

A Case Study of Taiwanese People's Preferences for Korean Drama Series

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the factors influencing Taiwanese people's preference for Korean dramas. The study participants totaled 254 individuals (M=50; F=204). The research instrument used was an online questionnaire. The research question was: What factors influence Taiwanese people's preference for Korean drama series? The main findings of this study revealed that (a) The most influential factor affecting Taiwanese people's preferences for Korean drama series was "drama plots," irrespective of demographic factors such as gender, occupation, education level, age, type of Korean drama subtitles (dubbed or subtitled), and place of residence; the least influential factor was "Korean history," regardless of subtitle type and place of residence, (b) The least influential factor for two groups—male Taiwanese individuals and Taiwanese people aged 51-60—was "Korean makeup" and "Korean language," respectively, (c) The least influential factor for two groups—graduate students and unemployed Taiwanese individuals—was "Korean drinks," and (d) The least influential factor for the following groups—females, college students, Taiwanese individuals under the age of 51, all students, and employed individuals—was "Korean history." Additionally, any government can invest money and resources into the audiovisual media industry and marketing, such as drama series, to enhance its country's visibility on a global scale.

Keywords: Korea, Korean drama series, drama plots, Taiwan

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Introduction

In recent years, with the accelerated development and transmission of social media, cultural exchanges have become easier (王/Wang, 2007) than before. Korean TV culture has stirred up the craze of the Korean Wave around the world, including Taiwan and Indonesia (Bonita, 2018). Due to the promotion of the Korean government and many streaming services, Korean drama series have become the most popular choice for college students in their leisure time (Kalbi, 2016). In 2004, about three million Asian tourists took trips to Korea, two-thirds of whom did it because of the impact of the Korean TV drama series (劉/Liou, 2016, 2017). Korea's number of foreign tourists increased by 76% from 2011 to 2016 (cited in Bonita, 2018). Additionally, the statistics show that the number of Western female tourists who took a trip to Korea from 2010 to 2019 was up to ten million and was highly above that of male tourists (自由時報/Liberty Times Net, 2022).

Because the culture between Taiwan and Korea is similar, Korean culture has attracted much attention in Taiwan. Taiwanese people are fond of the aura of Korean drama series' plots, characters, and cuisine. They chose to have Korean food, wear Korean clothes, and watch Korean drama series (郭/Kuo, n.d.a). Korean drama series initially presented the Korean lifestyle with long freedom and rebellion and then displayed romance, cultures, and customs (Bonita, 2018). Taiwanese people's eating, clothing, education, and recreation have also been influenced by Korean drama series.

The popularity of Korean drama series among Taiwanese people dates back to four series: "Autumn in My Heart" (Chinese translation: 藍色生死戀) (2000), "Winter Sonata" (Chinese translation: 冬季戀歌) (2002), "Summer scent" (Chinese translation: 夏日香氣) (2003) and "Spring Waltz" (Chinese translation: 春天的華爾滋) (2006). The beautiful seasonal landscapes in the Korean drama series stirred up Taiwanese people's inclination toward Korea (張/Chang, 2021). The drama series "Squid Game" (Chinese translation: 魷魚遊戲), released in 2021, attracted over 1.42 million views within a month and became the most-watched original drama series on Netflix (黃/Huang et al., 2021; Squid Game,

2022). The series won various accolades, such as the Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Lead Actor by Jung-Jae Lee in a Drama Series (Squid Game, 2022).

The current study aimed to explore the popularity of Korean drama series among Taiwanese people and fans. Few research studies focused on the relationship between preferred factors, such as drama plots, and various Taiwanese demographic variables, including age, educational status, occupation, dub-subtitle type (DST) of Korean drama series, and residence (see Table 2). A research question produced to motivate the present study is: What factors influence Taiwanese people's preference for Korean drama series?

Literature Review

The term “Korean wave” is early to describe the trends of Korean cultural fashion at the end of the 20th century, including cultural industries (e.g., TV drama series, movies, and gaming) and Korean traditions and features facilitated by such industries as Korean cuisine, hanboks, cosmetics, and tourism (Bonita, 2018). Korean TV culture refers to the TV dramas and movies that spread Korea's beauty culture, encompassing customs, etiquette, lifestyle, fashion, and delicacies (Roll, 2021). As part of the Korean wave, Korean TV culture brings favorable reviews (Roll, 2021).

The Korean government has facilitated Korea's cultural development through streaming services to break into the foreign market (容/Yung, 2018). The Korean government also enforced many policies to advance the quality of film and TV works and accelerate inter-industry competition (容/Yung, 2018). In the 1960s, Korean TV series, such as “Real Theatre,” aired from 1964 to 1985, were related to politics, especially anti-communism (Kalbi, 2016). At that time, it was a stressful phenomenon that most Korean TV drama series did not focus on entertaining watchers. In the 1970s, the TV sector began focusing on facilitating TV dramas with more entertainment because the ban on obtaining profit from advertising agencies was lifted in 1969 (Kalbi, 2016). In the 1980s, the Korean TV sector, affected by Japanese TV drama series, began to create fashionable dramas about love stories and the lives of young people, such as “Love and Ambition” (Chinese

translation: 愛情與野望) aired in 1987 (Kalbi, 2016). Nowadays, Korean TV drama series have become hotly discussed worldwide (Bonita, 2018; Kalbi, 2016).

With the prevalence of Korean drama series throughout Asia, many countries' TV industries even patterned their TV shows on Korean TV drama series, such as "My Love from the Star" reproduced in Japan, which they want to piggyback on the movie (自由娛樂/Liberty Entertainment, 2016). Since the TV series "Fireworks" was televised by Gala Television Corporation (GTV) in 2000, Korean TV series have caught public attention. Then, GTV rolled out the TV drama series "Autumn in My Heart" in the same year (2000), and the Korean TV drama series received high ratings and soon made a hit (郭/Kuo, n.d.b). At the same time, the fetish towards Korean TV drama series has also facilitated the economy (郭/Kuo, n.d.b).

陳/Chen (2004) recruited and interviewed 18 netizens (M=2; F=16) on the Internet to examine how Korean drama series were popular among Taiwanese people. The results of the study indicated that (a) The heat of Korean drama series in Taiwan resulted from the interplay of watchers, TV companies, and media support, and (b) The features of Korean drama series appreciated by the participants included real Korean history, intriguing themes of real life, the cast of handsome actors and beautiful actresses, and so forth.

柳/Liu (2015) employed a questionnaire to explore the viewing behaviors of Nantou residents about Korean drama series. In total, 420 residents rated the questionnaire, and the number of valid responses was four hundred. The important results of the study indicated that (a) Nantou residents watched Korean drama series the most, followed by Taiwanese soap operas, Mainland Chinese drama series and Japanese drama series, and then Hong Kong drama series the least, and (b) The key factors affecting Nantou residents' preferences for Korean drama series were "different customs," "enlarging knowledge," "music," "handsome/beautiful actors/actresses," "diverse program types," "staying away from busy life," and "stress relief."

The connection between the literature above review, especially previous studies, and the current study lies in numerous factors, such as intriguing life issues and the cast of charming actors/actresses, affecting Taiwanese watchers' preferences for Korean drama series. However, most previous studies discussed these factors in terms of entire participants

and gender. In contrast, this study aimed to explore these factors across a broader range of demographics, including educational status, age, occupation, dub-subtitle type (DST) of Korean drama series, and residence (see Table 2). One important research question driving the current study was: What factors affected the liking of Taiwanese people for Korean drama series in terms of entire participants, gender, educational status, age, occupation, dub-subtitle type (DST) of Korean drama series, and residence? In a broad sense, Korean drama series in the current study could be watched via Taiwanese TV cable stations such as GTV (Gala Television) and Video Land (Bonita, 2018), videos, TV, Netflix, YouTube, and other media platforms.

Research Methods

This section includes two parts: the description of the questionnaire and the participants. The former includes the processes of questionnaire completion and collection. The latter centers on the demographics of Taiwanese participants, including gender, educational status, age, occupation, favorite dub-subtitle type (DST) of Korean drama series, and residence.

3.1 Questionnaire

The purposes of using an online questionnaire in the current study were (a) convenience sampling and (b) time-saving. The convenience sampling method facilitated participant recruitment through technology, particularly Line, which covered various social media groups. Moreover, the online questionnaire reduced the time required for data collection; otherwise, the researchers would have had to spend considerable time traveling around Taiwan and outlying islands to gather participant responses.

Table 1 presents the process of completing and then collecting the questionnaires. The questionnaire, especially items, was designed based on (a) the results of telephone interviews with five familiar people aged from 40 to 47 (M=1; F=4) who were in the habit of watching Korean drama series, (b) the results of other researchers' studies such as 王/Wang's (2007), and (c) the researchers' brainstorming. The telephone-via-Line interview

questions were in Mandarin Chinese: (a) 喜歡韓劇的原因? (哪些因素影響最多?) 韓劇對你的生活有哪些影響(食衣住行育樂)? [Why do you like to watch Korean drama series? (What factors influenced your viewing of Korean drama series more?) How did Korean drama series affect your life (food, clothing, housing, transportation, pedagogy, and entertainment)?] The first draft of the paper questionnaire included sixteen items in total. Then, through convenience sampling, five female college students were invited to rate the questionnaire to verify whether the questionnaire items were appropriate enough, and they suggested two items (I like Korean wine, and I like Korean vehicles) be deleted because few Taiwanese people, especially females, might mind these two items. Hence, the final draft of the questionnaire was completed with fourteen items, including item 14 (Skip this question, or the questionnaire will be invalid). The design of item 14 was aimed to avoid collecting any questionnaires rated by participants without concern. Afterward, one Chinese instructor with more than 10 years of Chinese teaching in a national technical university was invited to revise the questionnaire for expert validity.

The online questionnaire (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeQZ3QmGLHbQYpwmQcqhHHOnS2YYeVeqneleF6Ml_xcjUk64Q/viewform) constituted three parts: participants' demographics, questionnaire items, and free writing. The free writing section was used for participants to write down any ideas about the research topic. It is a measuring scale with *strongly agree* (5), *agree* (4), *neutral* (3), *disagree* (2), and *strongly disagree* (1). The questionnaire rating time ranged from October to November 2022. In the end, 291 questionnaires were collected, which included 254 valid questionnaires and thirty-seven useless surveys. The valid percentage, 87% (254/291), presented a high questionnaire response rate. Of the thirty-seven invalid questionnaires, twenty-three raters rated item 14, 13 raters did not watch Korean drama series, and one not only rated item 14 but also did not watch Korean drama series. The accumulation of Excel made the statistical results of the questionnaire available for analysis.

Table 1
Completion and Collection of Questionnaire

No.	Technique	Purpose	Participant (n)
1	Line interviews	identification of main issues	5 (M=1; F=4)
2	brainstorming	identification of main issues	2 researchers
3	pilot paper questionnaire rating	identification of main issues	5 female college students
4	expert validity	validity of questionnaire	1 Chinese instructor
5.	pilot rating online	rating smoothly	2 researchers
6	official questionnaire rating	data collection	291 raters (valid: 254)

3.2 Participants

In the current study, the participant group consisted of 254 Taiwanese people who watched Korean drama series. The participants were recruited through the researchers' Line groups based on convenience sampling.

Table 2 shows the demographics of 254 participants, including gender, educational status, age, occupation, dub-subtitle type (DST), and residence. Of the sample, 50 (20%) participants were male and 204 (80%) were female. Two (1%) participants' educational status was junior high; 12 (5%) were senior high; 206 (81%) were college level; 34 (13%) were graduate school level. There were no participants at the elementary school level. In terms of age, 72 (28%) participants' age was twenty or below; 81 (32%) were between 21 and 30; 22 (9%) was in between 31 and 40; 40 (16%) was in between 41 and 50; 29 (11%) was in between 51 and 60; 10 (4%) was sixty or more. From the perspective of occupation, 109 (43%) participants were students; 120 (47%) had jobs; 25 (10%) did not have any jobs. Considering the DST of Korean Drama Series, 205 (81%) participants watched Korean drama series with Chinese dub and subtitles (KCC); 14 (6%) watched Korean drama series

with Korean dub and Chinese subtitles (KKC); 35 (14%) watched both KCC and KKC (Both). Based on residency, 57 (22%) participants lived in Northern Taiwan (PNT); 94 (37%) lived in Central Taiwan (PCT); 99 (39%) lived in Southern Taiwan (PST); 3 (1%) lived in Eastern Taiwan; one lived in an outlying island.

Table 2**Participants' Demographics (N=254)**

Items	Characteristics	Number	percentage
Gender	Male	50	20%
	Female	204	80%
Educational status	Elementary school	0	0%
	Junior high school	2	1%
	Senior high school	12	5%
	College	206	81%
	Graduate school	34	13%
Age	≤ 20	72	28%
	21-30	81	32%
	31-40	22	9%
	41-50	40	16%
	51-60	29	11%
	≥ 60	10	4%
Occupation	Student	109	43%
	Employment (Full-/Part-time)	120	47%
	Unemployment	25	10%
Dub-Subtitle Type (DST) of Korean Drama Series	KCC (Korean drama series with Chinese dub and subtitles)	205	81%
	KKC (Korean drama series with Korean dub and Chinese subtitles)	14	6%
	Both (KCC+KKC).	35	14%
Residence	North	57	22%
	Middle	94	37%
	South	99	39%
	East	3	1%
	Outlying islands	1	0%

Note. All the percentages were rounded up from the unit digits.

Results and Analyses

The statistical results of the questionnaire were obtained by accumulating Excel data. This section addresses the discussion and analysis based on the order of the participants, gender, educational status, age, occupation, favorite DST of Korean drama series, and residence.

4.1 Entire Participants

In the order of importance, Taiwanese people watched Korean drama series because of “drama plots” (item 8: agreement percentage (AP) =88.58%; $M=4.43$), “Korean characters” (item 11: AP=80.71%; $M=4.21$), and “Korean dress code” (item 3: AP=72.44%; $M=3.95$) (see Table 3). On the other hand, the factor affecting Taiwanese people's preferences for Korean drama series the least was “Korean history” (item 6: AP=19.29%; $M=2.82$).

Table 3

Results of Questionnaire –Entire Participants (N=254)

Item: I watch Korean drama series because _____.	St. A. + A (%)	Neutral (%)	St. D. + D. (%)	<i>M</i>
1. I like Korean delicacies.	61.42	25.20	13.39	3.73
2. I like Korean drinks.	31.89	41.34	26.77	3.09
3. I like the Korean dress code.	72.44	16.93	10.63	3.95
4. I like Korean makeup.	57.48	27.17	15.35	3.64
5. I like Korean architecture.	40.16	39.76	20.08	3.29
6. I like Korean history.	19.29	48.03	32.68	2.82
7. I like the Korean (language).	35.83	34.25	29.92	3.11
8. I like their plots.	88.58	10.24	1.18	4.43
9. I like Korean songs.	65.35	22.44	12.20	3.87
10. I like to travel to Korea.	70.47	19.29	10.24	3.92
11. I like their characters.	80.71	14.96	4.33	4.21
12. I have topics to chat with family members.	31.89	37.01	31.10	3.04
13. I have topics to chat with friends.	57.87	27.56	14.57	3.62

Note. St. A: Strongly Agree (5); A: Agree (4); Neutral (3); D: Disagree (2); St. D: Strongly disagree

(1). All the percentages and means were rounded up from the second decimal point.

4.2 Gender

Table 4 shows that the factor “drama plots” (item 8) affected males’ and females’ preferences the most (AP: 82.00% and 90.20%, respectively; *M*: 4.26 and 4.47, respectively). However, the factor affecting males’ and females’ preferences the least was different. The factor “Korean makeup” (item 4) affected males’ preferences the least (AP: 22.00%; *M*: 2.82), whereas the factor “Korean history” (item 6) affected females’ preferences the least (AP: 16.67%; *M*: 2.80).

Comparatively, the largest different factor affecting males’ and females’ preferences for Korean drama series was “Korean makeup” (item 4), by an agreement percentage difference (APD) of 44.18% and a mean difference (MD) of 1.02. The matter of makeup is female-oriented. The last difference between the two groups was “Korean drinks” (item 2), with an APD of 2.63% and an MD of 0.09.

Table 4

Results of Questionnaire – Gender (M=50; F=204)

Item: I watch Korean drama series because	Gender	St. A./ A (%)	Neutral (%)	St. D. /D. (%)	APD (%)	<i>M</i>	MD
1. I like Korean delicacies.	M	48.00	34.00	18.00	-	3.50	-0.28
	F	64.71	23.04	12.25	16.71	3.78	
2. I like Korean drinks.	M	34.00	38.00	28.00	2.63	3.16	0.09
	F	31.37	42.16	26.47		3.07	
3. I like the Korean dress code.	M	48.00	24.00	28.00	-	3.36	-0.73
	F	78.43	15.20	6.37	30.43	4.09	
4. I like Korean makeup.	M	22.00	38.00	40.00	-	2.82	-1.02
	F	66.18	24.51	9.31	44.18	3.84	
5. I like Korean architecture.	M	36.00	42.00	22.00	-5.18	3.18	-0.14
	F	41.18	39.22	19.61		3.32	
6. I like Korean history.	M	30.00	36.00	34.00	13.33	2.92	0.12
	F	16.67	50.98	32.35		2.80	
7. I like the Korean (language).	M	26.00	32.00	42.00	-	2.82	-0.37
	F	38.24	34.80	26.96	12.24	3.19	
8. I like their plots.	M	82.00	16.00	2.00	8.20	4.26	-0.21
	F	90.20	8.82	0.98		4.47	
9. I like Korean songs.	M	58.00	20.00	22.00	-9.16	3.64	-0.29
	F	67.16	23.04	9.80		3.93	

10. I like to travel to	M	64.00	22.00	14.00		3.70	
Korea.	F	72.06	18.63	9.31	-8.06	3.98	-0.28
11. I like their characters.	M	74.00	18.00	8.00		4.04	
	F	82.35	14.22	3.43	-8.35	4.25	-0.21
12. I have topics to chat	M	48.00	36.00	16.00		3.44	
with family members.	F	27.94	37.25	34.80	20.06	2.94	0.50
13. I have topics to chat	M	50.00	36.00	14.00		3.46	
with friends.	F	59.80	25.49	14.71	9.80	3.66	0.20

Note. St. A: Strongly Agree (5); A: Agree (4); Neutral (3); D: Disagree (2); St.D: Strongly disagree (1). APD: Agreement Percentage Difference; MD: Mean Difference. All the percentages and means were rounded up from the second decimal point.

4.3 Educational Status

No participants' educational status was elementary school, so there was no discussion of the group and comparison with other groups in this section. Also, the sizes of the two groups, junior and senior high school (2 and 12, respectively) (see Table 1), were too small to be discussed and compared in this section.

Table 5 shows that the factor "drama plots" (item 8) affected both college and graduate students' preferences for Korean drama series the most (AP: 88.35% and 94.12%, respectively; *M*: 4.41 and 4.62, respectively) and only 0.97% of college students disagreed, and no graduate students disagreed. On the other hand, the factor affecting the two groups' preferences the least was different. The factor affecting college students' preferences for Korean drama series the least was "Korean history" (item 6) (AP: 18.93% *M*: 2.86). As for graduates, the factor affecting their preferences for Korean drama series the least was "Korean drinks" (item 2) (AP: 11.76%; *M*: 2.44), and more than half of them (52.94%) did not agree with item 2.

Comparatively, the largest difference in college and graduate students' preferences for Korean drama series was "Korean makeup" (item 4) (APD: 29.79%; MD: 0.69). The least difference between the two groups was "traveling to Korea" (item 10) (APD: 3.22%; MD: 0.42).

Table 5**Results of Questionnaire –Education**

Item: I watch Korean drama series because	Edu- cation	St. A./ A (%)	Neutral (%)	St. D. / D. (%)	APD (%)	<i>M</i>	MD
1. I like Korean delicacies.	C	63.59	24.27	12.14	13.59	3.77	0.36
	G	50.00	26.47	23.53		3.41	
2. I like Korean drinks.	C	34.95	42.72	22.33	23.19	3.18	0.74
	G	11.76	35.29	52.94		2.44	
3. I like the Korean dress code.	C	76.21	15.53	8.25	29.15	4.04	0.69
	G	47.06	29.41	23.53		3.35	
4. I like Korean makeup.	C	62.14	26.21	11.65	29.79	3.75	0.69
	G	32.35	35.29	32.35		3.06	
5. I like Korean architecture.	C	44.17	38.83	16.99	23.68	3.38	0.62
	G	20.59	41.18	38.24		2.76	
6. I like Korean history.	C	18.93	50.49	30.58	-7.54	2.86	0.10
	G	26.47	32.35	41.18		2.76	
7. I like the Korean (language).	C	39.81	33.98	26.21	25.10	3.23	0.79
	G	14.71	35.29	50.00		2.44	
8. I like their plots.	C	88.35	10.68	0.97	-5.77	4.41	-0.21
	G	94.12	5.88	0.00		4.62	
9. I like Korean songs.	C	67.96	22.82	9.22	17.96	3.94	0.47
	G	50.00	20.59	29.41		3.47	
10. I like to travel to Korea.	C	70.87	21.84	7.28	3.22	3.98	0.42
	G	67.65	5.88	26.47		3.56	
11. I like their characters.	C	81.55	15.53	2.91	5.08	4.24	0.12
	G	76.47	17.65	5.88		4.12	
12. I have topics to chat with family members.	C	31.07	36.89	32.04	-4.22	3.03	0.00
	G	35.29	38.24	26.47		3.03	
13. I have topics to chat with friends.	C	62.14	24.76	13.11	18.02	3.70	0.44
	G	44.12	32.35	23.53		3.26	

Note. St. A: Strongly Agree (5); A: Agree (4); Neutral (3); D: Disagree (2); St.D: Strongly disagree (1). APD: Agreement Percentage Difference; MD: Mean Difference. C: College students (n=206); G: Graduate School (n=34). All the percentages and means were rounded up from the second decimal point.

4.4 Age

In this section, the number of the 61-or-more-year-old group ($n=10$) was too small to be discussed and analyzed. Table 6 shows that the factors affecting the preferences of the 51-60-year-old group for Korean drama series were not as varied as those affecting the other four groups (ages of ≤ 20 , 21-30, 31-40, and 41-50). The factor “drama plots” (item 8) affected the preferences of the five groups (ages of ≤ 20 , 21-30, 31-40, 41-50, and 51-60) for Korean drama series the most (AP= 86.11%, 87.65%, 81.82%, 92.50%, and 100.00% respectively; $M= 4.32, 4.38, 4.55, 4.53$ and 4.62 respectively).

However, the least crucial factor affecting the four groups’ (ages of ≤ 20 , 21-30, 31-40, and 41-50) preferences differed from that affecting the 51-60-year-old group. To be more specific, the factor “Korean history” (item 6) affected the four groups’ (ages of ≤ 20 , 21-30, 31-40, and 41-50) preferences for Korean drama series the least (AP: 23.61%, 16.05%, 22.73% and 17.50% respectively; $M: 2.99, 2.86, 3.18$ and 2.58 respectively). Unlike the other four groups, the factor “Korean language” (item 7) affected the 51-60-year-old group the least (AP: 6.90%; $M: 2.28$).

Comparatively, the largest difference in the five groups’ preferences for Korean drama series was the “Korean dress code” (item 3) (APD: 50.24%; MD: 1.24). The least difference among the five groups was “Korean history” (item 6) (APD: 7.56%; MD: 0.56)

Table 6**Results of Questionnaire – Age**

Item: I watch Korean drama series because	Age	St. A./ A (%)	Neutral (%)	St. D. / D. (%)	APD (%)	<i>M</i>	MD
1. I like Korean delicacies.	≤20	66.67	26.39	6.94		3.92	
	21-30	65.43	22.22	12.35		3.78	
	31-40	68.18	18.18	13.64	26.80	3.95	0.85
	41-50	67.50	22.50	10.00		3.90	
	51-60	41.38	31.03	27.59		3.10	
2. I like Korean drinks.	≤20	43.06	45.83	11.11		3.51	
	21-30	32.10	41.98	25.93		3.12	
	31-40	45.45	27.27	27.27	35.11	3.32	1.20
	41-50	27.50	45.00	27.50		2.98	
	51-60	10.34	34.48	55.17		2.31	
3. I like the Korean dress code.	≤20	84.72	13.89	1.39		4.38	
	21-30	81.48	11.11	7.41		4.07	
	31-40	77.27	13.64	9.09	50.24	4.00	1.24
	41-50	62.50	20.00	17.50		3.70	
	51-60	34.48	37.93	27.59		3.14	
4. I like Korean makeup.	≤20	63.89	26.39	9.72		3.82	
	21-30	69.14	22.22	8.64		3.86	
	31-40	59.09	18.18	22.73	38.11	3.73	0.89
	41-50	42.50	40.00	17.50		3.38	
	51-60	31.03	34.48	34.48		2.97	
5. I like Korean architecture.	≤20	43.06	48.61	8.33		3.47	
	21-30	44.44	35.80	19.75		3.35	
	31-40	45.45	45.45	9.09	30.26	3.59	0.97
	41-50	47.50	32.50	20.00		3.38	
	51-60	17.24	34.48	48.28		2.62	
6. I like Korean history.	≤20	23.61	51.39	25.00		2.99	
	21-30	16.05	56.79	27.16		2.86	
	31-40	22.73	54.55	22.73	7.56	3.18	0.56
	41-50	17.50	35.00	47.50		2.58	
	51-60	20.69	37.93	41.38		2.62	
7. I like the Korean (language).	≤20	45.83	36.11	18.06		3.43	
	21-30	45.68	33.33	20.99		3.40	
	31-40	54.55	31.82	13.64	47.65	3.68	1.40
	41-50	17.50	37.50	45.00		2.65	
	51-60	6.90	37.93	55.17		2.28	
8. I like their plots.	≤20	86.11	11.11	2.78	18.18	4.32	0.30

	21-30	87.65	11.11	1.23		4.38	
	31-40	81.82	18.18	0.00		4.55	
	41-50	92.50	7.50	0.00		4.53	
	51-60	100.00	0.00	0.00		4.62	
9. I like Korean songs.	≤20	70.83	23.61	5.56		4.07	
	21-30	71.60	24.69	3.70		4.05	
	31-40	81.82	13.64	4.55	30.10	4.41	1.03
	41-50	55.00	25.00	20.00		3.58	
	51-60	51.72	17.24	31.03		3.38	
10. I like to travel to Korea.	≤20	79.17	16.67	4.17		4.10	
	21-30	72.84	22.22	4.94		4.09	
	31-40	77.27	13.64	9.09	30.89	4.32	1.18
	41-50	70.00	15.00	15.00		3.85	
	51-60	48.28	24.14	27.59		3.14	
11. I like their characters.	≤20	80.56	16.67	2.78		4.25	
	21-30	87.65	8.64	3.70		4.31	
	31-40	72.73	18.18	9.09	14.92	4.18	0.21
	41-50	75.00	20.00	5.00		4.10	
	51-60	82.76	13.79	3.45		4.24	
12. I have topics to chat with family members.	≤20	27.78	34.72	37.50		2.99	
	21-30	33.33	27.16	39.51		2.95	
	31-40	40.91	40.91	18.18	13.13	3.36	0.41
	41-50	30.00	50.00	20.00		3.13	
	51-60	34.48	44.83	20.69		3.07	
13. I have topics to chat with friends.	≤20	65.28	22.22	12.50		3.76	
	21-30	66.67	22.22	11.11		3.79	
	31-40	63.64	27.27	9.09	35.64	3.91	0.88
	41-50	52.50	27.50	20.00		3.45	
	51-60	31.03	44.83	24.14		3.03	

Note. St. A: Strongly Agree (5); A: Agree (4); Neutral (3); D: Disagree (2); St. D: Strongly disagree (1). APD: Agreement Percentage Difference; MD: Mean Difference. Age of ≤20 (n=72), 21-30 (n=81), 31-40 (n=22), 41-50 (n=40), and 51-60 (n=29). All the percentages and means were rounded up from the second decimal point.

4.5 Occupation

Table 7 shows that the factor affecting the preferences of the three groups (i.e., students, employment, and unemployment) for Korean drama series the most was the same, “drama plots” (item 8) (AP: 84.40%, 90.68%, and 96.30% respectively: *M*: 4.30, 4.47, and 4.74 respectively). Additionally, only 2.75% of the students disagreed, and none of the other two groups disagreed.

On the other hand, the least key factor affecting the unemployment group’s preferences differed from that affecting the other two groups. The factor affecting both the students’ and the employment group’s preferences the least was “Korean history” (item 6) (AP: 20.18% and 18.64% respectively: *M*: 2.91 and 2.80 respectively; the factor affecting the unemployment group the least was “Korean drinks” (item 2) (AP: 14.81%; *M*: 2.30).

Comparatively, the largest different factor affecting the three groups’ preferences was “Korean delicacies” (item 1) (APD: 30.76%; MD: 0.93). The least different factor among the three groups was “Korean history” (item 6) (APD: 1.66%; MD: 0.32), but only about 20% of the three groups tended to agree with the factor (20.18% vs 18.64% vs. 18.52% respectively).

Table 7
Results of Questionnaire –Occupation

Item: I watch Korean drama series because	Occu- pation	St. A./ A (%)	Neutral (%)	St. D. / D. (%)	APD (%)	<i>M</i>	MD
1. I like Korean delicacies.	S	60.55	28.44	11.01		3.74	
	E	67.80	21.19	11.02	30.76	3.89	0.93
	U	37.04	29.63	33.33		2.96	
2. I like Korean drinks.	S	37.61	45.87	16.51		3.32	
	E	30.51	40.68	28.81	22.80	3.06	1.02
	U	14.81	25.93	59.26		2.30	
3. I like the Korean dress code.	S	80.73	11.93	7.34		4.17	
	E	68.64	20.34	11.02	25.17	3.85	0.65
	U	55.56	22.22	22.22		3.52	
4. I like Korean makeup.	S	64.22	24.77	11.01		3.80	
	E	55.08	27.97	16.95	23.48	3.58	0.58
	U	40.74	33.33	25.93		3.22	
5. I like Korean architecture.	S	43.12	43.12	13.76		3.39	
	E	41.53	38.14	20.34	20.90	3.31	0.58
	U	22.22	33.33	44.44		2.81	
6. I like Korean history.	S	20.18	50.46	29.36		2.91	
	E	18.64	50.00	31.36	1.66	2.80	0.32
	U	18.52	29.63	51.85		2.59	
7. I like the Korean (language).	S	44.95	30.28	24.77		3.34	
	E	30.51	41.53	27.97	22.73	3.04	0.82
	U	22.22	18.52	59.26		2.52	
8. I like their plots.	S	84.40	12.84	2.75		4.30	
	E	90.68	9.32	0.00	11.90	4.47	0.44
	U	96.30	3.70	0.00		4.74	
9. I like Korean songs.	S	69.72	22.94	7.34		4.00	
	E	65.25	22.88	11.86	21.57	3.87	0.67
	U	48.15	18.52	33.33		3.33	
10. I like to travel to Korea.	S	77.98	14.68	7.34		4.02	
	E	67.80	20.34	11.86	26.13	3.92	0.46
	U	51.85	33.33	14.81		3.56	
11. I like their characters.	S	81.65	14.68	3.67		4.21	
	E	78.81	16.10	5.08	6.38	4.20	0.02
	U	85.19	11.11	3.70		4.22	
12. I have topics to chat with family members.	S	32.11	30.28	37.61		3.05	
	E	33.05	41.53	25.42	7.12	3.10	0.36
	U	25.93	44.44	29.63		2.74	
13. I have topics to chat with friends.	S	61.47	25.69	12.84		3.69	
	E	60.17	25.42	14.41	28.14	3.69	0.69
	U	33.33	44.44	22.22		3.00	

Note. St. A: Strongly Agree (5); A: Agree (4); Neutral (3); D: Disagree (2); St.D: Strongly disagree (1). APD: Agreement Percentage Difference; MD: Mean Difference. S: Student (n=109); E: Employment (n=118); U: Unemployment (n=27). All the percentages and means were rounded up from the second decimal point.

4.6 Dub-Subtitle Type (DST) of Korean Drama Series

The number of the group who watched Korean drama series with Korean dub and Chinese subtitles (KCC group=14) was too small to be discussed and compared in this section. In Table 8, the KCC group was the participants who watched Korean drama series with Chinese dub and subtitles; The KCC or KKC) groups were the participants who watched Korean drama series with Chinese dub and subtitles (KCC) and Korean drama series with Korean dub and Chinese subtitles (KKC).

According to Table 8, the most important factor affecting the two groups' preferences was the same, and so was the least important factor. To be more specific, the factor "drama plots" (item 8) affected both the KCC group and the Both group the most (AP: 90.24% and 80.00% respectively; M: 4.44 and 4.34 respectively); the factor "Korean history" (item 6) affected the two groups the least (AP: 19.02% and 20.00% respectively; M: 2.81 and 2.91 respectively).

Comparatively, the largest different factor affecting the two groups' (KCC and Both) preferences for Korean drama series was "having topics to chat with friends" (item 13) (APD: 21.95%; MD: 0.33. The least different factor affecting the two groups' preferences was "Korean drinks" (item 2) (APD: 0.70%; MD: 0.14).

Table 8

Results of Questionnaire –Dub-Subtitle Type (DST) of Korean Drama Series

Item: I watch Korean drama series because	DST	St. A./ A (%)	Neutral (%)	St. D. / D. (%)	APD (%)	<i>M</i>	MD
1. I like Korean delicacies.	KCC	60.00	25.85	14.15	5.71	3.71	-0.12
	Both	65.71	22.86	11.43		3.83	
2. I like Korean drinks.	KCC	30.73	43.90	25.37	0.70	3.11	0.14
	Both	31.43	37.14	31.43		2.97	
3. I like the Korean dress code.	KCC	73.17	16.59	10.24	4.60	3.98	0.18
	Both	68.57	20.00	11.43		3.80	
4. I like Korean makeup.	KCC	57.07	27.80	15.12	2.78	3.64	0.17
	Both	54.29	28.57	17.14		3.57	
5. I like Korean architecture.	KCC	39.02	40.98	20.00	-9.55	3.29	-0.17
	Both	48.57	37.14	14.29		3.46	

6. I like Korean history.	KCC	19.02	48.29	32.68	-0.98	2.81	-0.10
	Both	20.00	51.43	28.57		2.91	
7. I like the Korean (language).	KCC	38.05	32.68	29.27	6.62	3.17	0.20
	Both	31.43	37.14	31.43		2.97	
8. I like their plots.	KCC	90.24	8.78	0.98	10.24	4.44	0.10
	Both	80.00	17.14	2.86		4.34	
9. I like Korean songs.	KCC	67.32	21.46	11.22	1.61	3.93	0.07
	Both	65.71	22.86	11.43		3.86	
10. I like to travel to Korea.	KCC	71.22	19.51	9.27	8.36	3.97	0.28
	Both	62.86	22.86	14.29		3.69	
11. I like their characters.	KCC	83.41	12.20	4.39	9.12	4.28	0.19
	Both	74.29	22.86	2.86		4.09	
12. I have topics to chat with family members.	KCC	30.73	37.56	31.71	-12.13	3.01	-0.30
	Both	42.86	34.29	22.86		3.31	
13. I have topics to chat with friends.	KCC	61.95	24.39	13.66	21.95	3.70	0.33
	Both	40.00	45.71	14.29		3.37	

Note. St. A: Strongly Agree (5); A: Agree (4); Neutral (3); D: Disagree (2); St.D: Strongly disagree (1). APD: Agreement Percentage Difference; MD: Mean Difference. KCC: Korean drama series with Chinese dub and subtitles (n=205); Both: KCC+ KKC (Korean drama series with Korean dub and Chinese subtitles) (n=35). All the percentages and means were rounded up from the second decimal point.

4.7 Residence

Only three participants lived in Eastern Taiwan, and only one lived on an outlying island, so these two groups were not discussed and compared in this section. In Table 9, PNT means the participants living in Northern Taiwan, PCT means those in Central Taiwan, and PST means those living in Southern Taiwan.

According to Table 9, the most crucial factor affecting the three groups' preferences for Korean drama series was the same, and so was the least crucial factor. To be more specific, the factor "drama plots" (item 8) affected the three groups' (PNT, PCT, and PST) preferences for Korean drama series the most (AP: 92.98%, 92.55%, and 82.83%, respectively; M: 4.49, 4.44, and 4.38 respectively). Additionally, the factor "Korean history" (item 6) affected the three groups' preferences the least (AP: 14.04%, 22.34%, and 19.19%, respectively; M: 2.54, 2.96, and 2.86, respectively).

Comparatively, the largest different factor affecting the three groups' preferences for Korean drama series was "Korean (language)" (item 7) (APD: 24.74%; MD: 0.60). The least different factor among the three groups was "Korean makeup" (item 4) (APD: 5.21%; MD: 0.19).

Table 9**Results of Questionnaire –Residence**

Item: I watch Korean drama series because	Residence	St. A./ A (%)	Neutral (%)	St. D. / D. (%)	APD (%)	M	MD
1. I like Korean delicacies.	PNT	52.63	28.07	15.79		3.51	
	PCT	63.83	24.47	11.70	12.02	3.78	0.33
	PST	64.65	24.24	11.11		3.84	
2. I like Korean drinks.	PNT	33.33	31.58	26.32		2.96	
	PCT	35.11	42.55	22.34	5.82	3.26	0.30
	PST	29.29	45.45	25.25		3.04	
3. I like the Korean dress code.	PNT	71.93	10.53	28.07		3.91	
	PCT	76.60	14.89	8.51	7.91	3.99	0.08
	PST	68.69	22.22	9.09		3.93	
4. I like Korean makeup.	PNT	54.39	21.05	19.30		3.51	
	PCT	57.45	30.85	11.70	5.21	3.66	0.19
	PST	59.60	27.27	13.13		3.70	
5. I like Korean architecture.	PNT	29.82	40.35	31.58		3.09	
	PCT	45.74	37.23	17.02	15.92	3.36	0.27
	PST	40.40	42.42	17.17		3.35	
6. I like Korean history.	PNT	14.04	40.35	36.84		2.54	
	PCT	22.34	52.13	25.53	8.30	2.96	0.42
	PST	19.19	48.48	32.32		2.86	
7. I like the Korean (language).	PNT	26.32	36.84	36.84		2.86	
	PCT	51.06	27.66	21.28	24.74	3.46	0.60
	PST	28.28	39.39	32.32		2.98	
8. I like their plots.	PNT	92.98	7.02	15.79		4.49	
	PCT	92.55	6.38	1.06	10.15	4.44	0.11
	PST	82.83	15.15	2.02		4.38	
9. I like Korean songs.	PNT	63.16	19.30	15.79		3.81	
	PCT	71.28	22.34	6.38	10.67	3.99	0.18
	PST	60.61	25.25	14.14		3.82	
10. I like to travel to Korea.	PNT	68.42	19.30	12.28		3.84	
	PCT	79.79	14.89	5.32	17.16	4.05	0.21

	PST	62.63	24.24	13.13		3.87	
11. I like their	PNT	85.96	12.28	3.51		4.42	
characters.	PCT	86.17	12.77	1.06	12.43	4.29	0.36
	PST	73.74	18.18	8.08		4.06	
12. I have topics to	PNT	43.86	29.82	19.30		3.23	
chat with family	PCT	27.66	36.17	36.17	16.20	2.97	0.26
members.	PST	29.29	42.42	28.28		3.02	
13. I have topics to	PNT	63.16	28.07	14.04		3.72	
chat with friends.	PCT	64.89	21.28	13.83	15.40	3.72	0.21
	PST	49.49	33.33	17.17		3.51	

Note. St. A: Strongly Agree (5); A: Agree (4); Neutral (3); D: Disagree (2); St.D: Strongly disagree (1). APD: Agreement Percentage Difference; MD: Mean Difference. Participants living in Northern Taiwan (PNT=57), those in Central Taiwan (PCT=94), and those in Southern Taiwan (PST=99). All the percentages and means were rounded up from the second decimal point.

Conclusion

The current study aimed to investigate the popularity of Korean drama series among Taiwanese people. Appendix A shows the major findings of the current study as follows:

The top three crucial factors affecting Taiwanese people's preferences for Korean drama series were "drama plots," "Korean characters," and then "Korean dress code." The first two key factors, "drama plots" and "Korean characters," in the current study echoed the results of 陳/Chen's (2004) and 柳/Liu's study (2015). The least crucial factor affecting Taiwanese people's preferences was "Korean history," which is incompatible with one result in 陳/Chen's (2004) study indicating "Korean history" was one feature of Korean drama series appreciated by Taiwanese people.

The most crucial factor affecting males' and females' preferences was "drama plots;" the least crucial factor affecting the two groups was "Korean makeup" and "Korean history" respectively. The largest factor affecting these two groups' preferences was "Korean makeup"; the least different one was "Korean drinks." In particular, the result that the preferences for Korean drama series made more females (AP=72.06%; M=3.98) like to travel to Korea than males (AP=64.00%; M= 3.70) can echo the fact that the number of Western female tourists taking trips to Korea from 2010 to 2019 was highly above that of male tourists (自由時報/Liberty Times Net, 2022).

The most key factor affecting the two groups (i.e., college students and graduate students) was “drama plots;” the least crucial factor for college and graduate students’ preferences were different, with “Korean history” for the former and “Korean drinks” for the latter. Additionally, the largest different factor affecting the two groups was “Korean makeup,” and the least different one was “traveling to Korea.”

The most crucial factor affecting the five age groups’ preferences was “drama plots.” The least principal factor for the 51-60-year-old group’s preferences was “Korean (language),” but the least crucial factor for the other four groups’ was “Korean history.” In addition, the largest different factor affecting the five groups’ preferences was the “Korean dress code,” and the least different one was “Korean history.” The 51-60-year-old group only cared about drama plots and characters; they did not care about the other factors too much.

The most key factor affecting the three occupation groups’ preferences was “the drama plot;” the least key factor affecting the unemployment group’s preferences was “Korean drinks,” while the least important factor affecting the other two groups was “Korean history.” The largest factor affecting their preferences was “Korean delicacies”; the least different one was “Korean history.” Like the 51-60 group, the unemployed only cared about drama plots and characters; they did not care about the other factors too much.

The most crucial factor affecting the two DST groups’ preferences was “drama plots,” the least crucial factor was “Korean history.” In addition, the largest factor affecting the two groups’ preferences was “having topics to chat with friends,” and the least different one was “Korean drinks.”

The most important factor affecting the preferences of the three groups (PNT, PCT, and PST) was “drama plots;” the least important factor was “Korean history.” Additionally, the largest different factor affecting the three groups’ preferences was “Korean (language),” and the least different one was “Korean makeup.”

All the participants were recruited based on convenience sampling. Thus, the results of the current study cannot be generalizable to other Taiwanese people like those of Eastern Taiwan and the outlying islands. Also, the ratios of some groups to others in the current study were not even, such as gender and dub-subtitle type of Korean drama series, which may skew the results. As such, future studies can make such imbalanced ratios even to get

much more complete results. On the other hand, the current study focused on the popularity of Korean drama series only, and the Korean leading status does not count on merely Korean drama series, so the factors of other entertainment like music, movies, and variety shows among Taiwanese people can be taken into consideration in future studies. Moreover, to claim participants' demographic differences, such as gender differences, the researchers can do the statistical tests by conducting a T-test or One-Way ANOVA and then provide *t*-values to make the claims stronger and more interesting in their future studies.

Korean drama series catch the audience's eye with exquisite plots, attractive actors, etc. Unlike the plots of Korean drama series, Taiwanese drama plots are lacking in innovation (政治大學商學院/College of Commerce National Chengchi University(CCNCU), 2014). Compared with Korean actors with specialized management companies, Taiwanese actors are not equipped well with abundant resources and training (政治大學商學院/CCNCU, 2014). Most importantly, the Korean government has put money and effort into Korean drama series to make their cultures, customs, features, etc., popular around the world and thereby attract increasingly foreign tourists (政治大學商學院/CCNCU, 2014; 容/Yung, 2018). For example, with financial assistance from the Korean government, the directors could create high-quality work based on high expenditure (政治大學商學院/CCNCU, 2014). Taiwanese drama series were trending from the 1980s to the 2000s and were once at the forefront in Mainland China and even in Asia (台灣電視劇/Taiwanese drama series, n.d.). It was 2008, the golden time when the number of Taiwanese drama series reached a record high. Unfortunately, after 2008, the industry of Taiwanese drama series dropped off because of a shortage of funds and a severe brain drain (台灣電視劇/Taiwanese drama series, n.d.). As such, the Taiwanese government can put money and effort into Taiwanese drama series and other entertainment to make them as popular as before by training and cultivating superb directors, screenwriters, actors, etc. With the support and sponsorship of the Taiwan government, Taiwanese lifestyles, values, cuisine, etc., would be seen and loved in Asia and even the world, which can effectively help Taiwan facilitate its country's visibility. Concisely, if Korea can, then Taiwan can, too.

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Appendix A

Summary of Factors Affecting Taiwanese People

Participants		Factor			
		Most important	Least important	Largest different (APD)	Least different (APD)
Entire		Drama plots	Korean history	X	X
Gender	M	Drama plots	Korean makeup	Korean makeup	Korean drinks
	F		Korean history		
Educational status	C	Drama plots	Korean history	Korean makeup	Traveling to Korea
	G		Korean drinks		
Age	≤20	Drama plots	Korean history	Korean dress code	Korean history
	21-30				
	31-40				
	41-50				
	51-60		Korean language		
Occupation	S	Drama plots	Korean history	Korean delicacies	Korean history
	E				
Dub-Subtitle Type (DST)	U		Korean drinks		
	KCC	Drama plots	Korean history	having topics to chat with friends	Korean drinks
Residence	Both				
	PNT	Drama plots	Korean history	Korean language	Korean makeup
	PCT				
	PST				

台灣人對韓劇的喜好個案研究

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摘 要

本研究目的是在探討台灣人對韓劇偏好的因素，研究對象共 254 名（男=50；女=204），本研究使用的研究工具為線上問卷。研究問題為：哪些因素影響台灣人對韓劇的偏好？本研究的主要結果顯示：（a）影響台灣人對韓劇偏好的最主要因素是「劇情」，無論其性別、職業、教育程度、年齡、韓劇字幕類型（配音或字幕）及居住地點如何；而影響最小的因素則是「韓國歷史」，無論字幕類型及居住地點如何，（2）對於兩個群體——男性台灣人和 51 至 60 歲的台灣人——影響最小的因素分別是「韓國化妝」和「韓國語言」，（3）對於兩個群體——研究生和無業的台灣人——影響最小的因素是「韓國飲料」，（4）對於以下群體——女性、大學生、51 歲以下的台灣人、所有學生及在職人士——影響最小的因素是「韓國歷史」。此外，任何政府都可以投入資金和資源於視聽媒體產業及行銷，如電視劇，以提升國家在全球的能見度。

關鍵字：韓國、韓劇、劇情、台灣

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