

ABSTRACT

Development of Integrated Education Programs and Operating Methods: Helping Students of Multicultural Families Adapt to School Life in the Initial Stages

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The main objective of this research is to develop programs to help immigrant parents of multicultural families and their children to better adapt to Korean schools and education, as well as to explore the possibility of establishing an integrated educational support system that is required to ensure an effective operation of the programs actually in the field.

The research topics covered are as follows:

- The Setting of research direction and exploration of a theoretical base for research
- Preliminary analysis of the environment surrounding the development of programs
- Program design and development
- Application of programs
- Program evaluation
- Program modification

- Exploration of ways to provide educational support to ensure effective operation of programs

Prior to developing the programs, the concept of school adaptation is set as a theoretical base for the research, and the model of an integrated educational support system is explored. The concept of school adaptation, the key concept of this research, is established via literature review of previous research works and through re-analysis of the requirements for school adaptation on the basis of the results of the analysis on educational support in schools provided to the children and immigrant parents of intermarried multicultural families beginning with the year 2009. In order to develop an integrated educational support program, a model is explored to cover the entire range of program contents and subjects, as well as educational institutions that will operate the programs.

The program development was derived based on the following five phases:

- 1) analyses of program requirements, the environment of support systems, and the state of teachers;
- 2) program design and development;
- 3) application and tests of the program in the field;
- 4) evaluation of program; and
- 5) modification of program.

Included in the initial stage (the analysis of program requirements, the environment of support systems, and the state of teachers) are indentifying problems associated with student adjustments found in preexisting studies, understanding the requisites to improve the support, aiming to helping students of multicultural families better adapt themselves to school life, and collecting idea feedback on how to structure the content of the program. To

these ends, an opinion survey was carried out to analyze the requirements, in addition to data analyses and interviews to review the supporting environment systems, and the analysis of previous studies to understand the key features of teachers.

The survey was conducted with twenty teachers (general and alternative schools) and educational professionals. It turns out that Korean language capabilities and writing skills most of all are required to enable the students of multicultural families, especially those who were born in and had grown up in Korea, to better adapt to schools. Also needed to develop are programs and ways to improve the confidence of these students and to encourage their participation in classes. When it comes to the students who immigrated to Korea, the most important thing is to improve their Korean language capabilities. In addition, a psychological counseling program designed to help these students learn the common matters required to carry on regular lives with others in Korea are needed, such as how to establish relationships with teachers, mentors, and native-language teachers and how to abide by common rules and expectations.

In analyzing the supporting environment and systems, the general outlines of elementary school curricula and the “we are first-grade students” education course were analyzed on a comprehensive basis. By analyzing the content of the “we are first-grade students” course that was excluded in the revised education curriculum in 2009 but had been included until the 2007 education curriculum revision, the study reveals what these students of multicultural families need to acquire and develop during their initial school days in order to adapt. Also found through the review of the Multicultural Family Student Mentoring Program that was included in the Report on the Nation’s Elementary School Teacher – Fostering Universities’ Multicultural

Education Program Monitoring and Achievements, 2009 (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2010) and through in – depth interviews with professors and university students who participate in mentoring programs were what are required to improve the mentoring items and effects. As a result, the multi-cultural students who were born in and had grown up in Korea turned out to have no significant difference in spoken languages but have difficulty in writing. The implications for these students who had immigrated to Korea are that, in addition to basic Korean language education, they also require emotional and psychological education.

To analyze the state of teachers, the study reexamines what skills and capabilities are required for the elementary students of multicultural families and their parents as found in the preexisting research “Exploration of Integrated Educational Support Methods to Develop the Capabilities of Multicultural Families (Lee Jae-Boon et al., 2009). Also reviewed were the key characteristics of immigrated students identified in the paper “Research on the Actual State of Educational Support Extended to Multicultural Families by Schools” (Lee Jae-Boon et al., 2009).

Based on the results attained through the above-mentioned analysis process, this research develops two types of programs: Type A for the students of the multicultural families who were born and grew up in Korea; and Type B for those who had immigrated. The program for Type A students focuses on school life adjustment, self-confidence, and writing, while those for Type B on basic adjustment to Korean life, self-respect, and Korean language capabilities.

In the second phase “program design and development,” a guideline for program development was established wherein the direction of program

development, the subject of program application, the type and characteristics of programs were identified by program type (Type A and Type B), all aimed at designing an appropriate program. Additionally, the program was developed through the selection of professional groups by program type. As a result, six different kinds of programs were developed, i.e. two programs for students, two for parents, and two guidelines for teachers.

The Type A program for the students of the multicultural families who were born and had grown up in Korea consists of four sections: 1) “Seed: I am a flower of my home;” 2) “Bud: School is a happy place;” 3) “Flower: The world inside books;” and 4) “Fruit: Living together.” The Type B program for immigrant students also consists of four sections: basic school life functioning skills (Korean language); basic school life functioning skills (computers); school life adjustment A (school culture and school life adjustment); and school life adjustment B (finding self-confidence). The two types of programs are both developed to run for sixteen rounds but can be expanded according to individual school characteristics and operational methods.

In the third “actual program application” phase, the application by regions, educational institutions, and the type of teachers was made differently by program type, aimed at enhancing the quality of the program and collecting ideas on how to operate. The field application was implemented at six schools and institutions from the second week of July through the third week of October. The number of students participating in the program was nine for Type A and twelve for Type B, for a total of twenty-one participating students.

To enhance the effectiveness of trial applications, an orientation was held

for the teachers prior to attempting trial application. A brief interview and class observation was made in the middle of the trial applications and an in-depth interview at a time near the end of the applications. For class observations during trial applications, a monitoring index consisting of “class environment,” “class design,” “class implementation,” and “class evaluation” were applied. After the termination of the trial programs, an in-depth interview was conducted with the teachers for the purpose of program content and program implementation analysis, and feedback opinions regarding the programs were collected.

In the fourth stage of program evaluation, the study analyzed the various results of “class observation and brief interview” and “in-depth interview” at the six trial educational institutions and on the “program content review” opinions provided by educational professionals.

The analysis of the “class observation and brief interview” reveals that despite several excellent performances regarding teachers’ understanding of students and their maintenance of mutually favorable interactions, there were problems found in that the connection between subjects such as students, parents, and teachers and the connection between contents such as major goals, all of which were goals of the programs, did not show up in the classrooms.

As a result of the analytical review of the “in-depth interview and program content,” the Type A program revealed the following implications. First, for students, there is a definitive lack of variety in activities. Also, there is strong need for materials and contents that can highlight the characteristics of multicultural education programs. Second, the contents of formative education need to present questions and tasks aimed at driving the students towards finding solutions via applying text materials and being

engaged in divergent thinking and various activities. Third, although overlooked at the current programs, additional supplementation should be made for the parts that are required for better school adjustment for the students of multicultural families. For teachers, they should first become more aware of the differences in the way of instructions relative to other countries. Second, efforts should be made to add more concrete methods of instructions and resolution methods for the students of multicultural families. Lastly, the implication for parents is that there is a necessity to convert Chinese character-based vocabulary into easier language.

The implications for Type B programs are as follows. For students, it is foremost needed to adjust the degree of difficulty among sections, as well as to reduce the overall content of study. To these ends, a comprehensive author-centered review needs to be conducted for the various sections. Secondly, taking the characteristics of immigrated students into considerations, the entire structure of the sections needs to be readjusted. To reflect the characteristics of multicultural education program, a wider variety of cultural materials should be inserted. In addition, other elements that need to be introduced further are the contents that can help form life habits and encourage students to increase self-study habits. For teachers, it is necessary to add contents such as explanations to help teachers understand the characteristics of immigrated students and the characteristics of the countries where they came from, aimed at helping teachers have a better understanding of these students. For parents, teaching materials are generally too difficult and use an unnecessarily high level language, thereby having a low level of usability. Given this in mind, it will be needed to develop teaching materials with Korean in parallel with foreign languages or translations into other major languages. And finally, there is the need to enhance the usability for the parents by compiling common school terms and

adding them as an appendix.

From the perspective of operations, the following eight implications can be presented. First, prior to program operations, efforts should be made to develop various methods to better understand the characteristics of the subjects concerned. Second, with respect to the understanding of the characteristics of the subjects concerned, Type A and Type B programs can be applied in various ways by the characteristics of the students. Third, efforts should be made to refine the “considerations for instruction” by exploring various types of integrated education support and providing appropriate information based on the results of trial applications. Fourth, preparatory education and workshops are needed to enhance recognition of integrated education programs. Fifth, it is needed to develop a variety of teaching techniques that are operated through cooperation among content developers and teaching professionals. Sixth, a comprehensive review is needed for teachers’ (and schools in general) communication methods with parents. At the least, parent education methods by program type should be explored. Seventh, the form of data should be diversified to enable easy selection and operation of the programs. Eighth, systematic promotion and support are needed to encourage greater participation of students of multicultural families in the programs.

In the fifth stage of program corrections and modifications, programs were modified by type based on the results of program reviews and simplified trial applications. The degree of acceptance for review opinions is determined through exhaustive discussions with the researchers and authors who participated in the program development, and through comparative analyses between authors’ intentions and review opinions. Also reflected are the items required through simplified trial applications. To further

strengthen the point that the programs are designed to provide integrated educational support, they were reviewed and modified from the perspective of connections between the programs for students, teachers, and parents. To adjust the degree of program difficulty, modifications were made regarding program contents and repositioning. The Type B program in particular was subject to additional development and comprehensive modifications to adjust the level of difficulty among sections.

Formative evaluation by sections or divisions is adjusted to reflect divergent thinking and to include a variety of activities without being limited to writing examinations. For those developed for parents, an emphasis is placed on modifying simply with easy terms. To enhance usability, Type A and Type B programs both are translated into Mongolian and Vietnamese languages.

In conclusion, this study explores ways to make the programs developed from the research to be effectively incorporated in the schools. To this end, it aims to present an integrated educational support method by exploring and analyzing domestic and foreign cases regarding the connections among program contents (e.g., connection and integration of intellectual and definitive content) and connection and cooperation among educational institutions on in-field operations (linkage and development of resources for students, teachers, and parents). To smoothly implement the research in the third-year (2011), this study also aims to present and explore within a possible range the requirements necessary to expand the applicability scope of the programs and to verify their effects that are planned for the next research.