

2011년 2월 19일 키워드 스피킹 방송 / 주제: 한국의 교육

Paul's Summary (transcribed)

Korea is a very competitive society. At the forefront of the fierce competition lies education. And it all starts in kindergarten. **Pre-school kids from mid to high income families** are sent to "English Kindergartens" as their parents desperately want their children to learn English as soon as possible. Parents don't seem to mind paying thousands of dollars a month as long as **their kids can get a headstart**.

But it's not just English. Korean students attend many **private institutes** or **Hagwons** specializing in academic subjects, piano, painting lessons, and Tae Kwon Do, just to name a few. There are even **private schools** for jump rope and programming robots. Though having students participate in **extra-curricular activities** sounds typical, these private academies dominate the lives of the average Korean child. Students are expected to study late into the night seven days a week, attend extra classes on the weekends, and summer/winter vacation is considered excellent times for **cram schools to get that extra edge**.

Dependence on private education climaxes when students prepare for **college entrance exams**. College bound students are told that **five hours of sleep a night is a luxury** and some students even **study for years after high school graduation just to score higher on their college entrance exams**. Ironically, regular school classes have become a hindrance to the students' academic achievement. Most students learn the knowledge and skills needed for college admissions through private education. Therefore classrooms in public schools sometimes are full of **dozing students** who catch up on some sleep to be awake during their private institute classes.

In Korea, the history of fierce competition at school goes back a long time. But as the problem of dependence on private education becomes more severe, the **quality/quantity of education students receive is now being determined by the income level of their parents**. Thus creating a wider **gap between the income classes** where richer families are able to send their children to more and better academies, consequently allowing them to **get into better universities**, and finally into higher paying jobs.

Some have made a very useful **analogy for comparing education to setting up a ladder**. Education is a ladder that helps students **climb their way up to a higher social position** or a higher income level. The most proper tools should be used to help students fulfill their dreams. One thing that can be said for sure is private education cannot become the true ladder for most students.

Key Words

1. 학원 private school, hakwon (private institution, academy은 수준 높은 교육기관), cram school (단기완성반, 부정적 어감:negative connotation)
2. 영어유치원 English kindergarten
3. 앞서나가다, 두각을 나타내다 get a head start, have an edge over others
4. 대학입시 college entrance exams, college admission
5. 4당5락 If you sleep four hours a day you will be admitted, but if you sleep five hours, you will fail; five hours of sleep at night is a luxury
6. 재수 take one more year to study again for one's university exam
7. 부모 소득이 학생 교육수준을 결정 the quantity and quality of education received by students is determined by the income level of their parents
8. 행정력 동원해서 사교육 폐해 막아야 Even through enforcing a law, the government should do something to limit the significance of private education in Korea.
9. 수준 높은 교육을 받고 싶은 욕구가 공교육에서 충족될 수 없어 필연적으로 사교육이 성장하게 된다.

Public education is not enough for students who yearn for a higher level of academic achievement, and it is almost inevitable for students to rely on private institutes because they have no other option.

Public education is not enough for students who yearn for a higher level of academic achievement. And it is almost inevitable to be dependent on private institutes for higher levels of education service.

More Key Words

1. 문해율 literacy rate
2. 경쟁사회 competitive society
3. ~의 최첨단/선두에서 at the forefront of
4. ~의 삶을 뒤덮다 dominate the lives of
5. 학업성취 academic achievement
6. 높은 사회적 지위를 향해 올라가기 위한 사다리를 세우다 setting up a ladder to climb their way up to higher social positions
7. 한국의 사교육은 과도하게 성행하고 있다 private education in Korea has run amok
8. 당신의 노력은 결실을 맺을 것입니다. Your hard work will pay off.