

Mediating effect of perceived destination image between K-dramas' motivational influence and visit intention to South Korea

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Felipe B. Pablo IV*

Joy DC. David

Patricia S. Ambrosio

School of Hospitality & Tourism Management, Holy Angel University
fpablo@hau.edu.ph

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Abstract

One of the central points of Hallyu, or Korean Wave, is Korean drama (K-drama) which has been popular in the Philippines since early 2000's. This study aims to explore K-dramas influence on Filipino young adult viewers' intention to visit South Korea by testing the relationships among K-dramas' motivational influence, and perceived destination image and visit intention to South Korea. Data were gathered from 181 younger adults through a survey done online. Utilizing partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM), results imply that K-dramas' motivational influence significantly affect destination image and intention to visit South Korea, and destination image significantly influences visit intention to the country. Perceived destination image also mediates the influence of K-dramas' on intention to visit the South Korea. The study contributes to the study on presence of Hallyu in the Philippines. Results has implications to national and local tourism organizations, and film and media suites in the Philippines to understand effects of media outputs on tourist behavior. The study contributes to the dearth in literature discussing the relationships among film and television effects, destination image, and visit intention, and the mediating role of perceived image.

Keywords:

Hallyu; Korean Wave; K-Drama; Destination Image; Intention to Visit

1 Introduction

Since 2000, rapid growth and multiple changes have been experienced by the tourism industry in South Korea with the birth, popularity, and influence of “Hallyu” (Kim & Nam, 2015). Since the early 2000, this global phenomenon has tripled in size with exports of USD239 million in 2018 (Maybin, 2018). It has also boosted the South Korean economy by approximately USD12.3 billion in 2019, proving its positive economic effect to the country (Eugenio, 2020). Hallyu phenomenon emerged in the late 1980’s and has made its presence felt in the late 1990’s (Fedorenko, 2017). In those years, it was because of the popularity of Korean dramas (K-dramas) which were televised across Asia that Hallyu, or Korean Wave, became a global phenomenon (Jeong et al., 2017). Korean Wave refers to the increase in international interest in Korean popular culture amidst the presence of Western contents (Singh, 2020).

The definition and scope of Korean Wave are not definite. Hallyu refers to the consumption of Korean contents in the domains of broadcasting, film, music, and fashion worldwide (Min et al., 2018), expanding further to include food, cosmetics, and lifestyle (Park et al., 2018). Hallyu’s central point lies in Korean media products, particularly Korean dramas (Kim & Nam, 2015) that resulted in a rise in the South Korean export of products from the Korean broadcasting industry.

The popularity of Korean media shaped South Korea’s film tourism industry (Kim et al, 2018). K-dramas have been studied to explore their influence on potential tourists’ preferences (Kim et al, 2020). Hallyu has exhibited its significance on South Korea’s image and its tourists’ behavioural intention (Kim & Nam, 2015), which is in harmony with Lee et al. (2017) that the positive effect Korean celebrities, dramas, and music on South Korea’s national image and behavioural intentions of its visitors is significant. From an average of 5 million in the early 2000’s, South Korea recorded a total of 17.5 million inbound tourists in 2019, generating around USD 26.22 billion in tourism receipts for the country (World Tourism Organization, 2020). A 2019 survey among Hallyu tourists in South Korea revealed that 88.3 percent expressed their willingness to return to South Korea within the next three years, and around 21.7 percent were from the Philippines (Statista Research Department, 2020).

K-drama viewership has been increasing in the Philippines, especially during the 2020 enhanced community quarantine period, offering short-term entertainment and escape from reality (Clemente, 2020). In the same year, K-dramas have dominated Google Philippines’ most-searched television series in the country: seven (7) of ten spots were occupied by K-dramas, with *Crash Landing on You* being the most searched series (Mercado, 2020). Media streaming giant, Netflix, a top source for K-dramas among Filipinos, identified a surge of 350% increase in K-drama viewing from the previous year (Tomada, 2021). *The King: Eternal Monarch* was 2020’s most popular K-Drama on Netflix Philippines (Lopez, 2020). K-dramas have become a big phenomenon in the Philippines that its national state university have begun offering an elective class on K-drama analysis through three K-dramas: *Crash Landing on You*, *Chicago Typewriter*, and *Misaeng: Incomplete Life* (Hallare, 2020).

Hallyu effect, with a special focus on K-dramas, have been studied in the Philippine context (Igno & Cenidoza, 2016) as Filipino consumption of the Korean Culture, as an effect of Hallyu, has been highly noticeable (Blas & Erestain, 2020). The study on Hallyu and its impacts on the tourism industry has rapidly increased more than a decade after its birth (Kim & Nam, 2015). However, studies investigating the influence of Hallyu and destination image are lacking (Kim et al., 2020).

The longevity and stability of the Korean Wave has been doubted despite its global success (Chae et al., 2019), as Korean pop culture, just like other countries, is affected by many factors which include, but not limited to, economic scenarios, policy measures, culture and traditions, and historical contingencies (Yang, 2012). Its stability as the leading cultural industry is uncertain in spite of its success in the world market, (Chae et al., 2019). In the case of the Philippines, Hallyu shows the cultural weakness and strengths of Filipinos, making it more than just a fad in the Philippines, showing no hints of decline in the next years (Igno & Cenidoza, 2016).

The popularity of Korean media is not a new concept these recent years (Kim et al., 2018). Studies that explore the impact of K-dramas on tourism attitude and intention exist but the relationship to destination image and visit intention, though growing, remain limited in some cultural settings (Kim et al., 2020). While studies on the relationships among film and television effects, destination image, and visit intention exist, studies on image's mediating role on the effect of motion-induced variables to visit intention remain scarce. This paper intends to address these identified gaps in the literature.

Aiding in the formation of a positive country image can help raise an overall awareness of Korea, thus maintaining market awareness of its products (Chae et al, 2019). In Chiu et al. (2016), future studies can focus on how K-dramas contribute to Korea's image building as a tourist destination, and this study aims for that. Meeting the objectives of this study will make a theoretical contribution to the literature on related topics. This study will provide better understanding of K-dramas and its effect on young Filipino tourist behavior. This study will also identify Korean content acceptance in the Filipino context. Local and national tourism organizations, and film and media suites in the Philippines are provided evidence of how television shows and series may help in boosting the tourism performance of the country through K-dramas and South Korea as an example.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Korean Dramas

Korean dramas (K-dramas) usually contain sixteen episodes, 8 of which are typically shot and produced before the show is broadcast (Chua, 2020). K-dramas' plot twists have often been compared to other television series (Chung, 2014). In Clemente (2020), themes about setting up businesses, mental health, health care versus business, dignity in ambition, parental duties and children's education, and the choices in life

and the sacrifices being made have been identified as new in the Philippine television mediascape.

What makes K-dramas popular are excellent writing and the familiarity with cultural values, at least in Asia (Chua, 2020). Viewers will be more interested to watch dramas in which they can relate with culturally, and K-dramas were able to go beyond language barrier because how they portray societal lifestyle is proximate to other Asian cultures, something that Western dramas may fail to accomplish (Ariffin et al., 2018). What makes Korean culture relatable to Filipinos are these: (1) being colonized by Japan and aided by the Americans; (2) being communal; (3) close family ties; (3) respect to elders; (4) being expressive and romantic; (4) similar political system; (5) similar aspirational value of working hard to fulfil one's dream; (5) being hospitable; and, (6) being courteous and being kind to those who are in need (Igno & Cenedoza, 2016).

The preference of Filipinos of K-dramas over locally produced television shows may also be attributed to superiority in script writing, production quality, distribution quality, and taking risks with new pairings of television stars as compared to the inseparable lovetears in the Philippines (Eugenio, 2020). The rise in K-drama viewership has pushed one of the biggest global video streaming platforms, Netflix, to further expand its K-drama genre to further cement its place in the Asian market (Toh, 2021). K-dramas' popularity has enkindled the creativity of Korean screenwriters as their stories are being marketed now not just in South Korea but also to other countries (Chua, 2020).

Trendy K-dramas feature current trends in Korean society and depict characters' life philosophy and lifestyle. (Chae et al., 2019). This particular genre targets the young generation which may eventually influence their consumption attitude (Park, 2012). The trendy drama genre has the highest appeal among international viewers as it consists of both universality and Korea's unique identity that enables the creation of a certain image in the viewers' minds.

Previous studies were done to evaluate K-dramas based on its visual, vocal, and celebrity effects to viewers (Rajaguru, 2014), the effect of K-drama celebrities to viewers' intention to buy endorsed products and to visit film destinations in South Korea (Kim et al, 2018), and effect of K-dramas to the perception of tourists on South Korea as a potential destination. Studies on K-dramas looking into its effect on feminism and cybernetic identity (Singh, 2020), school bullying and mental health (Park et al., 2020), the effectiveness of product placement (Perwitasari & Paramita, 2020), transcultural emotion and affective consumption (Ju, 2019), cosmetic purchase intention (Liu & Kim, 2019), consumer attitude and acceptance intention (Chae et al., 2019), media transnationalisation (Lee, 2018), soft power and propaganda (Jang, 2018), and fashion (Kusumasari, 2017; Park et al., 2017) were also done.

Television shows are believed to spark among travellers a strong interest in featured places (O'Connor & Bolan, 2008). Nguyen (2020) proved that K-drama, as part of Hallyu phenomenon, and destination image both have a positive influence on

attitude. Other studies indicate that viewers' attitude toward K-dramas positively affects their perception of the destination image of South Korea (Chae et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2020). An indirect effect was also observed when mediated by consumption satisfaction of Korean products (Byeon et al., 2015).

Motion pictures help familiarize travellers with destinations featured on media and are seen to have an influence on their culture, values, and their view of the world (Herman & McChesney, 1997). This stimulates travellers to look for additional information on those destinations, stimulating their intent to visit the attractions in their next travels (Rajaguru, 2014). K-dramas have significant influence in having a positive attitude towards South Korea (Yoo et al., 2014). Visual and vocal effects of K-dramas also induced a positive attitude among the viewers in the form of visit intention (Rajaguru, 2014). Behavioral and emotional involvement with K-drama celebrities was observed to positively influence the perceived destination image (Kim et al, 2018).

In Rajaguru (2014), K-drama celebrities did not significantly affect visit intention to South Korea. In contrast, Kim and Kim (2017) concluded that viewers are strongly influenced by K-drama celebrities and characters, but featured destinations have weak effect on them. Based on the presented understanding, concepts, and findings from related studies, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H1: *K-dramas' motivational influence has a significant positive effect on intention to visit South Korea.*

H2: *K-dramas' motivational influence has a significant positive effect on perceived destination image of South Korea.*

2.2 Perceived Destination Image

Destination image was coined by Hunt (1971) and Gunn (1972), applying the concept of image to the tourism industry. Any destination is subject to judgement and evaluation, as influenced by psychological elements as perceived by the tourists (Chen & Šegota, 2015; Chung & Chen, 2018; Robinson & Schänzel, 2019). Destination image is a branding tool of a place which makes it distinguishable from other places (Cai, 2002).

Mass media may influence how people perceived a country's image (Kunczik, 1994; Lipmann, 1922; Moffitt, 1994). With this, many scholars stressed the key role that mass media play in shaping country images. People who formed a destination image because of a television show have a more positive attitude toward the featured places compared do those who had not been exposed to the said medium (Kim & Richardson, 2003). The more positive general attitude viewers have toward a K-drama, the more positive images the image of South Korean is in their minds (Lee, 2014).

Destination image positively influences visit intention (Kanwel et al., 2019). In television context, a more positive perceived image of featured destinations has been observed among tv show viewers, which led to increased intention to visit those places

(Mege & Aruan, 2017). The relationship has been depicted in Kim et al. (2018), where image of the destination influenced visit intention to destinations positively, in harmony with Kim et al. (2020) on Hallyu effects, where perceived destination image had a positive effect on intentions to visit, revisit, and recommend. In a food-themed Korean tv drama, perceived image of South Korea positively influences the visit intention to the country (Kim et al., 2012). This study can confirm this relationship through this hypothesis:

H3: *Perceived destination image of South Korea has a significant positive effect on visit intention to South Korea.*

2.3 Intention to Visit

Intention refers to the tendency of a person to do something that will result in actual behavior (Fishbein & Azjen, 1975). Watching destination through media, which include television series (Mege & Aruan 2017), leads to intention to visit the place as viewers tend to form positive images (Croy & Walker, 2003; Pan & Ryan, 2013; Reijnders, 2016; Robinson, 2015). Motivated by the positive image of motion picture locations, viewers experience the authenticity and sense of the featured places (Kim et al, 2018).

A person's internal experience with an external force have been identified by previous studies to mediate the effects of the said external stimuli on their behavioural intentions (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Zhao et al., 2020). Those who watched tv show which featured destination were observed to rate destination image higher, which positively influences their intention to visit those places (Mege & Aruan, 2017), although a mediation effect was not measured. Thus, this study explores the possibility of the mediation effect of destination image through this hypothesis:

H4: *Perceived destination image of South Korea mediates the relationship between K-dramas' motivational influence and intention to visit South Korea.*

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The framework of the study is grounded on Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model in order to illustrate the relationships of the variables and hypotheses to be tested. The SOR model is a theoretical framework which posits that an individual's behavior is a result of a learning response to environmental stimuli (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). The theoretical framework explains that an environmental stimulus (S) influences the internal experience (O) of an individual and their behavioural response (R). Thus, SOR framework puts emphasis on an individual internal processing as a response to the external environmental stimulus (Hsiao & Tang, 2021).

SOR theoretical model was applied by Rajaguru (2014) in his study on the relationship between Korean film-induced effects and tourists' intention and behavior. The same theory was also adopted in the study of mobile gaming (Hsiao & Tang, 2021), massive open online classes (Zhao et al, 2020), virtual reality tourism (Kim et al., 2018) and branding co-creation in social media sites (Kamboj et al., 2018).

The purpose of this research is to identify the influence of K-dramas on viewers' intention to visit South Korea through the SOR model. The stimulus in the conceptual framework revolve around the construct, K-dramas' motivational influence, with four proposed dimensions: visual, vocal, story, and celebrity. The organism component includes perceived destination image. Lastly, the behavioural response refers to the intention to visit South Korea. The proposed conceptual framework will be a useful lens to understand K-drama viewers' behavioural decision process which involves an external stimulus affecting the internal state which then leads to their behavioural intention. Below is the proposed conceptual diagram of the study.

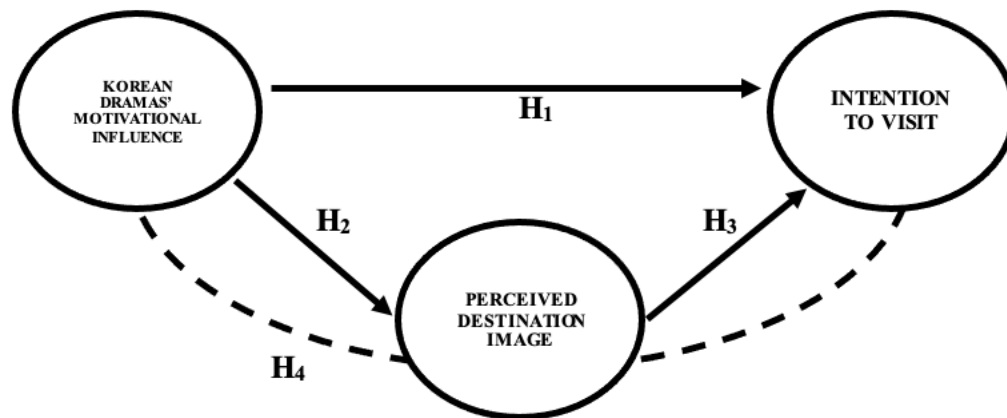


Figure 1: Conceptual diagram

3 Methodology

The study followed a causal-predictive research design. It involved 181 Filipino young adults as K-dramas tend to target younger generations according to Park (2012). Inverse square root method and gamma exponential method were used to compute for the sufficiency of the sample size. The respondents were limited to those aged 18-25 years old at the time of data collection. As K-drama viewership rose in the Philippines during the 2020 enhanced community quarantine period (Clemente, 2020), respondents must have completed at least on K-drama series since 2020. Purposive sampling was used to determine qualified respondents based on certain criteria that the study requires. Data was generated online from respondents residing in the Philippines.

Majority of the Filipino young adult respondents were female (80.1%) and were single (92.8%). Half were 21 to 23 years old (50.3%). More than half of the respondents were high school diploma holders (66.9%) and currently students (64.1%).

Viewing characteristics and habits of Filipino young adult respondents were also obtained. All of the respondents expressed interest in and satisfaction of K-dramas, with 71.9% having strong interest, and 75.1% being satisfied. Almost half of the respondents (46.4%) spent more than 5 hours a week to watch K-dramas. They mostly watched through mobile video streaming apps (68.1%), and online streaming (67.4%).

Respondents were asked to recommend up to three K-dramas, and Reply 1988 (16.02%) was the most recommended series, followed by Crash landing on You, Guardian: The Lonely and Great God (Goblin), and Vincenzo all in second place at 13.81%, then by Moon Lovers: Scarlet Heart Ryeo (13.26%) in third.

The questionnaire included items to measure respondents’ K-dramas’ motivational influence, and perceived destination image of and visit intention to South Korea. Items were measured through a Likert scale. K-dramas’ motivational influence involved measurement items from Rajaguru (2014) in measuring visual, vocal, and celebrity effects of Korean motion pictures on intention to and behavior of travel. Additional measurement items from Kim et al. (2008) to measure story effects of Korean movies and television drama series were also added. Perceived destination image of South Korea was measured through items from Kim et al (2020). Items to measure intention to visit South Korea was adapted from Rajaguru (2014) and Kim et al. (2018).

Through WarpPLS 7.0, partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was utilized to determine the internal reliability and validity of the model, and explore the direct and indirect effect of the structural relationship paths along with their p-values.

4 Findings

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics through mean rating was utilized to describe K-dramas’ motivational influence, perceived destination image, and intention to visit South Korea. The following descriptive ratings were used to interpret the mean rating of each measurement item:

Table 1: Descriptive ratings scale

Mean Rating	Descriptive Rating
1.00 to 1.85	Very Strongly Disagree
1.86 to 2.71	Strongly Disagree
2.72 to 3.57	Disagree
3.58 to 4.43	Neither Agree or Disagree
4.44 to 5.29	Agree
5.30 to 6.15	Strongly Agree
6.16 to 7.00	Very Strongly Agree

Table 2 presented the mean and descriptive rating of the three variables, along with standard deviation. The results pointed out that Filipino young adults very strongly agreed on the motivational influence of K-dramas (M=6.53). They also had a very favorable perceived image of South Korea as a destination (M=6.17). They also

expressed a very strong intention to visit South Korea after watching K-dramas (M=6.34).

Table 2: Descriptive statistics summary

Variable	Mean Rating	SD	Descriptive Rating
K-dramas' Motivational Influence	6.53	0.49	Very Strongly Agree
Perceived Destination Image	6.17	0.58	Very Strongly Agree
Intention to Visit	6.46	0.45	Very Strongly Agree

4.2 Model fit and quality indices

The result indicated that the model of the study had good fit and quality. Average path coefficient (APC= 0.446), average R-squared (ARS=0.405), and average adjusted R-squared (AARS=0.400), were significant ($p < 0.001$). Average block VIF (AVIF=1.630), and average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF=1.775) measured the overall predictive and explanatory quality of the model which were both at the acceptable (≤ 5.0) and ideal level (≤ 3.3) (Kock, 2015). The model of this study has a large explanatory power according to Tenenhaus goodness-of-fit index [0.462] (Kock, 2013). Ideal value was also reported in Sympon's Paradox Ratio (SPR=1.00) and R-squared Contribution Ratio (RSCR=1.00), while both Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR=1.00), and Nonlinear Bivariate Causality Direction Ratio (NLBCDR=1.00) were above acceptable value (Kock, 2017).

4.3 Reliability and Validity Tests

K-dramas' motivational influence, perceived destination image, and visit intention to South Korea reflected composite reliability of 0.852, 0.891, and 0.888, respectively, which exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.70 (Kock, 2017), and Cronbach's alpha of 0.767, 0.860, and 0.847, respectively, which were above acceptable level of 0.70, thus confirming a reliable to strong internal consistency (Taber, 2018). All CR and CA values were below 0.95 which further indicated very good internal consistency, as values above 0.95 may indicate redundant items which may result to possible undesirable response patterns (Hair et al., 2018; Hulin et al., 2001).

Average variance extracted (AVE) and factor loadings were computed to determine convergent validity. The model presented factor loading values ranging from 0.613 to 0.834, which were all greater than minimum acceptable level of 0.60 (Hair et al., 2009). The constructs, Kdramas' motivational influence (AVE=0.590), perceived destination image of South Korea (AVE=0.507), and visit intention to South Korea (AVE=0.570) had ideal AVE values exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

In Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion, when the square roots of AVEs, i.e., diagonal values, are higher than the off-diagonal coefficients, discriminant validity is observed. Discriminant validity was confirmed by the square root of AVE of each construct which were shown higher than the other values per column in Table 3. This

meant that the measurement items for one construct were not confused with other constructs' items (Kock, 2017).

Table 3: Square Roots of AVEs and Correlation Coefficients

	KD	DI	IV
KD	0.768		
DI	0.608	0.712	
IV	0.623	0.598	0.755

Notes: KD=K-dramas' motivational influence, DI=perceived destination image, IV=visit intention

4.3.1 Heterotrait-Monotrait(HTMT)

Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations was also provided to further assess discriminant validity. It was suggested that HTMT ratio must be smaller than 0.90 (Henseler et al., 2015). Values lower than 0.85 were said to be better indicators (Kock, 2020). As indicated in Table 4, the result of HTMT ratio indicated discriminant validity.

Table 4: HTMT Ratio of Correlations

	KD	DI	IV
KD			
DI	0.743		
IV	0.702	0.773	

Notes: KD=K-dramas' motivational influence, DI=perceived destination image, IV=visit intention. HTMT ratios are all significant at $p < 0.001$ (one-tailed)

4.4 Linear model hypotheses explanations

The p-values provided were the basis for supporting hypotheses. Cohen' s f^2 indicated if the path has a small ($f^2 \geq 0.02$), medium ($f^2 \geq 0.15$), or large ($f^2 \geq 0.35$) effect size (Cohen, 1988). For Filipino young adults, the SEM analysis revealed that K-dramas' motivational influence positively affected visit intention ($\beta=0.425$, $p < 0.001$) with a medium effect size ($f^2=0.201$), thus, H1 was supported. K-dramas' motivational influence was also proven to have a positive impact on perceived destination image of South Korea ($\beta=0.631$, $p < 0.001$) with a large effect size ($f^2=0.398$), supporting H2. Lastly, the analysis supported H3 because perceived destination image was found to have a significant influence on visit intention ($\beta = 0.335$, $p < 0.001$) with a medium effect size ($f^2=0.201$). The model with path coefficients is presented in Figure 2 below:

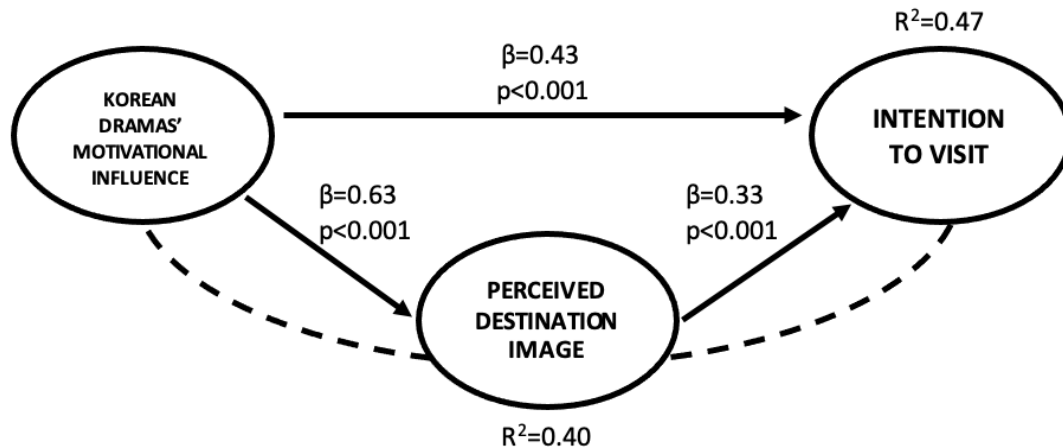


Figure 2: PLS-SEM path model with coefficients and p-values

The analysis also tested the mediating effect of perceived destination image of South Korea. The results showed that perceived destination image has a significant mediating effect between K-dramas' motivational influence on visit intention to South Korea ($\beta = 0.211$, $p<0.001$) with a small effect size ($f^2=0.134$). Thus, H4 is supported. The direct and indirect effects are shown in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Direct and Indirect Effects of the Model

	β	SE	t-value	R ²	f ²	Decision
<i>Direct Effects</i>						
H ₁ KD → IV	0.425**	0.068	6.233*	0.269	0.269	Supported
H ₂ KD → DI	0.631**	0.065	9.646*	0.398	0.398	Supported
H ₃ DI → IV	0.335**	0.069	4.819*	0.201	0.201	Supported
<i>Indirect Effect</i>						
H ₄ KD → DI → IV	0.211**	0.050	-	-	0.134	Supported

Note: β =path coefficient; SE=standard error; f² =effect size

The effect sizes follow Cohen' s (1988) criterion: large ($f^2 \geq 0.35$), medium ($f^2 \geq 0.15$), small ($f^2 \geq 0.02$)

**= $p<0.001$

*= $t>1.645$ (one-tailed)

5 Discussion and conclusion

The SEM analysis results aided the study to determine motivational influence of K-dramas among Filipino young adults on their perception of South Korea's image as a destination, and their intent to visit the said country. The study was able to prove positive significant relationships among the three constructs, and the mediation of perceived destination image on the influence of K-dramas on visit intention to South Korea.

Studies on the influence of K-dramas on tourism attitude and intention remain limited in some cultural settings (Kim et al., 2020). Further, studies on the role of perceived destination image as mediator on the effect of K-dramas to visit intention remain scarce. The result of this paper contributes to these gaps in literature. It was able to contextualize a model in the Philippine setting, specifically among young adults who are known to be a primary target market of K-dramas (Park, 2012).

It was confirmed that among Filipino young adults, K-dramas' motivational influence significantly affect visit intention to South Korea ($\beta=0.425$, $p<0.001$) which was in parallel with the studies of Lee et al. (2017), Nguyen (2020) and Yoo et al. (2014). The study also proved that K-dramas significantly influenced perceived image of South Korea as a destination ($\beta=0.631$, $p<0.001$) which was in congruence with the findings in Chae et al. (2019), Kim et al. (2020) and Lee (2014). The literature also cited the positive influence of destination image to visit intention (Kanwel et al., 2019) even in the television context (Mege & Aruan, 2017). The analysis of the study has proven that perceived image of South Korea as a destination positively influenced visit intention to the country ($\beta = 0.335$, $p<0.001$), which affirmed the result in Hallyu and K-drama context in Kim et al. (2012), Kim et al. (2018), Kim et al. (2020), and Nguyen (2020).

As derived from the findings, the model indicated that unit increase in K-dramas' motivational influence corresponded to 0.425 unit of increase in intention to visit, thus supporting H1, 0.631 unit increase in perceived destination image, thus confirming H2. The analysis also pointed that a unit increase in perceived destination image corresponded to 0.335 unit increase in visit intention. This supported H3. The findings also indicates that 47% of the variances in intention to visit South Korea may be explained by K-drama's motivational influences and perceived destination image, while K-drama's motivational influences can explain 40% of the variances in perceived destination image of South Korea.

In Mege & Aruan (2017), those who watched tv show featuring destinations rated the image of these locations higher, which lead to their intention to visit those places, but a mediation effect was not measured. The results proved that the image of South Korea as a destination mediated the relationship between K-dramas' motivational influence and visit intention to the country ($\beta = 0.211$, $p<0.001$), as partially supported in Jin (2017). The mediation suggested that K-drama would influence Filipino young adult viewers more effectively to visit South Korea if an effort to create a very positive impression of South Korea as a destination has been achieved in these K-dramas. While K-dramas have significant influence on visit intention, the study has proven that there is a higher coefficient in the said relationship if K-dramas' motivational influence quality translates to a positive destination image of South Korea which then leads to intention to visit the country.

Despite the global success, the longevity and stability of Korean Wave has been questioned (Chae et al., 2019). This study proves that in the case of the Filipino young adults, Hallyu may be expected to be a strong industry and a significant influencer of

consumer attitude and behavior. This may support that the Korean wave in the Philippines is more than just a fad and will not be expected to decline in the next years (Blas & Erestain, 2020, Igno & Cenidoza, 2016).

5.1 Theoretical implications

The study provides theoretical contribution in the relationship of Hallyu and destination image which is said to be limited (Kim et al., 2020). The study primarily contributes to the application of K-dramas' motivational influence on viewers' intention to visit South Korea through the SOR model. Although SOR model has been utilized in Rajaguru (2014) in his study on the relationship between Korean film-induced effects and tourists' intention and behavior, this study proposed K-dramas' motivational influence as a higher order construct with four dimensions, namely, visual, vocal, story, and celebrity effects.

The study also answers the call in Chiu et al. (2016) for future studies on how K-dramas influence South Korea's image as a destination. It also contributes to the literature on related topics. This study provides a model which can also be applied in other cultural contexts for future academic research. Future studies may be explored to further address the lack of studies on the influence of K-dramas on tourism attitude and intention in other cultural settings, the contention of the stability and longevity of Hallyu as a phenomenon, and the assessment of film-induced effects on tourism destinations and tourist behavior.

5.2 Practical implications

The study provides empirical evidence for national and local tourism organizations, and film and media suites in the Philippines to look into the effect of media products to destination image and tourist behavior, thus boosting tourism performance in the country. The government may also consider to draft a comprehensive long-term tourism policy dedicated to film-induced tourism, which was new even for the South Korean government because of lack of coordination with key tourism agencies (Kim & Nam, 2015). Firms may also be able to understand Filipino young adult viewers' media consumption, specifically of K-dramas, and how these translate to consumer behavior. A positive image increases the overall recognition of South Korea as a country, maintaining the awareness of its products (Chae et al, 2019), which may be applicable to a destination featured in films and television series.

Applying the study's model in the current scenario in the Philippines, local filmmakers and online content makers may contribute in inducing local travel among Filipino young adults. Destinations and storyline must be highlighted in these media products to improve perception of local destination and induce intention to visit places which are open to locals. Local travel is encouraged to Filipinos as an effort to restart Philippine travel sector which used to contribute greatly to its economy (Westerman, 2021). The future of Philippine travel sector will see local travel as a priority, and travelers will prioritize excursions to rural, secluded, and natural areas, if allowed, and will be expected to avoid mainstream and overcrowded destinations, with beach

destinations being considered ideal in post-pandemic times. These types of locations are usually featured in local films, but more drawbacks than benefits were observed in film-induced tourism, with locals having to suffer from negative effects (Aquines & Batra, 2016).

5.3 Limitations and future research

The study was bound to some drawbacks. The respondents were limited to the researchers' network of Filipino young adults which may the generalization of the results. However, this could be addressed by applying the model in other networks and regions. Visit intention was used in the model due to travel restrictions since the start of the enhanced quarantine lockdown in the Philippines. Actual visit or revisit intention, along with capacity to travel as moderators, may be explored to further develop a more encompassing model. K-dramas' motivational influence was proposed to be measured as a higher order construct which could have undergone further validation which may be a springboard for a separate study. Other dimensions attributed to it may also be added for validation.

6 About the authors

Felipe Pablo IV has been teaching in the School of Hospitality & Tourism Management in Holy Angel University, Philippines for more than 10 years. He specializes in hospitality and tourism research writing, diversity in the workplace, total quality management, marketing, domestic tourism, and global culture & geography. He finished Doctor of Business Administration with concentration in Hospitality and Tourism with high distinction. His research interests include organizational and consumer behavior, destination image, film tourism, pop culture, and COVID-19 impacts.

Joy David is a passionate educator with more than 10 years teaching experience in this in Holy Angel University, Philippines. She is also a licensed professional teacher. Prior to this, she has worked in one of the leading restaurant chains in the Philippines as restaurant manager. She is currently pursuing her doctorate degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management in Holy Angel University, Philippines. She specializes in operations management, business technology, and food safety and sanitation. Her previous research works include topics in organizational commitment and job satisfaction in the restaurant industry, corporate social responsibility in the hotel sector, and destination image.

Patricia S. Ambrosio is currently the Admissions Head of Holy Angel University. She was an instructor under the School of Hospitality & Tourism Management for almost 10 years. She specialized in restaurant and kitchen operations, hotel operations, personality development and marketing. She finished Master of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management and is currently taking up Doctor of Business Administration with concentration in Hospitality and Tourism.

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