

The Dissemination of South Korean Cultural Soft Power in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Over the last decade, South Korea has captivated the world using the concept of soft power. As an emerging power country, South Korea has embraced culture as a primary source of soft power to influence the international system. The rise of South Korean culture in Sri Lanka within a short period of time is remarkable. The Hallyu or Korean Wave of South Korea is a cultural phenomenon that promotes South Korean culture on a global scale. In Sri Lanka, the first wave consisted of Korean dramas dubbed in the local language, while the second wave consisted of Korean pop music. The present New Hallyu Era comprises Korean online games, cuisine, fashion and beauty products which demonstrate South Korea's soft power in Sri Lanka. The primary objective of this paper was to investigate the implementation of culture as a soft power tool by South Korea and how it affects Sri Lanka. Both qualitative and quantitative methodologies were employed to conduct this study. Primary data were gathered using questionnaires and interviews from a selected number of participants while secondary data was gathered from online sources, journals and reports. A descriptive-analytical method was used to analyze the collected data. The research findings indicate that the dissemination of soft power has positively impacted Sri Lankans' perceptions towards South Korea. It has also led them to make an effort to learn and understand Korean culture and language. Moreover, Sri Lankans have been inspired to work in Korean companies which are in Sri Lanka and their desire to provide labor for South Korea was visible. Additionally, it builds a desire to visit South Korea for higher studies and to interact with South Korean people. In conclusion, this paper affirms that South Korea has been successful in using its culture to promote its image at the international level.

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