2. History, Policy, and Practices of Media Education in South Korea

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ABSTRACT

The authors begin by providing the historical and social background of Korean media education, which has its roots in civil participation activities in the 1980s. Then, they discuss the legal and governmental policies on media education, focusing on the Broadcasting Act and the diverse programmes provided by governmental organizations, particularly those under the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. They also analyse good examples of media education practices by teachers' groups, civil society associations and the media industry, in addition to introducing the recent changes in the newly reformed National Curriculum, which includes some elements of media literacy. They conclude by pointing out the need for a more consistent policy on media literacy and a forum to activate discussion on the topic.

KEY WORDS

Media education, media literacy, media environment, curriculum, civil society associations, media industry, media watch, media production.

1. Historical and Social Backgrounds

Media education in South Korea has developed in a very independent, sui generis manner. It arose from the television viewers' movement, which was launched in the early 1980s in order to achieve viewer sovereignty over public broadcasting. In 1980, an authoritative regime led by military leaders came to power and tightened its control over the press. Out of the struggle against political oppression, a civic movement arose to reject paying the subscription fee of KBS (Korea Broadcasting System), which was and still is Korea's leading public broadcaster. Beginning in April 1986, this campaign, which was named «The Movement against KBS Subscription Fee», was led by religious organizations (including Christian and Catholic) and women's organizations. It was supported by as much as 80% of the Korean population for approximately three years. During the course of the campaign, media activists transformed the issue into a nationwide television audience movement. Religious groups such as YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) and women's organizations such as Korean Womenlink actively participated in raising the awareness of the television audience. Content analysis, critical analysis and active participation were the main approaches used to educate television viewers. In this way, the history of media education in South Korea is rooted in this civic movement of television viewers (Kim K-T., 2004; 2007).

In the late 1980s, South Korea succeeded in achieving a peaceful transfer of political authority. This political change remarkably improved the freedom of the press, due to the introduction of more commercial television channels and less pressure on public television. These changes in the political and media environments affected the practices of media education in that civil society associations began to focus more on the education of children and young people rather than on the education of television viewers. School teachers began to teach media education, albeit mainly through unsystematic, extra-curricular activities. Since the mid 1990s, young people's interest in film and video production has increased with the popular use of digital camcorders. Many youngsters have learned video production skills at a low cost in youth centres run by local governments. In response to young people's interests in film and video production, the YMCA in Seoul has been holding the yearly «Youth Video Festival» since 1998 (Seoul YMCA, 2007). The Korean Society of Media Education began to hold its national conference on media education in 1997, in order to provide a forum for teachers, practitioners, activists, and academics to share their experiences and to discuss the issues.

Since 2000, the media environment in South Korea has been changing with the rapid development of new media such as the Internet, mobile phones, DMB (Digital Multimedia Broadcasting) and IPTV (Internet Protocol Television). The nationwide survey of media users in late 2006 showed that Korean people watch television for two and a half hours per day, use the Internet for half an hour, listen to the radio for 37 minutes and read newspapers and magazines for 25 minutes and 7 minutes, respectively (Kim K-T, Kang, Sim & al., 2007). In August 2007, there were 35 million Internet users, 15 million ultra high speed Internet subscribers and 45 million mobile phone users among a Korean population of 50 million people (Korea National Internet

Development Agency, 2007). While the old media forms, such as newspapers and television, still exert a powerful influence on Korean society, the social impact of digital media is ever increasing. These changes in the media environment influence the content and nature of media education as it is focusing more on the use of digital cameras, the Internet, computer games and mobile phones (Kim, Y-E, 2008).

2. Legal Systems and Governmental Policies

While media education in Korea began as a civic movement, there were few governmental or legal supports in the early stage. However, for the past 10 years, governmental organizations under the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism and the Commission on Youth Protection have been active in supporting media education programmes, developing learning materials, and conducting research in this area. The efforts made by the KCC (Korean Communication Commission), which is the broadcasting and telecommunications regulation body, and governmental organizations under the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism, such as KPF (Korea Press Foundation), KBI (Korean Broadcasting Institute), and the KACES (Korea Arts and Culture Education Service), are particularly noteworthy.

The underlying rationale of governmental support for the promotion of media education is to extend the welfare and rights of the media audience. Most supporting programmes are carried out in the form of financial and infrastructural aids, including funds for the expenses of NGOs' media education activities, training media instructors and sending them to schools, providing in-service training programmes for school teachers, publishing and distributing media textbooks, and more widely, the establishment and management of media centres for public access. Media education thus is taking place mostly outside the school, in informal settings, or even in the formal system, it is taught by media instructors who are not school teachers. The efforts to support media education by the governmental organizations contrast with the few efforts made by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, which is the main governmental body responsible for education in schools. In South Korea, there is a school culture in which obtaining a good score at university entrance examination is regarded as the ultimate goal of the entire schooling. In this context, it seems to be quite difficult for schools to take into serious of media education, which is not recognized as an independent subject for university entrance examination. This situation also explains the lack of contribution of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to media education.

2.1 The Broadcasting Act

While there is no single coherent piece of legislation for media education, the Broadcasting Act has laid out the legal foundations for establishing media education policies. When the Act was revised in 2000 in order to integrate the former Broadcasting Act and Cable Broadcasting Act, legal sections were fortified to enhance the television viewers' rights and to facilitate audience participation in broadcasting, in

terms of providing financial supports for production of audience-participated television programmes and television Ombudsman programmes as well as funding civil society associations' media education activities. In the revised Broadcasting Act, Section 36 dictates that the KCC must collect fees from the public and private broadcasters in order to fund projects to improve the broadcasting and culture in general. Section 38, which clarifies the uses of the fund, states that the fund should also be used for media education for the public interest. In fact, these legal sections have served as a momentum for civil society associations to focus more on media education than on monitoring television programmes and educating television viewers.

The Act has provided the legal basis for broadcasters to have systems that could protect viewers' rights and interests: such systems include setting up the guidelines for self-regulation, the viewers' committee and audience complaints committee together with producing and airing television Ombudsman programmes, audience-participation programmes and the right to reply. Considering that the broadcasting policy before the revised Broadcasting Act was centred on the interests of the broadcasters and programme providers, the revised Act is significant as a policy that emphasizes the rights of television viewers (Kim Y., 2001).

2.2. Korean Communication Commission (KCC)

The KCC is a governmental organization that is in charge of Korean broadcasting and telecommunications policies, administration, and regulation. Since 2000, the KCC has provided financial support for media education programmes and research. The total budget allotted to media education for the fiscal year of 2007 was approximately $5 million, which comes from the «Broadcasting Development Fund», according to the Broadcasting Act. The KCC's major undertakings focus on the financial support for media education NGOs, teachers' groups, the establishment and management of local viewers' media centres, financial aid for academic societies that develop textbooks, the implementation of experimental media education schools, and the opening of an online media education archive. The KCC's annual budget is relatively secure, considering that the Broadcasting Development Fund is guaranteed by law to be used for viewers' rights and services. However, the KCC's policy can be criticized in terms of its limited understanding of media education as a service for television viewers.

2.3. Korean Broadcasting Institute (KBI)

The KBI, a subsidiary organization of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, was established for the promotion of Korean broadcasting industries. The main focus of the KBI, therefore, is on the training or retraining of broadcasting and digital media professionals and on the extension of the digital broadcasting infrastructure (Choi, 2006). The KBI's supports for media education are being implemented through its provision of in-service training for teachers and media instructors. What is particularly noteworthy is that the KBI administers certification courses for media instructors. Those who complete the prescribed courses of media education can acquire a license

for teaching media education programmes, although, unlike a teacher's license, this certificate is not issued by the central government. While the KBI licence of media instructor seems to be a good step as the efforts for standardizing qualifications for media educator, it seems to have limits in that it is not recognized everywhere in the country nor does it guarantee stable and well-paid jobs.

2.4. Korea Press Foundation (KPF)

The KPF has provided training programmes for media professionals, such as former journalists, and sent them to schools to become media education instructors. Since 2000, the KPF has provided in-service training for about 300 media education instructors (a considerable number of these are retired journalists) and sent them into schools to teach media education programmes, which are mostly run as extra-curricular activities. Along with this instructor-dispatching project, the KPF supported the development of 35 volumes of media education textbooks that are used in schools by media education instructors. Despite the major contributions of the KPF, there has been some criticism that media education in their work is an opportunity to create jobs for former journalists, considering that KPF is an organization working for the benefits of journalists and that KPF's media education originally began with a purpose to find new jobs for retired journalists during the Asian economic crisis (Jeong, 2008).

2.5. Korea Arts and Culture Education Service (KACES)

KACES is another subsidiary organization of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. This organization focuses on the promotion of culture and arts education in schools and in society in general. Under the «Artist-in-School programme», KACES has sent professional artists who have completed classroom instruction training to schools across the country. As of 2007, KASEC had provided instructors to about 3,800 elementary, junior high and high schools in various genres of arts and culture, such as Korean classical music, theatre, film, dance and animation. Media education is stressed within these genres, especially in film and animation, with the focus on the appreciation and production of film and animation as art forms rather than a critical understanding of the media in general.

2.6. Korea Internet Safety Commission (KISCOM)

KISCOM is another governmental organization that was established in 1995 under the Telecommunication Business Act. It is now integrated into KCSC (Korea Communications Standards Commission), a governmental agency for deliberation on broadcasting and telecommunications contents. KISCOM's aim is to prevent the circulation of harmful information and contents over the Internet and to promote a more ethical information communication culture by classifying Internet contents and providing ranking information to the public. In relation to media education, KISCOM published and distributed a number of Internet education guidebooks and textbooks

especially for parents and youth, such as «Smart Parents, Healthy Kids in the Age of Internet», «Let's Make a Joyful Cyber World». It seems fair to say, however, that KISCOM's activities are more for guidance to sound Internet use rather than for critical media education.

2.7. Government Youth Commission (GYC)

Inaugurated as a governmental agency for the protection of young people from harmful environments in 1997, the GYC has implemented a wide range of activities for youth welfare, counsel, and protection from social and cultural harm of which the main cause is believed to be mass media. With a perspective of strong protectionism, the division of media environment in the GYC carries out diverse research and media education programmes. The GYC has been integrated into the Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs since 2008.

Thus far, the governmental policies on media education in Korea have been carried out by diverse agencies, among which media-related organizations have played a leading role. The focus has been on the protection of young people and on the provision of services for the media audience's welfare and rights. While the diversity of the supporting programmes and the size of the budgets can be evaluated positively, there has been a problem of overlap in terms of the allotment of policy and budgets (Ahn, 2000). In the meantime, governmental financial support for media education is expected to continue, considering that in 2008, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism announced its «5-Year Plan for Broadcasting Industry Promotion» in which a supporting plan for media education is included as part of the digital cultural welfare project.

3. Media Education in Schools

3.1. Teachers' Groups

In South Korea, media literacy has been taught unsystematically in schools. In the existing curriculum (the 7th National Curriculum, introduced in 1997), media literacy is not included in the content of the subject areas. Instead, the curriculum emphasizes teachers' use of the media and ICT-related skills in order to teach various subjects more effectively (Ministry of Education and Human Resources, 1997a, 1997b). Most teachers were given some media training by local education authorities, but the approach was somewhat limited in that it focused on the media as an aid for teaching rather than as the content in itself (Division of Media Studies, 2005).

In fact, there was a rather hostile attitude towards media education in schools. Most head-teachers and administrators of education authorities were reluctant to support media education even as extra-curricular activities, particularly during the military regime of the 1980s, because media education was associated with the social movement for democracy, which was against the government. Despite such an atmosphere in school and the fact that there was little space for media education in

the curriculum, some individuals and groups of teachers became more interested in media as a teaching subject because of their concerns about the impact of the media and popular culture on children and young people; these people became passionate about media literacy education (Ahn & Jeon, 1999: 205).

Examples of teachers' groups for media literacy include the «Teachers' Movement for Clean Media», the «Division of Media Studies of the Association of Korean Language Teachers», the «Research Group for Media Literacy across the Curriculum», and the «Daejeon Research Group for Arts and Culture Education». These groups were formed after some teachers took an extra media course or after they studied together in the same graduate school. While there has been little governmental support for these groups, each of them has led regular study meetings and seminars and published lesson plans and learning materials such as books or their own websites (e.g., Teachers' Movement for Clean Media, 2003; 2007; Division of Media Studies of the Association of Korean Language Teachers, 2005a; 2005b; Research Group for Media Literacy Across the Curriculum, 2006; Daejeon Research Group for Arts and Culture Education, 2008). They also provided lectures and workshops for media literacy as in-service training for other teachers. Despite the differences of their regional bases and approaches to media literacy, these teachers' groups seem to be effective and successful examples of teachers' learning communities for media literacy within the contexts of school environments (Jeong, H-S, 2008). Policy-makers of various levels of governmental organizations and civil society associations could develop a support system for these teachers' learning communities or work together with them, in order to scale up media literacy rapidly, considering that they can introduce change in schools by co-constructing their knowledge and experiences as well as developing learning materials.

3.2. Changes in the Newly Reformed National Curriculum

There are some exciting changes that will be made with the newly reformed National Curriculum of 2007. In contrast to the existing National Curriculum, which hardly has any elements of media literacy in any subject, the newly reformed one includes some elements of media literacy within the content of the compulsory subjects, especially in Korean (mother tongue), Ethics, Social Studies and Practical Studies (Ministry of Education and Human Resources, 2007a, 2007b). In studying the Korean language, students must learn to understand and produce various kinds of media texts alongside oral and written texts. Ethics emphasizes the importance of appropriate behaviours on the Internet and protection of personal information and of privacy. Social Studies includes critical understanding of mass media and popular culture in general and the role of mass media for freedom of speech. Practical Studies approaches computer skills as tools for information retrieval and storage. Considering that these subjects are compulsory for students of years 1-10 (aged 5 to 16, encompassing primary and secondary levels), it is certainly good news that every student will learn about the media to some degree. However, the approaches to the media seem quite limited because they reflect protectionist media perspectives (emphasizing the negative

aspects) or are only somewhat practical (emphasizing functional and technical literacy rather than critical literacy).

At the 'optional, elective stage' of years 11 and 12 (aged 16-18), a new subject termed «Media Language» is introduced as an elective course, with the focus on interpreting and creating meanings with media texts. Media education can be also taught in «Free Activities» class, in which teachers can teach any subject that is considered effective for the development of the students' creativity. The 2007 National Curriculum officially includes «Media Education» as one of the 35 topics that can be studied in the «Free Activities» class for the first time in the history of the National Curriculum in South Korea (Ministry of Education and Human Resources, 2007c: 23). However, media literacy is in competition with 34 other topics, and therefore, it is very unlikely that it will be chosen from amongst topics such as computer skills, book reading and foreign language teaching (English, mostly) which are preferred by schools because of their connectivity with the related curriculum.

In summary, media education has not taken place as an official part of the National Curriculum in South Korea until very recently, and there has been very little training for teachers for critical understanding about the media other than training to use the media for the purpose of teaching other subjects. However, there have been some significant efforts by passionate, self-taught teachers, who have formed their own study groups and published their results. In addition, the newly reformed 2007 National Curriculum shows some significant developments by including media literacy elements in many compulsory subject areas. Building on these changes and developments, it seems to be time for the education policy-makers and authorities to take media literacy education more seriously and provide systematic teacher training and develop learning materials for teachers. Various media literacy teachers' groups could assume important roles in finding effective ways to provide training and supports for teachers and schools. Building on their communities of practice could help decision-makers scale up media literacy at a minimal cost and with quite some effectiveness.

4. Media Education by Civil Society Associations

Civil society associations have been the focal point of media education in Korea since the early 1980s, beyond media literacy. Media literacy is part of a wider movement of media education that can also reach adults and relates to lifelong learning. Civil society associations have pursued media education as part of a civil movement. The result is that media education in Korea has aspects of a civil movement such as media watch and criticism of media content. In addition, media education programmes vary in their educational practices, depending on the goals of the civil society associations. Specifically, diverse media education programmes exist, with various values like society watch, disabled persons' rights improvement, environmental protection, increasing public awareness, children and adolescent protection, and gender. These values are reflected on their education programmes for children and activities with adults.

Considering this diversity, the media education offered by civil society associations can be categorized into three closely related areas: media watch, media literacy and media production. Media watch is mainly about monitoring the mass media as part of a national and global media watch movement related to the development of democracy. Media literacy aims to improve the audience's rights, mainly through critical analysis of media content. Media production is not only to develop the audience's media literacy through production but also to allow the audience to actively express their opinions through the media, going beyond analysis and criticism of media content. Thus, media watch and literacy are to improve the public awareness of audience welfare, while media production is a more active type of movement to improve the audience's rights in sync with the realization of public access rights and civic agency. Media education by civil society associations seems to be in complement of media literacy by school teachers, in that media literacy in school emphasizes protection of children and functional use of media whereas media literacy out of school emphasizes critical stance and rights of media.

4.1. Media Watch

Media education focused on media watch or media monitoring is provided by the YMCA and the YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association of Korea). «WatchTV» of the YMCA has supported the media monitoring movement and related media education since the early 1990s. Starting with television watch education, the group has operated by monitoring education on cable television, advertising and terrestrial television (Ahn & Jeon, 1999: 193). The YWCA has provided media monitoring education, particularly targeting television and cartoons, in the belief that the media are not playing their expected role as an opinion maker and aggregator, which could make society healthier and sounder (Choi, 2006: 30). Using the report and the information provided by media watch, civil society associations such as YMCA, Korean Womenlink and the «Media Watch Team» of the Citizen's Coalition for Economic Justice ask the media to remove the harmful content discovered by monitoring.

In 1993, civil society associations led by the YMCA took it a step further by staging a more proactive movement, «Turn off your TV». This campaign, which was led by the YMCA's «Viewers' Civil Rights Movement Headquarters» with participation of more than 30 civil society associations, such as the «Association of Parents for True Education», had persisted for about 2 months. The campaign began as an expression of protest against the broadcasting policy of a public broadcasting company, MBC (Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation), which reduced the broadcasting time of a children's television programme in favour of commercial programmes. As a result, the campaign led to the establishment of a television Ombudsman programme that was a self-control mechanism introduced by broadcasting companies (Kim K-T, 2004: 193).

4.2. Media Literacy

Media education focused on critical literacy is provided by the Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice, Korean Womenlink, and Mabius ('Media Criticism on Our Own' in Korean). The «Media Watch Team» of the Coalition runs a training programme for secondary school students to teach them to think critically about media content. Long before media education was provided by schools, Korean Womenlink dispatched media educators to schools, who not only delivered media education know-how but also the significance of media education to schools. This is a case where civil society associations contribute to the expansion of media education's social base by carrying out media education at public education institutions. Lastly, since 1998, Mabius has offered media literacy education, mainly about visual contents, believing that young people need to develop critical understanding about the media (Choi, 2006: 38).

4.3. Media Production

This type of training is provided by MediACT and the YMCA. MediACT focuses on production, enabling participants to express their own opinions through the media. This group's programmes aim to create a circular loop by which the audience understand the impact of the media and express their ideas by producing media content (MediACT, 2007: 93). In a similar vein, the YMCA's «Media Workshop for Adolescents» attempts not only to help adolescents understand media production mechanisms by understanding production processes but also to foster their power to use the media as an alternative cultural tool (Choi, 2006: 41). The spread of media production education has improved the social awareness of public access rights and has promoted the importance of fostering individuals' talents for creative expression. Meanwhile, the emergence of media production education has been made possible by the rapid spread of digital technology in Korea.

Media education carried out by Korean various civil society associations is diverse in its purpose and content. Under these circumstances, some of the organizations, including MediAct and Mabius, have been operating the «Media-edu Network» since 2005 to lay the foundation for the qualitative development of media education and to create synergy from diversity. The objective of the «Media-edu Network» is to put in place a communication channel among the various groups concerned with media education to allow them to share information and experience among the member groups.

Media education through civil society associations in Korea reflects some characteristics of Korean society, in particular suppressed freedom of expression and distrust of the media because they have not played their expected role as a public institution since the authoritarian period. In this context, the media education practices by civil society associations are meaningful cases that show the direction that civil society associations' media education should head for in the future in Korean society. They also raise issues of media education methods or contents in the ever-changing media environment and education conditions.

5. Media Education by the Media Industry

The media industry has also made important contributions to media education, particularly since the late 1990s. Public and commercial broadcasting companies have contributed through their own television programmes or by providing production training for the general public as well as people working in civil society associations. Internet portals have also been involved in media education for their users.

5.1. Media Education by Broadcasting Companies

As for the broadcast media education programmes, «Understanding the Media», which aired on the Education Broadcasting System (EBS) is the first example. The weekly 40-minute show aired from September 1997 to February 1998, with an adolescent target audience (Kim Y-E, 2001). Another example is «Wow! Media Exploration», which was produced in 2002 by EBS and the Foundation of Broadcast Culture for elementary school students. The show offered children information on sound and critical analysis of television, newspapers, radio, video, movies, cartoons, books, advertisements and internet content. Unfortunately, this programme was short-lived due to the lack of continuing interest of the broadcasting company in media education.

Broadcasting companies have also provided video production training for children and the general public to enhance public access to the media. A case in point is the Community Media Centres under the guidance of MBC branches in 6 cities throughout the country. Supported by the MBC foundation, these centers came into being in the late 1990s in response to social demands for public access. MBC's Community Media Centres are noteworthy in that a broadcasting company is directly involved in media production education targeting adults and children. These centres provide media production courses for adults and run outreach programs for children by visiting primary schools. KBS, a leading public broadcasting system in Korea, also provides video production training for the activists of civil society associations using the facilities and equipment of their training centre.

5.2. Media Education by Internet Portals

Information and digital technology has developed rapidly in Korea since the late 1990s and this has changed the media education environment significantly. In this context, Internet portals have provided a new, specific type of media education for their users.

Daum Communications (www.daum.net), one of the leading portals in Korea, set up the «Daum Foundation», which is a non-profit organization dedicated to young people's understanding of digital media and the development of communication competence. «Youth Voice», which began in 2002, is an exemplary case of the foundation's projects for media education. This project encourages adolescents to apply for media production funds using their own proposals and then provides supports

with professional advice and production skills. Daum Communications has operated «Daum Media School» since 2006 which aims to promote the creative use of the media as a tool for young people to express and distribute their opinions.

Media education by broadcasting companies and internet portals are different with regard to participants and contents. While broadcasting companies focus on the general public and video production, Internet portals support children and adolescents in their multimedia content production and distribution. Despite innovative and diverse attempts, however, media education by the media industry seems to have limitations in terms of paying too much attention to providing training skills for media production. It seems that more efforts need to be made for the media industry to provide a better environment for communication. This could be achieved with the active and critical participation of their users.

6. Conclusion

Media education in Korea emerged with the civil movement to defend freedom of the press and the television audience's right to quality programmes. Because of this unique historical background, media literacy seems to have been seen as part of a wider media education that can reach children and adults for their lifelong learning as well as in formal education settings. Teachers' learning communities for media education also have been developed voluntarily and have a good potential to enhance media education in schools.

Currently, media education in Korea is characterized by its diverse contributors, ranging from governmental organizations to the media industry, and including civil society associations and voluntary teachers' groups. The revised Broadcasting Act in 2000 has provided the legal basis for media education to protect television viewers' rights. Under this Act, governmental organizations began to provide financial and infrastructural support for media education. The Act has also been important for broadcasters; it has compelled them to create media education programmes and has provided production training programmes for the audience for the purpose of public access.

Civil society associations have benefited from the funds of various governmental organizations in terms of running their media education programmes. Teachers have also benefited from in-service training programmes for media education provided by various governmental organizations, although they were mostly one day or five days programmes at best. Schools were also provided with media instructors dispatched by governmental organizations such as KPF and KACES, civil society organizations such as Mabius and Korean Womenlink as well as media industry entities such as MBC's Community Media Centres and Daum Communication's Daum Media School programmes. In contrast to the contributions of media-related governmental organizations, the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, which is responsible for education in schools, has made few efforts except for the recent reformation of the National Curriculum, which now includes some elements of media literacy.

While there have been a variety of efforts and good examples of policy and practices in media education, there is a strong need for a more consistent and systematic policy for media literacy education. There is a need for a clear definition of media literacy and media education, considering the diversity of media education practices carried out by different organizations and groups. There is also a need for developing a policy for research on media education in order to evaluate the achievements, impacts and effectiveness of the various programmes and to exert accountability on various stakeholders such as government, schools and parents.

While it is good that various governmental organizations have been involved in developing media education policies, there has been a problem of overlap in terms of policy and budget allotment among them. For example, KPF, KACES, MBC's Community Media Centres have similar programmes of training and dispatching media experts (former journalists, film and animation artists, and broadcasting experts, respectively) as instructors in order to send them to schools. Therefore, there is a need for the government to develop a more systematic and effective policy of training and dispatching media experts in various media areas and experiences, in order to connect media education with schools. There is also a need for a more systematic support for in-service training for teachers and their learning communities in media literacy. It seems to be time for the government to establish a «Media Education Committee», which could develop more consistent policies for media education and make decisions on priorities and budget allocations, beyond the overlapping and perhaps conflicting interests of various organizations.

There has been also strong demand for networking and collaborating among all the people concerned with media education, such as policy makers, media industry, media professionals, civil society activists, teachers, and academics, in order to forge a more consistent policy on media literacy. In addition, there is a need for more academic research on the conceptualization and pedagogy of media education. Recently, a new forum for such discussions was set up with the name KRE@ME (Korea Researchers and Educators @ Media Education), in which the authors of this contribution participate. The civil participation activities rooted in the history of Korean media education are the dynamic basis for such a forum, particularly considering the increase in participatory culture that contemporary Korea is experiencing through digital media.

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Useful websites

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Korea Internet Safety Commission (KISCOM) (www.kocsc.or.kr).

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