



KOREAN CULTURAL PHENOMENON ON COMMUNICATION PATTERNS AND BEHAVIOR OF UINSU COMMUNICATION SCIENCE STUDENTS AGED 18-25 YEARS

Karin Reindra Phasya Siregar ¹, Nuzrul Ikhwanusshofa ², Salsabila Fazri Az-zahra ³

^{1,2,3} Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia

Corresponding author: salsafazri01@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Korean culture has penetrated the world, including Indonesia, through the Korean Wave (Hallyu) phenomenon, which encompasses K-Pop, K-Drama, culinary arts, and fashion. This phenomenon has a significant influence on Indonesian youth aged 18-25, who are in a crucial phase of identity formation and highly susceptible to external influences. Through social media and other platforms, youth adopt Korean language and communication styles. Research shows a correlation between the consumption of Korean cultural content and changes in adolescent behavior and communication patterns. Qualitative research methods were used, with in-depth interviews and a literature review as the primary approach. Interviews were conducted with UINSU students aged 18-25 who were interested in Korean culture to understand its impact on their communication patterns. The results showed that adolescents learn through observation and imitation of Korean content, which strengthens their communication and behavioral patterns. However, the influence of Korean culture has not changed their views on Indonesian culture, which they still value and love. This study reveals that despite Korean culture's significant influence, Indonesian youth are able to balance enjoying foreign culture and maintaining their local cultural identity.

Keywords: Medan Identity, Policy Implementation, Local Government.

1. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of Korean culture has become a global phenomenon that has a significant impact on various aspects of life, including communication (Glodev et al., 2023; Yoon & Min, 2021). Korean popular culture, such as K-pop, drama, and fashion, has influenced the behavior and communication patterns of young people in

various countries (Chen, 2023; Pha & Lhe, 2022). In Indonesia, especially among Communication Science students of North Sumatra State Islamic University (UINSU) aged 18-25, the influence of Korean culture is evident (Ramadhan, 2024; Sinaga et al., 2024). A survey by Hootsuite (2023) showed that 70% of respondents in this age group follow Korean cultural developments through social media. This fact shows that the phenomenon of Korean culture is not just a trend, but also has a deep impact on the communication patterns and behaviors of university students (De Mooij, 2019; Park et al., 2021).

The literature review reveals that cultural globalization has facilitated the spread of popular culture, including Korean culture (Ganghariya & Kanozia, 2020; Jin, 2019). Research by Kim (2023) mentions that media globalization allows wide access to Korean cultural content, thus influencing the behavior and preferences of media consumers around the world (Doobo, 2024). In their study, Kim found that increased consumption of Korean content correlates with changes in lifestyle and ways of communicating, especially among teenagers and young adults (Kim et al., 2022). This is reinforced by the findings from Kim et al (2022) which showed an increased interest in learning Korean and the use of Korean idioms in daily conversation (H. Lee et al., 2023). This literature suggests that the spread of Korean culture through global media plays a major role in shaping the communication patterns of the younger generation, including university students in Indonesia (Y. L. Lee et al., 2020).

This article aims to examine the influence of Korean culture on the communication patterns and behaviors of UINSU Communication Science students aged 18-25. Although many studies have examined the influence of Korean popular culture, few focus on its impact on the communication of university students in Indonesia.

This research will fill the gap by collecting primary data through surveys and in-depth interviews, as well as analyzing secondary data from various sources. Thus, this article is expected to provide new insights into how Korean culture affects college students' communication, as well as its implications for communication studies in Indonesia. The hypothesis proposed in this article is that Korean culture has a significant influence on the communication patterns and behaviors of UINSU Communication Science students. Based on initial observations and literature review,

there are strong indications that Korean culture affects the way students interact, both verbally and non-verbally. For example, students exposed to Korean culture tend to use Korean words or phrases in daily conversations, imitate the style of dress, and follow the social etiquette promoted by Korean dramas or idols (Pha & Lhe, 2022). This argument will be tested through analyzing the data collected in this study, hoping to provide empirical evidence of the impact of Korean culture on college students' communication.

2. RESEARCH METHODE

This research uses a qualitative approach with the aim of deeply understanding the influence of Korean culture on the communication patterns and behaviors of UINSU Communication Science students aged 18-25 years. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore and interpret social phenomena in detail and in depth, by paying attention to the context and meaning given by participants (Creswell, 2021). The data collection technique used in this research is in-depth interview. In-depth interviews were chosen because this technique provides flexibility to explore information in detail and allows participants to convey their views and experiences freely and openly. Interviews were conducted with three students of UINSU Communication Studies Program who have a great interest in Korean culture. The selection of participants was carried out by purposive sampling, which is the selection of samples with certain criteria that are relevant to the research objectives. The criteria for participants are students who actively follow the development of Korean culture through social media, watch Korean dramas, or listen to K-pop music regularly.

Before the interviews were conducted, participants were given an explanation of the purpose of the study and asked to provide written informed consent. Interviews were conducted face-to-face on the UINSU campus with each interview lasting approximately 60-90 minutes. Each interview was recorded with a voice recorder to ensure the data obtained was accurate and complete.

The interview questions were designed to explore participants' understanding of the influence of Korean culture on the way they communicate. Some of the topics covered include:

- 1) Participants' experiences in consuming Korean cultural content.
- 2) The influence of Korean culture on language use and daily communication expressions.
- 3) Changes in social interaction patterns due to the influence of Korean culture.
- 4) Participants' perceptions of Korean culture and how it affects their identity as university students.

The data obtained from the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The analysis process involved transcribing the interview data, coding, and identifying key themes that emerged from the data. Thematic analysis enabled the researcher to identify patterns and relationships between themes relevant to the study. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, data triangulation was conducted by comparing the interviews of the three participants. In addition, the researcher also conducted member checking by asking participants to review the interview transcriptions to ensure data accuracy.

With this method, it is hoped that this research can provide deep insight into the influence of Korean culture on the communication patterns and behaviors of UINSU Communication Science students, as well as its contribution to the literature in the field of communication studies.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on interviews that have been conducted, the author can explain that communication patterns and daily behavior can be influenced by the content that a person frequently consumes (Huang & Chang, 2020; Kaufmann & Peil, 2020). This is in accordance with the elements of Mass Media Communication, namely (Busri & Badrih, 2022; Priadi & Thariq, 2023).

- a) Communicator: The party who sends the message, such as a news producer, content creator, or broadcaster. In the context of Korean culture,

communicators can be Korean entertainment companies that produce K-Pop and K-Drama.

- b) Message: Information or content conveyed by the communicator. This message can be text, image, sound, or video.
- c) Media: Channels or platforms used to convey messages, such as television, radio, newspapers, internet, and social media.
- d) Audience: Message recipients consisting of individuals or large groups. The audience in the Korean cultural context can be K-Pop fans or Korean drama viewers around the world.
- e) Effect: The impact or influence of the message on the audience. This effect can be a change in attitudes, knowledge, or behavior.

Alsha Nazwa, who has been following Korean culture, especially Kpop and Kdrama since 2020, explained that she often consumes Korean content from social media, *"I often consume Korean cultural content, every day I see Korean content through social media such as TikTok, Twitter, YouTube and also Instagram". "And this affects communication patterns and behavior,"* I use verbal and non-verbal language quite often. Usually the verbal language I use is like Annyeonghaseyo when greeting close friends who already know that I like kpop.

Another verbal language that I use is kamshamida when thanking. *"For non-verbal language, most of it is limited to heart-shaped movements or sometimes bowing your head when greeting or thanking."*

Similar to the presentation from another resource person, Zahra Ramadhan, who has been following Korean culture, especially Kpop and Kdrama, since 2015, I've been interested since 2015. At first I watched Running Man together with my brother, from there I started to know about K-pop boy groups.

Starting in 2016 full fangirling kpop until ink day. If it's kdrama from 2015 until now, it just tends to be more kpop. I consume Korean content very often, it has become a daily thing with high frequency. I quite often communicate verbally and non-verbally with Korean elements depending on the situation and conditions when I'm with people who are interested in Kpop or Kdrama too. *"Otherwise, usually when you use personal social media that is not published, you never show it to the*

general public, except to your closest friends who have known you for a long time." If the author analyzes using social learning theory, this shows that the resource person learns through observation and imitation through media that displays Korean content.

The interviewee's interest in Korean culture shows the initial process of observation and exposure to Korean content which was later adopted. Repeated observations of Korean cultural content through various media likely contributed to shaping the communication patterns, behavior and interests of the interviewees. Frequent and routine consumption of Korean content through various social media platforms shows continuous reinforcement.

Social media plays an important role in providing models of behavior that interviewees will observe and adopt. Content that is viewed every day functions as a reinforcer that strengthens the communication patterns, behavior and interests of the resource person related to Korean culture. The use of Korean language (verbal) and movements (non-verbal) is the result of a modeling and imitation process. The interviewee observed this behavior from Korean idols or content and imitated it in daily interactions. This behavior is reinforced by positive responses from the social environment, which recognizes and supports the interviewee's interest in Korean culture.

The adopted Korean culture had several positive impacts for the interviewees. As explained by resource person Desi Ayu, "K-Pop culture and Korean dramas are also a place to overcome stress and refresh the mind. There are many songs and dramas that motivate my life, such as enthusiasm for studying, working and enthusiasm for other activities." *Apart from that, resource person Zahra Ramadhan explained,* "You can be more aware of the basic manners and morals of life through kdrama. Get motivation and inspiration from content created by Korea. Makes you more enthusiastic about carrying out activities." The interviewee observed positive behavior such as hard work, discipline and responsibility which is often displayed by characters in K-Pop and Korean dramas. Korean content provides examples of inspiring and motivating behavior. They then imitate this behavior and apply it in their daily life. This is in line with the concept of modeling in social learning

theory, where individuals imitate the observed behavior of models they perceive as role models.

Apart from that, the impact of positive reinforcement can be seen from how K-Pop and Korean dramas help speakers overcome stress and refresh their minds. Motivating songs and dramas provide emotional reinforcement and strengthen positive behavior such as enthusiasm for studying and working. If we talk about positive impacts, this is accompanied by several negative impacts from consuming Korean cultural content, as explained by the resource person below, "*The negative impact I felt was limited to being addicted to playing on my cellphone to see the latest content updates from my K-pop idols.*" Spending more time playing with gadgets, spending a lot of money.

Apart from these negative impacts, there are negative impacts that affect the existence of culture itself. As explained by resource person Desi Ayu below, "In my opinion, consuming too much Korean content can sometimes make you forget local content and Korean culture can also threaten local cultural identity in various countries, including Indonesia, which can threaten the continuity and preservation of the cultural heritage of local communities. "K-Pop content actors and is involved in repeated observations of idols and the content they produce or what is called Observational Learning (learning through observation). This creates a pattern of behavior that is continuously monitored via the cellphone device.

Every time the resource person sees the latest update, they get positive reinforcement in the form of emotional satisfaction or pleasure. This strengthens the addictive behavior of playing on cellphones to get the latest updates from K-Pop idols. Despite the positive reinforcement of pleasure and satisfaction, negative consequences such as addiction and excessive time spent on media consumption also arise. This shows another side of social learning theory where reinforcement can have negative consequences if not managed properly.

Time spent on gadgets can also be reinforced by the desire to avoid the feeling of missing out or FOMO (Fear of Missing Out). This makes the interviewee continue to engage in this behavior even though he is aware of the negative consequences. With sources observing and consuming Korean content in very large quantities, it can cause

attention to local content to decrease. This shows how dominant behavioral models can divert attention from existing alternatives (local content).

The strong influence of Korean culture can lead to cultural hegemony or cultural domination, where local culture begins to be marginalized (Ryu & Kang, 2023). This is the result of modeling and reinforcement where foreign cultural content is continuously reinforced through observation and consumption. Local cultural identity can be threatened because individuals more often imitate and internalize foreign cultures that they consider more attractive or superior. In social learning theory, it shows how identities and values can change through the process of observing and imitating different models.

The solution to this is to have awareness and regulate media consumption (sufficiently) to avoid negative consequences that could threaten the balance of cultural identity and social behavior. If this can be handled well, Korean cultural content cannot completely replace local culture.

This was explained by one of the interviewees when asked whether liking Korean culture changed his view of his own culture, "It doesn't change any views about the culture that I have (Min et al., 2019; Yang & Lie, 2020).

The Indonesian culture that I currently enjoy is traditional dances such as the saman dance and the plate dance (Fadillah et al., 2019; Reyes et al., 2021). These two things always appear on my social media so I'm interested in seeing them." Liking Korean culture or culture from other countries does not automatically change my view of my own culture. I can appreciate and enjoy aspects of Korean culture without compromising my own cultural values or identity (Cruz et al., 2024; Vinall & Shin, 2019). The experience of exploring and understanding a new culture can enrich my perspective, but it does not necessarily change my sense of pride and appreciation for my own culture and identity.

There are several aspects of Indonesian culture that I really like. One of them is the rich and varied diversity of Indonesian culinary delights, such as rendang, satay, fried rice, and many more. "I also really admire traditional Indonesian arts such as shadow puppetry and batik, as well as its stunning natural beauty such as Pink Beach in NTB and Komodo National Park in NTT, "The interviewees' answers show that although they enjoy Korean culture, this does not change their own views or cultural

identity. They are able to observe and enjoy aspects of Korean culture without losing their appreciation for Indonesian culture. According to social learning theory, this indicates a complex learning process in which individuals can model behavior from other cultures while maintaining their own cultural identity and values. Positive reinforcement from experiences with one's own culture also helps strengthen the interviewee's cultural identity, demonstrating that individuals can internalize and balance various cultural influences through observation and imitation.

4. CONCLUSION

After interviewing several students about the impact of Korean culture on their communication patterns and behavior, we can draw several important conclusions. First, students who are fond of Korean culture especially K-Pop and K-Dramas learn a great deal through observation and imitation. For example, they often use Korean terms in daily communication, such as "Annyeonghaseyo" when greeting others or "Kamsahamnida" to express gratitude. They also imitate nonverbal gestures, such as making a hand-heart sign or bowing their heads as a sign of respect. This indicates that they replicate what they see from Korean idols and the content they consume.

Korean culture also provides substantial positive reinforcement for them. For instance, K-Pop and Korean dramas often offer motivation and inspiration, helping them stay driven in studying and working, as well as serving as a way to relieve stress. This suggests that the behaviors they observe and imitate are strengthened by the positive feelings they experience after consuming such content. However, there is also negative reinforcement that should be considered. Some students feel addicted to using their phones to keep up with the latest updates about their K-Pop idols. They also admit that spending too much time on Korean content can lead them to neglect local content and their own cultural traditions, highlighting how negative reinforcement may strengthen unhealthy behaviors such as gadget addiction.

Interestingly, despite their strong interest in Korean culture, these students do not feel that their preferences change their views of Indonesian culture. They still highly appreciate and love local traditions, such as Indonesian cuisine, traditional arts like wayang and batik, and the natural beauty of Indonesia. This shows that they are able

to balance enjoying foreign culture while continuing to value their own cultural identity. Overall, these conclusions provide valuable insights into how Korean culture influences students' communication patterns and behaviors, and how they are able to manage this influence within the context of their cultural identity.

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