

Summary

As of 2009, Korea became a member of the OECD DAC(Development Assistance Committee). To increase the efficiency and viability of overseas volunteer programs that are government-led, the Korean government created an unified brand named 'World Friends Korea'. The overseas volunteer program still needs improvements despite government support. One of the difficulties that the overseas volunteer program is facing is that volunteers find it difficult to fully utilize their capacity in society once they return to their home country.

There is a certain value of scarcity and significance in the skills and knowledge volunteers acquire through the KOICA(Korea International Cooperation Agency) overseas volunteer program. The type of competence an overseas volunteer has varies according to the region and project the volunteer works for. The competencies of volunteers, which consist of their international perspective, altruistic value, regional expertise, cannot be easily acquired through other activities. Therefore, it is essential for our society to make the most out of the competencies developed through overseas volunteer activities.

This research aims to establish a strategy to make it possible for society to utilize the experience of volunteers to its full capacity. From a market perspective, the level of supply and demand is different for the competences of volunteers. There is a low level of demand for competencies supplied by overseas volunteers, despite its scarcity. The gap between supply and demand can be narrowed down by extending the scope of demand. Another strategy would be enhancing the quality of volunteer competency or transforming its characteristic.

The theoretical framework of this research is based on human resource management theories in career development and management. Opinion surveys on volunteers and related organizations was conducted in this research to point out the barriers in utilizing overseas volunteers in society. A job analysis was carried out

based on the results from a subject matter expert workshop to construct a competency model for overseas volunteers. The competency model provides a foundation for strategies that can guide KOICA how to manage the competencies of overseas volunteers and overcome the problem of career interruption.

There are ten strategies laid out in this research to increase the possibility of utilizing overseas volunteers in society. One of the proposed strategies is for KOICA to implement various ways to recruit and evaluate volunteers in order to attract excellent candidates. Once chosen as a overseas volunteer, the volunteer needs support with designing their career vision before being dispatched. Designing their own career future can motivate volunteers to make their time overseas as part of their career and not think it as a separate experience. Thus, an evaluation and feedback system should take place during their volunteer period to keep the volunteers focused on enhancing their skills and acquiring relevant knowledge that can help their career in the future.

KOICA should also provide opportunities to volunteers to deepen their common competencies that is normally required in potential employees or researchers. In this research common competencies of overseas volunteers include management, cooperation, planning, and teaching skills. Additionally, if the volunteers are provided with a customized career design and counseling, as well as post-dispatch programs, then it is more likely that the volunteer can find a way to make the most of their competencies in society.

From an organizational perspective, it is recommended for KOICA to construct a knowledge management system that can document and systemize the knowledge and experience acquired individually. Especially, if KOICA manages an expert group system that is customized toward expert knowledge and skills acquired from each region the knowledge management system can be used as a database for ODA specialists and CSR(corporate social responsibility) experts.

An event like World Friends Korea Week can also expand the scope of how the public perceives overseas volunteers. Lastly, we recommend for KOICA to lay a foundation for overseas volunteers to consider the possibility of developing their

regional knowledge and international perspective on social issues into a social entrepreneurial project.

Once the proposed strategies are implemented by KOICA, we find that it will be possible to narrow the gap between the level of supply and demand for competencies of overseas volunteers. Thus, we expect the following outcome to result from this research.

First of all, this research is significant in a sense that not only studied the theoretical aspect of utilizing the competencies of overseas volunteers, but also explored ideas based on the overseas volunteer and potential employer opinion survey.

Secondly, to motivate volunteers into enhancing their capacity, this study proposed a career vision design program to be implemented before a volunteer is dispatched, as well as a post-dispatch management system.

Lastly, this research reinterprets the competencies of overseas volunteers from a national perspective and recommends that they are managed as ODA specialists. Thus, we expect that the strategies proposed by this paper can enable KOICA to support volunteers fully utilize their competencies throughout society, as well as expand the scope of public perception on overseas volunteer work.