

# ~~Need to Modify~~Modification of the Equalization Policy and Suggested Policy Measures

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## aAbstract

The high school equalization policy should be modified because it is ineffective and no longer suitable in today's society for the times and is ineffective as a policy. However, simply scrapping the policy in the short term in one big swoop could prove to be extremely hazardous. Therefore, in the short term (삭제?), it is desirable to policies must be implemented implement policies that attempt to achieve such goals as an increase of school choices, and address widening educational demanders' school choice. Moreover, measures addressing the middle class' educational demands should be established. In the long term (→ In this process), it is necessary to establish an educational provision framework in order to bring about a society where all students can attain the same economic standing. More specifically, an education system for disadvantaged working-class students must be introduced, who are at a disadvantage when it comes to academic achievement to, and developing their abilities and aptitudes, must be introduced. This is the only way, Korean society can to achieve to arrive at a true educational equilibrium in Korean society.

Key words: equalization policy, suitable for the times, policy effectiveness, school choice, educational equilibrium

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## Introduction

The high school equalization policy has been in effect for some 30 years now, maintaining the same basic framework it has had since it was first introduced in 1974. When we considerConsidering that the majority of Korean education

policies and related institutions have been criticized for their lack of consistency as a result of ~~the frequent changes alterations, made to them~~, the equalization policy can be regarded as an exceptional case. The reason why ~~this the~~ equalization policy has endured for so long appears to be connected to ~~the fact that it is in tune with many one of the main characteristics of~~ Koreans', the desire ~~for for~~ equality.

However, much debate has arisen ~~of late~~ regarding the need to abolish this policy. Most of these arguments ~~have focused on the results about of the~~ equalization policy ~~have focused on its results. As such, T two schools of thought have emerged~~ These arguments can be divided into two main viewpoints. ~~The first: one believing believes~~ that the equalization policy has helped normalize the middle school education system by easing the extreme competition for high school admission, ~~helped repairing~~ much of the damage caused by the school hierarchy system, and ~~generalized generalizing~~ the secondary education system by expanding educational opportunities. ~~The second; school notes that while the other argues that~~ the equalization policy has lowered students' ~~levels of (사제?)~~ academic achievement, violated the autonomy of private schools, ~~units by limiteding the~~ school choice ~~of educational demanders~~, and ~~by failing failed~~ to bridge the gap in the educational conditions found in various schools and regions.

The achievements of the equalization policy are hard to ~~sum up in one word summarize~~. For this reason, it is highly ~~un~~likely that these arguments will ~~not~~ be resolved ~~anytime soon in the near future~~. Nevertheless, an evaluation of the equalization policy reveals that it is no longer suitable, ~~for the times and~~ has lost ~~some of~~ its effectiveness ~~as a policy, meaning and~~ that it is necessary to modify the policy ~~as it now exists in its current state~~. This paper identifies the reasons ~~why the present~~ equalization policy should be altered by analyzing the various criticisms that ~~have has~~ been leveled at the policy and related issues. Moreover, measures to improve the equalization policy in the future are also introduced.

## ~~Need to modify~~ Modifying the ~~present e~~ Equalization p Policy

~~-Lack of~~ Ss Suitability ~~for the times~~

The equalization policy was introduced at the beginning of the domestic drive for industrialization ~~drive, during an era~~ when the national income per capita was not even less than U.S. \$500. ~~It thus goes without saying~~ Now that the national income per capita is almost U.S. \$10,000, ~~g that~~ the quality of education demanded by parents and students ~~who are living in an era when the national income per capita is almost 10,000 dollars is different from that demanded by parents and students who lived during the period when the national income per capita was only 500 dollars.~~ has greatly changed. Moreover, ~~S in~~ in the ~~current situation where the~~ quality of education plays a decisive role in a country's national competitiveness, ~~as a result of the advent of a knowledge-based society,~~ there is a need to assure that the equalization policy, which has lost its ability to keep up with the times, is modified.

The equalization policy has been criticized for lowering students' levels of academic achievement. Those arguing this have based their criticism on the fact that the equalization policy has introduced standardized education curriculum for students' with various levels of academic ability, and placed these students in the same class. Therefore, both those students' who have a high level of academic ability, and those who do not, have lost interest in studying, and teachers have been faced with many difficulties ~~with regards~~ in teaching all these students. ~~Although~~ Some schools have introduced education curriculums ~~which were modified~~ in accordance with students' various academic levels in the classroom, in order to promote both teaching and learning effectiveness ~~and ease such heterogeneous group problems.~~ But, most such efforts have met with failure because of the lack of the necessary conditions within in these schools, and of the resistance of parents to any such efforts. In addition, the small number of policies designed to increase the quality of education instead have also contributed to the lowering of students' levels of academic achievement. In essence, this phenomenon has been caused by schools' inability to attract students to their schools; ~~thus meaning that~~ the equalization policy has become schools' main provider of students, while forcing them to be satisfied with the existing system.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ~~It is common knowledge that the fact that the practice of~~ matching students with schools based on their area of residence leads to schools' monopolization of the inherent rights of educational consumers of education and to the decrease in schools' willingness to improve their services in order to provide a better quality of education, ~~is a well-known one.~~ This was one of the main reasons behind the decision in many Western countries' ~~decision~~ to introduce a school choice system ~~for educational~~

~~On the other hand, s~~Some researchers have presented opposite arguments based on the results of ~~actual~~ empirical studies. For example, ~~a study by Seong Gi-seon and Kang Tae-jung's (2001) study demonstrates~~ that the level of academic achievement of students from equalized schools was, in fact, higher than that of non-equalized schools. However, these results are in large part ~~largely~~ due to the fact that the average grades of underachievers from equalized schools were much higher than those from non-equalized schools. Furthermore, even in this study, ~~the elite students' level of academic achievement by elite students showed negative~~ displayed downward results on accounts of the equalization policy. These elite students are the human resources who will help to significantly increase our Korea's national competitiveness in this knowledge-based society. As such, ~~this~~The equalization policy, which has interrupted the development of students' potential, ~~is unsuitable~~ should be seen as being unsuitable in this era ~~today, with~~ where suitable ~~proper~~ educational conditions are ~~being~~ regarded as ~~having~~ being ~~the~~ ~~most~~ most important ~~value~~ importance. ~~a study by Seong Gi-seon and Kang Tae-jung (2001) demonstrates that the level of academic achievement of students from equalized schools was in general higher than that of non-equalized schools. This result is mainly attributed to the fact that the average grades of underachievers from equalized schools were higher than those from non-equalized schools. However, the study also points out that the equalization policy has had negative implications for the academic achievement of elite students. Top academic performers will play a pivotal role in enhancing Korea's national competitiveness in the knowledge-based society. From this perspective, any education policy which~~that stands in the way of realizing fully potentials of elite students should be deemed as unsuitable, ~~which~~ ~~failing~~ to meet the educational needs of today.

One of the ~~important~~ factors deciding the quality of education is diversity. However, the equalization policy has standardized high school education by depriving ~~educational~~ ~~demands~~ ~~people~~ of school choice, pursuing uniform educational conditions, and limiting the autonomy of private schools ~~s~~ ~~units~~. Nevertheless, those in favor of the policy insist that the equalization policy should not be modified ~~precisely~~ because educational diversity can ~~still~~ be pursued under the existing equalization policy (Seong Gi-seon and Kang Tae-jung 2001; Bak Bu-gwon 2002). However, these arguments appear to be ~~nothing~~

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~~demands~~ (O Heon-seok 1995).

~~more than unreasonable, and are based on unfeasible expectations based on unrealizable~~ conditions. There is no reason for existing schools, which have been forced to implement entrance examination-oriented education programs, to ~~introduce-make~~ such troublesome educational efforts. While many cases ~~of in which~~ the government ~~granting-granted~~ ambiguous autonomy to private schools ~~units to promote the diversity of education~~ have been cited, ~~the in~~ reality ~~is that~~ no such efforts were carried out ~~the actual educational field~~. ~~As a result,~~ in order to improve the suitability and diversity of education, it is necessary for the government to modify the equalization policy.

### *Decrease in Policy's Effectiveness*

One of the main reasons ~~why~~ the equalization policy was introduced in 1974 was to tackle the problem of ~~extreme-rampant~~ private tutoring ~~encouraged caused-by~~ ~~extreme competition in the~~ high school entrance ~~exam~~. ~~The equalization policy competition-and-was meant~~ to ease parents' economic burden ~~of having to pay for this tutoring resulting from this private education~~. ~~Today,~~ ~~h~~However, ~~looking-at-the-situation-now,~~ it is clear that, contrary to original expectations, the equalization policy has not helped decrease the economic burden caused by private education expenses. ~~According to the study conducted by Yi Ju-ho and Hong Seong-chang, private tutoring expenses in the equalized school areas were reported to be more statistically significant than in other areas. As such,~~ ~~The~~ these researchers ~~research~~ concluded that the size of the market for private tutoring in equalized school areas would offset any potential factors capable of increasing expenses for private tutoring as a result of increased high school entrance competition among elementary and middle school students following the abolishment of the equalization policy. ~~According to the study conducted by Yi Ju-ho and Hong Seong-chang (2001), private education expenditures in the equalized school areas were statistically more significantly higher than those in the non-equalized school areas. It wa~~ ~~They~~s also found that the spending was much higher than potential private education expenditures, which might have occurred if the school equalization system had ~~been abolished-and competition to get into high schools among elementary and middle school students had resumed.~~

The public education system has ~~actually~~ been weakened during the equalization policy's ~~long~~ implementation period. In addition, ~~people's~~

~~Recognition~~ of schools' image has been degraded, ~~and schools as they~~ have increasingly become simply seen simply as a place to acquire a high school diploma. Many students ~~are now of the mindset~~ take advantage of classroom time that the time spent in school serves to supplement the to catch up on sleep sleep they lost lose while pursuing the much more important private education they receive after school. ~~As~~ Since schools have failed to carry out their proper functions, ~~one's~~ a family's ability to pay for private education has become an increasingly important factor in deciding whether an individual can enter an elite university ies or not. Furthermore, ~~as~~ the middle class, ~~which~~ does possess the economic ability to pay for such education, has increasingly moved to the Gangnam area, which is known to have ~~better~~ superior educational conditions ~~than other areas~~, and the price of real estate in ~~the~~ this area ~~Gangnam area~~ has skyrocketed. As such, the argument that the equalization policy should be maintained ~~in its present form~~ in order to ~~decrease~~ ease parents' economic burden caused by private education is no longer ~~a~~ defensible ~~one~~.

### *The Equalization Policy and Link to the high-level of Unemployment among University Graduates*

One of the most serious unforeseen social problems caused by the equalization policy has been the high level of unemployment among university graduates. ~~Because~~ the equalization policy has contributed to the development of high unemployment among university graduates by ~~has~~ forceing students to push back the period when they should be thinking about their future careers, ~~and~~ limiting their ability to experience those opportunities that would help them form ~~a good~~ an idea ~~of whereabouts~~ their future ~~lies~~, ~~it has contributed to the development of high unemployment among university graduates~~. The percentage of students' attending university in 2001 was 83.7 percent, the highest percentage tops in the world. Nearly every student in Korea feels that it is only natural to ~~go on and~~ pursue university education. ~~However,~~ I the problem is that simply attending university no longer guarantees ~~students of a future career~~ any more. Due to the increase in students' opportunities to enter university, practically anyone can obtain a university-level education. ~~However,~~ I the reality is, however, that university diplomas no longer guarantee a job upon graduation.

~~Regretfully, Unfortunately,~~ the rate of unemployment ~~rate~~ among Korean youth is the highest among OECD member ~~s~~ countries. But while the rate of unemployment among high school graduates has decreased, ~~The important fact related to this unemployment problem is that while the rate of unemployment among high school graduates has decreased,~~ that of university graduates has actually increased. ~~As such,~~ The rate of unemployment among university graduates increased from 25.6 percent in 1998 to 36.1 percent in 2002, while the rate of unemployment among high school graduates decreased from 64.7 percent to 55.7 percent over the same period (Yi Sang-wu and Jeong Gwon-taek 2003).

~~This~~ increase in the number of unemployed university graduates ~~who are unemployed~~ has been caused by a the lack of a weak sound work ethic in this community. More and more, young people simply look for easy jobs. There are ~~Increasingly,~~ cases of young people that choosing to be unemployed following graduation from university until they can find easy jobs, thereby saving face in their family, and thus not lose face or disgrace their family despite, ~~are being recorded; and this despite~~ the fact that the possibility of finding such jobs has become very slim. This phenomenon most likely stems from the fact that most Korean youth spend their teenage years concentrating solely on entering university without ever considering their future careers. ~~In~~ addition, the high school equalization policy, which has thoroughly removed competition to enter elite schools (상급학교: higher education ???), has decisively lessened students' need to decide their future career paths based on a serious consideration of their aptitudes and capabilities. In addition, by fundamentally removing competing the factors of competition from high school entrance procedure, the equalization policy has severely weakened the needs for students to determine their future careers based on serious considerations of their aptitude and capability.

### True PParental Real IIntention of Parents

Despite the above-mentioned problems ~~with~~ with the high school equalization policy, the government cannot freely easily modify this policy because many parents still prefer it ~~to other options~~. Taking a good look at the results of surveys conducted on the question of whether the equalization policy should be maintained or abolished, we find that the ratio of parents calling for the policy

to be maintained is higher than that of those wishing to abolish it. Pointedly, ~~h~~However, ~~there is a need to point out that~~ most ~~of these~~ parents supporting the policy were in fact unsatisfied with the current education system under the equalization policy. According to the study conducted by Kim Gyeong-geun (2001), which was carried out with ~~those~~ parents who had children in the third grade of middle school ~~as subjects~~, most parents had many complaints about the ~~present school~~ education system. In addition, two-thirds of the parents stated that they wanted to send their children to independent private schools. The percentage of parents who wanted to send their children to independent private schools was over 50 percent, even among the working class.

If this is the case, then why do Korean parents show such a duplicitous attitude toward the equalization policy? Most Koreans inherently have a strong affinity for the concept of equality. However, they many are also endowed with a very competitive nature that drives them to wish to finish ahead of others ~~in any competition~~. Thus, while in theory they pursue an idealistic view of equality, in reality they also gladly accept result-oriented thoughts. Korean parents have no intention of giving up the latter in order to achieve true educational equilibrium. The veracity of this assertion is supported by the fact that private education is more popular in equalized school areas.

~~Accordingly,~~ In reality, ~~those~~ parents who support the equalization policy ~~should not be understood as having~~ not abandoned their hope of sending their children to the school of their choice. Their support for the equalization policy originates from the hope of providing their children with the same educational conditions when competing for starting the entrance to university ~~entrance competition for university~~, and to remove the ever present stress that their children have to go through ~~from their own lives~~. Therefore, if these parents come to believe that their children are in a disadvantageous position to compete because of ~~this the~~ school selection system based on ~~the~~ residential districts ~~one lives in~~, they would clearly reject such a system. The reality, however, is that it is difficult for all ~~the~~ schools in ~~these the~~ equalized areas to have the same educational conditions. Therefore, it is obvious that there exists a gap in the students' academic level of ~~students' academic~~ achievement even among schools in equalized areas, although. ~~T~~his gap in students' ~~levels of academic~~ achievement is less than the one that exists among non-equalized schools. ~~Therefore~~ Hence, ~~there are~~ some schools ~~that~~ are preferred by parents, and ~~those some that~~ are avoided ~~by them~~. In this case,



even those parents who support the equalization policy would join those opposed to it if they ~~suddenly~~ found themselves unable to send their children to the schools that they preferred because of the school selection system. As such, it can be argued that those refusing to modify the equalization policy are in fact contributing nothing to the resolution of the existing education problems.

### Policy ~~m~~Measures

Although the limitations of the equalization policy have been exposed, considering ~~the Korean's passion for~~ educational ~~zeal of the Korean people~~, any effort to ~~suddenly~~ dismantle the system ~~in one big swoop~~ could prove ~~to be~~ dangerous. ~~As such, there~~ There is a need to search for policy measures capable of diminishing the damage done by the equalization policy, and of minimizing the problems that might be encountered if and when the equalization policy is abolished. ~~Seen in this light, C~~ onsumers of education ~~educational demanders~~ should gradually be given a wider range of school choice. So far, policymakers have not concerned themselves with ~~those the~~ groups that have taken issue with the equalization policy. ~~However, I~~ it is necessary for those who insist on abolishing the equalization policy to ~~be provided~~ receive the same opportunities of choice as the supporters of the policy have enjoyed. These efforts will eventually contribute to strengthening the public education system, which has been weakened due to the equalization policy.

In the short ~~\_~~term, schools should be provided autonomy with regards to the admission of students and the management of ~~educational~~ school curriculums, with ~~those~~ private schools that have the ability and conditions for such management needed at the center. The increase in ~~the~~ number of independent private schools may serve as a measure of how well ~~the above-mentioned~~ school autonomy is ~~being~~ implemented. Some have expressed their opposition to the establishment of independent private schools, linking private schools ~~these~~ to the emergence of aristocratic elite schools (Kim Cheon-gie, 2002). However, the fact that parents with the necessary economic resources want ~~to have~~ their children to obtain a higher quality of education should not be seen solely in a negative light. More specifically, it does not make sense to ~~one-sidedly strongly~~ oppose the establishment of independent private schools, while not objecting ~~to~~ the fact ~~that the~~ the middle class' ~~is-rush~~ rushing to send ~~their~~ elementary and secondary school children ~~to study~~ abroad to study.

Koreans' income level has increased rapidly over the last several decades. ~~However, if this~~ Had this increase in ~~family~~ income had been spent ~~in~~ undesirably ~~ways~~, without being invested in ~~any form of~~ education, the results would ~~not~~ have been ~~very un~~productive. Educational competitiveness is directly connected to national competitiveness in ~~this today's~~ knowledge-based ~~society~~ world. If the government does not have the will or ability to provide high-quality education, students have no choice but to increase their own competitiveness, even at the cost of if this means making use of individual private educational expenses. If such efforts are not carried out ~~at the individual individually level~~, ~~there is no way that~~ the future of ~~the state and this nation~~ Korea and Koreans, ~~as well as that of individuals~~, cannot be guaranteed in this era of unlimited international competition ~~among countries~~.

One of the main reasons why policymakers have insisted on maintaining the equalization policy is to provide better educational conditions to working-class students in order to achieve educational equilibrium. ~~But e~~Examining ~~Looking at~~ students' ~~actual~~ academic achievements, we find that the equalization policy has in fact provided ~~some~~ advantages ~~sous~~ factors to ~~underachieving~~ students ~~who are underachievers~~. Empirical studies conducted in foreign other countries have underlined strengthened this suspicion (point???). ~~That this is so has been proven by empirical studies conducted in foreign countries.~~<sup>2</sup> It is ~~a well-known fact~~ widely known that the socio-economic composition of school intakes - or "~~what we call~~ school mix" - may have a significant contextual effect on student academic achievement. Working-class students in particular, may ~~be~~ have an advantaged ~~d~~ by attending schools with a reasonable number of middle-class students. Students' levels of academic achievement are usually influenced by their level of aspiration (LOA), something that is formed by interacting with friends and classmates (Thornton and Eckland, 1980; Waslander and Thrupp, 1995; Fischer et al., 1996).

The equalization policy originally had some advantages for working-class students. However, during the lifespan in the thirty years of its implementation,

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<sup>2</sup> For instance, McPherson and Williams (1987) suggested the following: In some areas of Scotland, a country that which where they have adopted a comprehensive school system, similar to the Korea's equalization policy, in which that where students are arranges students distributed to schools based on where they live school districts (catchments) in a manner similar with the equalization policy used in Korea, the gap in academic achievement between students of different social backgrounds's levels of academic achievement was lower smaller than that in than other areas that which that did not adopt this comprehensive school system.

~~of the equalization policy,~~ the public education system has weakened, private education has spread, and the advantages enjoyed by working-class students have disappeared. A study conducted by Lee Ju-ho and Hong Seong-chang (2001) On this issue, the study conducted by Lee Ju-ho and Hong Seong-chang (2001) introduces many significant points~~comments on this situation.~~ According to these researchers, expenditures ~~used~~ made for private education purposes in the equalized areas were higher than those in non-equalized areas. Furthermore, ~~they argued that the main reason why the size of the private education market was bigger in equalized areas than in non-equalized areas is because of the expected increase in the competition for admission to high school once the equalization policy is abolished.~~ the amount of such spending exceeds the projected private education expenses which that might occur on the condition that when the equalization policy is abandoned and the competition system to enter high schools is restored back to life.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, ~~the researchers argued that the equalization policy had actually damaged the educational equilibrium because middle-class students were able to develop advantageous conditions in which it became easier for them to enter elite universities through private education, something known as, private tutoring effectiveness. As such, private education became the decisive factor in deciding who entered elite universities. Based on this finding, the researchers argue that under the equalization policy, the rich people have been in a more advantageous position to make get their children get into first-class universities by leveraging the so-called "Private Tutoring Effect," which has played a decisive role in entering prestigious universities. In this context, the equalization policy has rather undermined educational equilibrium. Therefore, the existing stereotype about the equalization policy that it absolutely benefits the socially disadvantaged class should be discarded. Therefore, this unfixed nderstanding idea that the equalization policy continues to provide advantages to working-class students should be done away with~~ discarded.

According to a study conducted by Kim KyungGyeong-gkeun and Byueon Seou-young (2003), most middle-class parents demonstrated ~~a~~ a negative attitude toward the equalization policy and a strong desire to send their children to ~~the~~ schools ~~that of their preference~~ they preferred. If this is truly the case, then the

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<sup>3</sup> These researchers argued that this phenomenon was caused by government regulations formulated in support of the equalization policy. As such, these government-regulations increased parents' '—dependence on private education, eventually-resulting eventually in

~~middle class, who are at the forefront of Korean society's passion for education, should reject the equalization policy. should be shunned by this middle-class group who are at the forefront of Korean society's passion for education.~~

However, the reality is that they do not have to worry about whether the equalization policy is continued, ~~even in its current form,~~ because middle-class parents have access to various economic and cultural resources that they can mobilize to ~~maintain~~keep their children's ~~position in the~~ educational competitiveness. In addition, such parents show a tendency to fully use these advantages, and to eventually achieve what they want for their children by searching for new solutions, even under difficult circumstances.

Therefore, any attempts to suppress the educational demands of ~~this the~~ middle class, ~~which wants to provide better educational opportunities for its children,~~ may ~~very well~~ cause serious social problems, such as the spread of private education and an increase boom in the number of parents' rushing to send their children overseas to study. ~~In conclusion,~~ the educational demands of the middle class must ~~should~~ be taken into account when the equalization policy ~~when is~~ modified ~~ng the equalization policy.~~

~~In the long term, as the paths to social mobility have has gradually become diversified, it is necessary to establish an educational infrastructure through in which all students can hope to attain a similar economic status. Moreover, an educational framework in which working-class students can develop their capabilities, and aptitudes, along with their and levels of academic achievement, should also be developed. In the long term, considering that the channels for social mobility are grow diversifying, it is necessary to build an educational infrastructure where capabilities and aptitude of the socially disadvantaged students could be nurtured along with their academic capability. The current economic conditions are too much in favor of the highupper class so that it is difficult for the children from who are socially m-socially-disadvantaged class to be competitive in recording high academic achievement and educational performance. This is because it is not easy difficult for working-class students to enjoy the same conditions in the entrance competition for elite universities academic achievement under the present Korean competition competitive conditions in Korean society structure, which is~~

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~~an growth increase in the size of in the market the for private education-market.~~

~~composed structured according to of a social status oriented structure.~~<sup>4</sup> ~~In this vein, it is unrealistic to only to concentrate on equal academic achievement to satisfy the traditional notion of educational equality. Under these circumstances, there is no use concentrating on achieving equilibrium in the levels of academic achievement so as to bring about educational equilibrium in the traditional sense of the word. True educational equilibrium, which can be linked to the achievement of social equilibrium in Korean society, will be realized only when an educational provision system is established that can to help working class students develop their aptitude, abilityies, aptitudes, and levels of academic achievement, is established. True educational equality which could that can eventually spread to social equality in the Korean society could be achieved only be achieved when such educational infrastructure is established. Only then, so that children from the socially disadvantaged class who are often ill positioned in competition for higher academic achievement could develop their capabilities and aptitude as muchwell as fostering their academic capability.~~

## Conclusion

The equalization policy has ~~remained untouched~~ been maintained for the last thirty years because of its perceived link to educational equilibrium. ~~During this period, however, However, as this policy has been in place for 30 years,~~ the public education system has weakened, and ~~the above mentioned many~~ problems have emerged as serious challenges. The equalization policy ~~can be seen as being~~ is no longer suitable in educating the human resources needed in ~~this today's~~ knowledge-based society world, and ~~as is~~ no longer providing any advantages to working-class students. As seen in the above sections, those who have actually benefited from the present equalization policy are the ~~group people which possesses~~ possessing inherent advantages, such as being able to pay for private education ~~expenses~~. ~~Under these circumstances, ureckless nquestionabled adherence to the equalization policy is hard to rationalize. In these circumstances, the thoughtless adherence to the equalization policy is~~

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<sup>4</sup> According to Lee-Yi Ju-ho and Hong Seong-Chang' s study (2001), the educational level of local residents influenced the rate of entrance to elite universities in equalized areas. In addition, expenses for private tutoring were reported as being a statistically significant factor in the rate of entrance to elite universities, even when the educational and economical levels of local residents were controlled.

hardly justifiable. Nevertheless, the government has shown ~~a very negative attitude~~ great reluctance towards modifying the equalization policy. As a result, many serious social problems have emerged.

The search for measures to modify and re-analyze the equalization policy at its very core, should not be put off any longer. In order to establish such measures, the implementation of detailed measures designed to include the educational demands of the middle class, who are very critical of the equalization policy, should be given priority. Many parents are saddled with worries in this era of a global economy and cultural opening. This environment has made parents strive to provide better educational conditions for their children in order to improve their international competitiveness. Therefore, a policy to suppress the desires of these parents may lead to many unexpected social problems and may also have undesirable effects on the future of ~~this state and our nation~~ Korea.

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