

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF IMPLEMENTATION OF KOREAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract

Needless to say, one of the most important factors in the development of a certain country is education, because South Korea has already proved this statement. Although the country has a few natural resources, they have achieved great development in almost all spheres, especially, in terms of education. Several countries are using the experience of this country, assuming they will boost their economy relying on success factors of South Korea. The Republic of Uzbekistan is also going to implement some successful methods in the educational systems of abovementioned countries. This paper studies the system of education of South Korea, and compares the pros and cons of its implementation in Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Education, educational system, development, advantages and disadvantages, Korea, Uzbekistan.

I. Introduction

The Republic of Uzbekistan is one the developing countries in Central Asia. Uzbekistan achieved independence after the collapse of USSR in 1991. In the early years of independence, the country experienced many difficulties in all spheres, including system of education. Because, each successor state of USSR had a special role and was industrialized only for some certain products so they could not be able to satisfy their needs fully. USSR organized a chain among those nations. Therefore, being independent was not easy and required much effort to have its own place in the world. As mentioned above, this event impacted on the system of education as well.

II. Educational system in the past and in the present

Preschool education at that time was available and was funded by government. It accounted for a considerable part of the government spending, and government could not finance all of them after some time.

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Because limited government budget did not allot it to realize. As a result, time by time most of kindergartens closed. Just some of them were available in cities, however people in the countryside could not send their children to kindergarten. But in the last two years there have been many private kindergartens after President of Uzbekistan introduced a new decree on the improvement of preschool education in the country. Mandatory education was 10 years in Uzbekistan in the beginning of independence, after that youths decided on their own whether they continue their education at Universities. However, there was another option for them after 8th grade. They could go to colleges where they could be trained to acquire one profession such as carpenter, cook, driver and others. Girls could go to medical colleges to become a nurse. Youths can study either at school for 11 years and after that apply for university degree or they can go to college or academic lyceums for three years after 9th grade at school. However at present mandatory education is either 11 or 12 years in the country. (Mirziyayev 2018/01/25). In terms of higher education entrance exams were not also transparent firstly, at that time educational system needed reforms very much. Until 1996, entrance exam results were decided by a university. This system caused some misunderstandings and most people disagreed with it. Therefore, for the first time in 1996, tests were used for entrance exams for higher education. So far this system has been used. There are only state universities in Uzbekistan, but expect this some foreign universities, such as Westminster International University, Management Development Institute of Singapore, and Korean Inha University have their branches in Uzbekistan. Admission at local universities is regulated and decided by Uzbekistan State Testing Center, however foreign universities have their own admission requirements. One of the advantages of educational system in Uzbekistan is mandatory education is totally free, however there are a few private schools where people pay some money for the education of their children. The quality of education in both state and private schools is almost the same. At Universities there are two options in terms of tuition fee. Students who gain the highest scores at entrance exams do not pay any fee for their studies. Other students should pay the tuition fee that ranges from 1000 USD to 2000 USD. All students get monthly stipendium depending on their marks from exams. It encourages students to focus on study better.

III. Educational system of South Korea

South Korea's quality education system rests on four pillars: (1) putting education at the center of a long-term development strategy, (2) getting the right people to become teachers, (3) developing these people into effective instructors, and (4) prioritizing information and communications technology in education (Bermeo 2014). The Korean school system is based on six years of elementary school (age 6-12), three years of junior high school (age 12-15) and three years of senior high school (15-18). After they are 18, they may go to Universities for higher education up to PhD degree. Korean people think that an investment in knowledge always pays the best interest. Therefore, the investment in human capital has always been a top priority for Koreans. Thus even in the dire circumstances of the Korean War, the government and families never gave up on educating children. Likewise during the 1950s when the country was still in turmoil after the war's devastation, and during the 1960s when it was struggling to overcome the vicious circle of poverty, Korea kept on investing in human capital. (Lee 2001) This attitude toward education has never shown any tendency to weaken in recent years. One of the most noticeable features of Korean people is their intention to study constantly. From school years till retirement ages they always

study and try to acquire new knowledge in their fields of interest. This focus on study may be related to the Confucianism that is stated in the opening passage of *Xueji*:

If a ruler desires to transform the people [and] perfect [their] customs, [the ruler] can only do so through education! (*Xueji I*) (Tan 2018/07/16).

According to this statement, one can lead people or make them follow through education. Obviously education may give someone power i.e. power of understanding surrounding environment, power of analyzing the situation. Thanks to their willingness to study a lot, South Korea has achieved unbelievable development for 50 years and at present one of the biggest economies in the world. In the last decade world ranking of Korean Universities increased considerably. According to the ranking of www.topuniversities.com Seoul National University (#36), Korea University (#86), Yonsei University (#107) and other Universities have also higher rankings compared to other Asian and even some European and the US Universities. Relying on these data we may recapitulate that mechanism of educational system in South Korea is working very well. There may appear a question if there is a role of the government in this progress. The answer is definitely yes. Government is one of the success factors in the development of the system of education.

IV. Success factors of South Korean's education

Education is a major factor in the long-term development strategy of South Korea and is one of the priority policies. There is a strong correspondence between the growth strategy of South Korea, the demands of the labor market and the educational policy. Every 5 years, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology updates and improves the national curriculum to reflect changes in economic and national conditions. As mentioned above, government has very essential role in educational system. Government regulates the system of education as well as supports teachers financially. Financial motivation is considered to be the best motivation for some people. The government spends about 4 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) on education. This indicator is one of the highest in the world.

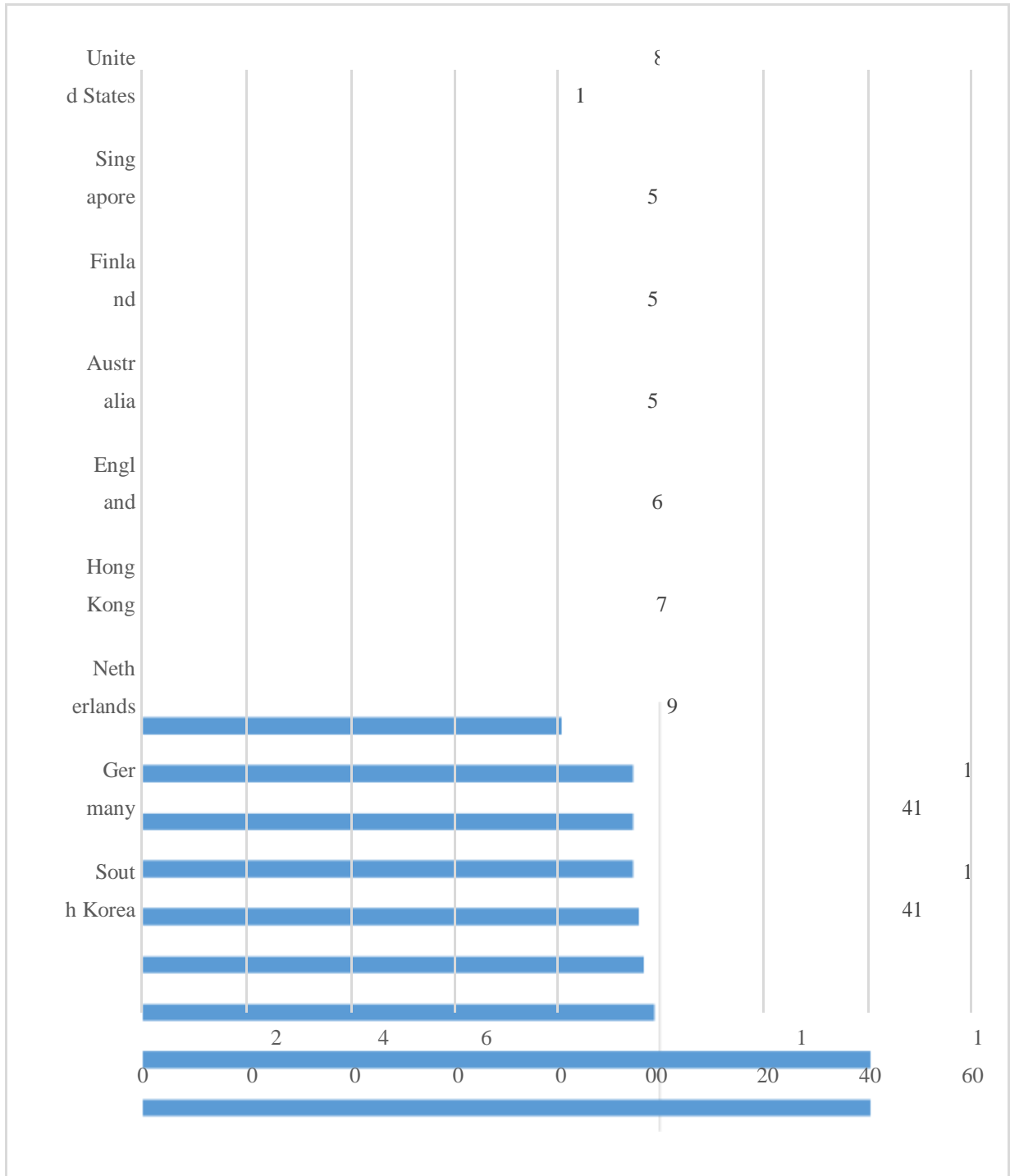


Figure 1 **Starting salary as a % of GDP per capita**

Source: OECD education at a glance 2005 (Barber and Mourshed 2007)

According to the data in Figure 1, salary of teachers in South Korea is higher than GDP per capita. It means teachers in South Korea are least likely to experience financial difficulties or think about another job to provide their families. It means the salary cannot be an obstacle to choose this profession. Moreover, Korean parents especially, mothers take care of the achievements of their children at school. In the recent years children are taking some tutorial classes after school. These classes may also improve and strengthen the knowledge of children.

V. Comparative analysis of systems of education of Uzbekistan and South Korea

At present most countries consider the system of education in South Korea is a perfect model to implement. Uzbekistan is also using the experience of South Korea for primary education. In terms of attitude of people towards the education of their children, they are paying attention to the education of their children more than did in the past. Some of them are paying extra money to tutors so they teach their children after school or even before their children go to school. Therefore, some private kindergartens offer language classes and logical classes for children who are 3 to 6 years old. However, in the past, children only used to play and learnt some short poems by heart. Although number of parents who think their children should study hard at their early ages is getting more and more, still some parents consider that children should enjoy playing with their friends, because playing games with others also improve some necessary skills for them. Therefore in terms of parents' attitude, more parents in Korea than those Uzbekistan want their children to study hard at their early ages. From 2008 to 2015 in Uzbekistan at schools the share of female teachers was higher than male teachers. The reason for this inequality was the less amount of salary in this field. Considering males are breadwinners in their families, that money was not enough for them. Even the ones who became teachers had to find the second job to raise their monthly revenues. However since 2015, there have been many salary raises for teachers. Those increases encouraged many men to become teachers. Exactly financial support for teachers by government was one of the reasons for the development of system of education in South Korea. At University level professors have more opportunities in South Korea compared to those in Uzbekistan. Firstly, all professors have their technical assistants to help them. This may not seem really noticeable factor, however, it helps teachers not to waste their time for some simple activities and they can focus on their research or teaching more. In Uzbekistan, professors at Universities spend considerable part of their time on paperwork. In South Korea teachers are not responsible if a student does not participate the class, however, in Uzbekistan, if a student does not participate a class, it means a teacher is not able to conduct a class attractively or interestingly. Compared to the teachers in South Korea, in Uzbekistan teachers experience more pressure by authorities of the Universities. As a result, it impacts on their teaching performance. In terms of intention and self-motivation of students, Korean students have better performances. The average hours of study depend on student's age. According to *National Statistical Office (NSO)*, elementary schoolchild spend 5 hours a day. Middle school students study 7 hours a day. In high school, students spend 8 hours a day. However, university students study 4 hours every day. A survey has been conducted in order to find out and compare the amount of time students spend on study a day. Target group are undergraduate students i.e. undergraduate students from Uzbekistan who study in Uzbekistan (24 students), Korean undergraduate students (17 students) and undergraduate Uzbek students that study in South Korea (23 students). Overall 64 students have participated in this survey.

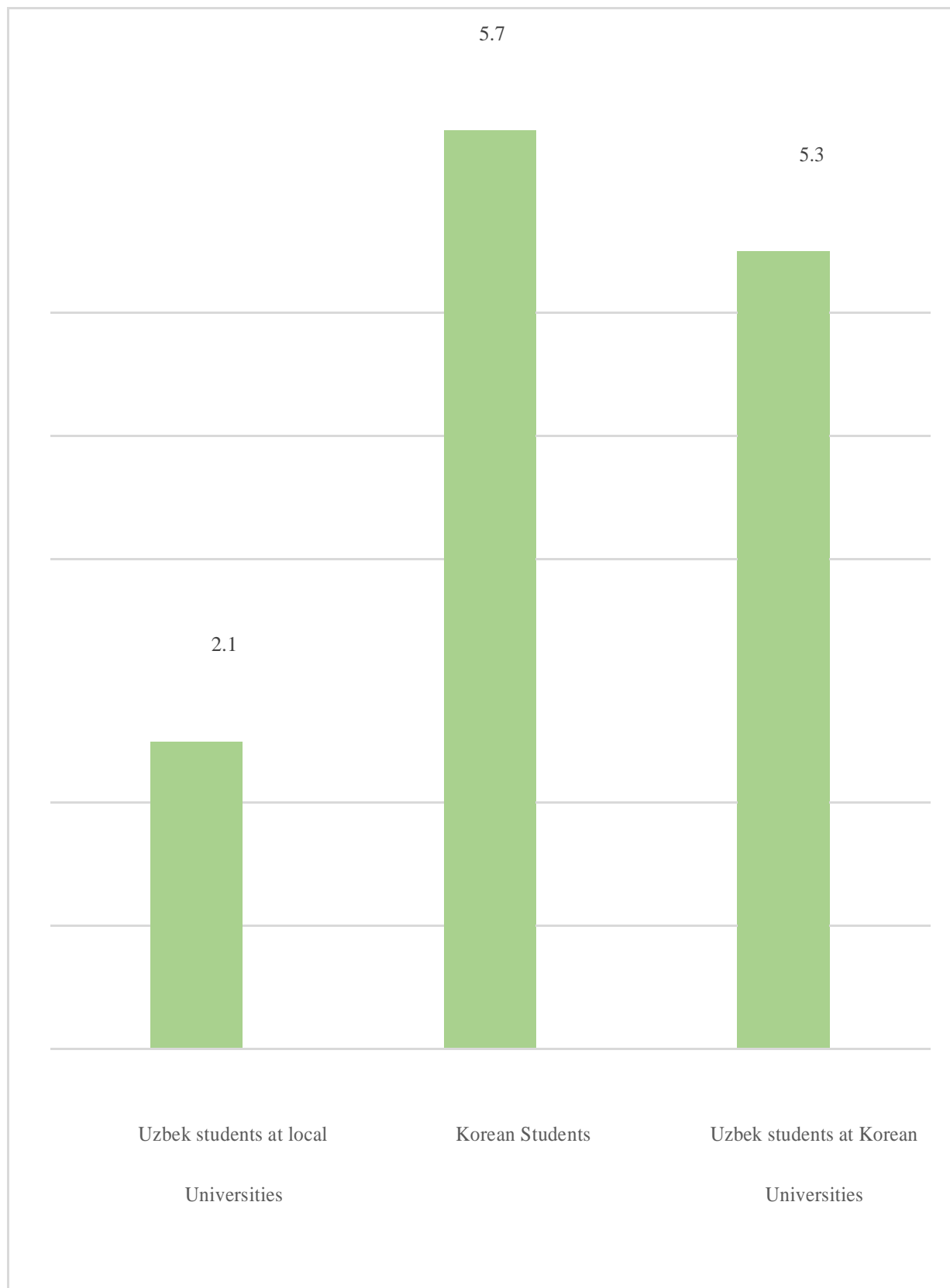


Figure 2 an average amount of time students spend in Uzbekistan and South Korea (in hours a day)

Source: Survey results conducted by author in November, 2018

Figure 2 shows that Korean undergraduate students averagely spend 5.7 hours a day, and it is nearly three times higher than those students in Uzbekistan spend. However, Uzbek undergraduate students at Korean Universities spend almost the same amount of time as Korean students. Maybe this survey cannot precisely compare the time investment of students in two countries, but anyway we may make a conclusion that self-motivation of students depend on the requirements of higher education standards. From my point of view, one of the factors of success is that students in Korea have all facilities to study, while students in Uzbekistan enjoy fewer opportunities. For instance, I did not notice any problem related to information sources such as, books, journal papers, access to websites, and free internet. In contrast, students in Uzbekistan may find it difficult to find some necessary or newly published books related to the courses they are taking. Another reason can be the absence of strong competition among people with same professions in the labor market.

Although at first look, everything seems very good in South Korea, there is a dark side of fast development. One of the negative consequences of strict educational requirements is Teenage Suicide. The pressure to score well on the exam has been blamed as the cause of teenage depression and suicide rates that are among the highest in the world. According to the report by *Statistics Korea*, suicide was the leading cause of death among those aged 9-24 in 2013. The reasons behind teenage suicides were: school admission (39.2%), family troubles (16.9%), financial difficulties (16.7%), and loneliness (12.5%). Korean students are not satisfied with their life because of the enormous amount of pressure they receive from studying. In fact, the competitive system of the country affects people of all ages: according to a 2017 study that appeared on *The Korea Herald*, South Korea ranked 33rd out of 34 countries surveyed on national happiness despite improvements in welfare. South Koreans' satisfaction with life came at 27th and the suicide rate remained at the bottom (Bonanomi 2017/05/09).

Nevertheless, it cannot be said that Korean system of education has completely dark sides. According to my observation, Korean government provides all facility and opportunities to study. Just people demand and expect more from their children at their early ages, however, this attitude should be changed. Otherwise, suicide rate remains unchangeable.

VI. Implementation of Korean educational model in Uzbekistan

Although the negative consequences of this system, it is impossible to ignore that it has been one of the main success factors in South Korea. One of the advantages of implementing Korean model is we are sure that it works. Another good point is we know possible side effects of this model. However, higher education is organized perfectly in South Korea. After some observations about Korean Universities I have concluded that there is fair and strong competition among Korean Universities, to some extent it also has contribution to the development of the education and research. However, in Uzbekistan this kind of competition almost does not exist. Another difference

is that students in Uzbekistan are not able to choose University courses on their own. It also slows down the improvement of the educational system. From my point of view, in order to implement Korean model of education in Uzbekistan, first of all we need to improve all facilities for education. Maybe they seem 2nd level issues, but they may boost the improvement. After authorities should organize fair competition among students, not in primary education level. Because a fair competition about students of Universities guarantee the positive growth in education output. However, existence of competition in primary education level may have the side effects that can cause serious social and health problems. Moreover, one more advantage of Korean model of education is that teachers give some team projects for students. Students should perform well in public showing the results of their team project. These type of innovative tasks develop different skills of students and strengthen their self-assurance. Therefore introducing these type of team projects as a part of curriculum at Universities may be beneficial for students. In South Korea University libraries work 24 hours non-stop and it is really important factor that should be mentioned. They are always full with students. Universities in Uzbekistan should introduce these type of 24 hour libraries.

VII. Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to mention that Uzbekistan educational system experienced a lot of changes for the last 28 years i.e. since the Republic of Uzbekistan became independent. Although there are many ongoing reforms in educational sphere in Uzbekistan, it still needs some positive changes. Above we have seen the educational background of Uzbekistan and success factors of Korean educational system. It can not be said Uzbekistan has bad educational system or Korean education has only dark sides, but there is always possibility of making something even better. Developed countries such as Korea, Japan are helping other nations so they can also develop their economy and have contribution to the development of countries in much need. As the founder of (Presse 2018/01/26)In the coming future robots and machines will take the jobs of many people, therefore we should educate our children in an innovative way so they can have advantage in competition with technology. Thus every country should choose a way to improve their education system and make it better. After observing the Korean system of education a bit, I think it also should be changed in terms of competition. From my point of view, government should have competition at schools in primary level of education disappeared. Children should enjoy their childhood without feeling themselves under pressure of their parents, teacher and competition. To sum up, positive sides of Korean education outweigh its negative sides and it can be a very good model for developing as well as some developed countries.

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