

Innovative Practices for Lifelong Learning in the Digitalized Society: Korean Cases

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With the advent of ubiquitous age where people have access to any information anytime and anywhere, “smart learning” transcending time and space is being executed in full scale. That can be mostly attributable to rapid advancement of cutting-edge information and technology devices dubbed as “smart devices.” For example, some schools put smart learning in practice by providing students with digital text-books instead of traditional paper books, and allowing them to write with touch pen on the monitor and utilize multi-media functions. The government is planning to provide digital text-books for all schools in Korea by 2015.

This trend of smart learning has been also emerged as a major strategic government project not only in schools but also in the lifelong learning targeting all Korean people. Currently, Park Geun-hye administration is pushing ahead with KSL Project as part of its effort for “national integration” strategy in order to open the era of smart lifelong education for all Korean people. KSL Project was designed to provide equal learning opportunities for all and narrow the gap between the well-educated and the underprivileged by allowing anyone to have access to learning opportunities or programs anytime, anywhere. The project serves as a

fundamental system supporting smart lifelong learning and aims at improving the public's access to online service and providing quality education services for all people.

For establishing infrastructure for KSL Project, the government is preparing “smart lifelong learning portal service,” which is open to anyone in the country without any limitation, in relevant organizations including the National Center for Smart Lifelong Education (NCSLE). At the same time, it is building the on-off line blended learning system by digitalizing quality offline education content.

Under the KSL Project, National Institute for Lifelong Education (NILE) is serving as hub organization and is forming partnership with the relevant organizations such as Korean Educational Research Institute (KERIS), Educational Broadcasting System (EBS), Korea National Open University (KNOU), cyber universities, digital universities, and cyber middle schools and high schools. NCSLE offers online VOD services, on-air section, offline smart learning zone and out-reach program delivery which all play a role of knowledge adviser. For the successful implementation of the KSL Project, the center operates individually-tailored learning consulting program and national-level system of evaluation and certification for learning results. Smart lifelong learning system will enable every Korean to participate in high-quality online and offline education programs free of charge, and people can obtain academic degrees corresponding to regular academic university degrees by attending alternative tertiary education programs such as Academic Credit Bank System (ASBS), Lifelong Learning Account System and Independent Degree by Self-study.

In addition, NILE is establishing lifelong learning portal sites in linkage with 118 lifelong learning cities and 13 lifelong education institutes in major provincial cities while developing and distributing certified online and offline lifelong education programs and sharing network

with the relevant organizations. Regional lifelong education institutes are in charge of building a lifelong learning portal site which includes all lifelong education programs within the regions, instructors and teachers and database. It also collects all the data into Damoa Lifelong Education Network, creating a nationwide smart lifelong learning ecosystem. Cases in point are lifelong learning portal site named Learning Moa Gil and online lifelong learning service system named Home Learn by Gyeonggi Province and Daejeon Citizens University Smart Learning Center which have more than 20,000 subscribers.

Among these, as a case of smart lifelong learning support system in Gyeonggi Province, there is 'Learning Moa Gil (gil.gg.go.kr)', a lifelong learning portal site containing all information and knowledge of Gyeonggi lifelong learning. The portal site Gil has a meaning of making a new road by collecting lifelong learning information in the 31 Si (city)/ Gun (county) areas which had been scattered in Gyeonggi Province and it is designed to confirm lectures, events and exhibitions operated by about 3,900 lifelong learning institutes in the province at one place and participate in the place. In order to provide fast and easy access to information, the site menu is reorganized along with user-friendly design. The portal site composed with a concept of 'Moa, Moyeo' provides some 7,000 free online lectures on foreign language, civil service examination, certificate and ordinary life, and offline learning and job information nearby, lifelong learning information and living information. In addition, it is designed to do apply for a lifelong learning project conducted on a regional basis such as the '365 · 24 Durunuri Academy'. There is also a section for users to make a direct participation. Somssi Nanum section gives users an opportunity of showing off their knowledge and talents, and Ji · Jung · Hae (sea centering on knowledge) is a free question and answer section. In particular, Ji · Jung · Hae allows both professionals and the general public to unfold freely their knowledge and thoughts to be expected to take the position of a Korea's representative

lifelong learning knowledge searching brand. The portal is equipped with the private lifelong learning management and support system that homepage production, education management system and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) are provided free of charge to relevant institutes and organizations. 'Gyeonggi Institute Lifelong Learning' is linked to Si · Gun lifelong learning sites to have a plan to provide provincial citizens with faster and easier access to lifelong learning information. Besides collecting useful information from the site, it is expected to be effective in sharing individual's lifelong learning related knowledge and talents with other users and cooperating with them.

Meanwhile, KNOU which has nearly 200,000 students is operating non-degree program titled “Prime College” other than its regular college degree programs. The program is open to ordinary citizens and provides quality online and offline learning programs. According to the request of a participant, the program can lead to the regular college degree program. That is, if a participant completes a non-degree education program, university recognizes the completion and grants university degree in linkage with the ACBS. This model is gaining high expectation as an innovative model of the second chance education.

In April 2012, KNOU established Dongsung College to operate a more open and flexible course compared with current colleges such as College of Liberal Arts, College of Social Sciences, College of Natural Sciences, College of Sciences in Education. And then its name was changed to Prime College. The college has developed and operated the second life design and preparation program in 2012 for establishing an educational environment for adult learners who can contribute to strengthening individual's capability and expanding social devotion, and a customized lifelong learning program for 4050 generations. Prime College is getting attention as a representing model to play a role of 'lifelong learning centered college

in the era of 100 years life expectancy' through lifelong learning by life cycle in the face of a super-aged society. Complying with changed life patterns such as aging and low fertility, it has developed and operated open lectures subject to citizens from diverse social classes for enjoying a more prepared golden years. Prime College is conducting online distance education transcending time and space along with offline attendance education based on the communication between teachers and students. In addition, human resources of Korea National Open University and the best faculty in each field give a lecture, and systematic theory learning is done in parallel with necessary on-the-spot practice to heighten an effect. By presenting pre and post learning related to curriculum except for lecture, it leads a core model of very preferred smart lifelong promotion system.

From the year 2014, MOE and NILE are building a nationwide smart learning network by establishing and operating Happy Learning Support Centers in 3,586 rural villages so that those centers can support lifelong study of rural citizens in full scale. The centers will employ nationally certified lifelong study instructors who help citizens with smart learning as learning manager or coach.

With the successful execution of the KSL Project, the Korean government is dreaming of building a nation of happy learning and study where all people can have freely access to learning programs and organizations anytime and anywhere and thereby maximizing their degree of happiness.