



**STUDY ON K-CULTURE INFLUENCES ON MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITY  
STUDENTS THROUGH MEDIA**

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## ABSTRACT

Last few years, K-culture has influenced people around the world through the media. This caused university students to be influenced by K-culture, which included Korean entertainment such as drama, TV shows, films, music, foods, fashions and cosmetic products. Therefore, this research aims to analyze university students' perception of K-culture and examine K-culture influences on university students' lives through media. Through this research, people are able to find out what is the perception of university students about K-culture and how K-culture influences university students' lives through media. This research was conducted with a quantitative research method by using Likert scale questionnaires and the questionnaire was distributed to Malaysian university students via Google Forms. The sample size of the research is a total of 50 students from 18 years old to 25 years old. The data will be collected from the respondents for data analysis. As a result, the influence of K-culture on Malaysian university students through media will be further analysed.

**Keywords:** K-culture, media, perception, influences, Malaysian university students

Subject Area: HE1-9990 Transportation and communications

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

In order for the study to analyze the perception of university students towards K-culture and how it influences their lives through media, the chapter presents research on K-culture influences on Malaysian university students. The chapter includes the research background, research questions, significance of the study, research objectives and problem statement, including key definitions of the concepts under study.

#### **1.1 Background of Study**

K-culture is currently on the rise and it is very popular, especially among young people. According to Khaerinnisa (2022), K-culture or Korean way of life is widely appreciated globally. According to Jin (2018), one of the early indications of the Korean Wave was showcased in the form of drama series like *What Is Love All About?* (1997), *Winter Sonata* (2002), and *Dae Jang Geum* (2003). In Asia, Korean pop music (K-pop) has spread across the globe through idol groups comprising TVXQ, Super Junior, Blackpink, BTS and NCT among others.

These few years, many Malaysians were able to consume more on Korean culture through media. There are numerous of evidence that the media has been used to spread the K-culture in Malaysia. For example, ASTRO, the leading content and entertainment firm in Malaysia, decided to introduce two more Korean channels in High Definition (HD). Oh!K HD (Astro Channel 394) and Channel M HD (Astro Channel 395) were chosen to be included among the company's television establishments (Sun, 2015). In addition, ASTRO subscribers can follow various Korean TV drama series, i.e., "Bad Guys," different Korean variety shows,

and so on. Even after 24 hours from its premiere in Korea at 'M! COUNTDOWN', the show is shown in Malaysia to those who had watched it earlier. However, these programs are also available with English, Malay, or Chinese subtitles. This has had a greater impact on the lives of most Malaysians by introducing K-culture into their daily routine easier way. According to Ariffin et al. (2018), Korean dramas satisfy Asian audiences' emotional needs by being easy to assimilate to a similar lifestyle, cultural proximity and expressiveness. This is the reason that make Korean dramas have a better chance of being broadcast in Malaysia and people are more willing to watch dramas that are closer to their culture even though they might not understand the language and they need to rely on subtitles to help them understand the storyline.

According to Malaysian Kpop Fans (2024) posts on social media platform X, it can be seen that more and more K-pop idols and groups have decided to conduct fan meetings or concerts in Malaysia. There are nearly 20 concerts and fan meetings from September 2024 to January 2025. This means that at least one K-events will be conducted in Malaysia every week during this period. This shows that the K-culture has become an important part of Malaysia and many Malaysians are involved.

This research will focus on understanding how K-culture influences Malaysian university students through the media.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

In recent years, K-culture has become more appealing to Malaysian students, particularly those in universities, but there is still scant data on how media exposure to this culture influences their day-to-day existence and opinions on it. K-culture content is now accessible to Malaysian students through various channels such as YouTube, TikTok and



Instagram. This calls for an estimation of how much media influence affects students' attitudes and behaviors. This survey seeks to find out how K-culture impacts on the perceptions and conduct of Malaysian undergraduate students. As the result, the objective of this research is to analyse the perception of university students about K-culture and to examine K-culture's influences on university students' lives through media.

### **1.3 Research Objectives (RO)**

**RO1:** To analyse the perception of university students about K-culture.

**RO2:** To examine K-culture's influences on university students' lives through media.

### **1.4 Research Questions (RQ)**

**RQ1:** What is the perception of university students about K-culture?

**RQ2:** How K-culture influence university students' lives through media?

### **1.5 Significant of Study**

This study will help businesses and professionals that target young consumers. With the findings, marketers could enhance the design of their products, services, and promotional activities that represent the beliefs and interests of K-culture. K-culture has caused significant changes in the tastes of university students towards music, fashion, and entertainment. Consequently, producers of K-culture content on media platforms would create better and more culturally resonant content by using the research to improve their comprehension of audience engagement.

The reason why this research is significant is because it provides insight that enables a further comprehension of the impact of K-culture on Malaysian university students who have embraced it through social and digital means.

## **1.6 Key Definition Concept**

### **K-culture**

K-culture represents Korean culture, involving among other things K-drama, K-food, K-fashion, K-cosmetics and K-pop videos that contain symbolic references to Korean tradition, such as hanbok (Korean clothing) worn by performers (Chun, 2023). For instance, The BTS meal (Chicken McNuggets, French fries plus Cajun sauce on them together with a Diet Coke) which was sold at McDonalds in 2021 is also an example of K-culture.

## **1.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the conceptual groundwork for the undertaking. It has explained the significance of K-culture and its effects on university students in Malaysia. The aims of the research, research questions and the problem have also been stated with particular reference on the aspect of how K-culture has permeated the lives of the students through the media. This provides a basis for further analysis in the following chapters where media usage and its relation to the K-culture of the students both in terms of identity and behavior will be examined closely.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter looks at existing studies on the evolution of K-culture, the following trends of its popularity across the globe, especially in Malaysia, and more importantly, the role of media in this process. This chapter will also discuss the key aspects of K-culture and their impacts on people's self-conceptions, everyday activities, and consumer behaviors, particularly among the university students.

#### **2.1 The Rise of K-Culture**

The term 'Korean Wave' or Hallyu is the worldwide inclination toward the consumption of South Korean popular culture, entertainment, music, drama and films (Roll, 2021). The word 'Hallyu' is derived from a Chinese expression that defines a phenomenon of rapid growth in K-culture, which includes music, film, cuisine, clothing and beauty.

From the side of music, bands such as Big Bang, Super Junior, Girls' Generation have proven the rise of K-culture and K-pop through their album sales records which hit 238 million worldwide. According to a report by the Korean Foundation, there were 89 million hallyu fans in 113 countries in 2019. This is another proof of the rise of K-culture in the whole world.

#### **2.2 K-Culture in Malaysia**

The growth of K-culture consumption is on the rise in Malaysia where younger initiators are adapting more to K-dramas, K-pop, and Korean styles. Research works by the

authors of Ariffin et al. (2018) stress that Malaysians are inclined to watch K-dramas because of their cultural closeness and social issues that familiar to them. Furthermore, the Malaysian media offers Korean content focusing on K-dramas – for example Astro thus enhancing K-culture. There is also recognition of demand for Korean programming in Malaysia for instance ASTRO Malaysia launched a Korean themed channels in High Definition format Oh!K HD and Channel M HD Instant Access Oh!K Channel. These channels serve as key K Culture windows for Malaysian University students, as they indulge in K-dramas, variety shows and live K-pop performances.

### **2.3 The Role of Media in Disseminating K-Culture**

Digital platforms, particularly social media, have played a pivotal role in the global spread of K-culture. Platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Netflix offer easy access to Korean entertainment and have facilitated cross-cultural exchange. In contrast to decades past's fitted mass broadcast engineering which controlled the distribution of content, social media is more open in allowing users to engage in content creation subsequently giving rise to fans and influencers taking part in the cultural distribution process. This has brought about consumption on a more individualized level since audiences started to understand K-pop, K-drama, K-beauty even better by finding themselves interacting with the Korean influencers directly. In Brunei Darussalam, as noted in the research by Mohamad, this has become an appreciation of the Korean culture which has developed an understanding of different cultures and led to the adoption of hybrid identities with local and Korean culture (Mohamad, 2021).

Research indicates that social media networking sites such as Youtube, Instagram and Facebook expand the scope of K-culture, enabling fans and creators to interact instantly. Regional television dramas, music, and beauty fads, in this case, K-culture, are easily

accessible and consumed due to the integration of social media. This has also provided scope for fan bases, encouraged content creation by users, and created a fictitious K-culture in which the society's culture is deeply influenced by K-culture celebrities. In Malaysia, the media exposure of university students in K-culture has healthy influence in the areas of music, fashion and entertainment which levels shows how effective the media is in the changing of cultures.(Mohamad, 2021) (Wong, 2023).

#### **2.4 Impact of K-Culture on University Students**

K-culture has an enormous effect on its customers, particularly university students who are still sculpturing their own identities. According to Lee et al. 2017, all of the respondents concurred that they held positive views on the Korean Wave. They strongly perceive that these Korean brands have a great effect on Malaysian university students and youth. They also denied that Malaysian university students and youth have a great interest in Korean cosmetic and fashion brands such as ETUDE HOUSE and SPAO respectively. The positive perception of K-culture is driven by its fresh and engaging content, leading students to engage deeply with Korean trends in cosmetics, fashion, and entertainment.

In addition, The K-pop fan community is largely responsible for boosting the creativity and talent of university students. Numerous fans are not only consumers but also contribute their efforts by creating and sharing their works: fan art, social media management or light works like videos and pictures. This extent of involvement not only pulls them towards K-Culture but also helps them grow as individuals as they explore and hone their latent abilities. Such active contribution instills a sense of freedom in expression, enabling the students to shape their personalities by the youth culture across the globe. Such activities performed by

fan communities also contribute to enhancing the students' social engagement and self-esteem when incorporated into their routines (Mohd Jenol & Ahmad Pazil, 2022).

## **2.5 K-Culture and Consumer Behavior**

K-culture has even impacted how people consume products, especially where clothing, makeup and entertainment are concerned. Young Malaysians have embraced K-culture where they appreciate Korean cosmetics and fashion most. The aggressive marketing strategy brought out new products such as the BTS meal at McDonald's in 2021 showed how global brands exploited K-culture for the benefit of millennial consumers.

According to Osman & Ismail (2022), the study shows that perception towards Korean food, Korean fashion, and Korean cosmetics was significantly correlated with consumers' purchasing behavior toward Korean products. For Korean food, youngsters started to consume Korean cuisine due to their exposure to K-drama. For example, Korean food such as Korean barbecue, Tteokbokki and Kimchi are nowadays some of the food choices of Malaysian university students when they hang out with friends.

Sometimes, fans of idol groups will also make their decision to buy a product if their idols are the brand ambassadors of the product and if their idols are brand ambassadors of an online shopping site, they will also purchase the product on the shopping site to show support to their idols. According to Septi & Bangsawan (2023), the study proves that brand ambassador NCT 127 and brand trust have a positive and significant effect on consumer purchasing decision variables. It is said that 55.5% of consumer purchasing decisions on the Blibli online shopping site can be influenced by the Brand Ambassador and Brand Trust variables. According to Dinh (2016), the study also pointed out that the length of exposure to

Korean Wave have positive effects on consumer behavior on Korean cosmetics and studying Korean language. The more they have known about Korean Wave, the more they are willing to purchase Korean products.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the literature review examines thoroughly the phenomenon of K-culture and its spread in the global and regional dimensions. The chapter, reports on the media as one of the conduits of K-content empire with special attention to the consumer-centricity of social media and streaming services such as Youtube and Netflix. It is pivoted to the assessment of why and how K-culture is so popular in Malaysia while examining factors of local history and society, informing the readers that K-culture plays an important role not just in entertainment, but also in shaping people's identities and consumer behaviour especially in the younger population, such as the university students. These conclusions will serve as a foundation for the next chapters where the media is in particular examined as the link between K-culture and Malaysian students.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter will describe the method that was used in this research and every element of the method, such as approach, population, sampling method, data collection method, and data analysis method.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Research design refers to the framework of methods and techniques a researcher selects to conduct a study, helping to refine the research methods that are most appropriate for the subject and ensuring the study's success. It involves outlining the type of research (e.g., experimental, survey, correlational, semi-experimental, or review) and its sub-types (such as experimental design, research problem, or descriptive case-study). The three primary components of research design are data collection, measurement, and data analysis. Importantly, the research problem dictates the design rather than the other way around. The design phase ultimately guides which tools will be used and how they will be applied in the research process (Khanday & Khanam, 2023). The method selected for this research is quantitative research. According to Bhat (2024), quantitative research is for cases where statistical conclusions to collect actionable insights are essential. Numbers provide a better perspective for making critical business decisions. Quantitative research methods are necessary for the growth of any organization. Insights drawn from complex numerical data and analysis prove to be highly effective when making decisions about the business's future. Hence, quantitative research involves the quantification and analysis of variables to obtain results. A



key characteristic of this approach is the collection and analysis of numerical data using statistical methods. Common methods in quantitative research include experiments and surveys.

According to Bhaskaran (2024), survey research is defined as the process of conducting research using surveys that researchers send to survey respondents. The data collected from surveys is then statistically analysed to draw meaningful research conclusions. The traditional definition of survey research is a quantitative method for collecting information from a pool of respondents by asking multiple survey questions. This research type includes the recruitment of individuals collection, and analysis of data. It's useful for researchers who aim to communicate new features or trends to their respondents. Researchers can conduct research in multiple ways, but surveys are proven to be one of the most effective and trustworthy research methods. Through the survey questionnaire, the perception of university students about K-culture and how K-culture influences their lives through media can be well explained.

The survey questions are going to be divided into five sections, which are the credential verification section, demographic section, perception of K-culture section, influence of K-culture through Media section and overall influence and personal impact section. Firstly, a credential verification question is going to ask for the respondents' acknowledgement of the use of data as if they are participating in this survey research. In addition, this section also verifies that only qualified respondents can take part in this research. Next, the demographic section would ask about the personal details of participants to collect their basic demographic information. Furthermore, the perception of K-culture section would ask how familiar are they with various aspects of K-culture such as music, food and fashion. This is to analyse the participants' responses based on their interest in K-culture and which aspects of K-culture are

they most exposed to. For the influence of K-culture through Media section will analyse how frequently the participants engage with K-culture content through social media platforms and how much time do they spend on consuming K-culture content daily. The last section is about how much K-culture has influenced the participants' lifestyles and which aspects of their life has K-culture had the most influence. This is to analyse the participants' responses to the influence of K-culture on their personal identity. These questions would help in studying the participants' willingness to recommend K-culture content to their family and friends.

The survey form will be completed online using Google Forms. This is because participants from the entire Malaysia could join without being limited to certain areas. Online survey research is easier and faster than traditional methods of data collection. The data collection process will take around two weeks. To show respect for the participants, their approval will be requested in the first section of the questionnaire.

### **3.2 Population, Sample Size and Sampling Method**

A population is an individual group of people who have a shared characteristic that may be of interest to research. The survey participants should indicate that they are university students who are currently staying in Malaysia. They should share a similar background in that they have had interest in K-culture before. The sample size of the research is 50 participants, aged 18 to 25, to represent the population in Malaysia. Hence, the subjects of the study are Malaysian university students who have interest in K-culture. The sampling method used in this research is the voluntary response sampling method. The participants for the online survey were recruited by posting an announcement of the survey on social media platforms which are Instagram and Xiao Hong Shu. Hashtags are used to reach those who are interested in K-culture. This sampling method can reach the target participants who are

interested in K-culture directly and easily as they are willing to participate in this study because they are personally related to K-culture. By posting the announcement with title of K-culture related, this ensures only qualified respondents participated in this study to avoid inaccurate results.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

Instagram, WhatsApp, and Xiao Hong Shu were used as the distribution channels for an online survey to target participants who are interested in and actively follow K-culture. The survey questionnaire was created via Google Forms, and participants were asked to follow the credential verification section page link. The participants were acknowledged for the confidentiality of the data collected on the first page. The survey consisted of close-ended questions that were separated into five sections, which are the credential verification section, demographic section, perception of K-culture section, influence of K-culture through Media section and overall influence and personal impact section.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

For data collecting, the data collected will be moved to a spreadsheet. Descriptive analysis will next be used to find trends in the familiarity, interest, and impact of K-culture on different aspects of students' lives, including social interactions, dietary choices, and musical tastes. To better understand the relationship between participants' engagement with K-culture and how it influenced the participants' personal identities and lifestyles, further analysis was performed on the data. Pie charts and bar graphs will be developed after the responses have been collected to show the data in an organised form for analysis.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

This chapter ends with the presentation of the research methodology adopted in examining the impact of K-culture among Malaysian university students. Considering the characteristics of the target population, who have easy access to and are intensive consumers of K-culture contents over the internet, the researchers opted to use online surveys as they are fast and efficient in data collection. By using voluntary response sampling, the study was able to reach respondents who had prior interests in K-culture content. The clear breakdown of the survey design and analysis methods in the research guarantees that the study will be based on strong, integrated, and systematic data collection processes. This section provides a background in which the research objectives and research questions will be thoroughly assessed in the next chapters.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

In order answer to the research questions stated in Chapter 1 of this study, the data collected via the survey questionnaires will be analysed in this chapter. Pie charts and bar graphs created based on the statistics of the data collected will be used to describe and analyse the data and responds collected through 50 sets of questionnaires using Google Forms.

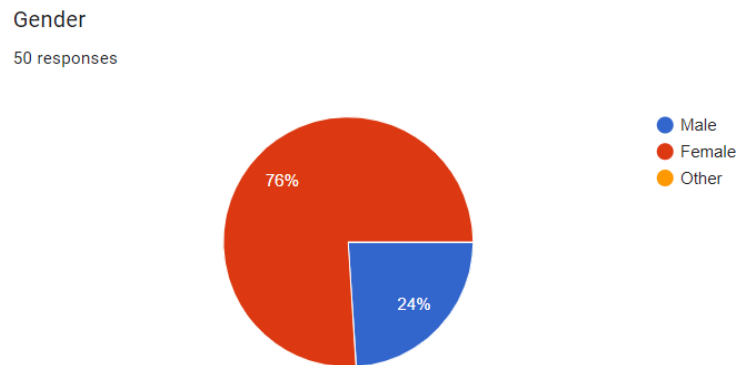
#### **4.1 Survey Analysis**

The findings and analysis are organised into four sections - Section A: Demographic profile; Section B: Perception of K-culture; Section C: Influence of K-culture through Media and Section D: Overall Influence and Personal Impact.

##### **4.1.1 Section A: Demographic profile**

This section will present the demographic profile of respondents which are gender, age, ethnicity and educational level. This allowed a better understanding of the background characteristics of the respondents.

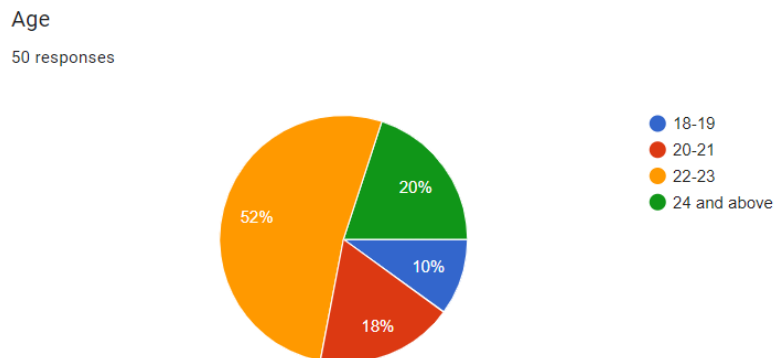
#### 4.1.1.1 Gender



**Figure 4.1: Gender**

Figure 4.1 shows that the number of female respondents who participated in the survey is more than male respondents. There are 28 respondents (76%) and 12 male respondents (24%) who took part in this survey.

#### 4.1.1.2 Age

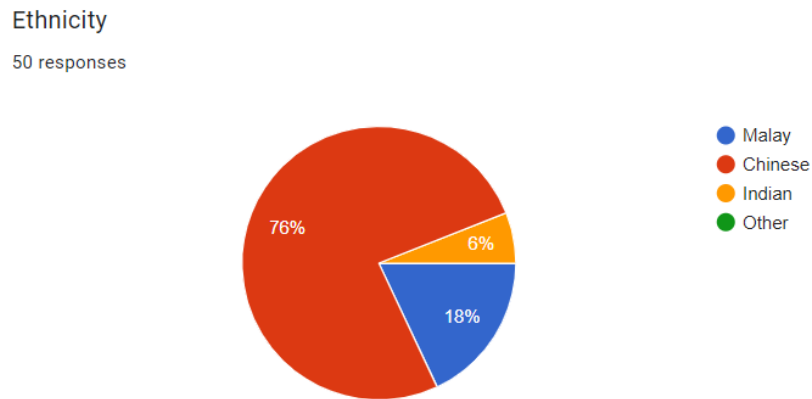


**Figure 4.2: Age**

As shown in Figure 4.2, the majority of the respondents who participated in this survey are those aged between 22 to 23 years old, which is 26 respondents (52%). The following are those aged between 24 and above, which is 10 respondents (20%). The following is those aged between 20 to 21 years old, which is 9 respondents (9%) and the

minority of the respondents are those aged between 18 to 19 years old, which is 5 respondents (10%).

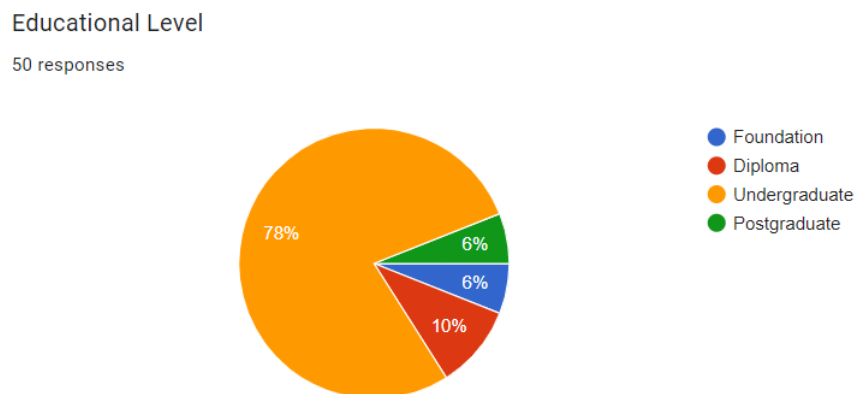
#### 4.1.1.3 Ethnicity



**Figure 4.3: Ethnicity**

Figure 4.3 shows the ethnicity of the respondents who participated in this survey. The majority of the respondents are Chinese, which is 38 respondents (76%). The following are Malay respondents which total 9 (18%) of them. Indian respondents are the least who participated in this survey, which only 3 respondents (6%).

#### 4.1.1.4 Educational Level

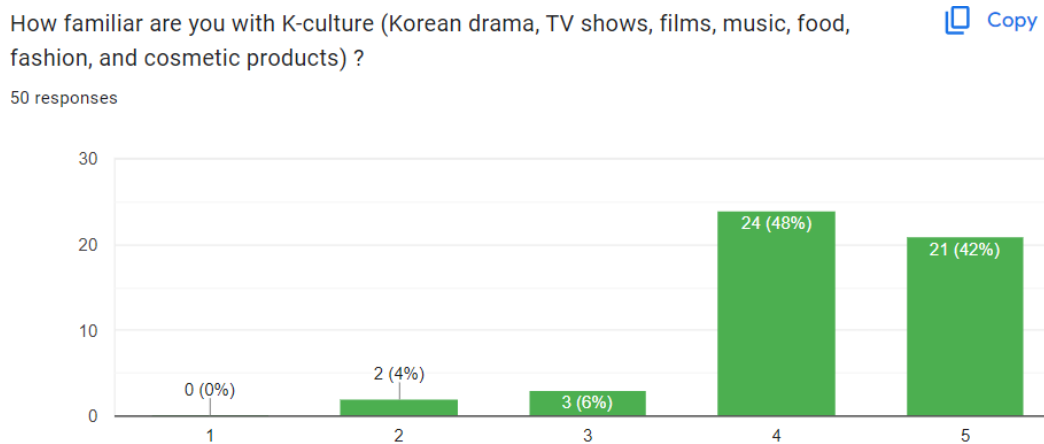


**Figure 4.4: Educational Level**

From Figure 4.4, it can be seen that most of the respondents are from Undergraduate educational level, which is 39 respondents (78%). It is followed by 5 respondents (10%) who are from Diploma educational level. The rest of the respondents are from Foundation educational level and Postgraduate educational level. Both of them have the same number of respondents, which is 3 respondents (6%) from each of them.

## 4.1.2 Section B: Perception of K-culture

### 4.1.2.1 The familiarity of respondents with K-culture

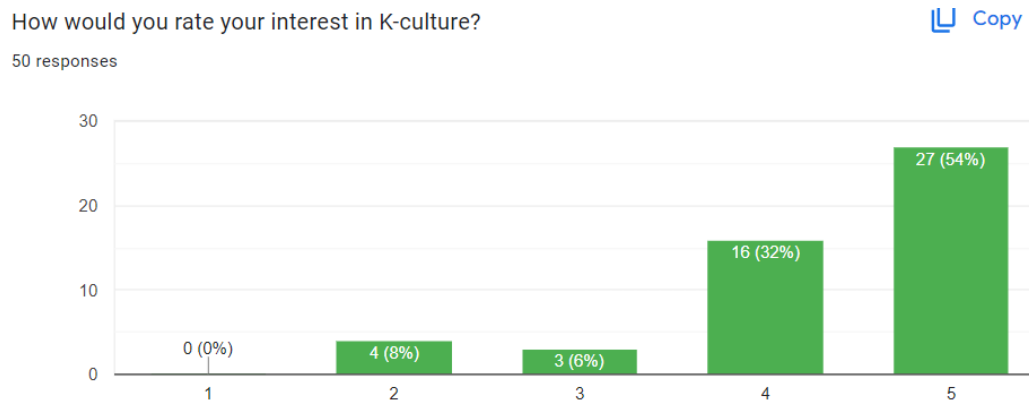


**Figure 4.5: The familiarity of respondents with K-culture**

Figure 4.5 shows the familiarity of respondents with K-culture which is Korean drama, TV shows, films, music, food, fashion and cosmetic products. As shown above, most of the respondents are familiar with K-culture, which is 24 respondents (48%). The following are 21 respondents (42%) who chose that they are extremely familiar with K-culture. 3 respondents (6%) chose that they are neutral with K-culture and only 2 respondents (4%) chose that they are not so familiar with K-culture.



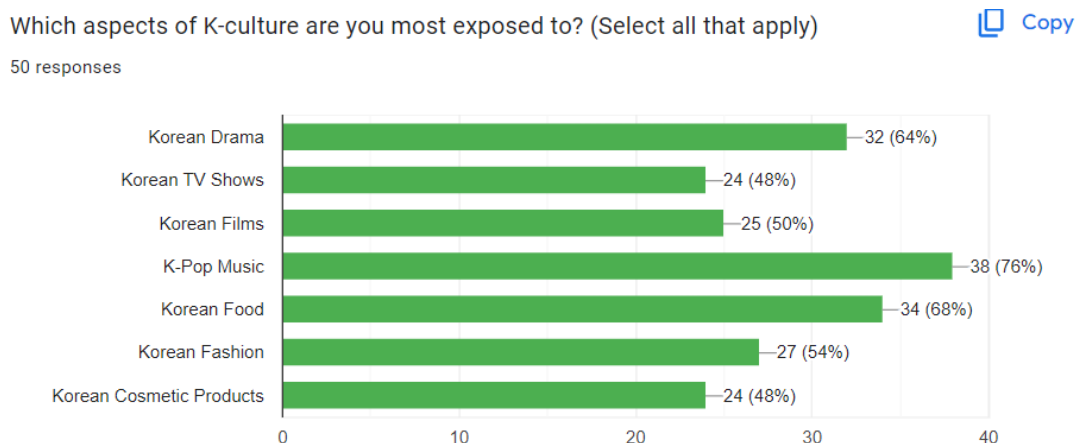
#### 4.1.2.2 Respondents' interest in K-culture



**Figure 4.6 Respondents' interest in K-culture**

The bar graphs above show the rate of interest in K-culture by the respondents. As shown above, there are 27 respondents (54%) chose that they are extremely interested in K-culture. The following are 16 respondents (32%) who chose they are interested in K-culture and 3 respondents (6%) who chose that they are neutral. Only 4 respondents (8%) chose that they are not so interested in K-culture.

#### 4.1.2.3 Aspects of K-culture that respondents most exposed to



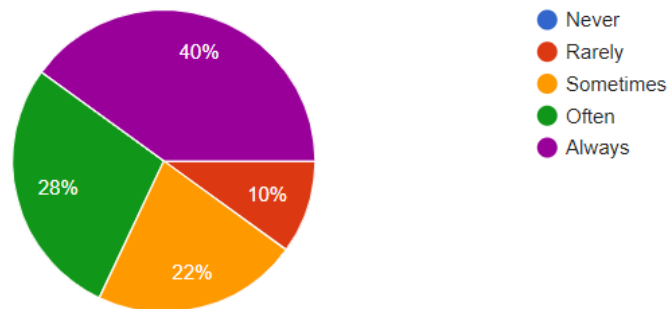
**Figure 4.7: Aspects of K-culture that respondents most exposed to**

Figure 4.7 shows which aspects of K-culture are respondents most exposed to. It can be seen that K-pop music is the highest, which is 38 respondents (76%). The following is Korean food which has 34 respondents (68%) and Korean drama which has 32 respondents (64%). Also, 27 respondents (54%) chose Korean fashion and 25 respondents (50%) chose Korean films. The rest of the respondents are from Korean TV shows and Korean cosmetic products. Both of them have the same number of respondents, which is 24 respondents (48%) from each of them.

#### 4.1.2.4 Frequency of respondents consume K-culture content

How often do you consume K-culture content?

50 responses



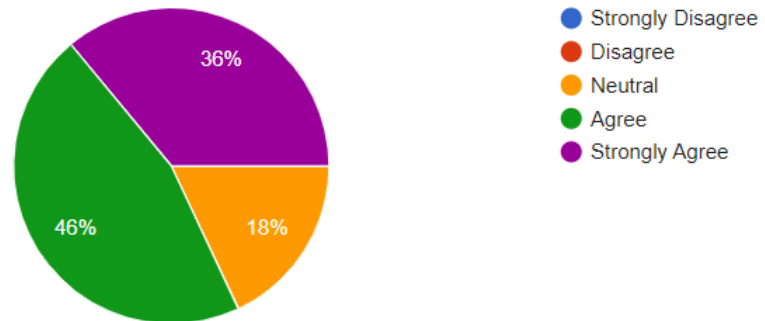
**Figure 4.8: Frequency of respondents consume K-culture content**

As shown in Figure 4.8, 20 respondents (40%) chose that they always consume K-culture content. The following are 14 respondents (28%) who often consume K-culture content and 11 respondents (22%) who sometimes consume K-culture content. Only 5 respondents (10%) chose that they rarely consume K-culture content.

#### 4.1.2.5 Respondents' agreement of K-culture has a positive impact on their lives

Do you believe K-culture has a positive impact on your life?

50 responses

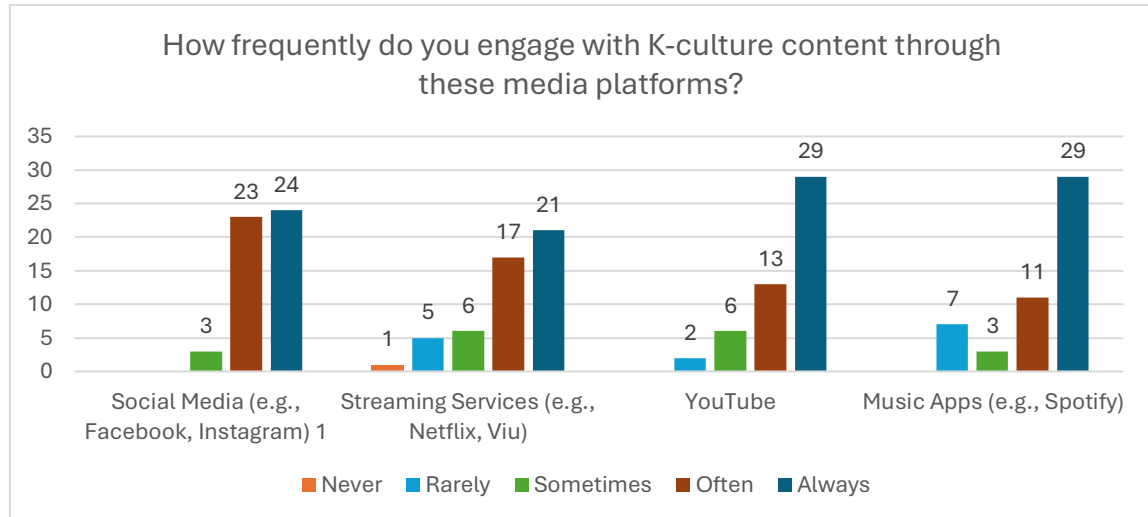


**Figure 4.9: Respondents' agreement of K-culture has a positive impact on their lives**

The pie chart above shows the respondents' agreement of K-culture has a positive impact on their lives. In Figure 4.9, 23 respondents (46%) agree that K-culture has a positive impact on their lives. The following are 18 respondents (36%) who strongly agree that K-culture has a positive impact on their lives. The rest, which is 9 respondents (18%) think that K-culture's impact on their lives is neutral.

### 4.1.3 Section C: Influence of K-culture through Media

#### 4.1.3.1 Frequency of respondents engaging with K-culture content through these media platforms



**Figure 4.10: Frequency of respondents engaging with K-culture content through these media platforms**

Figure 4.10 shows the frequency of respondents engaging with K-culture content through these media platforms. For social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, 24 respondents (48%) chose that they always engage with K-culture content through social media platforms. 23 respondents (46%) chose that they often engage with K-culture content through social media platforms. Only 3 respondents (6%) chose that they sometimes engage with K-culture content through social media platforms.

For streaming services such as Netflix and Viu, 21 respondents (42%) chose that they always engage with K-culture content through streaming services. 17 respondents (34%) chose that they often engage with K-culture content through streaming services. The following are 6 respondents (12%) who chose that they sometimes engage with K-culture content through streaming services. 5 respondents (10%) chose that they rarely engage with K-culture content

through streaming services. Only 1 respondent (2%) chose that he or she never engaged with K-culture content through streaming services.

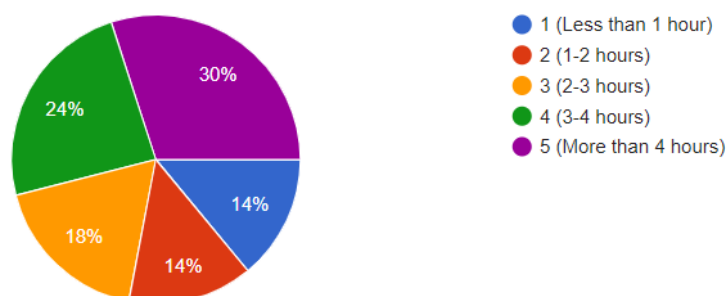
For YouTube, 29 respondents (58%) chose that they always engage with K-culture content through YouTube. 13 respondents (26%) chose that they often engage with K-culture content through YouTube. The following are 6 respondents (12%) who chose that they sometimes engage with K-culture content through YouTube. Only 2 respondents (4%) who chose that they engage with K-culture content through YouTube.

For music apps such as Spotify, 29 respondents (58%) chose that they always engage with K-culture content through music apps. 11 respondents (22%) chose that they often engage with K-culture content through music apps. The following are 7 respondents (14%) who chose that they rarely engage with K-culture content through music apps. Only 3 respondents (6%) who chose that they sometimes engage with K-culture content through music apps.

#### 4.1.3.2 Total time respondents spend on consuming K-culture content daily

How much time do you spend consuming K-culture content daily?

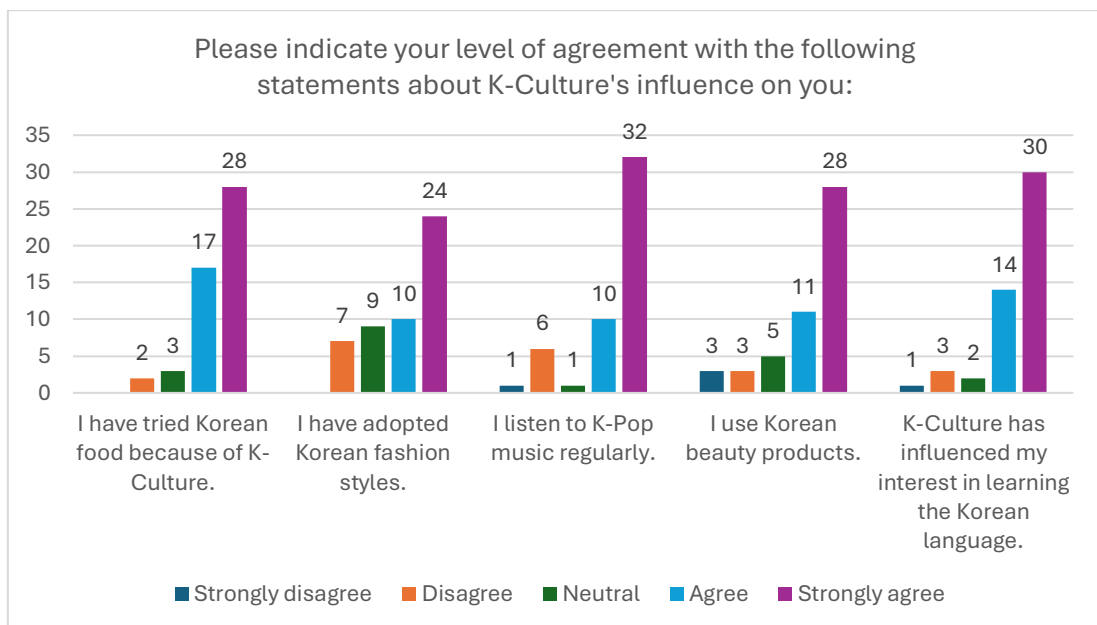
50 responses



**Figure 4.11: Total time respondents spend on consuming K-culture content daily**

The pie charts above show the total time respondents spend on consuming K-culture content daily. As shown in Figure 4.11, 15 respondents (30%) spend more than 4 hours consuming K-culture content daily. The following are 12 respondents (24%) who spend 3 to 4 hours consuming K-culture content daily. 9 respondents (18%) spend 2 to 3 hours consuming K-culture content daily. The rest of the respondents spend 1 to 2 hours consuming K-culture content daily and those who spend less than 1 hour consuming K-culture content daily share the same number of respondents, which is 7 respondents (14%).

#### 4.1.3.3 Respondents' agreement with the statements about K-culture's influence on them



**Figure 4.12: Respondents' agreement with the statements about K-culture's influence on them**

Figure 4.12 shows respondents' agreement with the statements about K-culture's influence on them. For the statement, which is I have tried Korean food because of K-culture. 28 respondents (56%) strongly agree with this statement. 17 respondents (34%) agree with this

statement. Besides, 3 respondents (6%) are neutral about this statement. Only 2 respondents (4%) disagree with this statement.

For the statement, which is I have adopted Korean fashion styles, 24 respondents (48%) strongly agree with this statement. 10 respondents (20%) agree with this statement and 9 respondents (18%) are neutral with this statement. Only 7 respondents (14%) disagree with this statement.

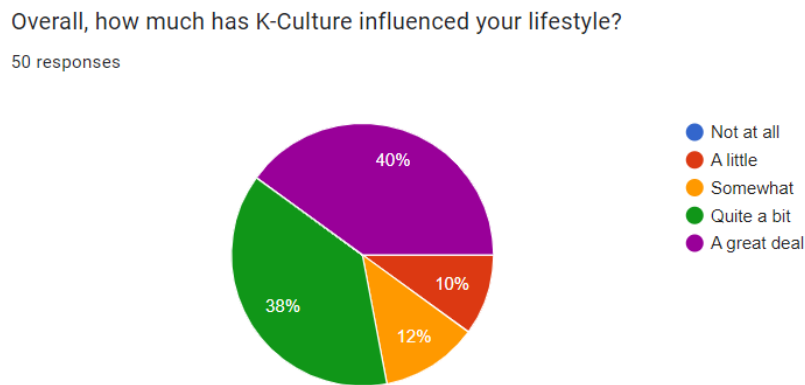
For the statement, I listen to K-pop music regularly, 32 respondents (64%) strongly agree with this statement. 10 respondents (20%) agree with this statement and 1 respondent (2%) is neutral with this statement. Besides, 6 respondents (12%) disagree with this statement and only 1 respondent (2%) strongly disagree with this statement.

For the statement, I use Korean beauty products, 28 respondents (56%) strongly agree with this statement. 11 respondents (22%) agree with this statement and 5 respondents (10%) are neutral with this statement. Besides, the number of respondents who disagree and strongly disagree with this statement is the same, which is 3 respondents (6%).

For the statement, K-culture has influenced my interest in learning the Korean language, 30 respondents (60%) strongly agree with this statement. 14 respondents (28%) agree with this statement, 2 respondents (4%) are neutral with this statement and 3 respondents (6%) disagree with this statement. Only 1 respondent (2%) strongly disagree with this statement.

### 4.1.4 Section D: Overall Influence and Personal Impact

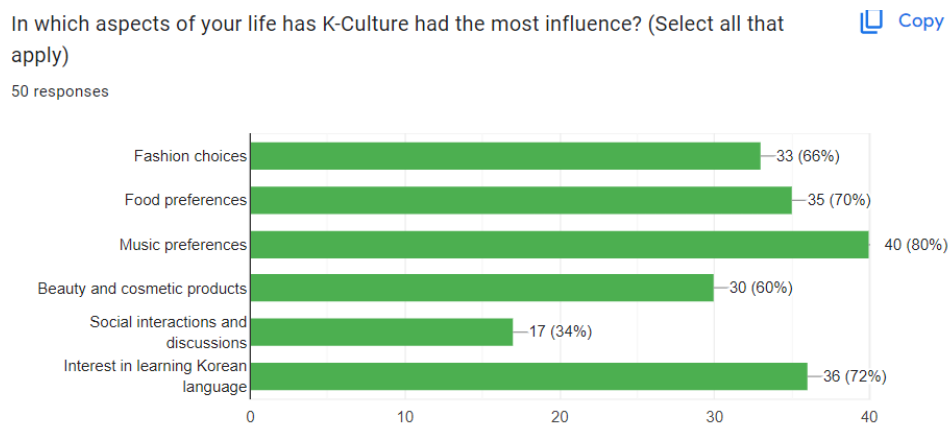
#### 4.1.4.1 K-culture influence on respondents' lifestyle



**Figure 4.13: K-culture influence on respondents' lifestyle**

Based on Figure 4.13, the pie chart shows the K-culture influence on respondents' lifestyles. 20 respondents (40%) think that it is a great deal about the K-culture influence on their lifestyle. The following are 19 respondents (38%) who think that K-culture influences their lifestyle quite a bit and 6 respondents (12%) who think that K-culture influences their lifestyle somewhat. Only 5 respondents (10%) think that K-culture influences their lifestyle a little.

#### 4.1.4.2 Aspects of respondents' lives have the most influence by K-culture



**Figure 4.14: Aspects of respondents' lives have the most influence by K-culture**

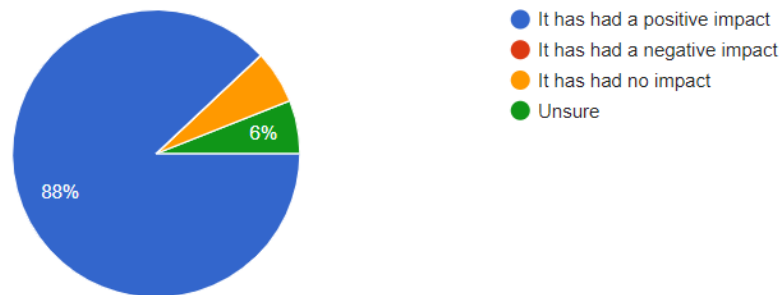


Figure 4.14 shows the aspects of respondents' lives have the most influence by K-culture. 40 respondents (80%) think that K-culture influences their music preferences the most and 36 respondents (72%) think that K-culture influences their interest in learning Korean language the most. Besides, 35 respondents (70%) think that K-culture influences their food preferences the most and 33 respondents (66%) think that K-culture influences their fashion choices the most. 30 respondents (60%) think that K-culture influences their choice in buying Korean beauty and cosmetic products the most and 17 respondents (34%) think that K-culture influences their social interactions and discussions.

#### 4.1.4.3 Impact of K-culture influence on respondents' personal identity

How do you feel about the influence of K-Culture on your personal identity?

50 responses



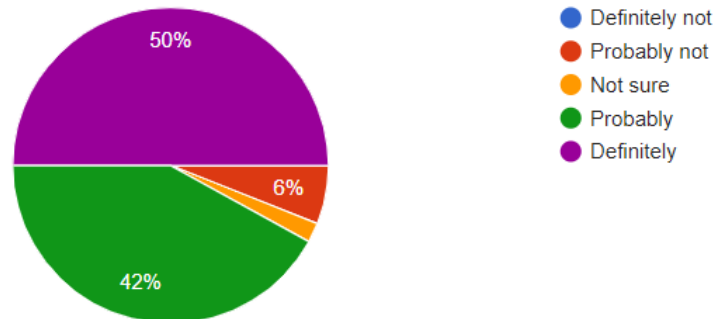
**Figure 4.15: Impact of K-culture influence on respondents' personal identity**

The pie chart shows the impact of K-culture influence on respondents' personal identity. 44 respondents (88%) think that K-culture influence has had a positive impact on their personal identity. 3 respondents (6%) are not sure about the impact of K-culture influence on their personal identity and 3 respondents (6%) think that K-culture influence has had no impact on their personal identity.

#### 4.1.4.4 Willingness of respondents to recommend K-culture content to their friends and family

Would you recommend K-Culture content to your friends and family?

50 responses



**Figure 4.16: Willingness of respondents to recommend K-culture content to their friends and family**

Figure 4.16 shows the willingness of respondents to recommend K-culture content to their friends and family. 25 respondents (50%) think that they will definitely recommend K-culture to their friends and family. Besides, 21 respondents (42%) think that they will probably recommend K-culture content to their friends and family and 3 respondents (6%) think that they will probably not recommend K-culture content to their friends and family. Only 1 respondent (2%) thinks that he or she is not sure whether he or she will recommend K-culture content to his or her friends and family.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

The empirical research related to the inquiry questions and objectives will be discussed in this chapter. Also, survey data and analysis will be used to conclude the whole research. It will further show what needs to be done by the university to improve students' perception of the Korean culture via media. This is why an investigation was made on Malaysian university students' perceptions and media effects on them about K-culture.

#### **5.1 Discussion**

The discussion is divided to four different sections from the survey analysis, which is demographic profile, perception of K-culture, media influence and the overall impact of K-culture on personal identity.

The majority of the respondents of the survey were Chinese (76%) female (76%) who aged between 22 to 23 years old (52%). This is a reflection of Malaysian university students as a whole, particularly those who might be more interested in K-pop, dramas, and fashion, which are popular among younger female viewers nationwide. According to Loh (2021), young women often stay away from reality and they escape to the 'fantasy boys of pop' because the pop idols do not expect anything in return. Furthermore, the high percentage of Chinese respondents suggests that K-culture may have a greater influence on some Malaysian ethnic groups. It's crucial to remember that the study also included respondents who were Malay (18%) and Indian (6%) which indicates that a wide range of ethnic groups have an interest in K-culture.

According to the results, most people (42%) know about K-cultural things, while 48% are very familiar with them. This shows that Korean cultural elements like music, food, fashion and even beauty are well represented and understood. Similarly, more than half (54%) of the participants were found to show extreme interest in K-culture which would be about the current rise of K-pop and Korean media throughout Asia especially to younger audiences or students who are very active on social and other media of today.

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the most popular components of K-culture are K-pop music (76%) and Korean cuisine (68%). This corroborates earlier findings that assert how the dominant K-pop music and Korean gastronomy appeal most to the contemporary Southeast Asian youth, Malaysia included. The maximum ever exposure to Korean dramas is (64%) and fashion (54%), which indicates that K-culture is not only limited to music but also has a wide range of other aspects. These all demonstrate the extent to which K-culture is integrated into their life.

The analysis also explored the different media channels through which the respondents were immersed in K-culture. With social media and YouTube emerged as the leading content consumption platforms for K-culture with 48% and 58% respectively. This corroborates various studies that have indicated the advent of digital platforms particularly social media has been a major factor in the global distribution of K-culture.

In addition, the growing importance of such services is illustrated as a whopping 42% of the survey respondents interact with K-culture via Netflix, Viu, and other streaming services. This shows the rising tendency of university students towards the availability of online content as they want to access an array of Korean shows, movies, and music with ease.

The aspect of the frequency with which the respondents consume K - culture content is also important to note as there are 40% of them engaged in the activity daily. This is an indication that K-culture is to an extent now a part of their daily activities which also stresses once more, the extent to which this culture has been embraced.

Respondents assert that there is a high level of significance in the impact of K-culture on their personal lives, despite this fact, the detailed overlook indicates that a moderate 40% claimed that it has a great impact on their lifestyle. The most affected of them are music, 80% of the respondents indicated that it is their preferred area and language, 72% of the respondents demonstrated interest in it but there are many who also mentioned that K-culture plays a role in determining the dressing style (66%) and the eating patterns (70%) of people.

Most of the respondents, 88% assert that K-culture has been a great improvement in their individual identity. Certain Korean media have been aspirational due to their portrayal which depicts certain beauty, success and modernity with little regard for functionality. In addition to this K-pop idols' fashions, music and way of life become very captivating and many young Malaysians take it as a motivation.

The information shows that K-culture has not only entertained the respondents but has also influenced their preferences, choices of lifestyle and even their dreams. This degree of impact is consistent with works that emphasize the fact that different socializing forces, especially for the youth in the process of social identity construction, have the media as one of their potent forces.

## **5.2 Implications of the Study**

This research has a number of really interesting implications. To begin with, the very endorsement of K-culture via-the-media calls for a better appreciation of how international cultural products affect local identity and lifestyle especially among the young population. These conclusions will help media producers and marketers design and create content and products that fit the tastes of K-cultural lovers living in Malaysia.

Furthermore, the findings of the present study indicate that K-culture influences the construction of identity among Malaysian undergraduates. Their incorporation of aspects of Korean culture within their everyday lives indicates that K-culture is no longer mere entertainment, rather it is a way to express oneself and engage in society.

## **5.3 Limitations of the Study**

While this study offers valuable insights, it has several limitations. Despite the merits of this study, certain limitations exist. y offers valuable insights, it has several limitations. The sample size of 50 respondents is rather small and probably does not reflect the entire Malaysian university population. Also, the survey has largely been responded to by Chinese respondents resulting in a bias in the preferences towards K-culture that are examined. Future research could address the K-culture effects on different ethnic groupings more holistically by using larger samples and ethnically diverse populations.

Moreover, the study to an extent concentrated on media exposure and did not examine other elements, such as the effect of peers, family history, or socio-economic variables that might also play a role in shaping the students' attitude towards K-culture. Studies in the future might also look at these aspects to give a more elaborate explanation of the issue.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

To build on the findings of this study, future research could investigate how K-culture influences other aspects of Malaysian society, such as intercultural relations or consumer behavior. K-culture influence could also be studied in terms of its impact on individual's identity and cultural values over a period of time and perhaps how new forms of identities influenced by K-culture will arise.

In addition, conducting qualitative studies such as interviews or focus groups would allow for better understanding of the K-culture debate on a personal level. This would contribute in seeking more details on the K-culture particular aspects of how they shape one's identity and choices across different cultures and societies.

#### **5.5 Conclusion**

Last but not least, the study shows that K-culture penetrates into Malaysian university students especially in the context of social media, YouTube, and other streaming services. They are inclined towards K-culture and its demographics of music, cuisine, fashion, and self-image in which most of the responses given were positive. This research noted the ability of the global media to determine local individuals and their culture and gives a basis for another study on the increasing Korean culture's impact on the young generation across the globe.

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## APPENDIX A

### STUDY ON K-CULTURE INFLUENCES ON MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS THROUGH MEDIA

#### Section A: Demographic Profile

1. Gender:
  - Male
  - Female
  - Other
  
2. Age:
  - 18-19
  - 20-21
  - 22-23
  - 24 and above
  
3. Ethnicity:
  - Malay
  - Chinese
  - Indian
  
4. Educational Level:
  - Foundation

- Diploma
- Undergraduate
- Postgraduate

### **Section B: Perception of K-Culture**

5. How familiar are you with K-culture (Korean drama, TV shows, films, music, food, fashion, and cosmetic products) ?

- Not familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Very familiar
- Extremely familiar

6. How would you rate your interest in K-culture?

- Not interested at all
- Slightly interested
- Moderately interested
- Very interested
- Extremely interested

7. Which aspects of K-culture are you most exposed to? (Select all that apply)

- Korean Drama
- Korean TV Shows
- Korean Films
- K-Pop Music

- Korean Food
- Korean Fashion
- Korean Cosmetic Products

8. How often do you consume K-culture content?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

9. Do you believe K-culture has a positive impact on your life?

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

### **Section C: Influence of K-Culture through Media**

10. How frequently do you engage with K-Culture content through these media platforms?

- Social Media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram)
- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often

- Always
  
- Streaming Services (e.g., Netflix, Viu)
  - Never
  - Rarely
  - Sometimes
  - Often
  - Always
  
- YouTube
  - Never
  - Rarely
  - Sometimes
  - Often
  - Always
  
- Music Apps (e.g., Spotify)
  - Never
  - Rarely
  - Sometimes
  - Often
  - Always

11. How much time do you spend consuming K-culture content daily?

- 1 (Less than 1 hour)

- 2 (1-2 hours)
- 3 (2-3 hours)
- 4 (3-4 hours)
- 5 (More than 4 hours)

12. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about K-Culture's influence on you:

- I have tried Korean food because of K-Culture.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

- I have adopted Korean fashion styles.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

- I listen to K-Pop music regularly.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral

- Agree
- Strongly agree
  
- I use Korean beauty products.
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree
  
- K-Culture has influenced my interest in learning the Korean language.
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

#### **Section D: Overall Influence and Personal Impact**

13. Overall, how much has K-Culture influenced your lifestyle?
- Not at all
  - A little
  - Somewhat
  - Quite a bit



- A great deal

14. In which aspects of your life has K-Culture had the most influence? (Select all that apply)

- Fashion choices
- Food preferences
- Music preferences
- Beauty and cosmetic products
- Social interactions and discussions
- Interest in learning Korean language

15. How do you feel about the influence of K-Culture on your personal identity?

- It has had a positive impact.
- It has had a negative impact.
- It has had no impact.
- Unsure

16. Would you recommend K-Culture content to your friends and family?

- Definitely
- Probably
- Not sure
- Probably not
- Definitely not