

---

## A Research on Work and Learning among the Middle-aged

Kim In Yeop, Kim Jong Wook, Song Kimin

### 1. Research Purpose

Korea has been aging faster than any other countries in the world. This has been causing economic problems to individuals after their retirement, and the decreasing number of production personnel and increasing welfare spending are likely to cause economic threats to the nation.

However, the reality lacks effective promotion of policies and improvement of legal systems that can serve the following purposes: to recognize the social middle-aged as the new human resources, and to raise the employment sustainability of the middle-aged through the provision of systematic life-long learning.

Accordingly, the purpose of this research is to draw a plan for activating the life-long education required for the middle-aged to design and execute their second life, and construct a road map for improving policies and legal systems from the medium- and long-term perspective, and, thereby, actualize the systemic basis for establishing a virtuous circle where the middle-aged can continue to work through learning.

### 2. Research Method

To effectively achieve the purpose of this research, the research group meeting and literature review were periodically conducted at least twice per month to analyze the second life of the middle-aged divided into the four different types: re-employment, business start-up/job creation, farm/rural returning, and social contribution. An official document requesting to recommend adequate middle-aged individuals was submitted to the middle-aged related institutions located nationwide, and taking into consideration the location, gender and age of the recommended middle-aged individuals, 10 individuals were selected as the final subjects who participated in the in-depth interview. In addition, the FGI(Focus Group Interview) was conducted among various experienced experts involved in

the educational world such as professors, center chiefs and consultants. Meanwhile, for the business world, taking into consideration the size<sup>1)</sup>, type and

location of business, the company representatives and human resources directors were selected as the subjects, and diverse opinions were collected from them.

Based on the opinions collected through the FGI, to draw more in-depth and fundamental issues and examine the appropriateness and practicality of the proposed plans, the FGD(Focus Group Interview) was conducted among diverse experts involved in the fields of life-long education, vocational education, license field and labor field. In this instance, researchers at research institutes having experience in conducting a research on the Constitution, Education Act and Labor Law, and legislative officers in charge of the Education Act at their legislative office were selected as the legislative system experts to served as the subjects in this research.

Finally, taking into consideration the importance of this research focused on the importance of life-long education related to work in a super-aged society, to draw highly reliable future forecast and middle ground based on the feedbacks and anonymous process, the Delphi analysis was conducted. In this instance, the human resource pool for selecting those to serve as the Delphi panel was constructed through submitting an official document requesting to recommend adequate individuals to the related institutions. Then, through the research group meeting and expert consultation meeting, 10 experts from educational/research institutions and 10 experts from middle-aged employment support institutions were selected as the final subjects.

### 3. Research Result

The short-term improvement plan and medium- and long-term improvement plan for activating the four types of activities(re-employment, business start-up/job creation, farm/rural returning, and social contribution) drawn through a series of research processes in relation to work and learning among the middle-aged are as follows.

Initially, there are 10 items that are required to be improved in the re-employment area related to work and learning among the middle-aged. The short-term improvements to be made are as follows: ①to systematize organizations that operate and support re-employment of the middle-aged, ②to publicize middle-aged re-employment programs, ③to construct life-long career management systems, ④to introduce life-long voucher programs, ⑤to establish vocational training institutions dedicated to the middle-aged, ⑥to reinforce the connection between life-long education and license acquirement, ⑦to expand incentives provided to companies employing middle-aged individuals, ⑧to introduce paid learning

---

1) The subjects mostly consisted of medium-sized companies relatively likely to employ the middle-aged.

leave systems, ⑨and to improve life-long educator appointment/training systems. The medium- long-term improvements to be made are as follows: ①to expand operation of life-long education centers within component schools. This includes assigning life-long educators specializing in life-long education to the schools.

Secondly, there are 9 items that are required to be improved in the business start-up/job creation area related to work and learning among the middle-aged. The short-term improvements to be made are as follows: ①to enhance expertise of business start-up education programs ②to raise and assign middle-aged business start-up consultants ③to develop start-up jobs customized to the middle-aged, ④to systematize business start-up control towers, ⑤to execute middle-aged business start-up apprenticeship education, ⑥to operate middle-aged business start-up mentoring programs, ⑦and to introduce joint middle-aged and youth business start-up support programs. Meanwhile, the medium-long-term improvements to be made are as follows: ①to expand support for non-profit cooperative societies, ②and to provide middle-aged business start-up support allowance. In particular, for the case of middle-aged business start-up support allowance, since there are realistic problems, it is determined that publicizing it would be necessary in the long-term perspective.

Thirdly, there are 5 items that are required to be improved in the farm/rural returning area related to work and learning among the middle-aged. The short-term improvements to be made are as follows: ①to construct and support human resource networks for farm/rural returning, ②to cultivate specialized local businesses, ③to establish and operate learning support centers per each region, ④and to raise farm/rural returning coordinators. In addition, the medium- long-term improvements to be made are as follows: ①to develop and operate NCS-based education programs for farm/rural returning. Although it is determined that the middle-aged individuals desiring farm/rural returning would be able to practice and train through such NCS-based education, since farm/rural returning requires not only the related knowledge and skills, but also diverse learning factors such as understanding on overall environment and construction of human resource networks, the education programs for farm/rural returning is required to be designed and operated based on sophisticated curriculums.

Fourthly, there are 7 items that are required to be improved in the social contribution area related to work and learning among the middle-aged. The short-term improvements to be made are as follows: ①to cultivate social contribution activities customized to the middle-aged, ②to establish and promote policies per each type of social contribution, ③to develop social contribution activity education programs, ④to construct integrated governance for social contribution activities, ⑤to reinforce support for corporate social contribution activities, ⑥and to apply incentives to social contribution activities. It is

necessary to establish related policies that would allow the middle-aged to continue to perform their social contribution activities. Meanwhile, the medium- long-term improvements to be made are as follows: ①to expand social contribution-type job fairs. Since the supply fails to meet the demand in reality, it is determined that this is required to be reviewed in the medium- long-term perspective.

Fifthly, the legal systems required to be revised to active the link between work and learning among the middle-aged are as follows: ①「Law of Korea」, ②「Life-long Education Act」, ③「Enforcement Ordinance of the Life-long Education Act」, ④「Enforcement Regulation of the Life-long Education Act」, ⑤「Education Laws」, ⑥「Act on Prohibition of Age Discrimination in Employment and Aged Employment Promotion」, ⑦「Teacher Certification Regulations」, ⑧and「Enforcement Regulation of the Teacher Certification Regulations」. Accordingly, a draft revision<sup>2)</sup> of the above legal systems was established and proposed based on the consultation meeting with legal experts.

The middle-aged work and learning related policy road map<sup>3)</sup> and legislation improvement plan proposed through this research are as shown in <Table>.

<Table> Middle-aged Work and Learning Related Policy Road Map and Legislation Improvement Plan

Area	Short-term Improvements	Medium- Long-term Improvements	Revision of Legislations
Re-employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to systematize institutions that operate and support re-employment</li> <li>• to publicize re-employment programs</li> <li>• to construct life-long career management systems</li> <li>• to introduce life-long voucher programs</li> <li>• to establish vocational training institutions</li> <li>• to reinforce connection between life-long education and license acquirement</li> <li>• to expand incentives provided to companies employing middle-aged individuals</li> <li>• to introduce paid learning leave systems</li> <li>• to improve life-long educator training systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to establish and operate life-long education centers within component schools (assigning life-long educators to component schools)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revision of Article 31 of 「Law of Korea」</li> <li>• Revision of Article 2 of 「Life-long Education Act」</li> <li>• Revision of Article 8(Learning Leave &amp; Learning Cost Support) of 「Life-long Education Act」</li> <li>• Revision of Article 9(Establishment of Basic Plan for Life-long Education Promotion) of 「Life-long Education Act」</li> <li>• Revision of Article 10(Installation of Life-long Education Promotion Committee) of 「Life-long Education Act」</li> <li>• Revision of Article 12(City/Province Life-long Education Council) of 「Life-long Education Act」</li> <li>• Revision of Article 14(City/District/ Autonomous District Life-long Education Council of 「Life-long Education Act」</li> <li>• Revision of Article 25(Life-long Educator Training Institution) of 「Life-long</li> </ul>

2) See the involved page(chapter 4) for the detailed revision.

3) The policy road map is divided into short-term improvements and medium- and long-term improvement in order to increase the level of understanding of the readers.

Area	Short-term Improvements	Medium- Long-term Improvements	Revision of Legislations
Business Start-up Job Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to enhance expertise of education programs</li> <li>• to raise and assign business start-up consultants</li> <li>• to develop customized jobs</li> <li>• to systematize business start-up control towers</li> <li>• to execute business start-up apprenticeship education</li> <li>• to operate business start-up mentoring programs</li> <li>• to introduce joint business start-up support programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to expand support for non-profit cooperative societies</li> <li>• to provide middle-aged business start-up support allowance</li> </ul>	Education Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revision of Article 32(Life-long Education Facility in a Format of College in the Company) of 「Life-long Education Act」</li> <li>• Revision of Article 22(Target/ Standard for Assignment of Life-long Educators) of 「Enforcement Ordinance of the Life-long Education Act」</li> <li>• Revision of Article 2(Life-long Education Practice Conciliation Committee) of 「Enforcement Regulation of the Life-long Education Act」</li> <li>• Revision of Article 14(Curriculum Completion Standard) of 「Enforcement Ordinance of the National Technical Qualifications Act」</li> <li>• Revision of Article 10(Operation of Aged Employment Information Center) of 「Act on Prohibition of Age Discrimination in Employment and Aged Employment Promotion」</li> <li>• Revision of Article 10(Social Education of 「Education Laws</li> </ul>
Farm/Rural Returning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to construct and support human resource networks</li> <li>• to cultivate specialized local businesses</li> <li>• to establish and operate learning support centers per each region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to develop and operate NCS-based education programs</li> </ul>	
Social Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to cultivate customized social contribution activities</li> <li>• to establish and promote policies per each type of social contribution</li> <li>• to develop education programs</li> <li>• to construct integrated governance</li> <li>• to reinforce support for corporate social contribution activities</li> <li>• to apply incentives to social contribution activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to expand social contribution-type job fairs</li> </ul>	

#### 4. Policy Proposal

##### A. Perspective of Policy Promotion

- Proposal 1) It is necessary to reinforce the control tower function of the government departments and agencies operating/supporting middle-aged re-employment programs.
- Proposal 2) It is necessary to secure, publicize and reinforce the excellent contents included in those programs.
- Proposal 3) It is necessary to immediately construct the ‘life-long career management system(provisional name)’ connected to e-Government to be applied to the labor market.

- Proposal 4) It is necessary to introduce the ‘life-long education voucher program (provisional name)’ to reinforce the public nature of life-long education for the middle-aged.
- Proposal 5) It is necessary to materialize a plan for connecting/ integrating life-long education and school education, and design a mutual cooperation model.
- Proposal 6) It is necessary to make it mandatory to assign life-long educators to secondary schools, and propose a related subject required for acquiring a teacher’s license.
- Proposal 7) It is necessary to develop jobs customized to the middle-aged and train consultants.
- Proposal 8) It is necessary to develop joint middle-aged and youth business start-up activation programs.
- Proposal 9) It is necessary to cultivate social contribution activities customized to the middle-aged.
- Proposal 10) It is necessary to promote a plan to decrease time/cost through the construction of VET-MOOC.
- Proposal 11) It is necessary to design and operate middle-aged education program models in a combined online and offline format.
- Proposal 12) It is necessary to secure a budget sufficient to provide life-long vocational education.

#### B. Perspective of Legal System

- Proposal 1) It is necessary to revise Article 31 of 「Law of Korea」 and Article 2 of 「Life-long Education Act」 in order to newly define life-long education and actively secure the connection between school and life-long education.

- Proposal 2) It is necessary to revise Article 8 of 「Life-long Education Act」 in order to secure the legal basis for the ‘life-long education voucher program’.
- Proposal 3) It is necessary to revise Article 9 of 「Life-long Education Act」 in order to include the matters related to promotion of life-long vocational skill enhancement education in the process of establishing the basic plan.
- Proposal 4) It is necessary to revise Clauses 1, 2 and 4 of Article 10 of 「Life-long Education Act」 in order to upgrade the status of the chairman of life-long education promotion committee, and reinforce the system and budget.
- Proposal 5) It is necessary to revise Articles 12 and 14 of 「Life-long Education Act」 to include the vocational education experts as the members of city life-long education council.
- Proposal 6) It is necessary to revise Article 25 of 「Life-long Education Act」 in order to reinforce the support for life-long educator training institutions.
- Proposal 7) It is necessary to revise Article 32 of 「Life-long Education Act」 in order to activate the colleges in the medium-sized companies.
- Proposal 8) It is necessary to revise Article 22 of 「Life-long Education Act」 to take necessary measures for assigning the life-long educators in component schools.
- Proposal 9) It is necessary to revise Article 2 of 「Enforcement Regulation of the Life-long Education Act」 in order to raise the status of life-long education practice conciliation committee and promote the policies.
- Proposal 10) It is necessary to revise Articles 10 and 11-2 of 「Act on Prohibition of Age Discrimination in Employment and Aged Employment Promotion<sup>4)</sup>」 in order to secure the legal basis and reinforced support plan for the currently operating ‘middle-aged job hope center’.

---

4) Hereinafter referred to as ‘Act on Aged Employment’.