

# The Influence of the Aspects of K-drama on the Favorability of Korean Wave Contents, Viewing Motivation and Purchasing Intention of Korean Products: Targeting Chinese Consumers

Ji Hye Lee<sup>1</sup> and Seung Yeob Yu<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>Dept. of Advertising and Public Relations,  
Namsseoul University, 31020, Korea

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## Abstract

This research concerns the aspects of K-drama which influence Korean Wave (KW) contents favorability, viewing motivation and Korean product purchasing intention, targeting Chinese consumers. In this research, K-drama was divided into three aspects. Namely, they are the K-drama aspects of theme, production and leading actor / actress. These aspects of K-drama confirmed the influence on favorability and viewing motivation of KW contents. For this, multiple regression analysis was executed. Also, Cronbach was used to confirm the reliability of each measurement, and factor analysis was executed to confirm validity. K-drama was divided into three aspects: theme, production, and leading actor / actress. First, concerning research results, only the theme aspect in K-drama had a meaningful influence on KW favorability. Second, the aspects of theme and leading actor/actress among the K-drama aspects had meaningful influence on viewing motivation of KW contents. Third, the aspects of theme and production in K-drama had meaningful influence on the purchasing intention of Korean

products through KW. These research results will be valuable for promoting increased consumption measures of KW contents, targeting Chinese consumers.

**Key Words :** Contents Favorability, Korean Wave (KW), K-drama Aspects, Purchasing Intention, Viewing Motivation.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Exporting Korean TV Drama abroad has become a good opportunity to activate a popularity boom. The K-pop boom with its various video contents such as drama, movies, TV entertainment, etc. has spread the popularity of the Korean Wave (hereafter, KW) worldwide. As cultural industry exports increased greatly through the KW boom in 2012, the amount of exports of the cultural industry has had a turning point, overtaking imports (Jung et al., 2013).

With the interest in KW, many researchers show a concentrated tendency toward researching status, cause and influence as concerns KW (Kang, 2009; Kim and Koo, 2002; Jeon, 2013), and on researching the related areas of Korean culture and reception, the spreading of KW, favorability of Korean cultural products, etc (Heo, 2002; Yu and Ko, 2006; Byeon et al., 2015). This study is based on the tendency of this spreading of KW to influence favorability, viewing motivation and purchasing intention of KW contents.

As KW goes beyond the 1.0 and 2.0 generations, it is true that not only for the cultural industry but also for the entire domestic industry, the influence is great. The KW fever that started from dramas between the second half of the 1990's and the early part of 2000's evolved into the KW 2.0 generation because KW started centering on Asian countries in the mid to late 2000's through the K-pop fever. Lately, the drama *After You Came from a Star* is spreading the KW 3.0 trend (Jang and Paik, 2012).

This characteristic of KW 3.0 reveals that the scale of consumption has a big influence because it is based on the Internet, and cultural contents cause big economic effects interlocking closely with industry (Kim, 2015). Because China is so big in producing and consuming the most drama in the world, it can be predicted that

KW 3.0 is in a renaissance and the cultural industry of Korea will be triggered by a jump once again.

This present situation of KW spreading generates a direct effect, leading the pop cultural contents export increase relating with this. Namely, through the KW movement, an increase in the demand for products related to Korea, its service consumption enlargement and an increase in investment demand in Korea can be expected. For example, improvement in the awareness and favorability of Korea is continually increasing demand for Korean products and services(Jung and Lee, 2010). This can be continued into an indirect expanding through cause and effect such as in the increase of Korean consumer goods exports, the number of foreign tourists, etc.

Also, we can see that the KW movement within China is causing a positive external effect which is causing the expansion of Korean products and services consumption and the increase of the investment demand in Korea, going beyond the consumption effect of cultural contents. Therefore, one can see that the export of KW is namely the export of Korean culture, and it is the main soft power that can secure independent national competitiveness, which is impossible for other countries to imitate(Maliangkay, 2007).

Certainly, the fever of the newly ignited KW, which was based on the K-pop of 2010, is changing the allocation area of KW contents and the circulation paradigm with the grafting of the smart media environment with such as YouTube, SNS, etc(Kim, 2015). Namely, as smartphone devices develop, the smart media use type is changing, and the contents consumption type is changing as well. According to Aichi Statistics, a platform of China video services in China, it is reported that more than 60% of viewers of After You Came from a Star watched through mobile devices.

But there are barriers for exporting KW contents to China. For example, the Chinese government made regulations not to broadcast foreign dramas and movies during their golden time (7-10pm) since Feb. 2012 to encourage the promotion of their own cultural contents and to control foreign cultural influences, etc. Also, it limited the airtime of imported drama and movies to not more than 25% of the whole day for drama broadcasting, and so the purchasing of Korean copyrighted entertainment is on the low side. Therefore, recently some Chinese broadcasters are buying only the program

format and locally producing them as a strategy to avoid import regulations.

KW 3.0 is the revival of KW, and also it can be an opportunity to give a jump to the cultural industry of Korea once again. But we cannot deny that the Chinese government may carry out stronger regulations to protect their own cultural contents in the future. We need to develop a dynamic plan to effectively access the cultural market of China through effective, elaborate strategies for export activation measures. With this understanding, we claim that a strategic attempt must be executed, targeting the Chinese market as the main objective. The decisive purpose of this research is to distinguish the characteristics of KW drama with an investigation into the KW drama aspects of theme, production and leading actor/actress. This research attempts to discover the aspects of KW Drama which influence Chinese favorability, viewing motivation and purchasing intention of Korean products of KW contents. Based on the results, an attempt is made to search for an activating plan to advance on the Chinese market for KW contents.

## 2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

This research attempts to discover the aspects of K-drama which have an influence on favorability, viewing motivation and purchasing intention of Korean products of KW contents. For this, the aspects of K-drama were distinguished and used as three elements based on the research results of Lee and Yu(2015). Namely, they are the aspects theme, production and leading actor/actress of K-drama. They were confirmed with a high positive response by Chinese consumers concerning their concepts of the K-drama aspects. Therefore, these research problems are set based on those research results.

Research Problem 1: Will the K-drama aspects (theme, production and leading actor/actress) influence the favorability of KW contents?

Research Problem 2: Will the K-drama aspects (theme, production and leading actor/actress) influence the viewing motivation of KW contents?

Research Problem 3: Will the K-drama aspects (theme, produc-

tion and leading actor/actress) influence the purchasing intention of KW contents?

### 3 MATERIALS AND METHODS

#### *A. Research Participant*

This research attempted to discover the KW contents aspect influence on favorability, viewing motivation and purchasing intention of Korean products of KW contents. For this, this research focused on 316 KW contents consumers in China. The detailed characteristics of the research participants are male(38.6%), female(61.4%), and in their 10's(3.2%), 20's(49.7%), 30's(37%), 40's(8.2%), 50's(1.9%). The characteristics of the research participants show that there was a higher rate of female participants than male participants. This can be understood to mean that the main consumers of Korean drama and Korean music are female. Also it showed that the participants in their 20's and 30's are the main respondents among the total respondents by age. This characteristic can be considered to mean that the main consumption target group of KW contents is of those who are in their 20's and 30's. Therefore, it can be judged that these research participants are a representative sampling concerning KW contents.

#### *B. Method of Data Collection*

This research is an attempt to discover which aspects of KW contents influence Chinese consumer favorability, viewing motivation and purchasing intention of Korean products of KW contents. Chinese consumers were the focus for this study. In this research, I defined operationally that KW contents means the Korean drama which appears with KW actors/actresses. Chinese consumers were set as the consumer target group of KW contents, and data was collected using an on-line survey through a professional on-line survey company located in China. The data collection period was about 2 weeks from Oct. 19th, 2015 to Oct. 31st, 2015.

#### *C. Measuring Tools*

##### *a. K-drama Theme Aspect*

In this research, the measuring tool of Lee and Yu(2015) was

utilized. The theme aspect of KW drama consisted of 8 sub items, measured with the Likert measurement of 5 points (1 point = not at all and 5 points = very much). The content of the measuring tool is as follows: I enjoy Korean drama for the following reasons: It is family centered. The love stories of Korean drama are fun and beautiful. The stories of Korean drama add more fun with triangle relationships, etc. The characters of Korean drama give the feeling of harmony to viewers. The affection of Korean drama gives us a comfortable feeling because it contains Eastern values. The contents of Korean drama have realism. Korean drama is cool and sophisticated because it reflects the latest fashion. The subject matter of Korean drama is fresh and various. Analysis results of reliability showed Cronbac'  $\alpha = .746$ .

***b. K-drama Production Aspect***

The measuring tool of Lee and Yu(2015) was utilized to investigate the production aspect of KW drama. The production aspect of KW drama consists of 5 sub items, measured by the Likert measurement of 5 points (1 point = not at all and 5 points = very much). The content of the measuring tool is as follows: The image of Korean drama is urban and sophisticated. The image editing of Korean drama is natural and cool. The acting techniques image of Korean drama is outstanding. The OST in Korean drama is creative and sounds good. The background and props of Korean drama are luxurious, and they reflect an urban life style. Analysis results of reliability showed Cronbach'  $\alpha = .755$ .

***c. K-Drama Leading Actor/Actress Aspect***

In this research, the measuring tool of Lee and Yu(2015) was utilized to investigate the aspect of leading actor/actress of KW drama. The aspect of leading actor/actress of KW drama consisted of 6 sub items, measured with the Likert measurement of 5 points (1 point = not at all and 5 points =very much). The content of the measuring tool is as follows: The appearance of the leading actor/actress of Korean drama is cool looking and beautiful. The style of leading actor/actress of Korean drama leads the style trends. The leading actor/actress of Korean drama has respect for the elderly, Eastern virtues and morality. The character of the leading actor/actress of Korean drama is one of integrity and warmth. The character of the leading actor/actress of Korean drama gives us a comfortable feeling. The acting power of the lead-

ing actor/actress of Korean drama is outstanding. Analysis result of reliability shows Cronbach'  $\alpha = .743$ .

***d. Favorability of Korean Wave Contents***

In this research, the measuring tool of Liu et al.(2014) was modified and used to measure the favorability of KW contents, fitting the purpose of this research. The favorability of KW contents consists of 4 sub items, measured with the Likert measurement of 5 points (1 point = not at all and 5 points = very much). The content of the measuring tool is as follows: I like KW culture because I like Korea. I like KW culture because I like Korean products. I use KW contents because of the favorability of KW culture. I had contact with KW contents because of my favorability of Korea. Analysis result of reliability showed Cronbach'  $\alpha = .741$ .

***e. Viewing Motivation of Korean Wave Contents***

In this research, the research results of Lee(2014) were modified to suit this research and used to measure the viewer motivation of KW contents. KW-contents viewing motivation consists of 5 sub items, measured with the Likert measurement of 5 points (1 point = not at all and 5 points = very much). The content of the measuring tool is as follows. I will listen and watch KW contents continually in the future. I will use KW contents on the same level as the present time. I intend to increase my use time of KW contents in the future. I want to be provided with KW contents for my use continually. I intend to recommend KW contents to others. The analysis result of reliability showed Cronbach'  $\alpha = .786$ .

***f. Purchasing Intention of Korean Products***

Engel et al.(1986) said that the reliability of purchasing intention offers effective alternatives to marketing managers because it is important as an outlook factor on consumption behavior, and it can instead be used to predict actual behavior. Therefore, in this research, the measuring tool of Hwang et al.(2013) was modified to fit this research and used to measure the purchasing intention of Korean products through KW contents. Purchasing intention of Korean products through KW contents consists of 4 sub items, measured with the Likert measurement of 5 points (1 point = not at all and 5 points = very much). The content of the measuring tool is as follows. KW contents stimulates my intention to purchase Korean products. KW contents encourages my intention to purchase Korean products. I intend to purchase general Korean

products (TV, cosmetics etc.). I intend to purchase Korean cultural products(DVD, Music CD). The analysis result of reliability showed Cronbach'  $\alpha=.739$ .

**D. Analysis Method**

In this research, K-drama was divided into three aspects. Namely, they are the K-drama aspects of theme, production and leading actor/actress. These aspects of K-drama confirmed the influence on favorability and viewing motivation of KW contents. For this, multiple regression analysis was executed. Also, Cronbach was used to confirm the reliability of each measurement, and factor analysis was executed to confirm validity.

**4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**A. The aspect of K-drama influencing favorability of KW contents**

In this research, multiple regression analysis was executed to discover the K-drama aspect (theme, production, leading actor/actress) influence on favorability of KW contents. The result is following in table I.

TABLE I

THE K-DRAMA ASPECT INFLUENCE ON FAVORABILITY OF KW CONTENTS

Model Aspect	Non-Standardization factor		Standardization Factor	t
	B	Standard error	Beta	
Theme	.301	.098	.235	3.075**
Production	.130	.087	.120	1.489
Leading actor/-	.167	.100	.136	1.660

$\chi^2=25.323, p<.001, R^2=.196$

\*\* $p<.01$

Studying table I, only the theme aspect of K-drama shows a meaningful influence on favorability of KW contents ( $t=3.075, p<.01$ ). On the other hand, it also shows that the aspects production and leading actor/actress of K-drama did not influence the favorability of KW contents. These results show that what is needed is to produce drama based on themes that Chinese consumers favor which

has certain subject matter, namely drama themes of Korean culture, which will lead to the promotion of favorability toward KW contents.

**B. The K-drama aspects (theme, production, leading actor/actress) influencing viewing motivation of KW contents**

In this research, multiple regression analysis was executed to discover the K-drama aspects(theme, production, leading actor/actress) influencing viewing motivation of KW contents. The result is following in table II.

TABLE II

THE K-DRAMA ASPECTS INFLUENCING VIEWING MOTIVATION OF KW CONTENTS

Model Aspect	Non-Standardization factor		Standardization Factor	t
	B	Standard error	Beta	
Theme	.388	.082	.324	4.711***
Production	.130	.073	.129	1.775
Leading actor/-	.228	.084	.199	2.701**

$\chi^2=55.413, p<.001, R^2=.348$

\*\* $p<.01, ***p<.001$

Studying Table II, it shows that the theme aspect of K-Drama has meaningful influence on viewing motivation of KW contents (t=4,711, p<.001). Moreover, it shows that the leading actor/actress aspect also has meaningful influence on viewing motivation of KW contents (t=2.701, p<.01). On the other hand, it also shows that the production aspect of K-drama did not influence viewing motivation of KW contents. These results mean that it is important to select the theme for Korean drama which is leading KW culture and which the Chinese consumer favors and to consider in the production who the leading actor/actress of the drama should be, namely, who the favorable actors/actresses of Chinese consumers are in order to promote viewing motivation of KW contents for the Chinese consumer.

**C. The K-drama aspects (theme, production, leading actor/actress) influencing purchasing intention of Korean products**

In this research, multiple regression analysis was executed to discover the K-drama aspects (theme, production, leading actor/actress)

influencing purchasing intention of Korean products through KW contents. The result is following in table III.

TABLE III

THE K-DRAMA ASPECTS INFLUENCING PURCHASING INTENTION OF KOREAN PRODUCTS

Model Aspect	Non-Standardization factor		Standardization Factor	t
	B	Standard error	Beta	
Theme	.518	.086	.411	6.010***
Production	.244	.077	.229	3.182**
Leading actor/-	.007	.088	.005	.074

$\chi^2=57.558, p<.001, R^2=.356$

\*\* $p<.01, ***p<.001$

Studying Table III, it shows that the theme aspect of K-drama has meaningful influence on purchasing intention of Korean products through KW contents( $t=6.010, p<.001$ ). Also, it shows that the production aspect of K-drama has meaningful influence on purchasing intention of Korean products through KWC( $t=3.182, p<.01$ ). On the other hand, it shows that the leading actor/actress aspect of K-drama did not influence purchasing intention of Korean products through KW contents. These results mean it is important to select the theme of Korean drama which is leading KW culture and which the Chinese favor and to produce the drama considering that the production direction of the drama techniques have to be the favorable techniques for the Chinese consumers.

## 5 RESULT AND ARGUMENT

In this research, an attempt was made to confirm that the K-drama aspects, namely the aspects of theme, production and leading actor/actress, have an influence on favorability, viewing motivation and purchasing intention of Korean products of KW contents. Firstly, as the result for the K-Drama aspect (theme, production, leading actor/actress) influence on favorability of KW contents shows, only the aspect of theme of K-drama has meaningful influence on favorability of KW contents. On the other hand the aspects of production and leading actor/actress of K-drama did not have meaningful influence on favorability of KW contents. So one needs

to produce the drama based on certain subject matter, namely a theme that Chinese consumer favor, which is Korean drama that is leading KW culture to promote the favorability of KW contents for the Chinese consumer.

Secondly, as shown in the results concerning the K-Drama aspect (theme, production, leading actor/actress) influence on viewing motivation of KW contents, the theme aspect of K-drama has meaningful influence on the viewing motivation of KW contents. Also, the aspect of leading actor/actress of K-drama had meaningful influence on viewing motivation of KW contents. However, the aspect of production of K-drama did not have meaningful influence on viewing motivation of KW contents. Therefore, it is important to select the theme of the drama that Chinese consumers favor to promote viewing motivation of KW contents which is leading KW culture. Also, it is important to produce the drama considering who the leading actors/actresses of the drama are, namely considering if the actors/actresses are the ones Chinese consumers favor.

Thirdly, as concerns the results of looking at K-drama aspect (theme, production, leading actor/actress) influence on purchasing intention of Korean products, the theme aspect of K-drama has meaningful influence on the purchasing intention of Korean products through KW contents. Additionally, the aspect of production of K-drama also had meaningful influence on purchasing intention of Korean products through KW contents. However, the aspect of leading actor/actress of K-drama did not have meaningful influence on purchasing intention of Korean products through KW contents. Therefore, it means that it is important to select the theme of Korean drama that Chinese consumers favor to promote the purchasing intention of Korean products through KW contents which is leading KW culture, and to consider the drama that Chinese consumers favor concerning production direction and technique of drama.

Finally, in this research, after determining the aspects of K-drama as the aspects of theme, production and leading actor/actress, this study attempted to confirm K-drama aspect influence on favorability, viewing motivation and purchasing intention of Korean products of KW contents. It shows that only the aspect of theme of K-drama influenced equally on favorability, viewing motivation and purchasing intention of Korean products of KW contents for the

Chinese consumers. This shows that the most important element for the K-drama creators who produce dramas in order to target the Chinese consumer has to be the theme. However, an important element of the Chinese consumers' views is not only the favorability of theme but also their favorability of leading actor/actress. Despite these results, this research has the limitation of executing the research confined to the K-drama aspects of theme, production and leading actor/actress. There is the need for conducting research into K-drama with the aspects more subdivided in the future. Namely, there should not just simply be the aspect of theme of K-Drama, but there should be subdividing in order to investigate the specific characters. For example, is it the love story theme between a man and a woman? Or is it the theme of family love? Or is it the theme of the love relationship between parents and children? Or is it the valuing of traditional subject matter? Or is it the valuing of contemporary subject matter? Also, the limitation on the object of research has a negative influence on the generalizations of the research result. Namely, I see the necessity of research conducted by subdividing Chinese consumers according to residency of city or countryside and the targeting by age from 20's to over 60's. Despite the limitations, these research results contain value for the manager who produces KW contents in offering practical implications on production direction of K-drama in the case of targeting Chinese consumers.

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