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## A Study on Reasons of SCHOOL MALADJUSTMENT of Multicultural Background Learners and Responding Measures

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### Abstract

*The ultimate purpose of this study was to seek ways that multicultural background learners could adapt school life well and have sense of belonging to school as well as self-identity. For this, it classified types of school maladjustment of multicultural background learners based on the status of them and looked at responding measures in the educational and sociocultural aspects to solve these problems.*

*Since the number of members who have a variety of langue and cultural backgrounds due to the expansion of exchanges between countries and cultures recently is increased, the Korean society changes to a multicultural society rapidly and the number of multicultural families is increasing. As the Korean society enters into the multicultural society, the number of multicultural background learners with various language and cultural backgrounds is swiftly increasing at school, a problem of Korean education for them is raised as a current issue and the phenomenon of not adjusting school life because of failure of communication, low school performance, identity crisis, and school violence problems, is increasing as well.*

*Most multicultural background learners should experience lots of difficulties in adjusting to school life as they are not familiar with Korean language and culture most of all. The lack of Korean ability can be connected to low school performance and to school maladjustment. Thus, it is urgent for them to have a certain level of Korean most of all to grow as members of Korean society overcoming these difficulties. The difficulty in using Korean that they feel could be connected to low school performance, emotional anxiety, complaints against the society, and isolation.*

*School maladjustment of multicultural background learners analyzed as difficulty of communication due to the lack of Korean and because of it, the difficulty in study performance due to the lack of basic learning, school violence due to the cultural, social, and physical differences and prejudice which came from the difference in the dual culture of their parents, and economic difficulty.*

*As responding measures to solve these problems, it suggested the necessity of effective Korean education and the activation of systemic device in the educational level to improve multicultural background learners' communication ability in Korean and study ability, in the sociocultural level, it suggested the improvement in ways of police response and activation of their activities as well as a variety of sociocultural programs, and it also suggested the preparation of scholarship system and effective operation for the responding measures in solving economic difficulties.*

*This study will contribute that multicultural background learners could adjust school life well while establishing the sense of belonging and self-identity as members of school and Korean society.*

**[Keywords]** Police Response, Crime Prevention, School Violence, Korean Education, School Maladjustment

## 1. Introduction

Since the number of members who have a variety of language and cultural backgrounds due to the expansion of exchanges between countries and cultures recently is increased, the Korean society changes to a multicultural society rapidly and the number of multicultural families is increasing. As the Korean society enters into the multicultural society, the number of multicultural background learners with various language and cultural backgrounds is swiftly increasing at school, a problem of Korean education for them is raised as a current issue and the phenomenon of not adjusting school life because of failure of communication, low school performance, identity crisis, and school violence problems, is increasing as well. Most multicultural background learners should experience lots of difficulties in adjusting to school life as they are not familiar with Korean language and culture most of all. The lack of Korean ability can be connected to low school performance and to school maladjustment. Thus, it is urgent for them to have a certain level of Korean most of all to grow as members of Korean society overcoming these difficulties. The difficulty in using Korean that they feel could be connected to low school performance, emotional anxiety, complaints against the society, and isolation.

Thus, this study classifies reasons of school maladjustment of multicultural background learners based on their status and the research on the actual maladjustment condition and to solve these problems, finds out educational and sociocultural aspects for responding measures to make them adjust well at school life and have the sense of belonging and self-identity which is the ultimate purpose of this study.

## 2. Status of Multicultural Background Learners and Actual School Maladjustment Condition

Since the number of members who have a variety of language and cultural backgrounds due to the expansion of exchanges between countries and cultures recently is increased,

the Korean society changes to a multicultural society rapidly and the number of multicultural families is increasing. As the Korean society enters into the multicultural society, the number of multicultural background learners with various language and cultural backgrounds is swiftly increasing at school, a problem of Korean education for them is raised as a current issue and the phenomenon of not adjusting school life because of failure of communication, low school performance, identity crisis, and school violence problems, is increasing as well. Most multicultural background learners should experience lots of difficulties in adjusting to school life as they are not familiar with Korean language and culture most of all. The lack of Korean ability can be connected to low school performance and to school maladjustment. Thus, it is urgent for them to have a certain level of Korean most of all to grow as members of Korean society overcoming these difficulties. The difficulty in using Korean that they feel could be connected to low school performance, emotional anxiety, complaints against the society, and isolation.

Thus, this study classifies reasons of school maladjustment of multicultural background learners based on their status and the research on the actual maladjustment condition and to solve these problems, finds out educational and sociocultural aspects for responding measures to make them adjust well at school life and have the sense of belonging and self-identity which is the ultimate purpose of this study.

### 2.1. Status of multicultural background learners

According to the research result of '2017 Basic Education Statistics' which researched on schools, teachers, and facility status of kindergarten, elementary, middle, and higher education institutions by the Ministry of Education and Korea Education Development Institution, the rate of multicultural background learners was 1.9% in the whole elementary, middle, and high school students which was 0.2%p increased compared to the

previous year. The rate of multicultural background learners of each school level was 3.1% which was 0.3% and the greatest increase at elementary school, 1.2% which was 0.2% increase at middle school and 0.6% which was the same as the previous year at high school.

The number of multicultural background learners was 109,387 which was 10,201 (10.3%) increase and the number for each school level was increased 8,761 (11.8%) at elementary school, 865 (5.7%) at middle school, 518 (5.3%) at high school, and 57 (17.9%) at other schools compared to the previous year. In the number for each type, the internationally married families (Korea born) were 89,314 (81.6%) which was the greatest, the foreign families was 12,281 (11.2%), and internationally married families (came to Korea in the middle) were 7,792 (7.1%)[1].

## **2.2. School maladjustment condition of multicultural background learners**

According to '2015 National Multicultural Family Status(announced in April 26, 2016)' which the Ministry of Women and Family announced, 89.8% among the total schoolers responded that they were well adjusted and in the reason that they could not adjust well (duplicated answer), 64.7% responded that they did not get along with friends which was the greatest, not interested in school study was 45.5%, not speaking Korean well was 25.5%, lack of parents' interests or economic support was 10.9%, appearance was 7.7%, discrimination of teachers was 2.5%, and other was 5.3%[2].

And in reasons that they quit schools in Korea, school life and culture were different (18.3%), school study was difficult(18.0%), transfer and preparing to study at overseas (15.3%), to make money(14.4%), poor economic situation (just did not want to go to school)(11.1%), and other was 7.4%. It can be said that we should urgently expand the multicultural education at school efficiently most of all to make them not to experience difficulties after becoming members of Korean society and a part of it.

## **3. Reasons of Multicultural Background Learners' School Maladjustment and Responding Measures**

This chapter seeks to classify types of reasons for multicultural background learners' school maladjustment and responding-measures based on the statistics on their actual condition research of Chapter 2.

### **3.1. Reasons of multicultural background learners' school maladjustment**

This clause is going to classify types of reasons for their school maladjustment based on '2015 Status of National Multicultural Families(announced in April 26, 2016)' which was announced by the Ministry of Women and Family as mentioned above.

#### **3.1.1. Difficulty of communication and study performance**

Since multicultural background learners lack in using Korean skill, they often experience difficulty in communication and it often results difficulty in the study performance. This kind of difficulty becomes an important factor for the group bully. It was revealed that when mom's communication skill of multicultural family is good, it is positive in children's language development as well as school adjustment, self-identity, and self-efficiency[3].

#### **3.1.2. School violence due to cultural, social, and physical differences and prejudice**

Multicultural background learners are confused in forming of identity while experiencing both home training which the two cultures are mixed and school education of Korea at the same time[4]. This confused identity forming works negatively in the forming process of personal relations and often become victims of school violence as they could be bullied from peers and pushed away in school education as they lose confidence. When there is no protection for victims of school violence or proper treatment, their self-esteem could be damaged and being more vulnerable due to the lowered self-esteem[4].

### 3.1.3. Economic difficulty

Another reason that multicultural background learners could not adjust at school life is the economic difficulty. In many cases, lots of multicultural families experience severe economic difficulty. This family situation affects children and becomes a reason that makes their school life more difficult and causes maladjustment at school as it influences to their cognition development and induces problematic behaviors and quit school eventually[5].

## 3.2. Responding measures on school maladjustment of multicultural background learners

As above, multicultural background learners experience maladjustment at school life because various reasons. To solve these problems, this study suggest measures dividing into educational and sociocultural levels.

### 3.2.1. Responding measures in educational level

Effective Korean education should be made as the responding measure in educational level for the improvement of their communication ability in Korean and study performance[6].

Recognizing the necessity of Korean education for multicultural background learners, the KSL curriculum noticed by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology in July 2012 was developed as the national level curriculum together with 2009 Revised curriculum as a way of 'multicultural student education advancement method' and since March 2013, Korean education is held at schools which need it for multicultural background learners at elementary, middle, and high schools nationwide[7].

'2017 Revised Korean (KSL) Curriculum' divides the teaching of Korea in 'Living Korean education' and 'Learning Korean education' and suggests details. In 2017 Revised Korean (KSL) Curriculum, the 'Living Korean education' is composed to learn basic 'communication Korean' skill necessary in daily life and school life and the 'Learning Korean education' is composed to have 'Korean for subject

adaptation' which helps to have 'Korean as a learning tool' and entering and adjusting to learn each subject which are the learning tool and basics for every subject. By differentiating the portion in beginner, intermediate, and advanced, it is systemized to improve the Korean skill and complete gradually. To resolve school maladjustment of multicultural background learners, measures to apply actual school sites, fostering professional teachers for multicultural education, improving support programs for them, and activity of understanding Korean culture for their parents, should be prepared together with the activation of Korean education at the level of education policy[8].

### 3.2.2. Responding measures in sociocultural level

In responding measures in sociocultural level to solve school maladjustment of multicultural background learners, the responding measure to school violence that they experience is to improve responding attitude of police[9]. It would be good if police explains how to respond to school violence to learners and runs preventive education. And multicultural understanding education for police, organizing department exclusively for multicultural families and its systematic operation, and crime prevention activity in the connection with multicultural families, immigration office, local multicultural centers, educational institutions, civic organizations, and social welfare centers[10].

In addition, by preparing various sociocultural programs for them and strengthen the sociocultural experience activities that they can directly/indirectly participate[11].

On the other hand, we actively consider to prepare scholarship system and its effective operation and activation of supporting for their textbooks and learning materials should be considered to solve their economic difficulty that they experience at school even a little[12].

## 4. Conclusion

As above, this study thought ways that multicultural background learners could adapt school life well and have sense of belonging to school as well as self-identity as the ultimate goal. For this, it classified types of school maladjustment of multicultural background learners based on the status of them and looked at responding measures in the educational and sociocultural aspects to solve these problems.

The reasons of school maladjustment of multicultural background learners were difficulty in communication due to the lack of Korean skill, difficulty of study performance, school violence due to cultural, social, physical differences and prejudice, and economic difficulty. As the educational level of responding measures, it suggested the necessity of effective Korean education and activation of systematic device. As the sociocultural level, it suggested improving responding method of police and activation of police activity, activation of sociocultural programs as well as preparing scholarship system and its effective operation and activation of supporting textbooks and learning materials to solve their economic difficulty.

If suggestions of this study is actively used, multicultural background learners will adjust at school life well and will contribute to establish sense of belonging and self-identity as members of school and the Korean society.

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## Research field

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- 2013~present. Semyung University, Professor.
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