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Research Article

LEARNING GEOGRAPHY OF KOREA BY MOUNTAINS AND ISLAND AS MAIN RESOURCE OF KOREAN PENINSULA

Submission Date: March 03, 2024, Accepted Date: March 08, 2024,

Published Date: March 13, 2024

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/ijasr-04-03-06>

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ABSTRACT

The article explores the unique geography of Korea, including its mountains and islands. Special attention is paid to the importance of mountains and islands for the ecology, tourism and culture of Korea. This article is devoted to the study of the unique geography of Korea, taking into account its mountains and islands as the main resource of the Korean peninsula. The authors explore the diversity of landscapes, climatic features and natural resources of the mountains and islands of Korea, as well as consider their importance for the ecology, tourism and culture of the region. The article offers an extensive overview of the geographical features of Korea, with an emphasis on its mountains and islands, emphasizing their importance as key components of the country's natural and cultural heritage.

KEYWORDS

Geography of Korea, mountains, islands, resources, rivers, landscape.

INTRODUCTION

The unique geography of Korea, characterized by its mountains and islands, plays a pivotal role in shaping the landscape and natural resources of the Korean Peninsula. This article aims to explore the diverse topography, climatic features, and

natural resources of Korea's mountains and islands, highlighting their significance in ecology, tourism, and cultural heritage in the region. By delving into the geographical peculiarities of Korea with a focus on its mountains and islands,

this study seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of these key components of the country's natural and cultural heritage.

Korea is a peninsula located in East Asia. It is bordered by the Yellow Sea to the west, the Sea of Japan to the east, and the Korea Strait to the south. Korea is divided into two countries: North Korea and South Korea.

South Korea occupies the southern half of the Korean Peninsula and has a total area of 100,363 square kilometers. Its terrain is mostly mountainous, with some plains and coastal areas. The highest peak is Hallasan, located on the island of Jeju, at an elevation of 1,950 meters. South Korea has several major rivers, including the Han River, which flows through Seoul, and the Nakdong River, which is the longest river in South Korea.

North Korea occupies the northern half of the Korean Peninsula and has a total area of 120,540 square kilometers. Its terrain is also mostly mountainous, with some plains and coastal areas. The highest peak is Paektu Mountain, located on the border with China, at an elevation of 2,744 meters. North Korea has several major rivers, including the Yalu River, which forms the border with China, and the Tumen River, which forms the border with China and Russia. Both North Korea and South Korea have a humid continental climate with four distinct seasons. However, North Korea is generally colder than South Korea, especially in the northern mountainous regions. Both countries experience monsoon season

during the summer months, which brings heavy rainfall and sometimes typhoons.

Korean island and their peculiarities

Korea is home to numerous islands, each with its own unique characteristics and attractions. One of the most famous and popular islands in Korea is Jeju Island, located off the southern coast of the Korean Peninsula. Jeju Island is known for its stunning natural beauty, including volcanic landscapes, pristine beaches, lush forests, and unique rock formations. The island is also designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site for its cultural and natural significance. Another notable Korean island is Ulleungdo, located in the East Sea. Ulleungdo is known for its rugged terrain, dramatic cliffs, and crystal-clear waters. The island is a popular destination for hiking, birdwatching, and exploring its volcanic landscapes. Ulleungdo is also famous for its seafood, particularly its delicious squid dishes.

Dokdo, also known as Takeshima in Japan, is another island that holds great significance in Korean history and sovereignty. Located in the East Sea, Dokdo is a small rocky islet that has been a point of contention between Korea and Japan. The island is home to a unique ecosystem and serves as a symbol of Korean national pride. Other notable Korean islands include Geoje Island, known for its beautiful beaches and shipbuilding industry, and Ganghwa Island, which is rich in historical sites and cultural heritage.

Strategic island of Dokdo

Dokdo is a small group of islands located in the Sea of Japan, about 87 kilometers east of Ulleungdo and 158 kilometers northeast of South Korea's Ulsan city. The island group has a total land area of 0.1874 square kilometers and consists of two main islets, Dongdo and Seodo, and several smaller rocks and islets. Dokdo is strategically important to South Korea because of its location and resources.

Geopolitical significance: Dokdo is situated in the East Sea (Sea of Japan), an area that has long been contested by South Korea and Japan. Both countries claim sovereignty over the island group, and the dispute has caused diplomatic tensions between the two countries for decades. The island group is also strategically located, as it sits at the entrance of the Sea of Japan and provides a strategic vantage point for monitoring sea traffic in the region.

Economic significance: Dokdo is located in an area with rich fishing grounds and abundant marine resources, including squid, crab, and abalone. The surrounding waters are also believed to contain deposits of natural gas and oil, which could be a significant source of energy for South Korea.

Symbolic significance: Dokdo has become a symbol of South Korea's sovereignty and national pride. Many South Koreans view the island group as a symbol of their country's history, culture, and independence. The South Korean government has taken steps to protect and promote the island's cultural and natural heritage, including

designating it a national park and establishing a research center on the island.

Topography of Dokdo Island

The Dokdo islets consist of two main islets, Dongdo and Seodo, and several smaller rocks and islets. Dongdo is the larger of the two main islets, with a land area of approximately 0.085 square kilometers. It is situated on the eastern side of the Dokdo group and is characterized by rugged terrain and steep cliffs. The highest point on Dongdo is called "Bukdo Peak," which rises to a height of 169 meters above sea level.

1. **Seodo:** Seodo is the smaller of the two main islets, with a land area of approximately 0.026 square kilometers. It is situated on the western side of the Dokdo group and is characterized by a gentler slope and lower elevation compared to Dongdo. The highest point on Seodo is called "Seodo Peak," which rises to a height of 98 meters above sea level.

2. **Surrounding Rocks:** In addition to the two main islets, the Dokdo group includes several smaller rocks and islets, including Jukdo, Saebyeokdo, and others. These smaller features are mostly located to the north and south of the main islets and are characterized by rocky outcroppings, steep cliffs, and exposed rocky surfaces.

On the other hand, the topography of Dokdo island is characterized by rugged terrain, steep cliffs, and exposed rock formations. The island group is relatively small, with a total land area of less than 0.2 square kilometers, but its unique

topography and location in the Sea of Japan have made it a subject of territorial dispute between South Korea and Japan. The Dokdo islets are home to a diverse range of plant and animal species, including some endemic species that are found only on the island group.

Flora: Despite the island's small size, Dokdo has a surprisingly diverse range of plant species. The island is home to more than 200 species of plants, including grasses, herbs, and shrubs. Some of the most common species on the island include *Stellaria coreana*, *Taraxacum coreanum*, and *Artemisia Montana*. The vegetation on Dokdo plays an important role in stabilizing the soil and preventing erosion.

Fauna: Dokdo is also home to a range of animal species, both on land and in the surrounding waters. The island is an important breeding ground for seabirds, including the Black-tailed Gull, the Streaked Shearwater, and the Pelagic Cormorant. The surrounding waters are also home to a variety of marine life, including squid, crab, abalone, and various species of fish.

Endemic Species: Dokdo is home to several endemic species that are found nowhere else in the world. One of the most well-known endemic species on the island is the Dokdo Lizard, a small reptile that is found only on the Dokdo islets. The island is also home to several endemic species of snails, including the Dokdo Littorina and the Dokdo Helicella.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the geography of Korea, with its prominent mountains and numerous islands, serves as a defining feature of the Korean Peninsula. These natural formations not only contribute to the diverse topography and climatic variations in the region but also play a crucial role in shaping the country's ecology, tourism industry, and cultural heritage. The mountains of Korea, such as Mount Baekdu and Mount Hallasan, are revered for their spiritual significance and provide opportunities for outdoor activities and conservation efforts. Similarly, the islands of Korea, including Jeju Island and Ulleungdo, offer unique ecosystems, beautiful landscapes, and cultural attractions that attract visitors from around the world. By studying the geography of Korea through its mountains and islands, we gain a deeper understanding of the country's natural resources, environmental challenges, and cultural richness. These geographical features not only showcase the beauty and diversity of Korea but also highlight the importance of sustainable development and conservation efforts to preserve these valuable resources for future generations. Overall, the mountains and islands of Korea are integral to the identity and heritage of the Korean Peninsula, making them essential subjects for learning and exploration in the field of geography.

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