voucher system has been in place to promote participation in lifelong learning among such alienated groups[4].

2.1 Alienated Groups as a Target of Lifelong Education

Alienated groups as a target of lifelong education encompass different but similar concepts or a superimposed concept. In the initial years of the lifelong education system, the terms "poor" and "low-paid" were frequently used to refer to the main targets of education, but since then and until today, terms

such as “alienated,” “new alienated,” “vulnerable,” “near poverty,” and “educationally alienated” groups have been used interchangeably.

2.1.1 Vulnerable Groups

In the Social Enterprise Promotion Act (Article 2 Subparagraph 2), the legal term “vulnerable (social) group” means a “group of people who suffer hardships in purchasing needed social services at market prices, or are confronted with particular difficulties getting a job under ordinary labor market conditions”; further detailed criteria prescribed by Presidential Decree are as follows[5].

1. A person whose monthly average household income does not exceed 60/100 of the national average household income
2. A person was aged 55 or above
3. A disabled person whose long-term vocational life is substantially restricted as a result of a physical or mental impairment
4. A victim of sex trafficking
5. A person who wants to find a job and is eligible for the new employment promotion subsidy among young adults aged 15 to 29 years old or among women who have stopped economic activities or have never been engaged in such activities due to pregnancy, childbirth, child-rearing, or care for family members
6. A North Korean refugee
7. A victim of domestic violence
8. A person from a single-parent family
9. A marriage-based immigrant
10. A person was eligible for rehabilitation
11. A victim of crime eligible for relief, or his/her family
12. Any other person recognized as belonging to a vulnerable group, including the long-term unemployed (for one year or more)

Kang et al. (2019) noted that based on the analysis of existing research literature, the concept and scope of vulnerable groups have been defined in different ways according to policy purposes and details, laws, researchers, etc. due to socio-cultural situations and the demands of the times, while defining a vulnerable group as “group that can be alienated, excluded from social goods or services, or whose hierarchical status can be lowered due to social, economic, and cultural factors, or inevitable events or accidents occurring in the life cycle”[6]. Traditionally, in terms of welfare policy, a vulnerable group refers to those who are highly likely to be poor or are not protected from danger, and the degree of poverty is determined by income levels and serves as criteria for identifying vulnerable groups. However, it is difficult to describe the state of a vulnerable social group (e.g. the poor in old age, the working poor, the housing poor, etc.) with a concept based only on economic vulnerability. This approach also has a limit in terms of encompassing all vulnerable groups derived from or connected to poverty or related to individual attributes. Therefore, the study conducted by the Korea Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training et al. (2003) included groups that can have difficulties in finding work or suffer insecure employment due to individual characteristics (young people, women, elderly people, disabled people, foreigners, immigrants, etc.) and competency-related factors (low-educated people, low-skilled people, etc.) in vulnerable groups[6]. In addition, foreign workers, married immigrants, and other foreign residents, who are increasing in number in the global era; North Korean refugees due to the specific characteristic of Korea as a divided country; and, the information alienated are categorized as the “underprivileged of this generation” or the “new underprivileged” [Kang et al.]. It is particularly emphasized that in classifying a vulnerable group as the main target of support, it is necessary to understand what the group is vulnerable to and take into account the inherent vulnerabilities of each vulnerable group as well as their overlapping and interlinked nature[6].

2.1.2 Educationally Alienated Groups

The concept of educationally alienated groups is related to the question of whom the government must determine as the target of its educational welfare policies in the policy establishment process. According to the definition by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (2004), educationally alienated groups include the disabled, low-income groups, students in rural areas, children of foreign workers, low-educated adults, under-educated people, North Korean refugee youths, those who quit school, and students who have returned from overseas. The Korean Educational Development Institute (2005) classifies educationally alienated groups into low-income groups, North Korean refugee students,

children of foreign workers, and students living in rural areas[7]. Meanwhile, Lee (2003: 50-53) included students from urban low-income families, rural students, and students with disabilities who have limited access to educational opportunities due to the economic, cultural, environmental, and social conditions of Korean society[7].

Education alienation can be defined as "a state in which one's quality of life cannot be improved due to failure in developing his/her potential ability, as the individual is unable to enjoy necessary learning experience through normal educational opportunities"[8]. Education alienation includes (1) alienation between the educator and the learner, (2) alienation of the learner from educational content, (3) alienation of the learner from education methods and (4) alienation of the learner from the education environment.

Choi et al. (2004) elaborated on the concept of education alienation from the aspects of (1) the lack of learning, (2) inadequate education, and (3) the lack of educational conditions. The lack of learning is a state in which one has difficulties living as a member of society due to a failure in internalizing the knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, etc. required of them by the knowledge and information society. Children of low-income families, North Korean refugees and foreign workers, and low-educated adults can be classified into this category. Inadequate education refers to a state wherein one fails to find the meaning of education and resists it due to a lack of participation in educational activities appropriate to his or her talent, aptitude, and level; or, due to excessive participation in such activities. Children with disabilities and low intelligence, children from low-income families, talented students, and middle and upper-class children are included in this category. The lack of educational conditions is a state in which the facilities, resources, environment, and opportunities necessary for educational activities are not sufficiently provided, and children of low-income families, rural households, North Korean refugees, foreign workers, and those who have returned from overseas fall into this category[9].

Han (2005) noted that education alienation in a lifelong learning society implies a "lack of learning" and a "distortion of learning" at the same time. The former is a state wherein an individual has not been educated enough to acquire self-learning ability; the latter is a state wherein the education that one has received has caused substantial damage to one's self-learning ability rather than improving it. Regarding the lack of learning, the study looks into the education alienation that is present in the structure of Korea, from the following perspectives: (1) economic factors (educationally alienated groups); (2) generational factors (educationally alienated generations), (3) labor-related factors (educationally alienated jobs), and (4) living environment and regions (educationally alienated areas)[10].

Kang (2009) defined education alienation as a phenomenon wherein all learners do not equally enjoy educational opportunities but some have limited access to education due to their environmental conditions—cultural, social, physical, and economic conditions, and areas of residence—and are put into a relatively alienated position about the development of their potential ability and the acquisition of higher social status through education[7].

In addition, the Ministry of Education classifies vulnerable groups into the following five broad categories: traditional socio-economically marginalized groups (low-income groups, low-educated youths, low-educated/low-skilled workers, women, etc.); the marginalized from the labor market (the long-term unemployed and irregular workers); especially vulnerable groups (school-aged disabled people, disabled adults, prison inmates, etc.); temporarily vulnerable groups (North Korean defectors and foreign workers); and elderly vulnerable groups (low-educated and low-income elderly people)[11].

The preceding studies provide diverse definitions of alienated groups depending on their major focuses including information, culture, and finance, not only education. In the field of lifelong education as well, educationally alienated groups can be defined in different ways.

The targets of lifelong education set by the government's Comprehensive Plan for the Promotion of Lifelong Education from its 1st phase (2002-2006) to the current 4th phase (2018-2022) and the terms referring to them are as follows: The 1st plan (2002-2006) aimed at strengthening lifelong education for

vulnerable groups and used the term “educationally vulnerable groups,” while the 2nd plan (2008-2012) specified the target of lifelong education with the terms “new underprivileged groups” and “educationally vulnerable groups.” In the 3rd plan (2013-2017), the terms “vulnerable groups” and “alienated groups” were used together, while the 4th plan (2018-2022) adopted the term “alienated groups” alone[3][12-14].

2.2 Lifelong Education Programs for Alienated Groups

As of 2018, a total of 97 welfare programs are being implemented by the government for low-income groups, including near-poverty groups. The following is a list of the departments responsible and the number of such programs operated by each: the Ministry of Health and Welfare (42), the Ministry of Employment and Labor (1), the Ministry of Science and ICT (4), the Ministry of Education (9), the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs (2), the National Tax Service (2), the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport (7), the Financial Services Commission (5), the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (1), the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (2), the Korea Communications Commission (1), the Ministry of Justice (2), the Korea Forest Service (1), the South Korean Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy (6), the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family (6), the Ministry of SMEs and Startups (1), the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries (1), the Ministry of the Interior and Safety (2), and the Ministry of Environment (2)[15].

Since lifelong education projects are structured and implemented separately by the national and municipal Institutes for Lifelong Education, these projects are carried out independently from the government's support projects for low-income groups, including near-poverty groups. To put it simply, as lifelong education projects are currently implemented separately by metropolitan and provincial governments, metropolitan and provincial education offices, and smaller regional governments, it is necessary to examine both the national projects and local government projects. This study aims to investigate the characteristics of lifelong education projects for alienated groups based on the national 2018 Lifelong Education White Paper[4], the Lifelong Education White Paper[16], and the Lifelong Education Survey Report of D city[17].

2.2.1 National Lifelong Education Projects for Low-Income Groups

The 4th Comprehensive Plan for the Promotion of Lifelong Education, launched in 2018, sets the following two major tasks under the slogan of "lifelong education for all citizens": (1) guaranteeing the right of all citizens to lifelong learning and (2) establishing a lifelong learning ladder for alienated groups. Regarding the first task of guaranteeing the right of lifelong learning for all citizens, the following sub-tasks were set to support the voluntary lifelong learning of all adults, including public office holders, and to provide learning programs tailored to individual learners' conditions: spreading the paid learning leave system, supporting career design consulting during the transitional stage of the life cycle, developing and using learning ability assessment tools for adults, improving lifelong learning history management and learning history recognition systems, customizing learning support for the elderly, supporting higher school education and career development for high school graduates, expanding learning support for multicultural families, and supporting women with career breaks. On the other hand, regarding the second task of establishing a lifelong learning ladder for alienated groups, the following sub-tasks were established to expand opportunities for literacy education and education level enhancement and to increase actual lifelong learning opportunities for alienated groups: expanding support for literacy education to all citizens who desire it, improving the quality of education in the Open Secondary School in consideration of the characteristics of learners, utilizing the system of Korea National Open University, supporting and specializing in strengthening adult learners' capabilities, reducing the burden of education costs by providing lifelong education vouchers, establishing a lifelong

education system for the disabled, and strengthening the provision of lifelong education tailored to the disabled. These projects have been implemented by the detailed plans established by each local government. Though some projects overlap with each other, the main targets of these projects for building a lifelong learning ladder for alienated groups are low-income groups[14].

2.2.2 Local Governments' Lifelong Education Projects for Low-Income Groups

Lifelong education projects at the local government level are led by three main entities: metropolitan or provincial governments, metropolitan or provincial offices of education, and smaller regional governments. For D city, lifelong education projects are carried out by the institute for lifelong education established by the metropolitan government, libraries and lifelong learning centers of the metropolitan education office, and lifelong learning centers of smaller regional (district) governments.

In D city, the following lifelong education projects were implemented: (1) Projects for guaranteeing the right to lifelong learning of all citizens, which included operating citizens' colleges, providing customized education for the happiness of citizens, opening cultural classes in libraries, providing information education, implementing a specialized instructor system for the popularization of science, distributing technology tailored to the needs of urban agriculture, operating the Daejeon Traffic Culture Institute, and providing visiting traffic safety training; (2) Projects for establishing a lifelong learning ladder for alienated groups, which included operating a literacy education center, providing informatization training for information vulnerable groups, supporting the operation of lifelong education programs for the disabled, providing literacy education for multicultural families, supporting programs for the enhancement of multicultural family members' capacities, and running programs for children from multicultural families such as "Exciting Reading," "Easy Reading Guidance," and "Reading Picture Books and Learning Korean."

The projects led by the office of education of D city were as follows: (1) Projects for guaranteeing the right to lifelong learning for all citizens, which included: subsidies to lifelong education organizations, experience-centered etiquette education for students, open lectures for parents, counseling for parents, the Tuesday Academy for parents, visiting education for parents, classes to promote empathy between family members, culture and art performances for senior high school students, creative experience programs for students, special career design lectures for youths, career and information center operation, reading experience lectures, reading experience events, culture, and art performances, customized reading culture programs, and events related to books and reading culture. (2) Projects for establishing a lifelong learning ladder for alienated groups, which included: literacy education programs based on elementary/middle school education recognition system, multicultural lifelong education courses, lifelong learning support for alienated groups, programs for students from alienated groups, lectures for multicultural families, and services for alienated groups. Although there are redundancies among the projects carried out by the education office, the main target of these projects for establish a lifelong learning ladder for alienated groups in low-income groups[16].

This study thus intends to analyze the characteristics of participation in lifelong education of low-income groups as the main target of lifelong education that can also be categorized as alienated groups, educationally alienated groups, vulnerable groups, socially marginalized groups, and socially underprivileged groups.

3. Characteristics of Participation in Lifelong Education of Low-Income Groups

3.1 Status of Participation in Lifelong Education in 2018

According to the national 2018 Lifelong Education White Paper, adults aged 25 and above showed a

participation rate of 52.0% in lifelong education in both formal and non-formal educational programs. Of all participants, 39.5% were male and 42.9% were female, indicating a higher participation rate among women. Participation rates by level of education were as follows: 52.3% for university graduates or higher, 35.0% for high school graduates, and 27.9% for middle school graduates or lower. This indicates that the higher the education attainment of citizens, the higher the participation rate in lifelong education. Significantly, the participation rate of college graduates or higher was 1.8 times higher than that of middle school graduates or lower. There was no significant difference in participation rates according to the area of residence; the participation rate of Seoul and metropolitan city dwellers was 41.9% and the participation rates of small and medium city residents and rural residents were 40.9% and 40.0%, respectively. By monthly household income, the group with the highest participation rate was households with a monthly income of 5 million won or more (46.8%), followed by households earning 3 million to less than 5 million won (39.2%), households with an income of 1.5 million to less than 3 million won (33.6%), and households earning less than 1.5 million won (32.2%). This indicates that the lower the household's income, the lower the rate of participation in lifelong education. Hours of participation in non-formal education averaged 81; men spent an average of 70 hours on lifelong education while women invested 92 hours. The average annual self-paid lifelong learning cost per person was 560,000 won. Men had a higher self-paid lifelong learning cost (610,000 won) than women (520,000 won). The participation rates for six lifelong education areas set by the Lifelong Education Act were as follows: the job competency improvement area showed the highest participation rate (45.1%, 7,370,030 people), followed by humanities education (28.3%, 4,618,008 people), and culture and arts (12.4%, 2,031,469 people). Humanities education was the second most popular area following the job competency enhancement area[2].

[Table 1] 2018 Lifelong Education Participation Status

Division		participation rate (%)	Division		participation
Total		52.0	Hours of participation in non-formal education(hour)	Average	81h
gender	female	42.9		female	92h
	male	39.5		male	70h
level of education	middle school graduates or lower	27.9	annual self-paid lifelong learning cost(ten thousand won)	Average	56ttw
	high school graduates	35.0		female	52ttw
	university graduates or higher	52.3		male	61ttw
area of residence	Seoul and metropolitan city dwellers	41.9	six lifelong education areas set by the Lifelong Education Act	Total	16,344,658(100.0%)
	small and medium city residents	40.9		education supplementary	2,278,216(13.9%)
	rural residents	40.0		Basic literacy	21,858(0.1%)
monthly household income(won)	less than 1.5 million	21.7		job competency development	7,370,030(45.1%)
	1.5 million to 3 million	27.9		humanities	4,618,008(28.3%)
	3 million to less than 5 million	31.3		culture and arts	2,031,469(12.4%)
	5 million won or more	43.6		citizen education	25,077(0.2%)

Source: 2018 National Lifelong Education White Paper, National Institute for Lifelong Education

In D city, the participation rate in lifelong education of adults over 25 years old was 31.6%. The participation rates of women and men were 32.1% and 31.1%, respectively, showing no significant difference. However, the overall adult participation rate was lower than the national participation rate. By education level group, the group with the highest participation rate was college graduates or higher (71.8%), followed by high school graduates (27.3%), and middle school graduates or lower (21.5%). The higher the education level of citizens, the higher the participation rate in lifelong education, and the participation rate in lifelong education of college graduates was more than three times higher than that of middle school graduates or lower. By monthly household income group, the group with the highest participation rate was households earning 581 million won or more (43.6%), followed by households making 3.13 million to less than 5.8 million won (31.3%), households with an income of 1.35 million to less than 3.12 million won (27.9%), and households earning less than 1.34 million won (21.7%). The higher the income, the higher the rate of participation in lifelong education. The average annual participation hours of D city residents in non-formal education was 38 hours, with 35 hours for men and 40 hours for women. By education level group, the participation hours of middle school graduates or lower was 27 hours; for high school graduates it was 40 hours, and for college graduates or higher it was 38 hours. By monthly income group, the annual participation hours in non-formal education were as follows: 33 hours for the group earning less than 1.34 million won, 35 hours for the group making 1.35 million to less than 3.12 million won, 41 hours for the group with an income of 3.13 million to less than 5.8 million won, and 30 hours for the group earning 5.81 million won or more. D city residents spent an average of 3.19 million won on formal education and 130,000 won on non-formal education, as self-paid lifelong learning costs. Of all participants, women spent 2.78 million won/130,000 won while men spent 3.59 million won/130,000 won. While there is no significant difference between men and women in the average self-paid learning cost for non-formal education, men spent more on formal education. By education level group, the average self-paid learning costs (formal education expenses/non-formal education expenses) were as follows: 0 won/70,000 won for middle school graduates or lower, 3.12 million won/140,000 won for high school graduates, 3.54 million won/130,000 won for college graduates, and 3 million won/30,000 won for graduate students or higher. The higher the participant's educational level, the higher the average learning self-paid lifelong learning cost. The average self-paid learning costs (formal education expenses/non-formal education expenses) by monthly income groups were as follows: 7 million won/110,000 won for the group earning 1.34 million won or less, 2.4 million won/120,000 won for the group with an income of 1.35 million to less than 3.12 million, 3.3 million won/130,000 won for the group making 3.13 million to less than 5.8 million won, and 3.31 million won/130,000 won for the group earning 5.81 million won or more. Overall, the lower the income, the higher the self-paid lifelong learning expenses[16].

3.2 Lifelong Education Participation of Low-Income Groups (Case of D City)

This study examined the status of lifelong education participation of low-income groups based on the results of a 2018 survey on lifelong education in D city. In this survey, four-member households with an average monthly income of 3,486,185 won or less in the third quarter of 2018 were considered a low-income group (2019 Social Enterprise Certification Guidelines by the Ministry of Employment and Labor) based on the income level variable among other background variables. Therefore, households with a monthly income of 1.34 million to less than 3.12 million won were considered to belong to low-income groups in this study. A comparative analysis was conducted between this group with a monthly average income of 3.12 million won or less (hereinafter referred to as the low-income group) and the group with an income of 3.13 million won or more (hereinafter referred to as the comparison group).

First, the lifelong learning participation rate was 22.0% (77.8% in the comparison group) in the low-income group, which was more than three times higher than that of the comparison group.

In terms of participating programs (multiple responses allowed), the rate of participation in culture and arts programs amounted to 112.2% in the low-income group (65% in the comparison group). Significantly, the participation rate in musical programs was as high as 57.7% in the low-income group (10.6% in the comparison group).

This contrasts sharply with the comparison group's high participation in job competency development programs, which amounted to 114.1% (40.4% in the low-income group). In terms of programs the groups desired to participate in, the preference for culture and arts programs was slightly higher in the low-income group (87.9%>78.9%), while the preference for job competency related programs was slightly higher in the comparison group (38.4%>29.3%). These differences were not significant, though.

In terms of participation time (multiple responses allowed), 163.6% of respondents from the low-income group (86.8% in the comparison group) selected daytime (9:00-17:00) on weekdays, while only 22.5% of respondents chose to even (17:00-21:00) on weekdays (79.9% in the comparison group). The results show different tendencies between groups in terms of participation time.

[Table 2] Participation and Desired Programs by Income Groups (Multiple responses, unit: %)

	Programs	Basic Literacy	Education supplementary	job competency development	Humanities	culture & art	Citizen Participation
participated programs	low-income group	4.7	-	40.4	42.3	112.2	0.8
	comparison group	2.4	-	114.1	18.5	65	0.2
desired to participate programs	low-income group	1.8	0.5	29.3	69	87.9	6.1
	comparison group	1.2	0.2	38.4	71.8	78.9	5.4

Source: 2018 Daejeon Lifelong Education Survey, Daejeon Institute for Lifelong Education, Reconstruction

When asked about the purpose of participation in lifelong education (multiple responses allowed), 162.3% of the low-income group respondents (94.6% in the comparison group) chose purposes not related to their occupation. The percentage of respondents who chose job-related objectives was only 37.7% (115.4% in the comparison group), while 25.2% of respondents (85% in the comparison group) chose "acquisition of skills necessary for work." In terms of the purpose of participation as well, the two groups showed different tendencies.

The annual lifelong learning participation hours of the low-income group was 34 hours and that of the comparison group was 35.5 hours. In addition, the average self-paid lifelong participation cost of the low-income group was 4.7 million won for formal education, while that of the comparison group was 3.305 million won. The average self-paid non-formal education cost of the low-income class group was 115,000 won, and that of the comparison group was 130,000 won[17].

4. Direction of Lifelong Education for Alienated Groups

Based on the results of the above study, the direction of promoting lifelong education for the underprivileged is as follows:

First, proper indicators are needed so that the central and local governments' annual lifelong education white papers and survey reports can present the characteristics of survey subjects according to each background variable. The previous white papers and survey reports have presented survey results according to different survey subjects. Their participation in lifelong education, achievements through lifelong learning, investment in lifelong learning, environment for lifelong learning, needs for lifelong learning, and perception of lifelong learning are included in these reports. In addition, while these reports also include the current status of lifelong education in women, the elderly, multicultural families, the disabled, farmers and fishermen, the military, parents, and North Korean refugees, they do not present

the current status of lifelong education in low-income groups. To understand these, the processing of original data provided in these reports is required, which is not an easy task. Since the status of lifelong education in alienated groups reveal the results of lifelong education projects, it is necessary to accumulate survey data from year to year so that the status of lifelong education in low-income groups can be understood at a glance, as well as the status of lifelong education according to different survey subjects. Based on these data, lifelong education project plans should be established.

Second, it is necessary to identify the causes of the low rate of participation of low-income groups in lifelong education. This is by no means a simple task, but by understanding the causes of their low participation, the efficiency of lifelong education programs provided to them can be improved. The government has carried out various projects based on a belief that social integration can be achieved by helping the low-income class get out of poverty through lifelong education, but their participation rate in lifelong education remains low. While redundancy, inefficiency, and lack of connectivity of programs have been pointed out as problems of lifelong education projects for low-income groups[1], they are still carried out mostly in the form of welfare support.

In general, the low-income class is relatively lacking in the formal education experience. They also have a low level of voluntary, internal motivation for learning because they have little experience of success, and their external motivation for learning is also likely to be below as the work they engage in does not require learning for professional development or job competency enhancement, or requires only basic learning competencies. Therefore, identifying the fundamental causes that hinder their participation in lifelong education is a prerequisite for the efficient implementation of lifelong learning support projects for low-income groups.

Third, it is necessary to provide customized programs for low-income groups. The results of the comparative analysis show that the low-income group and the other group with an average or above-average income have very different tendencies in terms of participating in programs and programs desired to participate in. This suggests that there is a gap between the programs that the low-income class needs and those that are deemed necessary by organizations. Alienated groups tend to consider participation in learning as a burdensome or unusual activity due to various obstacles. As such, their learning experience has great significance, and one successful learning experience can be the driving force that induces them to continue learning[11]. In addition, programs for alienated groups should be planned based on demand, not the position of the government allocating the budget or the institution providing the program, or groundless speculation. When alienated groups participate in learning programs designed to meet their needs based on the survey results, they can accomplish greater achievements through these programs[11].

Fourth, different standards for the outcomes of lifelong education for low-income groups are needed. Organizations that provide lifelong education programs are likely to focus on programs that link education and employment because they try to assess the outcomes with immediate, visible results. As various ministries focus only on linking learning and employment to help low-income groups earn a higher income, the main programs provided are redundant and support-oriented projects that can achieve results in a short period. In consideration of the goal of lifelong education, the learning experience should empower every individual in the low-income groups with change and transition through learning in their entire life. Therefore, from a long-term perspective, there is a need for integrated learning programs.

5. Conclusions

This study was conducted to analyze the current status and characteristics of the underprivileged' participation in lifelong education programs. To clarify the status and direction of lifelong education for low-income families, the government analyzed related prior research, reviewed government projects for low-income groups, reviewed projects for low-income groups among plans for promoting lifelong

education and analyze the status and results of projects for low-income groups. It also analyzed the status of the government's lifelong education and the status of citizens' participation in lifelong education by local governments.

In conclusion, The central and local governments of Korea have published white papers on lifelong education every year and carried out various projects for alienated groups to resolve the problem of inequality through education, which is the ultimate goal of the various lifelong education projects targeting alienated groups. However, the goal of tackling inequality through education for alienated groups remains unfulfilled, and the education gap continues to widen. And low-income groups show a lower rate of participation in lifelong education than other groups. The most popular lifelong education programs among low-income groups were culture and art programs. The most preferred participation time was daytime on weekdays, and the purposes of participation in lifelong education chosen by most respondents were irrelevant to their occupation. Low-income groups spent relatively fewer hours on lifelong education participation than other groups with an average or above-average income, while they had a higher self-paid learning cost.

Based on these characteristics, the following proposals were made as a way to activate lifelong education for the underprivileged. First, the status of lifelong education for the underprivileged should be reported in annual lifelong education white papers and survey reports of central and local governments. Second, the cause of the low participation rate in lifelong education of the low-income class should be identified. Third, it is necessary to provide customized programs for low-income families. Fourth, programs that reflect the needs of low-income families should be provided rather than programs focused on lifelong education outcomes.

The study, which aims to investigate the current status and characteristics of the underprivileged who participate in lifelong education programs, has limitations in utilizing only the results of a survey on the status of lifelong education in one region. Comparisons with other cities are difficult to access statistics, so they are left as follow-up tasks.

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