

Kpop's impact on tourists flow from Finland to Korea

Minh Anh Nguyen

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<p>This bachelor's degree thesis starting from April 2020 to August 2020, covers the topic of Kpop's impact on Finnish people's motivations to travel to South Korea. Hence, touching the topic of the relationship between popular culture and tourism. As Kpop has been gaining exceptional popularity in European countries in recent years, this research's objectives are to detect the impact of Kpop culture on Finnish people's motivation to travel to South Korea. Besides, analyze how and why this impact occurs as well as study the sustainability of it.</p> <p>Theoretical frameworks of the research connect this study to existing knowledge from previous relevant books and documents. Research methods are qualitative and quantitative in the form of semi-structured interviews and a survey. In the survey, respondents were asked 11 questions to categorize them, gaining information about their impression on South Korea as a travel destination before and after being Kpop fans. The total sample was 258. The semi-structured interviews were conducted on six Finnish Kpop fans using pre-constructed open-ended questions.</p> <p>The results show that Kpop has a significant role in gaining South Korea's positive image as a travel destination among Finnish people. This impact is considered long-lasting and worth further studies and investments from tourism, such as opening and promoting tour package to South Korea for Finnish people.</p>	
Keywords	
Kpop, popular culture, travel motivations, fans, leisure tourism.	

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1 Introduction

In recent years Kpop has grown to be very popular in European countries, Finland included. Also, there have been various studies about the impact of popular culture on the tourism industry, such as "The Routledge Handbook of Popular Culture and Tourism" (Christine Lundberge, 2018). Therefore, the author conducted this study to understand the relationship between Kpop as popular culture and tourism in Finland. This thesis's objective is to measure the impact the Korean popular music industry has on Finnish people's motivations to travel to Korea. At the same time, study how Kpop makes the impact possible, will this impact be sustainable and is it worth to invest in creating and promoting Kpop related touring packages. The result of this study will contribute to the more critical study of popular culture and tourism as well as specific study a new tourism concept heavily related to Korean music for Finnish people, which has not been studied before in Finland.

This thesis's theoretical framework was based on the definition of culture, popular culture, leisure tourism, and travel motivations. Furthermore, a number of previous studies about the relation between popular culture and tourism were studied to set the framework for this thesis.

This research was done using two research methods: quantitative and qualitative methods to supplement each other's limitations. Data were collected by conducting online surveys and semi-structured interviews with six volunteers, all of whom are Finnish people interested in Kpop. The survey targeted on Finnish Kpop fans was published using Webropol and received 258 responses in total within one week starting from 18th July 2020. The interviews were conducted via video call using pre-designed open-ended questions.

Overall, the results show that Kpop has a significant and robust positive influence on Finnish people's perspective about South Korea's image as a travel destination. This is because Kpop introduces and promotes South Korea's cuisine, fashion, landscapes, and lifestyle effectively through Kpop contents such as music videos and variety shows. The majority of Finns did not have any interest in traveling to Korea before viewing South Korea as an appealing travel destination. This impact is proved to be sustainable and is worthy of being invested. It is recommended that tourism personnel investigate more closely into this relationship of Korean popular music and Finnish's motivations to travel and take severe actions into taking full advantage of it, such as introducing new touring packages to Korea.

1.1 Motivation to choose the topic

Back in the years of 2009 and 2010, Kpop had their first explosion internationally. This time was in Asian countries such as China, Japan, Hongkong, Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand. Being in teenage years and just had been exposed to social media, the author was quickly got accustomed to Korean pop music culture since. Over the past ten years, it was more than fascinating to see the movement of Korean popular culture globally. In addition, studying abroad gave me the opportunity to move to Finland and have stayed here for four years. During that period of time, the author has been continuously learning and adapting to a whole new culture. Around 2018 and 2019, it was fascinating to see how Korean music starting to make an impact on the European entertainment market, including Finland. Being delighted to see how music brought different cultures together, the author started to have questions about how Korean music managed to go all the way from Asia to make present in the European music market.

However, the topic of Korean popular culture affects Finnish's outbound tourism to Korea only raised after knowing the story of one Finnish family who traveled to Korea summer 2019 despite the whole family has always been unaware and uninterested in traveling to Asia countries before the mother and the daughter started to be the fan of BTS, a popular Kpop boyband. Since then, the author has always been paying close attention to the movement of Korean popular cultures in Finland and how it reached numerous people and affected their traveling decision. Unsurprisingly, there has been a considerable amount of Finnish traveled to Korea with Kpop as main or valuable reason thorough the years, especially from 2018 onward. Another good reason that motivated me towards studying the subject is that I strongly believe the future of globalisation and cross-culture society, which will provide more opportunities for different cultures to spread and be known across the world. By studying the relationship between popular culture and tourism, we can use culture as an effective promoting method to accelerate tourism. Furthermore, this study will provide more understanding of society changes when popular cultures, different aspects of society.

1.2 Research questions

Throughout the thesis, there are three main research questions that needed to be studied. Firstly, " What is culture and what is Kpop?". Despite being used widely over the years, the word "culture" still bears a very vague meaning and concept that barely anyone can concretely define " what is culture". In this thesis, the culture concept will be explained precisely by studying a number of the most popular definitions of "culture." After that comes the question of Kpop's definition. Kpop is a part of Korea's culture and is the main subject that will be discussed in detail in this thesis. The next question accounts for the

majority of the thesis, which is “ How Kpop effected outbound tourism from Finland to Korea”. In order to answer this question, aside from studying every definition related, the author also needs to look into the relationship between popular culture and tourism in general as well as study the impact of the South Korea music industry on the country's tourism development. This can be done by studying theoretical frameworks, doing surveys and interviews on Finnish people that are interested in Korean music. It is also important to answer whether or not the positive impact of Kpop on South Korea as a traveling destination is sustainable even after the audience loses their interests in music content. This will decide to see if it is worthy for the government and business to invest in music-related tourist campaigns and products. Last but not least, the last question needed to be studied is how to make use of culture, if there are related to tourism, to accelerate traveling, which in this thesis will be about traveling to Finland specifically. Once these questions are answered, the results will either strengthen or weaken the statement of previous study about popular culture can heavily motivate traveling. In addition, if Korean music has impact on Finns' motivations to travel, this result will introduce a new traveling phenomena in Finland that has not been studied about specifically.

1.3 Key concepts

This study is centred around some specific terms and concepts. First of all, while the term “Kpop” will be explained in detail in the next chapter, “Korean Wave” and “Hallyu” are similar terms that needed to be clarified. These two terms can be used interchangeably, both of which are used to refers to South Korea's popular culture contents, including music, movies, drama as well as online games and so on.

At the same time, “ culture” and “popular culture” are the focus of this thesis as the author is going to define these terms and do research on their effects. More detailed definitions of these two terms will be found in the next chapter.

Another concept needed to be familiar with is “outbound tourism”. Outbound tourism comprises the activities of a resident visitor outside the country of reference, either as part of an outbound tourism trip or as part of a domestic tourism trip (UNWTO, 2016). It is important to differentiate this term with “inbound tourism”, which comprises the activities of a non-resident visitor within the country of reference on an inbound tourism trip (UNWTO,2016) since these two are normally confused. Simply put, if Finland is chosen to be the country of reference, the act of Finnish people traveling to a country outside of Finland is considered to be “outbound tourism”, which in this case is traveling to Korea. On the other hand, the act of people with residence other than Finnish traveling to Finland is called “inbound tourism”.

It is also important to understand the definition of “travel motivations”, which will set the base to study how and why Kpop impact on the final decision of traveling to South Korea. Travel motivation is the inner state of a person, or particular needs and wants of the tourists that can be considered as one of the most important psychological influences of tourist behaviour (Vasant, 2016). In addition to the well-known Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, push and pull framework is another popular approach that can be used to explain why tourists decide to visit a destination. This approach was first introduced by Dann (1977) then, later on, has been adopted by many researchers such as Yuan and McDonald (1990), Fodness (1994), Baloglu and Uysal (1996), Sirakaya and McLellan (1997) (Jumrin Said, 2018). However, in order to study the motivations to travel of fans specifically, Christine Lundberg and Vassilios Ziakas suggested dividing fans’ motivations into three dimensions: psychological, socio-cultural, and social belongings (Christine Lundberge, 2018).

"Fans" is another word that will often be used in this thesis. "Fan", defined as an ardent admirer or enthusiast usually as a spectator or as of a celebrity or a pursuit, according to Merriam-Webster dictionary. The word “fan” is important in this study since they emphasise the fact that those are very “ardent” admirers, as in very passionate and enthusiastic. This characteristic differentiates between Kpop fans and the normal audiences who might be interested in Korea music or like one or two songs.

"Leisure travel" will be the focal point of this study. A leisure trip refers to the purpose and motive of a visit as trips for leisure, recreation and holiday purposes outside the usual environment are mainly undertaken for relaxation. While in the Border Interview Survey, leisure trips are differentiated from trips made to visit friends or relatives, in the Finnish travel survey all trips that do not come under the category of "Business/congress trips" are considered leisure trips, including own holiday home, visits to friends and relatives, as well as leisure cruises and same-day visits.

1.4 Thesis structures

The thesis consists of four chapters in total. Chapter one plays as an introduction role, proposing the topic of the thesis and explaining the reasons why the author chooses to study on this specific matter. It also shows different research questions that will be tackled down during the research progress.

Chapter two: " Overview of culture, Kpop and its impact on tourism," will explain in detail the important concepts and phenomena that are mentioned and studied in this thesis. This section will help readers familiarise themselves with different concepts and the South Korea music culture. Thenceforward, signify the immense growth of South Korea pop music across the world. Through collected facts and statistics, the rising popularity of Kpop will

be shown not only in Korea and Asian countries but also in European countries. Most importantly, the rise of the Korean Wave in Finland in recent years will be clearly displayed to point out this trend amongst Finnish people in order to strengthen the hypothesis of this thesis.

Chapter three: "Impact of Kpop on tourism", this chapter continues with key factors that help Kpop differ and make its immense impacts on the tourism industry. Later on, explain in detail how and why these factors affect the Korean tourism industry by changing destination image and stimulating fans' travel decisions. Theoretical frameworks that set the ground for this thesis will also be introduced and discussed in detail in chapter three, which will be evaluating and comparing their studies.

Chapter four: "Methodology and Data collection," focuses on describing researches methods used in this study. The two main methods, which are quantitative methods and qualitative methods, will be defined and clarified each's advantages and disadvantages. The author will also explain the reason why these research methods are the most suitable ones for the purposes of this thesis. After this, a number of suggestions on how to carry out these methods seamlessly and effectively will be introduced. In this chapter, the results of researching will then be disclosed, which will then be discussed and compared to the theoretical framework in the previous section. The author will also discuss the validity and reliability of the results collected.

Chapter five: " Further application and conclusion" will expand the application of the study result and analyse how Finland can take advantage of popular culture content to improve its image as a travel destination. Finally, the author will make a conclusion on the study and reflect on the future use of the results.

2 Overview of Culture, Kpop and its impact on tourism

This study focuses on "popular culture" and "Kpop" concepts. Therefore, in this chapter, the author will discuss in details the definitions of these terms. At the same time, the author will explain how Kpop turned into a global phenomenon mainly through mass media. South Korea music industry also has a very distinct business model, which help broaden its impact, especially in tourism. This chapter will discuss those key factors that make Kpop very valuable in increasing South Korea's image as a travel destination. In addition, analyse on how those factors influent traveling decisions by looking into travel motivations. Firstly, in the next section the author will explain in details the definitions of key words "culture", "popular culture", their spread across countries by analysing different studies and the author's perspective.

2.1 Definitions and Globalisations

"Culture" was the "word of the year" announced by Merriam-Webster, America's most used online dictionary for English word definitions and meanings in 2014 (Webster, 2014). There are no doubts that people are keen on understanding the concepts of culture and find a hard time doing so. "Culture" is a confusing word, even when Merriam-Webster already provides six definitions of the word, culture's meanings seem to go beyond the sum of its definitions. The word itself is used in various contexts thanks to wide concepts and fields that cover. Through the years, there have been approximately 150 definitions of the word 'culture' by numerous authors (Digh et al., 2003). The founder of cultural anthropology, E.B.Tylor, gave one of the first modern definitions of culture which explained: " that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs, and any capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." (EB. Taylor, 1877). Dutch Social psychologist Geert Hofstede, later on, gave a comprehensive definition and explanation of culture. "Culture", he started, " is learned, not inherited". He reasoned that human nature, which every human being has in common, such as our ability to feel emotions, including fear, anger, love and the need for connections. (Hofstede, 1991). On the other hand, what and how one chooses to do with those feelings, how to express love, joy, fear, hate, and so on, is in one's culture. No matter how culture is defined, it is known that it has several layers that to understand a culture fully, we need to go through every layer like peeling an onion. Visible artefacts of culture, like the meaning of flowers, food preferences or cutleries choice, are just superficial signs of deeper values and norms of culture. Different models have been invented to describe these differences between what we see on the surface of culture and the deeper meanings and layers lying underneath, one of which is the iceberg model of culture introduced by Edward T.Hall in 1976 (T.Hall, 1977). On the surface of the iceberg is the artifacts that are easily observed, along with the way we dress or behave. Also, being

above the waterline are those aspects of culture that are visible, easily seen and be taught, such as food and drink, art, manners, and rituals. Hidden below the water, on the other hand, are factors that are less noticeable, often unspoken or unconscious and, of course, harder to be taught or changed. These include beliefs, customs, values, attitudes, ways of thinking, structures, work ethic and so on.



Figure 1: Iceberg Model of Culture

Source: Wendell L. French and Cecil H. Bell, *Organization Development: Behavior Science Intervention for Organization Improvement*, Englewood Cliffs, 1973.

Based on this model, it is often suggested that to understand a culture fully; we should go through these layers to examine its values, laws, rules, social categories, assumptions, and fundamentals. With some adjustments to fit the concept of Popular culture, we will go through these layers to understand further the definition of Popular culture, which will set the base to, later on, define Kpop and how it affects people's traveling decisions.

"Popular culture," however, has some specific characteristics that differentiate itself from "fine culture". In his book "An introduction to theories of popular culture", Dominic Strinati defined popular culture as an aspect of culture that is enjoyed by a large number of people, also called mass culture (Strinati, 2004). Alongside being mass-produced and consumed by the social majority, popular culture is also believed to be highly accessible and commercial. This draws the line that separates popular culture, knowing as entertainment and fine culture as art. Fine culture, also known as high culture, is much less accessible by the majority of the society and normally only enjoyed by people of high class. This difference accidentally created the biased idea that popular culture is a low culture, which is less significant in artistic value and less worthy of academic study. However, in his book,

Kidd notes, " popular culture is an important element in the dynamics of contemporary social life," and can be as complex and worthy of study as great works of literature (Kidd, 2014). As famous critic Camille Paglia said, " Popular culture is the new Babylon, into which so much art and intellect now flow. It is our imperial sex theatre, supreme temples of the western eye. We live in the age of idols. The pagan past, never dead, flames again in our mystic hierarchies of stardom", it is obvious that popular culture provides great resources for analysis of human culture and society behaviour that needed be studied academically.

For the author, culture is a board term that can be defined differently in different contexts. However, in a social context, the word "culture" holds the most extensive meaning. The author believes "culture" implies both tangible and intangible aspects of the human lifestyle. The tangible facets are clothing, food, houses, and transport, while the intangible facet can be considered to be ideas, beliefs, languages, music, and entertainment. Any factors that are enjoyed an shared by many people can be called "popular culture." Due to the broad definition of "culture" and "popular culture," the impact of South Korea popular music on tourism being studied in this thesis will also involve different related cultural aspects such as food, clothes, and language that brought about through Kpop.

2.2 Media

Briefly put, media is any kind of platform that people use to share content and communicate. There have been debates on how media can be classified. However, the most common knowledge is that there are four different types of media, including print media, broadcast media, support media and the internet. In this seamless era of globalisation, the impact of media, especially the internet, is tremendous in every aspect of life. Through the internet using social media platforms, people can share content and communicate immediately at any time of the day and from anywhere in the world as long as there is an internet connection. Just by definition, we already can see the immense impact media can have on one's perspective, opinions and behaviours and it is also safe enough to say amongst every aspect that has been changed since the internet including communicating, making friends, studying and so on; entertaining and traveling are one of those.

While the spread of popular culture cannot be all accounts for media, it is undeniable that media plays a major role in multiculturalism and diversity. In this study, we will only look deeply into mass media, which are media forms that were designed to reach a large amount of audience at a time. Truth be told, language, music, art and any other element of culture are expressed through communication, and mass media is the biggest tool for communication around the world. These media flatforms continuously create a constant

flow of transitional images and information that connect users of all cultures and ethnic backgrounds. Media, as a powerful social system, plays an important role in creating a person's sense of reality (Gergen, 1999). Media has been so largely embedded in our daily life that they start to play a significant role in shaping our perceptions of lives, culture and affect our behaviours and thoughts. In addition, nowadays, mass media becomes so popular because they can be easily accessed through different platforms such as personal computers, smartphones, laptops or tablets. Moreover, on the internet, there are various social platforms that can be used to access generous content around the world, namely Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and so on. This accessibility made the online community become bigger, and any content that spread through media can reach and affect a tremendous amount of audience. Therefore, the growing popularity of Kpop also quickly becomes a phenomenon, thanks to social media platforms. This success not only thanks to the fans posting their content to the social media platform, but Korean music companies have been brilliant and strategic in maximising their impact by utilising social media platforms to communicate with viewers across the world.

Alongside releasing music video teaser and music video on Youtube; entertainment companies often open and manage Facebook, Twitter and Instagram account to maximise their social media impact. By doing so, they can engage more audience to their online and offline promotions. Furthermore, the variety of contents will easily help to reach a more massive amount of audience. These contents are not only limited to the music video, but there are also dance practice videos in which Kpop idols show their sharp dance moves, funny videos of idols playing games or doing their normal routine to show off their personalities and close friendships. Most of the time, footage of them practising and training hard are also released in order to indicate their hard work. In those videos, not only the idols are being promoted, but also numerous aspect of Korean culture is being shown in the most appealing way: related to the lives of hard-working and talented young idols.

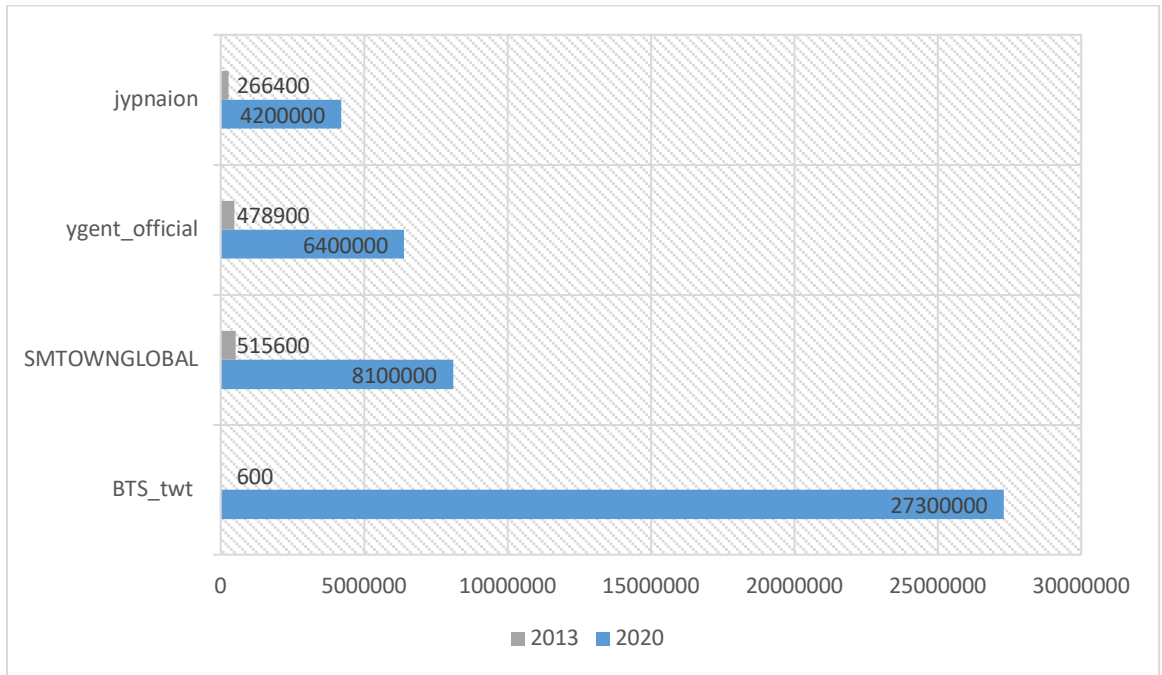


Figure 2. Number of followers of four Kpop Twitter accounts in 2013 and 2020

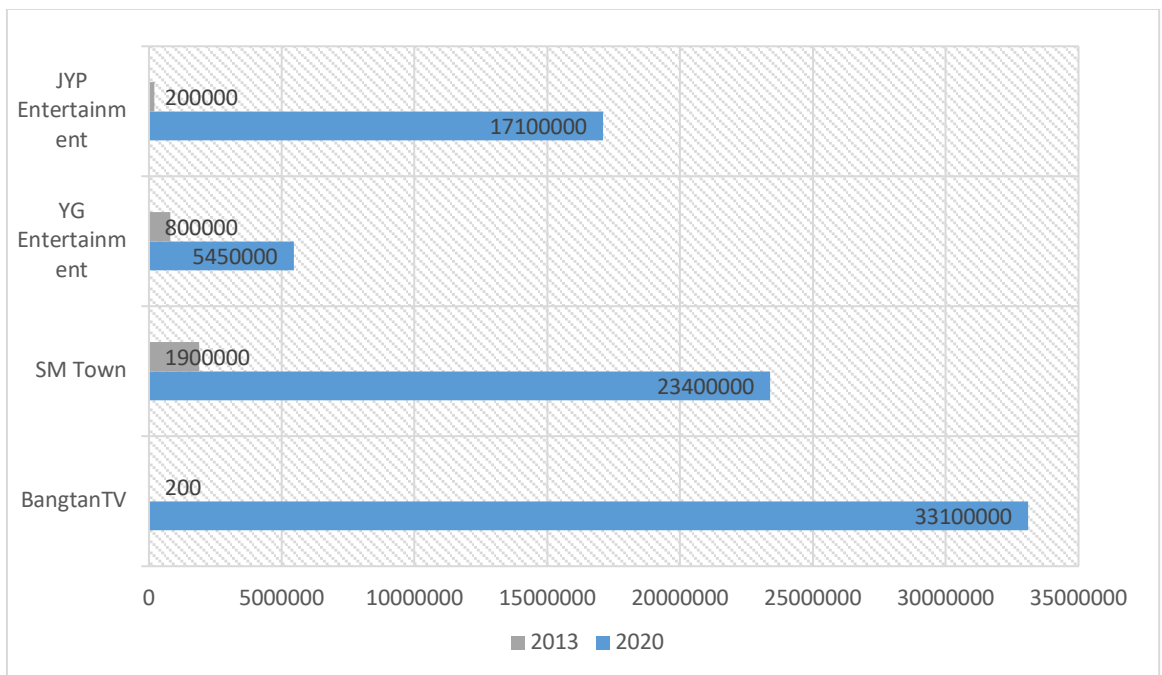


Figure 3. Number of subscribers of four Kpop YouTube accounts in 2013 and 2020

Two figures above comparing the number of Twitter followers and Youtube channel's subscribers in 2013 (Ahn, 2013) and in 2020 of four official Kpop accounts. These accounts are from SM Entertainment, YG Entertainment, JYP entertainment, three largest entertainment companies in South Korea; and BTS, a South Korean boyband receiving tremendous popularity in recent years. In the span of seven years, all accounts experienced a remarkable rise in interests and are no less popular than mainstream worldwide artists' accounts.

The social media power of Kpop idols is not only shown by their impressive growth through the years, as illustrated in the charts but also through various worldwide scale records that are held by Kpop related accounts. Amongst 20 all-time most liked tweets on Twitter, there are eight tweets made by user account @BTS_twt, which is the official account managed by Korean boyband BTS to update about their lives and interact with fans across the world. At the same time, this account also holds the first place on Twitter engagement rank worldwide (Anon., 2020). On another platform, Youtube, 7 out of 10 most viewed videos in the first 24 hours are Kpop music videos. The two highest spots belong to Blackpink's "How you like that" music video with 86.3 million views and BTS's "Boy with Luv" with 74.6 million views. The same impact can be seen on other platforms as well, such as Instagram, Tumblr and Pinterest. These impressive statistics illustrate how Kpop and its supporters are slowly and surely taking over major social media platforms. Considering the fact that mass media plays an essential role in spreading culture nowadays, it is undeniable that Korea's music and cultures have been gaining interest from many users worldwide.

In conclusion, mass media is a powerful and effective platform for contents to spread across countries. According to the statistics stated above, it is undeniable that Kpop business has been utilising successfully mass media to spread their impact and popularity. In the next section, the author will go into detail about Korean Pop culture, its origin, significant movements through the years and the keys that lead to their success.

2.3 Korean Pop culture

The term "Kpop" has been getting more attention nowadays, especially after the tremendous success of Psy's Gangnam style in 2012 or the global phenomenon boy group BTS. However, Kpop's history can be traced back to the early 1990s and has been developed slowly yet steadily since then to be the "soft power" of South Korea.

Kpop is the term to call Korean popular music, a part of the Korean Wave (Hallyu), which refers to South Korea's cultural economy exporting pop culture, entertainment, music, TV dramas, and movies. The word "Hallyu" is the direct adaptation of the Chinese term "Hanliu," which translated into "The flow of Korea" (Roll, 2018).

It all started with the establishment of SM Studio, later on, known as SM Entertainment, founded by Lee Soo Man in 1989. In 1992, the company introduced, which is known to be the first Kpop group: Seo Taiji and Boys. Seo Taiji and Boys received extreme success and popularity in South Korea with over 1.6 million copies sold each for the first three albums and the fourth nearing two million, making all four among the best selling albums in South Korea up till now (Roll, 2018). With the unexpected accomplishment of the band,

the Korean music industry experienced a tremendous shift to music genres that are influenced by styles and genres from around the world, such as hip-hop, R&B, reggae, rock, and electronic dance on top of its traditional Korean music roots. Later on, with the birth of boy group H.O.T in 1996, Kpop grew into a modern subculture with music products that are heavy with storytelling, well-invested fashions and visual aids, complicated choreography with diverse concepts. After the financial crisis that gripped much of East Asia and Southeast Asia in July 1997, South Korea's government has invested millions of dollars in developing its popular culture, including pop music, in being the "soft power" of this country. "Soft power" is a term introduced in 1990 by Joseph Nye, a Harvard political scientist. It refers to the intangible power of a country shown by its image, instead of through hard forces such as military power or economic power (Joseph S. Nye, 2004).

The Korean government, acknowledging the importance of the Kpop industry to Korea's economy and tourism, also have done various actions to support the development of Kpop. One of the most important actions made by the Korean government that pushed the popularity of Kpop was the decision to lift the ban on foreign travel for local Koreans. This opened the opportunities for a good number of Korean to travel and explore western world especially European countries and the US, pursue education abroad and later on in the late 1990s, returned to Korea bringing new perspectives of doing business, new subtleties and interpretations to arts, cinema, music and other forms of expressions.

H.O.T's (Highfive Of Teenagers) Chinese album in 1997 was the first step that helped Korean music ventured into the Chinese market. Kwon Bo-Ah, also known as BoA, broke into the Japanese market with her Japanese album in 2002, further increased the Korean Pop music wave. Also, in the early 2000s, new Kpop groups came along such as TVXQ, Super Junior, SNSD, Big Bang; who further increased the soaring popularity of Kpop and the Korean Wave in major Asian countries including China, Japan, Hong Kong, Taipei, Singapore, Vietnam, Philippines. In Shanghai, South Korean music shows became more popular than rival offerings from the west, which had long been the leader in the global entertainment sector (Kata, 2015). Kpop also became a great rival to J-pop in popularity in the Land of the Rising Sun despite this country's great pride in its own music culture. Following BoA's Japanese album success in 2002, in August 2010, Kara and Girls' Generation crashed the Japanese charts with their singles "Mister" and "Genie," respectively. Girls' Generation album even went double platinum in Japan for selling over one million copies. Not to mention the mega-hit "Gangnam Style" by Psy in 2012, which had the first YouTube video ever to reach one billion views and later on landed on number two on Billboard Hot100 chart and later on the global phenomenon BTS who have been receiving massive support and popularity all over the world that we will look further into later (Kelley, 2019).

This success is the result of various reasons ranging from the right strategies, good quality content to huge investments. First of all, there are numerous entertainment companies in South Korea and focus on producing Kpop groups and bands, which are widely known as "idols". These idols must excel in not only music but also having a good looking appearance and dancing ability. To be able to introduce these idols, entertainment companies in South Korea recruit their trainees from a very young age, around 15, and train them for 3 to 5 years until they reach the requirements of an idol. Following these well-trained bands and groups are numerous factors that easily catch the attention and interests of teenagers and young adults, Kpop's main target customers group. These factors including fashions, variety of shows where they show their loveable personalities, different visual concepts, fandom cultures and so on. Another crucial factor is entertainment companies' marketing strategies, with which they focus on content marketing and dominating major social media platforms. They also share various behind-the-scenes contents to increase a sense of engagement once the audience's experience feels closer to artists thanks to the stories behind. Kpop industry also has successfully built for themselves their own unique ecosystem in which they have their language and fandom culture.

To conclude, Kpop as a music phenomena started in 1989 in South Korea and has been going through years of improvement and shapen. Along with distinct business and music factors , Kpop fortunately experienced significant events that boosted their popularity such as Gangnam Style by Psy in 2012 and BTS in 2017. The next section will go into showing their immense popularity that surpass Asia and reached Europe as well as Finland.

2.4 Beyond Asia

Despite being formed in South Korea, using Korean language and adapting to South Korea's music standard; Kpop has been making there way beyond Asia and became a phenomenon in many European countries, including Finland. In this chapter, the author will go into details showing the rising popularity of Kpop in Europe and Finland to emphasise the impact Kpop has on their fans across the globe.

2.4.1 Kpop in Europe

The globalisation of Kpop is best attributed to the massive success of Gangnam Style, a catchy dance-pop song by Psy in 2012. From 4 concerts outside of Asia each year in 2010 and 2011 to 19 concerts in 2012. The song quickly became viral on social media and gained over 1.5 billion views on YouTube, had the dance covered by people all around the world. Despite having very distinct music taste and have rarely been exposed to Kpop, European countries were no immune to Gangnam Style either. MTV Europe

Music Awards in Frankfurt, Germany, named Gangnam Style's music video as one of the nominations for the best video. In Berlin, a flashmob "horse dance" was organised via Facebook in which hundreds of people dancing along with the catchy tune and do the iconic dance. A bigger flashmob of 20,000 people was organised by NRJ radio, and this time it was in front of Eiffel Tower in Paris, which further proved the popularity of this Kpop mega-hit. At the same time, the general public's interests were shown by Gangnam Style's number one position in iTunes charts in many countries, including the U.K., Denmark, and Finland (Hall, 2012). While having contradicted reviews about the musical quality of the song as well as being said by Psy himself that the success was purely an "accident", Gangnam Style's immense impact on the music industry and the spread of Kpop in the following years are undeniable.

Following the success of Gangnam Style in 2012 was the introduction of Kcon, which is the abbreviation for Kpop Concert, in the same year in California. Later on, this Kpop concert, including various Kpop artists, reached Europe and held one in Paris in 2016. It attracted approximately 20,000 fans in Accor Hotels Arena, marking another success of Kpop in Europe. With a huge line up consisted of six most popular idols at the moment, the concert was a smart move to break through the mono image of Gangnam Style and introduced to Europe market various styles, concepts and music genres that Kpop has. However, despite numerous approaches to hit the European market through the years, the Kpop industry still struggled to be mainstream in European countries and hit a plateau until the immense success of BTS.

Starting from 2017, the group's mini-album "Love Yourself: Her" entered United Kingdom's Official Charts at number 14 with the previous record of number 62 by the group themselves. Not only in the UK, but their album released in 2017 also has received good achievements on Sverigetopplistan and Ultratop charts in Sweeden, IRMA chart in Ireland. For charts in Italy and Germany, their positions stopped at number 56 and 57 respectively. (D. Kim, 2017). However, these are already very good beginning signs for BTS and Kpop since never before a Kpop album had this success in hard-to-please music market like German and Italy, which signalled a long term advance rather than a "one-hit wonder" like Gangnam Style. The next three years from 2017 to 2020 witnessed a surge in BTS's popularity and accomplishments in the European music market, opening various opportunities for the Kpop industry to emerge further into the market. Their "Love Yourself" worldwide tour kicked off in 2018, had seven shows in Europe across England, Netherlands, Germany, and France. These seven music shows had attracted more than 100,000 fans, not to mention tickets for these dates were sold out in approximately 2 hours. (Wang, 2019). In 2020, with the release of their full album called "Map of the soul: 7", BTS became the first Korean act to score the No.1 position on the UK's official music

chart twice. A French music chart, SNEP (Syndicat national de l'édition phonographique), also announced the album to be on the top spot one week after its release. The album also debuted as the top seller in various European music charts, including Dutch Charts, Official Irish Albums Chart, Belgium Albums Chart and Offizielle Deutsche Charts. (JiWon, 2020). Not only doing well in the charts, but they also have gained real dedicated European fans who have filled up four music tour dates in England and France in 2019. Despite having fewer shows than the previous tour, the "Speak Yourself" tour in 2019 was a stadium tour held in Stade De France, the fifth-biggest stadium in Europe, and Wembley Stadium, the second biggest stadium in Europe with the capacity reached 90,000 (Wang, 2019). Therefore, with two sold-out shows in each stadium, the BTS tour attracted approximately 340,000 fans, which was a huge jump from the number of 100,000 for their first tour in Europe just one year before. These achievements of BTS in Europe and around the world raised great interest in the music industry personnel as well as drew immense attention to the Kpop genre. With no sign of dying down, this popularity of BTS and Kpop raised the question of how they have been and will change the music world, along with everything that comes with it.

2.4.2 Kpop in Finland

Kpop's popularity in Finland's music market experienced a similar pattern with the European market, though slower and less significant. Gangnam Style stayed on the top position in Finland's digital song chart for four consecutive weeks and received a gold certification. The song was also featured in the foreign tabloid-size newspaper *Ilta-Sanomat*. There was no remarkable movement for Kpop in Finland after Gangnam Style's success until BTS made their global impact. In 2016, Finnish radio YleX played Kpop songs, including BTS's for the first time, and it received tremendous attention, caused two related hashtags climbing on top of Finland's top trend chart on Twitter.

Nonetheless, it took two years later for Kpop to see remarkable movements in Finland's market, including more media covers, first concerts and multiple organised fandom's activities. BTS Army Finland, a two-and-a-half-year-old Twitter account opened in 2018, reached approximately 29.5 thousand followers as of July 2020, with over 37 thousand tweets. They continuously update information about BTS activities in Finland and worldwide. In the year 2018, the Nosturi music hall welcomed TEENTOP for the first Kpop concert in Finland. Even though the capacity was at a humble number of 900, this marked one of the significant first steps for Kpop in the Finnish market. Yleisradio Oy, also known as Yle, published an article about the Kpop movement and analysed the reasons behind its immense popularity. Being mostly owned by the government, Yle news can be considered the most viewed newspaper by the majority of Finland's households, so their

article acknowledging the Korean wave was an important mark for the Korean music industry, supporting their way of becoming a norm in this country.

Later in the same year, there were two more Kpop concerts held in the capital of Finland, showing real interests from locals and Kpop's ambition to hit Finland's market. Aside from all the exalted activities online, Kpop's popularity in Finland is also shown in offline events such as two meetings in Roberts Coffee Redi to celebrate the birthday of two BTS members on 13th October 2019 and 16th February 2020. According to each of these events, even though only promoted through Twitter, it quickly attracted more than 500 participants each. Recognising the growing of avid Kpop fans in Finland, many Finnish companies are starting to adapt to satisfy the demands. Two times in a row in late 2019 and beginning of 2020, the biggest cinema chain in Finland: Finnkino put on screen BTS's music documents named Burn The Stage and Bring The Soul. Finnkino staff also confirmed that online ticket sales of these music documents caused their official website to crash due to over traffics. Moreover, in the screening days themselves, a long line of queuing is a normal scene.

To sum up, chapter two has gone into more details definition of culture and Korean popular music culture. At the same time, showing the wide-spread of Kpop through mass media and reached other Western countries including Finland.

3 Impact of Kpop on Tourism

The influence South Korea music industry has on tourism has been widely discussed in various studies and articles. In this chapter, the author will go into details to analyse distinctive aspects of Kpop that help them to have a significant impact on travellers' motivations. These factors are the key to their tourism impacts and also differ them to other music business models that do not have the same effect. At the same time, this chapter will also study travellers' motivations to understand how those key factors of Kpop can have a significant influence on South Korea' image as a travel destination.

3.1 Key factors

While Kpop is widely known for many interesting and distinct characteristics that help them to spread their popularity across the world, there are some key factors that the Korean popular music industry knows really well how to utilise to promote Korea's tourism. The most recognised element is their music video. Visually captivating, catchy music with well-trained dance moves and most importantly, being viewed and spread by millions of fans across the world, Kpop's music video can be used as a golden promotion opportunity for any traveling destinations in Korea. There are numerous music videos recorded in popular travel destinations, and conveniently, many lists can easily found online using search engines naming all those places with detailed addresses and how to get there for tourists. Not only stop there, travel agencies in Korea starting to create tour packages that guide tourists through destinations that their favourite Kpop stars have been through or used in their music products. On TripAdvisor, you can easily find tour packages conducted in English designed explicitly for Kpop fans, one of which called "Busan BTS Fan Full-Day Guided Tour," which has 3620 reviews, showing the popularity of the packages.



Figure 4. Famous Korea travel destinations in Kpop music videos, Jumumjin beach (top), Yangjae Stream's Cherry Blossom Lane (left), Gyeonggi English Village (right). (Shiers, 2019).

While appearing briefly and normally only as background, these destinations gain remarkable popularity amongst Kpop fans. According to a survey conducted by the Korea Tourism Organization on eight traveling websites in Korea, almost 22 per cent out of 22,272 BTS' fans across 137 countries chose Jumumjin beach as the first destination they would like to visit in Korea (Ik-su, 2019). This place was featured in BTS's "Spring Day" music video, which got 334 million views.

However, music videos have their own limitations since the only visual aspect of the destinations will be shown, and the music aspect itself should be the highlight of the video, not the background. Fortunately, the Kpop industry has another speciality of their own that helps to promote Korea culture and tourism in the most effective and wholesome way possible. This speciality is variety shows. A variety show, according to Collins dictionary, "is a show, as on television or in a nightclub, made up of different kinds of acts, as comic skits songs, dances, etc.". While many countries have their own versions of variety shows, having a close bond between the popular music industry and variety shows like in Korea is definitely a rare case. Most singers and idol groups have their own show and the common one they are invited to attend. Since it is vital for the Kpop industry to illustrate their idols

as lovable and admirable, these shows were originally filmed to show that Korean singers are funny, talented, honest, hard-working, and, among many other personality traits, that they could barely show through their music and performance. This will help fans to have a closer look at their idols and build stronger bonds. In order to create the best opportunities to do so, Korean variety shows have various creative settings in which Kpop stars can do different activities to show off their traits. They play different forms of games, cook, travel, do outdoor activities and so on. Conveniently, these settings also leave room for Korean culture in different forms to reach the audiences. During their cooking sessions, Kpop stars making different delicious Korean traditional recipes while joking around and talking about the food in a cheerful and happy atmosphere. In a normal situation, it is hard to imagine a Finnish person searching for kimchi recipes if they have little to no specific interest in Korean cuisine before. However, it is a different case if originally one come to see their favourite singers being funny for entertainment, which is much more interesting and pleasing to watch. Throughout this progress, fans across the world will be continuously exposed to Korean culture through food, fashions, language and also different travel destinations. For instance, Kpop idol group VIXX filmed their show called "One Fine Day" on Jeju island, the largest island in South Korea and is one of the most popular tourist attractions in this country. Throughout 8 episode in total, the group discover different entertainment centres and restaurants in Jeju while showing their personalities through games and delightful activities.

In addition to all those factors, Kpop also stars directly promote South Korea's tourism through promoting campaigns. After his song Gangnam Style's surge in popularity in 2013, Psy was chosen by the Korea Tourism Organization to be South Korea's tourism ambassador in the same year (Cha, 2013). Exo, Yoona and BTS also named as Honorary Tourism Ambassador of Seoul thanks to their exceptional achievements in the music industry, drawing attention and love from fans around the world. Duties of these ambassadors, including showcase and honour South Korea's interesting places to visit activities to do, and delicious cuisine.



Figure 5. Psy's South Korea tourism commercials aired in 70 countries (Cha, 2013).

Not only doing commercials and promoting campaigns, Kpop stars also fulfil their ambassadors' duties by making music videos that highlight the beauty of South Korea's nature and landscape along with its lively city life with exciting activities. Unlike their usual music products, these music videos include little to no dancing, simple ear-catchy music, and more footage of landscapes and destinations than Kpop singers. In 2017, Kpop boyband BTS released their "With Seoul" music video as a part of their campaign with the Korea Tourism Organization, attracted almost ten million viewers across the world. A viewer left a comment under the video saying, " Korean Government really knows how to attract tourists" and received over four thousand likes, showing the popular opinion that South Korea as a destination seems to be more appealing when it is connected to Kpop Idols.

The last factor that must be mentioned is Kpop concerts and music festivals, which is the ultimate wish of almost every Kpop fans. Website Trazy.com, one of the most well-known ticket sites in South Korea, stated that there are 25 official music awards show and music festivals across the country through the year. In addition to these yearly shows, typically each Kpop stars have their own concerts held every one or two years. These concerts have had a huge impact on tourism as Kpop's popularity is rising with impressive speed and scale.

In conclusion, those key factors that help Kpop to have more impact on their fans' motivations to travel are well invested visual effect of music videos, variety shows, promoting campaign and music concerts. In the next chapter, the author will go more into detail about how these factors influent traveling motivations .

3.2 Impact on Tourism

Way back to 2004, the Korean National Tourism Organization reported an impressive number of 3 million Kpop induced tourists visited Korea as of November 2004, which was 37 per cent higher than the previous year. In addition, the inbound Korean tourism industry has enjoyed an annual average growth rate of approximately 7 per cent thanks to the Korean pop-culture (Lee, 2016). At a press conference held on 27th September 2019, Seoul Mayor Park Won-Soon said " The proportion of individuals tourists has risen to 98 per cent, in comparison to a bit over 50 per cent four to five years ago. Kpop is one significant factor that contributed to growth in the number of individual tourists". These show the significant roles of Korean pop-culture on the Korea tourism industry's development over the past years.

There are various reasons why Kpop has such a strong impact on tourism. First and foremost, the author would like to mention the study made by Sojung Lee and Billy Bai.

The two authors stated that contents with no intention to promote a destination are considered to be more influential on image formation because they have higher credibility and the ability to reach wide audiences more than induced formation agents (Lee, 2016). This notion has also been supported by Gartner (1993), Hanefors & Mossberg (2002). This perfectly explains the effectiveness of Kpop in spreading Korea's positive image as a travel destination since most of its contents bear no intention to promote tourism. Hence, all beautiful and positive notions about Korea gained through Korean music content are more likely to be trusted by audiences.

There are two ways that Korean pop stars can impact tourists' motivations to travel: direct and indirect. The direct way is through opening concerts, music shows and festivals. These open the actual chance for fans across the world to visit Korea to attend their concerts. Despite attracting a high number of foreign concert goers and festival attendees annually, Kpop hardly makes an impact on Finnish travellers directly. Firstly, as a foreigner, it is hard to buy a concert ticket that held in Korea due to the language barrier. In recent years, because of the growing demands for concert tickets, many concerts in Korea are limited to buyers with South Korean residents' numbers. Secondly, concerts are always fixed in date and time, which cause extra difficulties for Finnish people to arrange such long-distance travel. Furthermore, thanks to the awareness of growing popularity across the globe, Kpop concerts have been being held outside of South Korea, including European countries such as France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom, Netherlands and so on. This made Kpop concerts more accessible for Finnish Kpop fans without having to travel to South Korea.

To strengthen this point, let us take a look at a popular way to study travel motivations: push-pull continuum. Push factors usually are intrinsic motivators, including a desire for play, relaxation, wanting to escape, prestige, health and fitness, adventure and social interaction. On the other hand, pull factors arise due to the tractiveness of a destination such as beaches, recreation facilities, and cultural attractions. (Uysal and Jurowski, 1994). It is easy to see the direct impact of Kpop, which are music concerts and annual festivals in Korea, might not provide strong enough of traveling motivation for Finnish people to go all the way from Finland to Korea. This is because concerts and music festivals are held on specific dates that goers can not decide. Therefore, it is less likely that Finnish travellers happen to have the desire to escape, relaxation, and other push factors at the exact same time to motivate themselves to travel to Korea. While Kpop continuously and effectively stimulating pull factors for Korea by increasing its image, Finnish travellers themselves must have the push motivations for the actual travel decision to be made.

In short, while the direct impact made by Kpop on Finnish outbound traveling is there, it is mostly the indirect effect that leads them to travel to South Korea. Therefore, in the following study, the author will be more focused on the impact made indirectly by popular culture and Kpop.

To analyse the impact of Kpop on tourism, it is essential to approach the way tourists are motivated to travel, then see how different factors of Kpop and fandoms culture impact these traveling motivations that lead to traveling to Korea decision. There are nine different main reasons for leisure travel; those are :

- A desire to escape from a mundane environment
- The pursuit of relaxation and recuperation functions
- An opportunity to play
- The strengthening of family bonds
- Prestige, since different destinations, can enable one to gain social enhancement among peers.
- Social interaction
- Educational opportunities
- Wish fulfilment
- Shopping

(Ryan, 1991)

As described previously, the Korean music industry and its contents are the perfect opportunities to promote South Korea's landscape and culture. Located in East Asia, South Korea has a long coastline as it is borderline with the East Sea to the east, the East China Sea to the south, and the Yellow Sea to the west. Besides, it also has two volcanic islands: Jeju and Ulleung, along with many hills and mountains. All of these geographical characteristics turn South Korea into a favourite travel destination as the country has many activities and sightseeing to offer throughout the year.

Shopping is another wish that Kpop's fans can fulfil when they travel to Korea. Not only providing quality music content that can be enjoyed for free but many South Korea music industry idols also have successful brand development, providing their audiences with another unique, engaging experience. Aside from official music albums, every Kpop idols have their own set of different goods and merchandise such as lightsticks, shirts, key chains, phone cases and so on. All of these merchandises can be purchased online thanks to the help of international shipping, but the collections are still limited compared to in-store shopping. Not to mention that shipping fees can raise the price significantly and

shop online is less joyful of an experience. Furthermore, Korean music stars, more than models or celebrities from any other field, are wanted to be the face of many brands, including clothing, cosmetics and foods. This marketing method helps accelerate the interest in purchasing Kpop fans, who, aside from being exceptionally devoted and want to support their idols' brands, are also willing to purchase to feel more connections to their favourite stars' lives.

It is crucial to look into how Korean popular music made an impact on tourism and analyse a different aspect of this impact. Tourism stimulated by popular culture, and Kpop to be specific, has always brought about the doubt whether it is sustainable or the moment one loses interest in said popular content, they will also lose the motivation to travel. This topic is of utmost importance to discuss since this will determine whether it is worthy for the government and business to invest in long-term destinations and promote campaigns closely related to popular culture. This concern is legitimate since what can be considered popular content change overtime quickly, as the popularity might lessen over time as people find new attractions. Considering Korean music industry, the average active age of artists is around 5 to 7 years, which is relatively short of making significant tourism impact, especially when it takes time for these artists to start gaining their recognition. Therefore, incase fans starting to gain interest in other artists, then will the influence made by Kpop, or popular culture contents as a whole, sustainable?

To answer this question, let us first look into research made way back in 1972 by Clare A. Gunn. He concluded that actual visitation could create an image more realistic than image prior to visitation. This conclusion strengthened by interviews made by Lee SoJung and Bai Billy for their research about popular culture impact on destination image also shows results that positive destination image from popular culture experiences has a long term impact on tourism in forms of word of mouth promotions and revisiting.

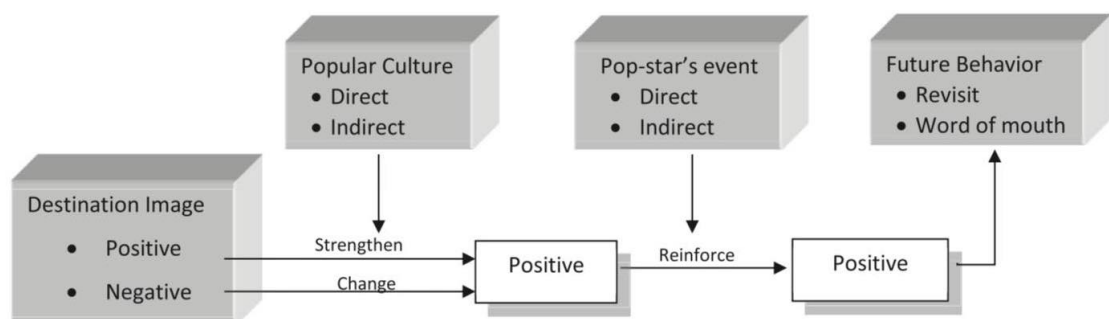


Figure 6. A model of popular culture on destination image formation (Sojung Lee, 2016).

According to Nielsen, 92% of consumers worldwide say they trust recommendations from friends and family above all other forms of advertising (Nielsen, 2012). The notion that

amongst Kpop fandom is an essential aspect of sharing collective experiences with others, the tendency for them to share their positive experiences with social media is relatively high. Thanks to the assistance of social media, now word of mouth will be more powerful than ever as recommendations from friends and among fandoms can be easily transferred across borders and reach more people.

In conclusion, Kpop and its contents can strongly influence their fans' motivations to travel to South Korea by providing trustworthy image and information about South Korea's cuisine, attractions, lifestyles and culture, which leads to a more positive image of the country. Furthermore, these Kpop contents also introduce fans more pull factors to travel to South Korea. In the next chapter, the author will introduce and analyse previous studies on similar topics, study their methods and reflect them on this thesis.

3.3 Theoretical frameworks

While the connection between Korean pop music and Finnish people travel has not explicitly been researched before, there are several studies about the connection between popular culture and tourism. The majority of these studies were carried out and emphasised the film and cinema industry, which has long been attracting tourists with their filming destinations. UNWTO (the World Tourism Organization) published an article on Tourism and cinema for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals on 6th February 2020, indicating the existing acknowledgement of cinema's impact.

In "The Routledge Handbook of Popular Culture and Tourism", the effect of popular culture in various forms such as cinema, TV shows, music, literature, sports and heritage on tourism and how a variety of popular culture is marketed were discussed in detail (Christine Lundberg, 2018). Any kind of traveling activities that are connected to popular tourism, they call this culture tourism. In order to explore the links between tourism and popular culture, the book divided the analysis into three manners of research: scholarship, socialisation and construction. In the section studied for the music industry, interestingly, this book mentions the motivation to travel related to visiting the cemetery of celebrities like how Graceland annual celebration of Elvis Week on the anniversary of his death that attracted thousands of fans across the world. While dark tourism is not the focus point of the thesis, this is one of the interesting connections between music and tourism. Aside from celebrity cemetery tourism, the book also studies ABBA and U2 fans on how their enthusiasm for these bands affects their motivation to travel. These online surveys on ABBA's and U2's fans' travel behaviour set a strong base for the study of this thesis as there was some impressive connection detected between the motivations to travel and the love for music bands in this book. However, this study by the two authors mainly focuses on the traveling motivations with which directly related to the artists and their music products such as concerts, music festivals, ABBA museums and at the same time, admit that there

was still lack of academic research that bring together how and why music fans choose to travel that indirectly affected by popular culture.

In this thesis, while those direct relation will be discussed, the author would like to also study in details the way Korean popular culture provoke the interest to travel to Korea without having direct attractions related to music celebrities. Another academic article that highlights this topic is the "Influence of popular culture on special interest tourists' destination image" (Sojung Lee, 2016) . This study emphasised the impact of music popular culture on shaping destination image by studying focus groups and interview 24 fans from different nationalities of Korean pop star: Ahn Jae Wook. The results of this study brought about three conclusions: pop culture brings a more positive image for travel destinations, pop music events reinforced good place image through experiences in South Korea, and these positive images on travel destinations have a substantial impact in the long term behaviours. This study strongly supports the hypothesis of this thesis, which focuses on how the Korean wave brings Finnish travellers to South Korea. In another article: " Tourists' psychological connection to pop culture tourism: A perspective of psychological continuum model", the authors used Psychological continuum model (PCM) to classified three different tourists groups based on their level of awareness, attraction and allegiance and hence analyse the psychological connection to pop culture tourism. While this is a very interesting study, it requires an understanding of psychological concepts and terms for a thorough comprehension of the study. However, it is important to note that studying travellers' psychological involvement in leisure traveling is relevant to their participation in popular culture.

In summary, there are various previous studies claiming that popular culture has significant impact on tourists' motivations to travel. In this thesis, the author will specifically adapt a model of data analysis from SooJung Lee's " Influence of popular culture on special interest tourists' destination image" to help analyse participants' responses in semi-structured interviews.

4 Methodology and data collections

4.1 Research methods

In this thesis, the main research method used is going to be qualitative. In order to the qualitative research effectively, it is crucial to understand the definition, uses and limitations of this method. Qualitative research is empirical research where the data are not in the form of numbers (Punch, 2014). The way to tell empirical research apart from other types of research is to see if the research in question establishes observations and derives knowledge from experience rather than theory or not. It is empirical research if there are either population, behaviour or phenomena being studied, and in said research, the methods used to study those are being clarified. In this research, the behaviour of Finnish people traveling to Korea is being studied with qualitative methods to understand the motivations to make the travel decisions and to analyse to see if the growing popularity of Kpop has any impact on these decisions. Therefore, qualitative research methods will be applied, which is the most beneficial when researchers need to go deep to find out people's attitudes and actions.

One of the most prominent advantages of using qualitative methods is more information is gathered from each participant, which results in fewer people that researchers need to reach out to. Thus, research costs will be lowered, and the results will be produced faster. In this specific case, while there is no cost for data collection needed, using qualitative methods is still beneficial by lowering the number of participants and time needed. Another benefit of using a qualitative research method is that they can provide deep insights into a particular matter. This is a result of the ask and answer progress that allows a lot of creativity and flexibility with open-ended answers. Researchers are allowed to come up with questions on the spot that helps to generate more depth and complexity to the data being collected. Additional characteristic of qualitative research method that is helpful for this particular study is that it is a more communicative, which the author can take advantage of and build trust among participants to obtain raw and unadulterated result (Bhandari, 2020). This quality can be significantly utilised in this thesis to ensure that even the smallest impact of Kpop on Finnish's traveling decision to Korea will be detected.

That being said, qualitative research methods have their disadvantages that need to be considered while conducting the research. The biggest drawback is the lack of statistical representation. Without statistical data, it is hard to conclude whether Kpop has an impact on Finnish travellers or not since the results collected from small numbers of participants using qualitative methods can not represent the whole population. To make up for this aspect, either another type of research should be carried out alongside or multiple

research periods are needed. Since operating large amounts of data collecting sessions using qualitative methods will be time-consuming, in this thesis, the author will apply the quantitative method and the qualitative method to ensure the validity of the results. The outcome of the research will also heavily depend on how researchers conduct their data collection progress. Since there is room for flexibility in data collection with qualitative methods, researchers must know how and when to provide follow-up questions to bring out more information. At the same time, they are required to recognise valuable data amongst participants' answers. There are cases where researchers failed to see the necessary materials and lose it. In addition, a professional attitude between researchers and participants is needed to make sure the results are accurate as well as no bias from researchers. There are cases where researchers have a sense of bias toward the results of researching, which might lead to them only collect data that are beneficial to their bias and, either conscious or subconscious, miss out on the data that might go against their biased results. Hence, the room for false conclusions is quite bedding on researchers' performance while collecting data. As a researcher for this thesis, the author needs to make sure to educate myself clearly about different research methods, strengths and weaknesses, and how to conduct them efficiently and minimise errors. Some test interviews will also be conducted to familiarise me with an unexpected situation and how to provide adequate follow-up questions. In addition, it is vital to maintain a natural attitude toward participants as well as the information they provide.

Table 1. Advantages and disadvantages of qualitative research method.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small number of participants needed - Provide deep insights - Allow creativity and flexibility - Communicativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of statistical representations - Subjectivity - Heavily based of researchers' performance - Lack of genealizability

In order to make amend for limitations of qualitative research methods, the author will, at the same time, apply quantitative research methods to ensure the validity of research results. Beside understanding quantitative research as empirical researches where the data are in the form of numbers (Punch, 2014) to understand the contrast between two research methods, quantitative research can also be defined as research that emphasise objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data collected through polls, questionnaires, and surveys, or by manipulating pre-existing statistical data using computational techniques (Babbie, 2010). The quantitative research method will be applied in this thesis solely in the form of a survey, which will measure whether or not Kpop has an impact on travel decisions.

4.2 Data collection

The primary data collection method used will be a semi-structured interview. Basically, a semi-structured interview differs from other types of interviews because of the way questions are formed. Instead of following a pre-designed list of questions, interviewers ask more open-ended and follow-up questions to create more of a discussion with the interviewee rather than just formalised ask and answer format. However, unlike unstructured interviews, semi-structured ones may include a list of questions, but interviewers do not necessarily ask them in particular order or mention all the questions prepared. Questions can still be formed ahead of time, allowing interviewers to prepare themselves better for the interview and minimise unnecessary asking. At the same time, there is still room for flexibility. Therefore, both interviewers and interviewees have the freedom to express themselves in their own terms, and there is always room for more in detail discussion if needed. The fact that participants can also ask back interviewers can also bring out more in-depth information. As a result, data collected will be reliable and comparable qualitative data.

Nonetheless, before conducting a semi-structured interview, it is of utmost importance to be also aware of the disadvantages of this method. The semi-structured interview requires a fair amount of time and extensive resources to sit down and have open-ended discussions to produce comparable and valuable data. It can also be challenging for interviewers since there are different interviewing skills needed throughout the process. Firstly, pre-questions are required to be planned carefully so that they will not be prescriptive or leading; otherwise, the interview can be biased. While doing the interview, confidence and the ability to conduct valuable follow-up questions are called for to avoid a lengthy and unprofessional interview. Post-interview requires skills to recognise, analyse and compare relevant data. In order to carry out interviews successfully, the author needs to clarify the interview's objectives, what information needs to be obtained and spend time building a guide of questions that do not have to be strictly followed but to remind of all required information. When doing an interview, it is important to explain the purpose of the interview to get interviewees familiar and start with simple questions first then more complex questions after. It is vital to the interviewers' success that the interviewers ask the right open-ended questions without leading and probing. Immediately after the interview, even when a recorder is always used, it is recommended to write down any insights and impressions the interviewers have.

In this thesis, semi-structured interviews are conducted with the purpose of seeing if Kpop has an impact on Finnish people's decision to travel to Korea and if there is, how and why. At the same time, detect their interest to travel in the long term. Six Finnish people being

interviewed are diverse in age and social background but share the same interest in Kpop, all of whom were being active and interacted under Kpop related posts on Twitter. The author then reached and asked for permission to interview through Twitter after briefly looking through their profile to ensure the diversity of interviewees. All the interviews were conducted using Zoom on laptop, recorded with a smartphone and notes written down by the author. A set of questions was prepared beforehand by the author to make sure the interview will not be misleading, and all objectives are met.

1. Identify interviewee's interests and dedication in Kpop:
 - How did you found out about Kpop?
 - For you long have you been interested in Kpop?
 - What is about Kpop interests you?
 - Have you ever bought Kpop's related content?
2. Identify interviewee's image of Korea as a travel destination:
 - How do you perceive Korea as a travel destination before and after knowing Kpop?
 - How did those perceptions change over time?
 - What factors contribute to your image of Korea?
 - Have you ever visit Korea/ Do you have the interest to travel to Korea in the future? Why?
3. Identify the long term effects.
 - In Korea, what did you do?/ What would you want to do while traveling to Korea?
 - Will you tell your friends/family about Kpop and Korea?
 - Would you want to revisit Korea?

Through the interview, it is essential to detect some keywords to identify the interviewee's perception of Korea as a traveling destination. These keywords can be divided into two major categories as negative and positive. All of the interviews will be recorded.

The survey method can be defined as "questioning individuals on a topic or topics and then describing their responses" (Jackson, 2011). A survey is easy to carry out, collecting data from a large number of participants through questionnaires. This method is specifically helpful in collecting characteristics of a significant population, which in this case, is whether Kpop has an impact on Finnish travellers' decision to travel to Korea. Therefore, in addition to in-depth interviews to understand how and why popular culture has an impact on Finnish travelers, a survey will be conducted to give statistical data on whether Kpop has said impact. Thanks to the help of well-designed survey software available online today, surveys typically are easy and cost-effective to develop. In some cases, however, a survey might not be the most effective way of collecting data if respondents

are in hard-to-reach areas, or have little to no access to media or mobile, which are the primary channel researchers use to reach their population. However, due to the specific character of the topic that studies Kpop's impact, a survey is an adequate method to reach a population that has been exposed to popular culture in Korea mostly through social media platforms.

As a complement method to the main one, a semi-structured interview, the author carried out a designed survey to see if interests in Kpop spark the interests in South Korea's culture and travel to this country. The survey consists of 11 questions in total, two of which are to generally categorize participants by age and geographic information, two of which are only for participants who answered they have been to South Korea or interested in traveling to South Korea in the near future. The rest of the questions are intended to see how, when Kpop reach the Finnish population and change the perspective of Finnish people toward South Korea's culture. One question asking about the time participants start being interested in Kpop to understand around what time did Kpop start to grow in popularity among Finnish people. The next question asked whether participants were interested in traveling to South Korea before knowing Kpop. The result of this question then will be compared to the number of Finnish people who are interested in traveling to South Korea after being Kpop fans to see the change in behaviors, which is also the main point of the survey. To understand this change further, the author asked about factors of Kpop that interest participants, what they have learned more about South Korea thanks to Kpop, and what about the country that makes them want to visit. Last but not least, asking the participants to rate the relationship between their interest in Kpop and their motivations to travel to South Korea. All of these survey questions can be found in the appendix.

4.3 Results

To analyze data collected by the survey, the author mainly used methods that commonly used for statistical data. The arithmetic mean, or also known as average, is calculated to determine the overall trend of the data set rating the impact of Kpop on traveling motivations. The author also focuses on studying the mode of the data collected, which is the answer that appeared the most often on results. The survey's results are also used to test the hypothesis that Kpop has an impact on Finnish people's motivations to travel to South Korea. After gaining data, the author used results to test said hypothesis. For the semi interviews, the author transcribed interviewees' answers then looking out for themes adapted from SooJung Lee to detect interviewees' perceptions towards Kpop and South Korea as a travel destination (Lee, 2016). These themes are divided into different categories.

Table 2. Themes to categorise and analyse interviewees' responses (Lee, 2016).

Categories	Macrotheme	Theme
South Korea image	Positive	Unique culture
		Delicious food
		Beautiful landscap
		Interesting history
		Friendly people
	Negative	Military system
		Plastic surgery
Severe violence		
Kpop impact	Direct	Fan-club members cultural exchange
		Going to concerts
		Close access to Kpop-star
	Indirect	Introduced and educated South Korea's culture and attractions
		Strengthened positive image
Future behavior	Revisit	Visiting different attactions and venues
		Return
	Worth of mouth	Recommending/Promoting South Korea to friends and relatives
		Posting experience in social media flatforms

The online survey on “ Kpop’s impact on Finn’s decisions to travel to Korea” received a total of 258 respondents, the majority of which coming from Southern Finland (49.61%) and Western Finland (23.64%). These respondents were reached by spreading the survey through social media platforms, including Twitter and Facebook, with the help of the Kpop fandoms account. Over half (61.24%) of these correspondents have been interested in Kpop for 1 to 3 years, and the majority of the rest have known Kpop for over three years. Only 25 out of 258 respondents starting to take a liking to Kpop less than one year ago. This strengthened the study of the Kpop movement in Finland in the previous chapter, as the majority of Finnish Kpop fans started to like South Korea popular music around 2017 and 2018, the time Kpop made notable appearances in Finnish music charts and social flatforms.

The interviews were conducted successfully with six participants, all of whom are Finnish people who have interests in Kpop. On average, an interview lasted for tweenty minutes. Among six interviewees, there was one 18 years old student who has been Kpop fans for

one year and a half. She yet has the opportunity to make travel decision, yet spreads her interest in Kpop and South Korea significantly by being active on social media. Another participant was a 22 years old psychology student who traveled to South Korea before with her family and is going to come back there again for a study exchange on 2021. She had negative image on South Korea before as she viewed them as a competitive country and plastic surgery oriented:” I used to think they are very competitiveness with each other, and too academically oriented. And also that thing when many people do plastic surgery, I didn’t like that”. However, after knowing Kpop, her image in South Korea slowly changed from negative to positive as she starting to learn more about this country. Specifically, she confessed how she was drawn in Korean laguage by watching Kpop contents which leded to her studying Korean and applied for an exchange in South Korea.

One of the most important indicators in the survey also shows that almost all Finnish people being surveyed confirmed that Korean pop music had given them more understanding and knowledge towards Korea and it is culture, with only one person said otherwise. Out of 257 responses, language and food are the most popular learning about South Korea thanks to Kpop. Following that is Korean’ traditions and attractions.

	n	Percent
Language	242	94.9%
Food	236	92.55%
Different destinations and landscapes	188	73.73%
Korea's brands	116	45.49%
Fashion	169	66.27%
Korean's traditons and mindset	212	83.14%

Figure 7. Finnish people’s new learning about South Korea thanks to Kpop.

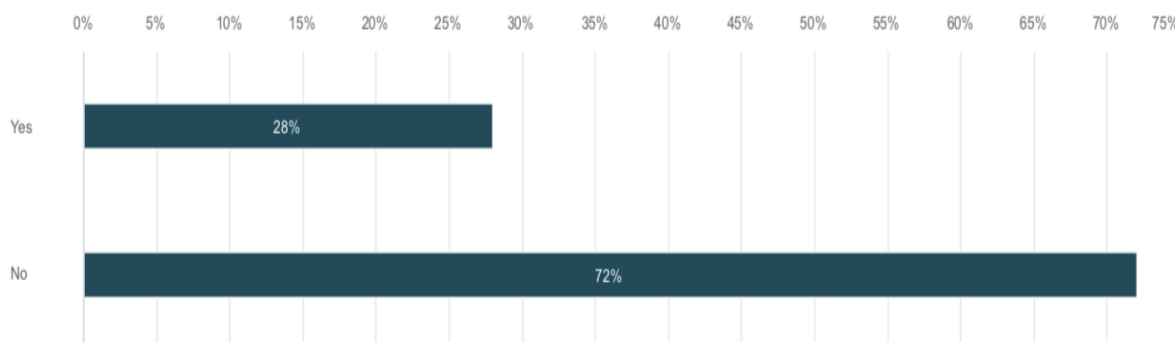
" I did not know a lot except for their language cause I had an interest in different languages. But Kpop, for sure, has introduced me to a lot of Korean cultures that I had no idea about. Now I realised that a really rich and beautiful culture that they have" was what an 18 years old interviewee confessed. “ Rich and beautiful culture” in participant’s

response indicates the image of South Korea coming from neutral to positive one. These results confirm the theory that South Korea popular music culture indeed introduced Finnish people more more positive image about the country's cuisine, language, attractions and lifestyles.

Interestingly, up to 184 out of 257 Finnish people admitted they did not consider Korea to be a promising travel destination before knowing Kpop, which accounts for more than 71% of the responses.

4. Were you interested in Korea as a travel destination before knowing Kpop?

Number of respondents: 257



10. Are you interested to travel to Korea?

Number of respondents: 231

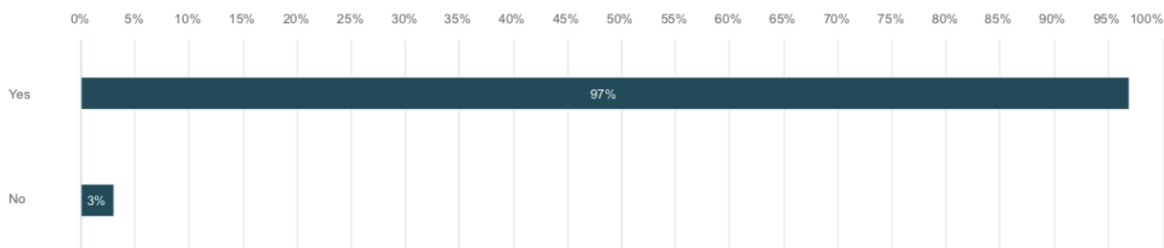


Figure 8. Finnish people's interest in traveling to South Korea before (up) and after (down) knowing Kpop.

Aside from 26 Finnish people being surveyed who have already been to South Korea before, the majority of the rest (97%) admitted they are interested in traveling to Korea after being interested in Kpop. The same idea has been shown through interviews.

“ Before I knew BTS, I did not know much about Korea, and I had no plan to travel there. I did not find it interesting at all, so it was all thanks to BTS. We went to Tokyo before I know BTS. So, I had this interest in Asia countries, but did not consider Korea before Kpop”, a 43 years old mom of three, said in our interview. With her being the only Kpop fan in the family, she and her family of five people traveled to Korea in summer 2019. The author also got another response said, “ To answer your question, I have to say that before I knew of Kpop I was indeed interested in Asia and it's culture, music and food.

However, my interest was focus on Japan more than Korea. But ever since I met Kpop, started to listen to their music, get to know more Korean language, its culture and history and, of course the food, my interest has been growing more than I want to go someday and visit Korea. That is my dream”. These responses contributed to the major finding of this study: Kpop did, in fact, motivate Finnish people to travel to South Korea.

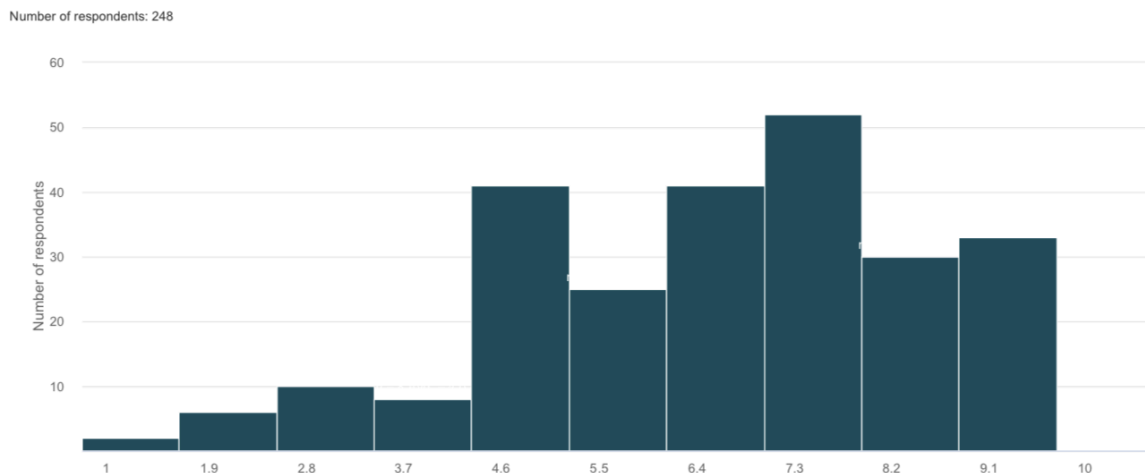


Figure 9. Finns rating on the impact of Kpop on their South Korea’s traveling motivations

On the scale from 1 to 10, 7 is the average point given by Finnish people being surveyed about the relations of their motivations to travel to Korea and their interest in Kpop music. After being asked the same question, one of the interviewee answered “ non of my family members considered traveling to South Korea before, and after liking Kpop I am still the only member in my family interested in traveling there. But I told them about the country, and show them the food, landscapes and different beautiful places we can go together and they were finally convinced. We traveled to Seoul together last summer, and while we did not do many things related to Kpop except visiting some merchandise shops for me, I think it is my interest in Kpop that started this. And we all did enjoy it and want to come back again someday”.

4.4 Discussion

Results taken from the survey as well as interviews show Finnish people's growing interest in traveling to Korea thanks to the effect of the Korean wave. The visible indicator of this is that 71 percent of respondents admitted they did not consider Korea to be a travel destination before knowing Kpop. However, aside from Finns who have traveled to Korea before, 97% of the rest are starting to gain great interest to travel to Korea. This finding supports the previous claim by SooJung Lee that autonomous agents can change the destination image quickly if the information recieved is considered credible (Lee, 2016). Considering the fact that Kpop is also rising in popularity in Finland as stated

before in Kpop in Finland section, it is safe to ensure that Kpop fans in Finland will create a wave of a growing demand for traveling to Korea. This study will be beneficial for traveling agencies in Finland to detect this demand and create new product packages with Korea as a destination. The same data also brought about a confirmation for the significant impact popular culture has on the destination's image.

In this specific case, when being asked what about Korea that participants have learned more through Kpop, the answers were varied. Language, food, Korean traditions, different destinations and landscape are among the most popular answer from the survey when Finnish Kpop fans being asked about what more have they learned about Korea through Korean music. A 22 years old going to do an exchange in Korea next spring, also shared with me, " I have learned they have many customs, also very family-oriented, the history is very interesting too. The country very beautiful, they have a really beautiful landscape, like the city has many places to visit, so it is like overall. And of course, food!". This show the great hidden opportunity to promote traveling destination through popular culture content, especially the music industry. What these Finnish people have learned more about Korea not only stop in beautiful landscape showing in music videos but also the language, lifestyle, food and fashion. These new learning not only bring about more pull factors to affect travel decisions but also create a stronger bond to Korea, lead to a stronger motive to travel. While the growing interest is undeniable, the actual trip has only been made by 26 out of 258 respondents and 4 out of 6 interviewees. This set the further question will these interests turn into actual traveling decisions, or will they just stop there without the actual purchase be made. However, this fact should not turn down the meaning of this study but should be put into relations with others.

First of all, is the broad and fast spread of this phenomenon: more than 40% of respondents said they figured out about Kpop through friends and family members, while 51.5% of them through social media platforms. With social media knowing to spread information faster than any other media and word-of-mouth being the most trusted form of marketing (Tan, 2020), Kpop fans sharing their love and interest in Kpop and Korea through these means will inevitably help Kpop gain in popularity. On the other hand, this research also proves the longevity of this demand to travel to Korea despite the everchanging Kpop industry. " Oh I love it, I really want to go back", one participant said when being asked about her trip in Korea last summer, then she added, " at the moment, I am not like stanning any group strongly, but for me, it is more about that I find Korea as a fascinating travel destination that I really want to travel again". One interviewee who traveled to Korea with her family of five, also expressed that all of them had a wonderful time even though she is the only one interested in Kpop. " We went to see North Korea border, and we did visit military museums and temples", she said.

This study indicates that while playing an important factor in gaining a positive image for Korea pre-visit, Kpop plays less essential roles in creating a satisfying experience and revisit if not for concerts and music festivals. This is, in fact, an advantage since people might lose interest in popular content in a short amount of time. However, once they start to see Korea as a desirable traveling destination and better yet, had one or two great experience in the country and fall in love with the food, the scenery and so on, the impact will remain as they share their interest with people around and want to come back. This means more attention and investment in Finnish people traveling to Korea should be seriously considered.

4.5 Reliability and validity

To test the usefulness and trustworthiness of research, its data collection method, and results analysis, researchers will evaluate the research's reliability and validity. Simply put, reliability refers to how consistently a method measures something. If the same result can be consistently achieved by using the same methods under the same circumstances, the measurement is considered reliable. (Middleton, 2019). Highly reliable research will ensure researchers that the results collected do not depend on situational factors. These situational factors might vary, including different ways of wordings when carrying out interviews or instructions on questionnaires are not clear and so on. There are three types of reliability that can be measured in researches :

- Test-retest validity: the same questionnaire is given to the same respondents in two different times then compares two sets of responses.
- Internal consistency reliability: questions measuring similar data are divided into equivalent groups then correlate responses to those questions.
- Equivalent forms reliability: two equivalent forms are given to respondents in two different times then compare the results given by two equivalent forms.

(Bajpai, 2011)

On the other hand, validity refers to how accurately a research method measures what it is intended to measure. Sometimes the survey questions are understood in the wrong way, which will lead to invalid results. (Middleton, 2019). There are also three types of validity that can be measured in research :

- Content validity: The extent to which the measurement covers all aspects of the concepts being measured
- Criterion validity: The extent to which the result of a measure corresponds to other valid measures of the same concept
- Construct validity: The consistency of a measure to existing theory and knowledge of the concept being measured.

(Middleton, 2019)

Considering the reliability of this method, the author will assess the consistency of the data collected. The online survey received 258 responses from Kpop lovers all over Finland, all of whom are reached randomly through social media platforms. The results collected are ensured of interrater reliability since they were either the majority opinion of respondents or the average assessment on the scale of Kpop impact. At the same time, six out of six interviewees gave their answers, indicating the same results showing Kpop's positive impact on Korea as a travel destination. On the other hand, different questions illustrating similar data got similar answers. The combinations of these questions are, for example, "Were you interested in Korea as a travel destination before knowing Kpop" and "Are you interested in traveling to Korea".

The validity of research is harder to measure. However, the results received are compatible with a previous study about popular culture's impact on destination image. In addition, thorough the interview progress, the author is sure to paraphrase my question in various ways in order to avoid invalid results because of misleading wording. Unfortunately, the survey method's validity might be weakened due to the unclear wording of an important question "Are your motivations to travel to Korea related to your interest in Kpop"? While the response to this question was relatively high: 7 out of 10, by not specifically define the relation to be direct or indirect, results taken could have been higher due to respondents might have eliminated the possibility for indirect impact. Another factor that might affect the result is that even though the majority of survey respondents' answers show that they obviously gained more interest in traveling to Korea and have the wish to be there one day after knowing Kpop, the act has not been done. Therefore, the actual impact on traveling flow was not obviously shown in those people. As for the summary, the author believes that while this research could have been conducted more thorough to ensure more substantial validity and reliability, it does reach the level for scientific research.

5 Further application and conclusion

The research will only be valuable if the results of it are valuable and can be used for further applications. In this chapter, the author will justify the meaning of my study as well as different circumstances in which the results are applicable. Author also makes suggestions on future studies of similar topics to strengthen the meaning behind this study. Lastly, a conclusion for this thesis will be present as well as the learning outcomes the author has achieved through the researching progress.

5.1 Meaning of research and further applications

This research on the topic of Kpop impact on Finnish people's motivation to travel to Korea created not only the opportunity to study more in-depth to the relationship between popular culture and tourism but also is a test for the theories of the strong impact popular culture has on tourists' motivations stated in previous studies. Furthermore, this thesis broadens those studies by focusing on the music industry rather than film and cinema like the majority of previous research. At the same time, this thesis studies explicitly and gathers information about Finnish travellers and their perceptions of Korea as a destination country, which introduced a new traveling trend full of potential for travel agencies to invest in. Most importantly, the sustainability of popular culture contents on tourism is confirmed. Therefore, it is valuable for the government and travel agencies to take advantage of this impact. Specifically, knowing the growing trend of visiting Korea due to the increase in Korean pop music popularity, Finnish travel agencies can cooperate with those in Korea and introduce new tour packages with target groups that are most likely to enjoy Korean music. Aside from that, the government and travel agencies in Finland can also invest in promoting and create more destinations that are related to popular content originate in Finland in order to attract more both domestic and foreign visitors. Those contents have high potential to draw the attention of travellers worldwide, including Moomin, Santa Clause and Gaming industry. Surprisingly, Finland's tourism can also utilise the Korean wave to spread its beautiful image as a destination country around the world. In fact, a Korean boyband BTS came to Helsinki to film and shot their first DVD and photobook called "Winter package." and drew significant attention towards Helsinki and Finland from Kpop lovers across the world.

5.2 Conclusions

Starting from April 2020, this thesis reached the final result in July 2020 that confirms the impact Korean popular music has on Finnish's people's decisions to travel to Korea. This impact, while still need further and bigger scale study to ensure it is worthy of significant investments from the Finnish government and travel agencies, is proved to be sustainable

and is creating a new traveling trend in Finnish people. The research was carried out objectively following strict discipline with carefully carried out time management.

Through the researching progress, the author did come across many struggles and difficulties. The most significant one must be getting educated thoroughly about different research methods and data analysing to make sure the research was carried out correctly, effectively, and the results are given are valid. Another hardship is learning different academic terms and words to express my idea in the most accurate and precise way. However, despite those difficulties and the fact that there are different aspects that can be done better, the author believe I was able to conduct thorough research with a valuable result that answers the research question the author had in mind at the beginning of the progress. Thanks to raising awareness of the popularity of Kpop, there were many academic articles writing about its achievements across the world as well as its impact on the tourism aspect.

Furthermore, the study on popular culture is, fortunately, not a new topic. Therefore, the author was able to find many interesting and useful materials to help with my research. Admittedly, being a Kpop lover myself and having been living in Finland for many years, it was easy for me to reach the community of Kpop fans in Finland to ask for their opinion on the topic. All of them were very supportive, helpful and open about their interest, which made my researching progress much more manageable.

To gain a deeper understanding of this topic that sets the base for actual actions that can be taken to improve tourism in Finland, the author would suggest a bigger scale study on the impact of Korean popular music and Korean popular culture on travel flow from Finland to Korea. This study should be focus on major social media platforms including Twitter, Instagram and Facebook to reach Kpop fans across Finland and understand their motivations to travel to South Korea. On the other hand, tourism personals should also look further into the effect of the music industry and other popular culture contents in general, aside from just the cinema and film industry.

5.3 Learning outcomes

Through the researching progress, the author has gained a lot more knowledge about different research methods, how to conduct them successfully, and each method's strengths and weaknesses. This learning is not only limited to survey and interview methods, but the author have also known more about the case study, real-life observation, focus group and ethnographic research while searching for the best methods for my study. More importantly, the author got the chance to carry out an online survey and interviews to practice my learning about these methods. While having studied carefully about these

methods, conducting them with real people brought total new insights and understandings toward research methods that could not be learned without real-life practice. It was an exiting learning progress creating an online survey via Webropol which the author believes introduced an essential data collecting method. With conducting interviews, the biggest obstacle the author has learned to overcome is being biased towards the results and using leading questions. Later on, in order to gather meaningful and valuable information, the author has learned more about how to gather important data and analyse them correctly. However, the author believes one of the most crucial things has been learned through the progress is how to detect faults in research and understand how could have done better. Usually, it is hard to recognise your own fault. Nonetheless, by learning more about how researchers access their studies based on validity and reliability, the author had opportunities to reflect on own research and see them from a different perspective. The author is then able to spot own mistakes in wordings that might lead to understanding and the lack of coherency in some questions.

At the same time, this study allowed the author to read and educate a lot more about culture, popular culture, and tourism. This knowledge including new and deeper insights into travel motivations, business and culture. Most importantly, the close relationships between popular culture and social media, as well as between social media and tourism have been analysed precisely. Being a hospitality student, the author will have chances to apply these new studies and comprehension in my real working life especially when social media and popular culture are definitely enlarging their impact on individuals. The author also has improved skills in writing, wording and presenting my idea so that they are precise, cohesive, easy to follow and understand. The author acknowledged further the importance of studying popular culture in its relation to tourism since this opens a rich opportunity for tourism to develop and create a whole phenomenon called culture tourism. Last but not least, further studies on this topic are being suggested.

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7 Appendix

Survey questions:

1. Where do you live?
 - a. Southern Finland
 - b. Western Finland
 - c. Eastern Finland
 - d. Oulu
 - e. Lapland
 - f. Aland

2. Your age?
 - a. Under 18
 - b. 19-30
 - c. 31-49
 - d. Over 50

3. How long have you been interested in Kpop for?
 - a. Under 1 year
 - b. 1-3 years
 - c. 3-5 years
 - d. Over 5 years

4. Were you interested in South Korea as a travel destination before knowing Kpop?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

5. Where did you first find out about Kpop?
 - a. Friends and family members
 - b. Finnish TV, newspapers, boardcast or radio
 - c. Social media platforms
 - d. Others : ...

6. What factors of Kpop interest you?
 - a. Music
 - b. Unique fashion
 - c. Variety of contents
 - d. Dance

- e. Idols' appearances and personalities
 - f. Others: ...
7. Did you gain more acknowledgement/interest in South Korea's culture because of Kpop?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
8. If yes, about what?
- a. Language
 - b. Food
 - c. Different destinations and landscapes
 - d. South Korea's brands
 - e. Fashion
 - f. South Korea's traditions and mindset
 - g. Others: ..
9. Have you ever traveled to South Korea?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
10. If no, are you interested to travel to South Korea?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
11. Are your motivation to travel to South Korea related to your interest in Kpop?
Rate from 0 to 10, 0 as Not related and 10 as solely because of Kpop.
12. What interests you about traveling to South Korea?
- a. Local food
 - b. Visiting landscapes and popular destinations
 - c. Clothing and cosmetics shopping
 - d. Kpop related merchandise
 - e. Kpop concerts
 - f. Traditional activities and festivals
 - g. Others