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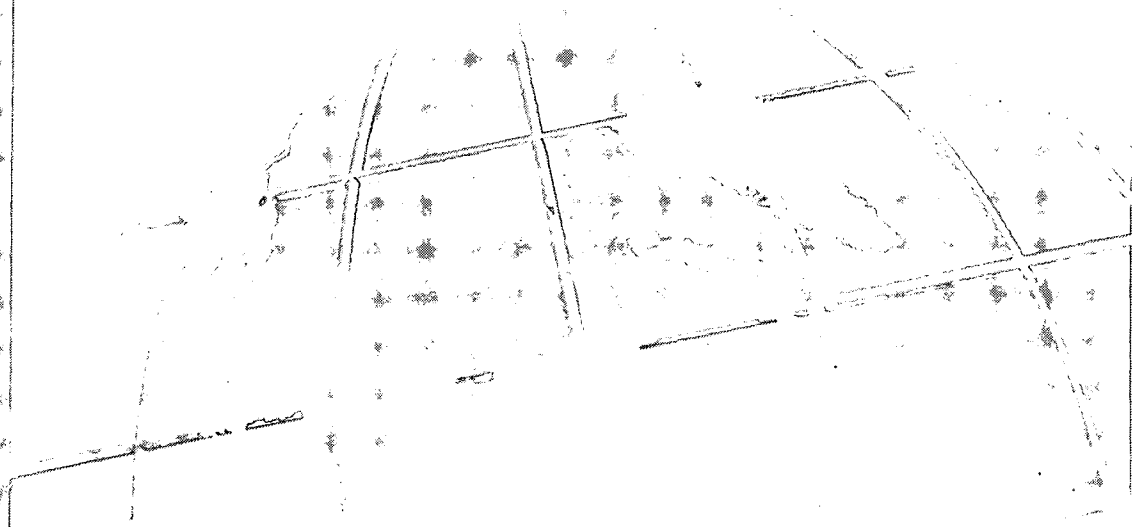
ABSTRACT

The school-to-work transition in Korea was examined in a comprehensive study that included an overview of the realities of the school-to-work transition in Korea and a survey of 694 Koreans aged 15-29 years who had completed high school. The sample included 366 respondents who were in enrolled in a two-year college or higher level of postsecondary education. The study established that Korean schools and society are not systematically helping Korean youths make the transition form school to work but are instead leaving responsibility for a successful school-to-work transition to graduates themselves. Many Korean students were being forced to seek employment individually through informal means. Even after entering the workforce, many Korean graduates faced problems adjusting to the environment, adverse work conditions, and bleak future prospects. The following were among the seven recommendations for establishing a school-to-work transition network: (1) provide all students with preparation for the workplace, including workplace experience and field training; (2) provide the diversity and flexibility required to ensure opportunities for employment and continued education after high school; (3) establish an institutional mechanism for networking schools and enterprises; and (4) establish a local network to enable all members of society to share the responsibility of smoothing students' transition into the workplace. (Forty-seven tables/figures are included. The bibliography lists 96 references) (MN)

A Study on the Transition from School to the World of Work in Korea



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A Study on the Transition from School to the World of Work in Korea

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I . Introduction

The first step in the career path after graduation matters a lot. The first step signals the transition period in one's life and a success in the first profession greatly influences one's career path afterwards(Cha, 1992; Chang, 1997). If the school-to-work transition fails, a youth may be mentally damaged, which can last a lifetime.

A smooth transition of school-to-work is also a matter of great consequence for the Korean society. The lack of linkage between school education and workplace may hinder the smooth transition for a graduate, which, in turn, may cause problems in the graduate's career development as well as Korea's human resource management. Therefore, it is an enormous challenge for the society and country to nurture best minds needed by the society and to help them best positioned according to their aptitude and capability, so that the overall society may develop and function in a balanced way. An effective school-to-work transition is very important not only for the individual but also for the whole society.

The working environment has witnessed rapid changes driven by digitalization and the advent of knowledge based society. However, there is a rising concern over a widening gap between school and work due to the failure of school education to adapt itself to the changes in the working environment. Moreover, youth unemployment is on a sharp rise due to the highly educated workforce, the humanities-oriented school education, increased flexibility in the labor market and changes in the structure of employment.

There have been vast numbers of studies on the linkage between

school and work and on the level of practicality of education and training(for example, Lee, *et al.*, 1998). As for the school-to-work transition process, it can be partly understood through studies on Koreans' career paths(Lee, *et al.*, 1998). In addition, demonstrative studies were carried out on students' employment and their adaptation to work(Lee et *al.*, 1992). More recently, there have been efforts to introduce the concept and the program of 'school-to-work transition', on which OECD and the US have placed weight. There have been efforts to apply it in reality in Korea(Shin, 1998; Oh 1998; Chang 1997).

However, there is more room for improvement in terms of conducting systematic studies on this field, establishing policies based on the studies and making better condition in work sites. In particular, the theoretical framework for school-to-work transition has not been put in place and there is a lack of demonstrative studies on the current state of school-to-work transition. In order to develop appropriate policies and improve working conditions, more systematic, comprehensive and demonstrative studies are required.

In this sense, the primary object of this study lies in establishing a conceptual and theoretical framework. In addition, this study aims at laying the groundwork for improvement of policies and working conditions in order to set up an effective school-to-work transition system by understanding the comprehensive situation about school-to-work transition in Korea.

Ⅱ. Conceptual and theoretical frameworks of the school-to-work transition

1. What is the school-to-work transition?

The school-to-work transition may be understood from several different perspectives. In reality, transitions proceed in various ways such as employment after graduation, employment after coordinated education between schools and employment after further education.

Among these transitions, school to work transition mainly refers to the act of transferring to workplace from schools where students prepare for employment, and the transition includes extension of related education and training(Smith & Rojewski, 1993). Therefore, the concept of school-to-work transition covers both education and employment. The concept enables a consistent explanation, within a conceptual framework, of various elements related with the relationship between school education and working life. Those elements have not been explainable through traditional concepts of school- industry cooperation and career path education.

In a broad sense, school-to-work transition is related with the whole process from primary education, when one acquires the notion of career path, to college education and to further education and training after employment(Hoerner & Wehrley, 1995). Therefore, the school-to-work transition happens to all students including not only those on the vocational track but also those on the non-vocational track(National School-to-Work Office, 1997). Besides on-site training programs for

graduates to enhance their on-site capability, programs like Tech-Prep that coordinates secondary education and higher education are considered major programs of school to work transition since those programs extend vocational education in middle schools to the level of college education(Stern *et al.* 1995)

Meanwhile, school-to-work transition involves various aspects. According to perspectives and focal points, the elements consisting of school-to-work transition can be classified into a variety of different fields. From the perspective of education and training based on discussions and studies, school-to-work transition involves the preparation focusing on education, the transition from school to work, and the outcome at workplace<Fig. II-1>.

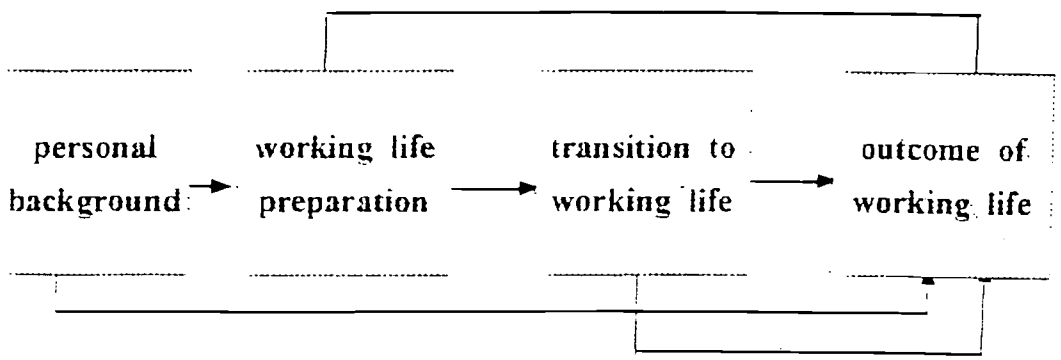


Figure II-1. School-to-work transition system

The preparation phase involves various preparatory activities before entering the working life through education and training in schools and work places and through continuous education and training based on articulation programs. These education and training are aimed at dealing with problems derived from qualitative non-equivalence between school

environment and working environment. The process phase includes various activities supporting employment of students, helping students find jobs easier and faster getting over the limited school-to-work transition opportunities. Career guidance, recruiting information and education and training in the labor market are offered through the supporting activities. The preparation and process phases are evaluated by their outcomes in working life based on such factors as the worker's income, productivity, satisfaction job, etc.

2. Conceptual framework of school to work transition

A. Relationship between education and work

Education and work are inevitably related to with each other. Education, in itself, bears a significant meaning. However, education would be meaningless if it is detached from society. Individuals brought up by education lead their lives playing certain roles in the society. In most cases, their working life represents their social life(Lee, 1999).

The relationship between education and society or more specifically, between school and workplace can be classified into correspondence theory and relative autonomy theory, according to the solidity of the relationship. If it is not viewed from conservative educational philosophical perspectives such as an everlasting effect or essentialism, which put emphasis only on the internal value of education.

From the correspondence perspective, the modern society is a work-oriented society. Therefore, the education needs a paradigm shift from traditional point of view focusing on general education to a new

point of view(Hoerner & Wehrley, 1995). Traditionally, education has been academy-based or content-based learning but now it has to be changed into work-based learning. The work-based learning integrates formerly separated education and working life into one world of life.

According to the relative autonomy theory, schools should put more focus on nurturing a student's nature to become democratic citizens rather than on supplying just skilled workforce to the labor market, contributing to economic development. Unlike the arguments by industrialists, the gap between school and industry is not likely to be completely narrowed. In this sense, schools should have relative autonomy against the world of working. Nonetheless, the theory acknowledges that school education should not be separated from the society but should make changes phase by phase according to social changes and that education should be given centering on life. Therefore, it can be said that the theory admits the linkage between education and working life to some extent.

The correspondence theory and the relative autonomy theory differ from each other in their priorities but they share a common ground in that education should reflect the changes in the working life and also should be linked with the working life. The two theories admit that there indeed is a gap existing between school and industry, especially in the modern society where dramatic changes take place. Therefore, what becomes the most important is how to overcome the gap between education and work in a harmonious way in this late industrial society where a more open, linked and flexible paradigm emerges.

There are three ways to narrow the inevitable gap between education and working life. First, school education should directly reflect the changes in the working life as fast as possible. However, this seems to be almost impossible in the dramatically changing current society. Only

specialized schools of small size with a flexible system would be able to do this to some degree because small schools can more easily adjust to social changes.

Second, if schools cannot reflect the changes in working life fast, schools can put the priority on general and basic education. This may be misunderstood as a traditional and conservative perspective. However, it would be desirable if schools can nurture students' basic abilities required by working life, gradually accepting the changes in working life. The SCANS report in the US can be cited as a good example of this approach.

Third, schools themselves can initiate changes in working life, which also is very hard to succeed in reality. In general, enterprises engaged in free competition in the market are faster to adapt to changes than schools that are rather conservative. However, this third way can be viewed as positive and feasible, seeing that some schools are actually leading changes in the industry through school-based enterprises as well as the development and spread of technologies.

In conclusion, each way has its own merits. Therefore, if schools can develop related programs based on these approaches and make a harmony among them, the coordination between school and a working life would be able to head in the right direction.

B. Theoretical models of school to work transition

The theoretical models of school and work transition are largely divided into deficit model, opportunity structure model and network model(Kariya, 1988; Rosenbaum, *et al.*, 1988; Chang, 1997)

The deficit model explains school-to-work transition focusing on the

supply of workforce. It assumes that the key to a successful school-to-work transition is individual factors such as student's skill and ability as well as attitude toward work. Scholars supporting deficit model often criticize schools for ill-preparing students before entering the labor market.

Therefore, this model seeks to resolve problems stemming from school-to-work transition through getting rid of problems of the individual. Many scholars and policy makers present various ways to help students develop capabilities and attitudes required by the industry through more effective education programs in school. Those school-to-work transition programs based on this approach are dealt with later on.

The opportunity structure model, by contrast, focuses on the demand of workforce in school-to-work transition. According to this model, the structure of opportunity for successful transition applies differently from individual to individual. That is, since the structure of the labor market has already formed according to gender, age, origin, social class, and the level of education, such factors tend to determine a success in working life rather than one's own ability or attitude. Scholars upholding this model say that people at a disadvantage like females or poorly educated people are very likely to have a job with unfavorable conditions such as low income, poor working environment and low opportunity for continuing learning and promotion. Therefore, according to this model, a student with unfavorable condition tend to face more stumbling blocks in the transition from school to work compared to other students.

The opportunity structure model that emphasizes the demand aspect or the structural elements of the labor market bears a significant meaning with regards to school-to-work transition. It is because, besides vocational capabilities or attitudes, such factors like age, gender, origin, level of

education, eminence of the school graduated from, family background, marital status, military service can influence a graduate's success in the working life.

The two models mentioned above are both based on the market model, thus have certain limit in explaining school-to-work transition. By contrast, the institutional model or social network model has a different perspective and points out those parts that have been overlooked by the two models based on the market model.

The social network model defines school-to-work transition as involving not only the industry and job seekers but also a third party in the process of job searching and hiring. This model presents a dynamic point of view toward school-to-work transition by highlighting the employment process influenced by the quality, credibility and impact of recruiting information that are essential for a success in working life. To put it simply, the social network model considers that information for job seekers or recruiters given by a third party can play an important role in the process of job match.

The social network model introduces not only personal network but also institutional network between school and enterprise. In personal network, the third party is an individual, while in institutional network the third party is institutional based on formal or long lasting relationship between school and enterprise. In Japan, for example, most of the school-to-work transition are carried out through institutional networks, which enable a successful transition from school to work(Kariya, 1988; Rosenbaum *et al.*, 1988, Rosenbaum, 1996).

3. Preparation and method for school-to-work transition

School-to-work transition involves a variety of activities, experiences and opportunities in preparation for working life. In the process of transition, various methods of seeking a job and recruiting are utilized. Here, patterns of major programs of school-to-work transition are dealt with, which coordinate education and working life. Also, school to work transition will be discussed in detail, centering on the social network model.

A. Patterns of preparation for school-to-work transition

School-to-work transition programs are vast in its kind and scope and they fall into several patterns according to certain standards.

The work-based learning, unlike the traditional content-based learning, involves learning experience and activities in actual working environment or workplace-like environment, and can be divided into school-based work experience and job-based work experience. More specifically, school-based work experience includes school-enterprises, career academy, and model enterprise project, while job-based work experience includes apprenticeship, school-industry coordinated learning, OJT and mentoring(Hoerner & Wehrley, 1995).

Smith and Rojewski(1993) grouped school-to-work transition programs according to how much school is involved and whether salary is given. While schools take a great part in programs like simulation and Tech Prep, programs like internship, part time job have seen limited involvement of school. As for salary provision, students on programs

like OJT or part time job are given salary, while those in mentorship or local community voluntary work are not.

Also, school-to-work transition programs can be grouped into those that offer simultaneous experience of education and work and those that first provide school education in preparation for working life(Stern *et al.*, 1995). The former refers to programs that enable students to have working experience while going to school. These programs are further divided into structured experience supervised by school such as school-industry coordinated learning, youth apprenticeship, school -enterprises and non-structured experience managed by students themselves such as part time job. The latter refers to traditional or new forms of vocational training with the clear objective of preparing students for working life.

B. School-to-work transition process and a social network

There is no such thing like 100% perfect information with regard to recruitment and salary in the real labor market. Moreover, it is important to secure important information for successful school-to-work transition. That is, collecting information is the prerequisite for employment in the labor market. Therefore, both job seekers and recruiters spend time and money searching for information. Here the ways to collect information, which is essential in job hunting and recruitment, are reviewed, emphasizing on the social network model that bears a significant meaning in relation to school-to-work transition.

Traditionally in the labor market, job seekers and recruiters have applied various methods for employment such as formal methods, direct

contacts and informal means(Chang, 1999; Granovetter, 1974; Marsden, 1994).

As for formal methods, institutions recognized by both job seekers and employers or impersonal intermediaries are used to link job seekers and employers. Among these intermediaries commonly used are newspapers, want ads in magazines, public/private employment agencies, an employment center in school.

Direct contacts literally refer to the direct contacts between job seekers and employers. A job seeker may inquire of employment at a company even though the company let out no recruitment information in the labor market. This method also involves a job seeker's personal visit to an employer or inquiry through mail or telephone.

The informal means is a way to acquire information for job search or recruitment through personal contacts like with relatives, friends, family or teacher. In this case, the job seeker gets information or recommendation from people in personal relationship unrelated with employment, or vice versa.

Job searching and recruiting activities can be carried out through institutional networks, a new means in the process of school-to-work transition. The social network model puts emphasis on social contacts among job seekers, employers, and information providers or advisors playing the role of intermediary. In traditional networks theory, the intermediary connecting employers and job seekers were mainly individuals. However, in the network theory, the networks are not confined to those among individuals but also includes those among institutions. In other words, organizations or institutions as well as individuals can form networks with each other. Therefore, the network with regard to employment comes in the form of institutional networks

as well as personal networks(Kariya, 1988; Rosenbaum & Kariya, 1989).

The institutional network means the pattern of interaction between institutions. In general, two organizations or institutions that are mutually dependent in the society form a network to keep their business relationship, which tends to be based on mutual trust and profitability. Their business relationship based on mutual trust is maintained as long as the two sides see long-term benefits, even though they have to endure a short-term loss.

The school system and economic system are dependent to each other in that schools supply workforce and enterprises demand it. Schools want enterprises to employ their graduates, while enterprises in the need of productive workers want schools to produce more skilled and trained students.

This mutual dependency in terms of employment and recruitment serves as a good condition for schools and enterprises to establish institutional networks. However, the network can come into being only when the mutually dependent relationship develops into a mutually trusting one. It is because there would be no network established if the school and the enterprise mistrust and denounce with each other. For example, suppose the employer does not trust students' grades at schools or teachers' recommendations and thus does not consider them in hiring process, while schools feel their education systems are not respected. This mistrust will keep the mutually dependent relationship between school and enterprise or between education and working life from developing into a mutually trusting relationship and thus from establishing an actual network(Rosenbaum, *et al.* 1988; Rosenbaum & Binder, 1997).

On the contrary, if the mutually dependent relationship develops into

a mutually trusting relationship, thus realizing the network between school and industry, the network can serve as a good means of employment. School can select and deploy students needed by enterprises based on their academic achievements and characteristics, while the industry can accept the students recommended by school. By doing so, formal strong ties between school and the industry can be established(Rosenbaum & Binder, 1997).

In fact, a school-enterprise network brings about huge benefits. As for enterprise, it can promote its productivity by recruiting the best workforce supported by more accurate and reliable information on the skill and aptitude of a student than information provided in the market. As for teachers, by taking a large role in student's getting a job, they can fulfill their duty of guiding students' career paths and also have authority. Meanwhile, students will try to enhance their capabilities at school, thus finding a job more easily after graduation. With merit principle more strictly applied to the labor market, the society in general can move towards a more universal trend(Rosenbaum *et al.*, 1990; Rosenbaum, 1996). In sum, scholars supporting the establishment of school-enterprise network argue that school-to-work transition can be effectively carried out through formal strong ties between school and enterprise.

Despite all these necessities and merits, a few concerns emerge surrounding the school-to-work transition through the school-enterprise network.

First, favoritism can influence the process of teacher's evaluation and recommendation of students. That is, the personal relationship between a teacher and a student may determine the future of the student. Against these concerns, proponents of school-enterprise network counter that the recommendation through the network gives much less room for bias

toward the student than a five minute interview(Rosenbaum, 1996). They also argue that those concerns may be wiped away if the recommendation is well-grounded on student's grades. If school keeps failing to deploy students qualified enough, enterprises would not continue to accept school recommendation.

Second, the market economy principle with the idea of 'invisible hand' at its heart warns that the network between institutions may cause a decrease in effectiveness of the market. However, school-enterprise networks in Germany and Japan have been found to be contributing to effective deployment and the utilization of workforce. School-enterprise network can help a student to spend less time searching for a job and to find an appropriate job more easily. With the network in place, school and enterprise can fulfill each other's need of preparing students for working life or securing the workforce(Rosenbaum, 1996; Rosenbaum & Binder, 1997).

Third, for high school graduates searching for a job, the school-enterprise network can be more effective than the individual network since their individual network may be limited in scope and low in quality due to the lack of social experience. Therefore, the network, based on meritocracy, can provide students with good opportunities to advance into the society, especially for students with less social and financial means(Rosenbaum, 1996)

Last, the social network for school-to-work transition requires cooperation and participation of other related organization, even though the network is mostly founded on the linkage between school and enterprise. For example, in order to induce successful job preparation and transition, it is important to form vertical or horizontal connections with other schools equipped with different facilities and programs, vocational training centers, and institutions for higher education. Also, cooperation

and support of civil organizations and citizens in the local community is also essential. In this sense, school-to-work transition networks are effective only when they are community-based school-to-work transition networks(Chang, 1997).

Ⅲ. Realities of school to work transition in Korea

1. Changes in the youth employment environment

A. Decrease in young labor force

The school-to-work transition of young workforce is closely related with the supply structure of the labor market. One of the important elements that impact the supply of workforce newly entered the labor market is the shift of demographic structure, which is, most of all, influenced by the population growth, and which, in turn, brings about long lasting changes in the supply of workforce.

According to the Korea National Statistical Office, Korea's population growth rate dropped below 1% in 1985 and was around 0.9% until 1995, as shown in <fig. III-1>. The rate stayed around 0.9% during the period of 1995 to 2000, and it is forecast to decrease further to 0.8% during the period of 2000 to 2005. The growth rate for the population aged 15 or over had stayed beyond 2% by late 1980's but sharply dropped to 1.4% in 1995 and has kept falling. It is forecast that this trend will continue and the rate will stay below 1%.

The drop in the population growth rate gives rise to a decrease in the workforce newly entering the labor market. Moreover, it causes the structure of labor market to be leaning towards middle-aged labor force and the dramatic increase of the elderly. Meanwhile, the decrease in youth population means more opportunities for youths to advance into higher education, thus raising the overall level of education of young workers.

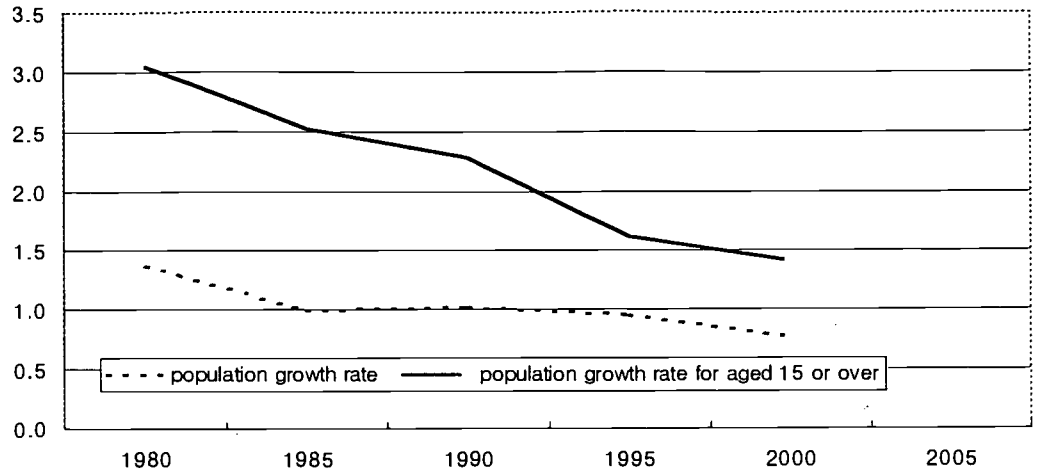


Figure Ⅲ-1. Trend of population growth rate

Decrease in the young workforce is clearly demonstrated in <Table Ⅲ-1>. The proportion of population, age 55 or older out of the total population, age 15 or older is forecast to sharply rise to 21.8% in 2005 from 14.1% in 1985. The proportion of population aged from 30 to 54 is expected to increase to 50.5% in 2005 from 41.1% in 1985. On the contrary, the proportion of young population in the range of 15 to 29 is forecast to be on a steady decrease to 27.7% in 2005 from 44.8% in 1985. This fast-paced decrease in the young population heralds dramatic changes in education and the labor market. That is, the labor market will witness a lack of workforce in certain fields and the education sector is highly likely to see a shortage of population receiving education.

Table Ⅲ-1. Population proportion of each age group

(unit: thousand, (%))

year / age	1985	1990	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
15~29	12,780 (44.8)	13,111 (41.1)	12,589 (36.4)	12,545 (35.1)	12,265 (33.5)	11,712 (31.3)	11,135 (29.3)	10,713 (27.7)
30~54	11,710 (41.1)	13,843 (43.4)	15,894 (46.0)	16,581 (46.4)	17,382 (47.4)	18,264 (48.8)	18,980 (49.9)	19,555 (50.5)
55 or over	4,012 (14.1)	4,941 (15.5)	6,073 (17.6)	6,573 (18.4)	7,008 (19.1)	7,418 (19.8)	7,934 (20.9)	8,434 (21.8)
total(15 or over)	28,502 (100)	31,896 (100)	34,556 (100)	35,699 (100)	36,656 (100)	37,394 (100)	38,049 (100)	38,702 (100)

Note: the number inside parenthesis means the proportion out of the total population aged 15 or over

Source: Korea National Statistical Office (1996) *Population projection.*

B. Rise in the youth unemployment

Along with the decrease in the young population, the increase in youth unemployment is one of the recent changes in the youth employment environment. Compared by age group, the unemployment of youths have stayed at high levels<see <Table Ⅲ-2>. Recently, the vocational education has lost its ground because more and more people are receiving higher education and schools are focusing on humanities education. Moreover, the bailout package by the IMF has accelerated changes in the labor market and in the employment structure. All these factors have contributed to the growing youth unemployment. In addition, the youths entering the labor market are facing more difficulties finding

jobs since the financial crisis has taken place. This means that youth employment is most sensitive to changes in the labor market. In fact, the youth unemployment problem is more serious than indicated by unemployment indices because the youth that chose to advance into higher education instead of going straight into the labor market are not taken into account when estimating youth unemployment.

Table Ⅲ-2. Unemployment trend by age group

(unit: thousand(%))

age / year	15~29	30~44	45~59	60 or over	total
1980	468(9.3)	183(3.4)	90(2.7)	4(0.6)	745(5.2)
1985	389(7.6)	157(2.7)	73(1.94)	3(0.3)	622(4.0)
1990	290(5.5)	112(1.5)	49(1.1)	5(0.4)	456(2.5)
1995	252(4.6)	112(1.3)	49(1.0)	7(0.4)	420(2.0)
1996	155(4.7)	116(1.3)	48(0.9)	7(0.4)	426(2.0)
1997	313(5.7)	161(1.8)	66(1.3)	15(0.8)	555(2.6)
1998	612(12.2)	522(5.7)	280(5.3)	47(2.4)	1,461(6.8)
1999	537(11.0)	493(5.3)	273(5.1)	50(2.4)	1,353(6.3)
2000	422(8.6)	335(3.7)	187(3.4)	37(2.0)	982(4.6)

Note: Inside parenthesis is the unemployment rate

Source: Korea National Statistical Office (yearly) *Annual report on the economically active population survey*

In general, the unskilled workforce with lower education is more likely to suffer the employment instability, thus showing high rates of unemployment. This is evident in developed countries. In the case of Korea, by contrast, the workforce with higher education recorded higher rate of unemployment by 1996. And then, since 1997, especially after the financial crisis, the unemployment rate among high school graduates has risen to a higher level than other groups, particularly compared to

college graduates. This trend is attributed to the fact that many weak companies have been forced out of the market and low-skilled workers like daily workers have suffered massive layoffs, due to the sharp downturn of the economy. The high unemployment rate among high school graduates is also partly because college graduates have made inroads into the jobs traditionally occupied by high school graduates, as the employment competition has gotten fiercer. With the recent economy fast recovering, the unemployment rate of college graduates has been low compared to that of high school graduates, which demonstrates the trend that the workforce with higher education responds to economic changes less sensitively than the workforce with lower education.

Table Ⅲ-3. Unemployment trend by education level

(Unit: thousand (%))

education level / year	junior high graduation or under	high school graduation	college graduation or above	total
1980	384(3.8)	306(9.3)	60(6.2)	749(3.5)
1985	221(2.5)	291(5.9)	109(6.6)	621(4.0)
1990	100(1.1)	240(3.4)	114(4.4)	454(2.5)
1995	86(1.1)	226(2.5)	109(2.7)	421(2.0)
1996	83(1.1)	231(2.5)	111(2.6)	425(2.0)
1997	119(1.5)	307(3.3)	131(3.0)	557(2.6)
1998	410(5.8)	766(8.2)	285(5.7)	1,461(6.8)
1999	369(5.2)	713(7.6)	271(5.3)	1,353(6.3)
2000	232(3.3)	453(4.7)	204(3.9)	889(4.1)

Note: Inside the parenthesis is unemployment rate.

Source: Korea National Statistical Office(yearly). *Annual report on the economically active population survey.*

2. Youth's preparation for working life

A. Lack of job preparation in high school

Vocational high schools are established with the aim of preparing students for working life through a regular curriculum and on-site training. However, as shown in <Table Ⅲ-4>, when teachers are asked if the on-site training in vocational high school contributes to the original educational purpose, 41.6% of respondents said no, while only 14.5% said yes. The results show that the on-site training has failed to achieve its original purpose of producing workforce required by the industry through promoting students' field adaptability and through enhancing practicability of education at school.

Table Ⅲ-4. Teachers' opinion on the on-site training's contribution to its original educational purpose

degree of contribution	very contributory	rarely contributory	not contributory	total
percentage	14.5	43.9	41.6	100.0

Source: Chungnam National University Technical High School Curriculum Revision Research Committee(1997). *7th tentative technical high school professional curriculum revision plan.*

Many of high school students are having an experience of working life through part-time job, which is a major means of job preparation before graduation. According to a survey by Koh, (1997), as shown in <Table Ⅲ-5>, 40.8% of respondents said that they were part-timers at the time of survey or had an experience of part-time job. In the case of

general high school students, 23.6% of respondents answered as having a part-time job or having an experience, while 59.5% of respondents in technical high school and 58.2% in commercial high school answered the same way. However, many of the part-time jobs were irrelevant to school education and some students were found to be working at entertaining industry. Therefore, the part-time job experience is not considered meaningful as vocational education.

Table Ⅲ-5. Part-time job experience of high school students

(Unit: %)

category / status	general high school	technical high school	commercial high school	total
currently employed	3.5	13.2	13.3	8.3
once employed	20.1	46.3	44.9	32.5
never employed	76.4	40.5	41.8	59.2

Source: Koh, (1997). Research on the status of high school students holding part-time jobs† . *Examining part-time jobs among the youth*, Seoul YMCA Consumer Protection Seminar.

Meanwhile, general school students lack preparation for their future career since they are engrossed in preparing for the college entrance exam. Although general school students, on average, have a higher level of basic capability, vocational school students show better performance in terms of adaptation to working life(Lee, *et al.*, 1992).

Moreover, the vocational classes in general high schools are shrinking rapidly. The current state of vocational classes in general schools can be understood through the information on commissioned courses and independent courses <TableⅢ-6>. The number of students in vocational

classes has plummeted from 56,236 in 1993 to 19,009 in 1998. Among them, the number of students on commissioned courses has almost halved from 26,881 in 1993 to 14,495 in 1998 and the number on independent courses has decreased even more drastically by around 85% from 29,355 in 1993 to 4,514 in 1998. These figures reflect the trend of shrinking vocational education in general high school as a result of improved opportunities for students to go to college.

Table Ⅲ-6. The current state of vocational classes in general high school in terms of the number of students

(Unit: people, (%))

year / course	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999 (forecast)
commi-ssioned	26,881	26,811(- 0.3)	22,601(-15.7)	17,104(-24.3)	15,919(- 7.0)	14,495(- 8.9)	14,926(2.9)
indepen-dent	29,355	16,263(-44.6)	11,150(-31.4)	8,109(-26.3)	5,812(-28.3)	4,514(-22.3)	3,772(-16.4)
total	56,236	43,123(-23.3)	33,751(-11.7)	25,213(-25.3)	21,731(-13.8)	19,009(-12.5)	18,698(- 1.6)

Note: inside the parenthesis is the growth rate of the number of students

Source: The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (1998). *† 98 State of vocational high schools(I).* **P.17**

Source: The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (1999). *99 State of Main Projects,* Lifelong Education Department.

B. Imbalance between supply and demand of college graduate workforce

Since the 1980's, the labor pool of college graduates has expanded and, along with that, the opportunities for higher education have been increased and school education has been more focused on humanities education. All these factors have brought about the imbalance of supply and demand of college graduate workforce.

First, there are an increasing number of people receiving advanced education, raising the overall level of education of the workforce. Among the changes in the labor market since 1980's, the most significant one in the supply side is the heightened level of education and humanities-oriented education. These two are the major reasons behind the qualitative and quantitative imbalances between supply and demand of workforce.

As of 1997, Korea does not lag behind major developed countries in terms of the rate of participation in advanced education by the youth, except the population aged 26 to 29 <Table Ⅲ-7>. 34.1% of those aged 18-21 and 16.3% of those aged 22-25 are receiving higher education, which is beyond the average of OECD countries and is almost the level of advanced countries like the U.S. and France. This trend of increased participation in advanced education is likely to continue because colleges are now given autonomy in deciding the number of accepted students and also because more people are going to the college in the wake of the increased unemployment.

Table Ⅲ-7. The youth's participation in advanced education by country(18-29)

(Unit: %)

age / country	18～21	22～25	26～29
Canada	37.9	21.7	9.2
the U.S.	34.7	20.7	10.5
Britain	25.8	9.3	4.8
Germany	10.6	17.0	4.6
France	34.2	17.7	11.4
Australia	29.8	14.1	8.9
Korea	34.1	16.3	3.4
OECD average	21.1	15.5	6.6

Source: OECD (1997). *Education at a Glance*: OECD Indicators, p.172.

Second, while there have been the increased workforce with higher education, the school education have been more focused on humanities education. These two are cited as major factors causing the imbalance between supply and demand of the workforce with college education. In particular, humanities-oriented education also tends to cause one to have a job unrelated with his/her major or a job below his/her education level, thus giving rise to the qualitative imbalance in the workforce with college education.

Looking at the number of college graduates, in the case of two-year college, the number increased by 430% from 51,935 in 1981 to 223,489 in 2000 and the annual growth rate has been recorded at relatively high rates of 9.8% in early 1980 and 6.6% during the period of 1995-2000.

Table III-8. Trends of the number of two-year college graduates by field

(Unit: people (%))

field / year	humanities and social study field	science and engineering field	other	total
1981	4,349(8.4)	31,918(61.5)	15,668(30.2)	51,935(100)
1986	15,891(21.0)	26,902(35.6)	32,761(43.4)	75,572(100)
1990	18,630(21.4)	28,328(32.5)	40,173(46.1)	87,131(100)
1995	39,307(27.5)	52,832(36.9)	50,936(35.6)	143,075(100)
2000	66,426(29.7)	100,987(45.2)	56,076(25.1)	223,489(100)
average growth rate				
1981-1986	29.6	-3.3	15.9	9.8
1986-1990	4.1	1.3	5.2	3.6
1990-1995	16.1	13.3	4.9	10.4
1995-2000	11.1	13.8	1.9	6.6

Note: inside the parenthesis is the proportion out of the total.
Source: the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development(yearly).
Source: *Annual report on educational statistics.*

The proportion of the humanities and social study field out of the total graduates has risen from 8.4% in 1981 to 29.7% in 2000. Looking at the growth rate, the field recorded as high as 29.6% in early 1980 due to the increased quota and has kept recording more than 10% since 1990's. On the contrary, the proportion of graduates in the science and engineering field has fallen from 61.5% in 1981 to 42.5% in 2000 and the field recorded a minus growth rate in early 1980's and over 10% in 1990's.

For two-year colleges in early 1980's, it was the humanities and social study field that saw the most dramatic increase in quota. As a result, the education has become more humanities-oriented, which, in turn, caused qualitative imbalance of the supply and demand of the workforce

graduated from college.

Meanwhile, the education focusing on humanities has been also evident in four-year colleges since 1980's. The total number of graduates has increased by around 380% from 56,841 in 1981 to 214,298 in 2000. The annual growth rate has reached as much as 19.4% in early 1980 and then has dropped to below 5%. However, the number of graduates from four-year colleges has been on a steady increase, which means the supply of the workforce with college education newly entering the labor market has been on the rise.

Table Ⅲ-9. Trends of the number of four-year college graduates by field

(Unit: people (%))

field / year	humanities, social studies	science, engineering	other	total
1981	16,310(28.7)	18,484(32.5)	22,047(38.8)	56,841(100)
1986	55,641(40.4)	37,986(27.6)	44,221(32.1)	137,848(100)
1990	73,626(44.4)	43,601(26.3)	48,689(29.3)	165,916(100)
1995	74,490(41.2)	57,205(31.7)	48,969(27.0)	180,664(100)
2000	89,146(41.6)	85,546(39.9)	39,806(18.6)	214,498(100)
average growth rate				
1981～1986	27.8	15.5	14.9	19.4
1986～1990	7.3	3.5	2.4	4.7
1990～1995	0.2	5.6	0.1	1.7
1995～2000	3.7	8.4	-4.1	3.5

Note: inside the parenthesis is the proportion out of the total.
Source: the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development(yearly).
Source: *Annual report on educational statistics.*

As for the humanities and social studies field, the proportion out of the total number of graduates has increased from 28.7% in 1980 to 41.6% in 2000. Meanwhile, the proportion of science and engineering field was 32.5% in 1980, and has since decreased, and then increased again to 39.9% in 2000. This change reflects the fact that in four-year colleges too, the education has gotten more humanities-oriented. However, after the number of four-year college graduates in the humanities and social studies field rose sharply in early 1980, the number of the science and engineering field graduates have grown relatively fast in 1990's compared to the humanities and social studies field.

In sum, while the number of two-year college graduates has risen sharply since 1990's, the number of four-year college graduates has been on a relatively modest increase. In addition, as for the trend of increase of each field, the humanities and social studies field in two-year colleges has recorded relatively high growth rates in 1990's, while the engineering field in four-year colleges has shown a relatively high growth rate compared to the humanities and social studies field. This trend can be interpreted to mean that the quantitative imbalance between the supply and demand of the workforce with higher education, caused by the heightened level of education of workforce and the humanities-oriented education after 1980's, has been resolved in a slow phase.

Third, the heightened level of education of the workforce and humanities-oriented education is a major cause of the imbalance between the supply and demand of the workforce with higher education in the labor market. The imbalance takes place not only in terms of quantity but also in terms of quality, which will be dealt with later on.

3. The delay in school-to-work transition of the youth

A. The decrease in the youth's participation in economic activities

The rate of participation in economic activities by young population is falling. It is because more and more college graduates opt to advance into further education over to go straight into working life, thus staying as economically inactive.

As seen in <Table Ⅲ-10> the economic participation by people aged from 15 to 24 ballooned in early 1990, reached a peak of 37.1% in 1994, and has steadily shrunk ever since. In particular, in the wake of economic downturn and unfavorable employment conditions caused by the bailout package by the IMF, the figure decreased to as low as 31.3% in 1998. The fall in the economically active population among the youth aged 15-24 goes contrary to the major trend of increasing economic participation by all other age groups except the year of 1998.

Table Ⅲ- 10. The trend of economic participation by age group

(Unit: %)

age / year	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 or over	total
1985	35.6	66.3	75.8	73.3	39.0	56.6
1990	35.0	70.6	78.0	77.3	46.3	60.0
1991	36.1	70.9	78.4	77.2	47.1	60.6
1992	36.3	70.6	78.2	77.3	48.2	60.9
1993	36.7	70.5	79.3	76.3	47.0	61.1
1994	37.1	71.0	79.5	76.9	47.9	61.7
1995	36.5	71.1	79.9	76.9	48.1	61.9
1996	35.3	71.9	80.1	77.1	48.2	62.0
1997	34.4	73.0	80.3	77.0	49.1	62.2
1998	31.3	70.7	78.7	76.2	46.5	60.7

Source: Korea National Statistical Office (yearly). Calculated based on the Annual *report on the economically active population.*

The economic participation among Korean youths is quite low compared to other countries. While 31.3% of Korean youths are economically active, as much as 70.5% of British, 65.4% of American, 52.1% of Germany and 48.6% of Japanese youths are economically active. Korea lags far behind the average of OECD countries, 51.5%. The low participation rate among young male in Korea seems to be because of the military duty along with expanded opportunities for higher education.

The low economic participation by the youth bears two significant meanings. First, if the decrease in the population growth rate and economic participation rate considered together, the long term trend of declining population growth rate should give rise to a shortage in the supply of workforce. The fall in economic participation by the youth, coupled with the fall in population growth rate, causes a shortage of young workforce, thus hindering the effective deployment of labor force

and promoting the aging trend of the workforce.

Second, the decrease in economic participation by youths aged 15-24 means the delay of entering the labor market by the youth, which hinders the adequate deployment of young workforce according to the level of one's skill. Since the fast changes in information technology lead to shifts in the employment structure, the decrease in economic participation is more likely to hinder the adequate deployment of workforce according to the level of one's skill. In other words, the transition from school to work by youths in Korea is being delayed, the youth being deprived of their work experience.

B. The increase in advancement into higher education

One major reason behind the falling economic participation by the youth is deemed to be the expanded opportunities for higher education and the subsequent increase in the flow of youths into the economically non-active population. As the education level of workforce rises, the time period for youths to enter the labor market is being delayed, pushing upward the average age of new workforce.

The rate of college education is a good barometer to understand the extent of rise in the education level of workforce. The rate of college education has increased fast from 32.8% in 1980, to 51.4% in 1995 and to 66.2% in 1999. The rate of advancing into college by general high school students has risen from 34.0% in 1980 to 84.0% in 1999, while the rate by vocational high school students has almost four folded from 10.1% in 1980 to 38.2% in 1999. The rate of college quota against the number of college applicants was 105.9% as of 1999, which means anyone who wants can enter a college. Moreover, as the population

growth rate falls, colleges are likely to suffer a lack of students, due to the discrepancy between the college quota and the number of enrolled students (Chang, *et al.*, 1998). In sum, the increased number of youths going to college means a delay in their entering the labor market.

Table Ⅲ-11. College quotas and college advancement rate

(Unit: %)

category	college advancement rate			students hoping for college advancement			opportunity rate of college advancement	
	total	general high	vocatio-nal high	total	general high	vocatio-nal high	against graduates	against students hoping for advancement
1980	32.8	34.0	10.1	45.8	72.8	31.2	44.0	96.1
1985	36.4	53.8	13.3	60.1	82.8	30.0	41.4	68.9
1990	33.2	47.2	8.3	63.0	86.0	22.1	43.3	68.8
1995	51.4	72.8	19.2	69.4	91.8	35.6	72.9	105.1
1999	66.2	84.0	38.2	77.0	93.9	50.5	81.6	105.9

Note: 1) the number of students entering college and college quota is the sum of those in four-year colleges, two-year colleges and educational colleges.

2) The rate of students hoping for college advancement = (the number of students hoping for college advancement among graduates of the year/ the number of graduates of the year) † 100

3) The opportunity rate of college advancement = (the college quota / the number of graduates or students hoping for advancement) † 100

Source: the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, Korean Educational Development Institute (1997).

Source: *The Statistical History of Korean Education.*
The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (1999). *Annual report on educational statistics.*

Some criticizes that the increased rate of receiving higher education results in the lack of skilled workforce, the distortion of the supply and demand of industrial workforce and the creation of worse employment conditions for college graduates. However, it would be problematic to control the college quota in order to limit the opportunities for college education. The main reason is because it would then dampen people's desire for education, promote competition for college entrance and increase the number of people who prepare for college entrance exam after failing to pass the exam. In addition, in order to enhance the global competitiveness of the nation by promoting the knowledge-based industry, the overall workforce should be value-added and equipped with various advanced functions.

Therefore, the higher education should be actively popularized, strengthening the linkage between education and work. In particular, various measures should be sought to meet the demand for higher education by expanding the opportunities for life long learning, in order to cool down the zeal for college education among those who just graduated from high school. Also, it is necessary to find out ways to enhance the rate of higher education among people aged over 25, rather than among people aged from 18 to 21.

4. The labor market movement of the youth

A. Informal paths of employment

In the process of school-to-work transition, the structure and situation of the labor market act as meaningful variables. Therefore, in order to understand the youth's school-to-work transition, it is necessary to review

the process of school-to-work transition and the process of adaptation in the working life after transition. Here, the career option of the youth and the state of labor transfer are dealt with based on statistics.

The process of career option of the youth can be observed through the information on the employment path and the relevance between one's major and work duty. The information reveals the fact that when high school graduates chose their jobs, they don't receive much help from the school and society and they themselves have to cope with the process of career choice. As shown in <Table Ⅲ-12> the employment rate of general high school graduates have been on a steady decline from 26.2% in 1995 to 18.1% in 1999, while that of vocational high school graduates slightly increased in 1996 and 1997 from 89.8% in 1995 and then dropped to 84.7% in 1998 and to 83.4% in 1999. The fall in the employment rates of high school graduates seems to be largely due to the overall economic downturn.

Looking at the employment path, as for general high school graduates in 1995, 29.3% got a job through school recommendation, 24.9%, through internship programs, and 23.1% through personal contacts. In 1999, 33.6% of general high school graduates were employed through personal contacts, 20.4% through school recommendation, and 18.2% through internship programs. On the other hand, as for vocational high school graduates, the most significant means of employment in 1999 was school recommendation that accounted for 47.7%, followed by internship program, 22.1% and personal contacts 19.0%. The rate of school recommendation in 1999 was far down from 57.1% in 1995, while the rate of personal contacts was up from 11.9% in 1995, which means that employment through personal contacts, as informal means of employment, have been rising.

Table Ⅲ-12. Means of employment for high school graduates

(Unit: people, (%))

category	general high					vocational high				
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
number of the employed (employment rate)	27,892 (26.2)	21,630 (24.8)	16,204 (22.0)	12,807 (18.5)	12,726 (18.1)	190,148 (89.8)	196,403 (91.8)	177,532 (91.7)	164,075 (84.7)	148,478 (83.4)
school recommendation	29.3	26.7	25.9	20.2	20.4	57.1	54.7	55.3	48.3	47.7
employment exam	6.2	5.7	5.6	6.7	4.8	7.3	7.9	7.8	6.3	3.5
personal contacts	23.1	24.9	25.1	27.9	33.6	11.9	11.6	11.8	13.7	19.0
internship program	24.9	27.5	24.7	22.9	18.2	18.9	20.8	20.5	25.4	22.1
run family business	6.2	5.0	4.9	5.7	6.5	2.1	1.5	1.4	2.1	2.6
self employment		0.2	2.5	2.4			0.7	0.6	1.0	0.9
other	10.2	10.1	11.3	14.1	1.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	3.1	4.2

Note: the employment rate = the number of employed/(the number of graduates - the number of graduates advanced into college - the number of graduates on military service) p.100

Source: the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (yearly). The *Annual report on educational statistics.*

The insecurity in the college graduates' transition into the labor market can be understood through an observation of the employment path of college graduates. The major means for employment was school recommendation for two-year college graduates and the employment exam for four-year college graduates. Also, the rate of employment through informal means was higher for two-year college graduates than for four-year college graduates. Still, the rate of employment through informal means among four-year college graduates has dramatically increased since 1998.

Table Ⅲ-13. Employment paths for college graduates

(Unit: people (%))

category	two-year college					four-year college				
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
number of the employed (employment rate)	102,648 (78.2)	115,096 (75.5)	114,035 (66.3)	128,308 (68.1)	159,960 (79.4)	101,911 (63.3)	102,245 (61.7)	85,805 (50.5)	90,147 (51.3)	104,371 (56.0)
school recommen-dation	57,101 (55.6)	61,493 (53.4)	48,806 (42.8)	59,749 (46.6)	75,756 (47.4)	29,266 (28.7)	26,318 (25.7)	20,268 (23.6)	25,366 (28.1)	24,082 (23.1)
employment exam	18,837 (18.4)	22,362 (19.4)	23,061 (20.2)	25,191 (19.6)	36,197 (22.6)	50,443 (43.5)	50,477 (49.4)	42,246 (49.2)	39,685 (44.0)	54,336 (52.1)
run family business	4,871 (4.9)	6,558 (5.7)	5,966 (5.2)	7,010 (5.5)	8,195 (5.1)	5,482 (5.4)	5,216 (5.1)	3,994 (4.7)	3,962 (4.4)	3,916 (3.8)
other	21,839 (21.3)	24,683 (21.4)	36,202 (31.7)	36,358 (28.3)	39,812 (24.9)	16,720 (16.4)	20,234 (19.8)	19,297 (22.5)	21,134 (23.4)	22,037 (21.1)

Source: the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (yearly). *Annual report on educational statistics.*

When a highly educated person transits to work, he/she is most likely to be employed through formal recruitment but the rate of employment through informal means is also high. In particular, there has been an increase in the employment through informal paths by four-year college graduates, which seems to be because a growing number of companies are hiring people through irregular recruitment rather than formal large scale recruitment. In other words, while the large scale regular recruitment was a major path for college graduates to be employed in the past, the irregular recruitments conducted by each department of a company whenever necessary have greatly increased. Moreover, it is an evident trend that companies prefer to hire people as irregular workers

rather than as regular workers.

These trends bear at least two significant meanings. First, the proportion of informal paths of employment is rising because formal paths have failed to provide enough information on career option in the process of school-to-work transition and on the labor market. The information on the labor market required for school-to-work transition must include not only the information on job opportunities but also include the information on characteristics of each job and the level of skills required by the job. This information is crucial so to let the job seeker make sure the job is suitable to him/her. This kind of information is more important for the workforce that just graduated from school.

Second, the proportion of informal paths of employment is rising due to the changes in recruitment methods caused by changes in economic environment and manufacturing methods. That is, the existing way of tailor-based manufacturing, which is manufacturing fewer kinds of products in large scale, is giving its way to manufacturing various kinds of products in small scale. As a result, the labor market has gotten more flexible, which has led to the increase in irregular recruitment. Considering the information on the labor market is imperfect, the major means of hiring people irregularly is using the informal path of employment. In fact, the easiest way for a company to hire a person and for a graduate to secure information on job opportunities is using personal contacts(Chang, 1997).

B. The irrelevance of major and job and turnover

Another important factor in choosing a job is the extent of relevance of one's major to his/her working duty because too much irrelevance

leads to labor movement and thus re-deployment of the workforce. If one keeps the job even though it is not suitable to his/her aptitude, he/she is highly likely to fail in building career in early days of working life and has to search for another job afterwards as an almost inexperienced worker. In this case, it can be said that the process of choosing a job after graduation is still ongoing.

Vocational high school graduates tend to have a job irrelevant to their majors, thus failing to effectively utilize the school education in the workplace. As shown in <Table Ⅲ-14>, 26.1% of the responded high school graduates said the extent of relevance of their job to major is above the average, while 50.8% said, below the average. It was found out that the lower was one's level of education, the higher was the irrelevance, which shows that companies are failing to effectively utilize the workforce according to the education level.

Table Ⅲ-14. The relevance of major to job according to education level(1996)

(Unit: %)

category	very relevant	somewhatr elevant	middle	irrelevant	very irrelevant	total
vocational high graduates	4.1	22.0	23.1	27.1	23.7	100.0
two-year college graduates	16.3	23.4	18.4	23.6	18.4	100.0
four-year college graduates	20.6	28.2	19.7	18.8	12.8	100.0

Chart Guide: 5 High Relevancy 1 Low Relevancy

Source: Korea National Statistical Office (1997). *Social statistics report-Culture, Leisure, and education division.* p. 403

The data on labor movement after choosing a job serves as an important barometer to understand how smooth the school-to-work transition was. As mentioned above, if the work is irrelevant to major, a job transfer is highly likely to happen. As shown in <Table Ⅲ-15>, the rate of job transfer during the period from 1994 to 1997 was over 35%, and the lower was the education level, the higher was the rate of job transfer. However, the workforce with higher education also showed a high rate of job transfer. This generally high rate of job transfer is an indirect indication of the fact that school graduates entered the working life without securing enough information on the labor market, which reveals the problem in the process of choosing a job.

Table Ⅲ-15. The rate of job transfer of the workforce aged 29 or under by year and education level

(Unit: %)

category / year	total	junior high education or under	high school education	two-year college education	four-year college education or over
1994	35.5	49.6	38.5	30.4	16.6
1995	37.9	59.8	41.9	29.9	18.9
1996	39.4	65.1	44.2	32.3	20.2
1997	37.1	59.0	43.1	28.2	19.3

Note: inside the parenthesis is the rate of job transfer, job transfer rate (the number of job transfer/the total number of workers)† 100

Source: The Ministry of Labor(yearly). *Annual labor statistics.*
The Ministry of Labor(yearly). *Basic statistics on income structure.*

Ⅳ. Results of Survey on School-to-work Transition

In this chapter, the results of our survey on school-to-work transition are presented. The survey, which was carried out on youths, was divided into the school-to-work transition process in high schools and colleges. The study included preparation for the labor market, the transition process into the labor market, and the results of the transition.

1. Methodology

A survey was carried out to examine the state of school-to-work transition. The population was determined as 15～29 year-old males and females residing in Korea. In order to extract a sample, the population distribution throughout the country was considered according to each administrative district and the number of samples for each district was determined proportionately through multi-stage random sampling. Through this method, 700 people were selected for the survey. The demographic background of the selected samples are as shown in <Table Ⅳ-1>. Respondents who graduated junior high and did not receive high school education were excluded from the data analysis, as they were not considered relevant to the survey on school-to-work transition. Therefore, 694 samples were considered valid in the analysis. The school-to-work transition of college-level students was restricted to 366 respondents who were enrolled in a two-year junior college or above.

Table Ⅳ-1. Demographic background of respondents

(Unit: frequency, %)

item	category	frequency	percentage
gender	male	351	50.1
	female	349	49.9
age	under 19	215	30.7
	20-24	244	34.9
	25 or above	241	34.4
education level	middle school education or below	6	0.9
	high school student	144	20.6
	high school graduate or dropout	184	26.3
	junior college student or graduate	117	16.7
	university student or above	249	35.6
marital status	married	114	16.3
	not married	586	83.7
current occupation	employee	215	30.7
	self-employed	22	3.1
	student	336	48.0
	high school graduate preparing for college exam	8	1.1
	homemaker	56	8.0
	unemployed	63	9.0
total		700	100.0

Data was gathered through personal interviews carried out by a trained interview professional. A pilot study was carried out for three days from July 5 to 7 in 1999 in order to verify the study tools, and the actual interviews were carried out from July 8 to 16. In order to select the subjects for the interview, samples were selected from six large cities and provinces in proportion to the population. Within each region, 7~10 sample points were established as the index to determine the actual number of sample points to be used in the study. The sample points

were determined through random sampling of households in each region. One person from each selected household was determined for the interview.

The tools used in the study were 72 questions to examine the overall school-to-work transition process. First, the questions on the preparation for the transition into the workforce were comprised of items regarding the experiences of the respondent in preparing for the workplace within the school. The questions included the respondent's field of education, participation in work-related programs, and work experience. Second, the questions regarding the school-to-work process were comprised of items regarding the job searching and employment process before obtaining a first job. The items included methods employed in job searching and employment, the time period of job searching and vocational education and training before employment. Third, the questions regarding the results of school-to-work transition were comprised of items regarding the current status of the respondent, and included items on the type of employment, income, and characteristics of the current place of work. Finally, personal background such as gender, age, education level and family background were included in the survey.

2. The State of School-to-work Transition in High Schools

A. Preparing for the labor market in high school

When asked if they had prepared for employment during high school, 17.4% of Korean youths responded that they had. However, it was also found that personal background acted as a variable to whether a student

had prepared for employment or not. Significant differences existed among genders, types of high school and career course after graduation. The rate of preparation was higher in females than males and higher in vocational schools than general schools. It is of particular interest that 48.3% of vocational school graduates responded that they had prepared for the labor market during high school while only 4.0% of general high school graduates had made preparations for employment. Among general high school graduates, 18.6% obtained work straight out of high school, as shown in <Table Ⅳ-2>. However, only 4.0% had prepared for the workplace, meaning that 14～15% were deployed into the workforce without any prior preparation. Therefore, the results show that students of general high schools as well as vocational high schools need more programs to prepare themselves for the labor market. Also, when considering the fact that vocational high schools are secondary educational institutes focusing on vocational education, only 48.3% (commercial high schools 52.7%, technical high schools 45.7%) of students preparing for the workplace is an extremely low percentage.

Table IV-2. Preparation for employment in high school according to personal background

(Unit: frequency, (%))

background \ preparation		prepared	not prepared	total
gender	male	50 (14.4)	297 (85.6)	347 (100.0)
	female	71 (20.5)	276 (79.5)	347 (100.0)
type of high school	general high school	19 (4.0)	457(96.0)	476 (100.0)
	vocational high school	102(48.3)	109(51.7)	211 (100.0)
	commercial	69 (52.7)	62 (47.3)	131 (100.0)
	technical	32 (45.7)	38 (54.3)	70 (100.0)
	other vocational	1 (10.0)	9 (90.0)	10 (100.0)
	other high school	-	7 (100.0)	7 (100.0)
graduation and future course	high school student	14 (9.7)	130 (90.3)	144 (100.0)
	employment after graduation	86 (48.0)	93 (52.0)	179 (100.0)
	continued education after graduation	14 (4.0)	334 (96.0)	348 (100.0)
	other	7 (30.4)	16 (69.6)	23 (100.0)
total		121 (17.4)	573 (82.6)	694 (100.0)

One of the main methods employed in preparing for the labor market during high school is obtaining certification licenses. Of our respondents, 23.2% answered that they had received education for obtaining licenses during high school. However, over half of the respondents who had joined the workforce straight out of high school(52.5%) did not receive education for obtaining licenses. As we have seen above in the state of preparation for the labor market, this adds evidence that many students are entering the workforce without adequate preparation.

Table IV-3. Participation in education for obtaining licenses in high school

(Unit: Frequency, (%))

background \ education for licenses		received	not received	total
type of high school	general high school	38 (8.0)	438 (92.0)	476 (100.0)
	vocational high school	122 (57.8)	89 (42.2)	211 (100.0)
	commercial	80 (61.1)	51 (38.9)	131 (100.0)
	technical	39 (55.7)	31 (44.3)	70 (100.0)
	other vocational	3 (30.0)	7 (70.0)	10 (100.0)
	other high school	1 (14.3)	6 (85.7)	7 (100.0)
future course after graduation	high school student	36 (25.0)	108 (75.0)	144 (100.0)
	employment after graduation	85 (47.5)	94 (52.5)	179 (100.0)
	continued education after graduation	33 (9.5)	315 (90.5)	348 (100.0)
	other	7 (30.4)	16 (69.6)	23 (100.0)
total		161 (23.2)	533 (76.8)	694 (100.0)

When asked how they had received education for obtaining licenses, over half of the respondents who had said they had received education (55.3%) answered that they had taken courses at private institutes and other organizations outside the school. Commercial high schools had the largest percentage of students attending outside courses for licenses, with 60% responding that they had received education at private institutes. On the contrary, only 20.5% of technical high school students who said they had received education for licenses responded that they had taken outside courses, while 71.8% said they received education within the school. This shows that while vocational training and education for licenses are being carried out actively in technical high schools, other vocational high

schools such as commercial schools are not preparing their students for certification of licenses. Rather, commercial high school students were found to be individually preparing for employment at private institutes through their own means. Meanwhile, about 3/4 of general high school students were also found to be taking private courses for licenses.

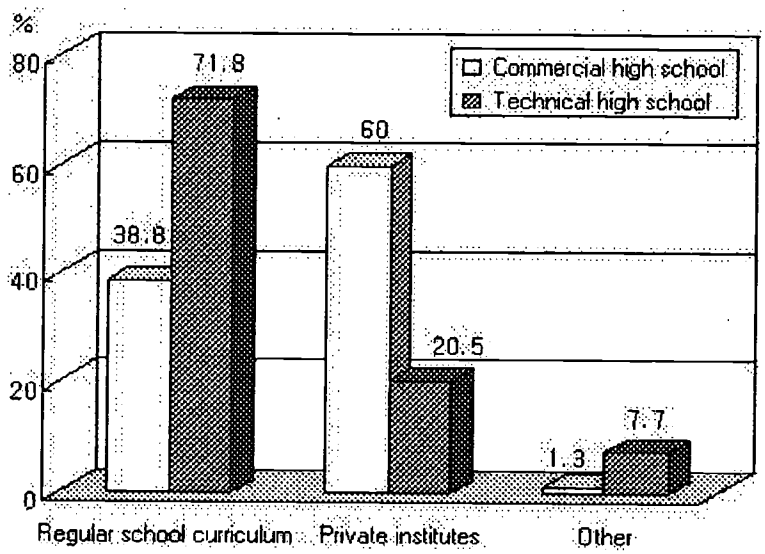


Figure IV-1. Methods employed in obtaining licenses among commercial and technical high school students

Part-time jobs are a widely used informal method of obtaining experience during high school. About 22.8% of the respondents said that they had worked at part-time jobs in high school. Men(28.0%) were found to have more experience in part-time jobs than women(17.6%), while more vocational school students(40.8%) were found to have worked at part-time jobs than general school students(14.9%) have.

Table IV-4. Work experience in high school according to personal background

(Unit: frequency, (%))

background \ work experience		yes	no	total
gender	male	97 (28.0)	250 (72.0)	347 (100.0)
	female	61 (17.6)	286 (82.4)	347 (100.0)
type of high school	general high school	71 (14.9)	405 (85.1)	476 (100.0)
	vocational high school	86 (40.8)	125 (59.2)	211 (100.0)
	other high school	1 (14.3)	6 (85.7)	7 (100.0)
future course after graduation	high school student	29 (20.1)	115 (79.9)	144 (100.0)
	employment after graduation	64 (35.8)	115 (64.2)	179 (100.0)
	continued education after graduation	58 (16.7)	290 (83.3)	348 (100.0)
	other	7 (30.4)	16 (69.6)	23 (100.0)
family income level	under 1.5m won	49 (25.9)	140 (74.1)	189 (100.0)
	1.5- under 2.5m won	72 (21.3)	266 (78.7)	338 (100.0)
	2.5m won or above	37 (22.3)	129 (77.7)	166 (100.0)
high school grades	upper level	28 (21.1)	105 (78.9)	133 (100.0)
	upper-middle level	79 (19.1)	334 (80.9)	413 (100.0)
	lower-middle level	42 (34.4)	80 (65.6)	122 (100.0)
	lower level	9 (36.0)	16 (64.0)	25 (100.0)
total[1)]		158 (22.8)	536 (77.2)	694 (100.0)

1) One respondent did not answer the question regarding family income and high school grades, so 693 samples were used for the analysis.

When asked whether work experience during high school was helpful after fully entering the workforce, the responses of those who had held

part-time jobs were as shown in <fig. Ⅳ-2>. 63.9% of the respondents said that work experience in high school helped them after entering the labor market, showing that most people who have had work experience in high school held a positive view of such experiences.

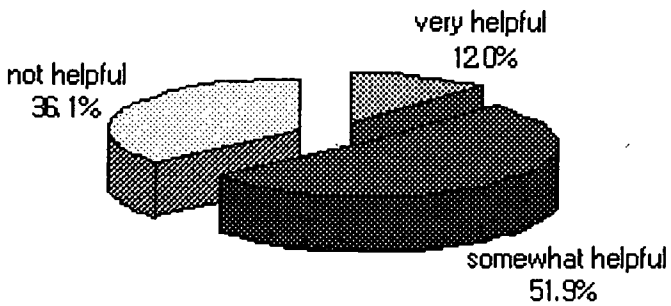


Figure Ⅳ-2. Helpfulness of work experience in high school after entering workforce

A comprehensive examination of preparation for the transition into the workforce during high school shows that about half of vocational high school students were preparing for employment in a relatively well-organized method. However, general high school students were found to be ill prepared to enter into the workforce. Unlike other methods, work experience during high school was found to be an important method of preparing for future employment not only among vocational school students, but also among general school students. Because general high school students are not able to receive any other form of systematic vocational education, it is especially important to make full use of informal methods of obtaining work experience.

B. The School-to-work transition process

The school-to-work transition process after graduating from high school includes a number of courses and procedures. Some of the main procedures included in the process are gathering information and gaining a job. The characteristics of school-to-work transition after graduating from high school are as follows. First, the methods employed in gathering information and obtaining a job tend to be informal, rather than formal. In gathering employment information, 51.7% of respondents who entered the labor market after graduating from high school said that they used informal methods, while only 17.4% responded that they had used formal methods. However, as the education level increased, fewer people opted for informal methods of obtaining information(junior college graduates 41.2%, university graduates 35%) while more people chose formal methods(junior college graduates 26.5%, university graduates 27.5%). In terms of employment methods, 49.7% of high school graduates used informal methods; while 38.2% of junior college graduates and 36.3% of university graduates used informal methods. On the other hand, formal methods of employment increased with the level of education, with 23.5% of high school graduates, 33.8% of junior college graduates and 48.8% of university graduates obtaining jobs through formal methods.

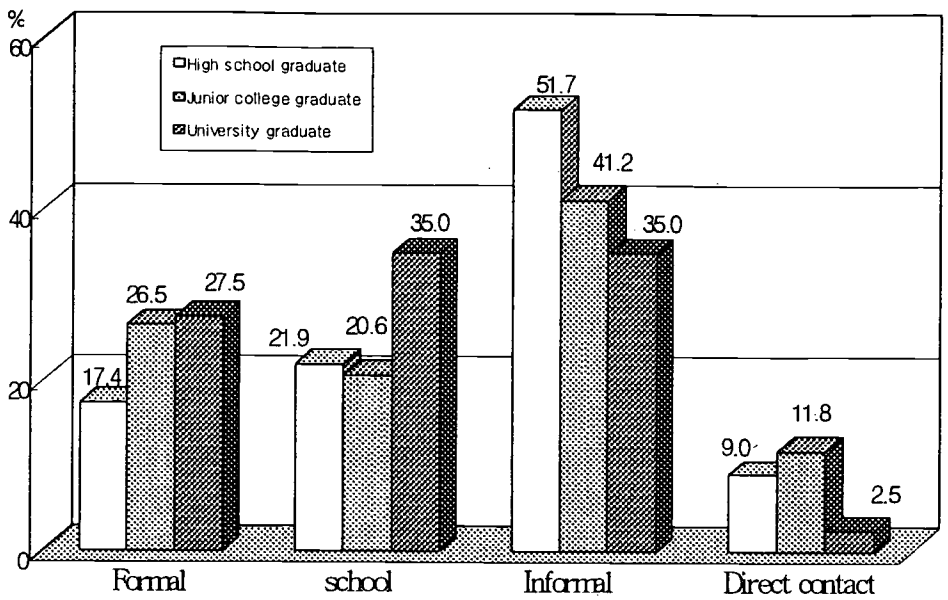


Figure IV-3. Information source for first job according to education level

The results of the analysis show that in order to carry out a smooth transition from the school to the workplace, it is important to establish a comprehensive information network in connection with the school, including employment opportunities and course options. Thus, an information network for future career options after graduation is needed through which students can receive more systematic information on job opportunities and the labor market.

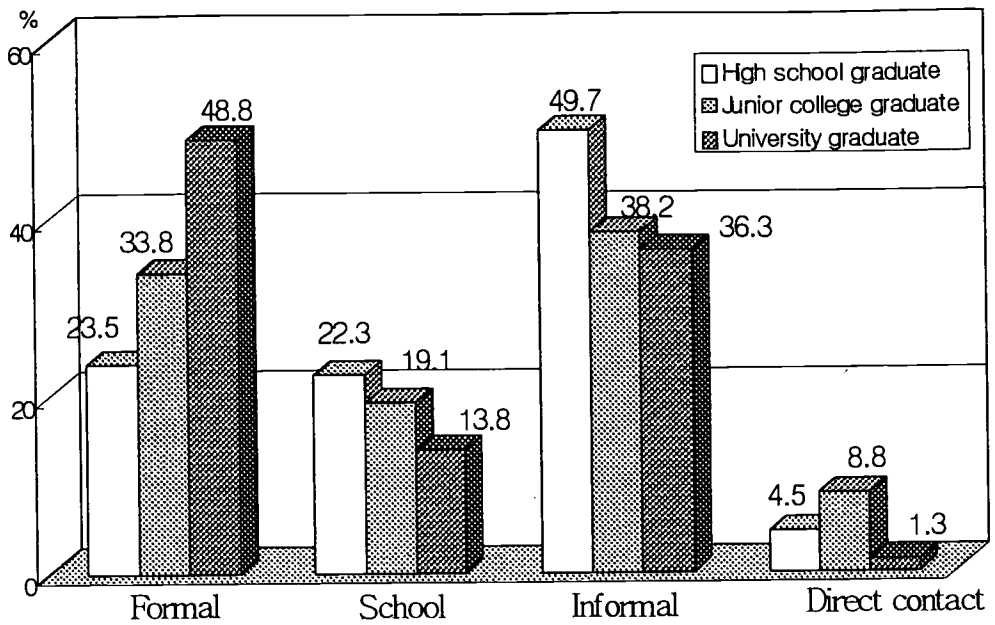


Figure IV-4. Methods of gaining first jobs according to level of education

Second, the school was found to have a strong role in the information collection and employment methods of the school-to-work transition process. It was notable that in the case of high school graduates seeking work, 22% of respondents said that they used the school in both the information collection and employment process, showing that graduates had a good chance of being employed if the job opening was introduced through the school. On the other hand, 35.0% of four-year university graduates obtained information on job openings through the school, but only 13.8% obtained job through the information. Meanwhile, 48.8% of university graduates used formal methods such as media sources such as newspapers, TV ads and newsletters to obtain employment information in comparison to 27.5% of high school graduates. This shows that

university graduates utilize the school as a source of information, but tend to obtain job through public advertisements or employment exams.

When asked the time period they began searching for their first jobs, only 18.1% of respondents replied that they began searching before graduation, while 38.8% said they began at the time of graduation and 43.3% after graduation. A significant difference was found among the different types of high schools regarding the time period when the respondents began searching for their first jobs. The percentage of vocational high school graduates who searched for jobs before or around the time of graduation was found to be 69.8%, which is significantly higher than the 36.6% of general high school graduates. In particular, 63.4% of general high school graduates began searching for jobs after graduation, showing that most of the respondents had entered the workforce without prior preparation.

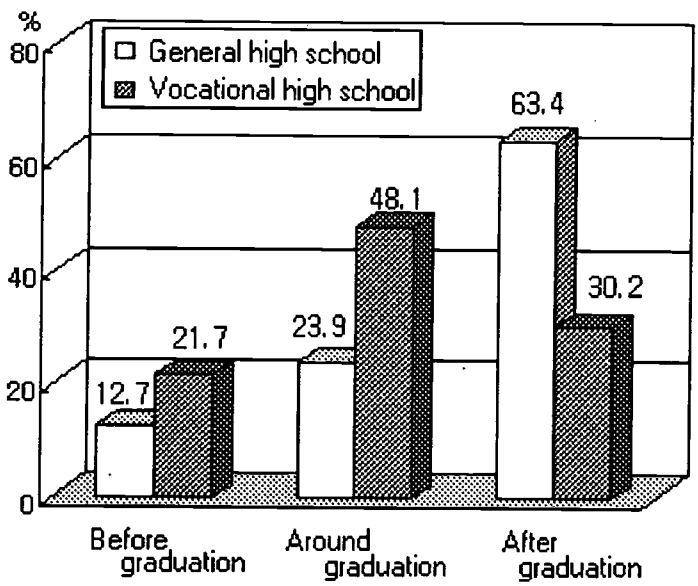


Figure IV-5. Period during which respondents began job searching, according to type of high school

Respondents who were unable to gain employment for a certain amount of time after graduation or those who had spent a considerable amount of time searching for jobs were asked how they spent their time after graduation up to the time they obtained employment. The results showed that unemployed high school graduates spent their time on part-time jobs(29.4%), personal hobbies(24.6%), military duty or preparing for military duty(16,7%), and job preparation and training(15.1%). Only 15.1% of the respondents replied that they spent their time preparing for employment, showing that the time in which the respondents were unemployed was not used effectively as an opportunity to enhance their job capabilities. An examination of the responses showed significant differences between genders. In the case of men, 35.0% responded that they had spent their time on fulfilling or preparing for their military duties. On the other hand, most women spent their time on part-time jobs(36.4%) or on pursuing personal hobbies(33.3%).

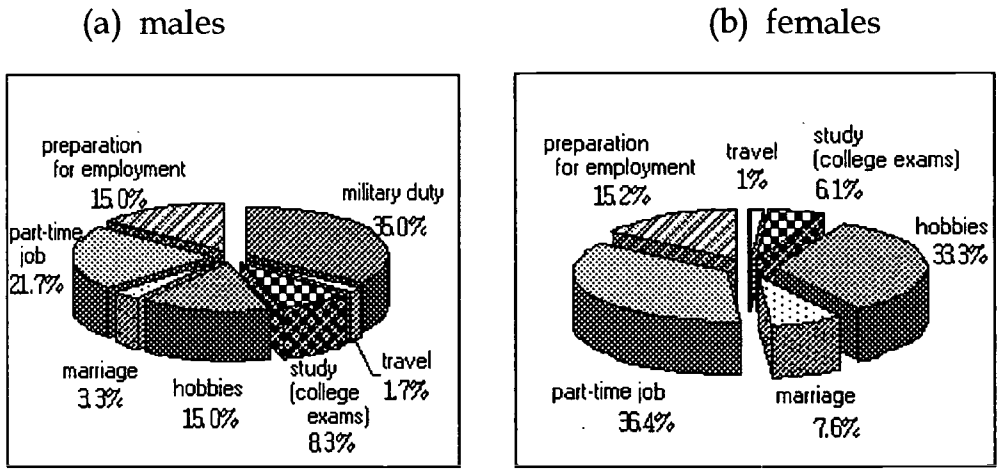


Figure IV-6. Activities after high school graduation before employment

<Table Ⅳ-5> examines job education and training after high school graduation before employment or after employment, that is, the time invested in job training after graduation before or after employment, training in private institutes, and on-the-job training after employment.

The results showed that respondents had received job training before and after employment for an average of one month. The duration of training differed according to gender and whether the respondent had received vocational education for license acquisition before employment. Women who had received vocational education for licenses tended to have the longest vocational education period outside of the school through job training and private institutes. On the other hand, training after employment was connected to the task undertaken by the employee and thus personal background exerted no influence. However, it was found that generally, the duration of training before and after employment was longer in the case of respondents who had received vocational education during high school.

Table IV-5. Duration of job training before and after employment according to personal background

		N	average	standard deviation
training period before employ-ment	men	80	.53	2.04
	women	99	1.31	3.03
	received education to earn licenses	85	1.65	3.53
	have not received education to earn licenses	94	.34	1.18
	prepared for employment	86	1.36	3.20
	have not prepared for employment	93	.59	1.98
	total	179	.96	2.65
training period after employment	men	80	.80	2.22
	women	99	1.11	2.11
	received education to earn licenses	85	1.14	2.22
	have not received education to earn licenses	94	.82	2.10
	prepared for employment	86	1.10	2.22
	have not prepared for employment	93	.85	2.11
	general high school	72	.75	2.14
	vocational high school	106	1.02	1.90
	earned license	70	1.27	2.40
	have not earned license	15	.53	.92
	highly relevant license	42	1.29	2.32
	relevant license	9	2.11	3.89
	irrelevant license	19	.84	1.57
	total	179	.97	2.16

C. Results of school-to-work transition

In order to examine the overall characteristics of the results of school-to-work transition after high school, high school graduate workers were compared with employed workers who graduated from four-year universities or two-year junior colleges. The results are shown in <Table Ⅳ-6>.

There was a difference in the type of company and work type as well as the income level of first jobs. Compared to high school and college graduates, university graduates were less likely to be employed in private enterprises, but held a wider variety of jobs in various institutions such as schools, private education institutes, universities and research institutes. High school and college graduates tended to hold jobs in manufacturing or service sectors while university graduates had a strong tendency to hold white-collar office jobs, showing a vast difference in the type of work according to education level. Also, a comparison of income showed that only 38.5% of high school graduates earned a monthly income of 700,000 won or above, compared to 58.8% of junior college graduates and 71.3% of university graduates, showing a difference in first job income according to education level. However, a comparison of current income among respondents who had left their first jobs or continued to accumulate working experience in the same job showed that there was not a large gap in current incomes. This information provides that education level among similar age group is not a continuing decisive factor determining income. Overall, while high school graduates and junior college graduates showed similar characteristics excluding initial income; university graduates were clearly differentiated from the other two groups.

Table IV-6. Disparity in first job income according to education level

(Unit: frequency, (%))

characteristic \ education level		employed after graduating from high school	employed after graduating from junior college	employed after graduating from university	total
type of business	private enterprise	156(87.2)	55(80.9)	46(57.5)	257(78.6)
	public enterprise	8(4.5)	3(4.4)	5(6.3)	16(4.9)
	government organization	4(2.2)	1 (1.5)	1(1.3)	6(1.8)
	school	-	-	10(12.5)	10(3.1)
	private education institute	3(1.7)	6(8.8)	11(13.8)	20(6.1)
	university/ research institute	-	1(1.5)	5(6.3)	6(1.8)
	non-profit organization	7(3.9)	2(2.9)	2(2.5)	11(3.4)
number of employees	under 25	88(54.0)	37(60.7)	32(43.2)	157(52.7)
	25-499	51(31.3)	15(24.6)	25(33.8)	91(30.5)
	500 or more	24(14.7)	9(14.8)	17(23.0)	50(16.8)
work type	office work	58(32.4)	30(44.1)	59(73.8)	147(45.0)
	manufacturing	67(37.4)	14(20.6)	9(11.3)	90(27.5)
	service	46(25.7)	17(25.0)	10(12.5)	73(22.3)
	self-employment	8(4.5)	7(10.3)	2(2.5)	17(5.2)
employment type	permanent employment	133(74.3)	53(77.9)	61(76.3)	247(75.5)
	temporary employment	35(19.6)	8(11.8)	17(21.3)	60(18.3)
	self-employment	11(6.1)	7(10.3)	2(2.5)	20(6.1)
initial income	under 700,000 won	110(61.5)	28(41.2)	23(28.8)	161(49.2)
	700,000-under 1,300,000 won	60(33.5)	31(45.6)	42(52.5)	133(40.7)
	1,300,000 won or above	9(5.0)	9(13.2)	15(18.8)	33(10.1)
current income	under 700,000 won	41(32.5)	15(32.6)	19(29.2)	75(31.6)
	700,000- under 1,300,000 won	62(49.2)	21(45.7)	27(41.5)	110(46.4)
	1,300,000 won or above	23(18.3)	10(21.7)	19(29.2)	52(21.9)
total [1) 2) 3)]		179 (100.0)	68 (100.0)	80 (100.0)	327 (100.0)

[1] One respondent provide no answer to the type of business so 326 cases were used in the analysis

[2] 29 respondents provided no answer to the number of employees so 298 cases were used in the analysis

[3] 237 cases were used in the analysis of current income, due to currently unemployed respondents

Here we will take a closer look at the results of school-to-work transition after graduating from high school. First, differences in the characteristics of first jobs were examined according to personal background. <Table Ⅳ-7> shows the gender-based differences. In the case of males, 67.1% of respondents worked in small enterprises consisting of less than 25 employees, while only 9.2% worked in large corporations with 500 or more employees. On the other hand, 42.5% of females worked in small enterprises comprised of less than 25 employees while 19.5% worked in large corporations with 500 or more employees. In terms of work type, 51.5% of females held office jobs compared to a mere 8.8% of men. On the other hand, 60.6% of males worked in the manufacturing field compared to 19.2% of women.

Table Ⅳ-7. Differences in first job characteristics according to gender

(Unit: Frequency, (%))

job characteristics \ gender		men	women	total
number of employees [1]	under 25	51 (67.1)	37 (42.5)	88 (54.0)
	25-499	18 (23.7)	33 (37.9)	51 (31.3)
	500 or more	7 (9.2)	17 (19.5)	24 (14.7)
work type	office work	7 (8.8)	51 (51.5)	58 (32.4)
	manufacturing	48 (60.0)	19 (19.2)	67 (37.4)
	service	19 (23.8)	27 (27.3)	46 (25.7)
	self-employment	6 (7.5)	2 (2.0)	8 (4.5)
total		80 (100.0)	99 (100.0)	179 (100.0)

[1] 16 respondents provided no answer to the number of employees in the company so 163 cases were used in the analysis.

In particular, there was a difference in first job income according to gender. Results showed that 70.7% of women earned less than 700,000won a month compared to 50% of men, showing that men are receiving more income than women.

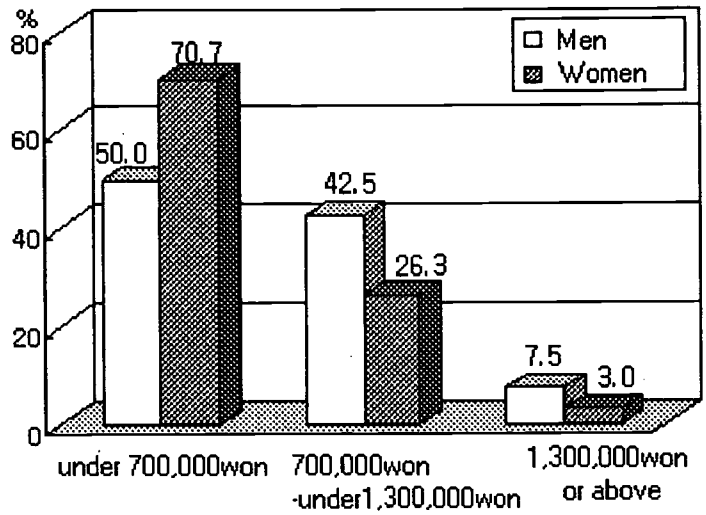


Figure IV-7. First job income of high school graduates according to gender

However, there was no difference in first job income according to the type of high school or whether the respondent had earned a license. That is, graduates of vocational high schools who had received job education and graduates of general high schools where job education programs were not developed did not show a difference in first job income. Also, whether the graduate had earned a license or has not affected the income level. This shows that school education and certification do not play an important role in determining the income level of a first job.

The respondents were asked how much help the high school

curriculum offered in carrying out their job duties. The respondents replied that field training was the most helpful, followed by the guidance of teachers and the courses on their major field of study. This shows the importance of implementing a curriculum that can be useful in the field. On the other hand, the general curriculum and special activities at school were given an average score of less than a mediocre 3.00, meaning that they were not considered to be helpful in the workplace.

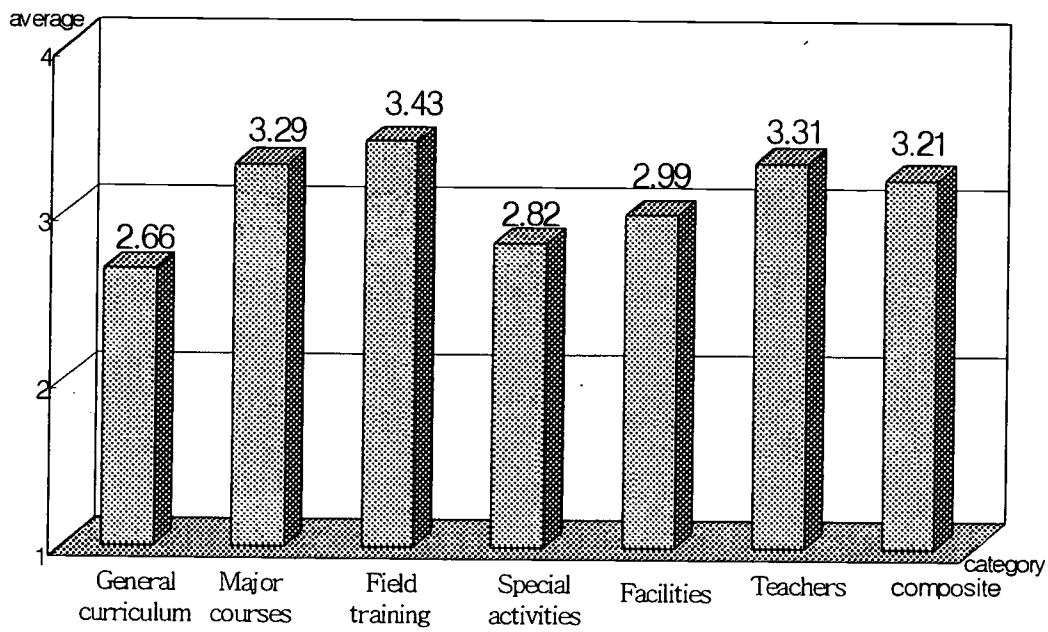


Figure IV-8. Helpfulness of high school curriculum in carrying out work duties

The helpfulness of the high school education and the training before and after employment in carrying out work duties were compared in order to examine whether there was a difference, and if there was, which training course was most useful. Job training after employment was found to be the most helpful in carrying out job duties followed by training before employment and high school education. Thus, the high school education was felt to be least helpful in the workplace. This result shows that

school education in general is not much contributing to carrying out job duties in the workplace.

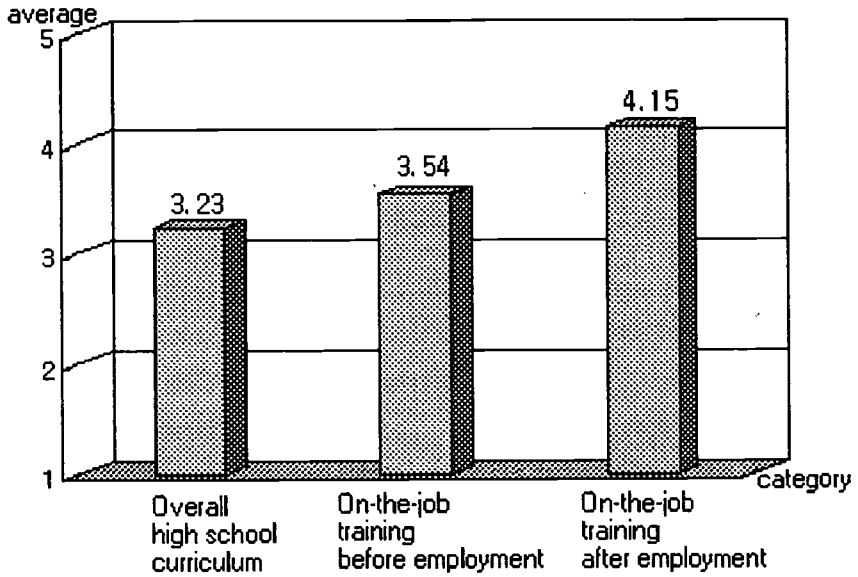


Figure IV-9. Helpfulness of high school curriculum and on-the-job training concerning, carrying out work duties.

The number of respondents who had left their first jobs was over 2.5 times higher than those who had not, which shows that an extremely high rate of high school graduates are leaving their first jobs.

Many variables, which affected the time the worker remained in a company, were examined. It was notable that the length of time a worker remained in a company was affected by the source from which the worker obtained employment information during job searching. Among the respondents who had left their jobs, those who had used formal methods to obtain employment information were found to remain at the job for a shorter period than those who obtained information through informal methods or through school do. This seems to be because formal information sources tend to offer less information on the

job opening than other types of information sources.

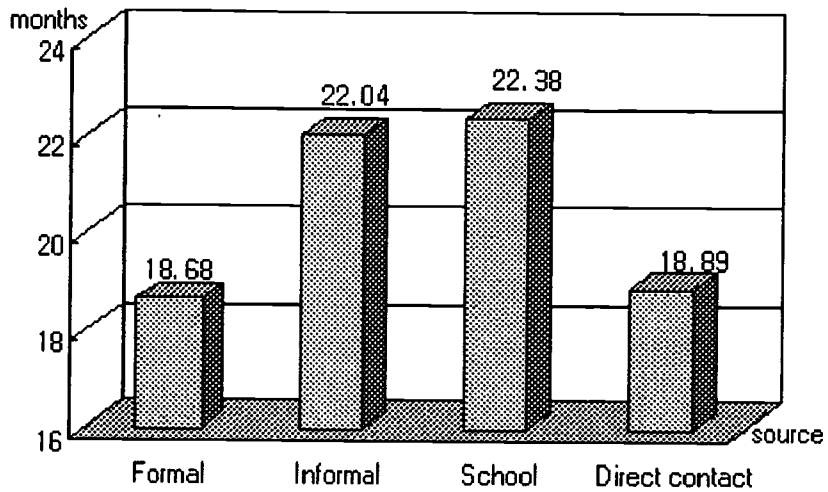
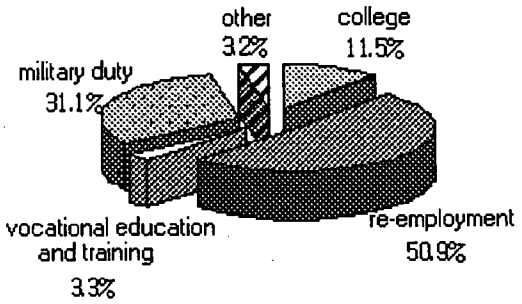


Figure IV-10. Duration of first job according to the source of employment information

Among high school graduates who had left their jobs, most(54.9%) respondents, both male and female, said that after leaving their first jobs they had spent their time looking for new jobs. This was followed by military duty for men(31.3%) and marriage/homemakers for women(24.7%). Thus, it was found that military duty for men and marriage for women are important factors, which interrupt the job experience of workers in Korea.

(a) Men



(b) Women

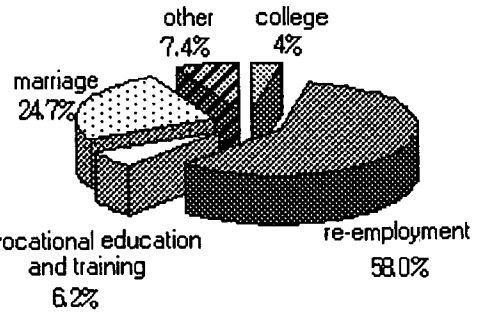


Figure IV-11. Activities after leaving first job according to gender

3. School-to-work transition in higher education

A. Preparation for the labor market in colleges

Our survey found that not many college students prepare for the working life while they go to college. Only about 36% of the respondents answered that they had prepared for employment during college. This is an extremely low rate considering the fact that most college graduates enter the workforce after graduation. Graduates of four-year universities were less likely to have received job education(34.1%) than graduates of junior colleges(40.2%). It was also found that college students were obtaining informal work experience through part-time jobs(71.9%) rather than taking specific steps such as obtaining licenses to join the workforce(29.0%). Such trends were more prominent in four-year universities than in junior colleges.

Table Ⅳ-8. Preparation for the workforce according to college type

(Unit: people (%))

preparation \ college type		junior college	four-year university	total
employment preparation experience	yes	47 (40.2)	85 (34.1)	132 (36.1)
	no	70 (59.8)	164 (65.9)	234 (63.1)
part-time job experience	yes	70 (59.8)	193 (77.5)	263 (71.9)
	no	47 (40.2)	56 (22.5)	103 (28.1)
certification preparation experience	yes	41 (35.0)	65 (26.1)	106 (29.0)
	no	76 (65.0)	184 (73.9)	260 (71.0)
total		117 (100.0)	249 (100.0)	366 (100.0)

Whether the student made preparations for employment or not was affected by the student's major and grades. <Table Ⅲ-8> shows that students in medical, science, and engineering fields were more likely to prepare for employment than students in humanities and social science fields. Students majoring in education and arts were the most likely to prepare for employment. This is believed to be because college majors are detached from the actual workplace in terms of relevance and level of preparedness(Sagen, *et al*, 1990). Also, college students with grades ranging in the middle were most likely to prepare for employment.

Table Ⅳ-9. Preparation for employment according to major and grades

(Unit: People (%))

category \ preparation for employment		yes	no	total
college major	humanities · social science	39(28.5)	98(71.5)	137(100.0)
	medical · science · engineering	72(39.3)	111(60.7)	183(100.0)
	other	21(45.7)	25(54.3)	46(100.0)
college grades	upper	23(32.9)	47(67.1)	70(100.0)
	middle	92(42.4)	125(57.6)	217(100.0)
	lower	16(20.5)	62(79.5)	78(100.0)
total		132(36.1)	234(63.9)	366(100.0)

While the largest number of respondents said that they prepared for employment through regular college education(46.2%), those who received private education outside of the school(25.8%) and those who prepared by themselves(28.0%) exceeded half of the total.

Holding part-time jobs is a good way to prepare for employment by experiencing the workplace. About 72% of college student and college graduates had work experience through part-time jobs, while about 75% of college graduates said that their experiences in part-time jobs during college helped them at the workplace after employment.

Table Ⅳ-10. Usefulness of part-time jobs during college in the workplace

(Unit: people (%))

school type / perception	junior college	four-year university	total
very helpful	19(27.1)	41(21.4)	60(22.9)
somewhat helpful	33(47.1)	102(53.1)	135(51.5)
not helpful	18(25.7)	49(25.5)	67(25.6)
total	70(100.0)	192(100.0)	262(100.0)

Earning licenses is also another meaningful sign of effort in preparing for employment. There was a difference according to major in the rate of students preparing for employment by receiving education to obtain licenses. Students majoring in humanities and social science fields had the lowest rate of preparation for licenses. This seems to be because there is not a various kinds of licenses available in the humanities · social science field. Taking courses at private institutions was the most popular method of preparing for licenses(56.2%), followed by regular school education(32.4%) and studying independently(11.4%).

Table Ⅳ-11. Education for obtaining licenses according to college majors

(Unit: people (%))

college major / education	humanities · social science fields	medical · science · engineering fields	other fields	total
yes	29(21.2)	58(31.7)	19(41.3)	106(29.0)
no	108(78.8)	125(68.3)	27(58.7)	260(71.0)
total	137(100.0)	183(100.0)	46(100.0)	366(100.0)

B. The school-to-work transition process

The school-to-work transition process in Korea can be observed in terms of job searching period, job searching methods, employment method, income and promotion after employment, and period of employment.

First, most college students begin job searching at the time of or after graduation. In particular, 35.4% of junior college students begin job searching after graduation. Also, 75.0% of junior college graduates and 67.9% of four-year university graduates are employed after graduation.

Second, obtaining employment information is an important factor for the smooth transition from the school to the labor market. The methods employed in obtaining employment information included informal methods(37.6%), school(28.2%), and formal methods(26.8%) and direct contacts(7.4%). A large proportion of junior college students were found to use informal methods(41.2%) and direct contacts(13.2%) in obtaining employment information. Employment methods included formal methods (41.6%); informal methods(36.9%) and school assisted(16.8%). Notably, the four-year university students(48.1%) prefer formal methods.

Third, the factors considered in selecting a job are important in understanding school-to-work transition of college graduates. Respondents listed aptitude and interest(42.6%), income and welfare(24.3%) and promotion opportunities and future prospects(18.9%) as important factors in selecting a job.

Table IV-12. School-to-work transition according to college type

(Unit: people (%))

transition \ college type		junior college	four-year university	total
job searching period	1 year before graduation	6 (9.3)	23 (28.4)	29 (19.9)
	around graduation	36 (55.4)	42 (51.9)	78 (53.4)
	after graduation	23 (35.4)	16 (19.8)	39 (26.7)
employ-ment period	before graduation	17 (25.0)	26 (32.1)	43 (28.9)
	after graduation	51 (75.0)	55 (67.9)	106 (71.1)
employ-ment informa-tion source	formal method	18 (26.5)	22 (27.2)	40 (26.8)
	informal method	28 (41.2)	28 (34.6)	56 (37.6)
	school	13 (19.1)	29 (35.8)	42 (28.2)
	direct contact	9 (13.2)	2 (2.5)	11 (7.4)
employ-ment method	formal method	23 (33.8)	39 (48.1)	62 (41.6)
	informal method	26 (38.2)	29 (35.8)	55 (36.9)
	school	13 (19.1)	12 (14.8)	25 (16.8)
	other	6 (8.8)	1 (1.2)	7 (4.7)
factors in selecting job	income and welfare	17 (25.0)	19 (23.8)	36 (24.3)
	promotion opportunities and prospects	13 (19.1)	15 (18.8)	28 (18.9)
	aptitude and interest	32 (47.1)	31 (38.8)	63 (42.6)
	other	6 (8.8)	15 (18.8)	21 (14.2)
total[1) 2)]		68 (100.0)	81 (100.0)	149 (100.0)

Note: 1) 65 cases were analyzed in the job searching period of junior college graduates

2) 80 cases were analyzed in the factors considered in selecting a job among four-year university graduates

Fourth, it was found that most respondents were employed after graduation(71.1%). However, differences were discovered according to gender, age, and college major. More men were found to be employed

before college graduation(34.9%) than women(24.4%) are. Also, those 25 years of age or older(29.6%) were employed before graduation more often than those 24 or under, as well as medical · science · engineering majors(37.5%) over humanities · social science majors(26.8%) and other majors(4.8%). It was also found that the earlier one started searching for a job, the faster he/she got employed.

Table IV-13 Period of employment according to personal background

(Unit: people (%))

personal background \ period of employment		before graduation	after graduation	total
gender	male	22 (34.9)	41 (65.1)	63 (100.0)
	female	21 (24.4)	65 (75.6)	86 (100.0)
age	24y or under	11 (26.8)	30 (73.2)	41 (100.0)
	25y or over	32 (29.6)	76 (70.4)	108 (100.0)
college major	humanities · social science	15 (26.8)	41 (73.2)	56 (100.0)
	medical · science · engineering	27 (37.5)	45 (62.5)	72 (100.0)
	other	1 (4.8)	20 (95.2)	21 (100.0)
job searching period	1 year before graduation	19 (65.5)	10 (34.5)	29 (100.0)
	around graduation	23 (29.5)	55 (70.5)	78 (100.0)
	after graduation	-	39 (100.0)	39 (100.0)
total[1)]		43 (28.9)	106 (71.1)	149 (100.0)

Note: 1) In analyzing the job searching period, 42 cases were analyzed for those who began searching for employment before graduation and 104 cases for those who began searching after graduation for a grand total of 146 cases.

Most notably, the personal background of college students accounted for the largest difference in the employment information resources utilized, i.e. formal, informal etc. Men were more likely to utilize informal resources than women(41.3% and 34.9%, respectively). They were less likely than women to use the school as an information source(25.4% and 30.2%, respectively). College graduates 25 years old or older were more likely to use informal sources than those 24 or under, and less likely to use formal sources(23.1% and 36.6%, respectively) or the school(26.9% and 31.7%, respectively) as a source of information. Students majoring in humanities · social science fields utilized formal information sources more often than medical · science · engineering majors and other majors(33.9%, 23.6% and 19.0%, respectively), but did not use the school as a main information source(21.4%, 31.9% and 33.3%, respectively).

A difference was found in the employment information sources that were used according to the time period in which the respondent began searching for job. Those who began job searching early were found to use informal methods and the school for employment information. On the other hand, those who began job searching later tended to use formal sources more often. Also, those who began searching for jobs after graduation were found to utilize informal sources and direct contacts for information.

Table IV-14. Employment information source according to personal background

(Unit: people (%))

personal background \ information source		formal methods	informal methods	school	direct contact	total
gender	male	16 (25.4)	26 (41.3)	16 (25.4)	5 (7.9)	63 (100.0)
	female	24 (27.9)	30 (34.9)	26 (30.2)	6 (7.0)	86 (100.0)
age	24y or under	15 (36.6)	11 (26.8)	13 (31.7)	2 (4.9)	41 (100.0)
	25y or over	25 (23.1)	45 (41.7)	29 (26.9)	9 (8.3)	108 (100.0)
college major	humanities · social studies	19 (33.9)	22 (39.3)	12 (21.4)	3 (5.4)	56 (100.0)
	medical · science · engineering	17 (23.6)	26 (36.1)	23 (31.9)	6 (8.3)	72 (100.0)
	other fields	4 (19.0)	8 (38.1)	7 (33.3)	2 (9.5)	21 (100.0)
job search period	1 year before graduation	3 (10.3)	14 (48.3)	11(37.9)	1 (5.3)	29 (100.0)
	around graduation	25 (32.1)	23 (29.5)	25 (32.1)	5 (6.4)	78 (100.0)
	after graduation	12 (30.8)	17 (43.6)	5 (12.8)	5 (12.8)	39 (100.0)
total [1]		40 (26.8)	56 (37.6)	42 (28.2)	11 (7.4)	149 (100.0)

Note: 1) In the job search period, 54 cases of those who used informal information sources and 41 cases of those who used the school as an information source were analyzed for a total of 146 cases.

Employment methods after graduating from college differed according to personal background. More men than women obtained job through formal methods(42.9% and 32.6%, respectively). On the other hand, a lower rate of men used informal methods than women(36.5% and 45.3%, respectively). Those 25 or over were more likely to gain employment through informal methods than those 24 or under(40.7% and 26.8%, respectively), but less likely to gain employment through the school(13.0% and 26.8%, respectively).

Table IV-15. Employment methods for first jobs according to personal background

(Unit: people (%))

Employment method / personal background		formal method	informal method	school	other	total
gender	male	23 (36.5)	27 (42.9)	9 (14.3)	4 (6.3)	63 (100.0)
	female	39 (45.3)	28 (32.6)	16 (18.6)	3 (3.5)	86 (100.0)
age	24y or under	18 (43.9)	11 (26.8)	11 (26.8)	1 (2.4)	41 (100.0)
	25y or over	44 (40.7)	44 (40.7)	14 (13.0)	6 (5.6)	108 (100.0)
college major	humanities · sociology	26 (46.4)	22 (39.3)	5 (8.9)	3 (5.4)	56 (100.0)
	medical · science · engineering	25 (34.7)	26 (36.1)	18 (25.0)	3 (4.2)	72 (100.0)
	other fields	11 (52.4)	7 (33.3)	2 (9.5)	1 (4.8)	21 (100.0)
job searching period	1 year before graduation	9 (37.9)	13 (44.8)	4 (13.8)	1 (5.3)	29 (100.0)
	around graduation	34 (43.6)	28 (35.9)	15 (19.2)	5 (6.4)	78 (100.0)
	after graduation	16 (41.0)	12 (30.8)	6 (15.4)	5 (12.8)	39 (100.0)
information source	formal methods	33 (82.5)	5 (12.5)	2 (5.0)	-	40 (100.0)
	informal methods	8 (14.3)	44 (78.6)	2(3.6)	2 (3.6)	56 (100.0)
	school	18 (42.9)	4 (9.5)	19 (45.2)	1 (2.4)	42 (100.0)
	direct contact	3 (27.3)	2 (18.2)	2 (18.2)	4 (36.4)	11 (100.0)
employment period	before graduation	20 (46.5)	14 (32.6)	8 (18.6)	1 (2.3)	43 (100.0)
	after graduation	42 (39.6)	41 (38.7)	17 (16.0)	6 (5.7)	106 (100.0)
total [1]		62 (41.6)	55 (36.9)	25 (16.8)	7 (4.7)	149 (100.0)

Note : 1) In the analysis of the job searching period, 61 cases using formal methods and 53 cases using informal methods were used for a total of 146 cases.

While a higher rate of medical · science · engineering majors gained employment through the school in comparison to humanities · social science majors and other fields(25.0%, 8.9% and 9.5%, respectively), other fields tended to obtain jobs through formal methods. Also, those who began searching for jobs earlier tended to gain employment through

informal methods(1 year before graduation 44.8%, around graduation 35.9%, after graduation 30.8%). Most of the respondents who had gained information through both formal and informal sources also obtained jobs through the same method. However, respondents who had obtained employment information through the school were found to gain employment through the school or formal methods. As a result, employment methods were affected by the time period in which the respondents began job searching.

C. Results of school-to-work transition

The results of the study found that there were differences in the result of school-to-work transition among college graduates depending on the type of college. In comparison to four-year university graduates, graduates of junior colleges tended to be self-employed or work in manufacturing or service fields, small enterprises, receiving low income, carrying out duties that were below their education level and irrelevant to their college major. Also a higher rate of junior college graduates left their jobs in comparison to four-year university graduates.

Table IV-16. Results of school-to-work transition according to college type

(Unit: people (%))

first jobs \ college type		junior college	four-year university	total
work type	permanent employment	53 (77.9)	62 (76.5)	115 (77.2)
	temporary employment	8 (11.8)	17 (21.0)	25 (16.8)
	self-employment	7 (10.3)	2 (2.5)	9 (6.0)
field of employ-ment	office work	30 (44.1)	59 (72.8)	89 (59.7)
	manufacturing	14 (20.6)	10 (12.3)	24 (16.1)
	services	17 (25.0)	10 (12.3)	27 (18.1)
	self-employment	7 (10.3)	2 (2.5)	9 (6.0)
number of employ-ees	under 25	37 (60.7)	32 (42.7)	69 (50.7)
	25-499	15 (24.6)	25 (33.3)	40 (29.4)
	500 or more	9 (14.8)	18 (24.0)	27 (19.9)
income	under 700,000won	28 (41.2)	23 (28.4)	51 (34.2)
	700,000 - under 1,300,000won	31 (45.6)	43 (53.1)	74 (49.7)
	1,300,000won or above	9 (13.2)	15 (18.5)	24 (16.1)
rele-vance to college major	relevant	24 (35.3)	49 (60.5)	73 (49.0)
	somewhat relevant	7 (10.3)	9 (11.1)	16 (10.7)
	irrelevant	37 (54.4)	23 (28.4)	60 (40.2)
relevance to education level	work suitable or above education level	43 (63.3)	57 (70.3)	100 (67.1)
	work below education level	25 (36.8)	24 (29.6)	49 (32.9)
work transfer	yes	44 (64.7)	40 (49.4)	84 (56.4)
	no	24 (35.3)	41 (50.6)	65 (43.6)
total [1]		68 (100.0)	81 (100.0)	149 (100.0)

Note: 1) In the number of employees, 61 cases from junior colleges and 75 cases from four-year universities were used in the analysis for a total of 136 cases.

The initial income level received in first jobs differed according to age and college grades. Those 25 and over received higher income than those 24 or under. This is thought to be due to the fact that college graduates 24 years or under were employed during the Asian economic crisis, when the Korean economy was suffering from a recession.

Respondents who majored in medical · science · engineering fields received more income than other majors, while those with higher marks also received higher pay.

Table IV-17. Income level at first jobs according to personal background

(Unit: people (%))

personal background \ income		under 700,000 won	700,000 - under 1.3m won	1.3m won or above	total
age	24y or under	19 (46.3)	20 (48.8)	2 (4.9)	41 (100.0)
	25y or over	32 (29.6)	54 (50.0)	22 (20.4)	108 (100.0)
college major	humanities · social science fields	23 (41.1)	25 (44.6)	8 (14.3)	56 (100.0)
	medical · science engineering fields	23 (31.9)	34 (47.2)	15 (20.8)	72 (100.0)
	other fields	5 (23.8)	15 (71.4)	1 (4.8)	21 (100.0)
college grades	upper	10 (32.3)	10 (32.3)	11 (35.5)	31 (100.0)
	middle	32 (35.6)	49 (54.4)	9 (10.0)	90 (100.0)
	lower	8 (29.6)	15 (55.6)	4 (14.8)	27 (100.0)
total		51 (34.2)	74 (49.7)	24 (16.1)	149 (100.0)

Depending on the worker's college major, there was a difference in the relevance of work duties to college majors. Graduates of humanities · social science fields were more likely to be carrying out work duties irrelevant to their college majors than graduates of medical · science · engineering and other fields.

Table IV-18. Relevance of major to work duties according to college major

(Unit: people (%))

major \ relevance	relevant	somewhat relevant	irrelevant	total
humanities · social science fields	22 (39.3)	7 (12.5)	27 (48.2)	56 (100.0)
medical · science · engineering fields	36 (50.0)	8 (11.1)	28 (38.9)	72 (100.0)
other fields	15 (71.4)	1 (4.8)	5 (23.8)	21 (100.0)
total	73 (49.0)	16 (10.7)	60 (40.3)	149 (100.0)

The respondents' answers as to whether they had found the education they received in college to be helpful in their work showed that liberal arts courses fell below a score of 3.00. A score of 3.00 may be interpreted as the curriculum was found to be somewhat helpful. Therefore, it was found that respondents held a negative view of liberal arts courses, as those courses did not offer help in carrying out duties within the workplace. On the other hand, field training and major courses received considerably high scores, showing that respondents perceived field training and major courses to be helpful in their work performance.

Table IV-19. Usefulness of college courses in carrying out work duties

(Unit: Number of people)

curriculum \ usefulness college	average	standard deviation	rank
liberal arts	2.90	.96	6
major	3.87	1.01	2
field study	3.94	1.44	1
special activities	3.08	1.24	4
facilities	3.05	.94	5
professors	3.25	.94	3
composite	3.42	.80	

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

1. Conclusion

School-to-work transition for graduates in Korea is at a crisis level. This crisis is largely due to the fact that the school and society are not providing systematic help in the school-to-work transition process and leaving the responsibility to the graduates themselves.

In reality, students are unable to systematically prepare for the workforce within the school. Large proportions of students are being deployed into the workforce without minimum preparation for employment. There is a severe lack of structural job preparation programs within the school curriculum, and many students are preparing for the workplace individually through private institutions. There is a tendency to obtain the technology and certification required in the workplace in private institutes and after graduation rather than within the school. Although many students are accumulating work experience outside of the school, the school and society are also neglecting this fact.

Students are suffering in the school-to-work transition process because they are unable to receive the systematic help that they need from the school and society. The role of the school in the employment process has been reduced to the point that many students are individually seeking employment through informal means. Schools are not providing adequate counseling regarding future career options after graduation, and many students are entering college without specific plans. Also, many students are entering the workforce without specific preparations or

serious consideration.

Even after entering into the workforce, many graduates tend to have problems adjusting to the workplace for various reasons. Besides the adverse working conditions facing high school graduates, the more serious problem was found to be the bleak future prospects for high school graduates. Therefore, many high school graduates leave their jobs at an early stage and fulfill their military duties or marry in order to escape the situation. The higher rate of people receiving higher education seems to be somewhat linked to the problems facing school-to-work transition. Also, success in the labor market was found to depend not on job education, qualification or individual job searching efforts, but rather on personal background such as gender and education level.

Colleges are also unprepared to operate job-training programs, which accommodate the rapid changes of industries and the labor market. Because higher education is increasingly leaning towards humanities fields, the labor market is experiencing quantitative and qualitative problems in acquiring the workers that it needs. In particular, there is a severe lack of manpower skilled in technology fields, and the inconsistent skills of college graduates are causing problems in supplying qualified workers into the workforce. This is also causing college graduates to work in fields irrelevant to their college majors. Many companies hire employees irregularly and the practice of hiring through informal methods is spreading. Therefore, the transition pattern of college graduates into the labor force is taking on a different shape.

In Korea, the students are made responsible for the transition from school to the workplace, causing many problems in preparing for employment, the transition process, and the results of the transition in the labor market. In order to overcome these problems and enable students to enter into the workforce more effectively and efficiently, it is

necessary for schools and the society to pro-actively develop an organized and helpful school-to-work transition system, instead of forcing the students to carry out a do-it-yourself type transition process.

The school-to-work transition process is very complex and various participants are required in the process. Basically, the school-to-work transition process is a social phenomenon in which education, represented by the school, meets the workplace, represented by employment. The process concerns not only students, parents, teachers and employees, but also citizens, labor unions, academic circles, and central and local governments. Therefore, in order to ensure a smooth school-to-work transition for students, the indifference and negligence stemming from the perception that transition into the workforce is the responsibility of the student must be abandoned. All who are concerned in the process including schools, enterprises, citizens and the government must take on a sense of responsibility regarding youths that will be the leaders of tomorrow. Society must establish a school-to-work transition network through which they can systematically and comprehensively support the transition process.

2. Recommendations for establishing a school-to-work transition network

In order to establish a school-to-work transition network, which is both systematically helpful and accommodates the situation of Korea, the following directions should be taken in terms of educational, social, and policy efforts.

First, education preparing all students for the workplace should be provided. Counseling on future courses and job education programs

should be strengthened so that general high school, junior college and university students as well as vocational high school students can pave their own career paths according to their aptitude and abilities.

Second, job education should include programs through which students can directly experience the workplace and receive field training. This should be provided systematically through the school and various organizations outside of the school. A school-enterprise education network based on experience and training must be developed so those students can receive vocational training, which is closely linked to the workplace.

Third, a more diverse and flexible system that ensures opportunities for both employment and continued education must be adopted. Instead of making students decide a future course early in their lives, students should be exposed to more opportunities through an extensive and flexible system, which includes various exit points where the student can change the course of his or her life.

Fourth, in order to prevent excessive delay in the school-to-work transition, the higher education should be popularized while at the same time strengthening the tie between education and work, providing a realistic opportunity for high school graduates to continue higher education as they accumulate work experience in the labor market. Also, students going on to college after graduating from high school should be given broader opportunities to build on the skills and knowledge obtained in high school, and enhance their work abilities.

Fifth, an institutional mechanism for the networking of schools and enterprises and the separation of roles should be established. Schools and enterprises should establish strong ties so those students can receive experience-based education and smoothly carry out the transition process

into the workforce. In order to establish effective school-enterprise cooperation, school education and enterprise employment and training must recognize and understand each other's unique roles and pursue mutual interest through the separation of roles.

Sixth, a local network should be established so that all members of society can share the responsibility of ensuring students a smooth transition into the workplace. An institutional framework and grounds for mutual cooperation should be established under which parents, civic groups, labor unions, local governments and the various departments of the central government as well as schools and enterprises can cooperate under mutual responsibility and social ties. By doing this, the do-it-yourself school-to-work transition system where students themselves must take on the responsibilities of transition into the workplace should be abandoned for a system under which the entire society supports and helps the process.

Finally, measures to continue studies and evaluations into the development of a more efficient and effective school-to-work transition process must be carried out with a long-term outlook. Based on these developments, the existing system should be revised and complemented.

A school-to-work transition network heading in this direction must be a regionally based network based on the ties between schools and enterprises, but must at the same time enable the cooperation of various participants in the process. This is illustrated in the model shown in <fig. V-1>.

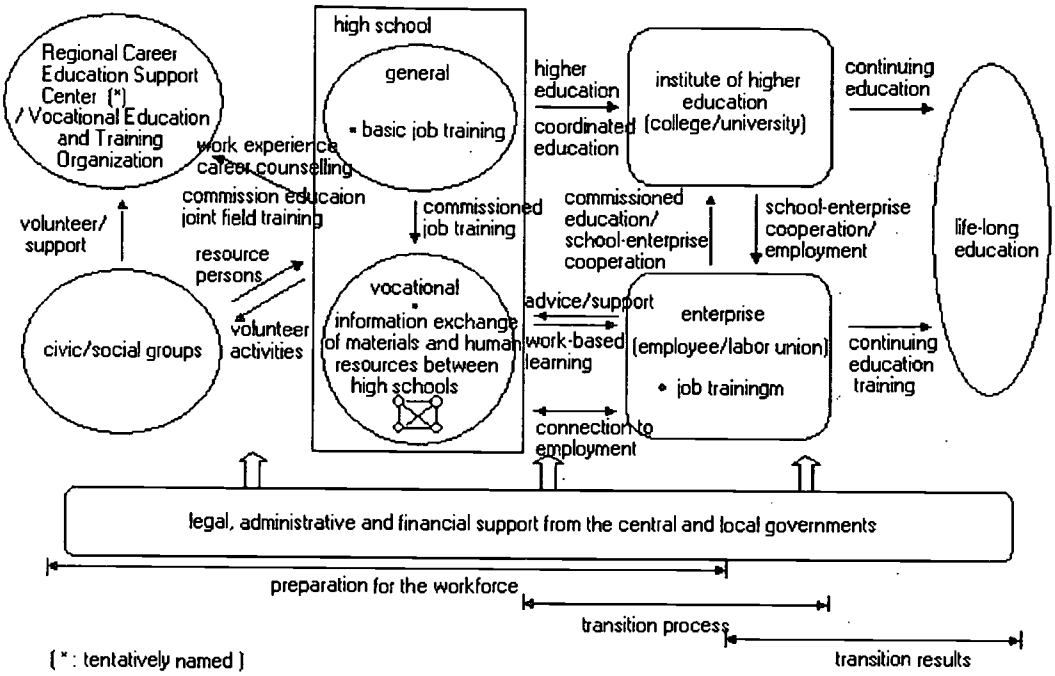


Figure V-1. Regional school-to-work transition network

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