

South korea sociocultural report



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One of the best ways to identify cultural uniqueness is to compare it with others. By this process, we can detect similarities and differences between the entities compared.

We use this method by comparing the South Korean sociocultural system with those of the United States. This approach will disclose the unique features of the South Korean management system as compared with others that have a similar cultural heritage. We focused on the potential differences between these two management systems. The report focuses on comprehending the behavioral patterns of Koreans, which have been reflected in the Korean management system. We believe that the South Korean management system has to be understood in the context of the behavioral patterns of Koreans, which were formulated by the Korean culture.

The employees play a vital part of the South Korean management system, and we attribute its effectiveness to their loyalty, dedication, contributions, and working habits. These employees, of course, express their grievances, complaints, and unhappiness within the management system. The bitterness of the Korean workers, in particular, exploded after the June uprising of 1987 in violent labor strife. As was said previously, each management system is formulated by the value systems that regulate the behavior of the people. Although other values are also important, the impact of religion and territorial separation are of outstanding importance. These different value systems, created by unique cultural heritages, have resulted in the unique cultural identity of each nation.

Therefore, South Korea, and the United States have their own cultural identities. One of the striking differences among these two nations is their conception of blood. While South Korea is a blood-taboo society, the United States are blood-prone society. Koreans have developed a value system that prohibits bloodshed. The Americans have developed a blood-prone society.

Even today many Americans keep guns, while Koreans are forbidden by law to possess them except as hunting rifles. Western culture, which the Americans inherited, respects the military class who fought in the name of God, king or queen, feudal lord, and country. In the United States, the military system is respected, even under a civilian government. Traditionally, the South Korean family does not accept the concept of adopted sons. Having his own son(s) is a Korean's supreme responsibility to his living parents and to his ancestors. The Americans have demonstrated a most generous attitude toward adopted children.

Americans raise adopted children as if they were their own, which is beyond the comprehension of many Koreans. The family system in South Korea, however, is crucially important because the Koreans perceive their society purely in terms of family. Their families were the only means of protection when the country had been invaded by foreign countries, and they showed little confidence in the government in case of an emergency. The sense of security or insecurity vis-à-vis territorial separation has promoted different behavioral patterns among these two nations.

Because of their extreme sense of insecurity, the Koreans have developed a behavioral pattern of regulated individualism and ultrabehavior. For a

Korean, no one except himself and his family is responsible for his safety and the survival of his family members. He must protect himself and his family by his own effort because the government never provides such protection. For their survival as a nation, the Koreans have to be persistent because they understand that negotiations and compromises lead to the collapse of the country. Therefore, an ultrabehavioral pattern is needed to survive. It is not accidental that South Korea had been an ultra anti-Communist country.

Education is important in the two countries. It is understood as a driving force toward economic growth and a high standard of living. Learning is a critical factor in South Korea because it is the only way to achieve a successful career for many Koreans, which used to mean becoming government civil servants. Today, an applicant still must pass the civil service examination to secure a government job, and must study hard to pass the test.

Education thus has been a guarantee for a successful life. This tradition of the high priority of education currently prevails in South Korea. South Korea is a culture where power is personalized; where parties exist to retain or acquire power for their leaders and—through them—their entourages; where party programs are essentially indistinguishable or absent; and where there is a marriage, albeit sometimes stormy, between the state and the business conglomerates. Payments by business to individuals or parties either in or out of power are endemic and twofold: they are informal taxes on doing business and insurance of good relations with future leaders. In a sense, they are tithes—institutional offerings to secular organizations for divine

intervention from those on high. Corruption becomes endemic under such circumstances.

Excessive power concentrated in the hands of political elites and their cronies led to a state-dominated economy permeated by patronage and corruption (Kang 190). 2005 “Corruption Perceptions Index” gave South Korea a 5 on a scale of zero to 10, with zero being “highly corrupt” and 10 “highly clean” (Global Corruption Report 2005). South Korea is generally regarded as a state where corruption is significant but essentially institutional. According to a report of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the South Korean economy achieved the highest GNP growth in the world for a quarter of a century (1975 to 2000), the average annual economic growth being an astonishing 7.1 percent. We attribute this phenomenal achievement to the industrious Koreans.

In government, technocrats effectively formulated and implemented the economic policy through economic planning, and in business, entrepreneurs and managers boldly formulated and skillfully implemented business strategies for their enterprises. Their employees effectively transformed these business strategies into viable goods and services through long, hard working hours. As a whole, the Korean people have nurtured a society that empowered its people through its educational system, family system, and fierce competition. Conclusion The Korean culture is unique, even though it shares certain features of Oriental culture with the Chinese and the Japanese. While events occurring in Japan and China have been recognized in the United States, Korea and South Korea in particular have been treated like forgotten children.

South Korea has never been considered seriously by government, business, media, or even academicians. However, we argue that South Korea deserves the attention of scholars and practitioners simply because it is becoming an influential nation in the global community. To comprehend South Korea, more attention is needed.;