

청소년의 사회참여 및 봉사활동

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일본 총무청(總務廳)·동경도(東京都)·청소년육성국민회의(青少年育成國民會議) 공동주최로 국제청소년포럼(International Forum on Youth)이 1991년 11월 29일 동경도청 국제회의장에서 개최되었다.

포럼의 개최 취지는 현재 일본은 경제적인 풍요로움 속에서 국제화·정보화·고령화(高齡化)등 커다란 사회변화를 맞고 있어 다가올 21세기에 대비하여 수시로 변화하는 사회에 적절하게 대응할 수 있는 풍요로운 마음과 힘찬 청소년의 육성이 강력하게 요청되고 있다.

이러한 상황에서 청소년을 둘러싼 육성환경의 변화에 대응하여 청소년의 사회참여를 적극적으로 촉진하는 것이 중요한 과제가 되고 있다.

이에 국내외로부터 전문가를 초청하여 여러 나라 청소년들의 사회참여 상황을 참고로 하면서 『『청소년, 21세기를 담당하는 사람』-사회참여의 현상과 촉진책을 탐구한다』를 테마로 의견교환을 하여 청소년들의 사회참여의 의의, 필요성을 아울러 생각하고 앞으로의 과제와 촉

진방안의 지침을 모색하는 것을 목표로 포럼을 개최하였다.

일본측에서는 千葉大學 소이찌·사카모토(坂本昇一)교수, 園田學園女子大學 토시오·카나야(金谷 敏郎)교수, 朝一新聞 히데코시·니시무라(西村 秀後)편집장, 東京都社會福祉協議會 아끼코·카와무라(河村 曉子)주사가 발표를 하였으며, 외국 전문가로는 불란서 유네스코 클럽 및 협회 세계연맹 패트릭 갈로드 사무총장, 독일 바바리안주 교육문화부 만프레드 히그 청소년국장, 네델란드 후생문화부 차장 콘스탄트 뮈위스 청소년정책부 차장, 그리고 한국에서는 필자가 초청되어 포럼에 참가하였다.

포럼의 진행은 오전 10시 주최측을 대표하여 총무청장관, 동경도지사, 청소년육성국민회의 회장의 인사말에 이어 제1부 「청소년의 사회참여에 관한 각국의 현상」과 제2부 「청소년의 봉사활동」이 진행되었으며 오후 5시에 포럼이 끝났다.

필자가 『국제청소년 포럼』에서 발표한 내용은 다음과 같다.

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YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN KOREA

1. Introduction

In Korea, the term 'youth' is defined as the cohorts aged 9 to 24 by the Youth Development Act. The population of youth is 13.6 million as of November 1988 which occupies 32.6% of total population of Korea. Out of the total youth population, 62% is school enrolled youth and others are working youth (17%), youth in national service (17%), and unemployed youth (4%).

In general, the term 'Korean youth' tends to be associated with the student movement for the university students are vigorous participants in the country's social and political life. The Korean young generation is a strong force for social change. It often challenges the existing order of things, even though they carry on the tradition. Sometimes the demand for change becomes so strong that a violent confrontation results. Therefore the youth participation is in both ways of antagonistic and protagonistic participations.

The Korean student involvement in society has a long history. The student actively involved in independence movement for liberation of Korea from Japanese col-

onial rule for 35 years, 1910-1945. The latent resistance spirit of the Korean students found expression in innumerable independence movements that sprang up throughout the country.

After the independence on 15 August 1945, the student have continued to play an important role in political and social activities. The April Student Revolution is a dramatic example. A student uprising broke out in Seoul and other major cities on 19 April 1960 to protest the rigged elections. The students of high schools and universities clashed with riot police in their demonstrations protesting election frauds. President Syngman Rhee was elected for his fourth term in rigged elections on 15 March 1960 and he announced his resignation on 26 April 1960.

To sustain the society the youth participation should be encouraged. Every young person have the right to take part in socially useful work throughout his or her school period. But the students don't have enough time for participation due to university examinations.

The ratio of high school graduates in relation to university enrollment in Korea (about 35 percent) is somewhat higher

than most of the European countries (slightly below 30 percent), but considerably lower than Canada's 55 percent and the U.S.'s 60 percent.

It is a reality that without a university education one has no prospect of making it in Korean society. So it happens that the high school students in their second and third years spend, on the average, 16 hours daily in the classroom, library and at home cramming textbook into their already over-jammed memory capacity. In fact they had earlier been subjected to a similar ordeal, at a lesser degree, during the years of their middle school days trying to get into the high school of their choice. So the young students have some 5 years of brutally harsh school grind without a letup. They are the victims of an "examination hell" so chronically pervasive in Korea.

Due to the examination hell, some 20 percent of Korean high school students have contemplated doing away with their stressful lives and 5 percent of them have actually attempted suicide, of whom an increasing number is succeeding. Drug addicts among the young are on the rise and their anti-social behavior—often ending in grisly violence—is manifesting itself.

The university students are also facing problems of military service for 30 months as liability and employment after graduation. The rate of unemployment has soared among university graduates.

According to the report of the Korea Labor Institute, unemployment is increas-

ing among people aged between 15-24 while the shortage of workers is prevailing on a broad industrial front. The rising unemployment among youths is attributable to their higher education and the so-called '3-D' (a tendency to dislike difficult, dirty and dangerous jobs) phenomenon.

Unemployment rate decreased to 2.9 percent during the first quarter of 1991, from 3.3 percent in the same period of 1989 and 3.1 percent in 1990. The rate, however, edged up among the 15-24 age group with 9 percent in the first quarter compared with 8.2 percent in 1989 and 8.7 percent in 1990.

2. Examples of Youth Participation

Under these circumstances, Korean youth have participated in various political, social and economic activities. The followings are some example cases of youth participation in Korea.

(1) Youth participation in national development

Before the second half of the present century, Korea was an agrarian society, poorly endowed with natural resources. Through the successful implementation of the five-year economic development plans since 1962, the Korean economy has obtained drastic industrial development. The Korean government has mobilized the ideology of industrial paternalism to

legitimize the system of low-wages and long-hours. This system has been required by the state strategy of "growth-first and distribution-later". The well educated young workers have contributed to the economic development through their hard work at factories with low wages.

The Saemaul Undong (New Community Movement), a drive for modernization of rural villages sprouted in spring 1970, received a strong and unanimous support among the people including youths. This drive of which three mottos are "Deligence, Self-reliance and Cooperation" has become a paragon for the Koreans and played a great role in improving living conditions and increasing income. The Saemaul Undong have contributed to boosting the standard of living of all walk of life and this movement changed its direction for enhancing spiritual reform, and sense morality in 1980's.

In 1970's, the main voluntary services of university students were focused on rural areas and the Youth Volunteers Association for National Development was organized to assist the rural development projects. The association members actively participated in the Saemaul Undong projects.

(2) Youth participation in national defense

Korea was liberated in 1945, after 35 years of Japanese control, but the Koreans

faced the division of the country, a result of the polarization of post-war global politics. Most Koreans were enraged with the division of their country which brought on the tragic Korean War (1950-53) and the young men in military service fought against the enemy.

A cease-fire was signed in July 1953, and both sides have since gone through enormous changes in their efforts at rehabilitation. Reunification remains a sacred goal for people on both sides of the vigilantly guarded Military Demarcation Line. For the national defense, all male Koreans should served for 30 months by the liability for military service and the draft age is 20 years old.

(3) Youth participation in world sports events

The Ministry of Sports was established in 1982 to promote physical education and sports throughout the country and provide the necessary government assistance for the successful staging of the 1986 Asian Games and the 1988 Summer Olympics. In employing qualified men for the successful operation of the Games, the organizing committee had to depend on the government and the students, and had collected volunteers through various institutions including schools and youth organizations.

Some 218,400 people including 84,800 students had applied for the volunteers for the 10th Asian Games held in September

1986 and 14,202 were selected as volunteers.

For the 24th Summer Olympics held in September 1988, some 116,300 people had submitted their applications for voluntary services and 27,221 were selected by the organizing committee. Among the selected 27,221 volunteers, 15,513 were students and the others were 3,929 employed persons, 1,300 housewives, 767 self-employed, etc. By the age groups, 10,951 volunteers were aged between 16 to 20 and 7,733 were 21 to 25 years old. Also 6,431 volunteers had served for the 8th Seoul Paralympics in October 1988.

Considering the volunteers' working places, command of foreign languages, and qualifications, the organizing committee stationed them where they would be most likely to fit. The three international sports games were good occasion for mobilizing the youth for voluntary services.

(4) Youth participation in international cooperation

The Korean Volunteer Youth Service Corps was founded in 1990. The first batch of 44 youth volunteers — all single college and high school graduates — left for Nepal, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and the Philippines in September 1990 and the second batch of 37 volunteers left for Asia-Pacific region countries in August 1991 for a minimum two-years' service. The volunteers are paid US\$200 to US\$400 a

month for living expenses financed by the Korean government but much will depend on how they adjust to conditions in the host countries, for which they have been amply trained.

Such kind of overseas volunteer service is an initiation for mutual understanding and cooperation among youths of various nations. Their activities in some 22 types of jobs will serve to broaden genuine humanitarian bonds beyond the boundaries of land and race.

3. Some Provisions to Promote Youth Participation

Korean government and various social organizations are trying to encourage youth participation. The followings are social provisions and measures to encourage and promote youth participation.

(1) Youth charter

The Youth Charter is aiming to set sound values for youth and form a national consensus to lead them into the new era of the 2000s. The charter was drafted by the Ministry of Sports and Youth in collaboration with various related youth organizations and approved by a cabinet meeting in May 1990.

The charter consists of a preamble presenting ideals and ambitions for the youth and five codes providing for their rights and duties, functions of the family, mission of the schools, and the nation's

and society's roles and responsibilities for sound fostering of youths.

(2) Principal Plan for Youth

The society contains harmful elements to youth due primarily to deranged value, falled morality, disoriented order, prevalence of pollution, etc. Furthermore, the education for youth does not seem to achieve harmonious up-bringing of the spirit, mind and body because of the disproportionate emphasis on knowledge and competitive entrance examinations for higher education.

So far, the youth policies of the state appeared to focus on the short-sighted, controlling and piece-meal approaches aimed at the young and mischievous minority in number, thus majority of youth have not been able to receive social support to their wholesome growth and to grow toward the ideal manhood.

For this reason, looking forward the year 2000, the Ministry of Sports and Youth (MSY) and the Korea Institute for Youth and Children (KIYC) have formulated the Principal Plan for Youth, a 10-year (1992-2001) comprehensive policies for youth, that they may dream and hope to secure valuable and meaningful future life, supported by the improved awareness of the adult and social environment, and by the provision of the basic training activities primarily through the self conscious efforts of youth for their own development.

The Plan contains as major elements; "youth activities", "youth welfare"—regarding the improvement of societal conditions and public assistance for needy young people, "youth exchange programmes" in preparation for the unification of the country as well as the world even more closer, "statutory reinforcement" to support the above, and "budgetary expansion".

About 300 students of middle and high schools and colleges participated in formation of the youth policies and they reviewed the draft Plan and made comments on the contents. The Plan was finalized and published in June 1991.

(3) Voting rights

By the law, a person over 20 years old is qualified as voter. The political parties are considering to demote the age for voting rights to 18 years to encourage youth participation in social and political issues.

(4) Peaceful demonstrations

Korea has long been known around the world as a mecca of violent demonstrations. Whenever and wherever student activists and dissidents had a protest or demand to air, they have taken to streets and engaged in explosive skirmishes with riot police. Their favorite weapons have been firebombs, wooden sticks and rocks, while the equally destructive item preferred by riot police has been tear gas.

The law-enforcement authorities are reciprocating the softened attitude of the students by seriously considering a revision to the current Law on Assembly and Demonstration. Under the revision, certain areas such as stadiums, parks and

riverside areas would be set aside for peaceful demonstrations. Authorities concerned are to implement a new set of policies to encourage peaceful gatherings and protest. Freedom of expression is part and parcel of democracy.

SOCIAL VOLUNTARY SERVICES BY YOUNG PEOPLE

1. Types and Contents of Youth Voluntary Services

The types of social voluntary services are part-time or full-time, payed or non-payd, voluntary services at the governmental organizations or non-governmental organizations, etc. Most of the teenagers' voluntary services are part-time and non-payd services at various institutions in Korea.

Generally the teenagers' voluntary services are provided in the community through various activities of schools and youth organizations, such as street cleaning, traffic safety campaign, collection of waste materials for recycling, protection of environment, enlightenment service for rural communities, prevention of crimes, etc. Also the young people are providing voluntary services for the needy people accommodated at orphanages, welfare centres for the handicapped, etc. There are 30,450 orphans and handicapped persons

acommodatd at 408 institutions.

The National Council of Youth Organizations in Korea has a membership of 31 organizations with about 4.7 million members. Each youth organization is planning its own programmes for the members. For example, the Sea Explorers of Korea invited the handicapped teenagers to participate in marine skill training and exploration activities. The sea explorers also took part in the campaign for the prevention of ocean pollution. The member of YMCA and YWCA have spearheaded the campaign to encourage the public to use soap and other alternatives instead of synthetic detergents which are blamed for extensive water pollution. The YMCA opened an education course for primary school students and parents to demonstrate how to produce the pollution-free soap with used edible oil and other easily available substances. Class attendants understand bad impact of synthetic detergents on water

quality through an experiment in which living conditions of fish were compared in underground water, river water and water polluted with synthetic detergents.

Korea has tended to neglect the importance of preservation of the environment in the past decades. Its rivers, lands and other parts of the environment are increasingly polluted with heavy metals and untreated water and now the country is paying a high price for it. The government has been under much pressure from increasingly vocal environmental groups to take substantial steps to protect the environment. The public's growing awareness of the pollution problems has led people to set up more environmental protection groups.

But despite the upgrading of its status, the Ministry of Environment still appears somewhat weak as most environment-related work is done by several other government organizations, including the Ministry of Construction, often causing conflict and inconsistency in the implementation of environment policies. For example, the Ministry of Home Affairs is directly involved in various preservation projects while the Ministry of Construction supervises management of national parks and lakes as well as construction of waste water treatment plants.

The Ministry of Sports and Youth and youth organizations are jointly sponsoring programmes, such as the exchange programme between the urban and rural

teenagers. Through the programme jointly sponsored by the Ministry, the Boy Scouts and the 4-H Club, the participants have promoted good relationship and understanding between the two areas.

During 1990, 3,757 students of 293 middle schools and 162 high schools joined voluntary service activities through arrangement of school counseling offices and they had served at the day-care centres and homes for the aged.

A group of 1,000 high school students joined the street campaign for purification of harmful elements for the young in service industry, mass media, movies, audio-visual matters and printed articles. A survey recently found that a surprising proportion of secondary school pupils had seen hard-core pornography at least once on video because pornography is available on a thriving video black market, leaving teenagers almost defenseless.

University students, about several hundred students each school, have participated in voluntary services for the urban poor and rural people during vacations. They are providing health education, day-care services, income-generation activities for the urban poor and helping the farmers during the busy farming season. There are shortage of farm laborers in rural areas.

2. Attitudes toward Voluntary Services

According to recently published report

on the Youth of the World and Korea by the Korea Survey (Gallup) Polls Ltd., the attitude of young Koreans in the age-group 18-24 on their goals in life are to work on behalf of society (16.3%), to get rich (16.1%), to acquire social position (7.2%), and to live as they like (59.4%). Young Koreans get personal satisfaction when they are doing something on behalf of society (46.3%), being engrossed to work (59.1%), being engrossed to study (33.4%), being with family (42.5%), being with friends and acquaintances (42.9%), being alone (28.0%), and concentrating on sports or hobbies (31.0%). The survey was conducted on 1,002 young people of 18 through 24 years during 1988.

The proportion of young Koreans who put their goal in life on working on behalf of society has been decreased from 21.2% in 1983 to 16.3% in 1988, while those young people who want to live as they like have been increased from 49.2% to 59.4% during the same period. But the proportion of youth who get personal satisfaction when they are doing something on behalf of society has been increased from 43.5% in 1983 to 46.3% in 1988. Therefore the Korean youth place a high value on services for the society and they are ready for voluntary services.

A survey conducted on 1,556 primary school students in 1988 showed that the main purpose of joining the youth organization is for promotion of cooperative and voluntary spirit (41.8%),

promotion of courage and patience (21.8%), body training (15.8%), and spending leisure hours (3.8%).

According to a report of the Korean Social Welfare Association, 9,969 persons took the volunteer training courses for active service during 1987-1990 period. Forty-three percent of the volunteers are students and others are office workers (24%) and housewives (18%). During the first half year of 1991, 935 volunteers have been trained and among them 344 are students. The number of teenagers is 138 (15% of total volunteers) and 418 are in their 20s (45%). The main purpose of participating as volunteer is to help the needy neighbours (34%), utilization of professional knowledge (22%), spending leisure hours worthwhile (13%), etc.

3. Policies for Promoting Voluntary Service Activities

Korean youth, the master of the future society to come, ought to be, based on the richness of knowledge, healthy physically, full of courage and positive sentiments, practicing courtesy and cooperation with neighbors for the life of true community, processing faith in freedom and democratic principles and incalculable pride in their motherland, also holding the positive and bright view on the mutual prosperity of mankind.

The major goal of the Principal Plan for

Korean Youth is fulfillment of positive life, based on self-esteem and voluntary actions. We have established six main training goals such as health, emotion, courage, courtesy, cooperation, and self-esteem.

Some three hundred model activity programmes will be developed by the Korea Institute for Youth and Children (KIYC) and the programmes will be used through physical training, emotional development, nature exploration, ethical behavior, social services, traditional culture, multiple training, etc. For example, the cooperation programmes inculcate young people with wisdom for sharing life with others, neighbors, community service, etc.

To motivate the young people in participating the programmes, the Ministry of Sports and Youth is consulting with the Ministry of Education for the positive reflection of youth activities in the university entrance examination through inclusion of extra-curricular activities in the

high school recommendation documents. Also the Ministry of Sports and Youth have encouraged the Ministry of Labour for granting merits of youth activities in employment process. Accumulation of documented evidence of youth activities will be used for employment.

The youth activities record card system will be developed by the Korea Institute for Youth and Children (KIYC). The card will be maintained for proper records of youth activities and make the records available for university entrance and employment application.

The national awarding of various medals and citations for exemplary young people will be expanded to stimulate the youth for undertaking activities for excellent achievements. Thirty-six persons were awarded medals and citations during 1991 and the number will be increased to 90 persons for 1992.