

ETHNOLOGICAL RESEARCH: THE CASE OF UZBEKS IN SOUTH KOREA

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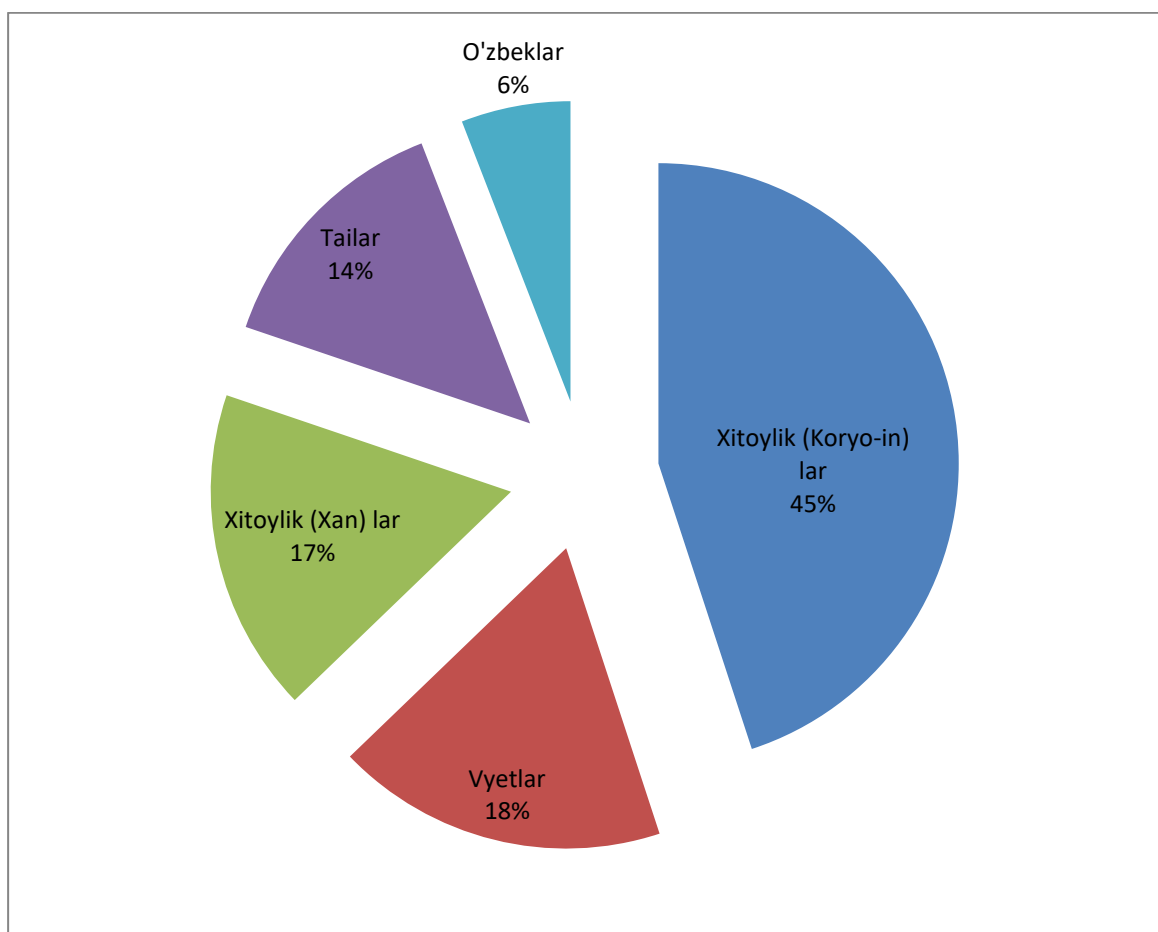
ABSTRACT	KEYWORDS
South Korea is considered one of the most developed countries in the world, it was one of the first to recognize the independence of Uzbekistan (1991), and it is one of the closest partners. Since the 1990s, high indicators of economic growth have been recorded in this country. Most of the local population did not want to do jobs that were considered to be relatively low-paid. Due to these reasons, the government began to attract workers from abroad. Due to these attractive offers, many of our compatriots went to the Republic of South Korea. Therefore, this article discusses the life and lifestyle of Uzbeks living in South Korea in detail. Also, information is given about the reasons and goals of the Uzbeks living as emigrants to go abroad. Special methods of overcoming the difficulties faced by foreigners, differences in cultures and customs are also highlighted.	Republic of South Korea, international labor market, unemployment, population growth, international economic relations, economic development, culture shock, marriage migration, student, immigrant, migration, immigration, koryo-in, koryo saram, deportation, vacancy, UN, cultural center, culture shock, demographic decline, investor.

Introduction

After gaining independence, the main priority in the foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan was to establish and develop comprehensive cooperation with foreign countries. Efforts are being made to ensure the social well-being of the population, accelerate economic reforms, exchange experiences in scientific fields and further strengthen foreign economic relations. The Republic of South Korea is one of the first countries to recognize the independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan (end of 1991). Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established on January 29, 1992 and have continued to develop to this day. So far, the leaders of both countries have held 17 high-level meetings. At these meetings, important agreements were signed on the development of trade-economic, political and cultural-humanitarian relations. As for the legal basis of cooperation between Uzbekistan and South Korea, a total of 181 documents were signed between the two countries, including 4 intergovernmental, 53 intergovernmental, 75 interdepartmental and 49 other documents.

Opportunities for citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan to travel to the Republic of South Korea will be discussed at high-level meetings between the leaders of both countries. Such agreements allow the Uzbek people to go to the Republic of South Korea to improve their skills, study and work. According to Arirang.uz, 2.5 million immigrants live in Korea more than one person. The main reason for the increase in the number of foreign migrants in Korea is directly related to Koreans. The term “Soviet Korean” was used for all Koreans living in the former USSR, but Koreans called themselves “Koryo

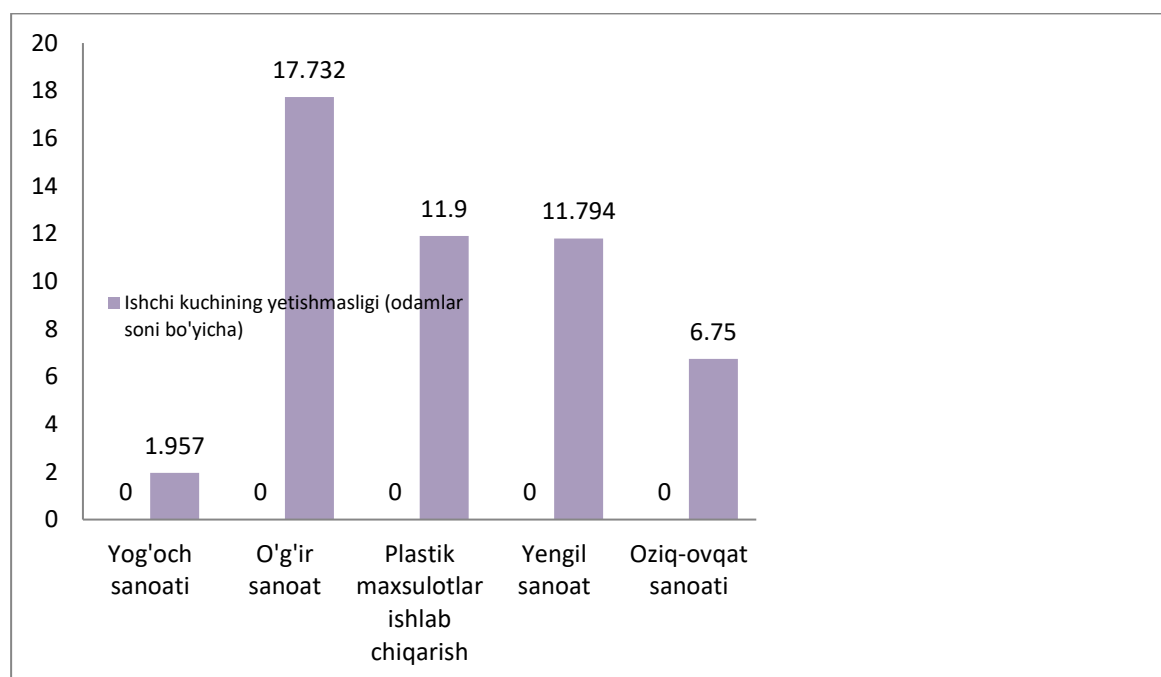
saram” or “Choson saram”. Currently, in South Korea, the term "Koryo-in" is the most commonly used term for post-Soviet Koreans who live outside the country, have forgotten their language but consider themselves Koreans (ethnic Koreans who were deported in the 20th century).



According to the Yonhap agency, Uzbeks are the fifth largest immigrant group in the country with 68,000 people. Uzbeks going to Korea can, in turn, be divided into three groups: those who left for family reasons (marriage migration) and those who went for work and study.

Given the extremely large number of illegal migrant workers in South Korea, we can see that the actual number of Uzbek migrants reported in Korean publications is somewhat understated. Due to the positive negotiations between Tashkent and Seoul in recent years, the procedures for obtaining visas for Uzbeks are being relaxed every year and the number of quotas is increasing. The main reason for this is the increasing demand for labor in Korean industry. For these reasons, the Korean government tries to attract foreign migrants by providing various subsidies every year. If we look at the table below, we can see the areas where there is a shortage of workers.

¹ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/934118/number-immigrants-living-south-korea-by-country-of-origin>



As can be seen from the chart above, labor shortages are highest in heavy and light industries and plastic production. The Korean government places particular emphasis on attracting foreign workers to develop industries with high demand for these workers. For this reason, the majority of those who entered Korea in various ways (for family reasons, to work and to study) fill vacancies (main occupations) in the same industries.

Today, 76.3% of job seekers in Korea (E-9 visa holders) work in manufacturing, 5.4% in agriculture, 5.8% in construction, and 2% in fishing. A special training center has also been established in Tashkent to prepare Uzbeks wishing to obtain an E-9 visa in mechanical engineering, electricity, electronics, information technologies and transport services.

According to recent UN analysis, the Republic of Korea will need 6.4 million migrant workers between 1995 and 2050 to maintain industrial production. Currently, migrant workers in the Republic of Korea are divided into two types:

Investors and experts from countries such as the USA, Japan or Germany.

Low-earning and unskilled migrant workers (citizens of China, Vietnam, Indonesia and the CIS).

In addition, the number of people entering South Korea through marriage is extremely high. Marriage migration is also actively supported by the Korean government, which is due to the demographic decline (population decline from year to year). In Uzbekistan, the number of Uzbek girls living with foreign citizens has recently decreased. According to official data, more than 1,200 Uzbek girls were married to citizens of Russia, Turkey and South Korea in 2021 alone. But not all young Uzbek girls who dream of a fairytale life in TV series lead a good life. Because everywhere it has its own stone scales. According to the results of the research conducted by the National Human Rights Commission in South Korea, 40% of people who immigrated through Bridewealth were exposed to domestic violence and 68% to sexual violence. The main reason for this is the large age difference between the

² Kadirova Z. International Cooperation of Uzbekistan in Labor Migration, Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Review, 2020. P.29.

parties. Those who migrate abroad also experience “culture shock” due to differences in culture, religion, customs and rituals. Kulturschock means “culture shock” or “cultural fear”. In general, culture shock is considered a normal process of adaptation to a new culture in which a person realizes the differences and conflicts between their customs and culture. This concept sometimes reflects feelings of fear, confusion, homesickness and anger.

It is also not easy for South Koreans to marry Uzbek girls because marrying a foreign citizen is expensive for them. According to unofficial data, marrying an Uzbek girl costs Korean citizens 18.3 million won (more than \$13,000). In South Korea, the rural population has been declining since the 1990s, and to improve this indicator, the government has given money to foreign brides and transferred wedding expenses to the mayors of some cities. In more than 35 administrative regions where agriculture and fishing are the basis of the economy, there is also a special subsidy for marriage support, which can range from \$3,600 to \$12,000. Financial support for marriages with foreign citizens is a project that was launched in 2009 and is producing positive results. It is becoming increasingly popular for Korean men to marry foreign brides. The number of Vietnamese brides in South Korea is much higher than that of Uzbek brides, and the reason for this is the low cost of marriage. Today, 73 percent of all people living in Korea are married.

The number of students going abroad in search of quality higher education is also increasing every year. The main reason for this is that the education system in South Korea is organized on the model of the USA, Japan and Germany, the unparalleled opportunities created for students, the large number of educational scholarships, the sufficient level of joint programs and the possibility of additional income outside the classroom. These factors make the Korean education system attractive compared to other countries, and that is why thousands of young people from Uzbekistan try to go to Korea and have a good career. Historically, before World War II, South Korea was considered one of the most backward countries in the world in terms of scientific potential. Before the war there were 30 million people, only 2,000-3,000 of them had higher education, and most of these diplomas were obtained abroad. But today South Korea is one of the most learned nations not only in Asia but also in the world. In conclusion, Uzbek migrants who are in South Korea for various reasons embody a positive image of the Uzbek ethnic group in the minds of the Korean population and other nationalities. The partial similarity of the Korean people in language and culture is the reason for further strengthening friendly relations between the two nations. The young people who study there in various educational fields are, in a way, role models for their Korean peers. They introduce the nations to the historically shaped traditions and customs of the Uzbek people. It is no exaggeration to say that respect for the Uzbek people is increasing because of these immigrant compatriots.

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