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Tourism in the Most Reclusive Country on Earth

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North and South Korea Reunite

Spring 2014

Tourism In The Most Reclusive Country On Earth



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ABSTRACT

Tourism In The Most Reclusive Country On Earth explores the tourism growth on the Korea Peninsula through qualitative data to analyze how tourism can be a vehicle in reuniting North and South Korea. Through an extensive literature review, the history of the Korean Peninsula was explored in order to grasp the understanding on why North and South Koreans are so similar yet differ in terms of what type of governance is present in the country. Current social issues in North and South Korea were also explored, along with the advancement of technology. These points were considered in order to show how Korea can become one again as tourism increases in both the North and South, and as the interactions between citizens from each country increases.

This study explores the opportunity for tourism in North Korea and how inbound tourism in the country can increase the interaction between South and North Korea through a two track system. It also considers present day technological, social, and political changes that are occurring in both countries, as these factors will escalate when the two countries will unite.

This paper is advantageous to the tourism industry as it assesses the potential for North Korean tourism which supports the thesis on how and when South and North Korea will reunite.

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Introduction

Not only do South and North Korea share the same language, culture, and history, they also share a demilitarized zone at the 38th parallel (Appendix, Figure 1). This area was established in 1953 at the end of the Korean War as an agreement to stop North and South Korean military conflicts (Hunt & Levine, 2012, p. 120). Since that year, there has been a constant struggle between the two governments, and also other countries of the world, like China who support North Korea. The Korean Peninsula has an extremely long history of invasions, occupations, and tensions. It has faced multiple changes in terms of where its borders are and who is in control. Though tensions are high between these two countries, there are policies that can occur to promote reunification and bilateral tourism. The purpose of this paper is to determine how tourism might act as a vehicle in reuniting North and South Korea through an extensive review of literature of the history of the Korean Peninsula as well as current economic, government, and social changes occurring in South Korea. By incorporating these changes into the two track policy (explored later in this paper), it will show how Korean re-unity could occur in the near future. These beneficial changes are boosting South Korea's productivity, which attracts more tourists to the region. With the influx of tourism, the North and South relationship can grow to achieve a single country.

There has been an increasing demand in the global tourism market, especially tourism in Asia. Despite economic challenges, Pacific and Asian countries saw a 6% increase in tourism from August 2012- August 2013 (“World Tourism Organization,” 2013). South Korea alone had 12 million tourist visits in 2013 compared to the 11,000 tourists who visited in 1961. (“Korea Tourism Organization,” n.d.). South Korea had a 9% tourism growth from 2011 to 2012, which shows the rising number of people interested in the country (“World Tourism Organization,” 2013). In 1988, 2.3 million dollars was earned from foreign tourists in South Korea according to the Ministry of Transportation (Kim & Crompton, 1990, p. 363).

South Korean tourism can be juxtaposed with North Korea tourism. Since North Korea is run by a totalitarian state, government has complete control over the country. This means that tourism is regulated by government, thus citizens are forbidden to leave the country, and foreign tourists have strict guidelines they must obey in order to stay inside the country. An estimated 4,511 non South Korean foreign tourists visited North Korea in 2004 (Kim, Prideaux, & Prideaux, 2007, p. 298). Tourists are not free to roam the country. They are met with the aid of a guide who stops only at monuments glorifying the first president, Kim Il Sung and the government (Cromley, 2007). The rare tourist that enters North Korea has very limited interaction with North Koreans (Sang-Hun, 2014, p. 2). The country’s president, Kim Jung Eun, and his government officials dictate the flow of tourism. Unlike their neighbor, North Korean citizens are restricted from leaving the country, which means only inbound tourists are allowed entry into

North Korea. Former South Korean president, Kim Dae Jung, initiated the Sunshine Policy in 1998 (Appendix, Figure 2) as an effort to promote economic and government engagement between the North and South to lead to peaceful relations (Lee, Bendle, Yoon, & Kim, 2012, p. 71).

Mt. Kumgang is a popular tourist destination in North Korea (Appendix, Figure 1). 2 million South Koreans have visited Mt. Kumgang since 1998 (Woo, 2013). It is a North Korean mountain that was open for tourism as a result of the Sunshine Policy to promote relationships between the countries (Kim, & Prideaux, 2004. p.134). The function of promoting tourism to Mt. Kumgang is to create a dialogue between the two countries and increase tourism initiatives. (Sang-Hun, 2010). The South Korean Hyundai Corporation was in charge of financing, developing, and operating Mt. Kumgang and its surrounding areas ("Mt. Kumgang and Inter-Korean Relations", 2014,). The Hyundai Corporation agreed to a 50-year monopoly for cross-border tours. The vacation area includes a golf course, resorts, spas, nature walks, and a conference room where split families can finally reunite after their separation during the Korean War.

Vacations to North Korea were, and still are, popular with the South Koreans but ever since a North Korean soldier shot a South Korean woman as she crossed military territory in 2008 (Appendix, Figure 2), tourism has slowed in Mt. Kumgang. Although there are times when tensions are high, like this, or when North Korea announced their possession of nuclear weapons in 2009 ("North Korea Profile", 2014), tourists still visit Mt. Kumgang to enjoy the scenery and experience the natural environment in the area. The reason tourists visit Mt.

Kumgang is because it does not appear to have been influenced by human activity as much as other travel destinations in the world. Nature is preserved and the scenery is filled with stone mountains, streams, and waterfalls. This is why the main motivator for South Koreans to visit Mt. Kumgang is “to see the beautiful scenery” (Kim, & Prideaux, 2004, p. 130).

Research conducted by Kyung Hee University in Seoul, South Korea found that there is a strong inclination to further support tourism development in Mt. Kumgang (Kim, Prideaux, & Prideaux, 2007, p. 301). This support can be explained by the close historical connection each country has with each other, which is why there is a desire to assist North Korea with establishing a business that creates a positive influence for each country. The elderly citizens of each country can remember the Korean War and strain it caused on their families and lives. The emotional and psychological feelings they have due to the war are called *haan* (Lee, Bendle, Yoon, & Kim, 2012, p. 74). *Haan* is an internal feeling of pain and suffering due to the invasions and destructions citizens have experienced in their lifetime from the oppression through different rulers of their countries. Another psychological feeling they experience is *han*, which is the desire to become one, and it is what epitomizes Koreanness (Son, 2011, p. 69). The strong thinking of “we” and group support (instead of individual thinking and looking out for one’s self, like most Western thinking) is how Koreans are; they sustain the whole family and country because of their ideology of *haan*. *Han* is especially deep with families that are split between the borders.

The “Korea Institute for National Unification” was founded in 1990 to advise Korean policy makers on how to approach Korean Peninsula issues and creating a foundation for a peaceful nation (“Korea Institute for National Unification”, n.d.). This shows how much South Korea values the importance of becoming one country again and why they support Mt. Kumgang.

Rational For Reunification

Koreans, whether they are from the North or South, are the same people. Some still have families that are on both sides of the border and the psychological effects of being separated may be intense for many. They share the same history, food, language, culture, and DNA make-up. They also share the goal of reuniting. Political leaders always speak of reunification as an objective. Korea is an interesting region to assess because both countries are relatively small, yet South Korea is considered a world leader in technology (Ferrari, 2013) and North Korea is the most secluded and detached country in the world (Jones, 2014). With these contrasts in place, it is compelling to assess how reunification can be achieved.

If the two countries become one, billions of dollars can be saved by both countries on military equipment, (Kim & Crompton, 1990, p.356) considering North Korea is the fifth largest military in the world in terms of active military personnel. North Korea has 690,000 active soldiers and South Korea has 640,000 active soldiers. North Korea’s annual defense budget was \$7.5 billion

and South Korea's annual defense budget was \$33.7 billion in 2013 ("Military Strength Comparison Results", 2013). Not only can these resources be combined, but when combined, the amount needed to support a combined military will be decreased. This reduction in military spending can be used for other purposes if the countries reunite.

Furthermore, as previously mentioned, South Korea received millions of dollars from foreign tourists in just one year. If a unified Korea were to open their doors to tourism, it would spark interest and the generation of increased tourists and tourist spending would be beneficial to the country.

Review of Literature

History Of Korea

To comprehend the similarity and differences the two countries have in terms of government and how the government regulates tourism, it is important to understand the history and struggles the Korean Peninsula has faced in the past. Although they both endured times of hardship, North and South Korea were a single country until just 61 years ago. A review of the history of the peninsula is discussed in this paper as it establishes the grounds for how Koreans view life and how they live. The history they share create a common ground for both parties. It also reveals the differences in the citizens of each country and how this can affect the reunification process.

Inhabitants have been in Korea for at least 700,000 years. Town-states were established throughout the peninsula and different political practices were in place (“History”, n.d.). Chinese and Japanese invasions had a great impact on the Korean Peninsula. These two countries had heavy influence on the two modern Koreas today, especially during World War Two and the Korean War.

The Chinese have always had an impact on Korea because they have shared borders and history since the Goguryeo Kingdom (37 BC- AD 688) (“History”, n.d.). Cultural and religious beliefs, like Confucian ideology and Buddhism, were brought from China to Korea.

The island of Japan is also in close proximity to the Korean Peninsula. Korean-Japanese history dates back to the Neolithic Period, when they exchanged farming practices and Japan ruled parts of Korea. Japanese control and interest in Korea had been prominent since the Neolithic Period, but it was not until in 1905 when the Eulsa Treaty was signed, which formally declared Korea a protectorate of Japan. (Kim & Prideaux, 2011. p. 591-593). From that time, the Japanese government strictly ruled Korea. Even in their own country, Koreans were deemed as lower class citizens than the Japanese and the Korean language was banned from being used. It was Japan’s defeat by the Allies in 1945 that lead to a free Korea (Appendix, Figure 2). But once free, North Korean communists migrated to the North near China to prepare plans for a communist Korea.

The Korean peninsula has faced multiple political and social changes since its recorded history. Its borders have been pushed and pulled by different

influential governments, which has now resulted in a split into two different countries with a distant relationship and minimal interaction. The Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) is the only area where the North and South Korean military come in direct contact with one another (Appendix, Figure 1).

World War Two and the Korean War

Korea has always been an area of interest for takeover: Russia from the North, China from the West, and Japan from the East. In the 1940's, Japan was still controlling Korea while becoming an influential Asian country. Japan's goal was to become as powerful as the US and European countries at the time ("World War II", n.d.). It was an emerging threat in the early 1940's as it occupied Indochina and challenged the US and European economic interests in the region. This is because the United States had relationships in the Philippines for its natural resources and strategic geographic location. When the US oil embargo was placed on Japan, Japan wanted to retaliate because they were infuriated and also wanted to gain resources in South East Asia ("World War II", n.d.). In order to fight back and demonstrate their military power, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, which commenced the Second World War.

When the Japanese surrendered in 1945 at the end of the war, Korea was finally an independent country (Appendix, Figure 2). It was a single country recovering from war damages and establishing itself as free country again. But as Korea was recovering from post-colonialism, Communist Koreans were

migrating in the North of the peninsula to be closer to communist China, with plans of spreading their beliefs throughout the country. Schemes to make Korea a communist state were brewing, especially with Kim Il Sung as head of the North Korean Worker's Party- a young group that promoted Soviet communist ideals. Sung admired Joseph Stalin's leadership in the Soviet Union and wanted to spread communism in his own country. Just like Sung and his party, there were Southern Koreans were trying to establish leadership and control as well. With the help of China and the Soviet Union, Sung attacked southern parts of Korea, taking advantage of their instability (Hunt & Levine, 2012, p.129). This was the start to the Korean War in 1950. Civil war in Korea lasted three years, with the United States and the United Nations supporting South Korea in order to prevent the expansion of communism, while China and the Soviet Union supported Kim Il Sung's communist forces. The war came to a truce with North and South agreement that established a demilitarized zone at the 38th parallel in 1953 (Appendix, Figure 1). This was the last border that was formed for Korea.

Government Policies

The DMZ has great impact on the peninsula. No outside contact can be made with North Korean citizens, nor can the citizens contact anyone outside of the country (Sang-Hun, 2014, p. 2). The DMZ is one of the few areas where foreigners can see into the North Korean boundaries. On the North Korean side, South Korean and American soldiers guard the zone (Cromley, 2011).

Another option to see into North Korea is a visit to the previously mentioned Mt. Kumgang. This area is an interesting development between North and South Korea, as it can eventually promote bilateral tourism between the countries, as well as encourage the dialogue for a closer relationship for the future (Kim & Prideaux, 2004, p. 125).

Track One And Two

Because the countries have such different governments in control, it is critical to recognize political and economic actions that can take place in order for tourism to grow. Previous research by Yong-Kwan Kim and John L. Crompton of Texas A&M University has developed a concept of a two-track policy (2007). These tracks are paths governments or citizens can take to encourage talks and actions of peaceful reunification. It can also be used to show how South and North Korean tourism interactions can be a tool to promote reunification. These policies are applied to situations where high and low political activities are present. High political activities are described as strategic government matters that occur at the regional, national, and international level, and low political activities are described as interactions that occur among citizens (Zhan. J, 1993). Both of these political activities can be applied to Korea. The first track is applied when there is government-to-government interaction between countries. The second track is applied when citizens are interacting with one another (Kim, Prideaux, & Prideaux, 2007, p. 295).

Since the split of the country, the first track has been applied multiple times by different heads of governments. For example, 1972 was the first time the South and North met to discuss reunification (Appendix, Figure 2). This discussion was ineffective because North Korea refused to continue the talks unless South Korea agreed to allow communism in their country and if the United States' military exited South Korea (Kim & Crompton, 1990, p.357). This is just one example of the government-to-government efforts that have proved to be unsuccessful.

Research by Samuel Seongseop Kim, Bruce Prideaux, and Jillian Prideaux (2007) show that the second track policy can be more effective; where citizens meet and interact, rather than their governmental leaders. By surveying South Korean tourists returning from their tourist destination, Mt. Kumgang, Kim et al. (2007) found a gap between the older and younger generations on their views of North Korea. While the older generations still have hostile feelings towards North Korea, the younger generation feels less strongly that North Korea is their enemy (Kim, Prideaux, & Prideaux, 2007, p. 303) because tourism in North Korea was recently established and the younger generation has not felt the direct impacts of the Korean War. This gives hope to the future unification of Korea. As more and more South Koreans feel this way about their neighbor to the North, combined with the *han* ideology and increased tourism, reunification is much more probable today and the future. As people interact with one another, it brings understanding to each individual. Social capital is defined by Dictionary.com as, "the network of social connections that exist between people,

and their shared values and norms of behavior, which enable and encourage mutually advantageous social cooperation". Social capital creates a strong bond that is important to each individual. But social capital between a North and South Korean is a relationship that is more unique because when it is combined with *Han*, it can change the perceptions of each country's citizens and help unite the two countries. A modification of Kim et al.'s (2007) research and concept is discussed further in the paper.

Track Two In Today's World

This paper agrees with the research that has been found on why the two track policy and tourism are practical actions to reunite the countries. As previously mentioned, Kim et al. (2007) have discovered the South Korean willingness to support tourism development in North Korea through their quantitative data research. This shows the want that South Koreans have to help their Northern counter parts. What their research lacks is qualitative data on current economic and social changes that are taking place in both countries because there is no mention of this in their research, which is what this paper will discuss. They also concluded that tourism and the track two policy is limited due to North Korea's stance on foreign policy (Kim et al. 2007).

Though this stands true, there are recent and modern changes in North Korean citizens' behavior that can make re-unity a goal that can be achieved in the near future. The advanced South Korean technology and economics, which

is discussed later, has affected North Korean citizens. Also, Kim, Prideaux, and Prideaux's research does not include the fact that North Korea has a new president in control, nor does it include North Koreans' true feeling about his power. The purpose of this research is to update the theory of Kim, et al. (2007) to show a two track policy with present research.

Inbound Tourism And Masik Ski Resort

North Korea has recently changed their inbound tourist requirements. In 2010, the North Korean government allowed US travelers to enter the country any time during the year. Previously, US tourists were only allowed to visit when the Mass Games were in session, which is during late summer. This change in requirement has led to an increase in US tourists. One third of the 2000 tourists that visit North Korea are Americans (Cripps, K. 2013). As North Korea's popularity increases, so does the need for more attractions. Aside from Mt. Kumgang, there is now a second tourist attraction in North Korea. In January 2014, Masik Pass opened as a new luxury ski resort for local and foreign ski enthusiasts (Cha & Hancocks, 2014). This ski resort has 11 ski runs, 2 hotels with 120 rooms, and spas. Guides for tours speak English. Most tour packages are from tour operators in China. Simon Cockerell is from Koryo Tours, a company based in Beijing, China (Cha & Hancocks, 2014). He was one of the first visitors of the resort. North Korea is slowly gaining more recognition as a tourism destination. Though North Korea does not receive mass tourism in their

country, the direction they are heading is catering to the increased visitors to their country.

Methodology

An extensive literature review of scholarly articles, government and organization policies as well as their websites, newspapers, and media was used for this paper.

When assessing tourism in a region, it is important to research the history of the country to fully understand the state of the country. Also, this helped establish what can be predicted for the future. History also reveals why a country is governed a certain way and why policies are enforced. The history of the Korean Peninsula shows the colonization of the Korean people since their existence. This is important to establish because it is the reason why Koreans experience *han and haan*. Both *han* and *haan* are the basic foundations of their beliefs and are the reason why Koreans have the desire to reunite.

World War Two and the Korean War further establishes the fact that Korean history has always included conflict. The Korean War was a civil war, which created the border between North and South Korea at the 38th parallel.

Stated previously in this paper, the increasing number of tourists a year visiting South Korea gives light to the fact that the region is in high demand. As more tourists visit, this generates income for the country. As the country accumulates more wealth, it can use the money to help North Koreans and

influence the North Korean government. Analyzing Mt. Kumgang and its influence on South Korean and other tourists shows how North Korea is capable of opening its doors to foreigners. This venture is just a step for future opportunities with South Korea.

Kim et al.'s (2007) model is quoted and used in articles by other researchers. For example, researchers Choong-Ki Lee, Lawrence Bendle, Yoo-Shik Yoon, and Myung-Ja Kim from the College of Hotel and Tourism at Kyung Hee University reference the two track policy in their paper, *Thanatourism or Peace Tourism: Perceived Value at a North Korean Resort from an Indigenous Perspective* (2012). They state that, "[...] the Mt Kumgang venture decreased mistrust of the North by South Koreans" (p. 73).

Media and news articles were reviewed to understand the current political and social aspects of Korea. These aspects were then incorporated into the track two policy to establish that tourism (starting with Mt. Kumgang) promotes interaction with citizens from each country. Once this interaction is established, and with the help of current advanced technology and social changes in North Korea, reunification can occur at a faster than expected time.

Results

Based on the review of literature, current political, technological, and social changes taking place on the Korean Peninsula, reunification of the two countries can be achieved in the near future with the track two policy (Appendix,

Figure 2). As tourism will continue to increase in South Korea and Asia, it will be a challenge for the North Korean government to not proceed with steps of reunification. They will see the opportunities that tourism has on South Korea and with Mt. Kumgang as a first tourist destination in North Korea, it is a wise opportunity with great potential that should be explored. With tourism in mind, the two track policy should be implemented in order to reunite the North and South. As mentioned, the second track is predicted as the more effective option, when being compared to the first track. People-to-people interaction can create a stronger and more effective impact than if heads of governments try to negotiate with one another.

When North and South Koreans voluntarily create a relationship with one another, the motive to do so is to increase one's social capital. They have a mutual understanding that by creating this relationship, each party will gain a positive end product that they value, whether this be a South Korean trying to help a North Korean defector, or a North Korean trying to understand the world outside of his/her country. Social capital can also be an agent of promoting peace. By creating these networks and increasing social capital, it creates a supportive bond for each involved party. Creating social capital between citizens of the South and North will be simple, because South Koreans already have a goal of reunification and helping North Korea because of their *haan*, which is explained in the next section.

Kim et al. (2007) two track policy of explaining how people-to-people interactions presents a model than can be adapted to demonstrate that reunification is possible earlier than predicted.

Economics And Technology

South Korea has grown exponentially faster than her Northern counterpart. This is due to the constitutional republic that governs the country, which allows for trade, innovation, and tourism. The success of such an advanced economy during a short span of time can also be attributed to *haan* (Tseng et al. 2014). As mentioned, *haan* is an internal feeling of suffering but it can be channeled to produce positive results in life. It is described as using energy to produce “[...] life, creation, or production of socially meaningful results” (Tseng et al. 2014). To create a better life for the future generations after the Korean War, South Koreans worked to grow economically, industrially, and politically. Through these efforts, South Koreans have proved themselves as a stable economy in the world. Efforts, such as opening up their economy for foreign trade, have helped boost the country’s GDP (Ferrari, 2013). The Ministry of Development, Industry, and Foreign Trade has seen that countries that are present in global chains produce and export more, which increases GDP.

South Korea has also made their mark by becoming one of the largest economies in the world to have fiber optics networks per inhabitants. It is also a benchmark country for the impacts of information technology infrastructure on

economic growth (Ferrari, 2013). South Korea achieved this by making information technology a priority in the 1990's while focusing on quality broadband networks. This goal was met so effectively in such a short period of time that they set a global standard for broadband networks. South Korea is recognized for their technology and innovation. This is a giant successful step that South Korea has achieved.

North Korea is lagging when it comes to trade, technology, and innovation. The Communist officials control every aspect of economic activity. Very little trade occurs in the country. Tourism was approved just in 1998 and most international trade is limited to China or South Korea ("North Korea", n.d.). Because North Korea is so isolated, it cannot grow and advance. Most of the country does not have electrical power, cars, or computers. This hinders its ability to be a recognized and stable country. Though most of the country does not have legal access to the Internet, North Korea does have broadband, which is for government use only.

In the current Information Age, technology, data, and information can be shared and learned in a matter of moments. With this ability, North Koreans can illegally obtain outside information faster and easier than ever before. This poses a great threat to the North Korean government. North Korea maintains their power by secluding their citizens from the rest of the world and generating fear, which forces them to abide by the laws that are enforced (Jones, 2013). If outside information leaks into the country, citizens will realize the truth about

North Korea and how government propaganda prohibits them from living a better life, like the South Koreans.

Technological advancement of South Korea and the rest of the world enabled basic mobile phones to be introduced to North Korean citizens. These phones are only able to call within the country since contact is strictly prohibited. They are not as technologically advanced as South Koreans' phones and networks, but phones are easily available. But like most economies, illegal jail breaking of the phones occurs, which allows them to make calls outside of the country. With one million citizens registered for a mobile phone in 2013, and an expected sharp increase of millions more who will register, North Koreans are able to contact people outside of their totalitarian state (Jones, 2013). With information like this, citizens will start to become aware (if they have not already) of the oppression they endure. If more and more people gain access to the outside world (especially from South Koreans who purposely send information to North Korean defectors), citizens will become proactive in changing the totalitarian government (Jones, 2013). With advanced technology in the South and the volume of registered mobile phone owners in the North, communication between the two countries will spread like wildfire. This two track form of diplomacy (people-to-people) will expedite the process of reunification. The use of technology plus people (transparency) will re-unify Korea.

Social Changes

North Korean defectors are increasing in numbers (Jones, 2013). Even the military guards are practicing illegal activities. For example, in an undercover documentary, *Frontline* (Jones, 2013.) interviewed Jung Kwang Il, a former political prisoner in North Korea. He is a North Korean defector living in Seoul who records films and television shows to smuggle them into North Korea. He drives to North Korea in the night and trades his movies and other goods, like crank radios, to North Korean guards. This is also an example of how each party is increasing their social capital. Each party is benefiting from the value they created in their social network. If this example can be broadened to a macro level (which is the purpose of this paper) where the North and South citizens create valuable social networks on a more frequent basis, that is when reunification will be achieved.

The illegal radios that are in North Korea are used to listen to radio stations like the North Korean Reform Radio (NKRR). Seung Cul Kim is a North Korean defector and refugee and is the leader of NKRR. He held a senior position at a South Korean research institute in Pyongyang, but decided to take action and try to help North Koreans escape their country (Davis, 2013). Radio stations like these transmit stories into the North. For example, it was alleged that Kim Jung Eun's wife, Ri Sol Ju, had made a pornography video and the North Korean government was trying to find the source of this story. This type of information is not disclosed to the North Korean public; the only way to hear a

story like this is to listen to a radio station that is run by defectors. There are currently one million North Koreans who listen to defector radio (Jones, 2013).

New President

As innovative technology grows, is it possible for North Korea to keep the power and control over their people? This is a challenge that their government faces. Information from the outside world will doom the government. Defectors and radio stations are just two examples of a two track policy, where citizens interact with each other. As technology advances, so too will North Korean defectors and their strategic ways of gaining outside information.

So what causes this growth in defectors and citizens who disobey the law? The increasing acts of rebellion can be attributed to the obvious fact that more outside information is coming into the country, but also the lack of full confidence citizens have for their president. Kim Jung Eun came into power when his father, Kim Jung Il, fell ill. Before Kim Jung Il died, little was known about Kim Jung Eun. He was hidden from the public and was secretly conditioned to become the next leader. It was not until 2011 when the state revealed his face and announced his position as the next president. Because so little was known about him, North Koreans are skeptical of his command and power. They have reservations about his knowledge and experience (Jones, 2013). Moreover, he does not have any military experience. As leader of a heavily armed state, this questions his authority, even to his military soldiers.

Frontline documented government soldiers making criticizing comments like, “He can’t do anything. He is too young. No matter how hard he tries, even if it kills him, he’s hopeless.” (Jones, 2013). With even his devoted followers doubting his authority, it is no wonder that citizens are slowly rebelling against the government.

With enough citizens and the help of South Korea, North Koreans can make efforts to change the government. North Koreans are realizing that they cannot follow their leader with full confidence like they had with their former president. If more people realize that they cannot take pride in their leader, this will install change in their minds. With cutting edge technology as the means of exposing the truth about the government, change will approach in the near future.

Achieving The Goal

It is clear that the track two policy also needs government intervention in order for the North and South to reunite. It is inevitable that government heads will need to hold talks with the same goal in mind. It will be a challenge for two countries to become one due to the fact that North Korea will need to step down and terminate their power. But seeing that North Korean citizens do not have faith in their government and accept aid from South Koreans, they will need to give up their rule. Furthermore, the South Korean government is an established and successful regime that will be able to support both countries. Not only does

North and South Korea have stake in this venture, but the United States, China, and the United Nations will need to have talks of a plan for and after reunification.

Obstacles that could prevent this goal are if North Korea shuts down Mt. Kumgang and prohibits South Korean tourist travel. If this takes place, South Koreans will have no access to North Korea. Another hurdle is that some North Korean citizens still believe in their government and leader, meaning that if the peninsula were to reunite, some hostile relationships would be present. A third barrier would be if the North Korean government possess all cellular phones used in the country that is not used for government purposes. If this were to occur, there would be no way for citizens to directly contact the outside world and obtain information.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to identify how tourism can be an instrument for North and South Korean re-unification. An extensive literature review of the Korean Peninsula, current economic and social changes, and politics reveals how the two track policy developed by Kim and Crompton (2007) indicates that a single country can occur in the near future.

From the literature reviews, it is established that Koreans, North or South, are the same humans that practice the same culture. Their shared belief of *han* and *haan* can create powerful bonds with one another in the future. With strong

South Korean support to the North, and initiatives to sustain Korean tourism, there is a bright future for the region.

The Sunshine Policy introduced a venture that was a gateway to reunification. With the increase in Asian destination tourism, Mt. Kumgang has potential to attract more tourists. Increased tourism has opened a new ski resort, which is another destination travelers can visit. If more tourists visit Mt. Kumgang and the Masik Ski Resort, this creates more people-to-people interaction. Also, as technology improves over time, and as North Korean citizens resist their government, human interaction will spread faster than ever before. Tourism is a stepping-stone for the track two policy that allows for people-to-people interaction. Coupled with new technologies, social adjustments, and opportunities to establish a sustainable economy, these interactions hold the future of a unified Korea.

SWOT Analysis

Below is a SWOT analysis of tourism as a tool to contribute to reunification.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism is a peaceful interaction • Tourism will allow for North and South Koreans to learn about each other 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased tourism and track two policy only occurs if heads of governments allow for such interaction
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism can generate revenue for a unified Korea • Families separated during the war will be reunited • Government spending on the military funding can be used for other activities 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Threats</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Korean totalitarian government refusing to cooperate

A strength of using tourism as the means to reunify the Korean Peninsula is in the peaceful way in which it can be achieved. There is no conflict when tourism takes place, thus it achieves the goal of civil people-to-people interaction. Once tourism creates dialogue for re-unification, citizens will be familiarized with each other and their countries. A weakness is that reunification will only occur if governments allow for tourism practices. Tourists cannot visit North Korea on

their own because it is regulated by the government. If tourism is increased on the peninsula, this opportunity will generate revenue for the county, which will benefit the economy. Another opportunity is for families to reunite with one another. Since some families were split after the Korean War, re-unification will provide the chance to be one family again. The third opportunity is the reduction of government spending on military forces. The revenue that is used for the North and South Korean military will be combined, which creates a surplus that can be used for other government activities. A threat to tourism and reunification is North Korea's totalitarian state. Tourism is controlled by the government, meaning that if the government decides to shut down tourism and prohibit foreigners into its borders, there will be no means to move forward with re-unification.

Limitations

Some limitations were faced when writing this paper. A major limitation is the lack of information about North Korea. Finding general and specific information about North Korea is a challenge due to its totalitarian government. No public information goes in or comes out of North Korea. Useful information from North Korea would be the ability to interview citizens in order to evaluate and assess their feelings about their country, their leader, their lifestyle, and tourism. It is already established that South Koreans support Mt. Kumgang tourism. If interviews with North Koreans about tourism flows in the country were available, it would have further supported this paper.

Recommendations

In order to delve deeper into the research of reunifying North and South Korea, it is recommended to first understand the history of the Korean Peninsula, as this paper has done. It is fundamental to gather substantial information on Korea's past, the reasons why the two countries split, and what kind of government is instituted in each country. Once an extensive historical review of literature has been concluded, potential for tourism in both countries can be assessed.

Many researchers have analyzed the potential for tourism and evaluated how tourism can help with reuniting the North and South. This paper has used

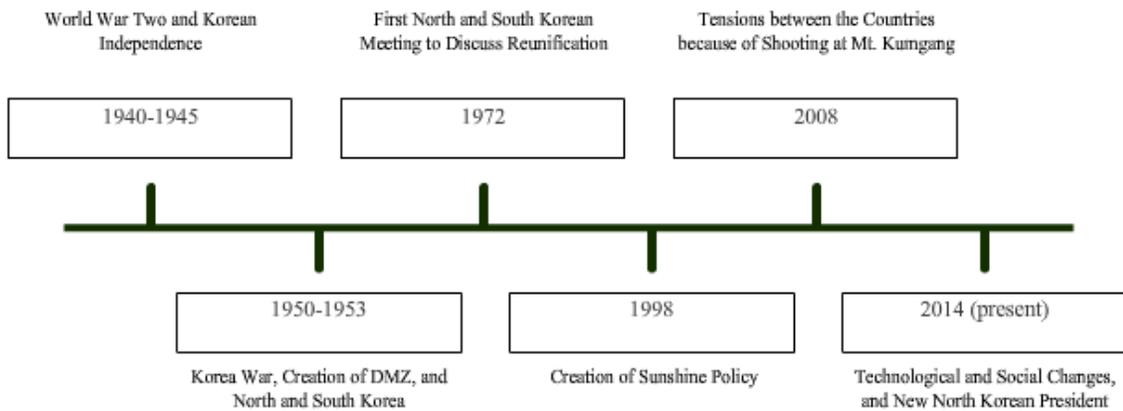
Kim and Crompton's research on the two track policy as one of the many findings of measuring tourism. Previous research that is found by other professionals who use other methods should be the foundation of future research about this topic. After understanding the base of preceding research, current government (local, national, and international) happenings in North and South Korea must be investigated because change occurs at extremely fast. Once present affairs are studied, then it can be established when North and South Korea will once again be a single country.

Appendix

Figure 1: Korean Peninsula Map. From *North Korean Resort Gives Solstice to South* by Star Bulletin, n.d., Retrieved from <http://starbulletin.com>



Figure 2: Timeline



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