

KOREAN DRAMAS: VIEWING AND LIKING ON  
MALAYSIAN YOUTHS' BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

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**KOREAN DRAMAS: VIEWING AND LIKING ON MALAYSIAN  
YOUTHS' BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS**

By

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **KOREAN DRAMAS: VIEWING AND LIKING ON MALAYSIAN YOUTHS' BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS**

**LOKE JINGYI**

The purpose of this quantitative study is to examine the influence of South Korean dramas on behavioral intentions toward South Korea among Malaysian youth. Using the cultivation theory as a guideline, the influence of South Korean dramas on the viewers' behavioral intentions toward South Korea is explained using the watching, likings of South Korean drama and attitude toward South Korea. A total of 547 samples were collected from Malaysian youths via online survey through social media (Twitter). The results suggested that Malaysian youths' behavioral intentions toward Korea is positively influenced by the viewing, likings of South Korean dramas and attitude toward South Korea. The viewing and positive feelings toward South Korean dramas are able to yield positive attitude toward South Korea. Furthermore, attitude toward South Korea is found out to be a partial mediator in the indirect effect of viewing and likings of South Korean dramas. Implications of the study findings are discussed in this study.

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## APPROVAL SHEET

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**SUBMISSION OF DISSERTATION**

It is hereby certified that LOKE JINGYI (ID No: 16UMJ01156) has completed this dissertation entitled “Korean Dramas: Viewing and Liking On Malaysian Youths’ Behavioral Intentions” under the supervision of Dr. Santhidran a/l Sinnappan (Supervisor) from the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Creative Industries, and Mr. Thinavan a/l Periyayya (Co-Supervisor) from the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Creative Industries.

I understand that University will upload softcopy of my dissertation in pdf format into UTAR Institutional Repository, which may be made accessible to UTAR community and public.

Yours truly,

(LOKE JINGYI)

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the dissertation is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UTAR or other institutions.

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(LOKE JINGYI)

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of Study

Korean popular culture has been spreading widely around the world regardless of the difference in language and culture. Popular culture content can be spread through three pop cultural products, which are movies, television (TV) dramas and pop music (Shim, 2006). The cultural products from South Korea are exported to many countries, including Malaysia. The Korean wave had arrived in Malaysia since early 2000s (Aisyah, 2019). Korea popular music or better known as K-Pop can be easily heard through local radio stations. Nowadays, Korean dramas are air on local broadcasting stations and Korean movies can be watched in local cinemas. Malaysia has been importing Korea's cultural products and there are high demands in Malaysia. Not to mention, Malaysians are exposed to the South Korean contents not only through the traditional media, but also through new media nowadays. These types of exposure are easier and faster with the advanced technologies and social media. With the emergence of new media, the teaser or snippet of the Korean drama or K-Pop can be spread or shared through social media. Hence, by using the social media advantages, the South Korea is able to promote their popular culture products to wider audiences and also reach the consumers faster by overcoming

the geographical borders. Through this method of “advertising”, they can get people to be interested in watching Korean dramas or listen to K-Pop.

There is abundance of Korean popular culture contents readily available to the consumers in Malaysia. Consumers are now able to access to movies, dramas, variety shows and pop music through online and also offline. As the South Korean culture is becoming more popular and the demand are increasing, it is easy to find South Korean culture content online. Malaysia consumer can get access to the Korean popular culture content from online and with subtitles readily available. As for offline, local broadcasting stations, regardless of TV stations or radio stations, have added Korean contents (Korean dramas, movies, variety shows and music) to their broadcasting schedules. Nevertheless, in this study, we will be solely focusing on one of the pop culture’s product, which is the South Korean drama.

A research done by Samsudin (2005) reported that 100% of Malaysian teenagers watched television, 59% of teenagers watched satellite television and 91% of all teenagers own a personal computer and surfed the internet. Meanwhile, research done by Baboo et al. (2013) on young people and new media in Malaysia, found that television (96.2%), mobile phone (90.8%) and computer or laptop (87.4%) are the top three new media tools present in the young people’s home. As South Korean media can be accessed effortlessly through broadcasting stations and internet, youths in Malaysia are seen engaging in Korean wave. According to Zailin et al. (2014), Korean popular



culture had been absorbed into Malaysian teenager life. The popular trend was seen by the popularity of South Korean culture products, not only restricted to drama and music, but also food, fashion, beauty products and language. For instance, the popularity of K-Pop in Malaysia is well-known among the youths. The youths are forming dance groups to cover K-Pop dance, attending K-Pop idols fan-meetings and concerts organized in Malaysia or neighboring countries (Lim, 2015). The popularity of Korean dramas is overwhelming as well, with fan-meetings of actors or actresses are always filled with fans. The fans can be seen waiting at the venue for hours to catch a good spot to see their beloved idols or even just to catch a glimpse of them. From these situations, we can see that Malaysian youths that are influenced by the Korean wave are willing to spend their time and money for other country's cultural products.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

The increase popularity of television dramas in the East Asian television industry was seen since early of 1970s' (Wahab et al., 2013). It is not unusual when television drama is one of the major entertainment's sources for Malaysian audiences. Television dramas from the ASEAN countries such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan and South Korea are being imported and are well accepted by the audiences (Wahab et al., 2013). As mentioned by Latiffah et al., Asian dramas are seemed to be more appealing as compared to Hollywood dramas because Malaysian audiences found that Asian dramas' storylines and themes are more relevant to their daily live (as cited in Wahab et al., 2013).

When Korean wave hit Malaysia in early 2000s', South Korean media have become popular in Malaysia and Korean dramas have been aired on national television station. Since then Korean dramas have become popular among Malaysian audiences due to the influence of Korean wave.

Despite the language difference, Korean dramas are accepted into Malaysia society because of the culture similarity shown in dramas with Malaysia culture. Korean dramas touch on human sensitivity, such as lifestyle, value and family, which are familiar to the Asian's audiences. These approaches and strategies used in the drama to attract audiences are successful to make Korean dramas popular in the overseas (Ariffin et al., 2018). Malaysian audiences are able to feel satisfied emotionally compared to the Western drama due to the culture familiarity and similarity. Hence, Korean dramas have a better chance to be broadcasted in Malaysia (Ariffin et al., 2018).

Now, Malaysian audiences not only can watch Korean dramas on television, but on online platform as well. With the advance of digital media, Malaysian audiences can easily get access to Korean media, including Korean drama. They can watch the media anytime and anywhere they want using their digital devices. This will allow Malaysians to engage with Korean dramas for a longer period without having to depend on the television airing time. When the audiences' engagement with Korean drama increased, their interest in Korean culture will also increase over the time (Ariffin et al., 2018). As a consequence, the increased interest has sparked admiration for the Korean culture, language

and fashion among the younger generation. Besides having interest in the Korean culture, the views towards South Korea has also become better. According to Cho (2010), Malaysians have developed favourable views toward South Korean society through Korean dramas consumption. A research by Yoo et al. (2014) had showed that the viewing of drama was able to produce positive attitude toward the country of origin and yield a high level of behavioral changes.

South Korean products and brands are no more foreign to Malaysians as Korean wave is accepted into the country. South Korean well-known brands for cosmetics, fashion and food, can be found in Malaysia retail markets, such as Innisfree, SPAO and Samyang Foods. Malaysia's local food brand have also embraced the popularity of Korean food in Malaysia by releasing their own product with Korean themed (Aisyah, 2019). This shows that Malaysians consumption on South Korean products have been increasing and are becoming a trend in Malaysia.

Malaysia was mentioned as one of the countries that contribute to South Korea's tourism. Teh and Goh's (2016) research on Malaysians has found out that Korean dramas are able to motivate potential tourists to visit South Korea. Korean dramas are able to induce tourism as the viewers will feel likely to visit the destinations that are associated with the dramas and to experience the culture. Korean dramas are a good marketing channel to market and promote their country as a tourism destination (Lin & Huang, 2008). This shows that Korean drama have the ability to influence their viewers to visit their country.

According to Teh and Goh (2016), Korean drama-induced tourism does not promise tourist satisfaction for Malaysian tourists. But Korean dramas can act as a cultural platform to provide familiarity for the destination before their trip (Teh & Goh, 2016).

With Korean pop culture becoming a trend in Malaysia, this study can give insight on the influence of Korean wave in terms of Korean dramas among the youth population. Cho (2010) had mentioned that there was a possibility where the Korean wave trend was able to cause changes to Malaysians' way of thinking and living. Malaysians are able to gain information of the thinking and living way of South Korean from Korean drama, films and entertainers (Cho, 2010). In this case, teenagers may begin to lose or alter their original national cultural identity as they incorporate other country's culture they favored into their lives. A study done by Ainslie (2016) on the Korean drama effect among contemporary Thai consumers showed that those Thai Korean drama fans had constructed "Koreanness" and incorporated it into their lives. These had changed their construction and discourses of "Thainess".

Furthermore, the younger generation had shown high appreciation towards Korean culture, language and fashion due to the South Korean drama popularity in Malaysia (Ariffin, 2016). Another study done on Algerian Fans also showed that Korean wave had impacted their daily discourse, where they had employed Korean elements into their speeches and slowly applying different pronunciations of some English sounds (Touhami & Al-Haq, 2017). This could

become a concern as the existing youth culture in Malaysia might change due to the Korean popular culture influence. As a consequence, the National culture conserved by the Government will be affected and Malaysia culture will lose its original identity. Therefore, there is a need to study the Korean dramas watching youths to understand their behaviours toward South Korea.

### **1.3 Study Objectives and Significance of Study**

This study aims:

**RO1** To determine the influence of Korean drama from the aspect of viewing and liking on Malaysian youths' viewers' behavioral intentions

Earlier, Malaysia's culture and media content were seen to be influenced by the Western culture due to the globalization (Adlina, 2005). Subsequently, Japanese pop culture became popular in Malaysia due to the popularity of Japanese animation (anime), Japanese comic (manga), Japanese drama and Japanese music (Lim, 2015; Yamato et al., 2011). But after Korean wave hit Malaysia in the 2000s', Korean pop culture became popular and Malaysia youths were seen engaging in the Korean wave. So, it is important to understand the viewing and liking behaviors of the Korean dramas viewers to understand the influence of Korean dramas.

Youth at the age of 10 to 24 years old are at the stage of changing from child into adult. This is the stage where they are searching for identity, as well as learning and discovering new things (Adlina, 2005). In short, the youths are most vulnerable and easily influenced during this stage. They get their influence from their peers and also from the media they are exposed to. With Korean wave popularity in Malaysia, more Malaysians are interested in Korea's society and culture, which include language and lifestyles (Cho, 2010). With the high interest in Korean popular culture, the youths will surely come to understand and accept the Korean culture, even it is not taught by their own family or the society they live in. Not to mentioned, they can easily obtain information from the internet due to the technology's advancement.

This study also aims:

**RO2** To determine whether the attitude toward the country of origin mediates the proposed cultivation effect on Malaysian Korean drama viewers' behavioral intentions

A variable is called a mediator when it accounts for the relation between the predictor and criterion (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Preacher & Hayes, 2004; Solimun & Fernandes, 2017). Viewing of media in a long period of time was suggested to influence and cause changes in viewer's behaviors. Nonetheless, the cultivation effect could be influenced or explained by some mediating

factors. Han's (1990) research had viewed the role of country image in consumer choice behaviors as a "halo". While Son and Kijboonchoo's (2016) research has suggested country of origin as an important mediator for the Korean wave influence on Korean products purchase intentions. As media was suggested to impact the attitude toward the country of origin and then further affecting the viewer's behaviors, the attitude toward country of origin could be the mediator variable in this relationship. Determining the mediating mechanism in behavioral study can help to understand indirect relationship better. By acknowledging the presence of mediating variable, the additional variable in the indirect relationship can be judged whether its involvement achieve its effects and also understand the impact on the behavioral change (Solimun & Fernandes, 2017).

Furthermore, this study aim:

**RO3** To determine the viewers' behavioral intentions instead of behavioral changes.

Studies have suggested that media can influence viewers and cause changes in their behaviors (Hasegawa, 2006; Kim et al., 2009; Su et al., 2011; Namdar et al., 2013; Yoo et al., 2014; Josiam et al., 2015; Koksai & Gjiana, 2015; Wu & Wang, 2017). The effect of cultivation was believed to show after years of slow build-up of heavy television viewing according to Gerbner

(Griffin, 2009). Hence, behaviors changes may not occur instantly or within a short period. So, instead of focusing on behavioral changes, behavioral intentions will be the main subject in this study. This study will not be focusing on a particular behavior, but has also included possible behavior intentions formed from the effect of South Korean drama. The intentions include visiting or returning to South Korea, learning Korean language, having a Korean friend, purchasing Korean cultural and commercial products.

Through this study, the possible behavioral intentions towards South Korea formed by watching Korean dramas among Malaysian youths can be determined. Furthermore, this study will determine the role of the attitude towards South Korea among Malaysian youths' viewers in the cultivation effect. This will be benefited when understanding the influence of foreign media, considering the foreign media is able to influence viewers' behaviors despite of the cultural differences and language barrier. This study will also able to give insight to the demand and interest in South Korea and Korean culture among the Korean drama watching youths in Malaysia.



## **1.4 Concept and Terminology**

### **1.4.1 Human Behavior**

Behavioral studies have been a general research area for researchers who are interested in understanding human behaviors. According to the Business Dictionary online, human behavior is defined as the capacity of mental, physical, emotional and social activities experienced during the life of a human being and can be influenced by culture, society, values, morals, ethics and genetics (“Human Behavior”, n.d.). Thus, it is true that human behaviors are able to be influenced by different factors such as peers, adult and media. Humans tend to change their behavior after being exposed to the factors for a period of time.

### **1.4.2 Behavioral Changes vs. Behavioral Intentions**

According to Merriam-Webster online, change was defined as to make completely different or to make a shift (“Change”, n.d.). Therefore, behavioral changes mean a shift or difference in the behavior compare to the previous behavior shown. Behaviors influence by media may not show instant difference, but rather slowly and gradually. Furthermore, the time taken to show changes in the behaviors can be different for each person and also depends on the person thinking and acceptance. Hence, if we were to determine and certify that a

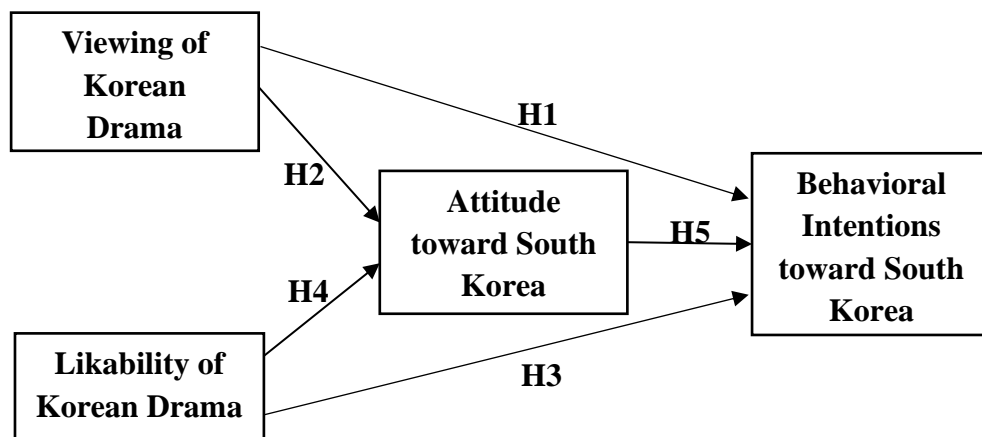
person do have behavioral changes, it will be a long-term research and required follow up with the subject of research. Besides, we could not determine whether the behaviors changes occurred will remain as interest can be changed after a period of time.

On the other hand, intention is defined as a determination to act in a certain way or what a person intent to do (“Intention”, n.d.). Changes in the viewer’s behaviors are not necessarily needed to occur after getting influenced. The behaviors show can be simply only a thought of the respondents unless they decide to do it. According to Swan, a person’s anticipated or planned future behavior can be described as behavioral intentions (as cited in Lam & Hsu, 2006). In this case, behavioral intention will be more appropriate for the study rather than behavioral changes. This is because thinking and feelings yielded from watching Korean dramas are more likely to form intentions first rather than changes. For example, viewers who are influenced by Korean dramas will develop interests in South Korea, Korean language and Korea products. These generated interests will then influence their behavior into learning Korean language or buying their cultural products (music or movie). However, for younger viewers’ they may not be financially able to perform certain acts that required money and will need the support from the adult. For example, visiting to South Korea and purchasing Korean goods. As such, the viewers may not be able to show any behavior changes due to certain factor. Therefore, research that are not long term, intentions will be the better selection to capture the influence on the viewers. Behavioral intentions will be able to reflect the recent behaviors better than the changes. Moreover, a specific change does not need to

occur and it can be their thinking or feeling. By looking at the intentions rather than changes, the viewers do not need to be an avid fan of Korean drama to be qualified as a respondent for this study. No confirmation of their behavioral changes is required. Thus, in this study, instead of determining the respondents' behavioral changes influenced by Korean drama, the behavioral intentions will be determined.

## 1.5 Conceptual Framework

**Figure 1.1**  
**Conceptual Model**



The conceptual model for this study was constructed as shown in Figure 1.1.

### **1.5.1 Viewing of Drama**

Researches have supported the idea that media, such as films, TV series and shows have the ability to influence their viewers and cause them to take on certain attitudes towards the country of origin (Su et al., 2011; Lita & Cho, 2012; Köksal & Gjana, 2015). Drama not only give entertainment, but also channel messages and promote brand to their viewers (Huang, 2009). By watching Korean dramas, viewers are not only gaining entertainment, but also knowledge about South Korea and their culture. Foreign viewers engaging with Korean dramas over a period of time will become familiar with them and can influence their behaviors. Therefore, it is important to identify the amount of viewing to proof the behavioral change.

### **1.5.2 Likability of Drama**

Summarization of a viewing experience evaluation is known as the program likings (Murry et al., 1992). These feelings and likings of a viewer are important as it can influence the viewers' viewing experience. Rather than just watching a drama, there is a cognitive process going on when watching the drama. The outcome from cognitive process undergo by the viewer will decide whether they do enjoy and like the drama they watched. The positive feelings of the viewers can be developed by the storyline or due to the characters in the drama (Russell et al., 2006). According to Murry et al. (1992), the positively

liking of a program can influence viewers' attitude toward advertisement or brand. This is because when the viewers positively engage with the drama, they show positive attitude toward drama's characters or the actors and actresses, places shown in the drama and as well as the culture shown in the drama (Chang, 2015; Wu & Wang, 2017). These positive feelings will then influence the viewer's behaviors.

In Wu and Wang's (2017) research, they had studied the relationship of likability of Korean dramas toward the premium of Korean products and travel intention. The likability of the drama was suggested to influence the viewer's attitude toward the country of origin. Lee et al.'s research (2015) suggested that likability of drama had a positive relation with country of origin image and the positive image able to influence the consumer's preference on restaurant. These show that the outcome of the likability of the drama suggested is similar to the viewing of drama outcome proposed by the cultivation effect.

### **1.5.3 Attitude toward Country of Origin**

Scholars that researched on the media effect on behavioral changes had mentioned about the attitude toward the media's origin country. This is because the country of origin (COO) of a product is able to influence viewer's behaviors, such as perception or attitude toward the country and purchasing behavior (Lita & Cho, 2012). It is called the country of origin effect. The COO effect theory

explained that the acceptance of the product is determined by the attitudes of the viewer toward the product's origin country (Lita & Cho, 2012). Viewers are able to formed perception toward the country of origin by watching dramas. This is because a country's social, culture and economic can be reflected through a drama (Su et al., 2011).

Korean dramas can be a channel for foreigners to be familiar with the country. When the foreign viewers watch the media over the time, they gradually will become familiar with the country of origin. As told by researchers, television drama is identified as the most successful tool to arouse interest of foreign viewers in the origin's country (as cited in Lee et al., 2015). This is because television drama leads the viewers to become familiar with the country of origin through a familiarization process (Lee et al., 2015). On the long run, the viewers will be able to formed attitude and perception, and connection towards the country through the country's image portrayed in the dramas. Tsai and Lu's (2012) study had suggested that the likings of Korean dramas can lead to viewer connectedness and positive attitude toward South Korea. Korean dramas are also able to improve their country's image among the foreign viewers (Hasegawa, 2006; Cho, 2010).

As the foreign viewers become more familiar with the country of origin, they will accept the country's culture. A country's culture can be seen through a drama as they are based on a country's various dimension, such as culture, social, historical and political (Su et al., 2011). In this case, the cultures are

seen as the messages or values in the Korean drama. After accepting the cultural values of the Korean dramas, the viewers will have a positive attitude toward the origin country – South Korea. Suh et al. (2016) had mentioned that acceptance of one's country culture was able to develop positive attitude toward that country. This includes the country's companies and products. The positive attitude then will produce purchase intentions for the country's product (Suh et al., 2016).

There is a possibility where the attitude toward the country of origin can act as a mediator in the effect of Korean drama on Malaysian viewers' behaviors. The viewing and liking of program were suggested to influence the viewers' perception and attitude toward the country of origin (Yoo et al., 2014; Köksal & Gjana, 2015; Lee et al., 2015; Wu & Wang, 2017). In addition, previous researches have also found out that the country image play a role as mediator in influencing consumer behaviors (Han, 1990; Son & Kijboonchoo, 2016). Therefore, the attitude toward South Korea could play a mediating role in the indirect effect of the media viewing and likability as discussed in this study.

#### **1.5.4 Media Impact on Behaviors**

Human behaviors can be changed due to factors or influences. One of the general influencers for the human behaviors is media and this topic has been discussed in media study for years. Over the years, researches have been done

and suggested that media can influence the behaviors of people. According to DellaVigna and Gentzkow, media can influence people by changing their belief and have direct influence on the behavior through persuasion (as cited in Enikolopov & Petrova, 2018). Media provide information to their viewer through different model such as informative and advertising, where the information provided through these models are assumed as accurate (Enikolopov & Petrova, 2018).

As suggested by Gerbner and Gross (1976), viewing media showing violence can lead a person to become violent after getting expose for a period of time. This is due to the cultivation effect as viewers will more likely to believe the reality constructed by the media shown after watching it for a period of time. West and Turner (2014) had suggested that televisions shaped the way of thinking and relating of the society. Television is also able to bring different group of people together and let them forget their differences for the time being (West & Turner, 2014). This statement is especially true when viewers are watching media from a foreign country when the culture portrayed and language used are usually different. Media are still able to influence their viewers regardless of their origin country. In this case, the South Korean media, especially Korean dramas and K-pop are the best examples to show the influence of media on their overseas viewers.

Before a decision is made or has an attitude changed, a person will undergo a thinking process and eventually will only has the decision made. A



cognitive process will take place before the person starting to act a particular behavior. The ways human think and make decisions undergo a series of process and it is influenced by different factors. Using the elaboration likelihood model as a guideline, for an attitude to change there are two routes mentioned by Petty and Cacioppo in 1986, which are the central route and peripheral routes (as cited in Severin & Tankard, 2014). The route will be depending on the persuasion that taken place. Considering Korean drama as a media, which can influence the viewers to show change in attitude, persuasion should have taken place after they watched the drama. As the Korean drama watched is more of an entertainment source and they do not hold any strong argument, the persuasion on the viewers will most likely undergo the peripheral route. Persuasion that undergo the peripheral route do not need to have thoughtful consideration on the message shared (Severin & Tankard, 2014).

Pervan and Martin's study had mentioned that one of the successful advertising venues is soap operas or also known as dramas (as cited in Köksal & Gjana, 2015). This shows that Korean drama is not only providing entertainment for their viewers, they are actually also function as an advertising tool for businesses to promote their brands and products indirectly through product placement (Huang, 2009). According to Brennan et al., product placement enables brands to appear in the background (as cited in Su et al., 2011). By placing branded product in the drama, the overseas viewers get to expose to the Korean brand. By considering South Korea country as a brand, the places or tourist spot in the country are also promoted. This is why South Korea is able to boost their tourism and increase sales in their Korean brand

products. Compared to normal advertising, this type of product placement advertising is able to create a friendlier image with their natural appearance in the media for the products and brand (Chae & Sun, 2013). Through this type of marketing, the avid viewers are getting promotion on Korean brands shown in the Korean dramas. Besides, Korean dramas also can be viewed as a source to gain knowledge about the Korean culture, language and people. Viewers from other countries are able to learn the Korean culture and understand them. This can lead them to be interested to experience the culture themselves by visiting the country, getting to know the people from the country and trying their products. Hence, it is not surprising that this type of media can influence viewers' lifestyle, purchasing habits, brand preference and also enhancing the country of origin's image (Cho & Agrusa, 2007; O'Connor et al., 2008; Köksal & Gjina, 2015)

As they become familiar with the South Korea country and Korean brands, viewers who love Korean dramas will normally get positive feelings toward the products. These feelings will then influence their thinking and decision making in life. For example, Korean dramas can influence them in choosing Korean food when deciding on which restaurant they want to visit for their meal (Lee et al., 2015). Besides, when thinking of a country to visit in the near future or adding a country into their travel list, they may consider South Korea. The tourist spots they would like to go when visiting South Korea could be the filming locations from their favorite Korean drama (Su et al., 2011; Wu & Wang, 2017). Interest to know about South Korea and Korean culture can become stronger after being an avid-fan of Korean dramas. Furthermore, they

could get knowledge on the Korean culture and perhaps learn some simple Korean language through the Korean dramas they watched. Generally, Korean drama viewers or fans will tend to favor stuffs related to South Korea. As the viewers become more engaged in the Korean dramas and culture, their behaviors can be influenced. They may be keener toward Korean culture than their own origin culture.

Nevertheless, sometimes media influence may not be able to cause exact change in the viewer's behaviors and is just present as thoughts at that time. This form of thoughts can be considered as behavioral intentions. Behavioral intentions are the person's behaviors that intend to show or might show in the future. The intentions formed can reflect the determination for them to act on the particular behaviors. Hence, behavioral intentions can justify the Korean dramas have impact on the behaviors when the viewers show positive intentions toward South Korea. As an example, if a viewer has positive feelings toward South Korea and has positive behavioral intentions towards South Korea after watching Korean drama, it can be concluded that watching Korean dramas do cause impact on the viewer's behavior. Yoo et al.'s (2014) had also used behavioral intentions in their study of South Korean drama viewing effect. So, in this study, the behavioral intention will explain the respondents' possible behaviors that may occur after watching Korean dramas.

## 1.6 Research Question and Hypotheses

Referring to the literature review discussed in this study, viewing of drama and likability of drama is said to be able to create a positive attitude toward the COO. The positive attitude towards the COO will then produce positive consumer behaviors toward the country. It is expected that the factor can be the mediating factor for the indirect effect of viewing of South Korean drama and likability of Korean drama on behavioral intentions toward South Korea. Seeing this as the gap in media effect research, the key research question of this study is as below:

- Can viewing and liking of Korean drama influence the behavioral intentions towards South Korea with attitude toward South Korea acting as mediator among Malaysian youths?

The hypotheses for this study have been identified as below:

**H1** There is a positive relationship between viewing of Korean drama and behavioral intentions toward South Korea.

**H2** There is a positive relationship between viewing of Korean drama and attitude toward South Korea.

- H3** There is a positive relationship between likability of South Korean drama and behavioral intentions toward South Korea.
- H4** There is a positive relationship between likability of South Korean drama and attitude toward South Korea
- H5** There is a positive relationship between attitude toward South Korea and behavioral intentions toward South Korea.
- H6** Attitude toward South Korea act as mediation factor for positive relationship between viewing of Korean drama and behavioral intentions toward South Korea
- H7** Attitude toward South Korea act as mediation factor for positive relationship between likability of Korean drama and behavioral intentions toward South Korea

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Malaysian Youths

Youths or teenagers are also known as adolescents who are between childhood and adulthood. There are different age ranges proposed for definition of teenagers. In most societies and cultures, adolescence mostly begins during age of 10 to 13 years old and ends around 18 to 22 years old. Connell et al. (1975) had differentiated the adolescents into three sub-stages, which were early adolescence (between 10 to 14 years old), middle adolescence (15 to 17 years old) and late adolescence (18 until early 20 years old). Meanwhile, Curtis (2015) had suggested three sub-stages, which were early adolescence (11 to 13 years old), adolescence (14 to 17 years old) and young adult (18 to 25 years old).

Since this study is targeting Malaysian youths, we will then be following the age range proposed in Malaysia Youth Policy (MYP). According to Institute for Youth Research Malaysia (IYRES), the age range for youth are between 15 to 40 years old. However, the age range will be decreased to 30 years following the implementation of Malaysian Youth Policy in 2018 (Institute for Youth Research Malaysia, 2016). The age range proposed can be categorized into three

groups, which are early youth who are still schooling (15 to 18 years old), middle youth who are in higher education or working (19 to 24 years old) and late youth who are mostly in the working world (25 to 30 years). The age categorization is proposed to improve the implementation of youth development program for the specific age group by the government (Institute for Youth Research Malaysia, 2016).

According to The Malaysian Reserve's report in May 2019, Syed Saddiq Syed Abdul Rahman, the current Youth and Sport Minister had mentioned that the proposed amendments to the interpretation of youth in the Youth Societies and Youth Development Act 2007 (Act 668) will be tabled in the Dewan Rakyat in 2019 (Kumar & Zainuddin, 2019). The amendment on the age was proposed to minimize the generation gap, hasten youth maturity and minimize risk behavior in youth groups. In July 2019, the age for youth has been successful amended by lowering the age from 40 years old to 30 years old (Yunus & Landau, 2019).

Youth can be said to be easily influenced by what they see from media as they are still learning and exploring new things. At this stage they are still forming their identities (Adlina, 2005). As Korean pop culture become more popular and South Korea becomes a trend, the youths will get to know about it and may shape their identity by following the South Korea's culture. The said Korean popular culture had been absorbed into Malaysian teenager life (Zailin et al., 2014). Taking note that students are part of the youth group, researchers

have suggested that students will most likely to be involved with the drama characters and plot, as well as viewing the media as a behavioral guidance source (Carveth & Alexander, 1985; Lemish, 1985; Rubin, 1985; Perse, 1986). Therefore, it is important to identify the behavior intentions of the youths from the influence of South Korean drama.

## **2.2 Korean Wave**

Korean wave or the Hallyu has been spreading widely to other countries and has become well-known globally today. This Korean wave or Hallyu is referred to the Korean popular culture that is spreading to the oversea countries. This term was actually introduced in the middle of year 1998 by the Chinese news media to describe the Chinese youths' craze on the Korean cultural products (Kim, 2013). South Korea has managed to emerge as new center for the transnational popular culture production since the late 1990s. Starting from then, they have been exporting their own media product to overseas, such as Japan, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and United States (Kim, 2007).

The Korean wave was first started by the popularity of Korean drama. Since then, the exportation of Korean products has grown bigger. Not only the Korean drama was being exported but also other cultural products such as K-Pop, films, online games, fashion, cosmetics, food and also lifestyle. Furthermore, the number of foreign tourists visiting South Korea have seen a



significant increase in these years. This was made possible when the consumers of Korean cultural product become interested in South Korea and especially after watching South Korean dramas. The Korean drama viewers traveled to South Korea to visit the filming location of their favorite South Korean dramas (Kim, 2013).

As the digital media era take place, Korean wave was able to benefit from the change. The use of internet and online marketing was able to help Korea to promote their Korean contents better through the social media platforms, such as Youtube, Facebook and Twitter. According to Kim (2013), these platforms are the key roles in expanding the cultural wave to Asia, United State, Europe and other part of the world. One of the significant histories to show the global popularity of the Korean media during the Korean wave is when ‘Gangnam Style’ a song sung by Psy, a South Korean singer, became viral on social media. The music video has become the most watched video on Youtube in 2012. He has become a global phenomenon with the song and his signature house-riding dance move. There are also English-based websites that share news relating to the Korean popular culture on social media, which are Allkpop.com and Soompi.com. These two websites readers are Korean popular culture fans from all over the world. Hence, foreign fans can understand and get updated what is happening in the South Korea entertainment industry. Not to mentioned, subtitles are also available in English, Chinese and et cetera for Korean drama, K-pop and other content that are uploaded on the internet. These subtitles are sometimes created by the fans to help the foreign fans to understand the Korean contents and thus closing the language barrier. This could be the

reason why Korean wave is able to establish strong interest in foreign countries for years, even though their national language is different (Kim, 2013).

Until today, the Korean wave is still able to exist and gaining more fan around the world. This can be proven as over the period of time, South Korean actors, actresses and idol groups had managed to make their name into the Western entertainment industry. South Korean actors and actresses were starred in Western films. Idol group was invited as guest to perform on Western shows. For example, Lee Byung Hun, a South Korean actor had acted in Hollywood movie, G.I. Joe (year 2009 and 2013) and The Magnificent Seven (year 2016) (IMDb, n.d.). Meanwhile, in the recent years, Bangtan Boys or better known as BTS, an idol group from South Korea have been making their name well-known globally. They were invited to Western awards ceremonies such as Billboard Music Awards, Grammy Awards and American Music Awards. BTS were invited to perform on stage and present award to winner at the event. During the events, they also have managed to win a few awards. They have won the Top Social Artist from the Billboard Music Award in 2017, 2018 and 2019, and Top Duo or Group in 2019 beating other artists nominated in the category which are mostly American artists (Lipshutz, 2017; Cirisano, 2018; Herman, 2019). This has shown that South Korean artists are gaining the attention of the foreign entertainment industry with the spreading of Korean wave.

### **2.3 Malaysia Engaging in Korean Wave**

As mentioned above, a culture of other country can be spread to another country through their cultural product, which includes pop music, drama and movie (Shim, 2006). This is how South Korea was able to start a Korean wave globally by exporting their cultural products to many countries and getting foreigners to become interested in them. Malaysia is one of the countries that is exposed to the Korean culture's characteristics through the Korean cultural products (Cho, 2010).

Park had reported that Malaysia and South Korea relations have been friendly and cooperative since they established diplomatic relations in 1960 (as cited in Cho, 2010). Both of the countries are mutually important trading partners (Cho, 2010). Naturally, Korean dramas will be imported into Malaysia. Since the early 2000s', Malaysians have started taking interest in South Korea and engaging in Korean wave when *Winter Sonata* and *Autumn in My Heart*, which are the popular Korean dramas during that time, was introduced to Malaysian viewers through television (Cho, 2010; Aisyah, 2019). *Winter Sonata* was the first Korean drama aired in Malaysia through a local broadcasting station, TV3 in 2002. In order to overcome the language barrier during that time, the drama aired in Malaysia was dubbed in Mandarin and was aired with Malay subtitle. Since this drama received good responses from viewer, the drama was later released in VCD and DVD format by PMP entertainment. The title of the drama was written in Malay for the VCD and

DVD release, named 'Kisah Cinta Musim Salji'. In addition, a cover version for the Winter Sonata's theme song was released in Malay language (Liz, 2007). Winter Sonata was a popular South Korean drama not only in South Korea, but also in every Asia countries it had broadcasted. It was aired in 2002 in South Korea. This South Korean drama was said to be the most significant trendsetters of Korean wave (Kim et al., 2009). This is how Korean wave was able to spread globally and people started to take interest in South Korea.

According to Media Prima TV Networks' Sales and Strategy Director, Nini Yusof, Malaysians are always open to foreign shows, whether it is Japanese, Spanish or Mexican series (as cited in Begum, 2019). South Korean dramas are more popular in Malaysia as compare to other foreign dramas. This is mainly because of their relatable storyline and Asian values that can connect with their viewers emotionally (Begum, 2019). Korea dramas' storyline are mostly relatable to real-life. They normally portray family values, love and small violence that is more comfortable and daily life related as compared to Western drama (Ariffin, 2016). As mentioned by Hogarth, South Korean television drama apply universal human themes that are able to relate to different cultural background viewers (as cited in Ariffin, 2016). When viewers recognize similarity between them and the characters or the story in the drama, they will become engage in the drama (Ariffin, 2016). Hence, explain the popularity of South Korean drama in Malaysia.

When the Korean wave first started in Malaysia, there are only a few channels, i.e. TV3, 8TV, TV9 and Astro that broadcast South Korean dramas (Begum, 2019). Nowadays, Malaysians are able to enjoy South Korean dramas not only from free-to-air TV and cable TV, but also through online streaming from various websites. Currently, Malaysia's free-to-air channels, such as TV2, NTV7 and 8TV have been airing Korean dramas on their channels. Moreover, Malaysia's local satellite television provider, Astro had installed KBS World (CH 391), KBS World HD (CH 392), One HD (CH 393), Oh!K HD (CH 394), tvN (CH395) and tvN Movies (CH435) to cater to their subscribers' preference on South Korean television programs. This had shown that there are market demands for Korean programs on Malaysia's television channel. Furthermore, through the Internet, Malaysians are able to watch South Korean drama online through various online streaming services. For example, online websites such as, Netflix, dimsum, VIU and MyAsianTV provide South Korean dramas streaming on their website with English subtitle and can be watched for free or with paid membership (Begum, 2019). Not to mentioned, the Korean dramas provided on the websites are up-to-date and new episodes are updated fairly quick. The Korean drama fans-base in Malaysia become bigger continuously can be due to the convenience in accessing to South Korean drama and the increase on the engagement.

As Korean wave take over in Malaysia, Korea popular music can be heard through local radio stations, Korean drama is aired on local broadcasting stations and Korean movie can be watched in local cinema. This means that Malaysia has been importing Korea's cultural products to cater to the demands

in Malaysia. Besides the cultural products that are being imported into Malaysia, Korean products such as cosmetics products, food and fashion are also imported into Malaysia. South Korean brands are becoming familiar and can be considered no longer foreign to Malaysians anymore. Korean products can be seen and found easily in Malaysia. This can be due to the effect of product placement in South Korean drama, movies, music video and etc. The product placement has managed to attract the attention and increased the interest of the viewers to try out and purchase the product.

Korean brands are becoming more popular and its demand are increasing in Malaysia. For example, restaurant selling Korean food or South Korean franchise restaurant such as Kyochon 1991 and Mr Dakgalbi have branches in Klang Valley (Aisyah, 2019). As for South Korean cosmetic brand, a few popular South Korean cosmetic brands such as Innisfree, Laneige and Etude House have opened a few branches in shopping centers around Klang Valley area. Meanwhile, SPAO and Shoopon which are the South Korea's clothing brands are also found selling in Klang Valley shopping centers. These have shown the Korean wave has brought changes to the economies in Malaysia, where Malaysians begin to prefer Korean food, Korean goods and South Korea as a tourist place (Cho, 2010).

In 2016, AirAsia Group Bhd, Malaysia's low fares airline has also embraced the Korean wave by sponsoring a South Korean drama, named *On the Way to the Airport* by Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) (AirAsia, 2016;

Aisyah, 2019). The filming for the scenes in the aviation industry and Kuala Lumpur was reported to be fully sponsored by AirAsia (Airasia, 2016). Not to mentioned, some of the popular food brands in Malaysia have also introduced new flavor with Korean taste for their products to attract customers who are interested in Korean food. Malaysia fast food chains have joined in the bandwagon. In 2017, McDonald's Malaysia has introduced the 'Spicy Korean Burger' and was recently brought back into their menu again. Meanwhile, Domino previously has also introduced their Samyang flavored pizza when the craze of Korea Samyang Spicy Noodles took over Malaysia. In addition, Nestle (M) Bhd has also released 'Royale Korean Spicy Braised Beef', a Korean related instant noodle under their Maggie Brand. While Mamee-Double Decker (M) Sdn Bhd has gone to the extend to collaborate with Shinsegae Food Inc, a South Korean company to introduce a series of Korean noodles, named 'The Daebak' ramen (Aisyah, 2019).

As South Korea is leading the popular trend, South Korean brand regardless for IT products, fashion apparels and beauty products have become the center of attention for Korea pop culture lovers or fans (Leong, 2014). In order to attract more customers, most of the Korean brands have ambassadors who are famous in the entertainment industry, such as Korean idol, actor or actress. These celebrities are normally idolized by the teenagers. For example, South Korean cosmetic, Mamonde, uses Park Shin Hye – a well-known actress as their ambassador. Park Shin Hye has acted in numerous popular dramas, such as Autumn in My Heart, He's Beautiful and Doctors. When the actress came to Malaysia to promote the launching of Mamonde in Malaysia, it was reported

more than 2000 fans, consisting of male and female young adults, had gathered at the event (Bibi, 2016). This showed that Korean dramas are popular in Malaysia.

Since 2012, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Korea and Korea Broadcasting System (KBS) have been organizing a quiz show called Quiz on South Korea yearly and the participants are gathered globally (The Korea Herald, 2012). This is an annual international public diplomacy program. This program aims to generate interest and create image of foreigners on South Korea (Korea.net, 2012). The quiz show tests the participants on their general knowledge on South Korea (The Korea Herald, 2012). There are participants coming from different countries and backgrounds, including Malaysia. This has shown that people around the globe has been interested in Korean culture. Malaysia has representatives that are able to participate in the final which was held at South Korea for some years. In 2018, Malaysia representative was able to become the winner of the show (Anuar, 2018; Korean Embassy in Malaysia, 2018). This showed that there are Malaysians who are interested in the Korean culture. It is fascinating to see how a country's culture can become popular and is accepted into other countries regardless of its cross-cultural difference and language.



## 2.4 Cultivation Theory

The main theory involved when discussing about television viewing effect on viewer is cultivation theory developed by Gerbner in 1969 (as cited in Lita & Cho, 2012). Television viewing was said to have strong impact on people's everyday lives by different researchers (as cited in Kim et al., 2009). This theory is used to explain the effect of prolonged television watching effect on the viewer. Heavy viewers are most likely to reflect what they have seen on television compare to light viewers (Gerbner et al., 1986). People who watch television extensively tends to believe the media content portrayed is a reality (Namdar et al., 2013).

Gerbner and Gross (1976) had used this theory to explain watching television effect on violence. Viewing violence on television on a prolong period was said to cause the viewers to become violent (Gerbner & Gross, 1976). The behavioral change is said to be occurred because the viewers will learn and act accordingly to what they seen from the media they watched as they perceived the media shown as reality (Gerbner et al., 1986). Television programs, such as dramas were aired for entertainment purposes. The drama storyline was mostly reflecting real-life event, but with contents such as violence or sex for entertainment purposes. Hence, the violence element shown on television was perceived to be a reality by the viewers. They will then reflect the violence they seen in television in their real life. Through this behavioral change, Gerbner and Gross (1976) had concluded that the time of watching

television was related to the violence behavior portrayed. This viewers' behavioral changes can be said to be dogmatic as it is shaped according to the television contents viewed. Besides being able to cause an attitude change, according to Meyer, cultivation theorists argued that viewing of television may influence the consumer behavior on purchasing goods due to the media they had watched (as cited in Kim et al., 2009).

As mentioned above, heavy viewers perceived the television shows as a reality. This indicates that the television contributes to the social reality of the viewer formed. There are two ways how Cultivation's process occurs, which are mainstreaming and resonance (West & Turner, 2014). These two terms are used to differentiate and explain the different cultivation effect shown by different people. With these two terms, the cultivation effect can be understood better and have a better explanation for the different effects shown by the viewers.

#### **2.4.1 Mainstreaming**

Mainstreaming is used to explain the blurring, blending and bending processes where heavy television viewers are able to develop a common view or perceptions on the world even though they are from different groups of people (Griffin, 2009). Heavy viewing can lead different groups of people to come together and share the same view on the social reality (Severin and

Tankard, 2014). When this type of situation occurs, it is said that mainstreaming occurred. For heavy viewers, their source of information and ideas come from the television. The television has become the dominant source that shapes their thinking. The social realities for these heavy television viewers are constructed by the television and has become mainstreamed. This caused heavy television viewers from different co-culture to have similar belief about the world (West & Turner, 2014).

#### **2.4.2 Resonance**

Resonance occurs when the viewers' actual realities are similar to what they have seen on television. As the ideas or images portrayed in the television is similar to what the actual situation happens in real life, the messages relay by the television is termed resonate and amplify cultivation (West & Turner, 2014). The content they had seen on the television would not only be perceived as reality, as what they had seen already been deciphered into reality. Therefore, the cultivation is amplified and heavy viewers believed what is portrayed in the television is real. However, Severin and Tankard (2014) had suggested that resonance happened when a certain group among the heavy viewers' cultivation effect was enhanced. Hence, although the viewers are classified as heavy viewers, there can be a subgroup and their level of cultivation effect can be different a bit.

## **2.5 Impact of South Korean Drama on Viewers' Behaviors**

Previous research done on South Korean drama had found out that the media can influence their viewer's attitude and behaviors, regardless of the viewer's nationality (Hasegawa, 2006; Jalaluddin & Ahmad, 2011, Lita & Cho, 2012; Ariffin, 2016; Wu & Wang, 2017). One of the examples is the changed perception of Japanese toward South Korea and South Korean. When Korean drama, specifically *Winter Sonata* became popular in Japan, the Japanese viewer, especially women were influenced and Korean wave was embraced. The influence was able to spark the viewer's interested in the Japan-South Korea historical relationship. Image of South Korea and South Korean among the Japanese viewers have also changed and improved. The attitude of the viewers have been said to change toward pro-Korean through the empathic drama viewing (Hasegawa, 2006). With the popularity of Korean drama in Japan, a shift has occurred in the extreme tension relationship between Japan and South Korea that is due to their historical relationship (Creighton, 2009).

Lita and Cho (2012) had suggested that people, who engaged in the cultural wave spread by media, will likely to learn about the cultural product and purchase them, thus affecting their overall attitude and behavior. Cultivation theory has supported that extensive viewing of Korean drama will have effect on the viewer's behaviors. Viewers who are engaged in Korean drama will likely to show positive behavioral intentions towards South Korea.

The behavioral changes include, following Korean fashion, purchasing Korean cosmetics, visiting South Korea, prefer Korean food or restaurant.

Meanwhile, Wu and Wang's (2017) research had found out that likability of Korean drama was able to influence the viewers' behaviors on South Korean product purchasing and travel intentions. Liking of a program is a viewing experience's evaluation for a television program. A program that is liked by the viewers will be able to produce positive impression (Murry et al., 1992). Hence, depending on the level of likeness of South Korean drama, it can influence the viewers' attitude toward South Korean and further influence their behaviors on purchasing and intentions. Researchers also found out that liking of a media, such as drama and movie can also increase tourism (as cited in Wu & Wang, 2017). Hence, likability of the drama can also play a role in influencing viewer's attitude and behaviors.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out using the quantitative method. Survey was used as the research instrument and data collection was done through convenience sampling, purposive sampling and snowball sampling. There is no pilot study is done prior to this study. The reason being is the instruments used in this study were adapted from previous studies and have high reliability and validity (Carveth & Alexander, 1985; Yoo et al., 2014; Lee et al., 2015; Suh et al., 2016; Wu & Wang, 2017). Therefore, the instruments are assumed appropriate for this study.

#### **3.1 Sampling Method and Targeted Respondents**

Non-probability sampling method was applied in this study for the data collection. This type of sampling can be applied when a certain criterion is required for the targeted population (Etikan et al., 2015). Even though this study is opened to all Malaysian to participate, the targeted group of this study was quite specific. A few criteria have been set for the target population of this study. Adhering to the subject of this study, the targeted respondents need to be a Korean drama viewer and is considered a youth. The age range selected in this

study is between 15 and 30 years old, which is the youth's age according to the Malaysia Youth Policy (Institute for Youth Research Malaysia, 2016). However, there is no minimum watch period requirement for the respondents.

The samples are collected using the convenience, purposive and snowball sampling. Previously, convenience sampling had been used by researchers in their study to collect data from their target population (Su et al., 2011; Horzum & Cakir, 2012; Josiam et al., 2015, Wu & Wang, 2017). Convenience sampling is used to collect sample from the right audience through social media platform, where the targeted group can be reached easily. Since there are criteria set to be a respondent, which are a Korean drama viewer and is a youth, purposive sampling is also involved to aim the specific group. Korean fans use social media to get engage with Korean wave and also to obtain information about Korean wave (Lim, 2015). Therefore, the data are collected online by using social media to approach South Korean drama viewers in Malaysia.

Google Forms is used to create and distribute the survey online (Appendix A). In order to reach a large group of respondents, the survey link was shared on Twitter and has requested a few Malaysia existing fan-pages on social media related to South Korean drama or Korean pop music, example, Malaysia Kpop Fans to retweet the survey link to share to their followers. Although convenience sampling has limitations due to its selective nature, it is useful for large population when randomization is considered impossible. This

method is said to be suitable when the resources, time and workforce are limited (Etikan et al., 2015).

Meanwhile, snowball sampling can also occur in this study as it involved social media. Snowball sampling is also a form of convenience sampling (Bryman, 2012). This method is used when a small group of people were approached initially and the participants will offer other relevant individuals to participate in the research too (Bryman, 2012). Since the survey can be shared to others on social media by the participants, this sampling method can be considered as snowball sampling. Both methods were suitable because they can ensure the samples are collected from the targeted audience group for this study and can reach the audience easily. As the survey was distributed online, the participation was voluntary, confidential and anonymous.

### **3.2 Statistical Analysis and Sample Size**

Statistical analysis is done by using partial least squares structural equation model (PLS-SEM) to test the conceptual model. The conceptual model proposed in this study contained complex cause-effect relationships. PLS-SEM is able to predict the complex relationships between the constructs in the proposed model. Besides, PLS-SEM is able to predict key target constructs. This modelling is also suitable when the data are non-normally distributed and was said to require small sample size (Hair et al., 2014). Wong (2013) had



mentioned that PLS-SEM was a good modeling approach for structural equation model when the sample size was small. Hence, this modeling is chosen for this study as it is able to analyze the complex relationships model with small sample size.

SmartPLS 3 is used in this study for the SEM analysis. Initial assessment for the model is done by running the PLS algorithm. PLS algorithm can calculate the model's path coefficient, latent variables' factor loadings and Cronbach's alpha (Wong, 2013). Meanwhile, the bootstrapping procedure in the software is able to assess the significance for the path coefficient (Hair, Ringle and Sarstedt, 2011). The T-statistics and p-value for the structural path can be calculated using the bootstrapping procedure (Wong, 2013). PLS-SEM can also identify mediator variable in a model. The identification for a latent variable as mediator variable can be determined by following the mediator model (Appendix B) proposed by Zhao et al. (2010). Hair et al. (2017) had also proposed this mediator model for PLS-SEM.

Studies in different research area had used convenience sampling for structural equation modelling research (Horzum & Cakir, 2012; Chiang, 2013; Josiam et al., 2015; Koksal & Gjana, 2015; Wu & Wang, 2017). This shows that the methodology is applicable for this study.

According to the minimum sample size recommended by Cohen, for the statistical power of 80%, at minimum  $R^2$  value of 0.10 and a significant level of 5% for maximum number pointing to a construct is 10, the minimum sample

size require is 189 (as cited in Hair et al., 2014). Meanwhile, by using the formula for the sample size as below, the minimum sample require is 385.

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 p(1-p)}{e^2} = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{0.05^2} = 385$$

*n* = sample size                      *Z* = Level of confidence                      *e* = Margin of error

*p* = estimate proportion of the population the represent the characteristics

A bigger sample size will be better, although using PSL-SEM was said to require only small sample size. A small sample size was said to be unable to provide adequate statistical power (Goodhue et al., 2006). A total of 575 samples are collected for this study before screening the samples for criteria requirements.

### **3.3 Instruments**

Besides the instruments' items used to measure the constructs of proposed model, demographic information such as age, gender, race and occupation status are also collected. The instruments used to measure the

variables are discussed in the following section. Both supervisors for this thesis, Dr. Santhidran Sinnappan and Mr. Thinavan Periyayya, who are experts in the field evaluated face validity of the research instrument. All the instruments used in this study are adapted from previous literatures and were validated by other researchers (Carveth & Alexander, 1985; Yoo et al., 2014; Lee et al., 2015; Suh et al., 2016; Wu & Wang, 2017).

### **3.3.1 Viewing of Korean Drama**

Measurement on television viewing is important to access cultivation effect on viewers. The intensity of television viewing has been an important item in examining cultivation effect on the viewer as studies suggested that viewers show behavior changes after watching television for a long period (Gerbner et al., 1986; Griffin, 2009). Hence, for researches related to media effect or cultivation effects, television viewing of the respondent is measured. The instrument is used by researchers in their research related to viewing behavior to understand the viewer's viewing habits, specifically their viewing duration.

The instrument used in this study to measure the viewing of South Korean drama is adapted from Yoo et al.'s (2014) research. According to Yoo et al. (2014), the instrument was developed by Carveth and Alexander (1985). The amount of time per day spent viewing Korean drama and the number of

different Korean drama viewed per day are collected. In addition to the instrument adapted above, a question from the viewing variables used by Carveth and Alexander (1985) is added to ask viewer on the estimation of how many years they have been watching Korean drama. This question is added to access the possible long-term exposure effect (Carveth & Alexander, 1985).

### **3.3.2 Likability of Korean Drama**

The likability of the Korean drama is used to examine the feelings and liking of the viewers toward the Korean drama they watched. The instrument is adapted from Wu and Wang's (2017) research. This instrument is developed according to Murry et al.'s (2012) research to measure the likability of Korean drama through the viewer's liking and attitude formed from self-evaluation (as cited in Wu & Wang, 2017). The items that are used in this instrument is also similar to the instrument used in Lee et al.'s research (2015) for likability of Korean drama, where it includes the element of feelings, attractiveness and interest.

The instrument is consisted of 5-items. These items are such as "Overall, I have positive feelings toward South Korean drama", "Overall, I think that Korean drama is attractive", "Overall, I am interested in Korean drama", "Overall, I like to watch South Korean drama" and "Overall, regarding Korean drama there is something that attracted me". The instrument is measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree"

(5). The Cronbach's alpha value for the instrument is 0.890, while the average variance extracted (AVE) value is 0.657 (Wu & Wang, 2017).

### **3.3.3 Attitude toward South Korea**

The main aim of this instrument is used to measure the feeling and attitude of respondent towards the country of origin. The instrument is adapted from Suh et al.'s (2016) research. There are 3 subscales in the instrument, which are measuring the attitude toward the country, South Korea's companies and South Korea's products. The instrument was developed using research by Parameswaran and Pisharodi (1994), Boulding and Amna (1993), Bandyopadhyay et al. (2011), Johansson et al. (1994), and Klein (2002) for each of the subscales in the instrument (as cited in Suh et al., 2016). Yoo et al.'s research (2014) had also used a similar instrument to measure the attitude toward South Korea, where the feelings of the viewers towards South Korea as a country, South Korean nationals and South Korean products were recorded.

In this instrument, there are a total of 10-items. The subscales will be measuring on the attitude toward the country (3-items), South Korea's companies (3-items) and South Korea products (4-items). The items are such as "I want to live in South Korea", "I think South Korean companies are trustworthy" and "South Korean products are good value for money". The Likert scale is a 5-point scale, ranging from "very low" (1) to "very high" (5). The reported Cronbach's alpha for attitude toward the country, attitude toward

a company and attitude toward a product are 0.834, 0.826 and 0.766 respectively. While the AVE value for attitude toward the country, attitude toward a company and attitude toward a product are 0.695, 0.589, 0.520 respectively (Suh et al., 2016).

### **3.3.4 Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea**

The instrument used to measure the behavioral intentions is adapted from Yoo et al.'s study (2014). Previously this instrument was used in Carrillat et al.'s study (2005) to measure the purchase intention (as cited in Yoo et al., 2014). The instrument was then modified by Yoo et al. (2014) to measure the behavioral intentions toward South Korea. The modified instrument not only record the intention for purchasing, but also other possible behaviors intentions that may occurred reflecting the attitude toward the country of origin.

There are five items in this instrument. The items included are "I would like to visit or return to South Korea", "I would like to learning Korean language", "I would like to have a South Korean friend", "I would like to purchase South Korea's cultural products" and "I would like to purchase South Korea's commercial products". The measurement uses the 5-points Likert scale, ranging from "least interested" (1) to "most interested" (5). The reported internal consistency reliability of the scale was  $\alpha = 0.78$  (Yoo et al., 2014).

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULT

The data collection is done through the help from fan-pages on Twitter to share the link to their followers in order to reach the minimum number of samples required. A total of 575 samples were collected. Screening of the data collected were done to exclude respondents who do not match with the study criteria, which are age and nationality. Total of 28 samples were excluded from this study due to age (15 to 30 years old) and nationality criteria not matched. Thus, the total number of samples used for this study is 547 samples.

**Table 4.1**

**Respondents' Age**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Error of Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Variance</b>
<b>Age</b>	547	21.883	.149	22.000	22.000	3.473	12.060

**Table 4.2**  
**Respondents' Demographics**

<b>Demographics</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Age</b>		
15 to 18 years old	95	17.4
19 to 22 years old	222	40.6
23 to 26 years old	172	31.4
27 to 30 years old	58	10.6
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	16	2.9
Female	531	97.1
<b>Race</b>		
Malay	473	86.5
Chinese	47	8.6
Indian	4	0.7
Others (Kadazan, Iban, bumiputera etc.)	23	4.2
<b>Occupation</b>		
Student	334	61.0
Working	164	30.0
Unemployed	49	9.0



**Table 4.3**  
**Years of Watching Korean Drama**

<b>Years been watching Korean drama</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Less than 1 year	9	1.6
1 to 2 years	17	3.1
2 to 3 years	32	5.9
3 to 4 years	49	9.0
More 4 years	440	80.4

Descriptive statistics analysis are done using SPSS Statistics 22 on the respondents' age. The average age are 21.883 years old (Table 4.1). There are 16 (2.9%) male respondents and 531 (97.1%) female respondents. There are 473 (86.5%) Malay respondents, 47 (8.6%) Chinese respondents, four (0.7%) Indian respondents and 23 (4.2) other races such as Kadazan, Iban, Dusun, Bajau, Bidayuh, Bumiputera Sabah and Sarawak. 334 (61%) of the respondents are student, 164 (30%) respondents are working and 49 (9%) of them are unemployed (Table 4.2). Among 547 respondents, 440 (80.4%) respondents have been watching Korean drama for more than 4 years (Table 4.3).

**Table 4.4**  
**Factor Loadings for Constructs**

<b>Constructs</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Factor Loadings</b>
Viewing of Korean Drama	Viewing_1	0.915
	Viewing_2	0.721
Likability of Korean Drama	Likability_1	0.826
	Likability_2	0.887
	Likability_3	0.926
	Likability_4	0.902
	Likability_5	0.872
Attitude toward South Korea	Attitude_1	0.579
	Attitude_2	0.575
	Attitude_3	0.670
	Attitude_4	0.559
	Attitude_5	0.548
	Attitude_6	0.666
	Attitude_7	0.635
	Attitude_8	0.669
	Attitude_9	0.724
	Attitude_10	0.710
Behavioral toward South Korea	Behavioral_1	0.815
	Behavioral_2	0.843
	Behavioral_3	0.823
	Behavioral_4	0.804
	Behavioral_5	0.762

*Note.* The item for ‘How many years have you been watching South Korean drama’ from viewing of Korean drama’s construct is excluded because of factor loading lower than 0.500.

The factor loadings for all the instruments used in this study are recorded in Table 4.4. For the viewing of Korean drama, the item regarding the estimation of years of watching Korean drama is excluded from the construct as the factor loadings is lower than 0.500 (Table 4.4). Nevertheless, the data collected from the result is retained to understand the respondents’ engagement with Korean drama time period.

**Table 4.5**  
**Constructs' Reliability and Validity**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's alpha, <math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>	<b>AVE</b>
Viewing of Korean Drama (VKD)	2	0.551	0.806	0.671
Likability of Korean Drama (LKD)	5	0.929	0.947	0.782
Attitude toward South Korea (AK)	10	0.838	0.871	0.405
Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea (BIK)	5	0.869	0.905	0.656

AVE: Average Variance Extracted

To determine the internal construct validity, the value of the Cronbach's alpha for a variable should be higher than 0.700. However, according to Bagozzi and Yi, and Hair et al., composite reliability is suggested to be use as a replacement because Cronbach' alpha give a conservative measurement in PLS-SEM (as cited in Wong, 2013). Variables with Composite Reliability reading higher than 0.60 are accepted (Wong, 2013). Meanwhile, for the convergent validity, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for the variable should be higher than 0.50. Despite of that, AVE higher than 0.4 can also be accepted if the composite reliability is higher than 0.6 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Hence, the construct for viewing of Korean drama and attitude toward South Korea are acceptable (Table 4.5).

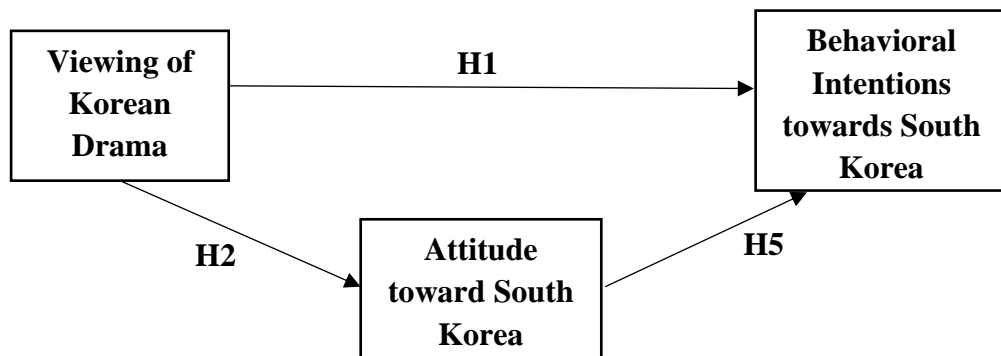
The structural equation modelling analysis is done separately for the constructed model. Since this study look at the impact of Korean drama from

two aspects, which are the viewing time of Korean drama and the liking of Korean drama among Malaysian viewers, it is acceptable to analyze the path for the two independent variables separately. Besides, this study aims to determine whether the attitude toward the country of origin act as a mediator in the indirect effect of each independent variables.

#### 4.1 Viewing of Korean Drama

**Figure 4.1**

**Conceptual Model Viewing of Korean Drama**



The path (Figure 4.1) is analyzed firstly without the attitude toward South Korea to determine the direct effect. The data are first ran using the PLS algorithm to analyze the relationship between the viewing of Korean drama and behavioral intentions toward South Korea.

**Table 4.6**

**Path Coefficient for Direct Effect of Viewing of Korean Drama on Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea**

<b>Path</b>	<b>Path Coefficient</b>
Viewing of Korean Drama → Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea	0.176

The result shows the direct effect has a positive relation with a 0.176 path coefficient (Table 4.6). After that, bootstrapping is ran to determine the significance of the direct effect.

**Table 4.7**

**Bootstrapping Result for Direct Effect of Viewing of Korean Drama on Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea**

<b>Path</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>STDEV</b>	<b>T Statistic</b>	<b>P Values</b>	<b>Result</b>
VKD →BIK	H1	0.176	0.186	0.037	4.744	0.000*	Supported

VKD: Viewing of Korean Drama; BIK: Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea; H: Hypothesis; O: Original Sample; M: Sample Mean; STDEV: Standard Deviation

\*Significant level at 0.05

According to Hair et al. (2014), p-value less than 0.05 shows that the result is significant. The p-value for the direct effect is  $p < 0.000$  showing a significant result (Table 4.7). Hence, H1 is supported, where the viewing of Korean drama and behavioral intentions toward South Korea have a positive relationship.

As the result showed that the direct effect is significant, the variable, attitude toward South Korea is added into the model. This is to calculate the indirect effect in the model. PLS algorithm is done to analyze the path coefficient of the relationships.

**Table 4.8**

**Path Coefficient for Indirect Effect of Viewing of Korean Drama on Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea**

<b>Path</b>	<b>Path Coefficient</b>
Viewing of Korean Drama → Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea	0.088
Viewing of Korean Drama → Attitude toward South Korea	0.161
Attitude toward South Korea → Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea	0.532

The path coefficient for the viewing of Korean drama and behavioral intentions toward South Korea decreased to 0.088 after the attitude toward South Korea is added. Nevertheless, the direct effect is still showing positive relation. The indirect effect showed positive relations from viewing of Korean drama to attitude toward South Korea and from attitude toward South Korea to behavioral intentions toward South Korea with a path coefficient of 0.161 and 0.532 respectively (Table 4.8).

**Table 4.9****Confidence Interval for Viewing of Korean Drama Model**

Path	2.5%	97.5%
Viewing of Korean Drama → Attitude toward South Korea	0.107	0.262
Viewing of Korean Drama → Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea	0.097	0.258
Attitude toward South Korea → Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea	0.376	0.506

**Table 4.10****Bootstrapping Result for Indirect Effect of Viewing of Korean Drama on Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea**

Path	H	O	M	STDEV	T Statistic	P Values	Result
VKD → BIK	H1	0.091	0.092	0.035	2.598	0.009*	Supported
VKD → AK	H2	0.156	0.160	0.042	3.735	0.000*	Supported
AK → BIK	H5	0.532	0.536	0.028	19.201	0.000*	Supported

VKD: Viewing of Korean Drama; BIK: Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea; AK: Attitude towards South Korea; H: Hypotheses; O: Original Sample; M: Sample Mean; STDEV: Standard Deviation

\*Significant level at 0.05

The confidence interval of 95% are recorded in Table 4.9. Bootstrapping result for the model showed significant result with p-value<0.000 for the indirect effects. This showed that there is positive relationship between viewing of Korea drama and attitude toward South Korea, and between attitude toward

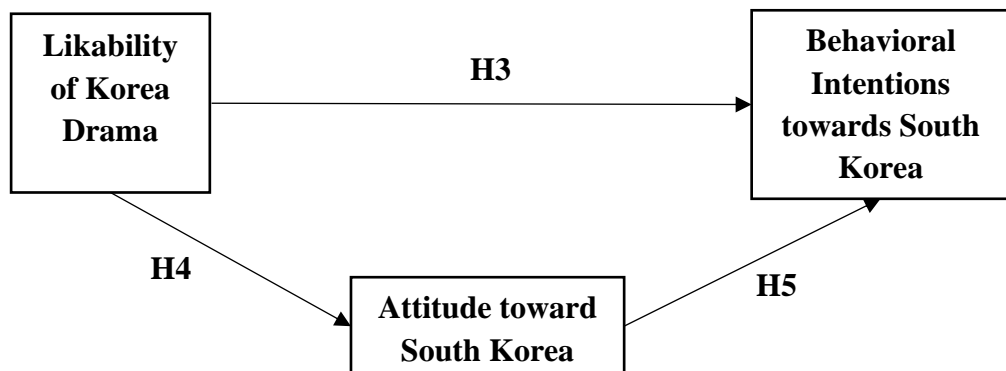
South Korea and behavioral intentions toward South Korea, supporting H2 and H5. As for the direct effect, the p-value is 0.009 supporting H1 (Table 4.10).

Since the p-value for the both the direct and indirect effects showed significant result, H6 is supported as mediation occurred in the model. According to the mediator model (Zhao et al., 2010; Hair et al., 2017), the attitude toward South Korea is identified as partial complimentary mediator as the direct and indirect effect are showing positive and significant result. This indicated that the positive relationship between viewing of Korean drama and behavioral intentions toward South Korea is partially mediated by attitude toward South Korea.

#### 4.2 Likability of Korean Drama

Figure 4.2

Conceptual Model for Likability of Korean Drama





The relationship between likability of Korean drama and behavioral intentions toward South Korea is also tested using the SmartPLS 3. The model (Figure 4.2) is first analyzed without the attitude toward South Korea to test the direct effect.

**Table 4.11**

**Path Coefficient for Direct Effect of Likability of Korean Drama on Behavioral Intentions toward Korea**

<b>Relationships</b>	<b>Path Coefficient</b>
Likability of Korean Drama → Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea	0.438

The path coefficient is calculated by the PLS algorithm, where the result showed 0.438 (Table 4.11). This result shows that the direct effect between likability of Korean drama and behavioral intentions toward South Korea has a positive relation.

**Table 4.12**

**Bootstrapping Result for Direct Effect of Likability of Korean Drama on Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea**

<b>Path</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>STDEV</b>	<b>T Statistic</b>	<b>P Values</b>	<b>Result</b>
LKD → BIK	H3	0.438	0.443	0.041	10.74	0.000*	Supported

LKD: Likability of Korean Drama; BIK: Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea; H: Hypothesis; O: Original Sample; M: Sample Mean; STDEV: Standard Deviation; T: T Statistics; P: P Values

\*Significant level at 0.05

Meanwhile, the bootstrapping result shows that the p-value for the direct effect is  $p < 0.000$  (Table 4.12). The result is significant as the p-value is smaller than 0.05 (Hair et al., 2014). Thus, H3 is supported indicating that likability of Korean drama has a positive relation with behavioral intentions toward South Korea.

As the direct effect is significant, attitude toward South Korea is added to the model to test the indirect effect. PLS algorithm is ran again to analyze the path coefficient.

**Table 4.13**

**Path Coefficient for Indirect Effect of Likability of Korean Drama on Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea**

<b>Path</b>	<b>Path Coefficient</b>
Likability of Korean Drama → Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea	0.258
Likability of Korean Drama → Attitude toward South Korea	0.407
Attitude toward Korea → Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea	0.433

After adding the variable, the path coefficient for the direct effect is decreased to 0.258. Nevertheless, the direct effect is still showing positive relation. Whereas, the path coefficient for likability of Korean drama to attitude toward South Korea is recorded with 0.407, and the attitude toward South Korea to behavioral intentions toward South Korea is 0.433 (Table 4.13). The model is tested further by bootstrapping to calculate the significance.

**Table 4.14****Confidence Interval for Likability of Korean Drama Model**

Path	2.5%	97.5%
Likability of Korean Drama → Attitude toward South Korea	0.268	0.409
Likability of Korean Drama → Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea	0.354	0.522
Attitude toward South Korea → Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea	0.256	0.406

**Table 4.15****Bootstrapping Result for Indirect Effect of Likability of Korean Drama on Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea**

Path	H	O	M	STDEV	T Statistics	P Values	Result
LKD → BIK	H3	0.258	0.259	0.044	5.871	0.000*	Supported
LKD → AK	H4	0.407	0.411	0.037	10.919	0.000*	Supported
AK → BIK	H5	0.433	0.435	0.035	12.313	0.000*	Supported

LKD: Likability of Korean Drama; BIK: Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea; AK: Attitude toward South Korea; H: Hypotheses; O: Original Sample; M: Sample Mean; STDEV: Standard Deviation

\*Significant level at 0.05

The confidence interval of 95% is reported as shown in Table 4.14. The p-value result for the direct and indirect effects showing  $p < 0.000$  indicates that the effects in the model are significant, thus H3, H4 and H5 are supported (Table 4.15).

Since both of the direct and indirect effects showed significant and positive result, mediation occurred in the model. The attitude toward South Korea is considered a partial complimentary mediator in the relationship according to the mediator model (Zhao et al., 2010; Hair et al., 2017). Therefore, H7 is supported, where the attitude toward South Korea is partially mediating the positive relationship between likability of Korean drama and behavioral intentions toward South Korea.

Both viewing of Korean drama and likability of Korean drama have contributed to the behavioral intentions toward South Korea among Malaysia Youths, with attitude toward South Korea act as the partial complimentary mediator in the model.

**Table 4.16**

**R Squared Value**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>
Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea (Viewing of Korean drama)	0.306
Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea (Likability of Korean drama)	0.345

By comparing the R<sup>2</sup> value for behavioral intentions toward South Korea in the present of the mediator variable, the likability of Korean drama and attitude toward South Korea has higher value of explaining the variance of behavioral intentions toward South Korea with 34.5% (R<sup>2</sup> = 0.345) as compare

to viewing of Korean drama and attitude toward South Korea with 30.6% ( $R^2 = 0.306$ ) (Table 4.16).

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION**

The results show that the hypotheses proposed in this study are supported, where Korean dramas are able to influence the viewers' behavioral intentions toward South Korea. The findings proved that both viewing of Korean drama and the likability of Korean drama are able to yield a positive attitude toward South Korea and affects their behavioral intentions toward South Korea positively. Although, the statistical results show low correlation between the independent and dependent variables proposed, the positive result shown shall not be ignored as it still proofs that Korean dramas have impact on their viewers. These results can only mean that the independent variables, viewing of Korean drama and the likability of Korean drama are giving a low impact on the viewers. Perhaps, there are other stronger factors that influence the viewers to have a positive behavioral toward South Korea, such as influence from the actors, actresses, celebrities or idols (Lee et al., 2015). Shim (2016) had mentioned that consumer culture had been influenced by the South Korean stars. Korean dramas do leave impact on the viewer and are able to influence them as cultivation effect take place.

#### **5.1 Viewing of Korean Drama**

Findings showed that Malaysia Youths who watch Korean drama over a period of time do have positive behavioral intentions toward South Korea.

Adhere to the Cultivation theory (Gerbner & Gross, 1976), Malaysia Korean drama viewers can be affected by the drama after watching for a period of time. Malaysian viewers also show positive attitude toward South Korea after watching Korean drama. This finding is supported as dramas are said to be able to produce positive attitude toward the country of origin (Köksal & Gjana, 2015). Hence, the Korean drama can influence Malaysian viewers by showing impact on their behaviors, where they have positive attitude and behavioral intentions toward South Korea. Their thinking and perhaps future decision making can be affected, where Korea elements will be considered. Cultivation effect for Korean drama do occurred on Malaysia viewers. This finding is similar to previous research done on effect of drama viewing on viewers' behaviors in different countries, such as Taiwan, Thailand and Japan (Hasegawa, 2006; Namdar et al., 2013; Köksal & Gjana, 2015; Yoo et al., 2014; Chang, 2015; Ainslie, 2016).

## **5.2 Likability of Korean Drama**

Through this finding, it is proven that not only viewing of Korean drama can affect the Malaysia viewers' behavioral intentions towards South Korea but also the likability of Korean drama. Malaysia Korean drama viewers showing positive behavioral intentions towards South Korea can be caused by the positive liking toward Korean drama. Their positive feelings and interest on the Korean dramas are able to yield positive attitude toward South Korea. When Malaysian viewers have a positive attitude and perception toward South Korea, they will also show positive behaviors toward South Korea. The level of liking

for Korean drama is said to be able to influence the viewers' attitude toward South Korea and it is important for the viewers to have positive attitude toward South Korea (Lee et al., 2015; Wu & Wang, 2017). This is because the viewers' affection for Korean drama can be developed into feeling for the country where they become attached. When they become attached to the media and the country, their behavior will be affected accordingly.

Not to mentioned, the likability of Korean drama has showed a stronger impact on the behavioral intentions toward South Korea as compared to viewing of Korean drama in this study. This shows that besides watching the Korean drama, liking of the drama could be more important as well to influence the viewers. This factor is especially important for foreign drama to show impact on the foreign viewers. It is important for foreign viewers to accept and show affection for the Korean drama in order to be influenced by the media. Foreign viewers showing positive liking toward the Korean drama they have watched mean that they have positive evaluation and watching experience (Murry et al., 2012). This positive feeling is important for the viewers to continue watching the drama and for them to create a positive attitude and behavioral intentions toward South Korea.

### **5.3 Attitude toward South Korea**

The results shown by the statistical analysis indicated that attitude toward South Korea has positive effect on the behavioral intentions toward South Korea and act as a partial complimentary mediator in the model. This can



suggest that the viewing and likability of Korean drama do not impact the viewer's behavioral intentions totally. The effects on the viewers' behaviors can be mediated by another variables. In this study, mediation occurred in the proposed model where attitude toward South Korea is identified as the mediator. This means that the attitude toward South Korea formed from watching Korean dramas shall be recognized and be considered as one of the variables that is able to influence the viewers' behaviors and decisions. As previous researches had identified, the attitude toward the country of origin did influence the viewers' behaviors (Lita & Cho, 2012; Yoo et al., 2014; Suh et al., 2016).

Through this study, it has proved that Malaysian youths who are Korean drama viewers are indeed influenced by Korean dramas. Korean dramas have influenced them in having positive attitude and behavioral intentions toward South Korea. Furthermore, the viewers' attitude toward South Korea have found to be partially mediated the influence of Korean drama on the viewers' behavioral intentions toward South Korea. Hence, long watching period and likings toward Korean drama cannot assure strong positive behavioral intentions toward South Korea. This can be due to the effect of viewers' attitude toward South Korea. Nevertheless, positive attitude or impression toward the country is expected if liking for the media occurred (Murry et al., 2012).

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

Overall, this study argues that Malaysian youths' attitude toward South Korea can affect their behavioral intentions towards South Korea influenced by viewing and liking of Korean dramas. Malaysian youths who watch Korean dramas attentively do shows the same result as other countries Korean drama viewers, whereby both have positive attitude and behaviors toward South Korea (Hasegawa, 2006; Kim et al., 2009; Su et al., 2011; Yoo et al., 2014; Chang, 2015; Lee et al., 2015; Wu & Wang, 2017). Nevertheless, the impact of viewing and liking of Korean dramas on the Malaysian youths' viewers' behavioral intentions toward South Korea are weak. This study also found out that their behavioral intentions are partial mediated by their attitude towards South Korea.

Attitude or perception toward the country of origin can affects the media influence. South Korea uses media as a form of soft power (Chung, 2018). Hence, a country needs to maintain a good image in the public's eyes for them to practice soft power. The government of a country have to take note the importance to portray a good image of their country. Their country's image can be reflected using media, such as drama and film. Malaysia's government can learn from South Korea as how they use their entertainment industry to increase foreign' interest in their country and show a good country's image.

Although the behaviors mentioned in this study are behavioral intentions, it is also proven that Malaysian youths do show likings toward South Korea and their products. Many Korea products are now sold and easily available in Malaysia. The importation of Korean products does not only aim to cater for the Korean expatriates living in Malaysia, but also local Malaysian. Furthermore, Korean restaurants are booming in Malaysia considering the market demands and popularity are increasing among Malaysian. Marketers or entrepreneurs can take opportunity of this Hallyu wave to sell Korean products in Malaysia as there are demands from the market.

Malaysia youths can easily get excess to Korean drama through television and online. There is no doubt that when they spend time watching Korean drama, they will get influenced. Not to mentioned, when they took liking in the Korean drama and Korean celebrities. They will start taking interest in the South Korea and Korean culture. As a consequence, their ways of thinking and behaviors are being influenced by the Korean culture. Subconsciously, they may incorporate some of the Korean culture learned from the Korean media into their live as they become engrossed. For example, they might incorporate some of the Korean words and expressions ('annyeong', 'oppa', etc) they learned from the dramas they watched into their daily discourse. This could have happened unconsciously or this is a way of them showing their identity as a Korean culture influenced fans. As this situation persist, this perhaps can cause the Malaysian Korean drama viewers to have their Malaysia culture instill since young to be altered. However, since Malaysia and South Korea are both Asian

countries, the way of thinking may not differ much besides the culture elements. Hopefully, this phenomenon will not have a huge impact on Malaysia culture.

### **6.1 Limitations and Future Studies**

The data are only collected through one social media platform, which is Twitter. Malaysian Korean drama viewers who do not use Twitter could be left out from this study. Besides, the respondents for this study are mostly female with 97%. Hence, the result of this study could not represent the male population wholly as it might be female biased. This study only studied on the viewing and the liking of the Korean drama to reflect the influence of Korean drama. Future studies can use other variables, such as perceived reality, narrative engagement to study the impact on the Malaysian viewers' behaviors. In addition, the Korean drama mentioned in this study does not specify a drama genre. Studies to be done in the future can study the impact of Korean drama according to genre, as historical and modern drama may have different impact on the viewers. Not to mention, Korean dramas always have original soundtracks. Through this method, they are able to promote their music to viewers and caused the viewers to engage with K-Pop song as well. K-Pop is also one of the Korean media that manage to expand the Hallyu wave globally, with foreign fans idolizing Korean idols. These days, K-Pop idols are being casted to act in Korean drama as well. Thus, further studies can also be done by comparing the popularity of Korean drama and K-Pop to understand the Hallyu wave in Malaysia better.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A**

#### **SURVEY**

Dear Participant,

My name is Loke JingYi and I am a post-graduate student at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), enrolled in the Master of Communication program. I would like to invite you to participate in a survey, entitled “Korean Dramas: Viewing and Liking to Behavioral Intentions Among Malaysian Youths”. This survey is a part of my Master’s Thesis requirement. You are invited because you are a Malaysian Korean drama viewer.

The purpose of this study is to understand the influence of Korean drama on Malaysian viewer’s behavior intentions. Your participation in the survey will help me understand the influence of the Korean drama on viewer’s behaviors better.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your participation from this survey any time. The survey should takes only 10 to 15 minutes to complete. There is no risk associated with participating in this survey. All of the responses collected from this survey will be recorded anonymously and are confidential. Only the researches working on this study will have the access to the data and the data will only be used for research purposes.

If you choose to participate in this survey, please answer all the questions in the survey as honestly as possible. By completing and submitting this survey, you are indicating your consent to participate in the study.

If you have any questions regarding the survey or this research project in general, you may contact me at [cljy26@hotmail.com](mailto:cljy26@hotmail.com).

Thank you for taking your precious time to assist me in my educational endeavors. Your participation is most appreciated.

**Age:**

**Gender:**         Male         Female

**Race:**         Malay         Chinese     Indian  
                   Others: \_\_\_\_\_

**Nationality:**    Malaysian    Foreigner

**Occupation:**     Student     Working     Unemployed

**Section A: Viewing of Korean Drama**

**Number of hours spent in a day on viewing Korean drama:**

- Below 30 minutes         30 minutes to 1 hours  
 1 hours to 2 hours         2 hours to 3 hours  
 More than 3 hours

**Number of different Korean drama viewed daily:**

(e.g If only watch one drama example Descendant of The Sun, then is 1. If watch Descendant of The Sun and Doctors is 2.)

- One         1 to 2         2 to 3         3 to 4  
 More than 4

**How many years have you been watching Korean drama:**

- Below than 1 year         1 to 2 years         2 to 3 years  
 3 to 4 years         More than 4 years

**Section B: Likability of Korean drama**

Please answer all questions by circling the most appropriate number.

**1 = Strongly Disagree    2 = Disagree    3 = Neutral    4 = Agree  
5 = Strongly Agree**

**Overall, I have positive feelings toward Korean drama**

1                                  2                                  3                                  4                                  5

**Overall, I think that Korean drama is attractive**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Overall, I am interested in Korean drama**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Overall, I like to watch Korean drama**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Overall, regarding Korean drama there is something that attracted me**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Section C: Attitude toward South Korea**

Please answer all questions by circling the most appropriate number.

**1 = Very Low    2 = Low    3 = Neutral    4 = High    5 = Very High**

**Attitude toward the country**

**I think South Koreans are friendly and likeable**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**I think South Koreans are reliable**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**I want to live in South Korea**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Attitude toward the companies**

**I think South Korean companies are reputable**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**I think South Korean companies are trustworthy**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**I want to work for a South Korean company**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Attitude toward the product**

**Korean products are good value for money**

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

**Korean products have a good design**

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

**Korean products are innovative**

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

**Korean products are equipped with leading technology**

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

**Section D: Behavioral Intentions toward South Korea**

Please answer all questions by circling the most appropriate number.

**1 = Least Interested    2 = Not So Interested    3 = Neutral  
4 = Somewhat Interested    5 = Most Interested**

**I would like to visit or return to South Korea**

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

**I would like to learn the Korean language**

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

**I would like to have a Korean friend**

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

**I would like to purchase Korean cultural products (e.g Drama, Movie, Music)**

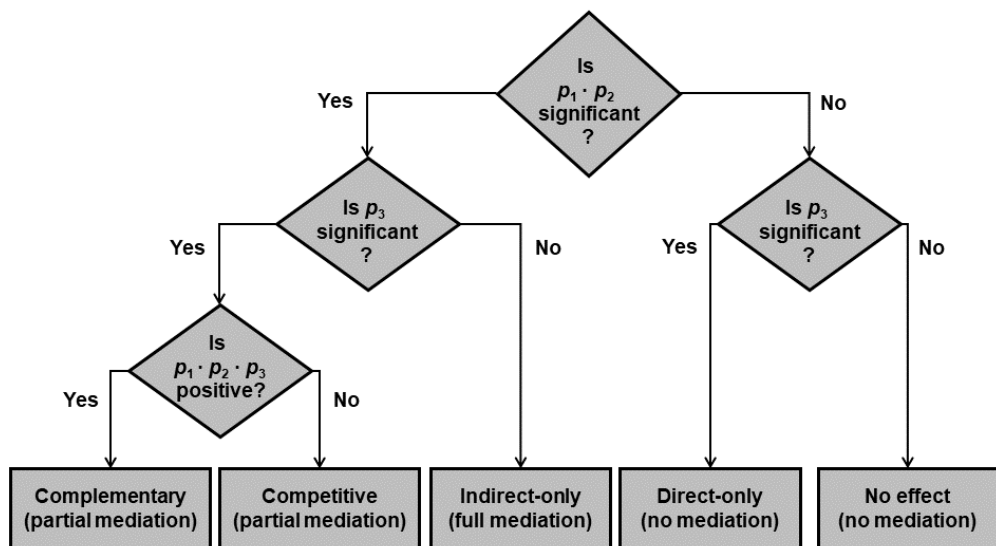
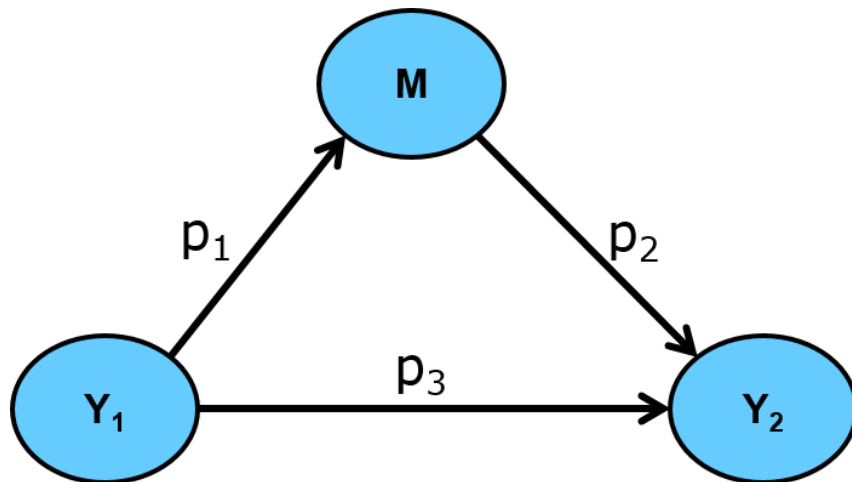
1                    2                    3                    4                    5

**I would like to purchase Korean commercial products (e.g Beauty products, Foods, IT gadgets)**

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

## APPENDIX B

### MEDIATOR MODEL



(Source: smartpls.com)