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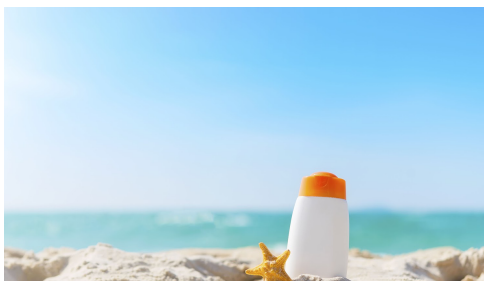# DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATION SOUTH KOREA AND UNITED STATES SERIES
by Kayleen Kim in Potorla HS

Language, traditions, and norms. In a unified society, these components of a centripetal force could transform into a centrifugal force, splitting cultural variations in educational systems. Diverse education systems are present in many nations, but the United States and South Korea have the most starkly divergent educational systems as a re-sult of their distinct cultures. As a consequence, the ways in which mental health is addressed, educational me-thods, and the various stu-dent bodies in terms of racial and soc-ioeconomic statuses be-tween the United States and South Korea account for the variances in their educational systems

L37-grade school students attempted suicide in 2011, and that number jumped dra-stically to 258 in 2015 and last year [2018] reached a record high of 451" (Kim Hyun-bin). This was a report from the Ministry of Education's 2018 psychoanalysis of suicidal students. With the general increasing trend of suicidal rates, it is no surprise why Korean teenagers are grad-ually wanting to escape from their reality: an 'all-work, no-play' life, as described by National Public Radio. In the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), member countries proved that the average number of hours per week spent on academics was 33.9 hours, whereas "Korean youngsters aged between 15 and 24 dedicated 49.43 hours

SIDEWALK LITTERING

BY BENJAMIN KIM

THE UNSEEN ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT

California, a renowned state for its diverse and stunning landscapes, as well as its vibrant and bustling cities, faces a pressing challenge that threatens its beauty and disrupts its delicate ecosystems. This challenge, originating from the issue of littering, begins primarily from the sidewalks. Beyond merely leaving an unsightly mark on the environment, this problem holds far-reaching implications that extend to marine life and the overall well-being of both residents and visitors.

The seriousness of this issue becomes evident as pedestrians, often including adolescents/students, casually litter wrappers, cigarette butts, and other forms of trash along sidewalks. This is particularly prevalent in areas where visible trash cans are scarce.

Over time, these thoughtlessly abandoned garbage accumulate, especially during rain and storms, resulting in obstructed drains and an unattractive accumulation of debris. Such unsanitary conditions not only affect the aesthetics of the community but also set the stage for more far-reaching repercussions.

However, the main problem arises when the remnants of this litter find their way into rivers and, ultimately, the Pacific ocean. Microplastics, one of the most widespread consequences of littering, pose a heavy threat to marine ecosystems. These tiny particles, often invisible to the naked eye, can destroy many levels of aquatic life, from plankton to large marine mammals. With a combination of overfishing and industrial products, marine environments would eventually be destroyed.

Overall, such improper disposal of a candy wrapper can accumulate into a substantial environmental burden over time. A mere 1% of untreated water, when mixed with the natural environment, can lead to significant pollution. Disturbingly, recent studies have indicated that California recycles only about 23% of its water, escalating concerns about water pollution.

Thankfully, several approaches can be made to address this challenge:

• **S**trategic Trash Receptacles: Placing trash bins strategically in sidewalk areas can discourage thoughtless littering. Convenient disposal options reduce the incentive for improper waste disposal, while visual cues remind individuals of their responsibility.

• **P**ublic-Private Collaboration: By forging partnerships among local businesses, nonprofits, and municipalities, a shared commitment to cleanliness is established. Together, they can install and maintain a clean environment.

• **R**ecycling Initiatives: Emphasizing recycling not only reduces waste but also taps into human psychology. Offering incentives, like rewards or discounts, links personal gain with eco-conscious behavior, encouraging wider adoption of recycling practices.

In conclusion, California's struggle with littering is a microcosm of a global challenge that demands immediate attention. By addressing this issue through strategic measures, increased public awareness, and collaborative efforts, the state can restore its natural beauty, preserve its ecosystems, and set an example for responsible environmental conservation. The path to a cleaner and more sustainable California begins with recognition of this issue and resolving it step by step.

BCI TECHNOLOGY

BY NEIL HWANG
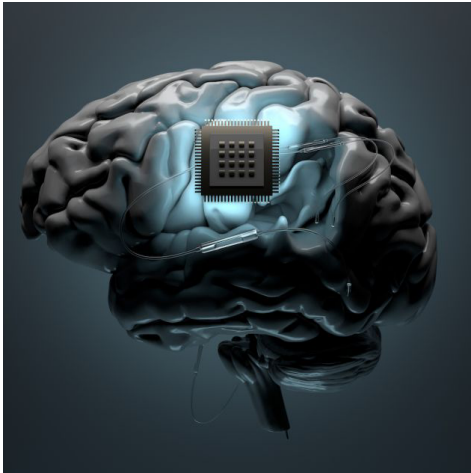
Imagine a world where you can control objects and communicate without lifting a finger. Thanks to Brain-Computer Interface (BCI) technology, this futuristic concept is becoming a reality. BCI technology allows us to connect our brains directly to computers and other devices, opening up a world of possibilities. However, linking a human brain to a computer is not an acceptable idea for some people, as there have been many mixed global responses

What is BCI technology? BCI technology is a system that establishes a direct link between our brains and external devices. Instead of using keyboards or touchscreens, BCI technology allows us to send information from our brains to computers. This remarkable technology uses various methods to capture brain signals, such as sensors placed on our scalps or even tiny implants that interact with our neural activity.

One of the most incredible applications of BCI technology is its ability to help people with paralysis or limb loss. By decoding brain signals related to movement, BCI systems can control robotic arms or prosthetic limbs. This breakthrough technology gives hope to individuals who have lost their ability to move, allowing them to regain some independence and perform everyday tasks. Additionally, BCI technology has the potential to transform the lives of people with communication disabilities. By translating brain signals into text or speech, BCI systems can help individuals who struggle to speak express their thoughts and communicate with others. This also applies to people with paralysis, enabling them to achieve freedom.

Additionally, BCI would revolutionize the gaming world. Being able to control your character using your mind instead of a mouse or a keyboard would create a more fun environment. BCI technology is also capable of improving mental health. BCI can detect brain signals that are associated with depression or stress, and give neurotherapy directly to the brain. Thus, BCI would change gaming and can lower suicidal rates.

While BCI technology holds immense promise, there are still challenges to overcome. Ensuring the accuracy and reliability of brain signal interpretation is a significant hurdle. Researchers are continuously working on developing better algorithms and improving signal processing techniques to make BCI systems more precise and efficient. Not only this, but there is also a possibility of hackers. At the end of the day, BCI is a piece of technology. Hackers can access the computer that is connected to the brain and take control of someone.

Consequently, while BCI Technology provides tons of possibilities to the mentally and physically hurt people, it is something that is yet to be one-hundred percent safe. If BCI were to become secure and reduce the risks of hackers etc., then it would be an evolution that would change humans' down to the core.

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Eugene Kwon

HYDROPONIC FARMING

BY EUGENE KWON

In order for a person to survive, they need to eat; they need to consume nutrients everyday. This might seem very obvious but many are not aware of the process of how their delicious meals arrive on the table. Many probably never wondered where or how these crops are cultivated as well as the environmental impacts of them. Such questions might not have arisen as vegetables and fruits are compiled abundantly in many supermarkets. However, it is important to think about the negative effects of the modern day food production system as it heavily contributes to greenhouse gas emissions and many other pollutants. In fact, about a third of all greenhouse gas emissions are linked to food production. For instance, the nitrous dioxide used in fertilizers, carbon dioxide from cutting down trees to expand farm lands, and methane produced by the cattle's digestive system all relate to climate change. Also,

since a lot of crops can be only raised in certain environments, countries heavily rely on aerospace or maritime transportation. This process adds on to the negative environmental effects as global aviation produces approximately 1 billion tons of CO_2 annually and maritime transportation is responsible for more than 15% of nitrogen oxide pollution. However, there might be a possible solution to this seemingly unsolvable crisis. The concept of "hydroponic farming" was first introduced in 1937 by an American scientist, Dr. W.E. Greicke. Hydroponics is a technique of growing crops in a water based solution rather than soil. Such a water based solution can include aggregate substrate, vermiculite, coconut coir, or perlite. The idea is that a plant will use less energy in finding nutrients in soil when its roots can be exposed directly to water and the nutrients. Many factors such as the temperate and pH balance can be easily controlled to perfectly suit the needs of the plant.

Pros

Eliminates use of Pesticides: Unlike traditional farming, hydroponic farming takes place indoors and the environment is fully artificially controlled to best foster the growth of the crops. Additionally, because there are no soils included, the possibility of many soil borne diseases are automatically eliminated,

• Uses less water: Only in California, farming uses 40% of the state's water and a lot of the water is lost due to evaporation and poor irrigation. However, the water used in hydroponic farming is constantly reused and recirculated through the pipes of the hydroponic farms.

• Maximizes space and does not rely on the surrounding environment: Conventional farming requires a lot of land. This results in certain countries not being able to produce their own crops and import it from elsewhere. This increases the use of transportation which contributes to the burning of fossil fuels. Also, cutting down forests in order to maximize farming land produces a large amount of CO_2 emissions. However, hydroponic farms can be placed anywhere as they can grow vertically and can be placed in dense areas.

Cons

• High set up cost: Setting up a hydroponic cost is very expensive as it requires the installation of many components such as a water treatment plant, nutrient tank, lighting, air pump, reservoir, temperature controller, EC, acidity control, and plumbing systems. For an area of 1000 square meters, the total cost would be roughly 1 million dollars.

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SUNSCREEN

BY PORTIA NEE

AND ITS CHEMICAL EFFECT ON THE OCEAN

Chemicals

Wearing chemical sunscreen to the beach helps protect your skin; however, it has multiple negative effects on marine life. About 14,000 tons of sunscreen end up in the ocean each year.

What is chemical sunscreen? Chemical sunscreen is a type of sunscreen that contains active ingredients and absorbs into your skin. Chemical sunscreen contains harmful products called oxybenzone (benzophenone-3) and octinoxate. Oxyobenzone does not break down when wastewater is getting treated to get rid of contaminants. These products can affect coral, shellfish, fish, and mammals.

Negative Effects

Oxybenzone causes abnormalities in baby corals and planula, coral larva. It also damages the DNA which ultimately leads to corals improperly growing. The chemicals can also cause coral bleaching. Coral bleaching is where corals turn white and they are more susceptible to disease. This can lead to less feeding areas and homes for other organisms and cannot minimize wave impacts during storms.

There was a study done by scientists at Polytechnic University which determined the effects of sunscreen on zooxanthellae and coral. Zooxanthellae is a symbiotic algae which lives in coral and helps coral by providing nutrients and its color. However, when zooxanthellae die or leave the area, coral skeletons are exposed which lead to death and losing color. During this study, the scientists put multiple samples of coral in sea water with various amounts of sunscreen. They found that certain ingredients in the sunscreen caused infections in zooxanthellae. The zooxanthellae exploded which caused viruses to spread to other coral communities and caused infections. Within a few hours of these tests, there was coral bleaching.

Oxybenzone, a chemical in sunscreen, can have multiple impacts on other marine life. For example, Oxybenzone reduces the amount of sea urchins as it prevents embryonic development. With less sea urchins, there would be less balance in the ecosystem as they balance the coral and algae. The sea urchins consume algae and create areas for corals to live in. Fish can form deformities such as a male fish gaining female fish qualities, while females can have less egg production and embryo hatchings. In mammals, dolphins can give oxybenzone to their offspring through milk. These harmful chemicals can cause a disruption in endocrines through the anti estrogenic and antiandrogenic qualities. Such negative impacts can lead to a decrease in shellfish, algae, and fish.

Alternatives

There are many ways to protect your skin without harming the ocean life. Mineral sunscreen reflects UV rays and stays on the surface of the skin. Reef safe mineral sunscreens contain zinc oxide and titanium oxide. Certain protective clothing which block UVA and UVB rays are another alternative.

In conclusion, chemical sunscreen has many negative effects, switching to other alternatives of chemical sunscreen can lead to a healthier ocean

WATER SCARCITY

BY KAYLA PARK

Water scarcity has been an issue for centuries and it has gotten worse over the years. Water scarcity can happen for many reasons. For example, water pollution. Water pollution can be caused for many reasons such as pesticides, fertilizer, untreated human wastewater, and industrial waste. Groundwaters aren't safe either, as most toxic pollutants can find their way down to the groundwater. Some effects of the toxic pollutants are so severe that it makes it impossible for the water to be drunk and swam in.

Most agriculture uses 70% of the world's accessible freshwater, but 60% of it is waste because of leaky pipes, and the crops being too thirsty for the environment in which it has been planted in. These wasteful uses are drying up our lakes, rivers, and groundwaters. Many countries that produce immense amounts of food like India, US, China, Australia, and Spain are slowly reaching their water resource limits. Because agriculture uses so much pesticides and fertilizers, they also contribute a considerable amount to water pollution.

Population growth is also another reason for water scarcity. In the last 50 years the human population has had a significant growth, reproduction wise. This rapid growth along with our industrial growth has made a huge decrease in biodiversity. Concerns about our water availability continue to grow as freshwater is continuously being used at an unsustainable amount. As the human population continues to grow, it causes us to use even more freshwater to grow crops, causing the water pollution to continuously grow at an unstoppable rate.

Water scarcity has caused a huge impact on wildlife. Most of the wetlands have been destroyed since the 1900s. Some of the most productive wetlands make home for a lot of mammals, birds, fish, and insects. Wetlands also provide the cultivation of rice. They also provide benefits to humanity like water filtrations, storm protection and flood control. However, the water scarcity has caused multiple freshwaters to become salty due to the excessive pollution. Because of the water scarcity it has caused food shortages which leads to infant mortality rates to rise and decrease life expectancy in nearby populations.

"BACK IN MY DAY"

BY KEVIN CHOI

SOCIAL AGING AND THE GENERATIONAL GAP

"Back in my day..." – a phrase that often signals the beginning of stories from older folks about the past. But beyond the nostalgic tales lies a compelling concept: social aging and the generation gap. It's not merely the act of growing older that sets us apart; it's the evolving world around us as we age and the subsequent disparities that arise between generations.

Consider the realm of technology. Picture elderly individuals reminiscing about a time when they meticulously composed letters or engaged in conversations tethered to stationary telephones. In contrast, today's youth are part of a digital era, having matured alongside portable devices and the ever-expanding realm of social media. This seismic shift in communication mediums can result in varying degrees of comfort and competence with technology, subsequently leading to distinctions in how different age groups interact and stay interconnected.

Beyond technological nuances, generations are also divided by their respective values and norms, molded by the transformative events they've witnessed. Individuals who navigated the complexities of the civil rights movement in the 1960s carry distinct viewpoints on matters of equality compared to those who came of age in the 21st century. These diverse perspectives can act as a catalyst, sparking conflicts that arise from differing opinions and beliefs.

Furthermore, the realm of work and career preferences becomes a prime breeding ground for disparities. Older generations often hold dear the concept of job stability and committing to a single profession for the long haul. In contrast, younger generations prioritize flexibility, personal growth, and a harmonious equilibrium between work and personal life. These work-related attitudes and preferences are deeply rooted in the distinct eras in which different generations were raised.

Yet, herein lies the beauty: these generational disparities do not have to expand the gap between us. The interactions that transpire between generations present golden opportunities for mutual learning and understanding. The wisdom of older generations can act as a guiding beacon for the younger ones, while the fresh and innovative outlook of the youth can brace the minds of their more senior counterparts.

In summation, the often-heard phrase "back in my days" encapsulates a profound truth: social aging is the harbinger of the generation gap.

Technological advancements, shifts in values, and the evolution of societal norms collectively contribute to the divergences in communication patterns, belief systems, and work ethics across generations. These differences may sometimes cause disputes, but they simultaneously provide fertile ground for personal and collective growth. By embracing the diversity of perspectives that different generations offer, societies can pave the way for a more enriched, harmonious, and well-rounded future.

GREENWASHING

BY SPRING PARK

THE HIDDEN TRUTH BEHIND ECO-FRIENDLY CLAIMS

aLiving in a period with rising environmental consciousness, increasing numbers of consumers are now seeking out products that fulfill their desire to participate in this sustainable movement. Then enters greenwashing, a marketing tactic employed usually by larger corporations to lure consumers into believing that they are investing in an eco-friendly product, while often falling short in their claims. The concept of greenwashing has been a rising issue, making it important for consumers to build strategies to navigate through the musky waters of misleading environmental claims of corporations.

Greenwashing is a method in which companies exploit the increasing demand for environmentally responsible products. These corporations seduce consumers by labeling their products as "green" or "eco-friendly" enticing consumers into paying a premium for the items that may not be as sustainable as advertised. By portraying their products as environmentally conscious, companies tap into the consumer's willingness to invest more money in exchange for cleaner ethics.

One of the cunning aspects of greenwashing is its ability to appear convincing. Corporations often sneak in carefully crafted statements that seem reasonable but lack considerable evidence to support their claims. This manipulation makes it difficult for consumers to identify whether a product is truly eco-friendly or not.

According to the 2020 McKinsey US consumer sentiment survey, approximately 60% of consumers are willing to invest extra money in products indicated as environmentally friendly. These data highlight the lucrative nature of the green market and why these companies are tempted to exploit it. Unfortunately, many of these consumers are unknowingly falling into misinformation and exaggeration.

To unravel these greenwashing tactics, consumers must be able to identify the span of various tactics of greenwashing. First are cosmetic changes, which are when companies introduce a single environmentally friendly product to divert attention from the overall unsustainable practices they perform. This can lead to misleading impressions of the company's commitment and investment in the eco-friendly business. Next are the misleading languages. Use of words such as "green," recyclable," and "sustainable" on the packaging of the product without substantial proof can mislead consumers into thinking that they are purchasing eco-friendly products. Finally, companies often provide ambiguous statements that lack trans-parency and detail, leading consumers to believe in information that isn't entirely accurate.

So, what are some ways that consumers can differentiate the greenwashing trap from actual eco-friendly companies?

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Tay Kim

POTENTIAL OF A.I.

BY TAY KIM
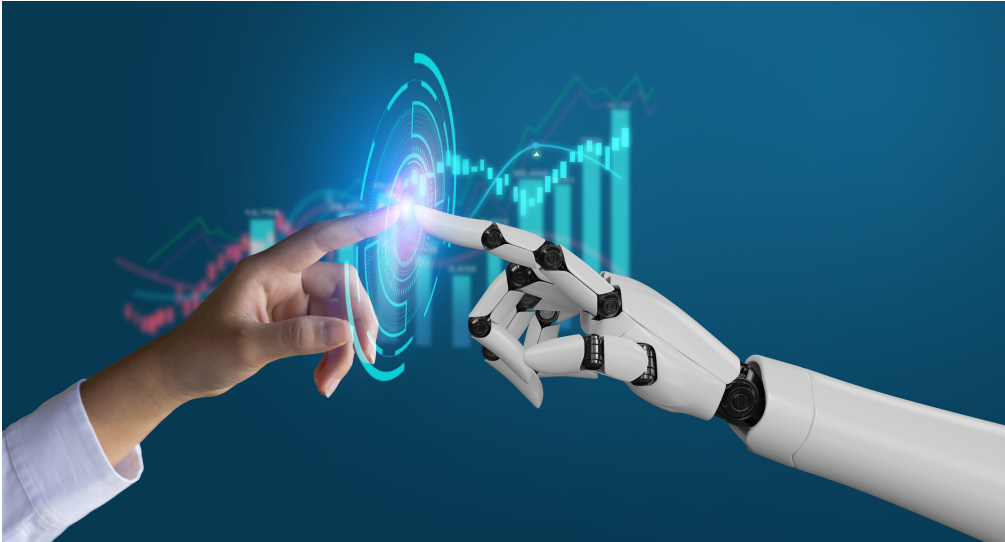
Potential of AI is definitely one of the most controversial topics right now. Trending stocks in the market are good examples of people's expectations in the AI industry. For example, Nvidia's market cap surged to over a trillion dollars as it grew remarkably for the past couple of years. However, what people are looking forward to in the AI industry is the limitless potential of AI. For the past few years, opinions on the potential of ai have diverged from pessimist to optimist.

Optimistic views say that the AI industry is going to lead the economy in 10 years. According to Bloomberg, the AI market is expected to explode, growing to $1.3 trillion over the next 10 years from $40 billion in 2022.

Most promising sector of the AI industry is definitely generative AI. Generative AI is artificial intelligence capable of generating text, images, or other media, using generative models. Big tech companies such as Google and Microsoft started implementing AI chatbots in their search engines. Currently generative AI like chat gpt is getting most attention from the customers, however other sectors of the AI market are also thriving.

Other major sectors of the AI industry include digital ads by AI, AI servers, AI storage, AI assistance software, conversational AI devices, and computer vision AI products. Those are in vast development led by companies like Nuro, Scale AI, Aurora Innovation, Dataminr, and etc. These AI technologies can be implemented in electric vehicles

marketing, banking, transportation, robotics, and etc.

AI may be the most successful industry in 10 years, however unemployment due to the growth of Ai is becoming a huge problem. In May 2023, roughly 5% of all job loss in the US was due to AI. The United Nation estimated a loss of 80 percent of jobs due to AI in the coming decade.

Nevertheless, the UN argued that it is impossible for AI to substitute the jobs entirely since many of those jobs require versatility and adaptability. They also mentioned that the new era of the AI industry will create new jobs that can substitute the previous ones. Fear of job substitution have occurred many times in human history. Industrialization and adaptation of new technology replaced many jobs and eventually led humanity to evolve.

Finally, as the AI industry started to draw lots of attention, opinions on the AI industry varied greatly. Most resources are positive about the growth and potential of the AI market, however some critics warn that we should be aware of the negative impact it can cause.

NEURO-DIVERSE, NEURO- TYPICAL

BY DAWON SHIN

A neurodiverse person's brain, however, works differently than the medical and social norm, away from others' expectations. Society, however, tends to force the neurodiverse community, forcing them to fit into the boxes. My goal, as a student with lots of neurodivergent friends, was to create an inclusive and diverse community to foster learning between both neurodiverse and neurotypical students. I was able to join the Stanford Neurodiversity Project - Research, Education, and Advocacy Camp for High Schoolers, also known as SNP-REACH, in order to accomplish this goal.

The first step is to understand which way we will address those on the spectrum. This is where the identity-first language and the person-first language come in. The identity

first language is referring to a person on the spectrum as an "autistic person" while the person-first language includes phrases such as "person with autism". Around 60% of the neurodiverse community prefers identity-first language, but everyone has different preferences.

Some of the challenges that people on the autism spectrum may face are social interaction with others. Autistic people may struggle to interact socially with others due to the challenges of reading social cues. Additionally, some individuals may face challenges with social cues, maintaining conversations, and understanding sarcasm or metaphors. Unlike the myth, this is not because they care less or struggle to be empathetic as some autistic people can be hyper-empathetic. This social struggle is rather correct to be characterized as not skills-based but energy-based, otherwise known as the spoon theory.

People on the autism spectrum could also suffer from emotional regulation, which is the ability to manage or respond to an emotional experience healthily. Many

neurodivergent people, inclu-ding autistic people, may struggle with this ability, which could relate to intensified emotions.

Another struggle of autistic people can be making or maintaining eye contact with others, but not everyone struggles to make eye contact are people on the autism spectrum.

For these individuals, making eye contact is more of a conscious effort than a natural phenomenon.

Various terminologies are required when learning about these neurodiverse communities. What are some ways to learn some of these vocabularies, not only on the medical model but on the social model? A group of eager students, including myself, decided to advocate for this community by creating a website that functions as a neurodiversity "handbook". "Neuroscope" creates a safe space to communicate and connect with their peers as it helps create an inclusive and diverse community to foster learning for both neurotypical and neurodiverse students where they both can benefit and grow. Please check out the handbook if you are interested in learning more about the social model of neurodiversity!

DIFFERENCE IN EDUCATION

BY KAYLEEN KIM

SOUTH KOREA AND UNITED STATES SERIES

Language, traditions, and norms. In a unified society, these components of a centripetal force could transform into a centrifugal force, splitting cultural variations in educational systems. Diverse education systems are present in many nations, but the United States and South Korea have the most starkly divergent educational systems as a result of their distinct cultures. As a consequence, the ways in which mental health is addressed, educational methods, and the various student bodies in terms of racial and socioeconomic statuses between the United States and South Korea account for the variances in their educational systems.

"37-grade school students attempted suicide in 2011, and that number jumped drastically to 258 in 2015 and last year [2018] reached a record high of 451" (Kim Hyun-bin). This was a report from the Ministry of Education's 2018 psychoanalysis of suicidal students. With the general increasing trend of suicidal rates, it is no surprise why Korean teenagers are gradually wanting to escape from their reality: an 'all-work, no-play' life, as described by National Public Radio. In the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), member countries proved that the average number of hours per week spent on academics was 33.9 hours, whereas "Korean youngsters aged between 15 and 24 dedicated 49.43 hours **to** study each week - 15 hours longer than the OECD average" (Ja-young). With persistent forces to excel in studies from both parents and schools, late ending school hours, and grueling hours in after-school programs and institutions, South Korea's educational system has been proven to reflect society's focus on academic achievement.

Rather than addressing the importance of mental health for students living with stress due to school, South Korean citizens continue to emphasize the importance of the college entrance test and academic life, describing mental health as taboo: "a mindset deeply rooted in the public conscience, making mental health awareness and advocacy work by South Korean physicians largely ineffectual" (Nagar).

United States

Unlike South Korea, the U.S. places much importance on personal freedom, individuality, etc. before all else. "Members of society are given the opportunity to think for themselves and make their own decisions—values that emphasize individualism, crea-tivity, and auto-nomy" (Lynch).

The types of schools in the U.S. reflect the culture of mental health in the country. Through alternative schools in the U.S., students have the option to pursue other fields and prioritize their mental health before anything else in moderate circumstances. Even

in public and private schools, mental health awareness is prominent and addressed through school counselors, programs implemented, etc. "Among children aged 3-17 years, in 2016: Nearly 8 in 10 (78.1%) with depression received treatment. 6 in 10 children (59.3%) with anxiety received treatment" (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

South Korea

The meritocratic system of South Korea stemmed from an outside power shaping the expectations of people and developing the South Korean culture from an early age, called Sinicization.

Sinicization in China, influenced by the Han dynasty, played a huge role in shaping the enthusiasm for educational achievement. The *kwago* exam, one of the main establishments, is a state examination system "devised as a way of ensuring that the most qualified, best-prepared men rule the country" (New World Encyclopedia). The National Confucian Academy, a nonprofit organization with a mission of promoting Confucianism, implemented

kwago. The academy was used to place people who scored higher in the bureaucratic government, where the position received great pay, treatment, and respect at that time. Most South Korean parents wanted their children to land a job in the government during this time for economic stability within their family, which meant that educational achievement was desired to pass the kwago exam.

Types of schooling

In addition to sinicization, vocational schools, one of the four main types of high schools present in South Korea (general, special purpose, vocational, and autonomous), also had an impact on future generations. Vocational schools, implemented in the late 19th century, are "technical high schools designed for students (approximately 27% of all high school students in 2010) who want to develop vocational skills and enter the labor market immediately after graduation" (National Library of Medicine). There has been an increase in the number of graduates from vocational schools who enroll in postsecondary institutions instead of entering the labor market immediately.

High schools that are self-regulated, known as autonomous high schools, determine curricula meant for an individual and manage a student's progress, have been debated mainly for their true purpose. These schools pursue a much more individualistic approach, however, autonomous schools have been slowly retracting their practices in education. In 2019, "11 out of 24 autonomous private high schools [in South Korea] have been eliminated, sparking a debate about the right to self-govern" (Lim). Autonomous high schools focus highly on the entrance exam to college, and because they operate as private high schools, the tuition fees are "2.5 to 3 times higher than those of ordinary high schools" (Lim).

All four main types of high schools in South Korea are designed to fit sinicization and the expectations of the Korean culture: scoring highly on standardized exams and achieving academic merit.

Similarly, the U.S. has three main sectors of high schools: public, private, and alternative. Alternative schools have four main types: boarding schools, vocational schools, magnet schools, and homeschooling.

Alternative schools do not provide the traditional educational experience, but serve more of a purpose that "educate[s] students who haven't been successful in regular schools, often due to behavioral issues or learning disabilities" (Barrington). Though the original mission of alternative schools was limited to troubled students ill-equipped to excel in a public education system, today, alternative schools appeal to a variety of students. Boarding schools have residential educational facilities, vocational schools often have job training opportunities, magnet schools attract students for specific subjects, and homeschooling allows for individually paced learning.

Government's role

The administrator and overseer of education is the Ministry of Education (MOE) in South Korea, which "formulates and impl-ements education policies on education structure, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment" (Ministry of Education).

Through this national system of maintenance of education in South Korea, the Ministry of Education sets goals such as

"Enhanc[ing] publicness in education from kindergarten to college," "Execut[ing] innovation in public education through a classroom revolution," and "Restor[ing] the Ladder of Hope for Education policy." (Ministry of Education). The Ministry of Education tackles challenging topics, such as socioeconomic status and inequality of education dispersion, which are crucial to the future of the Korean education system.

In contrast to the Ministry of Education in South Korea, the U.S. government does not have a set controller of education for all 50 states. The federal role in education is limited in the U.S. "Because of the Tenth Amendment, most education polic[ies are] decided at the state and local levels" (US Department of Education). Furthermore, "[t]he powers not delegated to the U.S. by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people" (United States Constitution. Amend. X). In other words, education becomes a function in each of the 50 states, allowing each state to form its own educational policies.

Socioecomics

In addition to school learning, students from economically advantaged families in South Korea have higher education rates and better test scores.

However, this is not the case for economically disadvantaged families. Because economically advantaged students receive more guidance and support outside of school, it is unfair for those who are disadvantaged. According to "Class and Cosmopolitan Striving: Mothers' Management of English Education in South Korea," "after-school programs include private and group tutoring (*kwaoe*) with Korean tutors or native English speakers; specialized English institutes (*Iyongo chonmun hagwon*); worksheets (*haksupchi*) that teachers visit the home to distribute, collect, and grade; and internet lessons" (Abelmann 655). Through diverse methods of activities and programs, it has deepened the disparities among economically advantaged families. Statistics show that the gap between the economically advantaged and economically disadvantaged has created an academic difference between the two groups. The "[s]ocio-economic status explains 8% of the variance in reading performance in Korea," meaning that economic inequality creates educational inequality in South Korea (OECD).

Styles and values

Two differentiating styles of educational systems in terms of pressurizing zeal for achievement versus accessible, poor education based on communities show the cultural impacts of South Korea and the U.S. "The Korean education system is based on a decades old system of rote memorization that is applied to every subject" (TESOL).

Though this system of rote memorization has worked for the majority of South Korean citizens, as proven by the near 100% literacy rate, the Korean education system has aspects to be improved upon that need to be taken into consideration. According to koreaherald.com, "Korean students [need to] learn to carefully listen to others and accept what they have to say before judging" (Kim). Due to their ambition to do well academically, Korean students naturally "ignore" the impact it could take on their personalities. "This self-deprecation of outstanding performance in PISA (and TIMSS) reflects the long-standing criticism that Korean education fails to nurture individuality, diversity, and creativity, with too much emphasis on rote learning, memorization, and testing" (OpenEdition). Furthermore, due to the traditional methods of teaching as well as the traditional education system in general, Korean education has "poorly equip[ped] students with creative, flexible, and independent thinking" (Open-Edition).

Conversely, the U.S. has a system based on logical thinking, interactions, and arguments that is extensive. "Since American students are trained to challenge and doubt others' opinions and ideas, they often neither listen to others with a positive mind, nor accept others' opinions wholeheartedly.

When you converse with American students, they invariably respond with 'but,' 'however,' or 'even though'" (Kim). Through more interactions between students, there is no doubt that the U.S. has a system that allows American students to challenge others' thoughts, but it creates doubt within society.
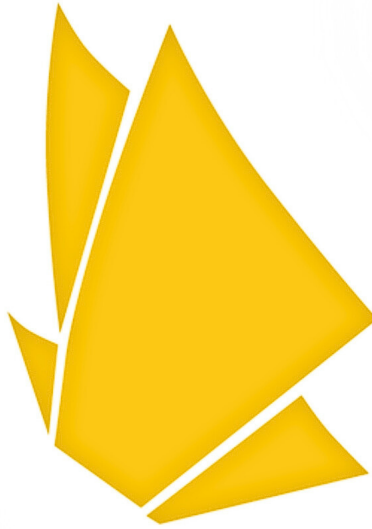
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