



Perception and Impact of Korean Wave among Students in a Local University in the Philippines

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ABSTRACT

Korean popular culture has spread like wildfire over the world in the last decade. This expanding popularity of Korean popular culture has been dubbed the "Korean wave." The Korean wave surged in the media, causing a rippling effect throughout the world. The main focus of this paper is to determine the level of perception and the impact of the Korean wave among students at a local university in the Philippines. This descriptive quantitative research involved 101 participants selected through a convenient sampling technique. This study shows that students have a fairly positive perception of K-pop and Korean dramas and movies. Also, there was an average extent of the impact of the Korean wave among them. The perception of the students regarding the Korean wave has led to an interest in and understanding Korean culture. Moreover, this study will help understand the perception of university students in the Philippines about the Korean Wave phenomenon.

Keywords: Korean Wave, Perception, Impact, Students

INTRODUCTION

The Korean Wave, or Hallyu, has become a major cultural phenomenon around the world (Kim & Lee, 2012). The term was created in China in mid-1999 by Beijing journalists who were taken aback by the rapid growth of Korean entertainment and culture in China (Kim, 2007). Non-Western cultural flows drive Korean popular culture (Jin & Yi, 2020). Academic discourses on Hallyu have grown as the major traits of the Korean Wave have altered (Jin, 2016; Howard, 2014; Kim & Choe, 2014; Lee & Normes, 2015). Several Asian nations, including China and Japan, are watching the Korean Wave closely, partly because they intend to employ their own popular culture and digital technology as part of national soft power (Jin & Yoon, 2017).

Research about the impacts on different countries has shown the various impacts of the Korean Wave on the social and cultural aspects of their community, especially to students (Jang & Paik, 2012; Ochieng & Kim, 2019; Ryoo, 2009; Lee, 2011). In Thailand, K-pop and Korean products have become more popular with students and many have been interested in the culture of Korea (Song, 2016; Park, Simon, & Kazimoto, 2021). The same is true in Malaysia, wherein perceptions of the Korean wave have heavily affected and influenced the students in that country (Lee, Lee, Kwak, & Kim, 2017). High consumption of Korean products could also be found in Latin America, India, and Indonesia (Min, Jin, & Han, 2019; Ghosh, 2022; Widyaningrum, 2023). Overall, the embodiment of K-pop fans has formed transnationalism and has created a global community that is connected through their sense of devotion, affinity, and belonging. The online spaces where fans can connect are another aspect that makes them participative consumers of pop culture. (Swan, 2018; Park et al., 2021).

Other countries have studied and documented the effect of the Korean Wave in their countries but very few studies have been conducted on how the craze about these Korean products has affected the perceptions of Filipinos. Thus, this paper aimed to describe the perceptions and impact of the Korean wave among students in local universities. Specifically, this study aims to answer: (1) What is the level of perceptions of local university students on (a) Korean Dramas and Movies, and (b) Korean wave? and (2) What is the extent of the impact of the Korean Wave on the local university students? The results of this study will help understand the perception of university students in the Philippines about the Korean Wave phenomenon. Hence, this study was undertaken.

METHODS

Research design

This research employed a descriptive quantitative research design. Descriptive research aims to find out "what is", which is why observational and survey methods are often used to collect data (Borg & Gall, 1989). In this study, the collected data, analysis, and interpretation were used to describe the impacts

of the Korean Wave on university students. Likewise, this study is anchored on the Cultural Proximity Theory, which suggests that people tend to media that are closest to their own culture (Straubhaar, 1991).

Participants and Sampling

This research study employed 101 students selected by means of convenient sampling technique.

Instrument

The questionnaire used in this study was adopted from the structured survey of Park et al. (2021) on University Students' Perception of the Korean Wave and Its Impact on Their Views of Korea and Korean Culture. It contains three parts with 10 questions each; (1) Perceptions of Korean Drama and Movies, (2) Perceptions of K-pop, and (3) The Impact of the Korean Wave. This survey used a 4-point Likert scale: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), agree (3), and strongly agree (4). Demographic information was also included in the survey. This survey instrument had a .91 (high validity) Content Validity Index value.

Data collection

The data were gathered using a three-page printed copy of the questionnaire and an online Google Forms survey. The printed copies were distributed through the class chairperson of each section and accomplished by the students. The participants signed the letter of consent found on the first page of the survey instrument for the assurance of confidentiality of information. On the other hand, an online Google Forms survey that also contained information similar to the printed copies was also given out to those who opted to make use of Facebook Messenger and emails. After the given deadline, the questionnaires were then gathered and electronically encoded in preparation for data analysis.

Data analysis

The data were analyzed using Excel and SPSS (Special Package for Social Sciences), wherein each question was given an identification number. The data was run through the SPSS to get the mean values. After calculating the mean and standard deviation, they were then interpreted using scales. The scale for interpretations is as follows:

Table 1. Scale for the Level of Perceptions

Value	Ranges of the Scale	Descriptive Rating	Description
1	1.0 - 1.75	Strongly Disagree	The students have a very negative perception.
2	1.76 - 2.51	Disagree	The students have a fairly negative perception.
3	2.52 - 3.27	Agree	The students have a fairly positive perception.
4	3.28 - 4.00	Strongly Agree	The students have a very positive perception.

Table 2. Scale for the Level of Impact

Value	Ranges of the Scale	Descriptive Rating	Description
1	1.0 - 1.75	Strongly Disagree	To no extent
2	1.76 - 2.51	Disagree	To low extent
3	2.52 - 3.27	Agree	To average extent
4	3.28 - 4.00	Strongly Agree	To high extent

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In terms of gender, 66.3% were female, 31.7% were male, and 2% preferred not to disclose their gender. Majority of the respondents were second-year students (45.5%), first-year students (39.5%), fourth-year students (7.9%), and third-year students (6.9%). Most of the participants were introduced through social media (50.5%), friends (38.6%), family (5%), and others (5.9%). Participants reported that they have been interested in the Korean Wave for more than five years (37.6%), less than one year (25.8%), one to three years (20.8%), and three to five years (15.8%).

Perceptions on the Korean Wave

Table 1. Level of Perception of Korean Dramas and Movies (N=101)

Category	Mean Value	Description	SD
Korean Movies and Dramas	2.68	Fairly Positive	.651

According to Table 1, the participants have a fairly positive perception of Korean movies and dramas. These results are also similar to the findings of Kim, Chen, and Su (2009) and Hua, Jittithavorn, Lee, and Chen (2021), wherein the strong connection of viewers to K-dramas and movies would increase tourism in Korea. The findings of Lee, Jung, Nathan, and Chung (2020) also reveal the same results, which reveal that consumers tend to learn about Korean products as part of their Asian identity. Similarly, the results also support the findings of Kim, Lee, and Kim (2020) that K-Dramas and movies have a positive effect on the image of foreign nationals. These results however contradict the findings of Vu and Lee (2013) where the participants had delusions about the glamor that is shown in K-dramas and movies.

Table 2. Level of Perception of K-Pop (N=101)

Category	Mean Value	Description	SD
K-Pop	2.79	Fairly Positive	.808

As Table 2 presents, the participants have a fairly positive perception about K-Pop. In a study by Lie (2012), people generally find the connection to the politeness, attractive appearance, and tender attitude of K-pop singers combined with the use of English Words and phrases. Similarly, a study conducted in Peru shows that K-Pop had a positive influence on the Peruvians, and has the potential to attract tourists to visit Korea (Bang, Joo, Seok & Nam, 2021). Another study in Japan also supports these findings, wherein the Japanese youths also positively perceive K-pop and was one of the most avid consumers of K-Pop products (Kozhakhmetova, 2012). Fandoms or a group of fans of K-Pop idols are also one of the driving forces that leads the positive and negative perceptions of K-Pop (Jang & Song, 2017).

Table 3. Level of Impact of the Korean Wave (N=101)

Category	Mean Value	Description	SD
Impact of Korean Wave	2.95	To an average extent	.7567

Table 3 reveals that the participants are impacted by the Korean Wave to an average extent. These results agree with the finding of Han and Lee (2008) which showed the great market for Korean products worldwide. The findings also backed the results of Yoon, Song, Ha, and Kim (2022), which presented that Korean products were still popular even in virtual consumption during the pandemic. Interest in learning the language has also resulted in the indirectly developing of Korean proto-lexicon among its consumers, especially within the Filipino community (Leon, Caparas, Caugma, Viduya, Pacheco, Estrada, & Dreishbach, 2022). These data strengthen the results that the Korean wave is a cultural hybrid that promotes hybridized cultures within the country it is imported (Lee et al., 2020; Dani & Bruno, 2015; Shim, 2006). Overall, these results also agree with the cultural proximity theory, which suggests that consumers choose media goods that are culturally comparable to their own (Straubhaar, 1991).

CONCLUSION

The Korean Wave phenomenon has swept the globe, including the Philippines. The Korean or Hallyu Wave has had an impact on these students' lives through the incorporation of Korean products into their daily consumption. Students' perceptions of the Korean wave have led to an interest in and understanding of Korean culture. Korean products such as 'BTS', 'Seventeen', '2ne1', 'The Penthouse', and 'Samgyup' becoming household names in Filipino households are examples of how Filipinos perceive K-dramas/movies, K-Pop, and Korean products in general. Future research should look into the political, economic, socio-cultural, and psychological effects of the Korean Wave on the Filipino community.

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