Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between the emotional labor environment of sports instructors at elementary schools in Jeonbuk and the quality of life of them to figure out the difficulties faced by the sports instructors in the field in order to present improvement plans.

**Method:** Specifically, the following results were derived from conducting in-depth interviews with sports instructors of Jeonbuk by using a semi-structured questionnaire from November 2020 until December 2020 as the purposeful sampling method.

**Results:** First, most of the elementary school sports instructors were temporary workers for the term of less than one year, and they complained of serious emotional labor in their discussion with school officials and consumers in the processes of contract renewal, opening classes for additional sports activities such as after school classes, and notification of contract renewal. Second, the sports instructor hiring method dependent to the discretion of school officials and the form of employment with a period of employment shorter than one year were leading to the lack of expertise in physical education of sport instructors and the necessity for sport instructors to have a sideline for livelihood. Third, although the role of sports instructor is assisting home room teachers in physical education classes, the roles and work of sports instructors were not clearly identified, and sports instructor were leading actual physical education activities. Fourth, although sports instructors had the status of instructors, they were performing the work of teachers, but there was no study space (desk, computer, chair, etc.), locker room, or resting space for sports instructors and sports instructors were seriously discriminated in terms of welfare.

**Conclusion:** In particular, during physical education classes at nearby schools to which they were dispatched once or twice a week, sports instructors were taking a rest in their private car between classes.

**Keywords** Elementary Schools, Emotional Labor, Work Environment, Quality of Life, Sports Instructors

1. Introduction

“In a single word, sports instructors were ‘invisible humans’ and ‘butlers’.”

In recent years, school physical activities intended for practicing happiness education to foster the students’ dreams and talents are largely psychodynamic, cognitive, and affective areas, and various health activities which contribute to the cultivation of their ability to think creatively and social skills are being carried out[1]. In particular, physical education and sports activities provided by elementary schools provide their students with high quality physical activities and knowledge needed for health, and furthermore, continuing physical education is the cornerstone of the social welfare policy to prevent adult diseases and reduce medical expenses for the elderly required in the time of super-aging.
Moreover, unlike the middle school teachers, in the case of the elementary school teachers, in a situation where they teach about 10 different subjects, in order to solidify the fundamentals of the elementary education and secure the professionalism of their curriculum, through the Enforcement Decree of the Education Act 1992 on music, art, and special subjects, the subject dedicated system was established, and in terms of the physical education subject which requires professionalism, a project to place a physical education teacher is actively carried out[2]. However, while the activities to secure the teacher's status and professionalism in consideration of the professionalism of music, health, nutrition, art, and computer subjects have consistently progressed, the physical education teachers are still the 'sports assistant instructors' and 'sports instructors' despite majoring in physical education, and maintain temporary worker status.

Contrary to the government's policy of recommending continuing continuing physical education programs for each life cycle and further promoting continuing physical education at the time of entering an aging society, elementary school sports instructors are currently elementary school sports assistants providing assistance for the homeroom teachers, and the demand for institutional improvement regarding accountability, etc., is undergoing discussion[3][4][5].

'Sports instructor' is the group of temporary workers supervised by the offices of education of cities and provinces and directly selected by elementary schools under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture as ‘sports instructor’ following the increase of employed personnel, while being used as the name of 'sports assistant instructor' for the purposes of promoting the activation of school physical education by triggering interest in the students' physical education class and reducing the burden of physical education class for the homeroom teachers or physical education teachers by introducing the sports instructor system exclusive for the elementary school physical education[2].

To help vitalize the elementary school physical education and form the lifelong exercise habits, and as an assistant for the elementary school physical education class, and under the responsibility of the homeroom teacher, they are carrying out and providing the physical education class related cooperation and guidance, physical education related teaching aids and facility management, PAPS work related support, sports related events such as sports competitions, support for regular classes and after school sports activities (after school activities and school sports clubs, etc.) related guidance, summer vacation program operation, physical education activities which require specialized knowledge, as well as the leadership and agility required to lead school events[2][4]. As such, while they are assistant lecturers for the homeroom teacher, the classes are led by sports instructors, and they are in charge of the tasks other than their teaching assistant related role, such as school leadership management, sports events, and award performance management, and hence, a very serious emotional labor occurs given the situations among the colleague teachers and students[6][7].

Emotional labor is a behavioral activity which creates or suppresses one's emotions in order to please others, which is largely divided into inner and superficial actions. Inner action refers to the actual expression of the emotion one desires to express, while surface action is the effort made to falsely express the emotion one does not actually feel[8][9]. According to a report by the Korea Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training in 2013, occupational groups which perform continuous emotional labor report a higher job satisfaction and turnover due to their severe mental and physical stress suffered, and their lower work efficiency[8][9][10] and as an occupational group with a high emotional labor, the study of emotional labor on sports instructors has consistently progressed, as it emerged in the order of food service related jobs, sales and sales related jobs, and beauty, accommodations, travel, entertainment, and sports related jobs[2][8][9][10]. Furthermore, in the case of sports instructors who are vulnerable for the employment contracts, most of them area involved with 2 to 3 types of part time jobs for maintaining emotional labor and livelihood due to employment instability caused by their status inequality with their contract renewed in the units of 3 months, 10 months, 11 months, and 12
months, etc. As such, it is apparent that the sports instructors are emotional laborers who suffer from a lot of distress in a poor work environment due to their job insecurity and poor level of wages.

Examining the previous studies conducted on emotional labor in the sports field, the studies on emotional labor, job burnout, and work environment for senior sports instructors, recreation instructors, Taekwondo instructors, and sports facility leaders were consisted carried out[10][11][12], while the sports leaders emphasize that they are emotional laborers in the service industry. Furthermore, examining the previous studies conducted on the emotional labor focused on sports instructors, a total of 3 studies were conducted, one of which on the middle school students[7] and two on the elementary school sports instructors[3][4]. Since the introduction of the sports instructors system in 2008, the studies on the sports instructors carrying out their livelihood as ‘sports instructors’ as temporary workers are very inadequate.

In recent years, at a point in time when the need for physical education is more stressed as a measure for health and stress, as well as the lack of exercise due to the rate of obesity of elementary school children and the entrance exam environment, approximately 92% of elementary school principals have had a positive effect on the vitalization of the school physical education[6][13][14][15]. Furthermore, approximately 89% of elementary school teachers and approximately 87.4% of elementary school students have demonstrated a high satisfaction with the placement of sports instructors[16][17] and it has been reported that the role of sports instructors has a very positive effect in the site of elementary schools where there are many female teachers, and hence, since 2017, the elementary school sports instructors’ placement project has expanded nationwide[3][15][18]. Notwithstanding which, gathering the previous studies, the will and participation of the homeroom teacher are very important for the vitalization of elementary education, which ought to provide the basis for the continuing physical education, yet in a vertical relationship rather than mutual cooperation between the homeroom teachers and the sports instructors, such as for essential matters, the quality of the life of sports instructors is in the form of temporary worker employment[3][13][15][19][20].

Examining the sports instructors of Elementary schools in Jeollabuk-do, as of 2018, a total of 124 people (38 in Jeonju, 20 in Gunsan, 20 in Iksan, 10 in Jeongeu, 7 in Namwon, 7 in Gimje, 9 in Waju, 1 in Jinan, 3 in Muju, 0 in Jangsu, 2 in Imsil, 3 in Sunchang, 2 in Gochang, and 2 in Buan) are serving[21], and while the scope of application of the sports instructors’ placement project has expanded ceremoniously, in the case of Jeollabuk-do, in 2014, a large reduction was made by 50% from 310, and compared to the positive effect of the sports instructors’ activities and educational satisfaction, which is an exceptionally reduced occupational group, which is vulnerable against job insecurity and employment front[14][15][18][19][20][22]. Compared to the positive synergy effect of sports instructors, the reduction of sports instructors in Jeollabuk-do, which is drastically reducing the instructor system, must eventually join the National Educational Civil Service Union of the Public Transport Union of the Korean Federation of Trade Union, and to improve the treatment of the occupational environment institutionally and educationally, they must be improved through negotiations with the Ministry of Education and local offices of education.

In particular, the issue of elementary school sports instructors as an occupation is the issue of low salaries which are less than the minimum cost of living for 2 people, and in addition to the regular 21:00 hours of class work, they participate in after school classes, childcare, sports clubs, and clubs to make incidental profits, and given a situation where after school classes are performed on behalf of an outside company, the quality of life of sports instructors, who have to work concurrently to making their living, the quality of their lives is declining.

Hence, this study seeks to improve the quality of life through the work environment, educational environment, and welfare environment where the elementary school sports instructors
experienced emotional labor as occupations affiliated with the Jeollabuk-do Office of Education through the in-depth interviews conducted with 7 elementary school sports instructors, and it is also intended to provide the basic data to help improve the quality of professional life of the sports instructors.

2. Research Method

2.1. Research subjects

This study has conducted the nonprobability sampling in order to examine the quality of life of sports instructors based on the emotional labor environment, work environment, educational environment, and welfare environment experienced by the elementary school sports instructors in the field as a profession and examined the direction of improvement, thereby conducting a metaphysical study determined to be appropriate for the purposes of this study in consideration of the qualitative research method and the purpose of the study based on the professional knowledge of the expert group as one of the purposeful sampling methods[14][23].

The prerequisites for the specific research subjects are, first, a person with a physical education instructor level 2 and a professional physical education instructor certificate, who has expertise in physical education, and who has expertise in life or practical aspects who have obtained a professional sports instructor license, are selected. Second, those with their field experience as elementary school sports instructors with at least 5 years were selected. Third, the sports instructors with active rapport building in the district representing Jeollabuk-do were preferentially selected. Lastly, in order to examine the quality of life of the sports instructors, the research participants who were making their living while being active as sports instructors (part time activities) were selected primarily <Table 1>.

Table 1. Research subjects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Highest academic achievement</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Career (years)</th>
<th>Multiple income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>AAA</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Graduate school for education</td>
<td>Class 2 permanent physical education teacher, Class 2 professional sports instructor</td>
<td>Elementary school A in Jeonju</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3 jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BBB</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Graduate school for education</td>
<td>Class 2 permanent physical education teacher, Class 2 daily sports instructor</td>
<td>Elementary school B in Jeonju</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2 jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CCC</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Graduate school for education</td>
<td>Class 2 permanent physical education teacher, Class 2 daily sports instructor</td>
<td>Elementary school C in Namwon</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3 jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>DDD</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Graduate school for education</td>
<td>Class 2 permanent physical education teacher, Class 2 daily sports instructor</td>
<td>Elementary school D in Gunsan</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3 jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>EEE</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Graduate school for education</td>
<td>Class 2 permanent physical education teacher, Class 2 daily sports instructor</td>
<td>Elementary school E in Jeongeup</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4 jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>FFF</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Graduate school for education</td>
<td>Class 2 permanent physical education teacher, Class 2 professional sports instructor</td>
<td>Elementary school F in Jeongeup</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2 jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>GGG</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Graduate school for education</td>
<td>Class 2 permanent physical education teacher, Class 2 daily sports instructor</td>
<td>Elementary school G in Iksan</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2 jobs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of cases 7 people
2.2. Data collection method

This study has conducted a metaphysical study to examine and understand the quality of life of and the improvement directions for sports instructors based on their emotional labor environment, work environment, educational environment, and welfare environment experienced by the elementary school sports instructors in the relevant field as a profession. The primary data were literature research, the Internet based data related to the sports instructors, and internal data of the Ministry of Education and Science to collect the data from various angles and conducted in-depth interviews, while a semi-structured interview was structured with a focus on the literature research and multifaceted data, and in order to prevent the interview results derived according to the researcher's personal questioning skills in advance, the interviewee were asked to express their thoughts on very specifically presented questions.

In particular, it afforded flexibility by changing the questions according to the interview situation, and within the limit that does not deviate from the purpose of the study, the opinions of the research participants were identified through the general questions and the opinions of the general questions were materialized. As for the specific method, first, the literature research was conducted by using sports instructors, degrees related to emotional labor and quality of life, academic papers, the National Assembly Library, the National Library of Korea, paper portal institutions (RISS, KISS), and the online newspaper articles, etc. Second, based on the documents collected from institutions including the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the offices of education, which are the institutions which recruit and manage elementary school sports instructors, the data were collected with a focus on the support plan for elementary school (special) school sports instructors from 2014 to the present.

Third, based on the collected data, a professional group of 1 physical education related PhD holder and 2 sports instructors was formed to check on the semi-structured questionnaire and the interview related matters through a metaphysical approach. An in-depth interview was conducted with 7 subjects of Jeollabuk-do sports instructors who were selected <Table 2>. As for the in-depth interview, the researcher personally visited the school of 7 sports instructors from November 2020 through December 2020 and conducted interviews within an hour or so, and conducted 2 online interviews at weekly intervals. The data were collected on the phone and via emails. Furthermore, before the interviews, the recording process and the recorded contents were not used for any purpose other than that of the research, and the recording was made, then transcription was performed[24][25]. To classify the research materials selected for the study and increase the reliability of the content related classification of the analyzed paper during the analytical process, the research materials with 3 fellow researchers consisted of 1 physical education related PhD holder and PhD candidates. After the analysis performed, the inter-rater agreement was confirmed to confirm the data category agreement among the analysts (Borg & Gall, 1983). Based on which, reliability and validity were secured by secondarily verifying the face validity of the experts by a professor of physical education.

Table 2. Categories of the semi-structured questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Semi-structured questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Emotional labor environment of</td>
<td>Emotional labor environment experienced as sports instructors and the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sports instructors</td>
<td>ways of improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Working environment of sports</td>
<td>Systematic work environment as sports instructors and the improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instructors</td>
<td>plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Physical education environment of</td>
<td>Physical education environment of sports instructors and the improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sports instructors</td>
<td>plan for equipping them with professionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Welfare environment of sports</td>
<td>Welfare environment as sports instructors and the improvement plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instructors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3. Data analysis

To achieve the purpose of this study, the inductive category analytical method was used for the data collected through the in-depth interviews with 7 participants. Specifically, by using the investigator triangulation based on the expert group meeting to increase the internal validity of the inductive analysis before preparing the research results, the internal product was verified with this researcher and expert group based on the contents organized after the in-depth interviews, and internal criticism was conducted, and reliability of the data and validity of the study were secured accordingly.

2.4. Integrity and ethics of the study

Before beginning this study in consideration of the ethical issues of the research, a full explanation was provided for the research participants on the background and purpose of this study, as well as guarantee of the anonymity of personal information, and the fact that the collected data will not be used for any other purpose. The study was conducted by selecting the research participants. Furthermore, increase the integrity of the research, the integrity of the research was secured via undergoing a member check process based on the investigator triangulation and peer debriefing.

Specifically, the triangular verification method was used as a method of collecting the in-depth interview related data and supplementary data from the Ministry of Education and Science by structuring a semi-structured questionnaire with a focus on literature research and the experts with prior experiences. Based on the collected data, an expert group consisted of a physical education expert and 2 sports instructors who did not participate in this study and had experiences in conducting qualitative research reviewed the research results, and together with the researcher who designed this study, the research results were reviewed, and the efforts were made to improve the integrity of the research through the process of reviewing the study [26].

3. Research Results and Discussion

This study seeks to examine and understand the quality of life of the sports instructors based on their emotional labor environment, work environment, educational environment, and the welfare environment experienced by the elementary school sports instructors in the field as a profession, as well as their directions of improvement, and present issues and ways of improvement thereto.

3.1. Emotional labor environment experienced as sports instructors and the ways of improvement

Emotional labor is labor of deceiving one’s real feelings and dealing with stakeholders with showcasing emotions [9][10][12]. As noted in the study of Yongnam Park et al. (2021) which claimed that the sports instructors move with sandbags on their body, the emotional labor environment for the sports instructors turned out to be very serious. ‘Lecturer’ is a temporary worker who serves and works as a teacher, yet whose salary is lower than the minimum wage and the right to hire is granted at the discretion of the principal during the contract renewal and selection process, and hence, emotional labor was occurring in multiple ways in the course of contract renewal and transfer to other schools [22][27][28].

3.1.1. Emotional labor environment among school officials

Most sports instructors arrived on time and left work just as the average teachers, and were in charge of physical education classes for 21 hours a week as with the homeroom teacher, as
well as for the elementary school physical activity and movement activities including after school classes, athletic competitions, and sports clubs, while being engaged with most of the business activities even across the sports fields other than their assigned tasks. As implied by the status description of 'sports instructor,' which indicates their status as temporary workers, a very serious emotional labor occurs at the time when the renewal of contracts, continuation and establishment of after school activities are decided each year, and unfair work due to non-regular workers is prevalent.

“Every time the contract is renewed, I get stressed out. However, the decision to renew the contract first depends on the principal, and so I have to do most of the work assigned by the teachers I work with, the vice principal, and the principal. Since the sports instructors’ salaries are so low, we have to take care of even a single one after school to making a living with extra allowances, and so, it is very common to understand the faculty and head teachers who have the right to make after school related decisions.” (AAA)

“Since I have children to raise and I’m not young, the cost of living is quite high. Since I’m making less than the minimum wage, it is difficult to make a living with my salary alone, and I have to offer additional after school classes and physical education classes to make ends met. At first, I chose this job because I majored in physical education, but now I’m very skeptical. There are many teachers younger than me, and even though I have worked at the school for long, my status is a temporary worker and I’m noticing that I won’t be able to run after school classes, and now, I’m thinking maybe I should quit.” (GGG)

The sports instructors system is one intended to further revitalize the elementary school physical education classes to help encourage lifelong sports in 2008, and it an institutionalized vocational group activity, supervised by each city and provincial offices of education, which account for 80% of the executed budget, and 20% by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. While various physical education activities are conducted within the school, the satisfaction of sports instructors among students, teachers, and parents is very high, the selection process is still at a standstill. In fact, the number of sports instructors, which was 2,911 in 2014, decreased to 1,899 in 2020, and the cause of the annual decrease in sports instructors is “poor treatment,” and the government is in a serious situation in promoting the elementary school education, which is the first step towards the lifelong physical education[16][17].

Most of the sports instructors, who majored in physical education at the specialized physical education and education graduate schools, and despite their being very high quality manpower, are concerned about their job insecurity in a situation where the renewal of contracts and additional classes are decided at the discretion of the faculty during the contract renewal and selection process given systemic limitations. A very serious emotional labor has been prevalent, and the number of sports instructors has declined each year due to actual turnover, suggesting that the job stress caused by wage issues and work environment of sports instructors is the largest cause of the emotional labor of sports instructors. Accordingly, it has been interpreted that emotional labor will be reduced only if and as soon as the sports instructors system promotes regularization of their status and specialization to address the status limitations for the sports instructors.

3.1.2. Emotional labor among the students and parents

Most of the sports instructors work from March to December and renew their contracts, and also have a system which requires them to change schools every few months if not every 2 years. If the principal or another school is assigned, the after tax salary, which is less than the minimum wage of sports instructors, is KRW 1.7 million, and consequently, from 2:30PM to 4:40PM, additional after-school, caring physical education and sports club classes had to be undertaken to generate additional income and maintain their minimum livelihood. If they were not established, most of the sports instructors were the livelihood type sports instructors who had to take on
additional part-time jobs such as multiple income[29]. As a result, in a situation where the school where they work desperately needs to open courses, they need to attract students and manage them through parent counseling, a serious emotional labor occurs in a situation where the sports instructors play the role of teacher, while the consumers approach the concept of private tutoring institutions’ instructors.

“In the previous school, after school tuition was paid by the school, so I offered badminton classes and soccer for the children at a more planned and systematic pace. The children found it difficult at first, but at the end of the semester, their skills improved a lot and they liked it. However, the school I am currently working at is an after school class which is funded by the beneficiary, whose children pay tuition. As a result, classes are organized around their interest rather than education, and I must understand what the parents and students want.” (BBB)

“I’m offering only one class after school. Until last year, the school had two after school classes, an after school class on Saturdays, and a sports day on Saturdays for an athletic competition, yet since I was assigned to another school this time, this school only operated one after school class. However, even after school, the cost of education varies according to the number of students, and so I give out snacks to children every day, saying that they are a reward during after school classes, and I have no option but to do so.” (DDD)

As such, after school and care activities were operated at the discretion of school officials according to the type of school. In the case of downtown areas, the system was opened at the discretion of school officials at the expense of the beneficiary, and in the case of areas outside the city center, the system was supported by the city and provincial office of education. In some schools, the school system pays in advance and guarantees the right to class through a comprehensive demand survey, whereas in the case of beneficiary centric schools, a subordinate relationship was formed by and between the parents and students. At a point in time when a variety of activity programs are recommended in schools for prior learning, arts and sports and cultural activities according to most multiple income families, and if a policy system is constructed which operates after school classes with the budget of the office of education rather than the beneficiary is not borne by the beneficiary so that sports instructors can focus on the class area, the emotional labor of sports instructors would like be significantly curtailed.

3.2. Ways to improve the emotional labor environment for the sports instructors

As such, the sports instructors were making their living as serious emotional laborers across various relationships between school officials, students and parents. In the modern society, the stress of instructors educating students tends to be transferred to the learners, and in terms of pedagogy, they are making efforts to relieve the stress from work and the surrounding environment[22][27]. However, while most of the physical education classes are in charge of elementary school classes, it is apparent that the discrimination in the status and benefits of a ‘lecturer’ is the emotional abuse of the teachers. Given which, there are many sports instructors who are physically and mentally fatigued and are working part-time after their primary work and making multiple income to make their ends met.

“After work, I go to another job, and when I go home after then, it is over 11 o’clock on weekdays and I get home at 1AM on Saturdays. When I get home, my 1 and 2 year old children are sleeping and my wife waits for me. On weekdays, I only see him sleeping. Leisure is like a distant story for me.” (AAA)

“I exercise every Thursday, but I don’t have time other than that. I have to go to work again.” (BBB)

“After work, I see my 3 children and my wife wait for me, but I can’t get home late. When the multiple income is over, I go home immediately, take a shower, put the children to bed, and prepare for work tomorrow. At least, having a cup of coffee with a close teacher after going to school relieves stress.” (DDD)
As such, it was discovered that the sports instructors at the elementary school are physically and emotional laborers who perform a very serious emotional labor and work activities within the school. Despite being emotional laborers, the reality was that they were hit by the front lines of making their living and could not even adequately relieve stress of their emotional labor. With the recent enforcement of the Emotional Labor Protection Act on October 18, 2018, and despite efforts to improve the emotional labor environment, as mentioned in the previous studies, emotional labor which takes place in a mutually vertical relationship within the work environment is ultimately concerned about the transfer of work, and consequently, depression can be passed on to the learners, and hence, it is determined that the highest priority is the attention of the offices of education and school officials is required to improve the working environment and the emotional labor environment survey of the sports instructors in the soonest time possible.

3.3. The emotional labor environment experienced as sports instructors and the ways of improvement

3.3.1. Job environment according to the contract and renewal decisions at the discretion of school officials

Sports instructors are performing their primary task of providing classes for 21 hours a week and physical education classes for grades 3 through 6 together with other teachers as an assistant with the homeroom teacher. However, as it is evident based on the difference between ‘teacher’ and ‘lecturer,’ the work environment as an instructor turned out to be very poor. Most of the sports instructors who work up to 2 or 3 jobs to make their living due to low salaries are also sports instructors, and the labor system that is driving the frontline of livelihood type employment has reduced professional educators who need to improve their professionalism and is driving them towards the livelihood type temporary workers. In particular, for the 3rd to 6th graders, they took the initiative in class rather than auxiliary activities, and were taking the initiative rather than assisting, and as for the classes for the 1st and 2nd grader, which require a lot of effort, are sometimes replaced with upper grade physical education classes without notice. During the season of track and field day, the 1st to 6th graders were led as a whole to perform additional mass game such as skipping rope, and so additional work was piled up. Furthermore, on top of the physical education work, the very personal teacher’s work and school chores (library cleanup, tree planting, and hard work, etc.) were called for, and so they were performed the tasks not as “teacher,” but as “butler.”

“It is always rewarding to teach students. I love my job, but it is very difficult now that I have to take on other job after work due to insufficient living expenses given such a low salary which is less than the minimum cost of living to focus on my work. I used to love doing my work because I liked it, but now that I have a family, I have no choice but to take on multiple jobs to make ends met.” (AAA)

“After graduating from the Department of Physical Education, I majored in Physical Education at the Graduate School of Education. That is why I’m very proud of this profession. There is what is called ‘a small wage for starters of professional career,’ but I go to work every morning and do the same work as a teacher, but I feel skeptical because the salary accounts for only about half that of a teacher in the same class. Those who are thinking of getting married or have families are inevitably faced with a situation where they have to make additional income after school classes or sports club guidance after regular classes due to financial difficulties.” (BBB)

“During the athletic competitions, the principal ordered a skipping rope performance for all students. It’s easy to say, so I put the students together all day, practiced it, and taught it while my throat was soar. There are times when I’m working outside the scope of my work, and my allowance is not included in the 21 hour shift. Sometimes, when they ask me to manage the net when teachers carry out physical

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“education activities, or during library cleaning, or flower bed cleaning, I feel very bad and confused whether I’m a teacher or a butler.” (FFF)

According to Article 2 Paragraph 11 of the National Basic Livelihood Security Act of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, and examining the selection criteria for the median income and livelihood medical benefit and the minimum level of coverage for households, and in 2020, for single-person households, KRW 1,757,194, for two-person households, KRW 2,991,980, for three-person households, KRW 3,870,577, for four-person households, KRW 4,747,174, and for five-person households, KRW 6,506,368 were disclosed as the minimum livelihood security.

The lecturers with more than 2 years of experience due to poor working environment and low salaries are seriously considering changing their job, or most of them are physical education experts with a master’s degree or higher, yet this leads to a lack of professionalism in physical education following their occupational distress[27][28]. Moreover, emotional labor is very serious due to some teachers who do not care about extra work outside of work, and in order to increase the professionalism of sports instructors in physical activity and enhance the quality of education, it is necessary to improve the system to support the priority in the stabilization of the salary system and the allocation of after school classes and pay attention to the human rights of the sports instructors.

3.3.2. Job environment according to the notice of the renewal of contract by school officials and the authority to decide on activities outside of regular classes

Sports instructors started as 10-month temporary workers in 2008 and there are differences by region. Jeollabuk-do signed a three-month contract as a contract worker after mass reduction in personnel in 2014, signed a contract for 11 months from 2015 to 2017, and started the contract as a 12-month contract worker from 2018. The current contract period for 2019 was also 12 months, which is the same as last year, while the improvement of the working environment was still at a standstill.

In a study on the actual condition of the elementary school sports instructors system and the plan for the amendment of the School Sports Promotion Act, reports that the information on the renewal of contracts for sports instructors is provided by phone at the discretion of the principal[18], and that they are suffering from job insecurity and career stress during the winter break. Despite the fact that the instructor system ought to have been established for more than 10 years, they abuse their power in the system by taking wages and contracts as hostages against the sports instructors, and hence, efforts are needed for regularization, legalization, and institutionalization of the sports instructors system in consideration of the working environment as soon as possible.

“After completing the contract every year due to an unstable contract, I usually apply for unemployment benefits after the contract expires in November, and make a living with unemployment benefits for December through February. When an announcement comes up in February, I always prepare the same documents, renew a contract, go through interviews, and until the announcement comes out a few days later, I was under pressure from an unstable short-term contract. I feel pity for myself that I will end up living a mosquito, depending on the principal of the school, just because I have an interview in the future.” (AAA)

“Elementary school sports instructors are required to assist their homeroom teachers in conducting cooperative physical education classes. However, in reality, it is not possible to have a joint class with someone who is wearing a skirt. It would be better if they give me the initiative in the physical education class and leave everything up to me, but if they watch me run my classes quietly from behind, I feel like I’m being evaluated, and my pride is hurt.” (FF)
Currently, there are many schools that wish to arrange sports instructors every year due to the aging of teachers. However, given the low wages and unstable contract positions, it was common for sports instructors to leave jobs, reduce the number of instructors, and dismiss existing instructors at the principal's discretion. Examining the office of education’s data in Table 3, large-scale reductions were made at the time of transition from 2013 to 2014. Consequently, it is reported that the sports instructors are experiencing a very serious job stress due to job security and insecure contracts rather than enhancing the professionalism of physical education [18].

Despite the fact that class assistance is specified on the school sites, most of them are in charge of 21 hours of regular classes, and it is time to improve the treatment of most sports instructors as their form of service has become fixed.

According to a study by Jihyeon Kim (2019), the number of sports instructors nationwide was 1,951 as of 2018, which has decreased since 3,800 in 2013, and when vacancies occur due to systemic issues, the number of instructors gradually decreased due to a natural decrease, and in the elementary school physical education field, homeroom teachers avoid physical education, leading to the vicious cycle of lowering the quality of elementary school physical education. Given the characteristics of elementary schools in Korea, female teachers are large in number, and they lack the specificity and professionalism of physical education, which leads to a phenomenon of avoidance of physical education classes.

### Table 3. Current status of changes in the sports instructors as of 2020.

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Hence, the Ministry of Education changed the system of sports instructors to a fixed salary system and an indefinite contract rather than a temporary worker who feels job insecurity in order to improve the system for social stability from the perspective of the school and the students' perspective, whereby an education system should be established so that they can focus on school work and learners.

3.4. Physical education environment of the sports instructors and the plans of improvement

3.4.1. Sports instructors as professional physical education educators rather than assistant instructors

Without doubt, sports instructors are specified as a job which assists homeroom teachers, yet in practice, sports instructors have independently conducted physical education classes for grades 3-6. While many university students of education oppose the right to teach sports for sports instructors and lecturer group, the homeroom teachers in the actual school site lack the professionalism of physical education classes, and hence, they entrust sports classes to sports instructors and sit behind them or spend private time in most cases, this was found to be the case mostly.

“Even though we teach 21 hours a week, there are cases where we are asked to work beyond working hours, and in class, the home teachers don’t even participate in class, and even if they do, they play games, read, and sleep.” (AAA)

“Classes are always taught by sports instructors, not as assistant classes, and the homeroom teachers come by chance, but they see if the kids are doing well and take care of their private affairs.” (CCC)

As a result of taking such initiative in running classes, in the event of an unexpected situation, issues arise regarding the responsibility and responsibilities of sports instructors who are playing the role of assistants, and they have the right to decide to increase the use and equipment in order to improve the quality of physical education classes. Furthermore, since there is no dedicated seat for the sports instructors, there were situations where the head of sports department’s attention had to be avoided, and they took a break in the meeting room and narrow space of the school office. Sports instructors are exposed to several hours in hot summer and cold winter due to the nature of the subject, and there was not even any personal space during breaks, and hence, there were frequent situations in which attachment to the school and the attention of the staff had to be noticed.

“Whenever there is a sports event, outside of regular class hours, most sports instructors are in charge of training students outside of class. Since the school says that they are in charge of physical education, the school assumes that it is very natural. They do it for free without any payment, and if they go to a competition and win a championship, they are excluded from the award for their achievements. All the credit goes to the head of physical education department who rarely shows up and who does not even participate in training sessions.” (AAA)

“I’m in charge of classes for grades 3-6, but sometime, my homeroom teachers ask me to change and run classes for grades 1-2. Originally, we were not supposed to be able to take on the Wise Life class for grades 1 and 2, but in the case of grades 1 and 2, the energy is overflowing and they are difficult to manage, and so, regardless of the intention, there are people who sometimes use us recognizing that we are temporary workers. I want to say no, but I’m patient because I fear that the relationship will deteriorate.” (FFF)

Various sports events are held each year. Among which, regional athletics competitions and various sports club competitions are held, and it is said that difficulties arise in the process of preparing these sports events. It is said that the school wants sports instructors to provide guidance and training for the preparation for the competition. If they receive a separate allowance or have won a prize in a competition without being included in the number of hours,
compensation and hard work must be returned to the physical education specialized teachers, and sports instructors are complimented briefly afterwards, and hence, the role and work activities of sports instructors must be systematically presented in detail.

3.4.2. Improvement plan for securing professionalism of sports instructors

Sports instructors collect membership fees from the sports instructors meeting and conduct elementary sports instructors training every year at the meeting. This is also practiced independently by the sports instructors’ meeting, and the office of education is setting up a place and paying small snack fees, whereby the sports instructors themselves are taking the initiative to enhance the professionalism of physical education. However, there are limitations as sports instructors, and hence, they hoped to conduct it twice a year (summer vacation and winter vacation) to improve the professionalism and quality of the office of education's leading physical education. In fact, during the summer vacation, and for about 3 to 5 days, a research institute designated by the office of education recruits professors, incumbent teachers, vice principals, principals, and professional sports instructors to undergo training for sports instructors once a year, and they are improving their physical abilities.

However, since it is conducted with the same content and subject every year, education on various teaching methods, use of new sports, and the teaching methods which can be used with various tools and instruments should be provided. Sports instructors hoped to undergo frequent training on teaching methods according to their age and new uses and equipment and usage related methods, as they run classes with the most enjoyable physical education methods that can be practically used in the field.

“In the past, we had been called in for training before March, but in recent year, we have been receiving training during summer vacation. However, it would be nice to conduct real training, such as experiencing various teaching methods and new sports, with similar training every year.” (CCC)

“I think it is necessary to have a meeting with the physical education teachers. I would like to have a time to share information while talking about each class, and have a forum to share class research and examples of individual student’s disposition related judgments.” (DDD)

“First of all, I think classes should be completely entrusted. What is lacking is that the group training for sports instructors should be further increased quarterly than before. Sports instructors are full of enthusiasm, but on the contrary, it is a pity that training and research activities are not supported.” (EEE)

As one of the national policies, sports instructors began as a part of the ‘School Sports Revitalization’ project, and the office of education and each school recruited physical education majors above a certain standard for elementary schools and placed them across various schools. However, the most problematic lesson gained thus far is the fact that the elementary school sports instructors are teaching sports exclusively rather than assisting them, thereby causing conflicts. Since the first implementation in 2008, 10 years have passed, and there is a conflict with the homeroom teachers, who took a lot of time to improve the system, students, parents, and the classroom teacher who avoided physical education classes.

As such, rather than improving the problem of the fixed working style of sports instructors, as a teacher who directly interacts with students like an average teacher, through professionalism and communication in physical education, they ought to be exposed to various sports activities. Furthermore, it is necessary to improve the system for the recognition of the teaching authority and treatment of the sports instructors by giving them to the sports instructors, who are not dedicated to physical education but the practical instructors.

3.5. Welfare environment of the sports instructors and the improvement plan

3.5.1. Welfare environment such as space for research and rest, etc.
Welfare issues were discussed as many difficulties including the working environment. There is no assigned place even when they work. There was no basic personal work place, so they sat all day on one side of the office meeting room, had to change clothes in the bathroom even if they were dispatched once or twice a week, and took a break in the car before participating in classes, and there were not even chairs and desks for the sports instructors. They were working in an environment where there was a gym equipment room and a desk and chair to take a break, or where there was no air conditioner or heater. In particular, it was not uncommon for them to be kicked out of the most important classroom which was most important for the students, and there were cases where problems with the administrator who misunderstood the school caused problems with the specified annual allowance or salary, which almost caused a disadvantage.

“There is a situation in which seats are suddenly moved from a designated office space to a storage space for sports equipment, equipment, or storage, and colleagues from other schools do not have a seat, so they either sit in one side of the office or only have one desk and one chair in a space the size of 2 pyeong. This is the situation facing the head of physical education department and sports instructors. There is not even a separate classroom.” (DDD)

“When I go to a nearby school to run physical education classes, there is no place to rest in the middle of summer. After taking a break at my car, I go to the gym in time for class, teach the students, and rest in my car again with much sweat. There are desks and chairs in the gym, but they tell me to remove them because they don’t look nice. Where should we rest? At the very least, there is not even a space to lead work activities to improve the work preparation and post class precautions and professionalism of physical education. I think this is very labor intensive industry, which is even worse than the security work. I tell my younger friends that this not a place to stay for long and instead, quickly develop their skills and leave for another job.” (FFF)

While it is natural that there ought to be a seating arrangement for class, research activity time and rest space when working at a minimum, most of the sports instructors live with desks and chairs next to gym equipment, or even had nothing at all. Furthermore, since they were unable to be paid their annual leave allowances, they were forced to take annual leaves, and even class work was at the discretion of the teachers. In practice, the treatment and welfare of sports instructors were very poor. Accordingly, it is suggested that the office of education and school officials need to improve the human rights of sports instructors so as not to cause unbiased human rights violations in the field through conducting a fact-finding survey to improve the human rights and welfare environment for the sports instructors.

3.5.2. Improvement plan for the welfare environment of sports instructors

It is evident that the limited activities and poor working environment which originate from the name of “sports instructors” are the root causes of lowering the quality of physical education[2][20]. Accordingly, in order to provide stability in the employment form of sports instructors, efforts for the working environment and welfare environment should be prioritized in the educational field oriented towards human rights as a matter of policy. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education, regional offices of education, and school officials must face the fact that the distinction between permanent and temporary workers in the educational field is another discrimination within the school which serves as a model for education, and there is a need for a practical system for the working environment, job training, and welfare environment as much as for the average teachers[30][31][32].

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

4.1. Conclusion
The purpose of this study is to specify the improvement plans through the in-depth interviews to articulate the relationship between emotional labor and quality of life experienced by the sports instructors of elementary school of Jeonbuk in the field. In order to solve this problem, 7 elementary sports instructors with at least 5 years of field experience, and possessing the qualification of class 2, have applied the nomadic sampling method to improve the emotional labor environment and quality of life for the elementary school sports instructors, and a result of examining the improvement plan for their emotional labor environment and quality of life, the conclusion has been reached as follows.

First, most of the elementary school sports instructors were temporary workers contracted for less than a year, and they complained of their serious emotional labor between school officials and consumers in the process of the contract renewal, offering additional sports activities such as after school, and the notification of contract renewal.

Second, according to the discretion of school officials as the sports instructors, the method of hiring instructors and employment of less than a year were driven to the lack of sports instructors' lack of sports expertise and a sideline for livelihood, and it is the time to change the instructor's name for the establishment of elementary school physical education and to improve the policy system for their status stabilization.

Third, while the role of sports instructors is the physical education class assistant role for the homeroom teacher, the roles and tasks of sports instructors were not clearly separated in the field, and they were leading the actual physical activities. In order to secure the professionalism of the elementary school physical activity, the educational foundation, such as creative physical education classes and instructor training, ought to be established based on the empowerment of sports instructors for them to take the lead in physical education classes and the training and research activities in the school.

Fourth, while the elementary school sports instructors are lecturer by definition, they are performing their duties as teachers, and yet, there was no space for research as lecturer (desk, computer, and chair, etc.), no changing room, no resting space for teachers, and a serious welfare discrimination was committed in terms of education and human rights. In particular, when performing physical education classes on dispatch for the nearby schools 1-2 times a week, they take a break in their own car and conduct classes, and hence, improving the welfare of sports instructors and enhancing their environment ought to be prioritized.

The elementary school sports instructors system recognized the importance of elementary school physical education for the continuing physical education and medical cost reduction, and was institutionalized in 2008 as a policy. However, as a lecturer, the sports instructors have performed more than their role of taking charge of physical education, not as class assistant, and were vulnerable emotional laborers in the selection, re-selection and additional class selection process, and were emotionally abused.

Accordingly, the welfare environment and educational environment based on the space of research and educational activity to improve the name and status of sports instructors and enhance the professionalism and physical education competency of sports instructors must be prioritized, thereby enabling the settlement of the elementary school sports sites, which are the cornerstone of the continuing physical education for life.

4.2. Recommendation

As such, it is sought to make a recommendation for a follow-up study on improving the working environment of sports instructors and further improve their quality of life.

First, this study has been limited to a specific region of Jeollabuk-do, and the results were derived from the in-depth interviews conducted with 7 study participants. Accordingly, it is
somewhat difficult to generalize the results of this study for the emotional labor environment and the quality of life of all sports instructors. Hence, in future studies, it would be necessary to study the sports instructors of all regions with a focus on their representative attempts. Second, many sports instructors have taught students with the memories of the physical education subject they learned in middle and high school. In order to improve the quality of school physical education and help many physical education majors for their career pathfinding, physical education related colleges, departments, and faculties must offer and research subjects such as the understanding of elementary physical education, instruction and practical skills, and management of sports equipment to foster experts.

5. References

5.1. Journal articles


5.2. Thesis degree


5.3. Books


5.4. Additional references


6. Appendix

6.1. Authors contribution

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