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Pursuing Universal Secondary Education and Economic Development: Republic of Korea

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Why did Republic of Korea pursue universal secondary education when they were lower income country in 1970?

How did they achieve universal secondary education with insufficient resources in 1980?

How was the contribution of secondary education for economic development?



World School Enrollment (Primary vs Secondary)



Sources: World Bank Data

- Even though the world achieved universal primary education, the secondary school enrollment rate is about 70% in South Asian countries, and 85% in East Asian countries (2021).
- Rural-urban education inequality gap and girls enrollment are the main contributors to education inequality in many countries.



Characteristics of Education Expansion in Korea



- **Compulsory Primary** ۲ achievement 1959
- enrollment for girls : the second 120.00 highest from the world in 1965



Universal Secondary in Korea

1971 started(GDP per capita \$316), 1985 achieved (GDP per capita \$2,542)

Support for the industrial transition from labor intensive to Heavy and Chemical industries (1970–1980)

The highest contribution for economic growth until 1990, since 1990 HE contribution was increasing.

Expansion of TVET high school (50% from total)

Expansion of Private school (50% from total)

Sequential Approach, Low-cost approach, High Private Sector Participation, High Priority on Equality rather than Excellence, Special policies and Investment for Rural Area and TVET high schools, Incentive for teachers who worked in Rural Area **#RDFS2022** World Vegetable Center JIL IFAD IRRI

Efficient Budget Allocation

CGIAR

- The distribution of educational expenditures is as important as the amount of educational expenditures. Allocating more than 60% of Education budget to Primary until 1975 (providing opportunity first-improving quality next strategy)
- Also, Korea minimized costs by maintaining large class sizes and high student-teacher ratios. (In some, 100 students a \geq class)
- Local education grant law : ground 20% of domestic tax will be allocated to K-12 education, virtuous circle with economy



Public–private Partnership in Secondary Education in Korea

Portion of Private Education(%):

Lower Secondary 20%, Upper Secondary 50%, Higher Education 80%



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Sources: Human Capital and Development (Lee, 2018).

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Government support for PPP

	Providing teacher salary, administration cost to private schools
	Various tax exemption for school foundation
	Same tuition policy between public and private schools
	Abolition of middle school and high school entrance examination, advancement exam
	"Equalization policy" : High school Allocation through lottery including private schools
	Equalization of education environment
/	Autonomy and Accountability, Excellence and Equality issue

TVET High School Support





Note: Share of government expenditure for higher education does not include the special accounts of national university hospitals and faculty investment at the Seoul National University *Source*: MOE & KEDI, various years

In 1970, TVET high schools were expanded and supported for industrial structure change.

In 1977, government spending on vocational and technical education had almost reached that on higher education.

Scholarship provided, special trek for university entrance (Three Presidents graduated From TVET High schools)

Contribution of secondary education to economic growth: 50.9% of total contribution of education in 1970-1975; TVET had a significant effect.



Tertiary Education for Regional Development

- Late expansion of Higher Education, low investment until 1990
 - 1980: from elite to mass, 1997: from mass to universal (Matin Trow)
- In 1950: encouraging establishment of HE, sending students and trainees abroad with grant, participating in national strategy, becoming faculty in universities, experiencing brain drain
- In 1960-1970: strong student quota restriction, increase student quota in the region and invest budget to reginal universities related with national prioritized areas like heavy and chemical, electronics and foreign language.
- In 1980: expanding education opportunity and improving social equity, supplying engineers and R&D personnel, supplying highly educated white-collar workers and the efficiency of bureaucracy
- Since 1990: increasing Higher Education budget, supporting world class researchers and universities, R&D expenditure % of GDP 4.528% (2021, World 1st)



Thank You!

