



Exploring Perception on the Swimming Rating System*

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the study is to analyze the perception of swimming rating system. **Research design, data, and methodology:** In this study, practitioners and leaders of Korean swimming federation were selected as the subjects of the study to institutionalize the grade of swimming. Data analysis was categorized according to word frequency after coding using the Nvivo 12.0 program, and words were visualized using the word cloud program. PASW/WIN 21.0 was employed to analyze demographic characteristics. Triangular verification and expert meetings were conducted three times to increase the validity of the study. In these meetings, the study excluded subjective interpretation and errors of the researcher. **Results:** First, as a result of analyzing the perception of practitioners before educational training, 16 words and the total frequency of words was 21 times. Second, as a result of analyzing the perception of practitioners after educational training, 22 words and a total of 25 frequencies were found. Third, as a result of analyzing the leader's perception before educational training, 32 words and the total frequency of words was 63 times. Fourth, as a result of analyzing the leader's perception after educational training, 41 words and a total of 72 frequencies were found. **Conclusions:** Findings indicated diverse feelings and thoughts of practitioners and leaders of Korean swimming federations towards swimming rating system. Further implications were discussed.

Keywords: Swimming rating system, Perceptions, Korean swimming federation

JEL Classification Code: I10, I12, I18

1. Introduction

Swimming has various educational values, including the development of physical self-efficacy and ego resilience, as well as physical development and functional improvement (Nam & Lee, 2018; Park, Kim, & Jung, 2015). In Korea, survival swimming education was introduced for 3rd and 4th grade elementary school students in the second half of 2014. In 2020, survival swimming and practical swimming education was expanded to all grades of elementary school. As a result of social interest in swimming and changes in education, research on children's swimming and swimming education has actively conducted.

Previous studies on domestic swimming education include exploring development plans based on analysis of the current status of elementary school swimming education (Park, Yu, & Jang, 2020), exploration study on essential learning elements of practical swimming education in elementary schools using the Delphi technique (Lee & Kim, 2017), research on ways to improve educational content and leader expertise through qualitative understanding of survival swimming education context (Kim, Kim, & Park, 2018), study for development plans based on analysis of elementary school swimming education status (Park et al., 2020), the impact of survival swimming education on class satisfaction and intention to continue swimming according to the general characteristics of elementary school students (Lee, 2023). In terms of swimming education, research has been mainly conducted on

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teachers' awareness and improvement, learning factors, analysis of actual conditions, class satisfaction, and intention to participation.

Although the swimming population is expanding and swimming education programs are being improved led by the state, instructional materials related to elementary school swimming practice and survival swimming are also different for each local government. Accordingly, there is a lot of confusion in an educational field due to swimming instruction materials for ages that are not appropriate for each grade.

In addition, compared to advanced swimming countries, swimming education and program systems are relatively inadequate in terms of expertise and systematicity. In particular, there is a need to develop more standardized and systematic education operation systems and programs such as advanced cases by reflecting the childhood swimming education and survival swimming education policies that are being expanded and implemented in response to the voices of society raised after the Sewol Ferry incident.

Give this, this study looked at cases from advanced swimming countries such as Australia, the UK, and Japan, where swimming education and evaluation programs are systematically being implemented. In Australia, swimming education is provided according to age and ability, from wet training to safe diving skills, through three systems, Wonder, Courage, and Active, under the name "Swim and Survive" for children aged 6 months to 14 years. It is being implemented. In the UK, a variety of survival swimming education and evaluations are provided from level 1 to level 13 through safe swimming education for children aged 12 to adults, including rescue, self-rescue and survival, and first aid. In Japan, survival swimming education is provided to all grades of elementary school, and swimming education is provided at different levels and training times through water adaptation, basic backstroke, and combined training through level education for each grade. In order to expand the base of Japan's swimming population and instill a sense of purpose, a 'grading system (certification system)' has been introduced, a standardized standard record has been established across the country, and a 'swimming performance test'(Hong & Park, 2020; Moon, Seo, Sho, & Seo, 2021).

In Korea, as the number of children-only swimming pools increases exponentially, some non-profit organizations are conducting 'graded' swimming level tests for children. However, due to the systematic composition of educational contents by grade and different evaluations by organization, the validity and public trust of the swimming rating system is lacking due to confusion in the swimming education field and the proliferation of rating certificates by organizations without public trust. Accordingly, it is necessary that the swimming grading system becomes trust at the level of the Ministry of Education and the Korean Swimming Federation, which contributes to systematizing swimming education programs and a level-specific evaluation (grading system) system (Moon et al., 2021). In this sense, the study attempts to explore the perceptions of swimming federation officials and leaders on swimming educational grading system.

2. Method

In this study, practitioners and leaders of 17 provincial and provincial swimming federations were selected as research subjects in order to institutionalize swimming ratings. Data were collected by attending a swimming grading training and meeting for practitioners and instructors organized by the Korea Swimming Federation together with the researcher and two assistant researchers. Researchers and assistant researchers completed research ethics training, and explanations for participation in the study, how to fill out consent forms, survey methods, and precautions were provided to research participants on a one-to-one basis. Participants responded a total of 37 questionnaires. 10 practitioners and 27 leaders' data were used in the final analysis. The demographic characteristics of respondents are shown in Table 1.

For demographic characteristics, participants reported their information (gender, age, region of affiliation, and work or guidance experience). In addition, it consisted of a total of two questions: one free-association open-ended question regarding awareness of the swimming rating system before participating in the swimming rating system education and training, and one question regarding the awareness of the swimming rating system after participating in the training. In the case of the open-ended questionnaire, the questionnaire used in the Taekwondo competition perception study (Kim & Jeon, 2020) and Taekwondo performance perception analysis (Jung & Kim, 2022) were modified to suit the purpose of this study. It was reorganized into 'Before the training, please write down 3 words that came to mind about [the swimming grading system].', 'After the training, please write 3 words that came to mind about [the swimming grading system].'

Data were computed using the Nvivo 12.0 program, followed by coding and categorization according to word frequency. Afterwards, words were visualized using a word cloud program, and PASW/WIN 21.0 was used to analyze demographic characteristics. In this study, triangular verification and expert meetings were conducted three times with two sports industry professors and two sports industry doctorates to increase the validity of the study. In this step, the researcher's subjective interpretation and errors were excluded. At the first expert meeting, the feasibility of the research design was discussed, and at the second expert meeting, refinement of the collected free association words was discussed. At the third expert meeting, discussions focused on the interpretation of recognition results and derivation of meaning.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics

		Practitioners	%	Leaders	%	
Gender	Male	7	70.0	20	74.1	
	Female	3	30.0	7	25.9	
Age	20's	0	0.0	1	3.7	
	30's	3	30.0	11	40.7	
	40's	4	40.0	13	48.1	
	50's	2	20.0	2	7.4	
	60's older	1	10.0	0	0.0	
Region	Seoul	1	10.0	2	7.4	
	Gyeonggi	1	10.0	2	7.4	
	Incheon	1	10.0	2	7.4	
	Gangwon	2	20.0	4	14.8	
	Daejeon	1	10.0	3	11.1	
	Daegu	0	0.0	1	3.7	
	Chungbuk	1	10.0	0	0.0	
	Chungnam	0	0.0	2	7.4	
	Gyeongbuk	1	10.0	3	11.1	
	Gyeongnam	2	20.0	3	11.1	
	Jeonbuk	0	0.0	1	3.7	
	Jeonnam	0	0.0	2	7.4	
	Jeju	0	0.0	2	7.4	
Career	less than 1 year	1	10.0	1	3.7	
	1- 5 years	5	50.0	3	11.1	
	6-10 years	2	20.0	7	25.9	
	11-15 years	0	0.0	7	25.9	
	16-20 years	0	0.0	5	18.5	
	more than 20 years	2	20.0	4	14.8	
	total	10	100.0	27	100.0	

3. Results

In this study, we attempted to compare and analyze the perceptions of practitioners and leaders of 17 provincial and provincial federations for the institutionalization of swimming ratings.

First, the perceptions of practitioners from 17 provincial and provincial federations before and after training on the 'swimming grading system' were investigated using the free association word technique. As a result, 16 words were presented regarding awareness of the 'swimming grading system' before training. The total frequency of words was 21. In detail, the words appeared in the following order: grade (3), level test (2), swimming (2), and promotion leader (2), as follows (figure 1).

Second, 22 words were presented regarding the perceptions of practitioners from 17 provincial and provincial federations after training on the 'swimming rating system'. A total of 25 frequencies appeared. In detail, the words appeared in the order of grading system (3) and certification swimming pool (2), as follows (figure 2).

Third, in order to compare the perceptions of leaders of 17 provincial and provincial federations before and after training on the 'swimming grading system', the perceptions were investigated using the free association word technique. As a result, 32 words were presented regarding awareness of the 'swimming grading system' before training. The total frequency of words was 63. In detail, words appeared in the following order: grading system (7), promotion, evaluation (5), possibility, education, children's swimming pool (4), masters, children, leader standards (3), certification, and Taekwondo (2). Same (figure 3).

Fourth, 41 words were presented regarding the perceptions of leaders of 17 provincial and provincial federations after training on the 'swimming grading system', with a total frequency of 72 times. In detail, certified swimming pool (9), grading system (7), children, systematic (4), possibility, leader (3), stage, harmony of biology and professional sports, expansion of base, expertise, leader education, participants, evaluation (2) The words appeared in order, as follows (figure 4).



Figure 1: Before training: Practitioners



Figure 2: After training: Practitioners



Figure 3: Before training: Leader



Figure 4: After training: Leader

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study conducted an analysis of the perceptions of practitioners and leaders of 17 provincial and provincial federations to institutionalize swimming ratings, and the discussion and conclusions based on the results of the study are as follows.

First, before participating in the training, working-level officials from 17 provincial and provincial federations were presented with words about the possibilities, including the unfamiliarity and vagueness of the swimming rating system. In addition, words used in existing swimming sites related to grades, level tests, promotion instructors, qualifications, and children's swimming pools appeared. After the training, awareness of the rating system and certified swimming pools was high in line with the purpose of the training. Positive perceptions about the swimming grading system were presented, including public certification, possibility, motivation, revitalization of children's swimming, coexistence with local federations, and institutional power.

Second, the leaders of the 17 provincial and provincial federations were most aware of the swimming grading system, promotion, and evaluation before training. However, words were presented regarding overall questions about the swimming grading system, such as leader standards and certifications, step-by-step classes, non-registration, classification of players by step, and swim cap color. Awareness after the training showed a high level of awareness of the content and target audience in line with the purpose of the training, including the certified swimming pool, grading system, children, leaders, stages, participants, and evaluation. Positive words such as systematic, possibility, harmony of biological and professional sports, expansion of base, expertise, public trust, unification, huge profits, coexistence, expansion of daily sports, sense of achievement, formalization of swimming ability, revitalization of swimming, and improvement of the quality of leaders appeared.

Based on these results, in order to successfully institutionalize swimming ratings, a nationwide unified rating system, education content, and leader education content must be implemented. Furthermore, among the results of free association words, money, business, manpower, certification, training, expansion of base, promotion, administration, instructor training, masters competition, elite sports linkage, leader awareness improvement, publicity effect and improvement, etc. were shown, so this will be taken into consideration in the future. Education and

training should be conducted.

In addition, the promotion system was mentioned before and after training, and it is believed that awareness of the word 'swimming grading system' is also necessary so that the correct word 'grading system' can be used. Additionally, education and training and promotions should be conducted to create a positive and correct perception of the swimming rating system.

Lastly, there should be a sufficient period of time for project promotion, promotion should be carried out with detailed project contents, and additional education and training should be provided for each city/provincial federation representative and working-level officials. In addition, as the environments of the metropolitan area and local areas are different, customized consulting by each city/provincial federation and promotion of the swimming grading system implementation system should be provided to expand the base of the swimming grading system.

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