

Thematic Article



After School of Korean Elementary Schools

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Abstract

Because of the rapid industrialization, Korea faced with many problems at all level of the society during the transformation to a knowledge based economy in the last few decades. There was a call for rescheduling the daily life of the family. Even the need had been on the surface for a long time, the Korean After School Program was settled only in the early 2000s. This paper, after defining the after school education and referencing the current educational situation in Korea, is pointing out the educational significance of this program, its effects on student achievement as well. Using the system based approach, participation of the other actor of the educational system, mostly from the school side (teachers, parents, students) are also described in this study. Extended this approach, most importantly, the after school became an opportunity to restore confidence of public education actively coping with changing social needs.

Keywords: after school program, Korean education, public education, care activities

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I. Introduction

Changes in lifestyles of Koreans such as expansion of women's social participation, increase in single-parent homes, nuclearization brought about a lot of changes even in the role and function of elementary schools. As a result, parents expected elementary schools to educate students while protecting them even after school. In addition, as the economic difficulties of Korean homes are worsened due to the financial crisis in 1997 and world financial crisis in 2008, parents asked for the school's efforts for reducing private education expenses.

Thus, in order to solve the diverse needs of parents and all levels of society, each elementary school is operating after school to provide various and creative educational experiences that complement the school educational function. This paper is to examine the overview, development process of elementary After School, current operation situation in schools and then, present educational achievements and tasks of After School.

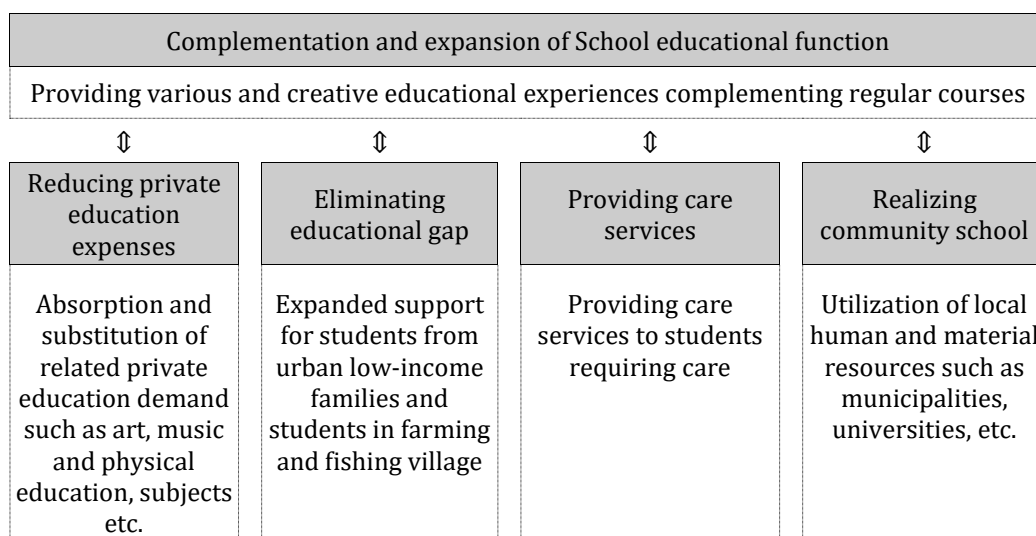
II. Overview of Korean Elementary After School

1. Concept

After school is education and care activities other than regular classes conducted by payment by beneficiary or financial aid by reflecting the needs and choices of students and parents and school educational activities operated continuously during a certain period of time depending on the school plan (Incheon Metropolitan Office of Education, 2015).

2. Objective

Figure 1: Complementation and expansion of School educational function



Source: Joint development by 17 city·provincial education offices (2015), 2015 After School Operation Guidelines

3. Development Process of Korean Elementary After School⁵

The elementary after school system settled in Korea in 2006 has changed little by little according to the direction of national education policy. In after school, 1995 to 2003 can be considered to be the introductory period, 2004 to 2007 to be the system maintenance and spread period, 2008 to 2012 to be the private participation expansion period and after 2013 to be the settlement and transition period.

A. Introductory period (1995~2003)

The beginning of after school can be seen after-school educational activities proposed by the Education Board at that time. After-school educational activities were one of the educational programs to cultivate students' personality and creativity by providing educational opportunities for exerting individual diversity.

In 1996, 'After school Activation Plan' was presented. The term after-school educational activities was used and existing skills, aptitude development activities and supplementary self-learning were included.

In 1997, the scope of after-school educational activities was expanded in 'Plan for reducing private education expenses through extra-curricular measures' and even after-school care function targeting infants and elementary school low graders was included.

In 1998, the term of after-school educational activities is changed to special ability-aptitude educational activities in 'special ability aptitude educational activities operation plan.' The reason was to emphasize students' special ability and aptitude education by targeting annual abolition of entrance examination-centered supplementary lessons and self-learning.

B. System maintenance and spread period (2004~2007)

In 2004, they focused on the reduction in private education expenses. The characteristics of after school at this time are equal educational opportunities, resumption of supplementary lessons by level and the concept of educational welfare was added.

In 2006, the after school policy was carried out for the purpose of complementation of school educational function, reduction in private education expenses, education welfare realization, regional socialization of school. And the Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development overseeing the education policy spread after school operation throughout the country. Also, the after school support project became in earnest and

⁵ Reconstructed the contents of Lee Ju-hyeong (2014)'s paper "Analysis of After-school related Research Papers".

farming, mountain and fishing village, college mentoring support project and elementary after school child care support project were carried out.

In 2007, education policy development and promotion related administrative agencies including Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development, Korea Education Development Institute, urban. provincial unit Education Office, regional education office made an active effort for the establishment and expansion of after school and introduced the English native instructor system.

C. Private participation expansion period (2008~2012)

In 2008, the school liberalization promotion plan was announced and consignment of after school operation to non-profit companies was allowed. And liberalization of the after school project was conducted such as transfer of after school project to province and additional fund raising, introduction of after school-related head teacher system, introduction of after school support social service agent system, introduction of economic incentives system for after school administrators. In 2009, the after school team was installed and operated in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and 10 municipalities. Education Offices jointly test operated the after school support center. The parent coordinator system was introduced for after school operation and management support and day care classroom system was carried out.

In 2010, there were after school free vouchers and college student mentoring support project. Free vouchers are free vouchers provided to students from low-income families in urban areas. The college student mentoring support project is that college students provide tutoring 4 hours per week to poor students living in city and farming, mountain and fishing villages.

In 2011, a plan for strengthening public education and reducing private education was established according to ‘after school social enterprises discovery and development plan.’ With regard to after-school operations, the autonomy of schools was enhanced and procedures were simplified. And jobs were created through private participation activation, after school instructor training, discovery and development of after school social enterprises. Also, support for vulnerable groups was expanded and care function such as Saturday care classroom operation was strengthened.

D. Settlement and transition period (After 2013)

In 2013, elementary school care services began to be provided for free according to ‘National Tasks Action Plan.’ This means to focus on not only enhancing students’ skills but strengthening the care function of schools based on the after school system. Looking at disclosed national statistical data in 2013 to examine the recent elementary after school operating status, 99.9% schools in the country were operating after school. And 2,035,000 people, 73.3% of all elementary school students were involved in after school. Looking at

changes in students participating in after school, the ratio is increasing continuously from 65.2% in 2010 and 72.2% in 2013.

The contents of elementary after school programs are diverse from Korean, mathematics to essay and can be largely classified into 12. P.E-related programs were the most, 41,278 followed by other subjects 38,176 programs, music related 32,802 programs, English related 25,901 programs, math related 25,708 programs, art related 25,562 programs, computer related 23,276 programs. Social studies related programs were the least, 2,198 and examining in order based on the number of many programs, there were knowledge based subjects and art, music and physical education in top 5 programs.

III. Korean Elementary After School Operating Status

The elementary after school operating status can be divided and into subjects and skill aptitude program conducted during the week, elementary care classroom, Saturday program according to the nature of organized programs and examined as follows:

1. Subjects and skill aptitude program

The school field cannot escape from the operational plan of each city·provincial education office unit because most Korean elementary schools are national·public educational institutions and conduct compulsory education. And the basic operating plan of each city·provincial education office unit contains similar information without escaping from the policy of the Ministry of Education establishing national education policies. Therefore, this paper is to present the current elementary after school operating status through '2015 after school operating basic plan' of Incheon Metropolitan Office of Education located in the metropolitan area where more than half of the Korean population is living while also including city and farming village, fishing village as its administrative districts. In the case of subjects and skill aptitude programs, the number of open departments is determined depending on the number of participating students so K elementary school in Incheon has less than 300 students and is operating 11 departments. Even in the same administrative district, B elementary school is operating about 30 departments²⁾ as the students want. The head of the school can autonomously operate after school programs to be operated in the school by school conditions and needs of students and parents and going through deliberation (consultation) of School Council.

For after school activation, unit schools establish the after school annual operating plan by including it in the school education plan and operate after school as soon as regular classes begin in early school year and at this time, they should not operate an after-school program preceding the school curriculum. But, they can operate English after school courses of 1st grade and 2nd grade of elementary school.

Typical tasks performed by schools with regard with the operation of subjects and skill aptitude programs include program open related basic research and analysis, instructor selection and recruitment, operating plan establishment, establishment of annual

instruction plan by department(program), course guide and student recruitment, fees collection, selection of free course participants, operation of after school programs, open classes for parents, best instructor selection and certificate awarding(teaching evaluation, survey evaluation, service evaluation), after school activity assessment(questionnaire), year-round educational activities promotion etc. To handle so many tasks, it may vary depending on the size of the school, the number of teachers responsible for after school work usually about 1-3 people.⁶ In particular, after school duties such as instructor appointment, instructor fee payment, fees collection and refund cannot be handled simply and easily so city· provincial education offices are operating a variety of measures for after school activation such as after school personnel training for professionalism development, formation and operation of visiting after school consulting group, formation and operation of city’ s education office after school T/F team, district joint council operation etc.

And Education Offices, schools and after school authorities are developing various projects such as after school support center operation, building community networks and providing integrated education services, educational program utilization of community organizations and conjunction promotion to operate creative and high-quality programs in conjunction with the community.

2. Elementary school care classroom

The reality of elementary school care classroom steadily expanding its project area among elementary after school areas is as follows (‘2015 elementary care classroom operation guide). Current elementary school care classrooms can be divided into 1~2 grader centered elementary care classroom and after school connected care classroom of 3 grader or higher.

1: table: Comparison (example) of elementary care classroom and after school connected care classroom operation

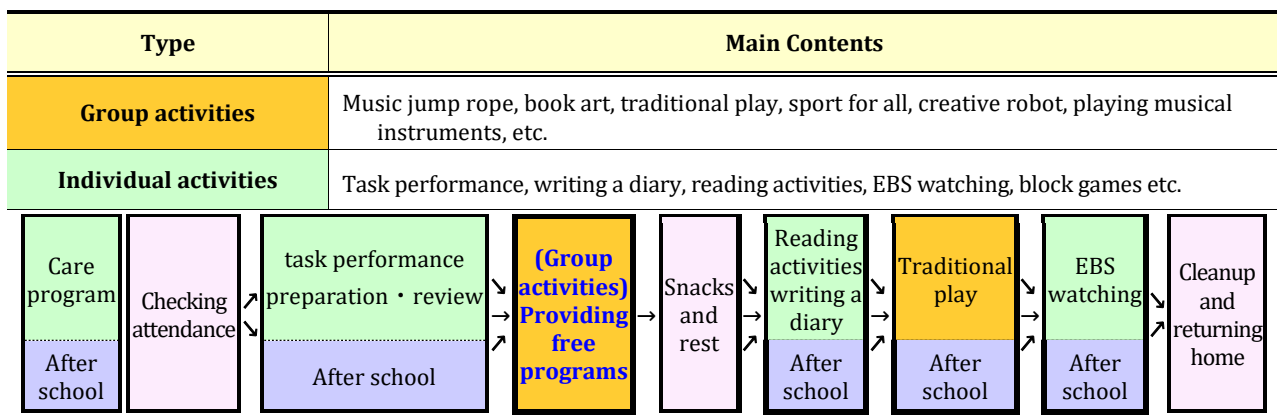
Classification	Elementary care classroom		After school connected care classroom(when operating for 2-3 hours)	
Facilities	Exclusive/combined classroom		General classroom /special classroom(building of additional care classroom is not required)	
Personnel	Dedicated person / teacher, etc.		Utilization of a variety of personnel by school(granting autonomy to each school)	
Use of after school programs	1 hour	-	1 hour	2 hours
Personal activities (Reading, homework)	2 hours	3 hours	2 hours	1 hour
Group activities	1 hour	1 hour	-	-

Source: Ministry of Education, Korean Educational Development Institute (2014), 2015 Elementary Care Classroom Operation Guide

⁶ If school size is large, there are many classes and there are many teachers working so the workload of 1 teacher is generally reduced.

The purposes of elementary care classrooms are to support healthy growth and education improvement, prepare for protection space after school of children of dual-income, low-income households, reduce private education expenses through education-care services, realize education welfare and improve the cultural level through experience opportunities expansion for children of dual-income-low-income households by providing care services to 1-4 grade students requiring childcare after school. In principle, elementary care classrooms should be operated throughout the year including vacation but can be adjusted flexibly depending on the seasons and opinions of parents and afternoon care classroom operating hours are after school to 17:00 and evening care classroom is operated from 17:00 to 19:00. For target students, low grade students (1st-2nd grade) of dual-income households should have the priority and middle grade students (3rd-4th grade) can also join as educational expenses support target. Each school has dedicated care personnel (dedicated care person) and nursery classroom only for after school. The school tries to plan a variety of programs in which students can feel interested and take advantage of the campus facilities. Depending on the school situation and consumer demand, it can configure and operate elementary care study room programs as customized optional programs.

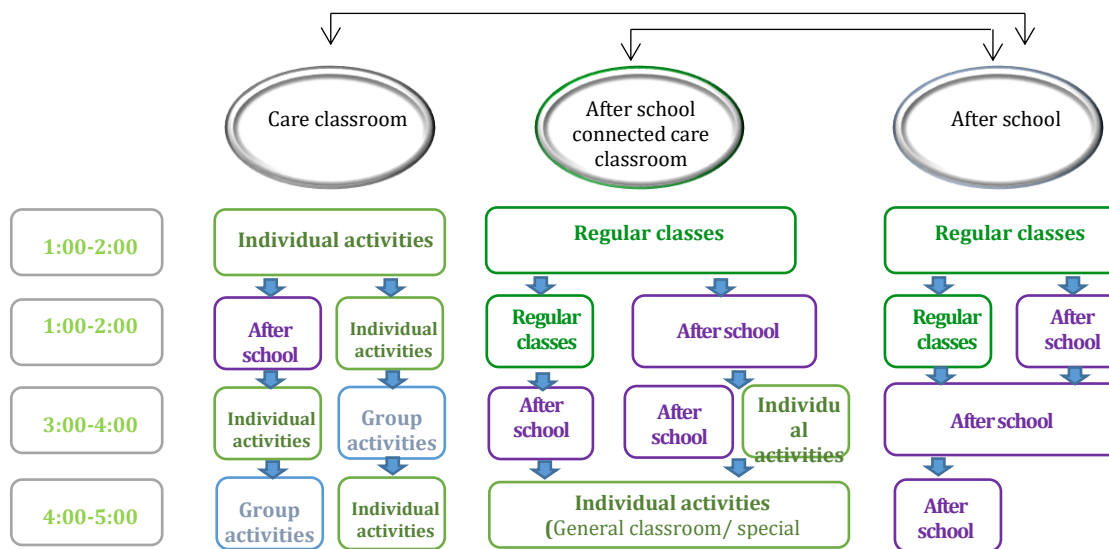
Figure 2: Care classroom program operation (example)



Source: Korean Educational Development Institute (2014), 2015 Elementary Care Classroom Operation Guide

An after school connected care classroom is the classroom operated targeting students who participate in after school programs and do not use afternoon elementary care classroom among 3rd-4th graders of dual-income, low-income, single-parent homes requiring after-school care and focuses on after school activities and voluntary activities (assignments, reading, etc.) of students and is operated in a different way from existing care classroom. Therefore, separate group activity programs and snack do not need to be provided and library, special classroom, general classroom (homeroom classroom) not exclusive classroom can be used as the operation space depending on the school situation. The relationship between elementary after school and care classroom, after school connected care classroom discussed above can be shown as follows:

Figure 3: Relationship between elementary after school and elementary school care classroom



Source: Korean Educational Development Institute (2014), 2015 elementary care classroom operation guide

3. Saturday Program

Due to 5-day School System introduced in 2012, parents had a lot of burden for students not going to school on Saturday. Thus, each school opened and operated 5-day School System 'Saturday program.' Saturday program aims to stably support 5-day School System by ensuring students' Saturday activities, creating sound Saturday culture to relieve academic stress and cultivate creativity, humanity of students and preparing for a variety of Saturday program support measures inside and outside schools. Main Saturday programs include Saturday care classroom, Saturday after school, Saturday sports day, Saturday culture and art club, education welfare first support project school (Saturday) program etc. Saturday care classroom and Saturday after school refer to operating the programs on Saturday. Saturday Sports Day is a regional association program using 'Living Athletic Association' instructors to support sports activities of students. A Saturday culture and art club is art education developing dreams and talents through aptitude, competence development of students. This aims to foster creativity and humanity by developing personality, aptitude and self-development and creating sound Saturday culture. It provides opportunities so that students can participate in culture and art club activities even on Saturday. This is the program operated on Saturday by the characteristics of schools and students in project areas such as learning, culture-experience, psychology and emotion, welfare in order to guarantee practical educational opportunities and eliminate educational gap through customized support of education, culture and welfare for students from education disadvantaged class.

As discussed above, apart from the regular curriculum, elementary school students are involved in various after school educational activities such as subjects and skill aptitude program, care classroom, Saturday Program operated by the school. It may be greatly significant to examine educational achievements and challenges of after school because

after school of elementary schools where students can participate every day except for Sunday if they want is actually having a lot of influence on students.

IV. Educational Achievements and Challenges of Elementary After School

The contribution of the after school system operated in Korean elementary schools to Korean education can be reviewed by dividing it into four areas of students, parents, school operation, connection with the community as follows:

When viewed from the aspect of students, elementary after school has greater educational significance in terms of experiencing activities difficult to be experienced in the regular curriculum and developing the talent and aptitude of each student and increasing students' self-esteem. Students can have opportunities to find individual talent and enjoy leisure by participating in a variety of good quality skills·aptitude programs without moving a lot to find institutes and after school greatly contributed to selecting their career by themselves and determining to enter school. And subject learning centered after school programs increased confidence in school life by improving the grades of elementary school students with poor grades. By acting positively on the overall development of elementary school students, this resulted in correct personality formation. In addition, students cultivate sensitivity through a variety of skills· aptitude program participation activities and have cooperation and considerate mind obtained in the process of working with friends and hence, educationally great performance of students' personality cultivation could be achieved.

When viewed from the aspect of parents, the after school programs of all day care classroom and Saturday program operation provided the opportunity to stably leave their children to parents and contributed a lot to self-realization due to women's social participation and reduction of household spending. The programs also provided the effect of reducing private education expenses by providing an opportunity that students can take segmented and various after school programs at an affordable price. After 2010, after school free voucher support project was particularly effective in reducing private education expenses and showed the effect of reduce the educational gap between classes and regions. And after school Saturday program operation provides a stable education service to parents working on Saturday at the time when a five-day work week is not performed in all workplaces yet. In addition, elementary schools continue to operate various after school programs during summer and winter vacations, greatly easing child-rearing and educational burden of parents - dual-career couples, single-parent families-requiring safe care education services.

When viewed from the aspect of school operation, after school became an opportunity to restore confidence of public education actively coping with changing social needs and complement school educational function. That is, schools enabled parents to reduce private education expenses by expanding educational options depending on changes in

the home and social environment and this became a chance to increase the status of public education.

When viewed from the aspect of connection with the community, continuous administrative and financial support of administration related institutions and various community groups and businesses including education donation activities of community professionals brought about the activation of elementary after school. And elementary after school activated as forming close relationships with the community played a role as the cultural center for the community in farming, fishing villages and contributed to the foundation of lifelong learning society realization and provided the opportunity to help form the local community spirit. And by providing educational programs that could not be provided to students such as English native speaker lesson program, computer certification program due to school circumstances through the participation of non-profit privately commissioned operation organizations, learning opportunities could be provided to students. In addition, college student mentoring system in conjunction with local colleges gave help to improve the academic ability of elementary school students and this became an opportunity to be a positive effect due to formation of students' self-esteem, rising confidence in school life, career choice appropriate for their skills and aptitudes etc. Elementary after school is being operated meaningfully by reflecting the condition of the region and characteristics of each school in all schools but we should pay a little more attention to the following to more increase the satisfaction of students and parents and meet the fast changing pace of the society.

First, even if a pre-actual condition survey is still conducted, the choice of students and parents should be expanded by building the system effectively reflecting often changing social and cultural environment and the demand of students and parents. Also, the opportunities of comprehensive and various selections should be provided and expanded to use after school attendance contents by disclosing them through school website or writing them in student records. When student customized programs, level program activation and recruitment and management of excellent instructors are preceded, various skills and aptitude programs that students want can be organized and this will be the basis of qualitative substantiality.

Second, administrative and financial support expansion at the national level and stable and sustainable funding system building should be supplemented. Currently, most after school program curriculum and skills-aptitude programs are based on beneficiary burden so learners bear the expenses but in the case of care classrooms, a lot of budget is spent such as dedicated care person expenses and care classroom free program operating costs etc. The budget of after school free vouchers for low-income students should be also ensured continuously. Therefore, in order to solve this problem, actual support needs to be secured such as placement of after school support dedicated staff by maintaining the after school support center of city, provincial education offices. And in the case of cities or provinces that have difficulty in reinforcing by themselves, entrusting the project to

social enterprise or operating after school public interest foundation will be one alternative.

Third, private participation programs of social enterprises, universities, companies, NGOs can be induced and social good resources of relevant organizations and local communities can be used. For example, unemployment crisis can be solved by operating after school social enterprises around College of Education or Teachers' College, Arts and Physical Education graduates and essay programs using the characteristics of mass media organizations can be operated. And a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with community agencies and groups that can give help to elementary after school should be signed to enable education donation activities for after school program operation to be made continuously.

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