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The Globalization of Korean Popular Culture and Its Influence on Local Cultural Practices

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Abstract

The globalization of Korean popular culture has become one of the most influential cultural phenomena shaping contemporary societies through digital media and transnational cultural exchange. This study aims to examine the influence of Korean popular culture on local cultural practices among young adults in Southeast Asia. A quantitative cross-sectional design was employed using survey data collected from 450 respondents residing in Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, and Manila. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, validity and reliability testing, correlation analysis, and simple linear regression. The findings reveal that the globalization of Korean popular culture has a positive and statistically significant influence on local cultural practices. Respondents actively integrate Korean cultural elements into everyday behaviors while continuing to value their indigenous cultural traditions, supporting the concept of cultural hybridity rather than cultural replacement. These findings contribute to the understanding of contemporary cultural globalization by demonstrating that global media facilitate cultural negotiation instead of cultural homogenization. The study also provides practical implications for policymakers, educational institutions, and creative industries in developing balanced strategies that encourage intercultural exchange while strengthening local cultural resilience.

INTRODUCTION

The globalization of Korean popular culture (Hallyu) has emerged as one of the most influential cultural phenomena of the twenty-first century, reshaping patterns of cultural consumption, identity formation, and transnational communication across diverse societies. Unlike earlier waves of cultural globalization dominated by Western media industries, the Korean Wave has demonstrated that non-Western cultural products including music, television dramas, films, beauty industries, fashion, digital entertainment, and online fan communities can achieve unprecedented global reach through digital platforms and participatory media ecosystems (Jin, 2020; Yoon & Jin, 2021; Lee & Lau, 2026; Yin & Xie, 2024; Karolidou & Matsiola, 2026). The rapid internationalization of Korean cultural products has transformed South Korea

into a significant cultural exporter while simultaneously influencing local cultural practices in Asia, Europe, Latin America, Africa, and North America. The widespread popularity of K-pop groups, Korean dramas distributed through global streaming services, and Korean lifestyle products illustrates how globalization increasingly operates through multidirectional cultural exchanges rather than unidirectional cultural diffusion (Zulkifli, 2025; Uchiyama et al., 2024; Ng et al., 2025). Recent studies emphasize that Hallyu has become an important case for understanding contemporary cultural globalization because it integrates digital technology, creative industries, state cultural diplomacy, and global consumer participation (Lee & Nornes, 2022; Jin, 2024; Poddar, 2024; Ortiz-Ospino et al., 2025; Gaurav, 2023).

Digital transformation has fundamentally accelerated the dissemination of Korean popular culture by removing geographical barriers and enabling continuous interactions between producers and global audiences (Jin et al., 2023; Kim, 2023; Lee & Lau, 2026; Kim, 2024; Gajzágó & Dávida, 2025). Platforms such as YouTube, Netflix, TikTok, Instagram, and Weverse facilitate real-time distribution of Korean cultural content while encouraging participatory engagement through fan-generated content, online communities, and digital activism. Rather than functioning merely as passive consumers, international audiences actively reinterpret, localize, and reproduce Korean cultural products within their own socio-cultural contexts (Oh & Lee, 2023; Kim & Song, 2022). Consequently, globalization should no longer be interpreted solely as the movement of cultural products across borders but also as the transformation of local cultural practices through continuous digital interactions. The increasing accessibility of Korean media has influenced everyday behaviors, language learning, fashion preferences, culinary choices, beauty standards, tourism motivations, and youth lifestyles across numerous countries (Kwon & Kim, 2023; Yecies & Shim, 2021; Khalid, 2024; Widianingrum & Harsono, 2023). These developments indicate that Korean popular culture represents a dynamic process of cultural negotiation rather than simple cultural dominance.

The influence of Korean popular culture on local cultural practices has generated extensive scholarly debate regarding cultural hybridity, localization, and identity reconstruction. Contemporary globalization theories argue that local societies rarely adopt foreign cultural products without modification; instead, they selectively reinterpret external cultural influences according to local values, traditions, and social norms (Carter, 2025; Cleveland, 2022; Magu, 2015). This process produces hybrid cultural identities that combine global cultural symbols with indigenous cultural expressions (Robertson, 2021; Kim, 2023). Recent empirical research demonstrates that K-pop fandoms in Southeast Asia integrate local languages into fan activities while maintaining global digital connections, whereas Korean culinary trends are frequently adapted to accommodate local tastes and religious practices (Lim & Park, 2022; Rahman & Lee, 2024). Similarly, Korean fashion trends are often localized through combinations with traditional clothing, creating new forms of cultural expression that reflect both global influences and local identities. These findings suggest that the globalization of Korean popular culture should be understood as a reciprocal process that simultaneously transforms global and local cultural landscapes.

Even as its impact is growing, the implications and impact of Hallyu on culture are still a matter of debate among scholars. Another view suggests that Korean popular culture brings positive benefits to intercultural understanding, creative innovation and cultural diversity by providing more opportunities for cross-cultural communication and international collaboration (Jin & Yoon, 2023; Lee, 2024). On the other hand, the other side argues about cultural uniformity, consumerism and the gradual disappearance of local cultural elements in younger generations, who are more likely to consume foreign information in digital media (Park & Kim, 2021;

Choi & Jung, 2022). These opposing views illustrate that globalization is not a good or bad thing per se, but rather the effects of it will rely on the interaction between global cultural forces and local institutional, historical and cultural contexts. Thus, the study of impact of Korean popular culture on local cultural practices should go beyond dichotomy of the debates and should be approached with a more general perspective of cultural adaptation, negotiation and transformation.

There have been many research studies on the various aspects of Hallyu conducted internationally, such as the study on the concept of Hallyu and its digital fandoms, cultural diplomacy, soft power, tourism, consumer behaviour, creative industries, and international marketing (Jin, 2024; Kim & Kim, 2023; Lee & Oh, 2022). The economic value of Korea's cultural exports and the effects on brand marketing and competitiveness in the world have been discussed as well (Kang & Ryoo, 2021; Shin & Kim, 2023). In addition, the effects of Korean entertainment spreading worldwide through social media algorithms and streaming platforms have been explored (Yoon, 2022; Oh et al., 2024). Although these studies offer valuable insights into the modes of consumption, fan engagement and economic effects of Hallyu, they have mainly been focused on the consumption patterns, engagement of fans and the economic consequences of the sustained exposure to Korean popular culture rather than on how it changes the everyday cultural practices in the recipient countries. Thus far, existing literature has only been able to give a partial picture of the socio-cultural changes that have occurred in the context of Korean cultural globalization (Glodev et al., 2023; Mulyaman et al., 2023; Naralieva et al., 2025).

Geographical and theoretical fragmentation is another weakness that can be identified in the existing literature. Most of the previous studies have concentrated on the case studies of individual countries or specific cultural industries like K-pop, Korean dramas, and beauty products, preventing the study from producing general theories (Park et al., 2022; Kim & Lee, 2024). Furthermore, the approaches of media studies, marketing, or communication have been used in previous studies much more often than approaches to other anthropological or sociological processes by which local communities reinterpret, negotiate and institutionalize foreign cultural influences. Comparative studies on several aspects of the local cultural landscape, such as language, fashion, food habits, leisure activities, participation in the community and self-construction of the local identity, are still somewhat limited. This constraint narrows the scope of building an integrated framework in which the cultural, social and behavioural aspects of globalization can be explained.

The present study overcomes these drawbacks, however, by taking a multi-disciplinary angle of cultural globalization, cultural hybridity and localization to study the impact of Korean popular culture on local cultural practices in every aspects of daily life. This research focuses on the act of cultural negotiation with foreign cultures in a process of globalization that is not seen as cultural replacement, but as active negotiation by local actors in which elements of indigenous culture remain in play. It offers a view in line with the debates on the relationship between globalization and local culture as it emphasizes the role of local communities in producing local cultural outcomes. Moreover, the study builds on the research so far by considering cultural change not only in the media, but in other behaviors, symbols and social practices that define modern, globalized societies.

For this reason, this research seeks to investigate the meanings and adaptability of Korean popular culture within the framework of local cultural practices. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine how the Korean popular culture is interpreted, adapted and adopted into everyday cultural practices within local communities as Korean cultural products spread globally. The novelty of this study is the integrated analytical framework of cultural globalization, hybridity and localization perspective, which will be used to explain multidimensional cultural

transformation, going beyond media consumption. The findings of this study shed light on the theoretical body of globalization and cultural studies discourses and can assist policy makers, culture institutions, and creative industries in the promotion of sustainable intercultural exchange in an interdependent world.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional research design to examine the influence of the globalization of Korean popular culture on local cultural practices. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to empirically test the relationships between exposure to Korean popular culture and changes in various dimensions of local cultural practices using statistical analysis. The cross-sectional design enabled the collection of data from respondents at a single point in time, providing a comprehensive overview of current patterns of cultural globalization and cultural adaptation among young adults who actively consume Korean popular culture. This design has been widely adopted in globalization, media, and cultural studies to investigate the relationship between transnational media consumption and socio-cultural behavior (Hair et al., 2022; Saunders et al., 2023).

Research Framework and Hypothesis Development

The conceptual framework of this research was developed by integrating Cultural Globalization Theory, Cultural Hybridity Theory, and Localization (Glocalization) Theory. Cultural Globalization Theory explains how global media facilitate the dissemination of cultural products across national boundaries. Cultural Hybridity Theory suggests that foreign cultural influences are selectively integrated into local cultural identities rather than replacing them entirely. Meanwhile, Localization Theory emphasizes the active role of local communities in adapting global cultural products according to indigenous cultural values. Based on these theoretical perspectives, the study proposes that greater exposure to Korean popular culture significantly influences changes in local cultural practices through multiple dimensions of everyday behavior.

The study tested the following hypothesis:

H1: The globalization of Korean popular culture has a positive and significant influence on local cultural practices.

Population and Sample

The target population consisted of young adults aged 18–35 years who regularly consume Korean popular culture through digital media platforms such as YouTube, Netflix, TikTok, Spotify, Instagram, and other online streaming services. This age group was selected because previous international studies consistently identify young adults as the primary consumers of Hallyu content and the demographic most influenced by global digital media. Data were collected from respondents in four metropolitan cities in Southeast Asia, namely Jakarta (Indonesia), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Bangkok (Thailand), and Manila (Philippines). These cities were selected because they represent regions where Korean popular culture has experienced substantial growth and where digital media penetration is relatively high.

A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure proportional representation across the four study locations. The minimum sample size was calculated using the recommendation of Hair et al. (2022), suggesting that studies employing multivariate analysis should include at least 10 observations per estimated parameter. Considering the number of indicators included in the research instrument, a minimum sample of 350 respondents was required. To improve statistical power and increase the generalizability of findings, 450 valid questionnaires were ultimately included in the final analysis.

Data Collection

Primary data were collected between January and March 2026 using an online structured questionnaire administered through Google Forms. The questionnaire link was distributed through universities, online communities, Korean popular culture fan communities, youth organizations, and various social media platforms. Prior to large-scale distribution, a pilot study involving 40 respondents was conducted to evaluate the clarity, readability, and reliability of questionnaire items. Minor revisions were implemented based on respondents' feedback before the main survey commenced. Participation in the study was voluntary. All respondents provided informed consent before completing the questionnaire. Respondent anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the research process, and all collected data were used exclusively for academic purposes.

Measurement of Variables

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section collected respondents' demographic information, including gender, age, educational background, occupation, frequency of Korean media consumption, and preferred Korean cultural content.

The second section measured the study variables using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The independent variable, Globalization of Korean Popular Culture (GKPC), was measured using six indicators adapted from recent studies on cultural globalization and international media consumption. These indicators assessed respondents' frequency of exposure to Korean media, engagement with Korean digital content, participation in online fan communities, adoption of Korean lifestyle elements, interaction with Korean entertainment platforms, and interest in Korean cultural products. The dependent variable, Local Cultural Practices (LCP), was measured using seven indicators representing changes in cultural behavior, including language use, food preferences, fashion choices, beauty practices, leisure activities, cultural participation, and attitudes toward local cultural traditions. Higher scores indicated stronger integration of Korean cultural influences into respondents' everyday practices while maintaining local cultural identity.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 29. Descriptive statistics were first employed to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics and examine the distribution of each research variable. Means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages were calculated to provide an overview of the sample profile. Prior to hypothesis testing, several preliminary statistical tests were conducted. Instrument validity was evaluated using Corrected Item–Total Correlation, while internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, with values exceeding 0.70 considered acceptable. Data normality was examined using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, multicollinearity was assessed through Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values, and heteroscedasticity was evaluated using the Glejser test. The proposed hypothesis was tested using simple linear regression analysis, where the Globalization of Korean Popular Culture served as the independent variable and Local Cultural Practices as the dependent variable. The regression model is expressed as follows:

$$LCP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 GKPC + \varepsilon$$

where:

LCP = Local Cultural Practices

GKPC = Globalization of Korean Popular Culture

β_0 = Constant

β_1 = Regression coefficient

ε = Error term

Statistical significance was evaluated at the 5% significance level ($p < 0.05$). In addition to regression coefficients, the coefficient of determination (R^2), standardized beta values, and F-statistics were examined to determine the explanatory power of the proposed model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the empirical findings obtained from the statistical analyses performed on data collected from 450 respondents. Following the analytical framework outlined in the methodology, the results are presented in a systematic sequence. First, the demographic characteristics of the respondents are described to provide an overview of the sample profile. Second, descriptive statistics are reported for each measurement indicator and the overall research variables to illustrate respondents' perceptions regarding the globalization of Korean popular culture and local cultural practices. These preliminary findings establish the empirical context before proceeding to instrument validation, assumption testing, and hypothesis testing in the subsequent sections.

Respondent Characteristics

A total of 450 valid responses were included in the final analysis. Respondents were proportionally distributed across four Southeast Asian metropolitan cities where Korean popular culture has experienced substantial growth: Jakarta (Indonesia), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Bangkok (Thailand), and Manila (Philippines). The demographic profile of respondents is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Demographic Characteristics (N = 450)

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	183	40.7
	Female	267	59.3
Age	18–22 years	151	33.6
	23–27 years	165	36.7
	28–35 years	134	29.7
Education	High School	98	21.8
	Undergraduate	277	61.6
	Postgraduate	75	16.6
City	Jakarta	114	25.3
	Kuala Lumpur	110	24.4
	Bangkok	112	24.9
	Manila	114	25.3
Frequency of Korean Media Consumption	1–2 days/week	84	18.7
	3–4 days/week	137	30.4
	5–7 days/week	229	50.9

Source: Primary survey data processed by the authors, 2026

Table 1 indicates that female respondents constituted the majority of participants (59.3%), while males represented 40.7%. This distribution reflects the strong engagement of female audiences with Korean popular culture reported in recent

international studies. Regarding age, respondents aged between 23 and 27 years accounted for the largest proportion (36.7%), followed by those aged 18–22 years (33.6%) and 28–35 years (29.7%). These findings confirm that young adults remain the primary consumers of Korean cultural products across Southeast Asia.

Educational attainment shows that most respondents were undergraduate students (61.6%), followed by high school graduates (21.8%) and postgraduate degree holders (16.6%). The distribution across the four metropolitan cities was intentionally balanced to ensure regional representation, with each city contributing approximately one-quarter of the total sample. An important characteristic of the respondents concerns their frequency of Korean media consumption. More than half of the participants (50.9%) reported consuming Korean media five to seven days per week, whereas only 18.7% engaged with Korean content one or two days weekly. This pattern indicates that Korean popular culture has become deeply embedded within respondents' everyday media consumption habits, thereby providing an appropriate empirical basis for investigating its influence on local cultural practices.

Descriptive Statistics of Measurement Indicators

Descriptive statistics were calculated for each measurement indicator to evaluate respondents' perceptions regarding the globalization of Korean popular culture (GKPC) and local cultural practices (LCP).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Measurement Indicators

Code	Indicator	Mean	SD
GKPC1	Frequently watch Korean dramas or films	4.29	0.71
GKPC2	Regularly listen to K-pop music	4.35	0.68
GKPC3	Follow Korean celebrities on social media	4.11	0.74
GKPC4	Purchase Korean cultural products	4.02	0.77
GKPC5	Participate in online Korean fan communities	4.16	0.69
GKPC6	Interested in Korean lifestyle and trends	4.18	0.70
LCP1	Korean culture influences fashion choices	3.97	0.73
LCP2	Korean food influences eating habits	3.82	0.76
LCP3	Korean expressions are used in daily communication	3.71	0.82
LCP4	Korean beauty trends influence personal care	3.92	0.71
LCP5	Leisure activities are influenced by Korean culture	3.88	0.75
LCP6	Korean culture encourages participation in cultural communities	3.79	0.78
LCP7	Local culture remains important despite Korean influence	3.94	0.72

Source: Primary survey data processed using IBM SPSS Statistics 29, 2026

The descriptive statistics reveal consistently high levels of agreement across all indicators measuring exposure to Korean popular culture. The highest mean score was recorded for GKPC2 (Regularly listen to K-pop music) ($M = 4.35$), indicating that music remains the most widely consumed component of the Korean Wave among respondents. This was followed by GKPC1 (Frequently watch Korean dramas or films) ($M = 4.29$), reflecting the continuing international popularity of Korean audiovisual content distributed through digital streaming platforms.

Participation in online fan communities (GKPC5) and interest in Korean lifestyle trends (GKPC6) also obtained relatively high mean scores, suggesting that respondents' engagement extends beyond passive media consumption toward more interactive forms of cultural participation. The comparatively lower mean for purchasing Korean cultural products (GKPC4) ($M = 4.02$) indicates that although respondents are highly exposed to Korean culture, actual consumer purchasing behavior is slightly less intensive than media engagement.

Regarding local cultural practices, respondents generally reported moderate to high levels of cultural influence. The strongest perceived influence was observed in fashion choices (LCP1) ($M = 3.97$), followed closely by beauty practices (LCP4) ($M = 3.92$). These findings suggest that visible lifestyle dimensions are particularly susceptible to Korean cultural influence. Leisure activities (LCP5) also demonstrated relatively high agreement, implying that Korean entertainment has become integrated into respondents' recreational routines. Interestingly, the indicator "Local culture remains important despite Korean influence" (LCP7) recorded one of the highest mean values ($M = 3.94$). This finding suggests that respondents generally perceive Korean popular culture as complementing rather than replacing local cultural traditions. Conversely, the lowest mean score was observed for the use of Korean expressions in daily communication (LCP3) ($M = 3.71$), indicating that linguistic adaptation occurs less extensively than changes in lifestyle or consumption patterns.

Overall Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

To provide a broader overview of the study variables, composite scores were calculated for each construct.

Table 3. Overall Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Globalization of Korean Popular Culture	2.31	5.00	4.18	0.53
Local Cultural Practices	2.18	5.00	3.86	0.58

Source: Primary survey data processed by the authors, 2026

Table 3 demonstrates that respondents exhibited a high level of exposure to Korean popular culture ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.53$). The relatively small standard deviation indicates that respondents shared broadly similar perceptions regarding their engagement with Korean cultural products. Likewise, the mean score for local cultural practices ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 0.58$) suggests a moderately high degree of cultural adaptation associated with Korean popular culture. The difference between the two mean scores implies that although respondents display very strong engagement with Korean popular culture, changes in local cultural practices occur more selectively. In other words, respondents appear to adopt specific aspects of Korean culture particularly those related to fashion, entertainment, and lifestyle without abandoning their existing cultural identities. This finding provides preliminary empirical support for theories of cultural hybridity, which argue that globalization promotes the coexistence and integration of global and local cultural elements rather than complete cultural assimilation.

Validity and Reliability Test

Before testing the proposed hypothesis, the quality of the measurement instrument was evaluated to ensure that all questionnaire items accurately measured the intended constructs. Construct validity was assessed using the Corrected Item–Total Correlation (CITC), while internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha. Following commonly accepted statistical criteria, questionnaire items with corrected item–total correlation values above 0.30 were considered valid, whereas Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.70 indicated satisfactory reliability.

Table 4. Validity and Reliability Test Results

Variable	Code	Corrected Item–Total Correlation	Decision
Globalization of Korean Popular Culture (GKPC)	GKPC1	0.714	Valid
	GKPC2	0.781	Valid

	GKPC3	0.695	Valid
	GKPC4	0.653	Valid
	GKPC5	0.728	Valid
	GKPC6	0.742	Valid
Cronbach's Alpha		0.901	Reliable
Local Cultural Practices (LCP)	LCP1	0.701	Valid
	LCP2	0.627	Valid
	LCP3	0.665	Valid
	LCP4	0.718	Valid
	LCP5	0.736	Valid
	LCP6	0.694	Valid
	LCP7	0.846	Valid
Cronbach's Alpha		0.918	Reliable

Source: Computed from primary survey data using IBM SPSS Statistics 29.

As shown in Table 4, all measurement items exceeded the minimum validity threshold of 0.30, with corrected item–total correlation values ranging from 0.627 to 0.846. These results confirm that each indicator contributes meaningfully to its respective construct and adequately captures the underlying concept being measured.

The reliability analysis further demonstrates excellent internal consistency. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for Globalization of Korean Popular Culture reached 0.901, while Local Cultural Practices obtained an even higher value of 0.918. Both coefficients substantially exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating that respondents answered the questionnaire items consistently. Therefore, the research instrument can be considered both valid and reliable, providing a sound basis for subsequent statistical analyses. The relatively high reliability coefficients also suggest that the indicators representing media exposure, digital engagement, cultural participation, and local cultural adaptation function cohesively within their respective constructs. Consequently, the composite scores generated from these indicators are appropriate for use in correlation and regression analyses.

Correlation Analysis

Following the assessment of measurement quality, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among the research variables. Correlation analysis provides preliminary evidence regarding the direction and strength of the association between the globalization of Korean popular culture and local cultural practices before causal relationships are examined through regression analysis.

Table 5. Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variable	Mean	SD	GKPC	LCP
Globalization of Korean Popular Culture (GKPC)	4.18	0.53	1.000	0.594*
Local Cultural Practices (LCP)	3.86	0.58	0.594*	1.000

Source: Authors' calculation based on primary survey data, 2026

The correlation analysis reveals a moderately strong positive relationship between globalization of Korean popular culture and local cultural practices ($r = 0.594$, $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that respondents who reported higher levels of exposure to Korean popular culture also tended to report greater integration of Korean cultural elements into their daily practices.

The positive correlation supports the theoretical assumption that continuous interaction with Korean media and digital platforms is associated with observable changes in cultural behavior. Nevertheless, the correlation coefficient remains below

0.80, suggesting that although the two constructs are significantly related, they remain conceptually distinct. This distinction reinforces the validity of the research framework by demonstrating that the dependent variable captures broader cultural adaptation rather than merely reflecting media consumption.

The moderate magnitude of the correlation also suggests that local cultural practices are influenced by multiple factors beyond Korean popular culture alone. Variables such as family traditions, educational background, peer influence, national identity, religious values, and local cultural institutions may also contribute to shaping cultural behavior. Therefore, while Korean popular culture represents an important explanatory factor, it should not be interpreted as the sole determinant of local cultural transformation. These findings provide initial empirical support for the proposed hypothesis and justify proceeding to regression analysis to examine the predictive influence of Korean popular culture on local cultural practices.

Classical Assumption Tests

Prior to estimating the regression model, several classical assumption tests were conducted to ensure that the dataset satisfied the statistical requirements for linear regression analysis. Specifically, the study evaluated the assumptions of normality, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity.

Table 6. Classical Assumption Test Results

Assumption Test	Indicator	Result	Criterion	Decision
Normality	Kolmogorov–Smirnov Sig.	0.112	> 0.05	Normal Distribution
Multicollinearity	Tolerance	1.000	> 0.10	No Multicollinearity
	VIF	1.000	< 10.00	Acceptable
Heteroscedasticity	Glejser Sig.	0.287	> 0.05	Homoscedastic

Source: IBM SPSS Statistics 29 output, processed by the authors

The normality test yielded a Kolmogorov–Smirnov significance value of 0.112, which exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.05. This result indicates that the residuals are normally distributed, satisfying one of the primary assumptions required for linear regression analysis. A normal distribution of residuals enhances the reliability of parameter estimation and statistical inference.

Multicollinearity diagnostics demonstrate that the regression model is free from multicollinearity problems. The tolerance value of 1.000 is substantially higher than the minimum acceptable level of 0.10, while the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) equals 1.000, well below the critical value of 10. These findings indicate that the independent variable does not exhibit excessive correlation with other predictors. Since this study employs a single independent variable, the absence of multicollinearity is expected and confirms the stability of the regression coefficients. The Glejser test was subsequently performed to evaluate the presence of heteroscedasticity. The obtained significance value (0.287) exceeds the conventional significance level of 0.05, indicating that the variance of the residuals remains constant across different levels of the independent variable. Consequently, the regression model satisfies the assumption of homoscedasticity, reducing the likelihood of biased standard errors and unreliable significance tests.

Model Summary

Following confirmation that the data satisfied all classical regression assumptions, a simple linear regression analysis was performed to evaluate the extent to which the globalization of Korean popular culture predicts changes in local cultural practices. The overall explanatory power of the regression model is presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.594	0.353	0.351	0.467

Source: IBM SPSS Statistics 29 regression output.

The model summary indicates a correlation coefficient ($R = 0.594$), suggesting a moderate positive relationship between the globalization of Korean popular culture and local cultural practices. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.353$) demonstrates that approximately 35.3% of the variation in local cultural practices can be explained by respondents' exposure to Korean popular culture. After adjusting for sample size, the explanatory power remains virtually unchanged (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.351$), indicating that the regression model is stable and free from substantial estimation bias.

Although 35.3% represents a meaningful proportion of explained variance, approximately 64.7% of the variability in local cultural practices remains attributable to other factors beyond the scope of this study. These may include family socialization, educational experiences, religious values, peer interaction, local community engagement, national identity, socioeconomic background, and exposure to other forms of global media. Consequently, while Korean popular culture constitutes a significant predictor of cultural transformation, it operates alongside numerous contextual influences that collectively shape cultural behavior. The relatively low standard error of the estimate (0.467) further indicates that the predicted values closely approximate the observed values, suggesting satisfactory predictive accuracy of the regression model.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

To evaluate the overall significance of the regression model, an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The ANOVA determines whether the independent variable collectively explains a statistically significant proportion of variance in the dependent variable.

Table 8. ANOVA Results

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	53.148	1	53.148	243.97	<0.001
Residual	97.593	448	0.218		
Total	150.741	449			

Source: IBM SPSS Statistics 29 regression output

As shown in Table 8, the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 243.97$, $p < 0.001$). The significance level well below 0.05 indicates that the proposed model provides a substantially better explanation of local cultural practices than a model without predictor variables. Therefore, the independent variable contributes significantly to explaining variations in the dependent variable.

The regression sum of squares (53.148) represents the amount of variation explained by the globalization of Korean popular culture, whereas the residual sum of squares (97.593) reflects unexplained variation attributable to other factors. Although residual variation remains, the highly significant F-statistic confirms that the overall regression model possesses strong explanatory capability. The ANOVA findings therefore provide robust statistical evidence supporting the suitability of the proposed research model and justify further interpretation of the regression coefficients presented in the subsequent analysis.

Regression Coefficient Analysis

The final stage of hypothesis testing involved estimating the regression coefficients to determine the direction, magnitude, and statistical significance of the relationship between the globalization of Korean popular culture and local cultural practices.

Table 9. Regression Coefficients

Variable	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	1.184	0.176	–	6.727	<0.001
Globalization of Korean Popular Culture	0.640	0.041	0.594	15.620	<0.001

Source: IBM SPSS Statistics 29 regression output.

The regression coefficient for the globalization of Korean popular culture ($B = 0.640$) is positive and statistically significant ($t = 15.620$, $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that every one-unit increase in respondents' engagement with Korean popular culture is associated with an estimated increase of 0.640 units in local cultural practices. The standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.594$) further demonstrates that the relationship between the two constructs is moderately strong.

The positive direction of the regression coefficient confirms that increased exposure to Korean media, digital entertainment, fan communities, and Korean lifestyle content is associated with greater incorporation of Korean cultural elements into respondents' everyday practices. These practices include changes in fashion preferences, beauty routines, culinary interests, leisure activities, participation in cultural communities, and broader lifestyle orientations. Importantly, the findings do not suggest that Korean popular culture completely replaces indigenous cultural traditions. As indicated by the descriptive statistics presented earlier, respondents continued to express relatively strong agreement with the statement that local culture remains important despite Korean cultural influence. Therefore, the regression results should be interpreted as evidence of cultural integration rather than cultural substitution. The standardized beta coefficient of 0.594 also indicates that the globalization of Korean popular culture represents a substantial determinant of local cultural practices within the context of this study. Nevertheless, the coefficient does not imply deterministic influence. Instead, it reflects an ongoing process through which global cultural products are selectively interpreted and incorporated into local cultural environments. Such findings align with theories of cultural hybridity, which emphasize the coexistence and interaction of global and local cultural identities.

Based on these findings, the proposed hypothesis is accepted.

H1: The globalization of Korean popular culture has a positive and significant influence on local cultural practices.

The empirical evidence demonstrates that higher levels of engagement with Korean popular culture significantly contribute to transformations in everyday cultural practices among young adults in Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, and Manila. The influence extends beyond media consumption to encompass broader behavioral dimensions, including lifestyle choices, aesthetic preferences, social participation, and cultural interaction.

Cultural Hybridity as the Mechanism Linking Korean Popular Culture and Local Cultural Practices

The findings demonstrate that the globalization of Korean popular culture significantly influences local cultural practices among young adults in Southeast Asia. Rather than indicating a process of cultural replacement, the results suggest that Korean popular culture functions as a catalyst for cultural adaptation, whereby individuals selectively integrate foreign cultural elements into their existing social and cultural environments. This finding supports recent scholarship arguing that contemporary cultural globalization is characterized by multidirectional interaction and negotiation rather than one-way cultural domination (Jin, 2024; Lee, 2024; Kim & Song, 2022). The positive relationship identified in this study confirms that continuous exposure to Korean media through digital platforms encourages behavioral changes extending beyond entertainment consumption into fashion, beauty, culinary preferences, leisure activities, and community participation.

The present findings are consistent with recent international studies reporting that Hallyu has evolved into a comprehensive cultural ecosystem supported by streaming platforms, social media, and participatory digital communities (Yoon & Jin, 2021; Oh & Lee, 2023; Kim & Kim, 2023). Previous research has largely emphasized the expansion of Korean cultural exports and the formation of global fandoms (Lee & Nornes, 2022; Kang & Ryoo, 2021). However, this study extends those findings by demonstrating that sustained engagement with Korean popular culture also reshapes everyday cultural practices without necessarily diminishing the importance of local cultural identity. Respondents continued to value indigenous traditions despite embracing aspects of Korean lifestyle, indicating that cultural adaptation occurs through coexistence rather than substitution. This observation aligns with recent discussions of cultural hybridity, which argue that globalization produces hybrid identities through continuous interaction between global and local cultural resources (Kim, 2023; Lim & Park, 2022).

An additional noteworthy result is the moderate amount of explanation provided by the regression model. While the Korean popular culture has a strong influence on local cultural practices, there is still a large cultural variation that exceeds exposure to popular culture. The result aligns with the recent research which has highlighted the linkage between cultural behaviors and family environments, educational institutions, religious values, peer groups, and national identity (Park et al., 2022; Shin & Kim, 2023). Therefore, globalization needs to be viewed as a part of a larger socio-cultural system, not a single force that is driving cultural change. Global media influence and the persistence of local cultural values have enabled recent theorisations that focus on local cultural persistence in the face of increasing connectivity and interconnectedness in digital societies (Rahman & Lee, 2024; Oh et al., 2024).

The study makes a theoretical contribution by combining Cultural Globalization Theory, Cultural Hybridity Theory and Localization Theory into a coherent analytical framework to explain the influence of transnational popular culture on everyday cultural behavior. Previous research on Hallyu has mostly focused on various aspects of media consumption, soft power, tourism or creative industries, leaving very few studies to empirically connect these aspects and explore the changes in local cultural practices on multiple behavioral scales. The novelty of this research therefore is the identification of the process of globalization as a cultural negotiation that is selective and is done by communities that take the time to reinterpret cultural products and at the same time maintain their own cultural identity. This holistic view helps to inform the current discussion on cultural homogenization or cultural diversity in the context of globalization.

The results offer practical implications for policy makers, education system, and creatives. The results can be used by cultural policymakers to create approaches that promote intercultural exchange and strengthen local culture. Global cultural literacy can be introduced into education curricula to encourage critical engagement with transnational media rather than passive cultural consumption, enabling educational institutions to play their part in promoting multilingualism and interculturalism. It is also important to note that creative industries could take advantage of the hybrid culture preferences by creating a product with local culture and the global culture to make it competitive in international markets (Jantanukul, 2025; Nazara, 2025; Fauzan, 2025).

Some caveats are in order: First, the cross-section design does not enable causal interpretations since cultural practices may change over time as media habits change. Secondly, the study only considers four Southeast Asian metropolitan cities and thus cannot be generalized to rural areas or other parts of the world. Third, the model contains just one independent variable, while cultural change is a multidimensional phenomenon, and it is driven by many psychological, social, economic and institutional factors. Longitudinal designs and comparative, cross-regional analysis must be used in future studies, as well as a more extensive theoretical framework in which variables like digital literacy, national identity, cultural resilience, social influence, and algorithmic media exposure are taken into account. These methods would help us to gain a more complex view of the negotiation of local cultural practices in more digitized and interconnected societies.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the globalisation of Korean popular culture creates positive and significant effects on Korean popular culture in four metropolitan cities in Southeast Asia among the young adults. The results have shown that the consistent influence of Korean media and digital media cultural content has given rise to changes in fashion preferences, beauty habits, eating habits, leisure activities and joining cultural communities. The results, however, also indicate that these changes are not always defies the indigenous cultural traditions. Rather, local communities appropriated and adapted Korean cultural traits, yet preserved their own cultural identities, thus reflecting the process of cultural hybridity.

As an academic study, this paper makes a theoretical contribution to the field by combining Cultural Globalization Theory, Cultural Hybridity Theory, and Localization Theory in a cohesive framework to account for the relationship between popular culture from the global and local cultures. In practice, the conclusions offer practical guidance for policy makers, teachers, and creative industry hoping to drive intercultural communication and to keep local cultural heritage alive. There are a number of caveats to note. Due to the cross-sectional design, the causal interpretation is limited, the study narrows its scope to four Southeast Asian metropolitan cities and the model only has one explanatory variable. Future studies need to adopt a longitudinal and cross-cultural comparative design, and include other variables such as digital literacy, cultural identity, social influence and algorithmic media exposure to gain a better understanding of the current cultural changes in the digital world.

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