

Country Report : Korea

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I . Introduction

In the last decade Korea has been inundated with rhetoric about globalization, internationalization, and market liberalization. Not much of the rhetoric has led to concrete results, perhaps because commitment to change has not matched the rhetoric. Commitment to change has not developed because the meaning of internationalization, the means of globalization, and the benefits of market liberalization have by no means been clarified, or at least no consensus has emerged about those presumably desirable goals.

Globalization itself, though the word is not as popular as it was several years ago, has been relatively new term, meaning anything from "learning English" to "making an overseas trip." Some of the same confusion exists in education, but at least in education there is a specific vision of a desirable product - an overseas degree. In Korea today an overseas graduate degree, particularly a doctorate, has much greater numberwise than previous years. Thus a program to deliver non-Korean degrees to Korean students has a theoretical chance of success. Even a program which gets the student into the foreign countries with a student visa, though not into the degree-granting institution at first, may be highly popular.

In addition, there is a high level of demand for overseas study that does not lead to a degree, mostly English language study. English is seen as a valuable preparation for a job, as preparation for "the borderless careers awaiting them, for the global marketplace, for the need to understand and interact with other cultures on a daily basis." These jobs are already coming to Korea ; LG Electronics uses the motto "Boundaryless." These two goals, an overseas degree for Korean and overseas English language study for Koreans, comprise most of the current demand which might take advantage of the educational market opening.

II. UMAP related educational activities

As a result of the UR agreement last December 1995, Korean became aware of the fact that educational market should be open to the world. The traditional limitations on market access and national treatment are no longer allowed in the newly developed world trade system. Although the area of educational services is not included in the UR negotiation, educators and government officers are preparing for the changing circumstances.

The open door policy in the field of educational services, about 140 fields(40%) of the private educational institutes, not regular schools, has been opened to foreign

investors in 1995. Because of the possible, tremendous impacts on the fields of music, fine arts, and physical education, these fields are not included in this first opening item. A foreign language institute has been allowed in each 15 cities and provinces. This may not be enough to student consumers, but it is just the beginning of the market opening in the educational services field. Because of their functions as subsidiary to the regular schools, these private institutes are very important.

After the successive settlement of the open door policy in private institutes, the next step will be the establishment of the similar open system in higher education institutions in terms of UR frame.

Most higher education institutions strive toward internationalization of its programs for the advancement of higher education. They have established formal academic exchange programs with overseas universities and colleges. These programs offer an outstanding collegiate experience for students with achievement and motivation. Important aspects of these special relationships include the mutual appointment and invitation of exchange of various cultural activities. UMAP related activities are various from simple student exchange program to branch campuses.

1. STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

One of the major UMAP related activities is student exchange programs. In the traditional model a Korean and foreign student in effect change places for a semester or a year, paying tuition at the home institution but not at the host institution, and receiving recognition for that study toward the academic degree earned at home. In fact, Korean universities have had exchange agreements with foreign universities for years, and the current Ministry of Education report indicates that at the end of 1996 there were a total of 1943 exchange agreements that Korean universities had with foreign universities, of which 573 were with universities in the United States ("Exchange Agreements").

Accordingly there are measurable student flows in student exchange. A fair number of Korean universities are running active student exchange programs. In 1996 Korean universities sent 3283 students overseas under exchange agreements, though they only received 476. Also interesting is the fact that exchange programs are the domain of private universities in Korea, not public. All the public universities together only sent 183 students and received only 13, Seoul National University sent 18 and received 4 ("Exchange Agreements").

Interest is also growing in another student exchange model, the international consortium, represented by UMAP, University Mobility in Asia and Pacific, UMAP was to be Asia's answer to the ERASMUS program and the other European exchange programs. Students currently enrolled in universities in the participating nations would spend up to a year in another country of the Asia-Pacific regions as part of their study plan. UMAP, like many plans in the joint study arena, is still more a good idea than a reality. It has taken five or six years of study so far, and university linkages and national conferences have been held, but without a single student yet going anywhere. Like many plans, UMAP has stumbled over the details that await the planner once the first step is taken beyond the glorious rhetoric of international study, details such as conflicting academic calendars, credits that don't translate, cross-recognition of degrees, immigration and visa issues, financial support, language barriers, and lack of information and communication. UMAP holds out hope for the continued expansion of students exchange programs. Exchange is small, but real and growing

2. ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS

A joint study program is articulation agreements. In an articulation agreement, students complete part of their education, often half, at one institution, and then the other half at a second institution, which then awards the degree. The agreement typically spells out which grades or courses or programs at the first institution will be accepted by the second institution, in order to facilitate the transfer of students from one to the other.

In our context, articulation agreements mean that Korean students complete part of their education in Korea, and then proceed to the foreign countries to complete their education and earn their degree. Such agreements may occur at any level.

Articulation agreements from Korea to the foreign countries have several important attractions that mean they are likely to be a major "joint study program" method between Korea and the other countries in the foreseeable future. In the first place, they parallel the unbalanced student flows already discussed. Articulation agreements would aid the large group of Korean students who already want degrees from the foreign countries undergraduate or graduate. The market is there, and does not have to be made.

A second advantage is that Korea has a large number of internationally trained faculty who can deliver the "in-Korea" half of the training program at internationally acceptable levels, in English if necessary.

The final reason why articulation agreements are likely to dominate the joint-study field in the immediate future is that approving them would take a minimum amount of regulatory change on the part of the Ministry of Education, and would represent the easiest first step a government that has a preference for both delay and incremental change.

For all these reasons, most of the active discussions of joint study programs turn out to be articulation agreements.

Of course, Korean companies have selected employees to send to foreign MBA programs for some time ; What distinguishes these programs is that part of the training, for credit, occurs in Korea before departure.

In particular, theological schools tend to have active articulation agreements.

3. DISTANCE LEARNING

In distance learning, the student also completes part of the study in one country, I.E. Korea, and part in the country of the institution granting the degree, I.E. the U.S. However, in distance learning the student is not usually enrolled in any institution in Korea, but is doing self-study and correspondence study, sometimes from radio broadcasts, nowadays perhaps on the Internet, work which will be periodically checked, reviewed, and completed at the granting institution. The pastor of Seoul Union Church has just completed a doctoral program in theology at Leuven by distance learning, in which he completed some courses and wrote his dissertation while in Korea, going to Belgium just two weeks a year. Columbia University Teachers College offers summer sessions to students worldwide leading to a degree with some work at home between terms. Obviously, such personal distance-learning involvement probably must have been going on in Korea for years with nobody knowing, and will continue in the future with no possibility of regulation. It's nice occasionally to remember that the MOE doesn't have even the theoretically possibility of controlling everything in education.

Distance learning may also involve an advisor, a liaison officer, or even formal gatherings of students in a given country or location ; it may involve a local educational institution. For instance, the NYU Language Center and BCM Language Institute, a well-known chain of institutes in Seoul, are working together on an Internet writing course. So far it does not involved credit, for all the reasons already cited. In addition, the Daewoo program with Michigan involved real-time video conferencing through telecommunications and the Internet. A few years ago Seoul National University and Griffith University in Australia agreed to use video teleconferencing for course offerings. It was never effectively implemented. The Internet holds more promise in this area ; Yonsei University's MOE-founded "International Manpower" program includes negotiation courses which utilize simulation and group distance work with similar courses in, for instance, the University of California at San Diego. Since millions of Korean students use email daily, the promise of the Internet for distance learning, like the promise of articulation agreements, is growing now.

4. FRANCHISE AGREEMENTS

Another exchange program is franchising agreements, whereby the overseas institution lends its name to a program in Korea. It is not a branch campus, as the program would likely be physically located at a Korean institution which provides sponsorship and support ; at least under the present MOE regulations in Korea, it is most likely not to be a degree program. For instance, the Council on International Education Exchange (CIEE), a leading U.S.-based international education agency, opened a CIEE Korean-studies program at Sogang University in the fall of 1994. Students studied at Sogang and got a Korean-studies experience, a "junior year abroad." with courses taught by Korean faculty and an overseas director from a CIEE-related university in the U.S. In fact, the program closed at the end of 1996, not for regulatory reasons but rather for lack of students.

A promising franchise agreement has been worked out between Yonsei University's Foreign Language Institute (FLI) and Cambridge University in establishing a Cambridge RSA Diploma program in Korea for teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL). There are a large number of foreign English teachers in Korea, and many of them, after they arrive and are floundering in the classroom, feel a strong need for some TESOL training. The market is there, and the agreement to provide Cambridge education to Cambridge standards with RSA trainers visiting Korea and teaching the program is a good example of "franchising."

One difference between a franchise agreement and an articulation agreement is that in a franchise, all the education is done in Korea, with no student travel. Given the desire for student travel, franchises will likely remain few.

5. JOINT DEGREES

There have been fewer discussions of true joint degree program in which the student would earn a degree from both institutions. Joint degrees face a number of limitations,

first of which is the government quota already mentioned. If a Korean institution sends its own degree-seeking students to the foreign country in a joint degree program, to the extent that the Korean student is in Korea less than the full Korean study period, the Korean institution must lose tuition income. The departing student's "place" cannot be taken by another under the existing student quota rules. In addition, the Education Law does not yet allow Korean universities to grant students credit for periods in which they have not paid tuition in Korea. Thus one might ask what the incentive is for the Korean institution. Yet such programs do exist, and more are planned. The primary incentive is the prestige of having such an arrangement, particularly with a well-known "name" school in the foreign countries. The availability of a joint degree program with a good foreign school could be used in recruiting students for the Korean university.

However, the benefits of prestige and publicity do not depend on the size of the program. The benefits are almost as great for small numbers of students, and the cost of lost tuition increases directly for larger numbers.

6. BRANCH CAMPUSES

The comprehensive exchange model of the ladder of international study programs is branch campuses. A branch campus could be a joint venture or a "wholly-owned subsidiary" a program in a foreign country not affiliated with an institution in that country but only with the home university. The noise these days is about branch campuses in Korea of foreign universities, though interestingly enough branch campuses in foreign countries of Korean universities are further developed. Either way would facilitate Korean students going overseas, among other purposes, so on the surface there appear to be incentives for both.

Though overseas branches of Korean universities are in fact fewer along than overseas universities here, still, as in all these areas, there is less there than meets the eye.

In 1996, listed twelve individual schools making ambitious plans for branch campuses abroad ("Universities to open"). Six universities wanted to start branches in Los Angeles, with others planned for Russia, China, Malaysia, Japan, and other places in the U.S. It was a very impressive list. However, only two or three of them have

proceeded farther. Kyonggi University is quite far along in its plan to open a department of hotel management in Vladivostok, to the point of making contracts and hiring personnel. Keimyung University has arranged (but not signed) a contract with Baylo University in Los Angeles, a non-accredited but reputable oriental medicine school, to purchase the school or merge with it, and establish a Korean traditional arts program (acupuncture, music, dance, shaman ceremonies, ceramics, etc.). Konkuk University in effect has what is almost a branch campus in Los Angeles. Pacific State University was a small college in Koreatown with a long history and a couple of buildings. In 1988 Konkuk's Board of Directors took over operational control of the school and sent a person of their choice to be president. It is not quite a real branch campus, but two independent universities run by the same board of directors.

Some top universities have held discussions about opening branch campuses which would recruit students who would start overseas but then complete their degree in Korea.

III. Open Door Policy in Higher Education

The Ministry of Education is now studying open door policies and schedules of higher education institutions. There are four principles in the international trade system which can be applied to higher education. They are the freedom of consumption abroad, the freedom of natural persons presence, the freedom of cross-border supply, and the freedom of commercial presence.

1. Freedom of Consumption Abroad

The freedom of consumption abroad applied to higher education is that domestic students can go out to other countries, and also foreign students can come to Korea for their studies without any limitations. There are no limitations in this category. Korean

students who want to study abroad are allowed to go out and it also is true for foreign students coming into Korea for their studies. About 57 thousand students in the United States and about 14 thousand students in Japan. Many Korean students are studying in most European countries, for example: Germany, France, England, Italy, and Australia. But, the problem is in the very small population of foreign students who study in the Korean universities and colleges. Less than three thousand foreign students are studying in Korea, while about 126,000 students are study in foreign countries.

2. Freedom of natural Person's Presence.

The second category, the freedom of natural persons' presence, is about the freedom of hiring foreign educators to teach our students. There are no limitations in this category, also. But hirings of foreign professors are quiet low in the universities and colleges. The percentage of foreign faculty members toward total faculty members is glowing. Universities and colleges should also aware of this problem and try to increase foreign faculty members.

3. Freedom of Cross-border Supply

There are some limitations in this category, the freedom of cross-border supply. When universities and colleges want to supply foreign educational programs, they have to have permissions from the Ministry of Education. If there is any commercial purpose in providing foreign educational programs, they will not be allowed by the government. But the air and correspondence education is open to students and faculty members without limitations at present. Some faculty members have gotten their doctoral degrees through the correspondence education running in the United States.

4. Freedom of Commercial Presence

The freedom of commercial presence of higher education institutions is not allowed at

this point. The government understands the necessity of the opening of universities and colleges and is trying to make schedules of opening. By the year of 1998 we will have a chance to open the higher education institutions to world fully.

However having sense of global awareness will be a part of developing Korean's ability to contribute to the world community. But, it may be quite reasonable to note, that Korea has far to go in helping students nurture global awareness. A great proportion of faculty members are indifferent toward global education. The closed nature of schools and shortage of educators capable of teaching global awareness will be the main hindrances to the promotion of global mind-sets at school.