

Articles

# Tasks of Educational Policies for Overseas Chinese Living in Korea to Realize Multicultural Education\*

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## Introduction

As of 2009, foreign residents in Korea account for 2.35% of the nation's population.<sup>1</sup> Some predict that the number of immigrants and their children will be 9.8% of the population in 2050. (Kim Seon-hui et al. 2010:55)<sup>2</sup> Given these current and predicted increases in foreign residents, the Korean government, academic world and private organizations agree that Korea has recently become a multicultural society, and it is urgent to establish relevant multicultural policies. However, foreign communities living within mainstream Korean society is, in fact, not a sudden phenomenon.

Having settled in Korea about 100 years ago, Overseas Chinese, also referred to as *hwagyo* or Huaqiao, have been living in Korea since the end of the 19th century.<sup>3</sup> Although most of them acquired permanent residence according to the Korean Nationality Act revised in 2002, they still have their own cultural identity as Overseas Chinese in Korea. Indeed, they are the only ethnic minority group with a history of extended residence in Korea.<sup>4</sup>

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1. The foreign residents in Korea numbered 1,168,477 at the end of 2009 (Korea Immigration Service, June 4, 2010) and 1,308,743 at the end of March in 2011 (Statistics Korea 2011).
2. According to this paper, the number of foreign residents in Korea will be about 4,090,000 in 2050.
3. Since the Korean government first granted permanent residency to foreigners who had resided in Korea for five years or longer in 2002, the number of Overseas Chinese living in Korea as of the end of 2004 was 102,321, of which 80,036 had Chinese nationality and 22,285 were Taiwanese nationals. Only 11 of the Chinese nationals in Korea acquired permanent residence (F-5), while up to 94% (13,179 male and 6,847 female) of those who had Taiwanese nationality acquired permanent residence. These statistics suggest that most Overseas Chinese who are Taiwanese nationals have been long-time residents in Korea, whereas those who are Chinese nationals came to Korea as short-term job seekers since Korea established diplomatic relations with China in 1992. This paper is about national educational institutions created by and for Overseas Chinese who have been living in Korea for generations. 'Overseas Chinese' mentioned in this paper refers to those who are Taiwanese nationals or of (including those Overseas Chinese who have recently become naturalized Korean citizens), all of whom share in the approximately 100-year history of being immigrants in Korea. As of 2009, the number of Taiwanese nationals residing in Korea was 28,062 (legal 27,171 and illegal 891) and the number of their school-age children (ages 5 to 19) was 3,512 (Korea Immigration Service, June 4, 2010).
4. In general, ethnic features affected by different cultures and languages are deteriorating, but groups who still maintain their heterogeneous nature compared with mainstream people are called an ethnic minority (Gang 1997:246). In this paper, Chinese residents in Korea are regarded as such a minority. Having lived in Korea for over a century, the Overseas Chinese in

Accordingly, most of their children are second or third generation Overseas Chinese who were born in Korea. Although they maintain their Taiwanese identity, they have established close emotional ties with Korean society. The Korean government has declared that the nation will transition into a multicultural society and will carry out multicultural educational policies, but these new policies do not take into account Chinese schools in Korea, primarily because these schools are currently outside their jurisdiction. Schools for Chinese children are foreign schools and therefore not under the purview of the nation's educational policies; as a result, those schools and students have been neglected and excluded from the Korean government's recent scope of multicultural education policies.<sup>5</sup>

This paper arose from an awareness of this situation. Multicultural education actually is a concept that affirms cultural diversity and strives to maintain educational equality in culturally diverse contexts. Educational equality means to guarantee students' approach to the same social benefits regardless of groups to which they belong (Gollnick and Chinn 2002:6). Multicultural education is rather positive activities to raise children from various cultural backgrounds into citizens who coexist in harmony through guaranteeing equality. When such education is guaranteed, a sustainable foundation for development of a multicultural society can be prepared. With an awareness of the importance of multicultural education in today's society, this paper suggests a political direction for Chinese schools so that they too can experience the nation's multicultural education. In other words, this paper

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Korea have both grown more culturally adapted to Korea and drawn away from the culture of their nationality. They, however, still are the only group to keep its culture and language without entering into mainstream Korean society.

5. A reason for special attention to Chinese schools formed by the Overseas Chinese is because these schools are practically the main force to bring together the Overseas Chinese community. The Association of Overseas Chinese living in Korea used to function as a sort of administrative organization which connected Overseas Chinese with the Taiwanese consulate. Today, its main function is considerably reduced to issuing family registers and identification cards. In contrast, with the decrease in students of Chinese schools, Chinese kindergarteners and students of all education levels often study in one classroom. After graduation, they are scattered to other places for work, often without fixed residence, so younger generations tend to establish closer bonds with graduates from the same schools than with relatives or people from the same towns (Lee Chang-ho 2008:89).

aims not only to understand problems related to the political<sup>6</sup> directions and contents of Korea's multicultural education – which developed as a response to an increase in foreigners since the 1990s – by exploring political tasks related to Chinese schools, but also to propose tasks that would promote a desirable future for the nation's multicultural education.

Since the IMF crisis, an increasing number of research studies have been conducted focusing on the Overseas Chinese in Korea, but the scope of these studies has been limited to the growing interest in this group in terms of politics and the economy. Therefore, there still have been few studies on education for Overseas Chinese in general. Seok Mi-ryeong is a leading researcher on education for Overseas Chinese. Seok (1995) analyzed the reality of Overseas Chinese residing in Korea based on China's educational policies for its people living in foreign countries. Miyuki Nagai (2004) analyzed the present educational experiences and opportunities for Overseas Chinese in Korea by comparing them with those in Japan. Several studies, including those mentioned above, give a very simple or limited view of education for Overseas Chinese in Korea. These studies did not specify concrete problems of future political directions within an overall vision of advancement into a multicultural society. This paper will discuss factual circumstances of Chinese schools and then suggest political directions and tasks related to educational policies for Overseas Chinese in order to provide multicultural education as a foundation within the larger vision of transitioning to a multicultural society. In other words, this paper suggests a political position that the Korean government should take regarding Chinese schools and the tasks which need to be solved in order to realize multicultural education.

## Study Methods

For this study, the author selected and investigated Chinese schools to understand their current situation. One of the subjects is Hanseong Overseas

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6. This paper defines multicultural policies in general as a political stance advocating a political vision of social integration based on equality and cultural pluralism. Multicultural education policies here are defined as education policies with aims to realize such vision (Kim Hyeon-mi 2009; Oh Gyeong-seok et al. 2007).

Chinese Primary School (hereinafter HOCPS) located next to the Chinese Embassy in Myeong-dong, central Seoul. The school was founded in 1909 and is the largest Chinese elementary school in Korea. The school had its highest enrollment of 2,300 students in the 1960-70s. At that time, the school was the third largest Overseas Chinese school in the world. In 2008, the enrollment decreased to 507. Of those 507 students, about 12% were Koreans and 51% were students one of whose parents was Korean. Thirty-four teachers taught the students in both Korean and Chinese languages (Principal of HOCPS, interview, July 25, 2008; November 20, 2008).

The author's investigation into the situation at the school involved two methods, a review of pertinent literature and a series of interviews. The materials examined included educational data, textbooks used for establishing actual programs, and related laws; the people interviewed by the author included the principal, teachers, students and their parents. The principal of Hanseong Overseas Chinese Middle-High School (hereinafter HOCMHS), a sister school of HOCPS, was additionally interviewed. There were two focuses in the interviews: the sense of identity of Chinese students in Korea, and the situation and pertinent issues at Chinese schools. Interview contents can be organized as follows.

Table 1. Interview Contents

Subject	Questions
Identity of students	- Home background (nationality, origin, birthplace, marital status, length of stay in Korea, reasons for immigration, occupation, etc.)
	- Languages (languages used inside and outside home)
	- The degree of China's cultural heritage
	- Intimacy with Chinese culture
	- Intimacy with Korean culture
	- Awareness of Korea and Koreans
School's current situation and problems	- Parents (motivation for entrance, tuition payment and commuting problems, etc.)
	- Faculty (motivation for work, wages, work environment, etc.)
	- Students (course satisfaction and problems associated with pursuing further education)
	- Satisfaction with school environment (qualifications to enter a school, tuition, teacher recruitment, facilities, class management, etc.)
	- Satisfaction with courses (satisfactory classes, desired future programs, etc.)
	- Objective of school education
	- Direction of school education
	- Demands made by Taiwanese, Chinese and Korean governments

An interview lasted for one to two hours and was based on unstructured and open questionnaires made by the researcher. In the case of the school

principal, three rounds of in-depth interviews were conducted. The following table shows all who were interviewed and their family background as well as when and where the interviews took place.

Table 2. Interview Overview

Interviewee	Date	Place (Family background)
Principal of Hanseong Overseas Chinese Primary School (HOCPS)	1st: July 25, 2008 2nd: November 20, 2008 3rd: July 2, 2009	Principal's office of HOCPS (Chinese family)
Teacher	July 3, 2009	The lounge for the staff of HOCPS (combined family of a naturalized Chinese in Korea and a Korean)
Parent 1	July 2, 2009	The HOCPS lounge (Chinese family)
Parent 2	July 2, 2009	The HOCPS lounge (combined family of a naturalized Chinese in Korea and a Korean)
Student	July 3, 2009	HOCPS Classroom (Chinese family)
Principal of Hanseong Overseas Chinese Middle-High School (HOCMHS)	July 6, 2009	Principal's office of Hanseong Overseas Chinese Middle-High School (Chinese family)

Based on the above-mentioned review of educational data and related literature as well as the interviews, Chinese students' sense of identity, the present situation of and issues related to Chinese education, expectations about the future and demands on the Korean government became clear. The results of this study suggest the political tasks that the Korean government should undertake in order to respond to the issues and demands of Chinese schools in order to realize multicultural education.

**An Overview of Operational Factors Affecting Chinese Schools in Korea and Hanseong Overseas Chinese Primary School**

*Chinese Schools in Korea: Establishment, Management and Enrollment Factors*

The curriculum, teachers' qualifications, facilities, student recruitment, and tuition fees of Chinese schools are managed according to Article 7 of the Taiwanese Law

on Installation of Overseas Taiwanese Schools (外國僑民學校設置法, revised on April 13, 2004). In other words, Chinese schools receive the same teaching materials and operation expenses as regular schools in Taiwan offering the same programs, and the academic ability of students of those Chinese schools in Korea are recognized equally with graduates of schools in Taiwan. Under the law, Chinese schools in Korea should obtain a foundation approval from the Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission (OCAC) in Taiwan, and then once established, they are under the supervision of the Taiwanese Embassy in their host country. Diplomas from primary schools require an official stamped signature of the embassy and those from middle-high schools require an official stamped signature of OCAC. OCAC, headed by a minister-level chairman, directs and supervises Overseas Chinese. Boards of directors consisting of Overseas Chinese and workers at the embassy cast votes to select principals who are responsible for the operation of Chinese schools. Teachers who want to be principals should submit applications and get majority votes.<sup>7</sup>

Those approved Chinese schools could begin teaching students after registering as foreign organizations under the Immigration Control Law (articles 39 and 45). As Chinese schools are foreign organizations that exist outside Korean laws regarding education, they don't have the same legal status as other schools in Korea. On February 5, 1999, related regulations were repealed after the Regulatory Reform Committee instructed that foreign organizations were exempted from the duty of registration, and Chinese schools registered as foreign organizations lost their legal standing under domestic law.<sup>8</sup>

Soon after that, on March 8, 1999, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (hereafter MEHRD) revised the "Regulations of Miscellaneous Schools," Article 12 of MEHRD Law No. 779 (Enforcement Regulations of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development and Organizations Attached to It) in order to convert foreign schools into miscellaneous schools. Under the revised law, foreigners who wanted to build and manage schools to educate their fellow countrymen could get approval

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7. For more information, see Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission (<http://www.ocac.gov.tw>).

8. In February of 1999, Chinese schools were run in the form of foreign organizations, while out of all international schools, three were being operated as miscellaneous schools and 58 as foreign organizations (Research Committee for Legal Organization of Foreign Schools 1999:5).

to establish schools by satisfying certain standards, and foreign schools which acquired approval could get formal recognition of their programs as formal schooling by following related regulations. Therefore, Chinese schools as miscellaneous schools came to have a basis to get tax benefits and their graduates gained formal qualifications to enter higher schools in Korea.

From December 31, 2001 the government began to approve of schools that satisfied the two minimum criteria of having received approval from the government and having offered Korean language and culture courses. Chinese schools that had registered as foreign organizations before 1999 gradually switched to miscellaneous schools with government approval. According to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, as of September 2008, there were 18 Chinese schools which acquired government approval and their enrollment was 2,338 (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology 2008).<sup>9</sup> Details are shown in the following table.

**Table 3. Chinese schools approved by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (as of September 1, 2008)**

School Name	Location	Approval Date(y/m/d)	Number of students		
			Foreigner	Native <sup>10</sup>	Total
Youngdeungpo Chinese Primary School	Mulla-dong, Yeongdeungpo-gu, Seoul	1999.08.27	26	23	49
Hanseong Overseas Chinese Primary School	Myeong-dong, Jung-gu, Seoul	2001.11.23	422	61	483
Hanseong Overseas Chinese Middle-High School	Yeonhui-dong, Seodaemun-gu, Seoul	1999.08.27	584	38	622
Busan Chinese primary school	Choryang-dong, Dong-gu, Busan	2001.07.23	125	19	144
Busan Chinese Middle-High School	Choryang-dong, Dong-gu, Busan	2001.07.23	126	0	126
Daegu Chinese Primary School	Jongno, Jung-gu, Daegu	2002.07.08	66	0	66
Daegu Chinese Middle-High School	Bongdeok-dong, Nam-gu, Daegu	1998.10.18	28	1	29

9. In comparison, as of September 2008, there were 46 foreign schools with a total number of 10,989 students (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology 2008).

10. Natives eligible to enter Chinese schools include dual citizenship holders, permanent residents, foreign children, and Korean students who had lived at least five years abroad (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology 2010a).



Incheon Chinese Primary School	Seollin-dong, Jung-gu, Incheon	2002.12.21	294	258	552
Jungsan Middle-High School					
Uijeongbu Chinese Primary School	Ganeung-dong, Uijeongbu-si, Gyeonggi-do	1999.04.07	27	6	33
Wonju Chinese Primary School	Won-dong, Wonju-si, Gangwon-do	1999.10.14	29	1	27
Chuncheon Chinese Primary School	Okcheon-dong, Chuncheon-si, Gangwon-do	2000.12.30	3	0	3
Cheongju Chinese Primary School	Heungdeok-gu, Cheongju-si, Chungcheongbuk-do	1996.06.30	16	0	16
Chungju Chinese Primary School	Gyohyun-dong, Chungju-si, Chungcheongbuk-do	1999.09.22	3	0	3
Jechon Chinese Primary School	Jungangro, Jechun-si, Chungcheongbuk-do	2001.11.15	1	0	1
Cheonan Overseas Chinese Primary School	Bongmyung-dong, Cheonan-si, Chungcheongnam-do	1999.08.27	0	0	0
Onyang Chinese Primary School	Yongwha-dong, Asan-si, Chungcheongnam-do	2002.06.14	3	9	12
Gunsan Overseas Chinese Primary School	Myeongsan-dong, Gunsan-si, Jeollabuk-do	2002.01.10	16	0	16
Suwon Chinese Jungjeong Primary School	Gyo-dong, Paldal-gu, Suwon-si, Gyeonggi-do	2007.08.31	54	72	126
Total: 18			1,820 (78%)	518 (22%)	2,338 (100%)

After the MEHRD announced a plan to reform its foreign school system in 2000, Chinese schools were allowed to admit Korean students up to 50% of their maximum number of students according to a regulation for foreign schools which was revised in 2008 and 2009. In addition, Koreans who had lived abroad for more than three years could enter Chinese schools. Also, domestic private school corporations could build Chinese schools (Korea Ministry of Government Legislation 2009).

### *Hanseong Overseas Chinese Primary School: Past and Present Management and Enrollment Trends*

Incheon Chinese Primary School, the first Chinese primary school in Korea

was established in 1902. Hanseong Overseas Chinese Primary School was founded a few years later, from its former body Zhonghua Xuetang (中華學堂), which was established within the Zhonghua Trading Company (中華商會) located in Supyo-dong. It is not clear when Zhonghua Xuetang was founded, but the school presumably was built in 1907 or 1908 considering the fact there were 15 students attending the school in December of 1908. Zhonghua Xuetang was renamed Hanseong Overseas Chinese Primary School in 1910 and relocated from Junghwa Hoegwan (中華會館) to its current location in Myeongdong (Lee Jeong-hui 2007:113). The HOCPS and its sister school, Hanseong Overseas Chinese Middle School in Yeonhui-dong, have become representative Chinese schools in Korea.

As of 2008, the number of students at HOCPS was 507 (including 82 kindergarteners) in four classrooms, the largest enrollment in Chinese primary schools in Korea. This school had its highest enrollment in 1969 with 2,300 students in 29 classrooms, but the number of students rapidly declined to 507 in 2008. About 51% of the students have a parent (especially mother) who is Korean. (HOCPS 2008; Principal of HOCPS, interview, July 2, 2009) As of 2008, the school's enrollment and number of teachers are shown in the following table.

Table 4. Number of students and teachers in Hanseong Overseas Chinese Primary School (HOCPS 2008)

Classifi- cation	Number of students and classrooms								Number of teachers	Number of students per teacher
	Kinder- garten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Total		
Number of classes	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	21		
Number of students	65	82	80	80	78	72	50	507	34	14.91
Number of students per classroom	16.25	27.33	26.66	26.66	26	24	25	24.14		

Under the direction of the Taiwanese Educational Committee, a board of directors called Gyodonghoe (校董會) has absolute authority over the management of the school (Principal of HOCPS, interview, July 2, 2009). The board is in charge of all administrative work related to supervision and direction of school management, supply and management of the school's budget,

management of school property, appointment of principals, and inspection of budgets and balancing accounts. The school site was initially within the grounds of Qing's consulate general along with the Taiwanese Embassy. After Korea and China established diplomatic relations, the Taiwanese Embassy was turned into the Chinese Embassy, but the Overseas Chinese Primary School remained under the jurisdiction of the Taiwanese government. It is legally ambiguous to judge which country has ownership of the school (Kim Gi-ho 2005:85). The school acquired approval as a miscellaneous school in 2001 and received no financial assistance from the Korean government until 2007. A principal of the school requested that the Korean government provide assistance for an expansion of the school building, and the Seoul metropolitan government promised financial contributions to build a school auditorium in 2010 (Principal of HOCPS, interview, July 2, 2009).

Table 5. Students' residential locations (2007)<sup>11</sup>

Location	Number of students	Location	Number of students
Jongno-gu	19	Gangdong-gu	1
Jung-gu	58	Yangcheon-gu	11
Yongsan-gu	32	Seocho-gu	12
Seodaemun-gu	152	Dongjak-gu	10
Dongdaemun-gu	11	Junngang-gu	1
Seongdong-gu	8	Eunpyeong-gu	24
Seongbuk-gu	26	Guro-gu	3
Mapo-gu	79	Nowon-gu	3
Yeongdeungpo-gu	19	Gangbuk-gu	6
Gwanak-gu	9	Gwangjin-gu	6
Dobong-gu	1	Geumcheon-gu	2
Gangnam-gu	18	Others	37
Gangseo-gu	3	Total	551

HOCPS runs a kindergarten on its campus, where children are allowed to speak in Chinese only. The Taiwanese government provides textbooks free

11. According to this data, as of 2007, about 68% of, or 373 students, in Hanseong Overseas Chinese Primary School had parents who graduated college, about 31%, or 175, had parents with who finished middle or high school and about 1%, or 3, had parents who only attended primary schools.

of charge and the kindergarten offers the same curriculum as the Taiwanese educational system. A student is charged with school fees of about 1.2-1.5 million KRW per semester.<sup>12</sup> Students live in Seoul and the metropolitan area (Principal of HOCPS, interview, July 2, 2009). Residential districts of those students as of 2007 are summarized in the following table (Hanseong Overseas Chinese Primary School 2008).

Teachers receive training in Taiwan, and they teach their special subjects to students on average 20 hours a week as of August 2009 (Principal of HOCPS, interview, July 2, 2009).

## Issues of Hanseong Overseas Chinese Primary School

### *Formation of a New Identity*

Overseas Chinese so far have experienced much confusion of their identity due to Korea's change in political ties with China and Taiwan.<sup>13</sup> At first, as settlers in South Korea under the Cold War regime, they were given Taiwanese nationality and pledged loyalty to the Taiwanese Kuomintang government. However, Overseas Chinese residing in Korea are descendents of the mainland Chinese, although they have been Korean residents educated in a Taiwanese system.<sup>14</sup>

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12. Each student of the Hanseong Overseas Chinese Middle-High School pays about 3.5 million KRW a year including the tuition fees, and electric and heating charges for the dormitory (Interview with the principal of Hanseong Overseas Chinese Middle-High School, July 6, 2009).

13. When Overseas Chinese formed ethnic communities in Incheon and Seoul in 1882, the majority of these settlers in Korea came from Shandong Province. When China became communist in 1949 and Korea severed relations with China by establishing diplomatic relations with Taiwan, they began to live in Korea as foreigners of Taiwanese nationality. In 1992 when the Korean government established diplomatic relations with China and severed relations with Taiwan, they had to choose whether to acquire Korean citizenship, apply for a Chinese passport, or hold passports from Taiwan, a country with which Korea had severed official relations (Lee Jae-gwang 2003; Jeon 2003). They are gradually establishing a new identity as "Korean Overseas Chinese," based on their perception of themselves as unique beings who are neither Chinese nor Korean (Lee Yun-hui 2004; Lee Jae-gwang 2003).

14. According to the data provided in the introduction of the Chinese Resident's Association, the number of Overseas Chinese in Korea was 21,806 as of 2002 and more than 90% were from Shandong (Chinese Resident's Association Seoul Korea n.d.).

Overseas Chinese in Korea have been living as Taiwanese foreigners, not Taiwanese Koreans, and have suffered much discrimination in Korean society. They have been in Korea for over one generation, but they have been living in an area where they are routinely excluded and discriminated against without getting any social benefits. Not just the first generation Overseas Chinese, but also their descendents had to renew residential permits every five years and those who were involved in crimes were deported until a permanent residence system<sup>15</sup> was introduced in 2002. In seeking jobs, they couldn't become public servants or executives at public institutions, and it was difficult for them to acquire licenses for professional jobs which require government certification, such as for lawyers, doctors, and certified public accountants (Bak Gyeong-tae 2005:174-175).

They have faced serious exclusion and discrimination from the Korean society, so establishing their ethnic and national identity has become a key factor to sustain their values. The Taiwanese government also has made the utmost effort to raise its people living overseas to be true citizens through educational support that emphasizes national ideologies, such as legitimacy of the Kuomintang, the Three Principles of the People (三民主義) and anticommunist ideas. Taiwan encouraged the teaching of the Chinese language, publishing and providing educational materials for Overseas Chinese schools and even organized the China Youth Anti-Communist National Salvation Corps (中國青年反共救國團) to encourage Overseas Chinese students to visit their homeland in order to help them become aware of and develop a sense of belonging toward their country (Son 1999:169-170). The Taiwanese government also opened local classes about literature, cooking, calligraphy, drawing and folk dance, encouraged students to study in their country, and provided benefits through special screening processes for persons who wanted to enter Taiwanese universities (Jo 2009:148-149). On the other hand, Beijing severed channels of exchange with Overseas Chinese, considering immigration

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15. According to the April 2002 law for the acquisition of permanent residency by long-term foreign residents, those who had been residing in Korea for five years or longer from the date of the foreign resident registration were issued permanent residence (F5) subject to the Immigration Control Law. The permanent residency holders came to have equal rights as Korean nationals to real estate and financial transactions, the national health insurance system, and education.

to other nations as treachery, and adopted policies to discriminate against and suppress those returning to the country or families of Overseas Chinese (Kim Gi-ho 2005:76-77).

School staff and students' parents stressed their experiences of discrimination by the Korean society and the importance of education on their identity as Overseas Chinese. As one put it, "We have had our feet on the Korean land but all our culture and livelihood haven't gotten out of the Chinese boundary" (Parent 1, interview, July 2, 2009; Parent 2, interview, July 2, 2009; Principal of HOCMHS, interview, July 25, 2008 / November 20, 2008). The principal of HOCPS stated, "When I was a child, I used to play with Korean children. As they made fun of me, I came home crying. My mother told me not to play with Korean children anymore, so I never played with them" (Interview, July 25, 2008 / November 20, 2008). Such experiences made Overseas Chinese believe that their children had to better understand Chinese culture and so as one parent put it, "I catch a bus at 6:50 in the morning in Anyang to send my children to this school" (Parent 1, interview, July 2, 2009). Some naturally sent their children to this school "hoping that they would learn Chinese culture just because they are Chinese," but also because of the prevailing consciousness that "Chinese persons attending Korean schools, not Chinese schools, are traitors" (Teacher, interview, July 3, 2009). Parents were "so welcome" to invite teachers from Taiwan and learn the traditional martial arts Wushu and "very sad when Wushu classes suddenly discontinued" (Parent 1, interview, July 2, 2009; Parent 2, interview, July 2, 2009).

HOCPS recently has been worrying about the formation of a new national identity. At present, there are no Chinese schools founded by mainland Overseas Chinese. All Chinese schools were officially registered as Taiwanese schools. Most officials at Chinese schools in Seoul, however, tend to sympathize with a central position between Taiwan and China pursued by the Chinese Residents' Association<sup>16</sup> (Principal of HOCPS, interview, July

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16. Recent conflicts among Overseas Chinese over their political stance between Taiwan and China have spread to affect their education. Every two years, members of the school board of directors are appointed from among figures with high reputations and financial power. As some board members of Hanseong Overseas Chinese Middle-High School joined the pro-Beijing Association of Overseas Chinese Residents as executives in 2002, the Taipei Mission illegalized the existing board and organized a separate board of directors mainly with executives of the

2, 2009; Parent 2, interview, July 2, 2009). Parents who are second or third generation Overseas Chinese don't long for their home in Shandong or Taiwan as much as their parents. Instead, "they think they can move to China if they can settle in large cities like Beijing and Shanghai" (Parent 2, interview, July 2, 2009; A student, interview, July 3, 2009). Moreover, those students' daily lives and cultural feelings are almost the same as those of Koreans. They eat kimchi, *doenjang* and *gochujang* every day, listen to Korean music, and use Korean and Chinese at school (Principal of HOCMHS, interview, July 6, 2009). They certainly think they are Chinese, but they also think if they can be a president of a country, "either Korea (*uri nara*) or Taiwan would be okay" (Student, interview, July 3, 2009).

Such confusion also appears at HOCMHS, a school that most HOCPS graduates enter. There has been an overwhelming increase in the number of students of Hanseong Overseas Chinese Middle-High School that choose Korean colleges rather than Chinese colleges. The number of Chinese students choosing Korean colleges has steadily increased since the 1980s and more than half of the total graduates entered Korean colleges for the first time in 1993. The next year, just 16 out of 147 school graduates entered Taiwanese colleges. Except for about ten students who got jobs immediately after their graduation, all of the remaining students entered Korean colleges (Kim Gi-ho 2005:83).<sup>17</sup>

An increasing number of students choose economics, business administration and international trade as their majors considering relations with China, and many students want to study at universities in China (Principal of HOCMHS, July 6, 2009). Officials of Overseas Chinese schools are trying to have a new international sensibility due to changes in interstate relations among such countries as Taiwan, China and Korea (Parent 2, July 2, 2009), and

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Chinese Residents' Association. As a result, the school had two boards of directors (Kim Gi-ho 2005:83).

17. A principal of Hanseong Overseas Chinese Middle-High School spoke about running classrooms for students who wanted to study at Korean universities as follows: "When I became a principal in 1984, I had a philosophy which I always have emphasized to students. 'Go to Korean universities if you want to survive in Korea, because it will be of great support to your career to meet Korean friends in Korean universities and use their social network after getting a job.' The ratio of students who enter Korean schools and Taiwanese schools is 7:3. When students become juniors in high school, they are divided into two groups: one to return to Taiwan and enroll in colleges there; and the other to stay in Korea and study at Korean universities. Students who want to enter Korean universities study using Korean textbooks."

consequently, they are facing the problem of the formation of a new identity.

*Demands for Reform of Educational Programs*

Chinese schools are teaching students with Taiwanese textbooks following curriculum policies set up by the Taiwanese Educational Committee. Courses are identically scheduled and run as in Taiwan, using traditional Chinese characters in class. At HOCPS, all students learn the national language, mathematics, social studies, living (natural and living science, arts and humanities lessons), physical education, music and art as of 2009. Third-year students begin to learn English and martial arts, while fourth-year students study Korean language and literature and Pinyin. Details are shown in the following table (Table for curriculum operation at HOCPS 2009).

Table 6. Subject-hours by grades (as of May 14, 2009)

Grade	Subject (Hours)	Total
5,6	Chinese (7), Mathematics (7), Social studies (2), Natural science (2), English (4), Korean (1), Composition (2), Everyday conversation (1), Common knowledge conversation (1), Pinyin (1) Fine arts (1), Music (1), Arbeitserziehung (1), Physical education (2), Computer (4), Review (1)	38
4	Chinese (8), Mathematics (8), Social studies (2), Natural science (2), English (3), Korean (1), Composition (2), Everyday conversation (1), Common knowledge conversation (1), Pinyin (1), Fine arts (1), Music (1), Arbeitserziehung (1), Physical education (2), Computer (3), Review (1)	38
3	Chinese (8), Mathematics (8), Social studies (2), Natural science (2), English (3), Reading (1), Composition (2), Everyday conversation (1), Common knowledge conversation (1), Conversation (1), Fine arts (1), Music (1), Arbeitserziehung (1), Physical education (2), Computer (3), Review (1)	38
1,2	Chinese (6), Mathematics (6), Living (4), Conversation (2), Fine arts (1), Music (1), Arbeitserziehung (1), Physical education (2), Video session (1), Computer (1)	25

Such course offerings have recently been confronted with demands for reorganization following requests for the formation of a new identity. First, students are calling for high-level courses on Korean language and culture. The HOCPS runs a one-hour Korean language and culture every week from the fourth grade, using textbooks made by the teachers themselves. These books,



however, are of such poor quality<sup>18</sup> that many Chinese families look for other resources on their own and eagerly participate in educational programs to provide their children with experiences in Korean culture. Some “spend most of [their] vacations joining programs for Korean cultural experience” in order to “let [their] children learn things Korean” (Parent 2, interview, July 2, 2009).

Second, there are demands for bilingual classes including Korean and Chinese. More than half of the students attending this school are children of Korean (especially Korean mothers)-Chinese couples. Therefore, a majority of students enter Chinese schools while using Korean as their everyday language. “Teachers face serious troubles with first graders because of students who don’t understand Chinese, and students also have difficulties understanding the contents of lessons” (Teacher, interview, July 3, 2009). There is no way to discourage students from using Korean. As a result, students “suffer twice because they must use Chinese as they enter the school and they can’t use Korean properly after graduation” (Parent 2, July 2, 2009). Moreover, with recent strong demands about English education, they “want to improve their English skills” (Parent 2, July 2, 2009; Teacher, July 3, 2009). Demands are rising on preparing measures to ease students’ burden to learn three languages, Chinese, Korean and English, and developing language programs to advance their skills at the same time.

Third, there are demands about adopting a curriculum suitable for mainland China. A majority of Overseas Chinese teachers and parents agree about long-term changes toward expanding relations with China. However, due to worries that a sudden change of the curriculum will bring chaos to students and the legal basis of the Overseas Chinese schools established upon Taiwanese regulations, the schools intend to make gradual changes (Principal of HOCPS, interview, July 2, 2009; Principal of HOCMHS, interview, July 6, 2009; Parent 2, July 2, 2009). Unfortunately, existing curriculum can’t keep up with such a vision. In the case of HOCMHS, revised history and geography

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18. As for materials to teach Korean, fourth-grade level comprises *hangeul* consonants and vowels, sentence order, word spacing, writing on manuscript paper, tense, honorific expression, and punctuation. Fifth graders are taught the history of *hangeul*, national holidays and holidays in Korea, proverbs, cultural heritage and the spelling, and sixth graders continue with Korean history from ancient to modern times and the Dokdo issue. However, they are minimally taught in low levels (Hanseong Overseas Chinese Primary School 2009b).

textbooks have been shifting their focus to Taiwanese geography and history while reducing contents on mainland China to such an extent that parents in Korea are seriously worried about the changes. As a last resort, students have been copying old textbooks for use in geography and history lessons since four or five years ago (Principal of HOCMHS, July 6, 2009). About such a circumstance, the principal of HOCMHS commented as follows.

Parents are demanding us to teach simplified Chinese. Since four or five years ago, we have placed the *People's Daily* or *Shandonggyobo* in the library and allowed the students to watch not only Taiwanese but also Chinese TV programs through satellite TV sets in the classrooms. Our school has no ties with the Chinese government or embassy. ... Of course, overseas Chinese do business with China, so their way of thinking is changing greatly. China, however, still is communist and we can't trust it. Moreover, since our school has been registered in the Taiwanese mission and received its assistance for a long time, we can't easily cut friendly ties with Taiwan. It would be premature to do so. The best way is that we don't lean toward China too much, keep our distance from Taiwan-centered education, and develop textbooks of our own.

Overseas Chinese schools recently have been agonizing over the development of curriculum to educate talented students with both national identity and international competitiveness considering parents' demands.

### *Student Decrease, Facility Shortage and Decline of Content Quality*

A decrease in students, financial difficulties, and a decline in the quality of education are the most urgent problems of Overseas Chinese schools. In 1974, there were 50 primary and 5 middle-high schools in Korea. The figures were 30 and 4 in 1994, 26 and 4 in 1999, and 18 and 4 in 2008 (Jang 2001:273). As the Taiwanese government has curtailed assistance, those schools have been operated with school fees and donations from Overseas Chinese. Financial difficulties resulting from such a situation have led to a decline in the quality of education (Seok 1995:44-45).

The number of students of HOCPS reduced from 2,300 in 1969 to 508 in 2008. The school can't repair its building, playground or lecture hall, so it has been requesting financial support from the board of directors or the Korean

government. Teachers are poorly paid. Until the middle of the 1970s, they were paid 1.5 times more than Korean teachers. However, their wages haven't been raised as much as those of Korean teachers and now they receive less than their Korean counterparts. In order to raise teachers' wages, school fees should rise, too. Since the board members who make decisions related to school fees or wages are students' parents, it is difficult to raise teachers' wages (Principal of HOCPS, July 2, 2009). The schools have no convenience facilities for teachers and almost no institutional welfare policies, like maternity leaves (Teacher, July 3, 2009).

The situation is the same at Hanseong Overseas Chinese Middle-High School. The school had 2,862 students in 41 classrooms in 1974. About 700 students lived in the dormitory. The enrollment reduced to 650 in 2009 and the figure was expected to decrease to 620 in the following semester. This is because the number of students who will graduate from HOCPS is just 54. There are about 60 students in the dormitory. The school has received 150 million KRW of monetary support every year from the Taiwanese government. Taipei changed its policy in 2000 so that now the schools cannot gain support for their requests until after the Taiwanese mission reviews proposals for approval. As a result, overall support has decreased. "We felt our school was begging money from the Taiwanese government, so we didn't ask for assistance for four years. In 2004, we asked for 50 million KRW to buy computers." At present, HOCMHS is being managed with students' registration fees. Only in 2003, the school repaired its building with 130 million KRW supported by the board of directors (Principal of HOCMHS, July 6, 2009). Parents and teachers are so seriously concerned about Overseas Chinese schools' poor facilities caused by the reduction of financial support and its deteriorating education, as well as the decrease in students, that they as such are desperately seeking financial assistance from the Korean government (Principal of HOCPS, July 3, 2009).

## **Tasks Related to Chinese Schools Policies**

### *Establishment of Multicultural Education Policies for Chinese (Foreign) Schools*

Overseas Chinese schools which were registered as miscellaneous organizations lost their domestic legal basis with the abolishment of the registration system

for those organizations in February 1999. Accordingly, foreign schools began to face trouble in getting social recognition as schools and in inviting teachers. In March of that year, a foreign school regulation was prepared and those organizations could maintain their legal status as schools. A legal basis for foreign schools could be found in the nation's tasks of expanding foreigners' investment, international exchanges and cooperation in order to stimulate the national economy which had been depressed since the IMF crisis (Research Committee for Legal Organization of Foreign Schools 1999:2). The government reviewed the legal formation of foreign schools for economic purposes to vitalize international exchanges and ultimately to maximize the nation's economic profits by effectively supporting the education of foreign children whose parents were living in Korea for investment or exchanges and cooperation.

Such a keynote has been continuing until now. The current government announced a plan to advance the service industry to expand a growth engine and improve service profitability at a government-civilian meeting to vitalize the national economy presided over by the president on April 28, 2008. Overseas study and training programs were part of the plan. According to this measure, the government would abolish restrictions on foreign educational institutions, actively support their establishment in Korea, allow these institutions to send profits to their countries in order to encourage Koreans to switch their expenses for studying overseas to domestic institutions, accredit foreign school courses as equivalent to Korean school courses, loosen qualifications of admission and expand the ratio of Korean entrance into those schools (Ministry of Strategy and Finance 2008). Consequently, Regulations on Foundation and Management of Foreign Schools and Others, and Regulations on Foundation and Management of Foreign Schools and Kindergartens were established in October of 2008 and January of the next year, respectively, as Presidential decrees. Under these regulations, domestic corporations could found foreign schools and foreign schools began to be state-accredited for their academic levels as regular schools. Following the new regulations, Koreans who stayed overseas for three years or longer, instead of five years, could enter foreign schools with the expanded proportion from 30% to 50%.

Now, it is time to reestablish political viewpoints about these foreign schools. A Foreigners' Policies Committee announced that a basic direction and vision of their policies in 2006 was "to make an open multicultural society

where Koreans and foreigners lived together by embracing multiculturalism and considering foreigners” (Korea Immigration Service 2006).<sup>19</sup>

The priorities of the nation’s foreigners’ policies have shifted from vitalization of the economy to the transfer to a multicultural society. As a consequence, the direction of foreign school policy should also be reestablished, focusing on the need for multicultural education to transfer to a multicultural society instead of an economic viewpoint. As policies for foreign schools are subordinate policies of those for foreigners, the basic direction and viewpoint for such schools should be equally established with policies for foreigners in order to consistently and properly carry out policies for foreign schools. Educational policies, in particular, should start off from the intrinsic perspective of educational, not economic, interest.

Then what is the primary task for establishing policies for multicultural education? First of all, it is important to establish correct concepts about a multicultural society and multicultural education. The concept of a multicultural society in Korea was created as the government carried out a policy to integrate foreigners into Korean society as their numbers have been increasing since the 1990s. In other words, the Korean concept of multiculturalism was used in order to integrate foreign workers and members of multicultural families into Korean culture and has led to the concept of multicultural education. Such a concept of multicultural education can be understood through the 2010 Education Support Plan for Students from Multi-cultural Families (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology 2010) which suggested the overall direction of the ministry’s multicultural education policies from 2006 to 2010. According to the plan, multicultural education is limited to helping foreign and bicultural children adapt themselves to Korean schools and ordinary students understand foreign cultures. However, a multicultural society literally means a society where various cultures coexist. The Ministry of Culture, Sports & Tourism (2008) defines a multicultural society as a society where members of various cultural backgrounds, including

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19. With aims to realize an open society where Koreans and foreigners can better live together, the Foreigners’ Policies Committee was established in 2006, headed by the prime minister and consisting of 17 related ministers — of such as Economy & Finance, Education & Human Resources Development, Trade & Foreign Affairs, and Justice — and seven civilian members (Korea Immigration Service 2011).

diverse languages, religions, customs, values, nationalities and races, associate with one another without suffering from discrimination.

In this sense, multicultural education aims to raise students of various cultural backgrounds to become members of democratic societies (Koppleman and Goodhat 2005:292). In other words, multicultural education is about adopting effective teaching methods suitable for students' cultural backgrounds and adjusting the official school environment in accordance with cultural diversity, social justice and democratic ideals (Gollnick and Chinn 2002:5). Concretely speaking, people in charge of multicultural education should help students clarify their cultural and racial backgrounds to positively develop their multicultural identity (Manning and Baruth 2004:19). The purpose of multicultural education is to produce advantageous results to individual students and the whole society by helping students recognize their identity, compare and communicate with the mainstream culture instead of making students with a different ethnic and cultural identity behave as if they are individuals of a mainstream society.

Hence, policies of Overseas Chinese schools also should be reestablished with consistent attention and influence on the students so that they can properly establish their cultural identity and will not be driven to academic failure or social discrimination due to their cultural background. The government should lay the foundation for the transition into a mature multicultural society with a commitment to multicultural education and a philosophical vision to cultivate citizens with diverse cultural senses, not just in the scope of economic benefits, service industries or increasing foreign investment.<sup>20</sup>

### *Harmony between National Autonomy of Chinese Schools and Supervision by the Korean Government*

The Chinese schools in Korea set formation of national identity as their primary

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20. The Ministry of Commerce, Industry & Energy has established and carried out a five-year plan to improve foreigners' living environment as a part of a comprehensive measure for foreign investment begun in 2003. Its education plan, in particular, consists of five tasks: 1) assistance for foundation and expansion of foreign schools; 2) cultivation of excellent foreign schools; 3) improvement of supporting systems for foreign schools; 4) reduction of foreign parents' burden of school expenses; and 5) operation of Korean-language schools (Ha 2005:98).

objective. As national education centers abroad, these schools stress Taiwanese curriculum and independent management. Although Overseas Chinese schools are under the control of the Taiwanese government's Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission (OCAC), they are in critical circumstances as students decrease and the Taiwanese government has reduced its financial assistance. The schools hope that the Korean government will be of some help to solve the problem, asking the Korean government to allow more Korean students to enter the schools and to provide some financial aid. It was the Korean government that set up and revised foreign school regulations on foundation, the acceptable ratio of Korean students, and accreditation of the curriculums. Yet these Korean foreign school regulations have not been so helpful for improving the conditions and management of Chinese schools. For those schools authorized under the regulation, the only interaction with the Korean local Office of Education is just to report their schools' circumstances twice a year.<sup>21</sup> Hanseong Overseas Chinese Primary School also has the same problem. On the one hand, the school is demanding responsible measures be taken by the related educational office regarding civil complaints; on the other hand, it is concerned whether to be under the management and supervision of the Korean government or to operate as an independent foreign school.<sup>22</sup>

The Korean government has its own concerns with such ambiguity. It cannot forcibly put foreign schools under Korean educational legal codes, and even if it did so, foreign schools' diversity in terms of foundation, management, and curriculum cannot be dealt with under a single category of law. The Korean government is confronted with a task of creating a law to bestow upon those schools a suitable variety of legal statuses according to their conditions and will. Whether to incorporate foreign schools subject to regulations under

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21. According to the Regulations on Foundation and Management of Foreign Schools and Kindergartens, the government can support students or the foundation and management of foreign schools following criteria and procedures set by the Ministry of Education, Science & Technology (Article 18), and the central government or local governments which financially supports a foreign school can participate in the decision-making body of the same school without prior consent by their principals, demand information, take actions and make suggestions regarding change of the budget. However, there are no regulations specifying related practical supports.

22. The principal of Hanseong Overseas Chinese Middle-High School expressed a hope to develop the school into an international school.



domestic educational law and administration or to let them freely manage themselves without intervention of the domestic law remains in question.

In the meantime, the struggles of Overseas Chinese students and teachers are neglected by the Korean government, with no specific guidance or proper assistance from the Ministry of Education or its educational offices. If Chinese children want to enter Korean schools, they are not restricted from doing so. But as foreigners, they are not subject to compulsory education, so they never receive notices to enroll their children into elementary schools in advance and are not exempted from expenses necessary for education, such as school fees. Besides, Overseas Chinese in Korea exchange information only within their own community, so they don't even know that their children can enter Korean schools. As one interviewee put it, "Only those who are interested in Korean schools or who want to send their children to Korean schools make inquiries to get information. Korea doesn't issue notices to Overseas Chinese. Most of them don't know that they can study at Korean schools. The majority of students enter our school because they believe Chinese should enter Chinese schools."

At the same time, Chinese parents call for active management and supervision from the Korean government. They say they didn't receive assistance or education from the Korean government when they were children, so they have no idea what to do if they send their children to Korean schools. As one parent stated, "We think it is risky to send our children to Korean schools, so we can't venture to do so." They hoped the Korean government would stop sitting back with "neither intervention nor support" towards Chinese schools and "either provide [students] with compulsory subjects, like Korean history or social studies so that Chinese students can easily adapt themselves to and settle into Korean society. Or, if the government supports education on Saturdays, it will be a great opportunity for Chinese students to better approach Korean society." The parent also expressed frustration that the Korean government "never even tried to discuss these solutions" (Parent 2, July 2, 2009). In addition, Chinese teachers are not granted social benefits, such as maternity leaves or retirement grants (Teacher, July 3, 2009).<sup>23</sup>

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23. A teacher of Hanseong Overseas Chinese primary School said that teachers of Chinese schools are poorly treated, adding that their status is ambiguous, as they are regarded neither as national school nor private school teachers.



So far, the Korean government has left Chinese schools at a dead zone in terms of educational concerns because Overseas Chinese haven't abandoned their nationality and routinely isolated themselves in their own social activities.<sup>24</sup> Chinese schools are controlled by their boards of directors whose common understanding is the future of Overseas Chinese depends on their education. However, formation of their self-concept and identity as young Overseas Chinese will certainly have a different meaning from the past and will change as the China-Korea relations evolve and attitudes of the two nations change. It is time to seriously consider ways to guarantee the autonomy of Chinese schools as well as to ensure that their students understand Korean culture and enjoy the benefits of Korean society.

### *Mediation of Equity and Discrimination with Other International Schools*

It is difficult to treat Chinese schools and other foreign schools from the same vantage point. First, unlike other foreign schools, Chinese schools are the only educational institutions for an ethnic minority. Students of other foreign schools – except for Chinese schools – attend those schools with an aim to return to their countries after staying in Korea for a while, instead of residing in Korea for a long time.

In comparison, most parents of students studying at Chinese schools are immigrants who came to Korea for their economic and social survival. They try to form their own network and build separate schools to establish their national identity. Since most of them think they will continue to live in Korea, Overseas Chinese can be regarded as the only minority group among foreigners who permanently live in Korea.

In fact, as of January 31 of 2001, the number of foreigners who were staying in Korea with F-2 visas (a five-year permit to live in Korea) was about 24,000 and about 92% of them were of Taiwanese nationality (Jeju National

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24. To this end, the number of Overseas Chinese in Korea decreased to around 20,000 from 80,000 shortly after the Korean War. Excellent, young Overseas Chinese aged 20-30s who can make a contribution to Korean society are heading for foreign countries due to restrictions on their education, jobs, welfare benefits and activities on the Internet (Lee Chang-hun et. al. December 31, 2008).

University 2008:9), most of them being the Overseas Chinese. In April 2002 when the government granted permanent residency (F-5) to foreigners who lived in Korea for five years or longer, most applicants were Overseas Chinese. Permanent residency is commonly perceived as a right to guarantee status immediately before a foreigner becomes naturalized and as such is the final stage of the foreigner's social integration to Korea. Consequently, students of Chinese schools are not just short-term foreign residents but those who fully have developed an understanding of Korean culture and way of life through their entire life. They are Chinese minority children with permanent residency who will continue living in Korea.

Second, Chinese schools are legally treated the same as British and American schools, but there are considerable differences in actual contents. The number of schools authorized as foreign institutions was 46 in September of 2008. Twenty, or 44%, were British and American schools (American 18, British 2) with 7,316 (66%) students, 18, or 39%, were Chinese schools with 2,338 (21%) students and eight, or 17%, were other foreign schools.<sup>25</sup> Foreign schools in Korea are largely divided into British and American schools, where English is spoken, and Chinese schools, where Chinese is spoken. Parents of students studying at foreign schools, except for Chinese, belong to the upper class. They are considered foreigners with a privileged status and schools their children attend are schools for the nobility. According to data from 2000, the annual school fee at English-speaking schools was about 5.68 million KRW on average, compared with about 1.28 million KRW for Chinese-speaking schools.

Such a gap has recently been deepening. The yearly school expense of foreign schools was about 15-28 million KRW on average in 2009 (Park 2008),<sup>26</sup> while the figure at Chinese schools was about the same as that of 2000 (Principal of HOCPS, July 2, 2009). Therefore, Chinese schools cannot be a subject of the recent criticism over the government policy permitting foreign schools' extended engagement in domestic education – such as acceptance

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25. Foreign schools by nationality were counted as 18 Taiwanese schools, 18 American, two British, two Japanese, one German, one Mongolian, one Turkish and one Norwegian (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology 2008).

26. The tuition fees are most expensive at American schools, about 10-28 million KRW a year (Park 2008).

of Korean students to foreign schools up to 32.7% of the quota (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology 2008), accreditation of the courses as equal to Korean education, Korean-establishment of a foreign school, and easier entrance qualifications for Koreans – which is regarded as establishing additional ‘noble schools’ in direct competition with special-purpose or Korean international schools.

Consequently, the Korean government should establish a fundamental policy for foreign schools and set up detailed specifications to meet the current needs of each school at the same time. In other words, the government should apply the same principles for all foreign schools in general while considering applying various specifications for Chinese schools with a clear notion of their differences from other foreign schools.

## **Conclusion: Summary and Proposals**

Korea socially aims to make the transition into a multicultural society in which various cultures can coexist in harmony. Thus an important issue inherent in this transition is the development of policies to embrace an increased number of foreigners and to facilitate a smooth transition to a multicultural Korean society. Creating a suitable environment in which the long-term foreign residents can create their own identity as members of the multicultural society is an important factor in determining the nation’s smooth transfer to a multicultural society. Such an effort starts with establishing effective educational policies for foreigners because educational systems create frameworks for human growth and people who grow up within the changed framework are the ones who create a new society.

However, current policies for multicultural education are centered on newcomers to the Korean society since 1990 with distinctive nationality and race, and do not cover individuals or groups who exist across boundaries of multiple cultural social divisions. Such tendencies can result in students ending up with a limited experience of multicultural education as mere acknowledgement of differences between countries and races; on the other hand, individuals or groups excluded from the scope of new education policies can develop a sense of inferiority and exclusionism instead of a sense of responsibility toward and desire for harmonious coexistence within the Korean society.

At the same time, current policies for multicultural education aim at providing superior education for children from multicultural families to guarantee their ability to competently survive in Korean society. If the ultimate goal of education is to make individuals only well-adapted to the existing system, such multicultural education will not be a capable measure to encourage foreigners or local people to change their feelings, attitudes and behavior toward people of other cultures. In other words, current passive and prescriptive approaches cannot create a strong enough driving force to lead individuals and the Korean society as a whole to comprise a mature, advanced multicultural society.

There are clear political tasks and direction regarding the education of the only ethnic minority in Korean land, namely the Overseas Chinese. While allowing their national identity to be acknowledged and further developed on their own, educational support should be strengthened in a way to help Overseas Chinese become model citizens and contributive leaders of Korean society. The Korean government should be more aggressive in educating Overseas Chinese with an extended framework of multicultural policies. The focus of policies, however, should not be limited to improvement of Korean people's foreign language skills nor promoted as a strategy to attract foreign investment. In order to fulfill the fundamental purpose to help foreigners enjoy their national culture and grow into talented people with a strong identity and a desire to play an important role in Korean society, efforts must be made to understand the reality and demands of Chinese schools and discuss ways to make resolutions in reality.

To this end, the direction and policies for Chinese schools should be included as an integral part of the nation's multicultural educational system. The Department of Fostering Global Talents, under the Ministry of Education, Science & Technology, is in charge of the establishment and authorization of foreign schools. However, this department is only responsible for the authorization of those schools, not any practical assistance for them. It is the Department of Education and Welfare Policies which is in charge of educational programs and assistance for students from multicultural families, but Overseas Chinese students are excluded from its subject boundary.

The government should commence a comprehensive survey of the foundation, admission and management policies, assistance policies and practical considerations of Chinese schools in order to establish a plan to support them.

As these schools are the only educational institutions for Korea's one ethnic minority group, the government should pay special attention to provide differentiated policies for them. Such efforts on the part of the government will be meaningful in that it will be preparing policies about education for new ethnic groups which will appear as foreign residents in Korea increase and their stay extends; in other words, policies for multicultural education in fact and in name will be made and will guarantee a successful transition to a multicultural Korean society.

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## Abstract

This study suggests directions and tasks of educational policies for Overseas Chinese to realize multicultural education in Korea. Overseas Chinese have been residing in Korea for over 100 years, and they are permanent residents who plan to continuously live here. Most of their children have feelings and cultural experience as Koreans. Schools for Chinese children, however, have recently been faced with problems of establishment of identity, reorganization of educational courses, and decrease of students and thus have requested active support from the Korean government. The Korean government should solve the following problems of Chinese schools to prepare the foundation for a multicultural education that cultivates citizens with diverse cultural backgrounds. First, the political directions of education for Overseas Chinese should be re-established from a viewpoint of multicultural education. Second, a strategy to harmonize the autonomy of Chinese schools and the Korean government's right to supervise education should be developed. Third, equality with other foreign schools should be established.

**Keywords:** Multicultural society, multicultural education, foreign schools, Overseas Chinese schools