

A Comparative Study on Everyday Life of South Koreans and North Korean Defectors*

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Abstract

This article is a research that surveyed and compared everyday customs, such as food, clothing and shelter, rites and seasonal rituals, and awareness of daily issues, such as views on family values, marriage, education and career, of South Koreans with that of North Korean defectors, in order to better understand the characteristics of living culture of South Koreans and North Korean defectors and to search for ways for the two groups to communicate better and culturally integrate. The results of the research show that, in relation to everyday customs such as clothing, food and shelter, rites and seasonal rituals, both South Koreans and North Korean defectors had transformed the traditional living culture to befit the lifestyles of the modern era. It seems that everyday customs of South Koreans had become more westernized while North Korean defectors maintained more traditional customs, but such difference decreased as defectors spent longer time in South Korea. One commonality in everyday customs found between the two was that customs acted as a mechanism maintaining a sense of community among South Koreans and among North Korean defectors, who had lived for a long time in different systems.

Due to inter-Korea tensions, and differing experience and habits formed under the different systems of capitalism and socialism, a large gap between the two groups was found in the area of day to day awareness and values. Differences were most pronounced in views on marriage and career. First of all, South Koreans were more negative toward marriage with a North Korean defector than

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with a Korean of another country whereas the defectors were more negative toward marriage with an overseas Korean and positive toward marriage with a South Korean. Secondly, for South Koreans, the higher the income, the stronger the pride they had over their jobs. However, for North Korean, those with lower income tended to be more proud of their jobs. South Koreans preferred becoming civil servants and professionals. North Korean defectors also added to the list, workers, as a job that made them proud. Thirdly, in choosing their jobs, South Koreans felt the thoughts and advice of their parents to be important while North Korean defectors were more reliant on state policy. The results of this study gives us important insight into how we can promote cultural integration of South Koreans and North Korean defectors. First of all, the negative perspective South Koreans have of North Korean defectors has to be fundamentally revisited. It is essential that the prejudice of equating ordinary North Koreans with the government be overcome and that North Korean defectors be seen with a sense of national solidarity. Secondly, South Koreans and North Korean defectors need to share the advantages of individualism and collectivism that the two sides had acquired as a result of living under different systems, and be able to use those advantages as a driver of social development. Third, cultural integration between South Koreans and North Korean defectors must be a process of attaining diversity in national everyday customs while respecting the customs of the other, and also of heading toward further expanding and developing national everyday customs.

Keywords: South Koreans, North Korean defectors, living culture, communication, cultural integration

1. Introduction

In 1948, two regimes were established, one in the South and the other in the North of the Korean Peninsula. Although the two broadly shared a common living culture with a long history, after the division of the Peninsula, the culture in the South and that of the North started to diverge. The everyday living culture of each side underwent transformation under the complex influence of division, Korean War, compressed modernization and capitalism or socialism.

The objective of this study is to use the results of the survey to compare and analyze the living culture of South Koreans and that of North Korean defectors. Everyday living culture is bound to change according to time and place. Having gone through the destruction and influx of foreign aid as the result of the war in the 1950's, cultural influence of the US and the USSR, compressed

modernization under either capitalism or socialism during and after the 1960's, and globalization, isolation and the Arduous March experienced during the 1990's, South Koreans and North Korean defectors unknowingly started to lead very different lives. The main part of this paper will look into how traditional living cultures of South Koreans and North Korean defectors changed over the years, focusing on everyday customs and awareness on daily issues.

During the late 1990's, North Korea went through a severe food shortage, leading to many North Koreans defectors¹⁾ to escape to the South. As of May 2013, there were a total of 25,560 North Korean defectors who had entered South Korea²⁾. According to other previous research surveying North Korean defectors, differences in the mindset, culture and everyday customs were the main factors that made it difficult for the defectors to adapt to the South Korean society, and this difference did not decrease over time (Chŏn 1997, 109-167).

And because of this kind of experience, many North Korean defectors pointed out that they thought the differences in perspective, culture, daily habits and customs between South and North Koreans would become the biggest problem should the Peninsula become reunified (Chŏn 1997, 109-167). Such research results show that there is a need for scholars to properly research into the everyday living culture of South Koreans and that of North Korean defectors and to come up with a viable solution.

Until now, studies on the living culture of South Koreans and that of North Korean defectors had been performed separately. However, approaching the two groups separately will not be effective in coming up with new prospects. In order to promote understanding, communication and integration between the two, it is

1) Before 1990's, South Koreans referred to the people who had fled North Korea and settled in the South as *Kwisuncha* (surrendering defectors)' or *'Kwisumyongsa* (surrendering warriors)'. After 1990's, with the growth in the number of people fleeing from the economic crisis in the North, the term *T'alpukcha* (people fleeing the North)' was widely used. However, some in the South pointed out that the term *T'alpukcha* had a negative connotation in regard to the North and that another term should be used instead, at which South Korea's Ministry of Unification created a euphemism of *Saetŏmin* (people of the new land) and announced it on 9th January 2005. However, the legal and official term referring to either *Kwisuncha*, *T'alpukcha* or *Saetŏmin* is still *Pukhanitalchumin* (North Korean defectors). This paper will use the term 'North Korean defectors' to refer to *Pukhanitalchumin*, the official legal term referring to "people who had defected from North Korea and gained residency in South Korea".

2) Statistics from website of the Resettlement Support Division of Ministry of Unification (<http://www.unikorea.go.kr>, accessed 10thSep, 2013).

necessary to historically compare similarities and differences between the living culture of South Koreans and that of North Korean defectors.

To understand the characteristics of the living culture of South Koreans and North Korean defectors, it is essential that, first of all, a basic survey be carried out to comprehensively understand the two cultures on the same level. Based on this kind of survey, the two cultures can be compared and analyzed, and their similarities and differences properly understood. This process will enable South Koreans and North Korean defectors to find a road to socio-cultural integration.

From 3rd January to 28th February 2011, the Konkuk University Institute of Humanities for Unification performed a survey on the living cultures of South Koreans and North Korean defectors. 501 South Koreans and 109 North Korean defectors residing in the areas of Seoul, Suwon and Namyangju participated³⁾. Sampling was based on gender and age to decide on the target population, and the survey included basic questions on locality, place of birth, age, gender, nationality, generation, level of education, marital status, structure and composition of family, period of residence, form of housing and income (in the case of defectors, the year of entry into South Korea was added). In the section surveying everyday customs, there were questions in regard to language, food, clothing and shelter, and seasonal rituals, and in the section asking about awareness on daily issues, there were questions related to the idea of supporting one's parents, preference for sons, and perspectives on marriage, education and career⁴⁾.

3) As of August 2011, according to a study by the Ministry of Unification, place of residency for North Korean defectors were distributed as follows: 29.4% in Seoul City, 26.6% in Gyeonggi Province, 9.4% in Incheon City, 4.1% in Busan City, 3.7% in Gyeongnam Province, 3.8% in Choongnam Province, 3.1% in Daegu City, 3.7% in Gyeongbuk Province, 3.0% Choongbuk Province, 2.7% Gwangju City, 2.5% in Gangwon Province, 2.3% in Daejeon City, 2.2% in Jeonnam Province, 1.9% in Jeonbuk Province, 1.3% in Ulsan City and 0.6% in Jeju Island (Statistics from Resettlement Support Division of the Ministry of Unification, <http://www.unikorea.go.kr>, accessed 10th Sep, 2013).

4) In the process of organizing the results into tables, duplicate answers and non-responses were excluded. This is why in some cases, the total does not add up to 100%. Unit is %.

2. Everyday Customs: Traditional Customs Being Maintained

a) Food, Clothing and Shelter

In regard to the question on people's perception of days that the Hanbok, Korean traditional costume, should be worn, South Koreans replied that they enjoyed wearing Hanbok 'on special occasions' and 'on national holidays'. 30.5% replied that they don't wear Hanbok. Only 2.6% replied that Hanbok was their everyday attire, showing that it had changed from an everyday clothing to a ceremonial costume.

<Table 1> Days Hanbok should be worn

	South Koreans	North Korean defectors
Don't wear Hanbok	30.5	45.0
On national holidays	40.1	36.7
Special occasions	40.7	17.4
Family gatherings	3.5	5.5
Everyday	2.6	0.9

As to the question of why respondents wore Hanbok, among South Koreans, the answer 'because all should wear Hanbok on special occasions' ranked first at 35.7%, 'because Hanbok is beautiful' ranked second (22.6%) and 'because it makes me feel Korean' came next (16.4%). On the other hand, in the case of North Korean defectors, 26.7% answered 'because it makes me feel Korean', 25.0% 'because Hanbok is beautiful' and 23.3% 'because I want to proudly show I am Korean', and 20.0% 'because all should wear Hanbok on special occasions'.

Whereas South Koreans took it for granted that they wear Hanbok on special occasions because everyone had to, defectors wanted to show their consciousness and pride as Koreans by wearing Hanbok. Since the 1990's in North Korea, Hanbok started to be referred to as national (*minjok*) clothing and people were encouraged to wear it (Kim, Seok-Hyang 2007, 84-88). Due to the influence of this kind of campaign, North Korean defectors also came to naturally consider the

Hanbok as an attire that overtly manifested national identity.

In regard to the question “Do you think you should always have kimchi with your meals?” , 29.5% of South Koreans replied 'very much so' and 41.9% replied 'yes'. So a total of 71.4% had replied positively to the question. When broken down according to age, respondents in their 20's expressed the lowest preference for kimchi because they were the generation exposed the most to global cuisine and enjoyed different tastes.

<Table 2> Do you think you should always have kimchi with your meals?
: South Koreans

	Total	Age group					
		Teens	20's	30's	40's	50's	60 and above
Very much so	29.5	34.9	26.7	20.2	39.2	28.6	29.3
Yes	41.9	38.1	33.7	51.0	31.4	44.6	56.0
No	13.8	14.3	14.9	19.2	14.7	10.7	5.3
Doesn't matter	14.2	12.7	23.8	9.6	14.7	14.3	8.0

<Table 3> Do you think you should always have kimchi with your meals?
: North Korean defectors

	Total	Age group						Year of Entry into S.Korea	
		Teens	20's	30's	40's	50's	60 and above	Before 2006	2006 and later
Very much so	55.0	100	58.5	50.0	57.1	54.5	37.5	53.8	77.9
Yes	33.9	-	24.4	38.9	39.3	36.4	50.0	3.8	10.3
No	4.6	-	7.3	-	3.6	9.1	-	30.8	5.9
Doesn't matter	6.4	-	9.8	11.1	-	-	12.5	11.5	5.9

For North Korean defectors, in all age groups, nearly 90% replied either 'yes' or 'very much so'. The latter answer was 35% higher than that of South Koreans. The number of defectors who either replied 'no' or 'very much no' was half that of South Koreans, showing a high dependency on kimchi.⁵⁾ The kimchi preference

of North Koreans can be explained by the North's emphasis on North Korean traditional foods⁶⁾ as well as the influence of the typical simple diet of working class North Koreans basically consisting of rice, soup and kimchi, complemented by one or two vegetable dishes (Hwang and Chang 2001, 376). On the other hand, South Koreans showed a lower preference for kimchi because Korean food culture has become more diversified through westernization and globalization (Korean History Research Association 1999, 153-169).

On why kimchi should always be there with meals, majority of South Koreans replied 'because it suits the Korean palate (50.3%)', and 'because it tastes good (19.2%)'. North Korean defectors replied similarly - 'because it suits the Korean palate (70.1%)', and 'because it tastes good (7.2%)'. Both South Koreans and defectors alike were enjoying kimchi because it was a natural living culture. This kind of embodied kimchi-centered food culture does not easily change and both South Koreans as well as North Korean defectors were sustaining this culture and handing it down to younger generations.

b) Customs and Seasonal Rituals

In regard to the question, “Do you think the coming of age, marriages, funerals and ancestral memorial rituals should be performed in the traditional way?” , slightly more South Koreans answered negatively ('not necessarily' 53.8%) than positively ('must' 5.6% and 'as much as possible' 40.3%) whereas more North Korean defectors answered positively ('must' 22.0%, 'as much as possible' 37.6%) than negatively ('not necessarily' 39.4%). In short, 15% more North Korean defectors, in comparison to South Koreans, thought traditional rituals should be adhered to.

5) The same result was found in Song Chu-Un's 2002 survey of 59 North Korean defectors (Song 2002, 141).

6) In an opinion article titled “Arirang of the Sun Nation” on July 11, 2002, Rodong Simun emphasized, “All Koreans should be familiar with the pleasant kimchi taste. All Koreans love the chōgori of Korean skirts, Pyōngyang-style cold noodles and the savory fermented soybean soup.”

〈Table 4〉 Do you think coming of age ceremonies, marriages, funerals and ancestral memorial rituals should be performed in the traditional way?: South Koreans

	Age group						Marital status		Gender	
	Teens	20's	30's	40's	50's	60 and above	Not married	Married	Men	Women
Must	7.9	6.9	1.0	6.9	3.6	8.0	7.1	4.7	8.8	3.2
As much as possible	27.0	28.7	52.9	45.1	48.2	37.3	29.9	46.5	46.1	35.7
Not necessarily	63.5	62.4	46.2	48.0	48.2	53.3	61.4	48.4	44.2	60.4

〈Table 5〉 Do you think coming of age ceremonies, marriages, funerals and ancestral memorial rituals should be performed in the traditional way?: North Korean defectors

	Age group						Gender		Year of Entry into S.Korea	
	Teens	20's	30's	40's	50's	60 and above	Men	Women	Before 2006	2006 and later
Must	-	22.0	27.8	10.7	36.4	37.5	18.5	24.5	6.9	26.9
As much as possible	100	36.6	33.3	35.7	36.4	37.5	37.0	39.6	51.7	33.8
Not necessarily	-	41.5	38.9	50.0	27.3	25.0	42.9	35.8	37.9	40.3

In the case of South Koreans, the younger the respondents and more women than men thought the four major rituals (coming of age ceremonies, marriages, funerals and ancestral memorials) did not have to be followed in the traditional way. Among the different age groups, people in their teens and 20's recorded the highest for 'not necessarily' when it came to traditional observation of the four major rituals while people between the ages of 30's and 50's answered the highest for 'must'. The difference between the former and the latter was nearly 20%. Those in their teens and 20's tend to be critical toward adhering to traditional ways of performing the four major events.

As for North Korean defectors, the percentage for 'not necessarily' grew as

respondents became younger, but the result for those in their 40's stood out - 50% replied 'not necessarily'. Defectors in their 40's had spent their teenage years during the 1970's in North Korea, which was when the single ideology system was established, and thus did not strictly follow traditional customs (Chu 1994, 494-495). Another reason could be that their awareness level for traditional rituals weakened because they were the ones who were breadwinners of their families during the difficult economic circumstances of 1990's - referred to as the 'Arduous March' - during which it was hard to maintain traditional rituals (Kim and Chung eds. 2012, 136-137).

On the other hand, in regard to the question, "Traditional holidays enjoyed by my family", South Koreans replied 97.4% for the 'Lunar New Year', 94.2% for 'Thanksgiving (Ch'usök)', 34.1% for the 'First Full Moon', 7.2% for 'Hansik' and 5.6% for 'Tano'. For North Korean defectors, the order was 'Lunar New Year' 86.2%, 'Ch'usök' 78.0%, 'First Full Moon' 32.1%, 'Hansik' 32.1% and 'Tano' 26.6%. The ranking was the same, but a difference in the percentage could be observed. For South Koreans, the Lunar New Year and Thanksgiving were considered important holidays during which the entire family had to gather even if it meant large-scale, long distance traveling, but for North Korean defectors whose families have been separated, the significance of 'holidays enjoyed by the entire family' was inevitably weaker. However, it seems that North Korean defectors still observed traditionally holidays like Hansik and Tano⁷⁾, which have relatively become less observed in South Korea.

These results reflect the holiday-related customs of North Korea. In May 1967, North Korea reduced the number of traditional holidays to be observed, under orders from President Kim Il Söng that "Remnants of feudalism must be rooted out." However, during the late 1980's some were revived and became a time for

7) In an agricultural society, the First Full Moon was a day bidding farewell to winter and ushering in the farming season, celebrated in the form of a festival praying for a good harvest. Hansik was the 105th day after the winter solstice. It was a day to prepare for the upcoming new farming season, planting trees or sowing vegetable seeds. Tano, since long ago, was considered the day when the yang force was the strongest and so was observed as one of the major holidays in Korea, Japan and China. During the agricultural period, it was a day farmers could rest, having finished sowing seeds of vegetables and rice, so farmers enjoyed themselves as much as they could on this day (Research Institute of Korean Studies 2001, 74, 83, 180).

families, neighbors and co-workers to enjoy themselves (Chu 1994, 447-467).⁸⁾ On Lunar New Year and Ch'usök, North Koreans perform simplified ancestral memorial rituals, and on the First Full Moon, eat traditional First Full Moon foods. On Hansik, they visit, or if necessary, move, the graves of their ancestors, and on Tano, workers spend the day playing sports or games together.⁹⁾

〈Table 6〉 Traditional holidays enjoyed by my family (multiple response)
: South Koreans

	Total	Age group						Family structure			
		Teens	20's	30's	40's	50's	60 and above	Single	Nuclear family	2-generation family	3-generation family
Lunar New Year	97.4	95.2	98.0	99.0	98.2	98.2	94.7	100	98.0	100	87.8
Ch'usök	94.2	92.1	95.0	99.0	97.1	96.4	82.7	92.6	94.6	96.1	87.8
First Full Moon	34.1	30.2	38.6	30.8	35.3	33.9	34.7	14.8	34.4	35.5	41.5
Hansik	7.2	11.1	5.0	9.6	5.9	5.4	6.7	3.7	7.4	7.9	7.3
Tano	5.6	7.9	11.9	4.8	2.0	5.4	1.3	3.7	6.5	3.9	2.4

〈Table 7〉 Traditional holidays enjoyed by my family (multiple response)
: North Korean defectors

	Total	Age group						Year of entry into S.Korea	
		Teens	20's	30's	40's	50's	60 and above	Before 2006	2006 and later
Lunar New Year	86.2	100	90.2	83.3	85.7	90.9	62.5	89.7	87.0
Chusök	78.0	100	75.6	94.4	75.0	72.7	62.5	69.0	81.8
First Full Moon	32.1	-	36.6	55.6	25.0	9.1	25.0	20.7	36.4
Hansik	32.1	50	29.3	44.4	28.6	27.3	37.5	13.8	39.0
Tano	26.6	50	29.3	38.9	25.0	-	25.0	13.8	32.5

8) Hansik remains an important occasion in North Korea, unlike South Korea, where it has diminished. On Hansik, North Korean trains are fully packed with people, and in major cities like Pyöngyang, traffic congestion becomes quite severe with people traveling to their ancestors' graves (Chu 1994, 516-517).

9) Interview with North Korean defector 'Shin' (Aged 32, from Hoeryöng, Hamkyöngbuk Province), 5pm-7pm, 11th November, 2013, Room 209, College of Humanities, Konkuk University.

The survey looking into everyday life customs of South Koreans and North Korean defectors revealed that the Hanbok, for South Koreans, had changed into a ceremonial attire worn only on special events and traditional holidays. Kimchi had become a part of everyday life and the center of Koreans' diet. With the onset of an industrial society, seasonal traditional holidays had diminished, however, some remaining traditional holidays were considered days one enjoyed with one's family and observes traditions by, for example, performing memorial rites for the ancestors. Compared to South Koreans, more North Korean defectors maintained and observed traditional holidays, but all in all, it seems that traditional living culture, of both South Koreans and the defectors, was evolving to match the lifestyles of the modern era.

3. Awareness of Daily Issues: Reflecting Differing Experience Under Capitalism and Socialism

a) Family Values

In Confucian cultures, filial piety forms the basis of morals. Filial piety is also related to loyalty toward the state, and thus acts as an ideology that consolidates the vertical structure between the family and the state. Since the Chosŏn Dynasty, filial piety has been important in the lives of the Korean people, and the idea of showing respect to and supporting one's parents are thought to be still valid today (Park et al 2003, 50). In order to find out the level of awareness in regard to the idea of having to support one's parents, an idea that epitomizes filial piety, the question "Do you think children should support their parents?" was asked to both South Koreans and North Korean defectors.

<Table 8> Do you think children should support their parents?: South Koreans

	Total	Age group						Gender	
		Teens	20's	30's	40's	50's	60 and above	Men	Women
Very much so	9.8	19.0	11.9	4.8	6.9	10.7	9.3	10.1	9.5
Yes	42.9	55.6	51.5	37.5	38.2	35.7	40.0	52.1	35.7
No	46.7	25.4	35.6	57.7	54.9	53.6	48.0	36.9	54.4

<Table 9> Do you think children should support their parents?: North Korean defectors

	Total	Age group						Gender		Year of entry into S,Korea	
		Teens	20's	30's	40's	50's	60 and above	Men	Women	Before 2006	2006 and later
Very much so	30.3	-	31.7	27.8	25.0	45.5	37.5	10.1	9.5	24.1	32.5
Yes	52.3	50.0	61.0	55.6	50.0	45.5	12.5	52.1	35.7	55.2	51.9
No	16.9	50.0	7.3	16.7	25.0	9.1	37.5	36.9	54.4	20.7	15.6

For South Koreans, those who replied 'yes' was slightly higher at 52.7% than 'no' at 46.7%. For North Korean defectors, 'yes' was 82.6% and 'no' 16.5%, showing a stronger tendency toward supporting one's parents. When broken down according to age and gender, among South Koreans, those within the age groups of 30's to 50's and women replied 'no' at a higher rate than average, and the same went for North Korean defectors in the age groups of 30's and 40's, and women. They are the ones who bear the actual responsibility of having to support their parents. It can be deduced that those who shoulder the actual burden of sustaining their parents - namely, South Koreans in the age groups of 30's to 50's and women, and North Korean defectors in the age groups of 30's and 40's and women - tend to think the state and society, and not just the children, should also take on the responsibility of taking care of the elderly.

These results need to be particularly noted by both Koreas, which consider filial piety to be a virtue of a different level compared to other nations. In order to sustain and preserve filial piety as a traditional virtue, the responsibility of supporting one's parents should not be shifted only to the individual and his or her family

in the name of morals, but the state and local communities should be able to take on some of the burden and actively put in place a socialized caregiving service, so that a physical basis that can actually uphold the traditional virtue of filial piety can be established (Lee 2011, 41). Traditions are handed down to future generations not simply through morals of individuals. They are maintained and further developed through the state system and the societal system befitting to the modern era.

Although the idea that parents have to be supported by their children is weakening, both South Koreans and North Korean defectors showed a stronger awareness toward the need to celebrate the birthdays of their parents and other family milestones. In a request for the respondents to choose which events all family members must attend, apart from weddings and funerals, 75.4% of South Koreans chose 'parent's birthday', 72.1% 'Ch'usök', 70.3% 'Lunar New Year', and 66.5% 'other special family events'. 61.5% of North Korean defectors answered 'parent's birthday', 46.8% 'Lunar New Year', 42.2% 'Ch'usök', and 23.9% 'other special family events'. It seems that parent's birthdays had priority over traditional holidays, showing that familism is still quite strong in both societies. However, in the case of North Korean defectors, because they were already separated from their families and could not come together, the overall percentage was lower compared to South Koreans.

In a question asking which gender they prefer for newborns, South Koreans overwhelmingly answered 'does not matter' and, in fact, showed a preference for girls over boys.¹⁰⁾ This preference for girls, who in general tend to be more caring and sensitive toward her parents, reflects the fact that there has been a transition from the pre-modern child-parent relationship based on rules and obligations of having to continue the family name, perform ancestral memorial rituals and support aging parents, to a more modern relationship based on affection and caregiving (Chung and Kang 2012, 52). Other recent research also show that the sense of fulfillment parents feel in regard to their children has shifted from socio-economic success to emotional benefits of childrearing (Nam and Chung 2012, 114).

10) According to Korea Institute of Childcare and Education's "Panel Study on Korean Children 2008", both parents were found to prefer daughters. The strong preference for sons has started to disappear in Korean society since the 2000's.

<Table 10> Which gender do you prefer for newborns?: South Koreans

	Total	Age group						Marital status		Family structure			
		Teens	20's	30's	40's	50's	60 and above	Married	Unmarried	Single	Nuclear family	2-generat ation family	3 generat ion family
Son	11.4	11.1	7.9	11.5	8.8	12.5	18.7	9.8	12.3	11.1	11.1	14.5	9.8
Daughter	16.8	36.5	20.8	14.4	16.7	10.7	2.7	24.5	12.3	11.1	18.8	13.2	7.3
Does not matter	70.9	52.4	70.3	74.0	73.5	73.2	77.3	65.2	74.1	77.8	69.0	72.4	80.5

<Table 11> Which gender do you prefer for newborns?: North Korean defectors

Answer	Total	Age group						Gender		Marital status		Year of entry into S.Korea	
		Teens	20's	30's	40's	50's	60 and above	Men	Women	Married	Unmarried	Before 2006	2006 and later
Son	27.5	-	31.7	16.7	35.7	18.2	25.0	38.9	15.1	29.8	25.0	20.7	29.9
Daughter	34.9	-	39.0	44.4	25.0	45.5	25.0	29.6	39.6	28.1	42.3	37.9	35.1
Does not matter	36.7	100.0	29.3	38.9	39.3	36.4	37.5	31.5	43.4	42.1	30.8	41.4	35.1

It is quite interesting to see that even North Korean defectors preferred daughters over sons because North Korea is usually considered more patriarchal than South Korea (Kim, Young-Hee 2006; Yoon 2009). The result seems to reflect the fact that when North Korea underwent severe difficulties during the 1990's, more women became economically active, leading to changes in roles within families. After 1990's, the planned economic system in North Korean crashed and markets flourished. Majority of the sellers in markets were women. During the economic crisis, women who became economically active in the markets saw their social status rise¹¹⁾. With the diminished role of men within families, the preference for sons also decreased.

11) On the issue of change in awareness of North Korean women during and after the economic crisis, refer to Lee Mi-Kyung(2006) and Kim Seok-Hyang(2006a).

b) Views on Marriage

The question “What do you think about marriage between an overseas Korean or North Korean defector and a South Korean?” was asked to both South Koreans and North Korean defectors. For both groups, the highest percentage was recorded for 'does not matter', but a closer look at the results manifests a stark contrast between South Koreans and North Korean defectors. As prospects in marriage, South Koreans tended to prefer Korean-Americans, then Korean-Japanese, then Korean-Chinese, and then North Korean defectors. This order of preference seems to show that South Koreans felt distant from North Korean defectors. It seems that North Korea's recent moves, such as the hereditary succession of power, the Military First doctrine, food shortage and nuclear weapons development, have led to a stronger perception of North Korea as an abnormal nation, which in turn seems to result in a sense of antipathy toward North Koreans defectors.¹²⁾

〈Table 12〉 “What do you think about marriage between an overseas Korean or North Korean defector and a South Korean?: South Koreans

	Groups of Koreans			
	Korean-American	Korean-Japanese	Korean-Chinese	North Korean defectors
Absolutely against	2.8	6.0	4.4	7.8
Avoid as much as possible	19.6	22.2	26.3	31.5
Does not matter	76.8	71.3	68.7	60.1

Women showed more negative feelings than men toward the idea of marrying a North Korean defector. There was only a 2~3% difference between the two genders in regard to overseas Koreans, but when it came to North Korean defectors, the gap increased to more than 10%. Such views of women seem to reflect the fact that women, in regard to international marriage or marriage with an overseas Korean, think importantly of the economic status of the prospect's home country

12) According to recent research, the biggest reason South Koreans feel prejudice toward North Koreans was found to be because of their hostility toward the North Korean regime (Shin 2009, 128).

(Kim, Doo Sub 2006, 38). It also reflects the fact that they are reluctant to marry a North Korean defector who is likely to be more patriarchal in daily life, and also that they have a strong prejudice¹³⁾ toward North Korean defectors in general.

〈Table 13〉 Who do you prefer as your marriage prospect?
: North Korean defectors

	Total	Age group						Gender		Year of Entry into S.Korea	
		Teens	20's	30's	40's	50's	60 and above	Men	Women	Before 2006	2006 and later
North Korean defector	30.3	-	19.5	22.2	50.0	27.3	50.0	42.6	18.9	31.0	29.9
South Korean	23.9	50.0	24.4	33.3	14.3	18.2	37.5	13.0	32.1	10.3	28.6
Korean-Chinese	0.9	-	-	5.6	-	-	-	1.9	-	-	1.3
Korean-Japanese	0.9	-	2.4	-	-	-	-	1.9	-	3.4	-
Korean-American	0.9	-	2.4	-	-	-	-	1.9	-	-	1.3
Does not matter	42.2	50.0	51.2	38.9	32.1	54.5	12.5	38.9	47.2	51.7	39.0

On the other hand, in regard to the question “Who do you prefer as your marriage prospect?” the order of preference for North Korean defectors was 'does not matter', then 'North Korean defector' and then 'South Korean'. The preference for overseas Koreans was very low, recording less than 1% for all groups - Chinese, Japanese and American.¹⁴⁾ However, the percentage for South Koreans was quite high. It was female North Korean defectors who led the trend. Female North Korean defectors preferred South Koreans as their marriage prospects whereas male North Korean defectors preferred female defectors.

The gender gap in preference toward South Koreans as marriage prospects is directly related to the defectors' experiences of North Korea and their ability to adapt to South Korean society. North Korea, as a socialist state, emphasizes gender

13) It has been surveyed that South Koreans are prejudiced toward North Korean defectors because, firstly, they detest the North Korean regime, secondly, they feel the defectors do not have sufficient knowledge about South Korea, and thirdly, the defectors are from North Korea (Shin 2009, 128).

14) This seems to be because the idea of 'bloodline' emphasized by North Korea exerts influence upon the mindset of North Korean defectors. In regard to how a national identity (*minjok*) theory emphasizing bloodline was established in North Korea, refer to Kim Tae-Woo(2002).

equality, but in fact, maintains strong patriarchal traditions in its culture. Male North Korean defectors feel that South Korean women are overly assertive and fastidious, and thus tend to prefer female defectors over South Korean women.

Unlike male defectors who go through a lot of difficulties adjusting to South Korean society¹⁵⁾, female defectors adapt very well and show a preference for South Korean men over their patriarchal male counterparts as their possible partners in marriage. Such gender difference in preference for marriage partners is indeed reflected in actual marriage. In a survey performed by Korea Hana Foundation in 2011 on 8,299 North Korean defectors residing in South Korea, it was found that among male defectors who married after leaving the North, 10.2% married a South Korean partner, however, among female defectors, the rate was 32.7% (Jeon 2012, 96).

c) Views on Education and Career

The next section of the questionnaire aimed to look at North and South Koreans' views on education and career. Questions in this section were related to the reason children were sent to daycare, level of trust toward school education, future of children, thoughts on national identity (*minjok*) education and in what areas it should be reinforced, pride toward one's job, people (groups) affecting job selection, criteria for choosing a job and thoughts on success.

First of all, in regard to the reason children were sent to daycare, South Koreans replied in the order of 'because there is no-one to take care of the child', 'for them to foster social skills' and 'for education', whereas North Korean defectors replied in the order of 'don't know because I do not send my child to daycare', 'for education' and 'because there is no-one to take care of the child'. South Koreans seemed to understand daycare as a place for their child to foster social skills whereas North Korean defectors seemed to place stronger emphasis on the educational aspect.

What kind of person do South Koreans and North Korean defectors what their

15) For gender differences among North Korean defectors in regard to their ability to adjust to South Korean society, refer to Chin (2008, 153).

child to become? Both groups replied 'contributor to society', followed by 'leader of society' and 'wealthy'. The reply showed the workings of the Korean psychology, complacent in regard to realistic issues but at the same time wanting a better life for their children. Parents were willing to bear any socio-economic burden to allow their children to realize their dreams and become respected people in society (Yi, Pak, and Ha 2010, 13-15).

These results also show that Koreans maintained the idea that if dreams are not realized, then their children need to focus on attaining wealth and status. The answers that ranked second and third were 'leader of society' and 'wealthy' respectively, showing the double-sided mindset of both South and North Koreans, that although it seems parents want their children to attain their dreams, they also emphasize economic success and power. In fact, North Korean defectors wanted their children to achieve economic success and power more than South Koreans. It seems that they felt the importance of economic success and power more strongly because of their lives trying to overcome their weak socio-economic status and survive in the highly competitive South Korean society.

〈Table 14〉 What kind of person do you want your child to become?

	South Koreans	North Korean defectors
Wealthy	11.2	22.9
Famous person	1.6	11.0
Leader of society	14.8	27.5
Contributor to society	69.5	34.9

Both South Koreans and North Korean defectors felt that national identity (*minjok*) education should be given (84.4% of South Koreans, 75.3% of North Korean defectors). The result for 'must be given' was quite high - 28.9% for South Koreans and 40.4% for defectors. It seemed that all age groups thought national identity education to be important. As for the contents of national identity education, South Koreans thought that 'history (60.3%)' and 'folk customs and etiquette (22.6%)' should be strengthened. In the case of North Korean defectors, 'history (45.9%)', 'language (22.0%)' and 'folk customs and etiquette (22.0%)' were

the top three answers. Both groups thought history and folk customs and etiquette to be important, with a big gap showing in the area of language.

〈Table 15〉 What area do you think should be strengthened in national identity education?

	South Koreans	North Korean defectors
History	60.3	45.9
Arts	6.6	5.5
Folk customs & etiquette	22.6	22.0
Language	8.0	22.0

Under the wave of globalization and internationalization, South Koreans do not think very much of the link between language and national identity education, but North Koreans seem to consider language an important representation of a nation and thus emphasize language education as a part of national identity education. Kim Il Sŏng, in 1966, pointed out, “The language being used in South Korea is losing all its national characteristics. It is not at all like Korean. South Korea faces the danger of its national tongue disappearing altogether” and emphasized the need to use 'our language'. He considered the adoption of foreign words as a cultural invasion and rejected it.

In fact, many North Korean defectors feel that the language used in the South and that of the North were diverging, and believe that this difference in language goes beyond mere difficulty in communication to outright discrimination against North Korean defectors (Kim, Seok-Hyang 2006b, 68). They say that they used 'pure Korean' when they were in the North, but here in the South, too many foreign expressions, whose origins are obscure, are being used. They thus find it difficult to understand what South Koreans mean, resulting in all sorts of additional hardships for the defectors.

On the question, “Do you think your job contributes to this society and state?” 75.3% of both South Koreans and North Korean defectors responded 'very much so' or 'yes', showing a positive view of their jobs. Broken down according to different jobs, South Korean civil servants and professionals showed a high level of pride, and among North Koreans, civil servants, professionals, workers and

students were the most proud of their jobs. In both groups, civil servants and professionals ranked high, however, in the case of South Koreans, as people living in a capitalist society, being a worker is considered a low-paid, harsh and degrading job, whereas in the case of the defectors, who had experienced a socialist society, there is a tendency to think that being a worker contributed to the state and the society even though he or she may be paid low and work under harsh conditions.

For the question “Which person (or group) exerts the largest influence on your selection of a job?” , South Koreans answered in the order of 'parents', 'state policy' and 'friends' whereas North Korean defectors answered 'state policy', 'friends' and then 'parents'. For South Koreans, the judgement and advice of one's parents were decisive factors in choosing a job, but in the case of defectors, 'state policy' was considered the most important - more so if the defector entered Korea in 2006 or later.

〈Table 16〉 Which person (or group) exerts the largest influence on your selection of a job?: South Koreans

	Total	Age group					
		Teens	20's	30's	40's	50's	60 and above
Teachers	6.8	9.5	3.0	10.6	6.9	5.4	5.3
Friends	14.2	9.5	17.8	10.6	20.6	10.7	12.0
Parents	51.9	52.4	55.4	53.8	40.2	50.0	61.3
Sibling	4.6	1.6	2.0	5.8	5.9	10.7	2.7
State policy	16.2	23.8	18.8	11.5	15.7	16.1	13.3

〈Table 17〉 Which person (or group) exerts the largest influence on your selection of a job?: North Korean defectors

	Total	Age group						Year of Entry into S.Korea	
		Teens	20's	30's	40's	50's	60 and above	Before 2006	2006 and later
Teachers	10.1	-	19.5	5.6	3.6	-	12.5	10.3	10.4
Friends	22.9	-	24.4	44.4	14.3	27.3	-	27.6	22.1
Parents	21.1	100.0	24.4	16.7	10.7	27.3	12.5	31.0	16.9
Sibling	9.2	-	4.9	-	10.7	18.2	37.5	6.9	10.4
State policy	33.9	-	26.8	27.8	60.7	18.2	25.0	24.1	39.0

These results show the experience and the judgement on the part of North Korean defectors. In North Korea, the state exerts the most influence on a person's choice of jobs. The situation is the same for them even in South Korean society because resettlement policies and support for defectors play an important role in deciding the jobs defectors take on and more generally in their everyday lives.

On the question of “What is the decisive factor that determines what job you choose?”, 'self-fulfillment' ranked first for both groups, followed by 'stability' and then 'pay'. Next came 'social contribution' and 'recognition'. The results show a correlation between Koreans' ideals about their careers and their perception of reality.

〈Table 18〉 What is the decisive factor that determines what job you choose?:
South Koreans

	Total	Age group					
		Teens	20's	30's	40's	50's	60 and above
Self-fulfillment	33.7	42.9	46.5	32.7	31.4	30.4	16.0
Pay	20.2	14.3	10.9	25.0	27.5	14.3	25.3
Stability	33.3	28.6	28.7	26.9	32.4	37.5	50.7
Social recognition	2.6	6.3	5.0	1.9	1.0	1.8	-
Contribution to society	7.2	6.3	6.9	7.7	6.9	8.9	6.7

〈Table 19〉 What is the decisive factor that determines what job you choose?
: North Korean defectors

	Total	Age group						Year of Entry into S.Korea	
		Teens	20's	30's	40's	50's	60 and above	Before 2006	2006 and later
Self-fulfillment	34.9	50.0	46.3	33.3	21.4	18.2	50.0	34.5	36.4
Pay	14.7	-	2.4	11.1	28.6	36.4	12.5	17.2	13.0
Stability	32.1	50.0	24.4	38.9	35.7	36.4	25.0	17.2	37.7
Social recognition	5.5	-	7.3	5.6	7.1		-	17.2	1.3
Contribution to society	11.9	-	19.5	11.1	7.1	9.1	-	13.8	11.7

Even though both groups of respondents had idealistic perceptions in regard to their careers, replying that they want to fulfill themselves through their jobs, they also took into consideration very realistic aspects as well. 'Stability' followed very closely behind the first ranking, and 'pay', though it came third, also recorded quite a high percentage. In short, the respondents seemed to think of 'self-fulfillment' only within possibilities of attaining stability and pay.

Such realistic tendencies were more pronounced in the case of South Koreans in their 40's and older and North Korean defectors in the age groups of 30's to 50's - those who are living the most intense lives in terms of their careers. South Koreans in the age groups of 40's and older, who are under the greatest financial pressure of having to feed their families, and North Korean defectors, apart from the age group of those in their 20's and 60's or older, chose 'stability' as the most important factor deciding their job. On the other hand, South Koreans, until they are in their 30's, thought self-fulfillment to be the most important. However, the fact that in the case of North Korean defectors, even those in their teens felt stability to be important reveals the instability North Koreans feel in terms of their social status.

4. Conclusion

This article compared the results of a survey on the living cultures of South Koreans and North Korean defectors, in order to look into everyday customs and awareness of day to day values of the two groups. It summarized the characteristics of the living culture of South Koreans and that of North Korean defectors respectively, and will conclude by summing up the results of the comparison it had made and what can be learnt from them.

In regard to everyday customs, Hanbok had transformed into a ceremonial attire but was worn frequently on special occasions or on traditional holidays, and kimchi had become rooted in our everyday food culture, enjoyed daily by Koreans. With the onset of an industrial society, holidays related to seasons were no longer enjoyed, however, some major traditional holidays became important occasions

during which the entire family gathered, to preserve tradition and maintain familist values.

As such, in relation to everyday customs such as clothing, food and shelter, rites and seasonal rituals, both South Koreans and North Korean defectors had transformed the traditional living culture to befit the lifestyles of the modern era. The results of the survey showed that the customs of South Koreans had become more westernized than those of North Korean defectors, and that the defectors maintained more traditional customs compared to the people in the South. However, one commonality found between the two was that everyday customs acted as a mechanism maintaining a sense of community among South Koreans and among North Korean defectors, who had lived for a long time in different systems.

Unlike traditional customs whose core values are continuously handed down to younger generations albeit with some revisions to accommodate modern lifestyles, a large gap between the two groups was found in the area of day to day awareness and values due to the differing experience and habits formed under the different systems of capitalism and socialism. The gap was particularly large in the case of views on marriage and career.

First of all, South Koreans were more negative toward marriage with a North Korean defector than with a Korean of another country whereas the defectors were more negative toward marriage with an overseas Korean and positive toward marriage with a South Korean. Secondly, South Koreans tended to prefer becoming civil servants and professionals. North Korean defectors also added to the list, workers, as a job that made them proud. Thirdly, in choosing their jobs, South Koreans felt the thoughts and advice of their parents to be important while North Korean defectors were more reliant on state policy.

The results of this survey looking into everyday customs and awareness of South Koreans and North Korean defectors revealed a few very important facts. First, as shown by the view on marriage, the fact that South Koreans feel negatively toward the defectors has to be fundamentally resolved. The reason South Koreans show prejudice toward North Korean defectors is basically because of their distaste with the North Korean regime and North Korea.¹⁶⁾ If hostile policies on North

Korea and inter-Korean tensions persist, then this kind of prejudice will not disappear. In this sense, conciliation and cooperation between the two Koreas are important not only in terms of inter-Korea relations but also as a necessary condition in overcoming the negative perspective South Koreans have of North Korean defectors and in strengthening compatriotism between the two.

Second, the process of culturally integrating South Koreans and North Korean defectors should not be unilateral, where defectors are required to simply absorb South Korean customs and culture. The two groups must share everyday customs of one another and thereby expand and develop them further. It is necessary to overcome the 'South Korea-centrism', where the living culture of South Korea is set as the baseline and North Korean defectors are forced to adopt South Korean ways. In other words, ways must be found to share, expand and develop customs that characterize 'Koreanness', while respecting the everyday customs and cultural pride of North Korean defectors as well as the living culture of South Koreans.

Third, learning from one another during the process of cultural communication is important. South Koreans should be able to learn from North Korean defectors and vice versa. South Korean society has developed itself based on individualism, but as society advanced, egoism started to hinder the integration of the South Korean society. On the other hand, North Koreans had been trained in North Korea to align the interests of the individual, the society and the state, but this process was one that forced unilateral sacrifice on the part of the individual. If we were to converge the advantages of each system, then the individualistic tendencies of South Koreans can become important stimulants for North Korean defectors to realize themselves while North Korean defectors' consideration of public interest can become an important motivation to overcome the self-centeredness of South Koreans.

Fourth, more institutionalized support must be rendered by the state in order to help North Korean defectors to find decent stable jobs. This research has found that North Korean defectors, in comparison to South Koreans, tend to have stronger desire for stability, prioritizing, for example, stability and pay over self-fulfillment

16) See footnote 14. 38.3% responded that they were prejudiced because they detest the North Korean regime, and even the reason 'just because they are from North Korea' accounted for 24.2%.

when choosing jobs. These results come from the desperate reality North Korean defectors face in South Korea, who tend to have precarious jobs as temporary workers or daily hires. South Korea has to go beyond simply giving one-off support, such as settlement money, toward coming up with more institutionalized ways to help North Korean defectors to find and maintain stable jobs.

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