Literacy & Citizenship:

A Korean Approach

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Literacy Crisis

Salt Water?
Fake News?

Literacy Crisis
South Korea

50% of adult population received Higher Education.

College Graduate (25–34 years old): 69.8%
Literacy Crisis in Korea

- **4.5%**
  - 2 million
  - Lack basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills for everyday life

- **2.3%**
  - 1.85 million
  - Can read, write, and count but are difficult to use in everyday life

- **11.4%**
  - 5.03 million
  - Can use literacy skills simple daily life, but are inadequate for complex daily life
Act & Policy

• Lifelong Education Act, revised in 2007
• 426 Institutions & 1,578 Classes (2021)
• 6,195 Adult Literacy Teachers
• Adult Literacy Textbooks (6 years into 3 years)
• 19,690 adult learners earned elementary and middle school certificates (by 2021)
A Dreadful Grandson

When I was young
Lying on my grandmother's legs
Listening to old stories
I used to fall asleep

My grandson
Brings me a book
Asks me to read it
I'm scared, and I'm going to die

If it were telling a story
It it were food made by hand
I can do whatever he asks

Although I want to run out to hug him
I cannot get out of the kitchen
Because of the scary book in his hands

Written by Kang Chun Ja, Yeosu-gu
2013 National Adult Literacy Poetry Exhibition
Grand Prize Winner
Critical Literacy

Seeing the relationship between text and context critically

Community's agenda contain matters of people's lives

Citizens' active participation skills begin with sharing your life with others

Poetry writing in adult literacy classes to develop self-expression capabilities

Adult literacy education aims at forming citizens who can adequately read, understand, and transform the world
I thought that a woman
Didn't need to know how to write

a woman
all she had to do was obey her husband's words

a woman
raising a child and plowing a field
working all day long

when winter passes, spring comes
I lived only in the cold winter every day

my eyes light up
my hands write
my feet take me to Hangeul* school

I met my spring when I was over 70
I want to play only with spring forever

Written by Jeong Jeong Soon, Ulsan Nambu Library
*Hangeul = Korean alphabet
2020 National Adult Literacy Poetry Exhibition Grand Prize Winner
Literacy Classes during Pandemic

- Sent class materials to learner’s home
  - Taught individually over the phone
- Aired EBS adult literacy programs
- A case of Nonsan city
A Case of Nonsan City

• Supporting adult literacy education at the municipal level since 2016
• 139 local women have been trained as literacy teachers
• Small class size (10 or less): not being affected by the pandemic
• Literacy classes in 333 towns in 2021
• Some classes were held in the learner’s home
• Literacy teachers and learners edit a bi-annual magazine together
“Course Delivery”

Dispatching adult literacy teacher to towns where literacy learners live.

Lifelong education programs based on citizen’s autonomy create various learning communities.
Declaration of the Right to Learn

1985, CONFINTEA IV

“Recognition of the right to learn is now more than ever a challenge for humanity”

- the right to read and write;
- the right to question and analyse;
- the right to imagine and create;
- the right to read one’s own world and to write history;
- the right to have access to educational resources;
- the right to develop individual and...
Fundamentals to Citizenship Development

Basic Literacy

Functional Literacy

Critical Literacy

Futures Literacy
Thank You