

A Study on Analysis and Improvement Plans of the Government Funding Project for University Lifelong Education

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The government has established and offered degree and non-degree programs to employees and adult learners in the form of the government's financial support for university lifelong education since 2008. While being assessed as a timely policy project to foster talents who will lead the future society, this project has been funded from the government over the last ten years. However, it was revealed that some problems failing to meet the objective of the project have occurred as follows: the social situation where adult learners have difficulties in entering university's regular programs, the unique characteristics

of the project linked with higher education and lifelong education, and the limitations of the project undertaken as the government funding. As a result, the government budget has been reduced, resulting in a blow to the universities involved in this project.

With this backdrop in mind, this study aims to suggest practical plans for universities to proactively respond to the future society and for the government to link and develop higher education-lifelong education by scientifically analysing the government-funded project for university lifelong education that have been undertaken so far. To that end, first, this study established the perspective of analysis to understand the concept and the characteristics of the government-financed project for university lifelong education and to draw up improvement plans. In addition, this study suggested the problems and issues of this project by thoroughly analysing the changes in the government-funded project for university lifelong education from 2008 to 2017, the changes in the current status of the government financial support and the current status of the government funding by university.

Fifteen criteria were developed to analyse the government-funded project for university lifelong education. As the entire cycle of the government funding, areas of securement-distribution-management-assessment were established. Based on each area, nine standards of sufficiency, stability, rationality, adequacy, efficiency, autonomy, effectiveness, and accountability were derived. In addition, as sub-concepts, fifteen assessment criteria were developed. With regard to the sufficiency standard of the securement area, the estimation of adequate project cost for the government funding project was derived. Also, for the standard for safety, the legal basis of the government-financed project for university lifelong education and the budget variation rate for the project were suggested. As with the assessment criteria to check the standard for rationality of the distribution area, the change cycle of the government-

supported funding policy for university lifelong education along with operation, the management and evaluation of the government-financed projects for university lifelong education were chosen. In case of the adequacy standard, the adequacy of selecting the universities who receive the government funding was derived. As the assessment criteria for the efficiency standard of the management area were the state of similar projects and the current status of the overlapping funding. In case of the assessment criteria for the autonomy standard were the method of budget allocation, formulation and execution of the budget. Regarding the assessment criteria for the effectiveness standard of the evaluation area were the achievement of reformulating university system and the outcome of learner-centered education. With respect to the assessment criteria for the accountability standard were the current status of the unsupported universities and the systemicity of achievement management.

Qualitative and politic assessment as well as quantitative and objective assessment were conducted by using the above fifteen criteria. First of all, according to the qualitative and politic assessment results, in the securement area, it was indicated that the need to implement multi-year projects, stable project implementation through the establishment of legal basis and predictable budget support were proposed. In the distribution area, the rational project management aligned with the academic schedule, adequate selection and support plans for the project implementation and rationality enhancement in evaluating universities were also proposed. In the management area, the reorganization of similar projects undertaken by other ministries, guarantee of university autonomy in grant, formulation and execution of the budget were suggested. As with the area of evaluation, the importance of follow-up measures to maintain continuous achievement, not just a one-time project, and the stability of support required for achieving outcomes were emphasized.

To conduct quantitative and objective assessment, the below factors were

utilized: collection and analysis of the project cost settlement data from the government-funded universities, analysis of related laws, the government's comprehensive plan for promoting lifelong education from 2003 to 2007, the basic plans related to the project and its implementation manual, analysis on the adequacy of selected universities based on economy of scale, comparison of overlapping projects with other ministries, major achievements, and analysis on the current status of the supported and unsupported universities. Hence, the results showed that to meet the sufficiency standard, the guarantee of average amount of funding for each university and the coordination of relevant laws for stability were required. Also, it was pointed out that to meet the rationality standard, the implementation of multi-year project and consideration of the academic schedule when implementing the project were derived. In the adequacy standard, it was reviewed that establishing the pool of the eligible universities with financial support based on economies of scale in universities etc were suggested. Regarding the efficiency standard, the elimination of overlapping projects from other ministries and for autonomy, the guarantee of university autonomy in allocating and executing budget were derived. Furthermore, with regard to the effectiveness standard, the securement of period to achieve outcomes in consideration of the meeting schedule of the project and the need of follow-up support were suggested. Concerning accountability, the preparation of long-term achievement management measures, the establishment of quality assurance systems to guarantee the achievements for each university and the realization of various evaluations involved in the project were also derived.

On the other hand, by analysing overseas cases, this study reviewed the government funding policies for university lifelong education along with their related budgets, projects and individual university case from the United States, the U.K., and Finland. It also provided the trend of university lifelong education policies in major countries and the implications in comparison with that of

South Korea. The results found that due to the different historical, political, social, and cultural backgrounds of the above nations, they have slightly different forms of the lifelong education. However, it turned out that each nation has been promoting its own university lifelong education for adults at the national level and in the area of higher education adults were already actively participating in the project. The fact that foreign countries intend to actively utilize universities as resources to produce human resources in the future without limiting the existing roles and functions of the universities have great implications, in particular, in terms of the social consensus required to implement the Korea's financially-supported lifelong education project.

Based on the mentioned analysis results, this study suggested plans to improve the government-funded project for university lifelong education. The overall structure of the plans consist of vision, objective, basic direction and policy measures. First of all, the vision which will be the ultimate direction point to develop policy measures was set up to improve the nation's capacity to respond to the future society. Among the various alternatives to achieve the vision, the government-financed university's lifelong education project will also function as a means, and the objective of the project is to create an inclusive higher education system for adult learners. To achieve both the vision and the goal, this study established the following three policy directions: First, inducement of stable transition from lifelong education to university education, Second, mutual growth of higher education and lifelong education, and Third, creation of virtuous cycle for education and industry. Based on these three policy directions, this study suggested the detailed policy measures in the four areas of budget management, project management, evaluation and quality assurance, and legal and institutional infrastructure.

First, in terms of funding management, this study suggested the enhancement of its autonomy through block funding, improvement of rationality and fairness

in budget allocation, improvement of funding allocation method to enhance the efficiency in the project management, and support of tuition fees for adult learners. Second, regarding project management, this study suggested the transition from single-year project to multi-year project aligned with academic schedule, the establishment of the qualified university pool for the government funding and improvement of selection method, supplementation of measures in securing each university's enrollment quota to minimize burden on universities, securement of sufficient period to respond after the notification of the government funding project, reorganization of similar and overlapping projects and connection with related projects, easing of entrance requirements and expansion of enrollment route, and guarantee of transparency in the process of policy implementation. Third, regarding evaluation and quality assurance, this study suggested ensuring the validity of assessment criteria for selecting recipient universities, the establishment of achievement management and sharing system, management of achieving mutual consideration among stakeholder(the government-universities-learners), and the realization of checking the implementation of accountability. Fourth, in terms of legal and institutional infrastructure, this study suggested the promotion of projects based on mid-to long-term plans, adjustment of conflict between related regulations and acts at the national level, reformation of university-level academic regulations and establishment of learning support system, establishment of social consensus and increase in public relations regarding the project.

This study came to the following conclusions: First, the government funding project for university lifelong education should establish an identity to serve as a stepping-stone so that 'university lifelong education' for adult learners can be developed into 'university education'. Second, to ensure the stability of funding support, the government should secure budget and support by implementing projects linked with the government's mid and long-term

development plans. Third, to enhance the validity of budget support, the basis of estimating and securing budget, and the standard for budget allocation by each university should be prepared. Fourth, the government funding project for university lifelong education must develop a close cooperation system among various stakeholders as this project cannot bear fruitful results without partnership with the business community.

Finally, this study provided suggestions on several follow-up research topics to contribute to develop the policies on university lifelong education. First, development of objective and reasonable standards to identify the size, characteristics, and financial condition of individual university. Second, promotion of continuous research on calculating the appropriate government funding project and Third, the comprehensive review of acts and regulations on education.

□ **Key words** : Financial support projects for lifelong education, Governmental funding project for university lifelong education system, Financial support programs for higher education