National Human Resource Development, Lessons from Korean Experiences

Dr. Eunsang Cho, Programme Specialist, UNESCO Bangkok

International Experts’ Meeting
TVET for Sustainable and Inclusive Development:
A Research Agenda for the 21st Century

College of the North Atlantic-Qatar, Doha, Qatar

Tuesday 17 April to Thursday 19 April, 2018
National Human Resource Development

What is NHRD? (Cho & McLean, 2004)

The planned and coordinated process of enhancing human resources in one or more political states or geographic regions for economic and/or social purposes

Scope

• functional illiteracy, primary and secondary education
• TVET (technical and vocational education and training)
• higher education
• traditional HRD and nontraditional HRD (e.g. online learning, structured on-the-job training)
• qualifications
• Lifelong learning
• labor market and employment
• health and welfare, the quality of life
• social integration, culture and population policy
Attributes of NHRD

- NHRD varies from country to country
- It provides a shifting and differential balance among central, regional, and local planning
- It provides training and retraining, education and reeducation, relocation, and compensation
- It is nondiscriminatory and designed for everyone
- It encourages rather than mandate
- There is a clear statement of mission for government agencies to eliminate duplication of services in HRD
- It emphasizes coopetition with other countries
- It is short term but visionary
Attributes of HRD (cont.)

- The role of the political system will be well defined
- Leadership will be interdisciplinary and consist of the very best minds available
- NHRD considers country culture but is not constrained by it
- Bias toward research and theory
- Evaluations include both qualitative and quantitative measures and outcome measures focus on both quality and quantity
- Objectives are established based on the capacities of the system
- Increase in HRD budget
- Tax incentives may encourage the use of HRD
- Work-life balance will be encouraged
- Social factors must be addressed
National Human Resource Development

Outcomes

• Decline in functional illiteracy, employment in socially undesirable occupations, and a need for child labor
• Emergence of the “right” mix of people
• Improvements in primary and secondary education quality
• Improvements in higher education
• Less money spent in traditional HRD, more funds in nontraditional HRD (e.g. online learning, structured on-the-job training)
• Increase in legal labor across national boundaries to seek labor market equilibrium
• Zero or negative population growth
• Progress toward full employment
• Improvements in health situations
• Enhancement in the quality of life
National Human Resource Development

Early studies on NHRD
- One of the first English-language articles on NHRD in the Republic of Korea (Cho & McLean, 2002)
- A paper summarizing 13 country cases along with the models, attributes, barriers, outcomes, implications, and directions of NHRD (Cho & McLean, 2004)

Evolved concept of NHRD caused by global and domestic political changes
- Advances in Developing Human Resources exploring 5 rapidly changing countries and their approaches to NHRD (Cho & McLean, 2006)
- A comparative case study between Brazil and Korea (Nery-Kjerfve, Kim, Kim, and McLean, 2014)
- Chapters providing an overview of the current status of NHRD (McLean, 2014 and McLean and Osman-Gani, 2014)
- A reference list of journal articles on countries using NHRD (Akdere & McLean, 2013)
Transformed Korean NHRD in the last 15 years due to environmental changes

• Previous research providing a limited glimpse of Korean NHRD (Chang, Cho, Kang, & Kim, 2005; Cho, 2001a; Cho & McLean, 2002, 2004; Nery-Kjerfve et al., 2014)
• Current research (Cho & McLean, 2017) investigates how Korea has moved around NHRD models and the subsequent developments and outcomes of NHRD policies
Primary and secondary resource used

1) Research databases
   • Dbpia, KERIC, and KISS
   • ERIC and SAGE
   • The National Assembly Library of Korea, the Academy of HRD and the University Forum of HRD

2) Government documents
   • The Ministry of Education
   • Other government-sponsored research institutions

3) Informal observation
   • Observations from both authors
Theoretical Framework

1) Centralized Model
   • The central government plays a critical role in planning, implementing, and assessing HRD policies and strategy
   • Usually linked to 5-year national development plan
   • Top-down management style
   • E.g. Poland, Mexico, Korea (before 1998)

2) Government-initiated Model
   • Government initiatives based on stakeholder views and the economy
   • E.g. The U.K., South Africa, Korea (from 1998-2000)
Theoretical Framework (2)

3) Transitional Model
   • Movement from the centralized model to the decentralized model or the government-initiated model
   • Tripartite relationship among unions, employers, and the government
   • E.g. Singapore, India, Korea (2001-2007)

4) Decentralized/Free Market Model
   • Dominant market power
   • The private sector is mostly responsible for training and development of individuals
   • E.g. Canada, USA

5) Small-Nation Model
   • Participative process, coopetition, and the role of intergovernmental organizations
   • E.g. The Pacific Islands, the Caribbean
Evolution of NHRD in Korea

**Before 1998:**
- Struggled through global ideology conflict and recovered from poverty
- Adopted the centralized model
- Growing demand for skilled labors as a result of the industrial policy

**1998-2001:**
- Shifted to the government-initiated model
- More active labor policies to address unemployment issues
- Industrial policies shifted towards technology-intensive industries
2001-2007:
• A mismatch between jobs and job seekers and a disconnect among policies, leading to inefficiency of HRD investment
• An emergence of the three pillars of NHRD policies and the first 5-year NHRD Basic Plan
• NHRD included involvement of a variety of ministries
• An establishment of HRD committee
• The transitional model with a weak version of the government-initiated model

2008-the present:
• The three pillars broke down due to changes in political leadership
• A mixed model of the centralized and government-initiated model
• New policies were implemented including “employment first, and education later” to revive vocational high schools and improve unemployment rate
Three pillars of NHRD

1) The Position of Vice Prime Minister of Education and HRD, taken by The Ministry of Education and HRD
   In charge of HRD meetings to coordinate NHRD agenda

2) Financial support for NHRD Basic Plans

3) HRD Basic Act, the support law for NHRD
   • Article 1: the establishment and coordination of policies for effective HRD
   • Article 5: the basic NHRD and implementation plans set up;
   • Article 13: An HRD network among public research institutes and educational institutions
   • Article 11: The HRD indices, production of related statistics, and use of the info;
   • Article 8: The evaluation of the basic NHRD and implementation plans
   • Article 9: The Ministry of Education and HRD must report an analysis of NHRD investment to NHRD committee
NHRD budgets in Korea

The first HRD Basic Plan
- Knowledge and manpower development 37.7%
- Basic competency 28.7%
- HRM and utilization 28.6%
- HRD infrastructure 4.9%
The second HRD Basic Plan

- Social integration and educational welfare 57.5%
- Lifelong learning 22.5%
- Excellent talent nurturing 18.7%
Research Outcomes of NHRD

- Desirable outcomes include reduced illiteracy, lower employment in socially undesirable occupations, less need for child labor, the match of right people, improved education quality, more funds for non-traditional HRD, and improvement in health
- The outcome trends show the impact of NHRD policies
- PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) scores: Korean students ranked high in learning performance
- The competitiveness of college education: 52\textsuperscript{nd} (2005) - 46\textsuperscript{th} (2010) – 53\textsuperscript{rd} (2014)
- The lifelong learning participation rate gradually increased by 5.8% (2012)
The employment rate of graduates from TVET institutions fluctuated and dramatically dropped by 36.2% in 2006 because of expectations and increased economic status and changes in policy to support technical and junior colleges.

There was a renewed emphasis on vocational high schools with the introduction of the Meister schools in 2010.

A labor productivity showed an increase during the time the NHRD policies were actively implemented.

The correspondence rate between educational major and tasks varies across types of higher education institution. An increase was seen in junior college graduates while a decrease was seen in university graduates.
Discussion and Implications

Major barriers to effective NHRD

• Change in political leadership
• Lack of genuine authority and insufficient budget
• Lack of systematic manpower forecasting and performance indicators
• Absence of coordination through the HRD committee
• Broader scope of NHRD

Limitations

• Subjectivity of observation
• Interviews were not part of the data collection process
• Limited data to measure and evaluate NHRD
• One set of models has been available against which to determine Korean NHRD
• Focus on only one country
Discussion and Implications(2)

Implications for NHRD policy in Korea
- Refinement of the concept and clarification of vision and activities
- Redesign of the system to improve effectiveness
- Capacity building among stakeholders

Implications for other countries
- An HRD law as a bottom-line for NHRD policies
- Political leaders’ awareness and understanding of NHRD
- Consensus building among stakeholders
- Understanding of NHRD systems and their evolution and outcomes
- Widened scope of NHRD including welfare, culture, and social policy
Implications for NHRD research

- More perspectives from various ministries and other stakeholders offering richness to the study
- Funding to support research of other countries undertaken NHRD
- Evaluation of NHRD policies and outcomes
- Evaluation through the use of direct measures
- Opportunities for longitudinal research.
- NHRD challenges the field of HRD to refocus its research and pay more attention to larger issues that affect the whole country.


Thank you

Learn more: http://www.unescobkk.org/education/tvet/

Dr Eunsang Cho
UNESCO Bangkok
e.cho@unesco.org
aquinascho@hanmail.net