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# Lifelong Education and Labor Education

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## 1. Goal

This study aims at recognizing the importance of labor education as part of lifelong education and finding a way to support development in labor education

This study investigates the significance of labor education, which becomes a significant part of lifelong education, the ideological basis of assimilating labor education into lifelong education system, and the reason why it is necessary to institutionalize labor education based on the findings of research on current development of unit trade unions. In addition, with the review of overseas precedents, this study will suggest possible ways to apply labor education to this nation's current lifelong education systems. These include the amendment of lifelong education law; the adoption of paid leave for educational purpose and the creation of a fund for labor study.

## 2. Theoretical background

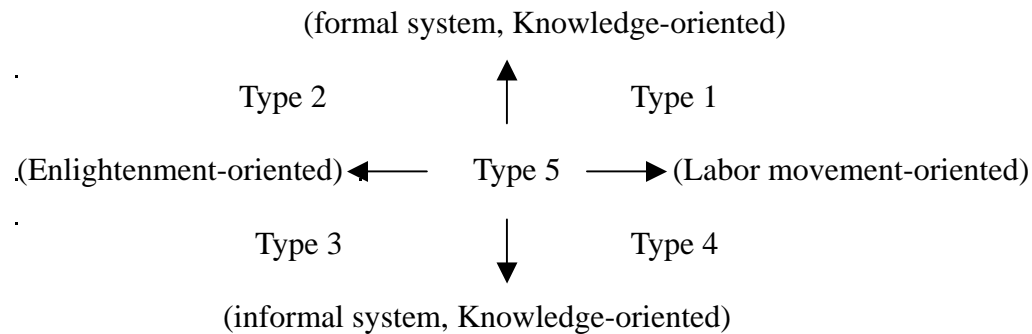
The plan for ways to include labor education in lifelong education system is designed to broaden the outlook for labor education. Until now, labor unions' education has been focused mainly on labor movement. But it is time to turn its focus onto individual workers as well as labor movement, thus making labor education a part of lifelong education.

### 1) 5 Types in lifelong education

Labor education proves its significance in this society in various ways. According to the social meaning of labor education, labor education can be classified into 5 categories as follows.

Type 1: Labor movement-oriented education led by public institutions including labor unions, labor parties, and the press

[Type of labor education]



Against this backdrop, ways to include labor education in lifelong education system shows a clear attempt to reinforce type 1 and type 2 labor education, and advance type 3, 4, and 5 to the level of type 1, and 2.

## 2) Labor education in Western history: the core of lifelong education

In Western societies, labor education was regarded as the heart of lifelong education. As a part of philanthropic work, churches and intellectuals in the 17th and 18th centuries taught labor workers who had no access to school education how to read and calculate at industrial schools, labor schools, and charity schools. In the 18th and 19th centuries, as there was increasing number of factory workers, the industrialization gave a boost to workers' drive for self-education in the form of forming reading clubs, and waging campaigns for library use. In the late 19th century, labor education took root as a regular course in the public education system. Under the 1870 amendment to education Law, British labor education became the basic foundation on its elementary school education system.

Since then, as the elementary school education system was promoted and sincerely operated, the demand for the establishment of common education was rapidly growing. With the help and the development of socialist movement, the labor education opens a new chapter in its history.

Britain's labor education in the 20th century was based on two traditional labor groups: the British Workers' Education Associations (WEA) and the National Committee of Labor College (NCLC). In 1944, Britain enacted a law under which elementary education, secondary education, and continuing education were systematically formed.

By the 1975 amendment, Regulations on Continuing Education stipulated that education conducted by the WEA be a major part of its continuing education policy.

between labor and management. Companies set up in-house colleges to provide various kinds of training programs, and labor unions diversified their education programs. Civic groups also joined such movement. Yet, Korea still has a long way to go before it has a systemized labor education when it comes to law and regulations.

#### 4) Future Tasks

The ideology and system of lifelong education are built on the notion of expansion, innovation, and consolidation. These are the tasks we need to address in the future.

First, labor education should be expanded in terms of time, circumstances, contents, and objects. We need to speed up the process of setting up proper regulations on financial support for education clubs and organizations in order to change workers' perception of labor education and adult education.

Second, there should be innovations in labor education, especially in its contents. Workers should be regarded not as an object but as a subject of labor education, and participate from the whole curriculum planning

Third, labor education system should be consolidated. So far, the system for the education of technology, politics, and liberal arts has been broken up into pieces. These pieces should be consolidated as one through a network among labor unions, colleges, companies, civic groups, and the government to have a synergic effect.

### 3. Current Development in Labor Education

#### 1) Summary

1,000 questionnaires were sent out to labor unions for one month in September 2002, and 302 labor unions of 17 industrial federations took part in this poll. 59.5% of those polled belong to the manufacturing industry, and 60.9% the Federation of Trade Unions. The age of respondents on average was 39 and union leaders amounted to 49% of those polled.

#### 2) Results

Trade unions participated in 2.71 education programs conducted by superior federations during the period from January to August in 2002, and 78.8% of the programs were day-and-night education sessions.

Inconvenience in education programs

1. Scheduling (29.7%)
2. Selecting participants (18.2%)
3. Financial problems, non-cooperative corporate managers, lack of information

In 75.3% of the cases, participation in education programs were regarded as leave on payment, while 14.9 % varied on the case by case basis. In most cases (90.4%), only delegates or higher

\* With regard to union members' leisure time activities including club activities, labor union encourages such activities in an attempt to reinforce their inner cohesion, and request the employer (company) to support them.

\* In the case that a company supports its employees' training programs, only in 36.5% cases, workers could seek a temporary rest for the training. In other words, effectiveness of the system is in question because training period is considered as unpaid leave in most cases.

\* While 92.3% of the respondents hail the expansion of the scope of labor education, overwhelming number found it impossible to administer a variety of education programs under the current situation.

\* In regard to lifelong education centers at which respondents got education, 33.1% or 234 respondents answered they got training at labor unions, 17.3% at private institutes, 10.6% at professional training institutes, 10.5 % at education centers run by civic activist groups.

\* In general, workers have little access to lifelong education except labor unions and private institutes.

\* When asked If you are granted leave of absence for education on your request, would you use it, 34.7 % answered "Yes" on any condition, 57.6% said "Yes, if it's paid leave". Only 2.7% answered "No" to this question. This shows workers have very much interest in education.

### 3) Lessons

First, Labor considers think education programs conducted by superior organizations as a method to enhance cohesion within a group based on group activities rather than education itself.

Second, the amount of education time for union members is not secured, the rank and file in a union find it difficult to take part in education programs provided by superior organizations because they are not granted paid leave in most cases.

Third, only 36.5% have regulations on temporary leave for education, and such leave is technically unpaid leave. So effectiveness of the regulations is questionable.

Fourth, when it comes to workers' participation in education programs conducted by labor unions, the level of support by a company varies depending to the scale of the company: from temporary leave for education to union members' leisure activities.

Fifth, workers have technically no chance to get lifelong education after formal education.

Sixth, while workers are demanding an expansion of the scope of labor education, they really have so many obstacles to get access to various education programs.

### 4. Overseas cases from previous studies

This study will show a need for the Korean government to enact a law which stipulates the leave on payment for education, the creation of a fund for labor study, and the governmental support for

Education Act (1998), juveniles are exempted from formal labor activities until they achieve job certificates. In Germany, regulations on education for field inspectors are subject to the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) while those for ordinary members are governed by law. The time period of paid leave for education differs from nation to nation: employers and workers can negotiate and decide the term in Sweden; 1 day a week is recommended in Britain; up to 3 weeks a year in Germany; more than 1 year off for education is possible in Canada.

#### 5. Ways to include labor education in lifelong education system.

First, Lifelong Education Act should be revised to include labor education in it.

Second, The central and municipal governments should act in unison to revise Lifelong Education Act to make paid leave for education (more) effective.

Third, regulations regarding paid leave for education under Employment Insurance Act should be revised to guarantee workers opportunities to get social and cultural education as well as vocational education

Fourth, Make use of Labor-Management Councils to create a new provision on leave for education in the collective bargaining agreement.

Fifth, labor unions should aggressively take part in a campaign to create a fund for supporting labor education led by the Tripartite Commission.

To this end, the government would do well to make its best effort to establish a society which guarantees lifelong education by expediting the process of overhauling the system. Employers need to recognize labor unions' participation in education programs and make investments to advance and develop education programs from a long-term point of view. Labor unions ought to recognize the significance of workers' rights to gain access to education, thus it is critical to nurture sophisticated and skillful negotiators and professionals who take charge of educating workers. Forming a network is also indispensable.