Cultural Divergence between Korean and Malay Industrial Workers as Reflected in Their "Definition of the Situation"

KIM Keum Hyun

Abstract

This article investigates intercultural misunderstandings between Koreans and Malays at work that may prevent Korean companies from becoming key players in global collaboration. It utilizes "sociology of knowledge" developed by Karl Mannheim and the sociocultural value orientation of Fons Trompenaars to understand the root cause and sources of conflicts in industrial settings. Korean society has always emphasized homogeneity as a basic feature of its cultural identity and integration. To outsiders, however, this may be viewed as Koreans' ethnocentricity. Experience suggests that the more Korean companies invest overseas, the more intercultural communication problems crop up in their international interactions, which can be attributed to lack of understanding of intercultural differences and diversity. In this respect, this research could contribute towards conflict resolution through mutual understanding. It concludes that one of the main causes of conflict is the different perspectives of various groups on how they look at reality and nature, which influence their understanding of problems and circumstances, or what Mannheim terms the "definition of the situation."

Keywords: intercultural value divergence, work-related values, intercultural conflict, definition of the situation, inner-directed orientation, outer-directed orientation

KIM Keum Hyun is Professor at the Department of Socioculture, Academy of Malay Studies, University of Malaya. She received her Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Malaya in 2008. Her publications include *Pengenalan Kepada Budaya Korea: Yangban Golongan Pemerintah Tradisional Korea* (Introduction to Korean Culture: Yangban) (2011). E-mail: korea@um.edu.my.

Introduction: Korea-Malaysia Cultural and Economic Contacts

Korean society has emphasized the importance of preserving homogeneity as a basic feature of its social and cultural identity. Although there has been a significant increase in intercultural or mixed marriages in Korean society over the last two decades, the trend cannot be said to represent a shift in the centrality of the ideal of homogeneity in Korea. Koreans have consciously cultivated and proudly maintained the sense of homogenous identity, emphasizing such elements as common ancestry, language, and culture in forging a strong bond among them. We have then, on the one hand, the Korean insistence on homogeneity as the essence of their identity while, on the other hand, to outsiders the same insistence on homogeneity would come across as *ethnocentric* or *parochial.*

Such charges of "ethnocentricity" by outsiders are not totally groundless, however. Whenever Koreans come into contact with other cultures and societies, experience indicates that Koreans lack social skills for and cultural understanding of the sensitive and complex intercultural interactions. Such limitations could well pose a serious impediment to Korean endeavor to step up international collaborations with other societies and cultures in various fields. Experience seems to suggest that the more Korean companies invest overseas, the more intercultural communication problems crop up in their international interactions, which can be attributed to their lack of social skill, as well as lack of understanding of cultural differences and diversity. Such serious shortcomings could well engender misunderstandings and conflicts, preventing Korean companies from realizing their aspirations for becoming major players in global collaboration.

The year 2010 was very meaningful for Korea-Malaysia relations as the two nations celebrated their 50th year of diplomatic ties. The relations between Korea and Malaysia had been forged and strengthened gradually throughout the 50 years since 1960. The last two decades especially witnessed a marked rise in terms of bilateral economic collaboration. The remarkable jump in economic cooperation is clearly reflected in the fact that in terms of bilateral trade and eco-

nomic investment, Korea ranked tenth for Malaysia during the last ten years.[1]

Besides trade and economic investment, the two nations have established close cooperation as well in the education sector. Since the early 1980s, under the "Look East Policy" inaugurated by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Muhammad, then the Prime Minister of Malaysia, the Malaysian government has been sending many students, as well as government officials, to Korea to study or acquire Korean technology and work ethics. In the reverse process, Korean parents have been availing themselves of the opportunity to provide English education for their children while in residence in Malaysia.

Thanks to the *hallyu*, or Korean Wave, in Malaysia, a growing number of Malaysians are interested not only in the Korean language, drama, and music, but also in all aspects of Korean culture, including food, fashion, customs, and life styles. Reflecting this growing interest and appreciation of Korean history and culture, the number of Malaysian tourists visiting Korea has been increasing annually since the early 2000s. This reflects, too, the ever-widening Malaysian exposure to Korean history and culture in the widest sense, be it through the various mass media or at the more personal level through direct contact and interaction with Korean visitors or Korean companies operating in Malaysia. Although it can certainly be said that Malaysians are becoming more and more conscious of Korea, it cannot be said, however, that Malaysians had attained an in-depth understanding of Korean culture beyond a superficial level. By the same token, it can be justifiably said that most Koreans have yet to develop deeper interest in the more significant aspects of Malaysian culture like language, customs, and religion, which are key areas to the understanding of Malaysia. Such interest could improve their social and communication skills in interacting with Malaysians.

---

1. Korea became the sixth largest trade partner with Malaysia (US$15,703 million) while eighth in FDI (US$353 million) in 2008 (Malaysia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2010, 56).

Research on Intercultural Divergence

Within the context of contemporary globalizing world, the Malaysian government has succeeded in cultivating strong interests among foreign investors to participate in economic collaborations with Malaysia. However, in spite of the various initiatives and efforts of the Malaysian government to facilitate and ensure the success of such collaborations, there are still problematic areas yet to be understood and effectively managed. Although Korea and Malaysia can be said to have enjoyed good diplomatic relations for 50 years, the lack of social skill and cultural understanding between them cannot be denied. If the two nations are eager for solid collaborations in various sectors, social skill and mutual cultural understanding are important prerequisites for realizing that goal, without which conflicts and misunderstandings can only be inevitable. A discerning observer of Korea-Malaysia relations can easily identify some areas of intercultural misunderstandings or even conflicts arising from the lack of social skill in building cooperation, as well as from mutual ignorance of the other's world view, concerning their values, attitudes, thinking, and behavior patterns.

One of the major problems in the way of effective communication and collaboration is the divergence in their cultural orientation, where culturally dissimilar groups differ radically in their interpretation and evaluation of the presupposed common situation before them. For example, Malay workers often find themselves in situations of conflicts at their workplace since they have to adjust or adapt to the new conditions and demands of corporate culture, mainly determined by various multinational companies, including Korean corporations. To such Malay workers of non-industrial and non-capitalist backgrounds, the values and norms of industrial and capitalist society would seem alien to and at odds with their thinking and value orientation, and with which they can reconcile only by way of a measure of tension and anxiety arising from a new culturally unfamiliar situation.

These adjustment or adaptive demands placed upon them have led Malay workers to feel dissatisfied with their working conditions, manifested in a high rate of employee turnover due to the lack of a

sense of belonging or ownership. Such sense of alienation among workers impedes the development and inculcation of corporate culture or a shared institutional identity. A workforce of such nature—discontented, atomized, alienated, and without a common anchorage in the corporation—could well be the fertile ground for all forms of intercultural misunderstanding and miscommunication as there is little consensus in terms of values and life orientation. Such lack of consensus in interpreting a situation or assessing a problem does not foster good teamwork or common purpose in the advancement of company interests or goals.

Sociology of Knowledge and Its Relevance for a Study of Cultural Divergence

This paper attempts to highlight the problem of cultural divergence in the hope of contributing modestly towards its redress. The paper hopes to show that the divergence of cultural values among the workers influence their perspective and evaluation of the problems before them. Cultural divergence between social groups influenced their responses to issues and shaped their management or working styles, which, unless understood and skillfully managed, could lead to serious misunderstanding or conflict. In its analysis, this paper utilizes some basic postulates of the *sociology of knowledge* developed by Karl Mannheim in his classic studies on the sociological nature of group evaluation and the dynamics of group relations (Mannheim 1936, 1964, 1971). Karl Mannheim (1936, 1) defines the main task of his *sociology of knowledge* to analyze "how men actually think . . . not how thinking appears in textbooks on logic, but how it really functions in public life and in politics as an instrument of collective action."

Some of the basic postulates of the *sociology of knowledge* are as follows. First, ideas and values of social groups are not only theoretical or intellectual in nature but include elements of the social process behind it, which can be easily missed in analysis confined only to formal thought. Second, the thinking or consciousness of social group will assimilate or formulate ideas that are harmonious with its inter-

www.kci.go.kr

ests in the widest sense, which may include material, mental, moral, and psychological interests. Third, the values and ideas of social groups are conditioned and shaped by their existential conditions, or putting it differently, the social process penetrates into the thinking of groups in a fundamental way, determining both form and content. Fourth, groups relate to each other in the form of competition of ideas and consciousness, where each group tries to advance its own ideas, values and consciousness as the legitimate or correct way of interpreting reality and the world or what Mannheim terms "defining the situation." Fifth, at the bottom of group conflicts is the differing ways in which groups think and interpret their world. According to Mannheim (1936, 19), "whatever source we get our meanings, whether they be true or false, they have a certain psychological-sociological function, namely to fix the attention of those men who wish to do something in common upon a certain 'definition of the situation.'" Conflict arises when different groups, including culturally divergent ones, have different definition of the situation, and "it is only by means of this meaning giving, evaluating definitions that events produce a situation where activity and counteractivity are distinguishable and the totality of events are articulated into a process" (Mannheim 1936, 19).

Two central concepts used throughout the paper should be defined and conceptualized here for clarity of discussion. They are taken from the *sociology of knowledge*. Firstly, the concept "perspective" signifies "the manner in which one views an object, what one perceives in it, and how one construes it in his thinking." Here, perspective refers not to formal knowledge or products of logical thinking, but to socially conditioned ideas closely associated with their social historical context of origins, just as a particular art style belongs to a certain period or epoch. According to the *sociology of knowledge*, *perpective* refers to existentially determined mode of thought and structures of thinking, not just simple differences of opinion. Karl Mannheim has listed some traits for identifying *perspective* and several criteria for associating a certain *perpective* with its existential roots, commonly termed "epoch," "collective memory," "historical experience," "cultural orientation," or particular "situation." Some of these traits and

criteria of *perspective* are the following: the concepts being used; the phenomenon of the counterconcept; the absence of certain concepts; the structure of the categorical apparatus; dominant models of thought; levels of abstraction; and the ontology that is presupposed (Mannheim 1936, 244).

Another central concept used in the paper is *the situation*, meaning "a unique configuration formed in the process of interaction between certain people." *The situation* is created by "cross-currents in a stream of events, in a process which is governed by certain social forces" (Mannheim 1980, 299). *The situation* acts as powerful social controls capable of molding human behavior, as well as conditioning his ideas and thinking. Mannheim describes the powerful influence of *the situation* on the thingking and behaviour of social groups in that "they have controlling power of their own. If one is involved in a situation one is not entirely free; the combination of forces represented both by the material and moral factors at stake and the wills of the other persons concerned, acts as a brake upon the individual" (Mannheim 1980, 299). There are many types of *the situation*, ranging from harmonious ones, making for sociability and cooperation, to catastrophic ones heading for serious conflicts or breakdowns.

For an understanding of cultural divergence as a source of conflicts, it is important to understand the connection between *perspective* and *the situation*. Cultural divergence becomes a source of conflict when diverse social groups with different perspectives as determined by their cultural orientation or "past situations" are caught in a "new situation" unfamiliar to them in terms of collective or historical experience. This gives rise to the phenomenon of "talking past each other." In this "new situation," one cannot speak of effective communication, as the conflicting perspectives do not constitute a simple *difference of opinion* on the issue at hand but involves a *difference of outlook* altogether. Effective communication is difficult when there is no common basis of thought because essentially there can be no common problem and conflicitng parties are actually engaging in a different universe of discourse.

Methodology

This paper attempts to analyze the manner in which intercultural divergence influences workers' perspectives towards work. This inquiry is based on my previous researches on communication problems and intercultural conflicts between Koreans and Malay workers in one of the major Korean companies operating in Malaysia.[2] This research had identified cultural divergence and the consequent perspectives in thinking as significant sources of conflicts between the two social groups concerned. Such problems became more concerning when they emerged in situations requiring team work between social groups, since behaving antagonistically towards each other jeopardized corporate interests and goals.[3]

　To identify some of the root causes of such cultural misunderstanding and conflict, this research adopts an empirical sociocultural approach, involving interviews and participant observations. The interviews with Korean and Malay respondents in 2000 and 2005 and the participant observations conducted yielded significant data.[4] In the

---

2. The research was conducted in one of the most well-known Korean companies that has been operating in Malaysia since 1990. This company manufactures electronics appliances, computer tube, monitor, and glass tube for television and so on. The company were located about an hour drive southwest from Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia. The company had hired 6,804 local and foreign workers by 2002. The majority of workers were ethnically Malay (75%), male (65%), and have worked more than five years in the company (56%).

3. The company has been facing the problem of high labour turnover since its establishment 20 years ago. According to the interviews with former workers conducted by the Human Resource Department of the company, the main reasons for leaving the company are problems with expatriates, managers, supervisors, dissatisfaction with salary, working hours, and working environments, non-compatible task or duty, and so on. The company requested the author's advice in identifying the causes of misunderstanding between local and Korean workers. The company allows the author the use of the data for the purpose of research and publication, however, on the condition of not disclosing the company's name, so as to safeguard the company's reputation.

4. The author has had many opportunities for conducting participant observations in the following capacities: (1) interpretor for the company's orientation and training programs for staff, (2) Korean language lecturer for local staff, (3) Malay language

pilot study,[5] respondents expressed many interesting perceptions of each other in the face of difficult circumstances or "the pressure of the situation." The Korean workers perceived the Malays as "good-natured and warm people" but, when it came to work performance, the Malays were described as passive, careless, lacking spirit and commitment, unmotivated, dependent on others, and not disciplined. On the other hand, the Malays perceived the Koreans in general as hardworking, hot tempered, impatient, aggressive, intimidating, stubborn, at times "out of their mind" or crazy, unrealistic, or in denial of reality in striving towards their goals.

Based on the findings of this pilot study, the author conducted in-depth interviews with 35 respondents, representing a selection of managers based on years of service, educational background, company position, gender, and the nature of their work experience. The main informants for this research comprised of two major groupings: local Malay managers and Korean expatriates who had experienced or directly witnessed intercultural misunderstandings or conflicts in the company. Each interview lasted around one and a half hours on average.

The Relevance of Corporate and Value Theories to Understanding Cultural Divergence

It is easy to see how distorted perceptions of each other can be a fer-

---

lecturer for Korean expatriats, and (4) lecturer on Malay and Korean culutre in years 1993, 1995, 1997, 2000, and 2005. These opportunities and experiences furnished valuable insights into background of conflicts between parties concerned.

5. For the pilot study, interviews and questionnaires were used to gather basic data pertaining to cultural divergence between respective parties. The author personally distributed and processed the questionnaires in order to reap the benefits of direct personal contact, so as to be able to emphatically understand the stance of the respective groups on the conflicts and backgrounds. When respondents were asked about their perception of the other party, it is observed that most of the negative perceptions were invariably formed in trying times or "the pressure of the situation" in the workplace.

tile ground for misunderstandings and strained relations between social groups. Distorted perceptions are reflections of poor social skills and the lack of mutual respect based on some consensus of values. Such differences open the way to disputes and frictions in issues directly related to work performance, team spirit, efficiency level, quality assurance, as well as in the general evaluation of circumstances before them. Consequentially, work problems and their resolutions would be seen in very different lights by the respective groups.

On the more general level, this problem can be ascribed to the variety of philosophical definitions on *reality* and *nature* and their relationship to man. The basic idea of reality and nature holds that man's place in it determines the cultural orientation in a very powerful way, forming and shaping values in all societies and culture. Pitirim Sorokin (1970), for instance, identified major cultural systems into *sensate*, *ideational*, and *idealistic* ones, each with its distinctive definition of reality and nature, forming distinctive world views and life styles. It is this search for meaning within his world view and value system that colors man's differing responses to his life problems and challenges. In this process, these highly diverse responses are then consolidated and institutionalized into cultural patterns or patterns of conduct. The same can be said of Max Weber's works that view economic ethos as the function of religious systems, such as seeing the development of capitalism as deriving from the Protestant ethics.

In the fields of management and anthropology, many scholars and researches have attempted to understand cultural differences and diversity both on the general and more specific levels. Many of these scholars have devoted their research inquiries to finding the most effective techniques and conceptual frameworks to understand the root causes of value differences that cause conflicts and frictions among workers with different cultural and social backgrounds. Among them are Hall (1976), Adler (1997, 2002), Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1993), Hofstede (1980), and Hofstede et al. (2002). They have proposed various criteria and models to construct a typology or classification of values and organizational cultures. Such approaches have made possible a comparison of types of organizational struc-

tures, values, or corporate makeup from various perspectives.

This paper has a preference for Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's approach of analysis because it is the most relevant framework for the particular context of cultural divergence problems faced by the Korean company being researched here. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1993) have suggested seven criteria for identifying and analyzing cultural differences.[6] They formulated new categories that characterize cultures into those with "inner-directed orientation" and those with "outer-directed orientation." "Inner-directed orientation" refers to a culture that strongly believes in a man's imperative ability to control nature on the strength of his will as well as his capacity for action. In contrast, "outer-directed orientation" cultural mode views the circumstances in social structure or organization as part of nature, which is therefore controlled or dictated by it. It considers that the environment determines the development in an organization. As a consequence, man, being an integral part of nature, needs to live harmoniously and in perfect balance with the environment, instead of being antagonistic or confrontational towards it (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 1993, 155).[7]

As Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's approach was specifically formulated to characterize cultural differences in worker perceptions of the physical environment, such inquiry could explain the divergence of worker responses to their work situation, particularly accentuated by "the pressure of the situation." As often observed by

---

6. The elements are (1) universalism versus particularism, (2) individualism versus communitarianism, (3) neutral versus emotional, (4) specific versus disseminate, (5) achievement versus ascription, (6) perception and time usage, and (7) perception on physical environment.

7. According to Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1993), the characteristics of "internal control culture" are (1) dominating attitudes bordering on aggressiveness towards environment, (2) conflict and resistance means having convictions, (3) a focus on self, own group, and own organization, and (4) discomfort when the environment seems "out of control" or changeable. On the other hand, "external control culture" shows (1) generally flexible attitude, willing to compromise and keep the peace, (2) harmony and sociality, (3) a focus on the "other" such as the customer, partner, colleague, and (4) comfort with waves, shifts, and cycles if "natural."

sociologists, it is during the times of crisis or conflict that value premises of social groups are clearly outlined or brought to the fore. The outline of cultural divergence and its influence on attitudes, behaviors, and responses is clearly manisfested when workers are "having a situation." It is in the manner in which they try to "come to grips with the situation" that we can clearly discern cultural divergence and how it conditions group conflicts or cooperation. It is on this basis that this paper shows a preference for Trompenaar's characterization or typology of cultural orientation. Trompenaars's criterion of "perception towards physical environment" seems to demonstrate an adequate explanatory power of the cultural divergence and conflict potentials between worker groups in the Korean company of this research. This paper shall apply Trompenaars's classification of cultural orientation to shed light on the sources of intercultural conflicts, along with some postulates of the *sociology of knowledge.* To represent the Malay worker's outlook, the term and concept of *takdir* (fate)[8] as a form of Trompenaar's "outer-directed orientation" will be used in this paper.

Intercultural Divergence of Values within the Context of Adversity

The divergence of values between Korean and Malay workers has given rise to an atmosphere of confusion, uneasiness, and misunderstanding in the Korean company being researched. To analyze intercultural differences and value discordance, this paper shall look at representative cases of dispute, misunderstanding, or miscommunication. The following cases illustrate the divergent perspectives of the respective parties on various matters involving the following elements: assessment of adversity, radius of possibilities and options, efficacy or limitation of human action, and the propriety of risk taking or avoidance, given the problems at hand. In this respect, Korean and

---

8. The concept of *takdir* means fore-ordination, destiny, fate, or predestination.

Malay workers expressed not only differing but even opposing perspectives, with Korean workers in general manifesting elements of "inner-directed orientation" while Malay workers expressed unequivocal traits of "outer-directed orientation."

One of the characteristics of inner-directed cultural orientation is the faith placed by workers on the resourcefulness of human being; hence, their refusal to acknowledge the impossibility or hopelessness of an adverse situation. In contrast, the outer-directed cultural orientation tends to humble itself before the "will of God," some kind of supernatural forces, or even powerful forces of nature, in the belief that human capability or action are limited or powerless against them. Such basic divergence in cultural orientation opens up misunderstanding or confusion over what is reasonable to expect of workers and their job performance.

Perspectives on the Limitation of Men and Fate

Case 1: "Nothing is impossible. If something is impossible, make it possible."

> Most senior executives of Korean companies do not entertain any kind of bad news that conveys that some work or assignment had failed or fallen short of expectation. Mr. K1, a Korean manager, simply refuses to hear admission of failure by his subordinates. Mr. K1 always insists upon his management principle encapsulated in the maxim that "even if something is impossible, make it possible." Mr. K1, who resolves never to fail, always compels or pressurizes his workers to step up efforts in their assignments until they succeed. His pressurizing management approach earned him the inglorious title of "Napoleon"[9] among many Malay respondents, who resented his unswerving reluctance to acknowledge impossibility when it comes to job performance, as well as his generally unsym-

---

9. Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821), the French military leader and conqueror, is noted for his maxims concerning the impossible, such as "the word impossible is not in my dictionary" and "impossible is a word to be found only in the dictionary of fools."

pathetic disposition towards failures.

In the perception of Encik M1, a Malay employee holding the position of supervisor for five years, many Korean workers have a similar attitude as that of Mr. K1. Top Korean executives or staffs seem to be always convinced that all job assignments can be successfully discharged, holding true to the principle that "there is no work which cannot be done or discharged, provided that the personnel concerned is sincere and has strong volition." Most Korean workers are so confident of their capability that they invariably appear to be dominating, even haughty or arrogant, in the eyes of outsiders. Encik M1's problem is that he has to follow his superior's orders and try to appear perseverant, even though when he feels he is striving in vain, merely wasting his time and effort. Consequently, some of Encik M1's colleagues avoid informing their bosses of bad results in their performance unless asked, in the conviction that their bosses would be sure to insist that they try even harder until they attain success. Encik M1 could not comprehend this overconfident or self-assured attitude of Korean managers and workers. From his perspective, at times human beings should be humble or modest enough to accept reality and concede to failure when necessary.

Case 2: "No compromise!" and "no patience!"

Encik M2, a Malay worker, has worked for one year in the Korean company as an officer. He doesn't seem to be able to adjust himself to the work environment. To him, what is the most unpleasant part about the company is the attitude of Korean superiors that never know the meaning of "patience."

Mr. K2, a Korean superior, always urges his subordinates to perform their tasks quickly, constantly saying "*ppali ppali*" (meaning "quickly, quickly"). If the result of given tasks seems yet to be ready, he keeps asking for it incessantly, pressuring his subordinates to the point that they feel very frustrated and annoyed. In addition, if the task or project they are undertaking doesn't go well, Mr. K2 would show his pushy, dominating, and pressurising attitude to his subordinates, often becoming aggressive, outraged, or

furious. If any of his subordinates makes a mistake, it seems diffi-
cult for Mr. K2 to forgive that person or absolve him of the respon-
sibility over the failure for a long time. To Encik M2, Mr. K2
doesn't compromise with any kind of unfavorable situation or envi-
ronments, especially when it has bearings upon the deadline or the
quality of work. Such attitudes of Mr. K2 seem to be too oppressive
and manipulative for many Malay workers, including Encik M2
who expressed a preference for a superior who is "flexible, forgiv-
ing, and compromising, who is easy when it comes to work
results."

Definition of the Situation in Case 1 and Case 2
from the Perspectives of Malay and Korean Workers

In the above cases, Malay workers feel rather stressful and bewildered
when Korean workers and senior management refuse to accept the sit-
uation in which success appears impossible. According to their belief
and value premises, Malay workers are quite willing to admit the limi-
tation of man in evaluating a problem and resolving it, or in seeing all
options open to them in certain circumstances. Hence, after expending
some efforts, they acquiesce to the situation realistically, though they
may feel disappointed or regret in doing so. Malay values guide them
to forge a harmonious relationship with the environment or nature,
which are deemed too powerful, unpredictable, and unruly for man to
fully master or control.

Consequently, they are more accommodative of their lot in life,
though it may be unfavorable or tragic to them, compared to people of
other cultures who do not believe that their fate or existential condi-
tions have been predetermined transcendently, independent of their
will or capacity for action.[10] Being consistent with their cultural orien-
tation, most Malay workers are deferential towards the forces of
nature or the environment and are, therefore, more accommodative of
events and *nature of things* in a given situation. Such life orientation

---

10. See works by Lévy-Bruhl (1975) and Skeat (1900).

or structure of thinking is naturally extended to their working milieu or life in an organization. Malay workers do their utmost to accomplish their duties, achieve success in a given task, and realize their goals, but their approaches are harmonious with the conditions of their lives.

Such inclinations of Malay workers have been understood as manifestations of fatalism by many scholars (Ngah 1985, 6-45; Osman 1985, 46-75; Sinaga 1998; Zaba 1980). S. Kim (1995) noted elements of fatalism among Southeast Asian workers, who believe that they cannot determine through efforts and actions the course of their lives, which ultimately depends on God's will and their predestination. Consequently, they have the notion that their will, volition, or resolve are not significant, decisive, and of consequence. Sinaga (1998, 213) also observed that Malaysian culture manifests elements of fatalism, which impede attempts to change or improve the world. The Malays tend to think that accepting the status quo or given conditions of life ensures stability for their community and its social order.

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1993) noted that Malay workers believe that the power of nature is beyond human mastery and control. Only 26 percent of Malay workers think that attempts at mastering natural forces such as the weather is worth human effort. Most Asian nationals show tendencies similar to those of Malaysia, except for Koreans and Thais. His observation highlights the intercultural differences between Koreans and Malays regarding human capability. According to his research, most Malay workers, as high as 75 percent of them, think man is incapable of controlling natural forces, while more than 39 percent of Korean workers are enthusiastic about harnessing natural forces for human benefits. This seems to reflect in part the dampening effects of fatalism on Malay workers, who are less inclined towards self-determinism and more resigned to their lot in life.

In the above cases, the perspective of Koreans in the situation is very different from that of the Malays. In their perspective, Malay workers are not serious at their job as they do not work hard enough or are not fully committed to their task and give up easily. These

Korean perspectives on the Malays are influenced by the Korean system of values, which views the conditions of life as being reversible by human will and action. This has the effect of Korean workers placing importance on their effort to completely master their circumstances or the situation before them.

It should be admitted that fatalistic elements are prevalent even in Korean culture, but this seems to be largely confined to the individual level. Some manifestation of this fatalistic tendency would include various forms of reliance on Korean *mudang* (shamans) and *jeomjaengi* (fortuneteller) in matters of marriage, business prospects, fortune, and so on. Korean workers seem to draw a line between such individual fatalism and group values or work ethics in Korean companies. Within the domain of work, Korean workers view demanding circumstances or adversities as a challenge or opportunity to prove their capability. In such situation, they believe that they should not easily give up before exhausting their mettle or resourcefulness. Therefore, although Koreans are quite aware of the limitation of human action in life and do admit some elements of fatalism at the individual level, they seem to place greater reliance on human capability and human action in the domain of work.

In this regard, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1993) found that 72 percent of Korean workers think that "what happened to me is the result of my deed," which is the highest percentage among Asians.[11] In general, Korean workers appear to take full responsibility for the outcome of given tasks, decisions made, and results achieved. Workers of most Western countries, including the United States and European countries, hold similar views as Korean workers (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 1993, 142-146).[12] Since Korean employees believe that "what happened to me is the result of my deed," they strive hard to succeed in their tasks or work, fully aware that they

---

11. Korea displays the highest percentage among the Asian nations (China 39%, Singapore 57%, Japan 63%, and Indonesia 71%). Thailand is also ranked the highest with 72%.

12. United States 86%, Australia 82%, England 77%, and France 76%. Interestingly, Israel is ranked the highest with 88%.

cannot rely on unfavorable circumstances as an excuse for unsatisfactory results or poor performances.

Perspectives on Worker Commitments and Responsibilities in the Company

Case 3: "Low spirited and too humble workers"

> Mr. K, a Korean expatriate who has been working in Malaysia for five years as a manager, thinks that Malay workers have many virtuous characteristics and attitudes. They are polite, humble, sociable, caring, and also respectful towards their seniors or elders. However, Mr. K from time to time has felt frustrated with his Malay subordinates when they didn't exhibit their commitment, initiative, and high spirit.
>
> He said, "If they are given a task, they don't seem to be serious about their assignment and they don't work hard enough to succeed at it. "Malay workers usually say 'Malaysia Boleh!' (meaning 'Malaysia can'), but in my opinion that is only talk and they don't actually do their best. Malay workers might face many obstacles in carrying out their tasks. They have to be brave in facing challenges in order to overcome them. As for me, they are not brave enough or highly spirited to change situation. To the contrary, they just accept easily their failure in their tasks. Their attitudes have let me down and sometimes I have to raise my voice to encourage them, who seem to work half-heartedly."
>
> Some other Korean workers also express that Malay workers hardly take the initiative to start new work or projects unless they have their superiors' guidance. They look either diffident or timid to take risk or assume full responsibility for their tasks. Mr. K wanted to encourage Malay workers to be enthusiastic, but he found that *pushy*, *intimidating*, or *oppressive* ways were ineffective for Malay workers.

Case 4: "'An invincible worker' with excessive commitment"

> Encik I, an Indian manager with six years of service in the Korean company, had his leg broken in an accident. The doctor put his

broken leg in a cast. Although advised by the doctor to rest for a week, he showed up at the office the following day, limping his way. When Encik I met by chance his Korean superior, the head of department, the Korean boss was very impressed by his exemplary conduct in turning up for work despite his injury. Seeing his boss impressed with his turning up, Encik I felt compelled or obliged to turn up for work regularly. In the turn of events, Encik I was promoted as some kind of a model employee in the eyes of the Korean management and workers, but not to his local colleagues, who tended to view the conduct of Encik I and the whole episode rather cynically with deep reservation.

Definition of the Situation in Case 3 and Case 4 from the Perspectives of Malay and Korean Workers

The above two cases show different perspectives on the concept of work commitment. In case 4, Encik I's Malay colleagues do not expect Encik I to turn up at the office still in a cast as they prioritize individual wellbeing, such as health and contentment, over office demands or company's interests. They opined that Encik I would not have turned up for work soon after medical treatment, had he been working for a Malaysian company. It was only after perceiving the responses of his Korean superiors that he felt obliged or compelled to turn up for work daily as usual, despite his injury. He felt guilty to rest at home as he could deduce from the responses of his bosses that they did not really care about a worker's personal wellbeing. He felt that Korean bosses would invariably insist on the discharge of work obligations, regardless of the personal difficulties or discomfort faced by the worker.

Initially, Encik I had decided to go to the office merely to inform the management of his injury as well as to submit his application for medical leave. As events turned out, he was caught in a different set of circumstances from what he had originally envisaged. The vote of confidence and strong approval that the Korean superiors had shown

him persuaded Encik I to abandon his original intention of taking leave and prioritizing his physical problem over office demands. He found a change of plans even more necessary when he saw urgent work piling up on his desk. In the end, he felt guilty to let down his boss's high expectations of him. His earlier priority changed, according higher priority now to office demands over consideration of his personal wellbeing. Encik I's decision to revise his priorities was seen by his colleagues as "excessive," "extreme," "stupid," and tantamount to "apple polishing"; in their perspective, he should be giving priority to his personal needs and wellbeing.

As seen in case 3, a majority of Korean workers think that Malay workers lack commitment and sense of responsibility in their work. Therefore, Korean workers and top management could not help but be pleased with the strong commitment and sense of responsibility demonstrated by Encik I, when he showed up for work despite his injury and personal discomfort. Their response is consistent with Korean values that expect personal sacrifices from workers for the sake of work and company interests. It is usual within this system of social values to consider such self-sacrificing workers as ideal personnel, while evaluating workers who place the individual above the company as being "unprofessional" and "mediocre." The Korean management projected the conduct of Encik I as an outstanding example to be emulated by all employees. This practice of highlighting exemplary conduct of employees is a common practice in Korean companies, where such staff is given much publicity as a role model or a company hero.

In both cases 3 and 4, we note the perspective of Malay workers on what constitute work commitment and responsibility. Conditioned by their values, Malay workers are not prone to work stress since they believe the outcomes of their work efforts are subject to factors or influences beyond their control. Therefore, many Malay workers adopt the attitude of doing the best they can and surrendering the rest to God's will. In this manner, Malay workers do not feel disappointed or apologetic over failure or poor result in their job assignment, so long as they feel that they have done or tried their best. This attitude

can be taken as a manifestation of the assenting and accepting attributes of Malay culture. Such value orientation puts Malay workers at odds with Korean corporate culture, which expects and compels workers to be fully accountable for their work performance or achieved results. Korean corporate culture is rather unforgiving of failures and low attainment, and frowns upon rationalizations that attribute poor results to extraneous factors like fate or God's will. Consequently, we have had situations where Korean workers accused Malay workers of being irresponsible or negligent in their work. In responses to the negative allegations, Malay workers have accused Korean workers and management as rather "unforgiving" or unsympathetic to failure and low performance beyond their control. Such situations have given rise to conflicts at the workplace.

Analysis: The Divergence of Perspectives and Definition of the Situation

Having outlined the facts of the above cases from the perspectives of the parties involved, it can be said that the confusion or tension springs from the divergence of cultural orientation which guided their respective *definition of the situation* at the workplace. These conflicting perspectives can be more clearly outlined according to the traits and criteria listed by Karl Mannheim for identiying a particular perspective and associating it with its existential conditions, subsumed commonly in concepts like "epoch," "age," "histrorical experience," or "the situation." We can clearly identify the divergence between them, if we analyze how Korean and Malay workers respectively define their situation and scrutinize the meaning and bearing of concepts and their counterconcepts, the conspicuos absence of certain concepts, and the level of asbstraction attained or resisted regarding certain concepts. Moreover, we must consider the categorical apparatus employed, the thought model adopted, and the ontology presupposed.

    The perspective of Korean workers reflects values and attitudes

that drive them to strive and prevail over adversity, while the perspective of Malay workers seem to express strongly affirmed values that the conditions of their existence as well as everything else had been destined by the will of God. The divergence between these perspectives has been clearly described or characterized by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's (1993) classification of cultural orientation. The perspective of Malay workers bearing on their definition of the situation reflects the "culture of accepting fate and nature," while the perspective of Korean workers reflects faith in "human effort and taking charge or control." The latter perspective emphasizes that man is capable of prevailing over adversities or setbacks and determine their conditions, particularly in the domain of work. Korean workers are thus ideationally conditioned to see problems as an integral part of and the nature of "work," and strive to manage them accordingly. On the other hand, Malay workers who are more deferential towards natural forces or other external determinants like fate or predestination are more susceptible to being overwhelmed by very same problems encountered by their Korean coworkers in the company.

The Malay perspective is more accommodative of life setbacks or disappointments as Malay cultural and religious orientations always remind them of the omniscience of God, the supremacy of nature, and the determinism of fate, all of which are beyond human control. In this regard, the perspective of Malay workers are heavily influenced or colored by elements of fatalism, commonly termed and understood as *Qadariyah* (predestation). According to this idea, their fate or life-course can never be reversed or determined by man's effort or action. Mohd Nor bin Ngah (1985, 17) describes the infuence of fatalism among the Malays as follows:

> The Malays believe in Allah's decree and predestination, both of good and evil, or in other words believe in *al-Qada wa al-Qadar* because it is the sixth article of faith (*Rukun Iman*). It means that Allah has, from eternity, predetermined and decreed everything, good as well as bad, believers and unbelievers, and everything that has been or will depend entirely on His fore-knowledge and sovereign will. Hence, some Malays are inclined to rely on fate rather

> than on their own efforts. They are easily contented and if anything
> happens, good or bad, they always say it is a *taqdir* or measure of
> Allah (Ngah 1985, 17).

In accordance with their understanding of Islamic beliefs, many work-
ers are not motivated to determine their circumstances since these had
been fated or predetermined by God. Asma Abdullah (1996, 106)
observed that "the Malays emphasize their religious belief more than
company matters, including productivity. . . . They have the attitude
of autonomous surrender . . . ." Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner
(1993) view such fatalistic element as a distinctive feature of Asian
managers. By their perspective and definition of work situation, Asian
managers tend to think that they are subject to the control or domina-
tion of external forces.

The perspective of the Malay workers, with its complex of *accept-
ing* elements, conditions them more towards submission or resigna-
tion since everything had been ordained by God. This perspective is
reflected in such expressions like "*kita mesti berserah*" (We must sub-
mit in resignation), "*apa boleh buat sudah nasib*" (What to do, it has
been fated), "*memang sudah takdir*" (It is fated), "*manusia wajib
tawakal*" (Men must submit), "*sudah jodoh*" (It is a match predeter-
mined), "*tiada jodoh*" (A match not predetermined), "*sudah nasib*" (It
is fated), "*sudah tiada rezeki*" (It is predetermined not your lot),[13] all
of which represent the spirit or ethos of accepting culture. Such cul-
tural orientation readily admits worker's limitations or shortcomings,
all in the way of being only human. It should be noted that besides
their interpretation of Islam, the perspective of Malay workers are also
molded by various folk beliefs and animistic elements, which predis-
poses them towards the supernatural and the man's limitation.

This accepting side of the perspective of Malay workers is further
reinforced by the constant conditioning of amicable, compromising,
gentle, and polite elements of Malay culture—elements categorized as

---

13. All these Malay expressions reflect the Malay belief that fate is determined by the
will of God.

belonging to "feminine culture" by Hofstede (1980). Malay workers' polite, gentle, and self-effacing ways can come across as their virtues when they reflect sociability in the right situation. However, the very same qualities become weakness within the context of a corporate culture that expects workers to be proactive, aggressive, and individualistic. From the perspective of the Korean management, such blending of accepting and feminine attitudes of Malay workers can have an adverse effect on the efficiency and productivity of the company. For instance, Malay workers seem to absolve themselves of responsibility over poor performance by claiming that the demands placed upon them by these etiquettes and proprieties prevent them from being aggressive and individualistic.

These obsevations by Korean workers and management seem to be collaborated by executives of an American company, who also described Malay workers as having "no spirit" and "unresponsive." When Western CEOs are asked about Malaysia, they are generally positive about business prospects in Malaysia. They are, however, generally disappointed with the unresponsiveness of Malay workers in voicing their opinions or in their tendency to avoid any kind of confrontations or queries at meeting. They are generally unresponsive when prompted, or even in conventional matters like responding to presentations or applauding in appreciation. This situation causes Western executives to feel let down as they see this as not being productive (Dooley 2003).

The perspective and definition of the situation characteristic of Malay workers are conditioned by their feudal past and its strong continuites today. Though many of their concepts represent an interpretation of Islam, such understanding itself was existentially determined by the feudal structure of the past (Shaharuddin 1984, 1988). Malay feudalism was generally authoritarian and did not encourage individualism in every sense of the word. It inculcated servility before authority and strongly frowned upon individualism.

Moreover, Malay *ackwardness* within the context of modern corporate culture is mainly due to the fact that Malay society is new, historically speaking, to modern capitalism. Their ethos is basically that

of a non-industrial and non-capitalist background, rooted in the rural economy. Even today, it cannot be said that Malay society has developed capitalism or an industrial ethos to a significant degree. Therefore, the perspective of Malay workers functions with concepts formulated and moulded by past situations—concepts which are rather inadequate, or even obsolete, in their definition of the situation in the industrial and multinational corporate world.

The perspective of Korean workers reflects a culture of challenging fate and nature, which prescribes self-determinism and resoucefulness to improve or reverse adversities. Such resisting and controlling spirit spurs man to challenge and push the limits of his capability to manage situation and achieve his goal. To a great extent, such perspective and definition of the situation has been shaped by Korea's aggressive and military culture, which highly emphasizes achievement or accomplishment while frowning upon failure. The influence of the military culture in Korean society makes it unacceptable to claim adverse conditions or difficult circumstances as justifiable reasons for failure.

Besides the influence of the military culture, historical experiences of Korea that had faced many external threats and invasions, for example from China, Japan, and North Korea, have also conditioned Korean character towards aggressiveness.[14] In order to prevail against such challenges to their survival, the Korean spirit and character had been tempered hard. In this regard, some scholars think that it is a distinctive feature of the Korean character to become more resilient and resourceful in adversities, tragedies, or crisis. One example often cited by Western scholars is the way Koreans successfully overcame the economic crisis of 1997, rebounding strongly from the setback of the recession.

---

14. The frequent invasions and wars in Korean history is also believed to be one factor contributing to Korean's confronting culture. The tragic experience of the 1950 Korean War shaped Korean values and attitudes that stress spiritual strength in hard times. They spontaneously manifest the tendency of confronting challenges when they have to solve problems (K. Lee 1995, 2001).

In above cases, we also note pronounced traits of a masculine culture with its stamp of controlling culture. Korean workers highly value any demonstration of strong commitment, high morale or spiritual strength, and sense of responsibility towards work. In fact, they are not as concerned about the process itself as about the outcome or result achieved. This is a reflection of the controlling and dominating side of Korean culture, which links result directly to effort or performance, as captured in the formula "success means right action and effort while failure means effort is waiting till success." These values have been identified as elements of masculine culture (Hofstede 1980; K. Kim 2008). The masculine element in Korean culture views failure as a disaster and demands satisfactory result in task.

Korean beliefs and Confucian values also strongly influence the perspective of Korean workers and their definition of the situation. Consistent with this value orientation, Korean workers take full responsibility for their work and its outcome. Confucian ethics of hard work is not solely confined to the advancement of personal interests, but also serves the interests of organization, society, or nation. Lee and Shin (2000) think that Korean workers generally attribute failure to their own mistakes or omission, and trace this predisposition to the teachings of Confucianism, which sees failure as the result of lack of efforts, volition, and spiritual strength.

There is another belief among some Korean workers, which holds a person accountable and responsible for his action and deed. Some Korean workers believe that God is authoritarian and strict, and punishes human beings for their wickedness or evil deeds. For example, if someone falls ill, his misfortune is considered a sign of God's wrath or displeasure for his sins or misdeeds. Although Koreans fear God's judgment and retribution, they also have faith in his benevolence and justice that all good conduct will be eventually rewarded. Such perspective guides Korean workers' definition of the situation and also motivates them in their work (E. Kim 1996).

The divergence between Korean and Malay workers is evident in their central concepts pertaining to work, human will, workers' responsibility, company loyaty, and a whole complex of values and

attitudes related to work. The elements of conflict can be clearly seen if we examine these concepts as counterconcepts posed by Korean and Malay workers in their contrasting definition of the situation. We note that central concepts guiding the evaluation of one perspective is conspicuosly missing in the other. Counterconcept is a measure of group divergence and conflict in which each group resists and criticizes the perspective of the other. Korean workers find the idea of external agencies affecting work to be incomprehensible, while Malay workers resist assimilating and developing the value of self-determinism. In other words, their level of abstraction is subject to the selection of values and ideas by their perspective and definition of the situation. As noted by the *sociology of knowledge*, social groups assimilate or develop ideas harmonious with their interests, while resisting and rejecting those they see as threatening to their social position and interests.

If we analyze the categorical apparatus, we note that the perspective of Korean workers reflect clear differentiation between the social and the economic domain. There is a dominance of the economic man over the social man in the workplace, which is characteristic of an industrial society, as observed by many scholars.[15] In the perspective of the Malay workers, however, there is no clear differentiation between the social and the economic man, hence the constant crosscurrents of social and economic imperatives in their perspective and definition of the situation at the workplace. The gaping divergence between the social groups is clear if we observe their respective thought model. The perspective of Korean workers followed the thought model of corporate culture and industrial society; it runs on the line of rationality of means and end. The perspective of Malay workers, on the other hand, follows the thought model of ethics and religious outlook, indicated for instance in the motif of *takdir* (fate) or external agencies influencing the work domain. As for the ontological premises behind worker values and attitudes, the perspective of Korean workers emphasized Confucian teachings of self-determinism,

---

15. See, for instance, Mayo (1977).

while that of Malay workers is anchored in predestation or deter-
minism by God or other cosmic forces.

Conclusion: The Imperative of Social Skills and Cultural Understanding

This research finds that misunderstanding between Korean and Malay
workers usually arises out of radically different perspectives coloring
definitions of the situations. A particular situation would invariably
appear very different depending on the group, as would the words
like "responsibility," "work commitment," "company loyalty," and
"solidarity." The *sociology of knowledge* shows us that ideas and
group responses are not to be taken only at their superficial level, or
at the level of assertion, without regards to their deeper social and cul-
tural meanings. The image of other social groups would invariably be
distorted when the ideas and values of social groups are taken only at
the level of assertion, judging their *validity*, *truth*, *legitimacy*, and
rationality based on one's own perspective and world view. This is a
form of ethnocentricity, which is the bane of harmonious intercultural
understanding and cooperation between social groups and nations.

Social skills and understanding of ideas and cultural forms and
their social-historical background are imperative for good intercultural
collaboration and cooperation. The management in multinational
companies should be equipped with such social skills, so as to enable
them to appreciate the deeper roots of conflicts between diverse cul-
tural groups in the company. A management that excels only in mat-
ters of production system and organizational structure but seriously
lacks the social skill of dealing with people will invariably experience
low morale, group conflicts, poor team work, and a host of other for-
midable problems upsetting the workings of the company. Such man-
agement would not be able to resolve the problems effectively
because it may fail to arrive at a proper diagnosis of the root causes of
the problems in the first place.

Frequently, the nature of group identities can pose serious imped-

iments to effective teamwork and cooperation between intercultural social groups or nations. Group identities that focus on group exclusiveness, or world views molded by a particular historical context, can develop into such rigidity of cultural form and style that makes them misfits in an intercultural or multinational situation. If such groups do not consciously endeavor to understand the nature of their rigidity and stiffness in a pluralistic setting, they will not be able to reach out to other groups effectively. In this respect, it is advisable that Koreans reflect on their insistence on homogeneity, while Malays face the reality and embrace the industrial ethos, and accordingly endeavor to neutralize the conditioning effects of their past non-industrial economy in the corporate situation.

REFERENCES

Abdullah, Asma. 1996. *Going Glocal: Cultural Dimensions in Malaysian Management.* Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Institute of Management.

Abdullah, Mah Lok. 1992. "Organizational Culture, the Key to Excellence: Malaysian Success Stories." In *Better Quality of Work Life through Productivity*, by the International Productivity Congress, 243-252. Tokyo: Asian Productivity Organization.

Ackerman, Susan. 1980. "Cultural Process in Malaysian Industrialization: A Study of Malay Women Factory Workers." PhD diss., University of California, San Diego.

Adler, Nancy J. 1997. *Organizational Behavior*. Cincinnati: South-Western College Publishing.

_____. 2002. *International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior.* 4th ed. Cincinnati: South-Western College Publishing.

Ali, Jamaliah Mohd. 1996. "Cross-Cultural Communication: A Case Study of German Companies in Malaysia." Paper presented at the annual conference of the European Business Ethics Networks, Frankfurt, September 18-20.

Ali, Syed Husin. 1979a. *Apa Erti Pembangunan* (What is the Meaning of Development). Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Lumpur.

_____. 1979b. *Orang Melayu, Masalah dan Masa Depannya* (Malay People: Their Problems and Future). Kuala Lumpur: Adabi Sdn Bhd.

Allport, Gordon W., Philip E. Vernon, and Gardner Lindzey. 1951. *The Study of Values*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Bae, Kyuhan, and Chung Chinsung. 1997. "Cultural Values and Work Attitudes of Korean Industrial Workers in Comparison with Those of the United States and Japan." *Work and Occupation* 24.1: 80-96.

Cho, Young-ho, and Park Ho-hwan. 1998. "Conflict Management in Korea: The Wisdom of Dynamic Collectivism." In *Conflict Management in the Asia Pacific: Assumptions and Approaches in Diverse Cultures*, edited by Kwok Leung and Dean Tjosvold, 15-48. Singapore: John Wiley and Sons.

Choi, Bongyoung. 1996. *Hagugin-ui sahoejeok seonggyeok* (Social Characteristics of Koreans). Seoul: Neutinamu.

Choi, Jae Seok. 1994. *Hagugin-ui sahoejeok seonggyeok* (Social Characteristics of Koreans). Seoul: Hyeoneumsa.

Deuchler, Martina. 1992. *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Dooley, Rebecca. 2003. "Four Cultures, One Company: Achieving Corporate Excellence through Working Cultural Complexity." *Organization Development Journal* 21.1: 52-66.

Fatimah, Daud. 1983. "Socio-Economic Problems of Women Workers: A Case Study of Electronics Workers in a Multination Japanese Firm." PhD diss., University of Malaya.

Gray, Kenneth R., and Kimball P. Marshall. 1998. "Kenyan and Korean Management Orientations on Hofstede's Cultural Values." *Multinational Business Review* 6.2: 79-88.

Gudykunst, William B. 2003. *Cross-Cultural and Intercultural Communication.* London: Sage.

Hall, Edward T. 1976. *Beyond Culture.* New York: Doubleday.

Han, Geon Soo. 2003. "African Migrant Workers' Views of Korean People and Culture." *Korea Journal* 42.1: 154-173.

Hofstede, Geert C. 1980. *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values.* London: Sage.

Hofstede, Gert Jan, Paul B. Pedersen, and Geert C. Hofstede. 2002. *Exploring Culture: Exercises, Stories and Synthetic Cultures.* Yarmouth: Intercultural Press.

Husain, M. G. 1997. *Psychology and Society in Islamic Perspective.* Kuala Lumpur: S. Abdul Majeed and Co.

Kearney, Robert. 1991. *The Warrior Worker: Challenge of the Korean Way of Working.* New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Khaliq, Ahmad. 2005. *Malaysian Management Styles: Policy, Practice and Human Resource.* London: ASEAN Academic Press.

Kim, Eun Young. 1996. *A Cross-Cultural Reference of Business Practices in a New Korea.* London: Quorum Books.

Kim, Keum Hyun. 1996. "Konsep Jadi Orang dalam Masyarakat Melayu: Satu Kajian Kes di Negeri Terengganu" (Perception of "Human Being" in Malay Society: A Case Study of Terengganu). Master's thesis, University of Malaya.

_____. 2008. "Konflik Nilai Sosial di kalangan Pekerja Melayu dalam Syarikat Muntinasional: Satu Kajian Kes di Syarikat Korea" (Social Value Conflicts of Malay Workers in a Multinational Company). PhD diss., University of Malaya.

Kim, Kwagn-Ok. 1996. "The Reproduction of Confucian Culture in Contemporary Korea: An Anthropological Study." In *Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity: Moral Education and Economic Culture in Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons*, edited by Tu Wei-ming, 202-227. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.

Kim, Shin. 1995. *Hanguk gieop haeoe gyeongyeong* (International Management of Korean Firms). Seoul: Seokjung.

Kluckholn, Florence R., and Fred L. Strodtbeck. 1961. *Variations in Value Orientations*. Westport: Greenwood Press.

Koh, Byong-ik. 1996. "Confucianism in Contemporary Korea." In *Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity: Moral Education and Economic Culture in Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons*, edited by Tu Wei-ming, 191-201. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.

Kumar, Krishna, and Kim Kee Young. 1984. "The Korean Manufacturing Multinational." *Journal of International Business Studies* 15.1: 45-61.

Lee, Hak-Jong. 2001. *Hanguk gieop-ui munhwajeok teukseong-gwa sae gieop munhwa gaebal* (The Characteristics of Korean Corporate Culture and the Development of a New Corporate Culture). Seoul: Pakyoungsa.

Lee, Jang-ro, and Shin Mannsoo. 2000. *Hanguk gieop-ui gukje gyeongyeong* (The Global Management of Korean Enterprises). Seoul: Korea University Press.

Lee, Kyu Tae. 1995. *Dongyangin-ui uisik gujo* (Mindset of Asians). Seoul: Sinwon Munhwasa.

_____. 2001. *Hangugin uisik gujo* (Mindset of Koreans). Seoul: Sinwon Munhwasa.

Lévy-Bruhl, Lucien. 1975. *Primitive Mentality*. Translated by Lilian A. Clare. Brooklyn: AMS Press. Originally published as *La mentalité primitive* (Paris: Alcan, 1922).

Malaysia. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2010. *Partnership towards Prosperity: Celebrating 50 Years of Diplomatic Relations between Malaysia and Republic of Korea.* Kuala Lumpur: Malaysia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mannheim, Karl. 1936. *Ideology and Utopia.* London: Routledge.

_____. 1964. *Essays on Sociology of Knowledge.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

_____. 1971. *Essays on Sociology and Culture.* London: Routledge.

_____. 1980. *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction: Studies in Modern Social Structure.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Mansor, Norma. 1998. "Managing Conflict in Malaysia: Cultural and Economic Influences." In *Conflict Management in the Asia Pacific: Assumptions and Approaches in Diverse Cultures*, edited by Kwok Leung and Dean Tjosvold, 147-166. Singapore: John Wiley and Sons.

Mayo, Elton. 1977. *The Social Problems of Industrial Society*. New York: Arno Press.

Mazelan, Norsaidatul Akmar. 2000. *Corporate Management Styles: Case Study of Malay Companies.* Subang Jaya: Pelanduk Publications.

Ngah, Mohd Nor bin. 1985. "Islamic World-View of Man, Society and Nature among the Malays in Malaysia." In *Malaysian World-View*, edited by Mohd Taib Osman, 6-45. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Osman, Mohd Taib. 1989. *Malay Folk Beliefs.* Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa and Pustaka.

Osman, Mohd Taib, ed. 1985. *Malaysian World-View*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Robbins, Stephen, and Timothy Judge. 2007. *Organizational Behavior*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Rokeach, Milton. 1973. *The Nature of Human Values*. New York: Free Press.

Saccone, Richard. 1994. *The Business of Korean Culture*. Seoul: Hollym.

Sendut, Hamzah. 1991. "Managing in a Multicultural Society: The Malaysian Experience." *Malaysian Management Review* 26: 61-69.

Shaharuddin, Maaruf. 1984. *Concept of a Hero in Malay Society.* Petaling Jaya: Eastern Universities Press.

_____. 1988. *Malay Ideas on Development: From Feudal Lord to Capitalist.* Kuala Lumpur: Times Books International.

Sinaga, Sherilyin Helen. 1998. "Global Bridges: A Comparative Study of the Cultural Values of China, Malaysia and The United States." PhD diss.,

The Union Institute, Cincinnati.

Skeat, William. 1900. *Malay Magic*. London: Frank Cass.

Sorokin, Pitirim. 1970. *Social and Cultural Dynamics*. Boston: Sargent Porter.

Trompenaars, Fons, and Charles Hampden-Turner. 1993. *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Business*. London: Nicholas Bearley Publishing.

Tu, Wei-ming, ed. 1996. *Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity: Moral Education and Economic Culture in Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.

Zaba, Hamdan Hassan. 1980. *Falsafah Takdir* (Philosophy of Fate). Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa and Pustaka.