

A Study on a Philosophical Foundation of Intergenerational Christian Education : The Significance of Reciprocity and Participation

Hyunho Shin

(Presbyterian University and Theological Seminary)

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore implications for intergenerational Christian education in Korean churches and families that struggle with “generational fragmentations” focusing on the conception of reciprocity and participation. For the faith community in Korea, “generational fragmentations” does not merely mean communication gaps or the disconnection between generations but also the absence of reciprocity and communal participation as a genuine intergenerational community of faith. With this phenomenon in mind, this study explores the concept of “intergenerationality” in education, focusing on reciprocity and participation. Next, this study examines the concepts of reciprocity and participation found in John Dewey’s seminal works, *Democracy and Education* and *Experience and Education* based on his ideas of democracy and experience in relation to intergenerational Christian education for the Korean church and families. The present paper then attempts to find implications for intergenerational Christian education in the Korean church and family, showing the importance of an intergenerational community of faith with reciprocity and communal participation, and communal spiritual journey with children and adults.

Key Words

intergenerationality, Dewey, reciprocity, interaction, participation, democracy, experience

This was supported by the research fund of Presbyterian University and Theological Seminary in 2023.

Received February 23, 2023 **Revised** March 29, 2023 **Accepted** March 29, 2023

Author : Hyunho Shin, Assistant Professor, Presbyterian University and Theological Seminary,
hhshin@puts.ac.kr

세대통합 기독교교육의 철학적 토대에 관한 연구 : 호혜성과 참여를 중심으로*

신현호**

(장로회신학대학교)

논문 요약

연구 목적 : 본 연구는 신앙공동체 내 “세대 단절”로 씨름하고 있는 교회와 가정이 함께 하는 세대통합 기독교교육을 위한 함의를 찾기 위해 호혜성과 참여를 중심으로 하는 교육철학적 토대를 탐색하는 것을 목적으로 삼고 있다.

연구 내용 및 방법 : 신앙공동체 내 “세대 단절”은 세대 간의 소통 단절을 넘어서 다른 세대 간의 호혜적 관계와 공동체적 참여를 상실한 세대통합적 기독교교육의 부재임을 지적하며, 본 연구는 이를 위해 먼저 최근 범지구적으로 교육학계와 기독교교육학에서 논의되고 있는 온세대성(intergenerationality)의 이해를 호혜성과 참여에 초점을 맞추어 철학적, 신학적, 교육학적으로 살펴본다. 둘째, 존 듀이의 〈민주주의와 교육〉(1916)과 〈경험과 교육〉(1938)에 나타난 민주주의와 경험의 교육철학적 개념에 기초하여 호혜성과 참여의 개념을 살펴보면서 교사와 학습자의 관계, 교육공동체의 호혜적, 참여적 교육과정에 대해 검토한다.

결론 및 제언 : 세대통합 기독교교육은 참여자의 통진적 신앙형성을 위해 호혜성과 참여를 회복해야 한다. 한국교회의 세대통합 기독교교육 실천에 대한 창조적인 대안 마련을 위해 본 연구는 호혜성과 참여를 회복하는 온세대적 공동체 형성의 중요성, 세대 간 신앙전수와 신앙공유를 위한 거룩한 경청과 공동체적 영적 순례의 실천을 통해 모든 세대 참여자의 상호 이해와 존중이 회복되어야 함을 강조한다.

〈주제어〉

온세대성, 듀이, 호혜성, 상호작용, 참여, 민주적 공동체, 경험

□ 2023년 2월 23일 접수, 2023년 3월 29일 심사완료, 2023년 3월 29일 게재확정

* 이 논문은 2023년 장로회신학대학교의 지원을 받아 수행된 연구임.

** 장로회신학대학교 조교수, hhshin@puts.ac.kr

I. Introduction

When Christians are overwhelmed by crises of spiritual relationships in the midst of difficult life situations, can a faithful intergenerational community be a meaningful answer to the spiritual and missional life of the church? This question seems to have significance and urgency in the individualistic and consumerism society. Since 2000s, there is a dramatic increase of theological interest in the significance of intergenerational community, for many churches and families living in modern society have experienced brokenness and indifference which are defined as “generational fragmentations”(Pazmiño & Kang, 2011). Accordingly, such generational fragmentations and individualism influenced the church education and family faith formation so that many Christians not only have lost opportunities to learn, love, and worship together with other generations in a community of faith(Chung, 2022; Park, 2014; Ko, 2018; Kim, 2021; Lee, 2022), but also have not appreciated the significance of reciprocity and participation in intergenerational faith formation as important factors to build a genuine community of faith(Shin, 2020).

In the church, children and youth are supposed to belong to so-called “age-appropriate” groups and learn the Bible for an hour or less at Sunday “school” without opportunities of reciprocal learning from and with other generations except teachers. Under such a schooling system, they attend a Sunday School for years and “graduate” from it with few connections in a faith community, failing to experience and participate in the genuine community of faith as well as spiritual experiments in an inclusive and reflective learning community. Such failure in participating in a trusting and loving community of faith has deprived chances from children and youth to play a role in intergenerational Christian education as active participants who learn from and contribute to others’ spiritual journeys. Although many Christian educators and parents already perceived such vexing situations and challenges, it does not seem to be easy to find answers.

Meanwhile, the Korean family and kinship system has been also challenged and modified by recent economic, social, and cultural changes. This traditional family system represents ambivalent social values. On the one hand, the system

justified a hierarchy structure and subordination in the family and kinship relationships. On the other hand, however, this family and kinship system ideally placed emphasis on the value of human interdependence and group belongingness. In a biblical and theological view, the latter is a crucial factor in any human relationship like the family and church whereas the former is the one which should be reformed based on equality and love. But, in changing into the contemporary family system, the family has been experiencing generational fragmentation and individualism based on consumerism and modern educational system. Inevitably, this generational fragmentation and individualism influenced the Korean church and family faith formation in terms of failing to teach the holistic meaning of faith in a faith community, and the Christian life for others for the common good. In that sense, within and through intergenerational education and practices come new possibilities for the Korean church and family to respond to such difficult problems they face and to build a genuine community of faith where they participate in a meaningful learning experience to grow together in faith.

Observing this phenomenon of generational fragmentations in the Korean church and family, I would like to raise questions: What educational philosophy do we need to confront generational fragmentations in the church and family? What answers can Christian education bring to their burdensome tasks of nurturing faith of children and youth? What relationship between learners and teachers should be in a genuine intergenerational community of faith?

In this study, I will argue that intergenerational Christian education brings the ecclesial, spiritual and missional life into the Korean church and family which are segregated by age. For the purpose of this study, this study explores the concept of "intergenerationality" in education, focusing on reciprocity and participation. Next, this study examines the concepts of reciprocity and participation found in John Dewey's seminal works, *Democracy and Education*(1916) and *Experience and Education*(1938) based on his ideas of democracy and experience in relation to intergenerational Christian education for the Korean church and families. The present paper then attempts to find implications for intergenerational Christian education in the Korean church and family, showing

the importance of an intergenerational community of faith with reciprocity and communal participation, communal spiritual journey with children and adults, and the reciprocal respect and understanding in a participatory practice of intergenerational worship.

II. Exploring the conception of reciprocity and participation in intergenerational education

Since 2000s, there have been researchers and Christian education theorists who pay attention to the significance of intergenerational practice and education in a number of academic disciplines. VanderVen's examination of intergenerational theory(2004), which provides insight into multiple aspects of intergenerational relationships, and helps raise important questions about intergenerationality in Christian education. VanderVen starts with the basic insight that intergenerational relationships have a combinatory aspect. She points out that the combinatory aspect has been traditionally understood as an intergenerational pairing or combination of two generations. She argues that in a rapidly changing and ageing society, four questions immediately arise: (1) the nature of the combination, (2) the gap between two developmental stages or generations, (3) the number of generations involved in the intergenerational relationship, and (4) the outcomes. According to VanderVen, the original idea of intergenerational relationships was that there was something special about people at each end of the human life span. She argues that intergenerational theory requires selection and integration of relevant "source" theories: relation and activity theory, cultural transmission, life span theory and generativity, all of which need to focus on the reciprocal transformation implied in the relationship.

Mannion(2016) shows how understanding of learning and education can be distinguished depending on different emphases given in "generation": (1) a predominantly intrafamilial view of generation which focuses on the relations among older and younger members of a family; (2) a more societal view of generations which inhabit different social groups; (3) a chronological or cohort-based view

of generation (the baby boomers, Xers, etc.) Mannion argues that such familial, social, and cohort perspectives on generation lead us to different views on education and learning, for instance, how reciprocal learning occurs within the family, outside of the family, or between distinct generations of past, current, and future groups and that all three forms of generational understanding are needed to encounter the contemporary situation.

Furthermore, Mannion points out how intergenerational practice and intergenerational education are understood differently in the recent literature. Mannion (2016) explains intergenerational practice as “an inclusive and reciprocal process that builds on the resources brought by each generation and aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations and contributes to building more cohesive communities.”(Mannion, 2016, 5) In this explanation, Mannion pays attention to the importance of seeing intergenerational practice as “a reciprocal process involving all-age exchanges”, that is, “[to] share their knowledge and resources and [to] provide mutual support in relations benefiting only individuals but their community.”(Mannion, 2016, 5). Meanwhile, according to Mannion, intergenerational learning and education is conceived as “founded to some degree on the sustenance, creation, expression of relations between generations” aiming “to achieve purposeful and progressive learning and lead to mutually beneficial learning outcomes” and to “promote greater understanding and respect between generations”(Mannion, 2016, 6-7; ENIL, 2012). This understanding emphasizes a participatory factor in intergenerational learning to achieve a common purpose.

In Christian education, Harkness(1998, 2012) understands intergenerationality as the essence of the church with an emphasis on mutuality and inclusive participation in education and worship. He points out that while the term intergenerationality is generally used in order to differentiate between people on the basis of perceived differences directly attributable to chronological age, an intergenerational community of faith has to be understood as normative church, in which a sense of mutuality and equality is encouraged between generations (Harkness, 2012, 122; 2000). Harkness argues that in order to build a genuine

intergenerational community of faith, the church needs relevant intergenerational strategies, that is, raising the level of congregational intergenerational consciousness and recognizing factors which enhance intergenerational involvement(Harkness, 1998, 436).

Allen and Ross(2012) draw on the term intergenerationality in relation to reciprocity and participation with more enthusiasm. They basically build their theoretical foundation on Harkness's definition. Allen and Ross are likely to use the term as a theoretical basis in theology, especially in a trinitarian theology. They pay attention to the body as a basic image of relational aspect of international community of faith (Allen & Ross, 2012, 111, 114). According to Allen and Ross, a significant clue to the body image of intergenerational relationship is found in St. Paul's "one another" passages such as in Romans 12 and 15 and 1 Corinthians 11. They argue that as children, youth, and adults participate in "a community where others are kind to one another, love one another, bear one another's burdens... they learn these concepts, experience them and socially negotiate their meaning; they are being formed spiritually into the image of God."(Allen & Ross, 2012, 115). Such reciprocal relationships among generations, as exemplified in the John's first epistle, are invited to *koinonia*, which refers to "both Christians' participation in the life of God and to the communal life it creates"(Allen & Ross, 2012, 115).

Meanwhile, Robert Pazmiño and Steve Kang(2011) propose an intergenerational approach of Christian education as a culturally informative, formative, and transformative ministry of the Christian church. Although they do not carry much of a theoretical discussion on intergenerational Christian education, they call for serious attention in creating a safe and hospitable place at home and in the church where each generation as "text-people" interacts and shares with other generations the "text" that is animated by godly Christians in real life situations(Pazmiño and Kang, 2011, 389). For Pazmiño and Kang, intergenerational interactions of lived faith, not just "text," play a key role in forming and transforming disciples of Jesus Christ, transcending generational fragmentations. Pazmiño and Kang call such intergenerational reciprocity in faith "the communion of saints" at the heart of which are participating in faithful practices, that

is, sharing faith life, mutual serving and exhorting one another (Pazmiño and Kang, 2011, 390). I find a crucial contribution Pazmiño and Kang make to this discussion that they do not understand intergenerational Christian education simply as a quick remedy for generational fragmentations in a faith community, but as a serious response to intergenerational faith communities in which people gather with diversity in age, culture, and faith and strive for finding meanings in their spiritual lives not at the expense of the diversity.

Exploring the conception of reciprocity and participation in intergenerational education theories, we may question what reciprocal exchange and participatory learning in intergenerational educational practices look like. To broaden our discussion, in the next section I will discuss John Dewey's ideas of reciprocity and participation in his philosophy of education. For the purpose of this study, I will focus mainly on how Dewey understands reciprocity and participation in education in relation to his ideas of democracy and experience in his major works, and later attempt to find implications from his ideas for the discussion of intergenerational Christian education.

III. Dewey's ideas of reciprocity and participation based on democracy and experience

John Dewey is one of educational philosophers who both brought strong influence on and received harsh criticism in Christian education. As the one who heavily influenced the religious education movement in the US in the early twentieth century, Dewey has been criticized by some in Christian education in terms of his ideas of naturalistic view on religion and of education in the evolutionary framework. Nevertheless, his contribution to Christian education also cannot be underestimated in terms of his emphasis on the understanding of learners as active pursuers of their own purposes (Noddings, 2007, 40), the interaction between the teacher and learner, and the importance of experience in learning. Especially, with respect to providing a strong foundation of reciprocity and participation in contemporary intergenerational Christian education

theories, it is Dewey's ideas of democracy and experience that can contribute to broadening the concept of intergenerationality as reciprocal and participatory, the concept that had been often understood as a unidirectional transmission in adult-centered Christian education theorist(Shin, 2020). As a proponent of intergenerational Christian education, Westerhoff(2012, 82) admits that his emphasis on "the dialogical relationship between equals" in the community of faith is also reflected in Dewey's idea of interaction and participatory learning(Westerhoff, 2012, 82), although he criticizes that the religious education movement deeply rooted in Dewey's philosophy of education eclipsed every other aspect of church life(Westerhoff, 2012, 26):

In the 50s and 60s a few religious educators affirmed a similar position. They spoke of the language of relationships, dialogical education, and experiential learning. They spoke of all life together in community... Of course, the idea was not new to them. Much earlier, John Dewey had defended a developmental-interactive view of education which stressed the importance of experiences that foster interaction between persons and their environment(Westerhoff, 2012, 83).

In this sense, it is helpful to examine his contribution to equality and participation to broaden our discussion on intergenerational education insofar as we fairly evaluate limitations in his approach. Through this discussion, I will attempt to illuminate how Dewey's ideas of democracy and experience in education contribute to a discussion of intergenerational Christian education in relation to reciprocity and participation, philosophically and practically. For this work, I will do this work based on Dewey's two seminal works, *Democracy and Education* (1916) and *Experience and Education*(1938).

1. Reciprocity and democracy in Dewey's philosophy of education

Dewey, first and foremost, understands education as a necessary function for social life. That means that insofar as human beings continue their social lives through a self-renewing process, education is the means of this social continuity life, intentionally spanning the gap between the original capacities of the im-

mature and the standards and customs of the elders(Dewey, 1916, 2-3). Education as the intentional means can only be established and maintained by communication which is fundamentally educative and transmissible. But, Dewey argues, in order for this intentional, communicative means to be genuine education, it must have direction toward growth. According to Dewey, education is distinguished from training and habituation which makes us repeat the same responses to recurrent stimuli without intellectual acts(Dewey, 1916, 29, 47). For Dewey, education is growth and has no end beyond itself. Also, "the educational process is one of continual reorganizing, reconstructing, and transforming"(Dewey, 1916, 50). This notion of education as growth accordingly needs for others and plasticity which is the power to learn from experience.

With regard to the necessity of others in education, we meet the democratic concept in education which Dewey underscores. He maintains that a democracy is more than a form of government, but it is principally "a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience"(Dewey, 1916, 87). For Dewey, insofar as education is a process of reorganizing an individual's experience, it is in itself the goal, helping people to form better habits and to improve the future society. In terms that education is a social process, Dewey argues that education must play a key role in giving "individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control, and the habits of mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder"(Dewey, 1916, 87). In other words, education always should consider the free interaction and communication between an individual and a society, and individuals to one another.

For Dewey, such interaction and communication should be reciprocal between equals. Dewey(1938, 43) understands a transaction as one that [is] "taking place between an individual and what, at the time, constitutes his environment." Višňovský(2011) points out that Dewey's idea of reciprocity does not occur within the context of power and relationships between the superior and the inferior, but in the context of companionship and love. However, for Dewey, such reciprocity in education does not mean equivalence in give-and-take in inter-generational relationships, but it means "a cooperative enterprise, not a diction," that is, the relationship of cooperation in love and friendship(Dewey, 1938, 71).

2. Participation and experience in Dewey's philosophy of education

In order to comprehend the meaning of participation in Dewey precisely, we need to investigate what role experience plays in such an education. Dewey's notion of experience is clearly manifested in his work *Experience and Education*. As mentioned in the editorial forward of *Experience and Education*, Dewey was asked to discuss the debatable questions that divided American education into two camps—so-called traditional education and progressive education and weakened it. Dewey argues that neither of the two camps is adequate in terms of not applying the principles of a philosophy of experience. So, Dewey attempts to illuminate the meaning of experience and its relation to education. Dewey understands experience as the means and goal of education, experience that is “always the actual life-experience of individuals”(Dewey, 1938, 89). He believes that there is an organic connection between education and personal experience. According to Dewey, all genuine education comes about through experience, which includes active participation by learners in a democratic learning process according to their choices in learning and education. For Dewey, it is crucial to discriminate between participation in common activities in a community being held together, which he advocates, and the traditional way of education. Such participation does not mean mere taking part in organized experience by students in a learning community, but “the [active] participation of the learner in the formation of the purposes which direct his activities in the learning process”(Dewey, 1938, 67).

Meanwhile, Dewey contends that all experiences are not genuinely or equally educative. In order to discern which experiences are worthwhile educationally, one needs to look at what Dewey calls two principles of experience: the principle of continuity and the principle of interaction.

The first principle of experience is continuity. Dewey explains the principle of continuity that “every experience both takes up something from those which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after”(Dewey, 1938, 35). That means that experiences in the past, present, and future are mutually correlated and influenced. In the continuity of experience,

Dewey finds two conditions which give rise to experience: internal and objective conditions. While the former is from inside an individual's body and mind, the latter is outside an individual. No one can have experience without either of the two. Here arises the second principle of interaction of experience. By interaction Dewey means "to assign equal rights to both conditions in experience. Consideration of the principle of interaction leads us to think about the relation between the individual and the world, social control and freedom, and interest in the individual and organization of subject-matter. Dewey maintains that the two principles of continuity and interaction are not separate from each other and that when the active union of these two principles provides criteria of the value of experience.

Given the interrelation of the two principles of experience, Dewey investigates the measure of the educative significance and value of an experience with regard to the present experience and growth. According to Dewey, education is not merely preparation for the future. Dewey notes that there are two ways to conceive education with regard to the relation between the past and the future: a retrospective way and a prospective way. While the former tends to accommodate the future to the past and to find its standards in what has gone before, the latter utilizes the past for a resource in a developing future(Dewey, 1916, 79). Dewey opposes any attempt to lead students to regard gaining skills or useful knowledge for their future as the primary goal of education(Dewey, 1938, 47). Instead, he claims that an issue of education based on experience is to choose the kind of present experiences that live fruitfully and creatively in subsequent experiences(Dewey, 1938, 28). This claim is closely connected to the notion that the educational process can be identified with growth, or growing as a verb. Dewey insists that education which links present experiences to subsequent experiences promotes universal growing which involves not only physical growth, but also intellectual and moral growth(Dewey, 1938, 36). He contends, "There is no subject that is in and of itself, or without regard to the stage of growth attained by the learner, such that inherent educational value can be attributed to it"(Dewey, 1938, 46). Only when attentive care is devoted to the conditions which give each present experience a worthwhile meaning, can this

education be meaningful to learners. In this regard, “education as growth or maturity should be an ever-present process”(Dewey, 1938, 192).

3. Scientific method of education for reciprocity and participation

For Dewey, organization of subject-matter is a scientific process which arranges objective conditions which operate to promote the enriched growth of further experience. As we saw in the principle of interaction, for Dewey, objective conditions are necessary to give rise to experience, and in this sense organized subject-matter is “the best at command to further new experiences”(Dewey, 1916, 182). By scientific method Dewey means the authentic means which “provides a working pattern of the way in which and the conditions under which experiences are used to lead over onward and outward” (Dewey, 1938, 88). In other words, when educators organize subject-matter, they above all need to realize that the subject-matter must be derived from materials which at the outset fall within the scope of ordinary life-experience (Dewey, 1938, 73). And then, what is already experienced by learners should be progressively developed into a fuller and richer and more organized form, a form that gradually approximates that in which subject matter is presented to the skilled, mature person. According to Dewey, this progressive organization of subject-matter is carried out scientifically, that is, through “analysis and synthesis”(Dewey, 1938, 84) so that learners perceive the principle of cause-and-effect and the relation of consequences to means.

With regard to the purpose of this study, I here find a crucial point in Dewey’s criticism of organizing subject-matter in both traditional education and progressive education. According to Dewey, educators in the camp of traditional education tended to select and arrange subject matter on the basis of the judgment of adults as to what would be useful for the young sometime in the future. This tendency resulted in the fact that the material to be learned was settled upon outside the present life-experience of the learners(Dewey, 1938, 76). Meanwhile, educators in the camp of progressive education were also led to misconception that the progressive schools can ignore the past, learners solely coping with the problems of the present and future. But, as Dewey indicates,

individuals must draw in memory upon their own past to understand the present conditions in which they find themselves(Dewey, 1938, 77). As we will see, these points Dewey indicates imply that, to put it shortly, learners can interpret their present experiences as meaningful only based on the story of the past and the hope of the future in close relation to other generations.

In addition, I want to indicate another point Dewey makes that students learn not only the particular thing they are studying at the time, but also other things which are not directly taught from subject-matter(Dewey, 1938, 48), things that we may call hidden curriculum. For Dewey, students' present experiences are substantially influenced by others, especially attitudes of educators and learning communities. This shows that learning does not occur only in studying a particular subject-matter, but in a learning community which appreciates a reciprocal interaction and exchange in sharing values in a democratic way. It implies that hidden curriculum plays a significant role in shaping students' attitudes and thinking as well.

4. Reciprocity and participation in the relation between the teacher and the learner

As we discussed in two principles of experience, Dewey believes that the role of educators is significant in terms of organizing an environment to facilitate students' ability and needs. Dewey understands the role of educators in two ways. First, educators are ones who can see inside the minds of learners and facilitate meaningful experiences for them. Dewey(1938, 38-39; 1918, 182) argues that educators should be able to "evaluate each experience of the young who are immature" and "judge what attitudes are actually conducive to continued growth and what are detrimental," with sympathetic understanding of individuals. Second, educators should recognize in the concrete what surroundings are conducive to having experiences that lead to growth(Dewey, 1938, 40). In relation to such roles of educators as guides and facilitators based on principles of experience, Dewey points out misconceptions one of which is that the teacher should not intervene in education for students' freedom and that, in an extreme sense, the

teacher is no longer necessary in education. Rather, insofar as education is based upon experience and educative experience is seen to be a social process, Dewey argues, "As the most mature member of the group the teacher has a peculiar responsibility for the conduct of the interactions and intercommunications which are the very life of the group as a community"(Dewey, 1938, 58). What Dewey accents is that when educators consider learners' ability and purposes in order to encourage them to create a worthwhile experience, the educators are already playing a significant role in education.

Dewey(1938, 67) understands learners as copartners of educators, learners who participate in the construction of the purposes which direct their activities in the learning process. He sees that each individual has his or her personal impulse and desire which are moving forces to grow and learn. But these impulse and desire in the individual are not automatically led into learning, but in and through the proper educational process and the free interaction between the educator and the student, the impulse and desire are connected to meaningful learning. In this sense, Dewey distinguishes his notion of education from the so-called "individual-centered" educational philosophy represented by Rousseau, which regarded a society as broad as humanity, of whose progress the individual was to be the organ. Dewey(1918, 99) insists that such individualistic educational philosophy lacked any agency for securing the development of its ideal. It is through the process of social intelligence in a relationship between the educators and learners, Dewey argues, that learners become grow up holistically.

If we take note what Dewey insists regarding the role of educators and the cooperation of students, can we arrive at Dewey's notion of a democratic community of education. He notes that, in planning an educational project, both the educator and the student are called to participate in cooperation. Dewey maintains that to develop contributions from the experience of all engaged in the learning process into a plan occurs "through reciprocal give-and-take" between the teacher and the learners, the teacher taking but not being afraid also to give(Dewey, 1938, 72). This notion radically challenges and changes not only the traditional image of education, but also that of the teacher who is a giver as well as a learner. This reciprocal learning community is deeply related to the

way in which Dewey understands democracy that is “a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience.”

IV. Implications for intergenerational Christian education for the Korean family and church

I have explored Dewey’s ideas of reciprocity and participation found in the ideas of democracy and experience in his works, attempting to reflect on intergenerational education. Throughout this discussion, one may have found that it is worthwhile to reconsider Dewey’s educational philosophy in relation to intergenerational Christian education, in terms of his balanced sense of participation and experiential learning as well as the democratic concept of reciprocity in education.

Now I will note briefly several points regarding Dewey’s ideas of experience and democracy to find his contribution to the understanding of reciprocity and participation in an educational context. I find in his educational theory that several points are relevant to the discussion of intergenerational Christian education for the Korean family and church. First, Dewey’s notion of education is fundamentally intergenerational. Presupposing a social life which consists of different generations, Dewey underscores the intentional reciprocal interaction between the immature and the mature, the young people and the elders, the teacher and the student. Second, Dewey sees education as growth or maturity. That means that education exists only when it leads learners to have better experiences. I believe that this point would be helpful to analyze the current Korean Christian education system, questioning whether the Korean Christian education is connecting experiences of different generations to grow together in faith. Third, Dewey’s principle of continuity of experiences allows us to consider that education is “an ever-present” process interrelated with experiences in the past and the future. Fourth, educators must recognize the powers and needs in learners and help the learners develop them through objective conditions. With regard to this study, the point can be said that intergenerational Christian education

cannot be practiced if it merely focuses on a certain generation or age-group; rather it should deal with experiences of each generation delicately and organize these experiences as a whole. Given this, I find some implications for a model of intergenerational Christian education for the Korean church and family, especially reflecting on the concept of intergenerationality.

First of all, the concept of reciprocity should be considered seriously in intergenerational Christian education theories and practices. For Dewey, reciprocal interconnection between the educator and the learner is one of the most important issues in a democratic education in which the necessity of others is not taken for granted but the relationship with others in education is considered in the context of companionship and love. This is also shown well when he attempts to overcome the limitations of Plato's society-centered philosophy and Rousseau's individual-centered philosophy. For intergenerational Christian education theorists, the concept of reciprocity can be considered in relationships between different generations in a way of inter-respect and care in intergenerational learning between different generations in the church and the Christian family. In that sense, intergenerational Christian education based on this study necessarily leads us to reconsider previous educational philosophies prevalent among churches and families in Korea. When we recall that Christian education is and should be intergenerational, fragmentation between generations within the theory and practice of intergenerational Christian education should be challenged and overcome by reciprocal interaction in love and hospitality. This is because we can love the triune God and live the genuine Christian lives only when we participate in "living together, learning together, loving together" as the body of Christ, the church as the body that is intergenerational. In this sense, the contemporary Korean church and family, who are segregated by age and generation, should be guided by respecting others and building a reciprocal relationship, regardless of their ages and developmental tenets, in intergenerational Christian education so as to learn and grow faithfully, responding to social challenges, such as individualism and consumerism, which cause generational fragmentations.

Second, the role of participation needs to be considered as crucial in intergenerational Christian education with respect to providing meaningful learning

experiences for people of all ages in the church and family. For Dewey, experience is “always the actual life-experience of individuals,” the value of experience that is measured with regard to the present experience and growth. For this, I argue that intergenerational Christian education should also invite people of all ages in the church to participate in meaningful learning experiences to grow in faith, not merely for preparation for the future of the next generation. In that sense, it is important to invite the church and family to participate in the communal spiritual learning in terms of encouraging each generation to learn from other generations and participate in co-pilgrimages in faith as intergenerational spiritual journeys. In order to carry implications of this point for the Korean intergenerational church and family, I want to point out three things. The first thing is that the Korean intergenerational church and family are invited to carefully listen to others. I would like to call it holy listening, for we can begin to be taught genuinely by God only when we pay attention to God and listens to others. Growing up in the Confucian hierarchical culture, the Korean adults, especially men, are not familiar with listening to the young people and even with learning from them. When the Korean intergenerational congregation sees holy listening as a starting point to learn from others, including children and youth, all the generations can learn about God and Christian lives more plentifully, and the older generation can welcome the younger generation as another co-pilgrims for intergenerational Christian education. The second thing is that, as Dewey argues, adult educators must endeavor to connect meaningful experiences of each generation with those of others. Educators, or facilitators, should pay careful attention to organizing educational environment and curriculum with regard to “stage of growth by the learner” (Dewey, 1938,46). I find that it by no means easy tasks for educators and parents in intergenerational Christian education. But it is worthwhile enough to encourage different generations to participate in others’ faithful journeys. The third thing is that the contemporary intergenerational Christian education should involve senior adults actively as storytellers who share their lifelong spiritual journey with the younger generations. When the elder are invited to intergenerational Christian education as significant agents, their meaningful past in faith can be shared and il-

luminated through the present of the younger generations and also make the future of the whole congregation more “hope-full” in the Spirit.

Third, pursuing reciprocity in intergenerational Christian education leads us to reconsider the role of faith formation in the family. Although Dewey pays special attention to the school, especially in his later works such as *Experience and Education*, I find from his ideas of reciprocity the significance of “ever-present process” in the spiritual journey of family that can be experienced by both parents and children as a way of intergenerational faith formation. In the era of brokenness and indifference, Christian families are called to practice reciprocal justice to overcome generational fragmentations that prevent them from being a genuine community of faith, moving toward the faithful household. Above all, each generation is invited to have openness to other generations without any prejudice, respecting and caring for each other in a reciprocal way. Although there was a good sense of reciprocal respect and interdependence in the Confucian ideology, which has dominated the Korean family system for a long time, a hierarchical family structure at times limited the right of women and children and obstructed the development of the family toward an equal-regarded community. Moreover, throughout industrialization and urbanization, individualism and generational fragmentations have consistently attacked the values of reciprocal relationship and interdependence in the Korean family. Nevertheless, parents in the family and educators in the church should not forget how they came to believe, who led them to know God, what they learned from the story of the Bible and forefathers in faith in the past, and for what they are called to live in God’s future. This recognition will encourage the Christian educators and parents to bear witnesses their present experiences to the church. And it will also cheer them to welcome all generations in the church to an “ever-present process” of learning in the community of faith. This should be the ideal of intergenerational Christian education.

Fourth, Dewey’s ideas of participation and reciprocity leads us to rethink the methods of intergenerational Christian education in the Korean church and family. Dewey’s ultimate purpose in his works is to construct a firm educational philosophy which leads educators to consider proper purpose, context, teach-

er/learner, curriculum, and method of education. I believe that intergenerational Christian education also do the same thing but in different ways. But, between Dewey and intergenerational Christian education theorists, there exists an important difference, which is a theological perspective. While Dewey sees democracy as the ultimate ideal of education, intergenerational Christian educationists find such ideal in the Bible and theology: for example, trinitarian theology, koinonia, and the biblical metaphor of the body. And those believe that it is God's grace that enables all generations to learn and grow. Nevertheless, both Dewey and intergenerational Christian education theorists seem to agree that education is an intentional activity by which both the individual and the community can become better than before in terms of pursuing a reciprocal learning community of faith and appreciating the significance of participatory learning as educational experience.

V. Conclusion

This study has attempted to explore implications of intergenerational Christian education in a reciprocal and participatory way with respect to Dewey's ideas of democracy and experience in education. I have argued that the significance of reciprocity and participation, which are derived from Dewey's ideas of democracy and experience, needs to be considered seriously in the theory and practice of intergenerational Christian education for the Korean church and family in terms of appreciating other generations, including children and youth, as active learners and participants in the context of companionship and love to be a genuine community of faith. Also, I have argued for the importance of participation in intergenerational Christian education as a meaningful process of experience. For this, I have insisted that the practice of holy listening as participatory learning in intergenerational Christian education can play a crucial role as "the actual life-experience of individuals" based on Dewey's idea of experience. Although his educational philosophy needs to be read carefully with respect to his naturalistic view on religion and education, I find it worth-

while to consider the value of reciprocity and participation in intergenerational Christian education for the Korean church and family to build a reciprocal learning community of faith, rooted in Christ, from whom “the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work” (Eph. 4:16).

References

- Alanen, L. (2014). Childhood and intergenerationality: Toward an intergenerational perspective on child well-being. In Asher Ben-Arieh et al. (Eds), *Handbook of child well-being: Theories, methods, and policies in global perspective* (131-160). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.
- Allen, H. C. & Christine L. R. (2012). *Intergenerational Christian education: Bringing the whole church together in ministry, community and worship*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press.
- Chung, H. E. (2022). A study on the direction of Christian education in the age of hyper connectivity society. *Journal of Christian Education*, 71, 371-399.
- Coe, G. A. (1917). *A social theory of religious education*. New York: C. Scribner's sons.
- Dewey, J. (1916, 1966). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*. New York: A Free Press.
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York: Touchstone Book.
- European Network for Intergenerational Learning. (2012). *European network for intergenerational learning report on intergenerational learning and volunteering*. EU Education and Culture DG. Accessed in February 2023.
<http://envejecimiento.csic.es/documentos/documentos/enil-ilv-01.pdf>.
- Harkness, A. G. (1998). Intergenerational education for an intergenerational church? *Religious Education* 93(4), 431-447.
- Harkness, A. G. (2000). Intergenerational and homogeneous-age education: Mutually exclusive strategies for faith communities? *Religious Education*, 95(1), 51-63.
- Harkness, A. G. (2012). Intergenerationality: Biblical and theoretical foundations. *Christian Education Journal*, 9.3, 121-134.
- Kim, J. J. (2021). New perspectives on Sunday school of Korean church for next generation. *Journal of Christian Education*, 67, 11-44.
- Ko, S. H. (2018). A study on the influences of cooperative relationship to the church and maeul community. *Journal of Christian Education*, 54, 331-376.
- Lee, W. I. (2022). Types of educational ministry for the post digital generation. *Journal of Christian Education*, 70, 11-35.
- Mannion, G. (2012). Intergenerational education: The significance of reciprocity and place. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, 10(4), 386-399.
- Mannion, G. (2016). Intergenerational education and learning: We are in a new place. *Families, intergenerationality, and peer group relations*, 5, 1-21.
- Noddings, N. (2007). *Philosophy of Education*. 2nd ed. Boulder: Westview Press.

- Pazmiño, R. W. & Kang, S. S. (2011). Generational fragmentations and Christian education. *Christian Education Journal*, 8.2, 379-394.
- Park, S. J. (2014). Church education in the era of low birth rates and aging. *Journal of Christian Education*, 40, 77-109.
- Shin, H. (2020). A relational-reflective approach to intergenerational Christian education with children. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of St. Michael's College.
- VanderVen, K. (2004). Intergenerational theory in society: Building on the past, questions for the future. In Elizabeth Larkin et al. (Eds), *Intergenerational Relationships: Conversations on Practice and Research Across Cultures*. Binghamton: The Haworth Press, Inc.
- Višňovský, E. (2011). The pragmatist conception of altruism and reciprocity. *Human Affairs*, 21, 437-453.
- Westerhoff III, J. H. (2012). *Will Our Children Have Faith? 3rd revised ed.* New York: Morehouse Publishing.