The impact of the Korean Wave on Finnish travelers

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Abstract

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The objective of this thesis was to study the impact of Korean Wave on Finnish travelers. In recent years, Korean Wave has become a global phenomenon due to K-pop group "BTS" and shows like "Parasite" and "Squid Game". The aim was also to discover what motivates people to travel, what part of the Korean Wave was the most followed and how has it affected Finnish travelers.

Theoretical framework of this thesis consisted of Korean Wave and its different generations (Hallyu 1.0-3.0), K-pop and its different generations and successes, K-dramas, movies and how they are distinct in style compared to Western shows, and two travel motivations theories. It also covered tourism in South Korea and how Korean Wave had affected it.

The research was carried out through a survey that had 11 questions: one of consent, four background questions, one travel motivation question and five questions about the Korean Wave. The limitations were age and nationality. The survey was available for three weeks and gathered 44 respondents.

The results of the research indicated that Korean Wave has impact on Finnish travelers. The interest in South Korea has grown in the last five years, and it has impacted the individuals want to travel to South Korea and other parts of the world.

The findings in this thesis can also be applied to the tourism industry in Finland and South Korea. Travel agencies in Finland and South Korea whose target groups are Finnish people traveling to South Korea can use the data to create new tour packages and attractions targeted towards Finnish people who are traveling to South Korea.

| **Key words** |
| Korean Wave, Hallyu, Finnish travelers, South-Korea, Travel motivations |

Table of contents

1 Introduction

Korean Wave has become a global phenomenon in the last five years. Popular groups like "BTS, "BIGBANG" and "TWICE" have introduced K-pop to a wider audience. Shows like "Crash Landing on You", "Parasite" and "Squid Game" have brought K-dramas to mainstream audiences and have made Korean Wave reach new levels of popularity, which is why this study is current. Korean Wave has a lot of different aspects to it, such as food, e-sports, beauty, and entertainment shows, but this thesis only focuses on K-pop and K-dramas to make it easier to analyse the results and to make the research easier.

The purpose of this thesis is to research the impact of Korean Wave on Finnish travelers. The aim is to gain a better understanding on how Korean Wave has impacted Finnish travelers and was the impact positive or negative. The theoretical framework of this thesis further explains the terms "Korean Wave", K-pop" and "K-drama" and explains the different generations of Korean Wave and K-pop. The theoretical framework also includes two theories about travel motivations and discusses tourism in South Korea and how Korean Wave has affected it. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 include the theoretical framework of the survey, which was collected from existing materials.

The research in this thesis was carried out via a survey. The survey included questions about respondents' backgrounds, travel motivations and how Korean Wave has affected their travels. The survey had 44 respondents and was available for three weeks. Chapters that discuss the research methology (research methods, data collection methods and the structure of the survey) and survey results are five and six. In the overlay matrix, the investigative questions, theoretical framework for them and the results and survey questions can be seen.

Table 1. Overlay matrix

Investigative questions	Theoretical framework (chapter)	Results (chapter)	Questionnaire questions
1. What motivates respondents to travel?	3.1, 3.2	6.2	6
2. How and when did the respondents lean about Korean Wave	2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3	6.3	7
3. What part of Korean Wave do the respondents consume the most?	2.2, 2.3, 2.2.1	6.3	8
4. Have the respondents traveled to South Korea, and if they have, what was the reason	4.1	6.3	10
5. How has Korean Wave affected the respondents traveling?	2.2, 2.3, 2.2.1	6.3	11

Chapter 7 gives the final conclusions of the survey results and discusses the ideas for further re-search and possible applications. It also includes insight into the reliability and validity of the thesis and the self-evaluation.

2   The Korean Wave

Korean wave, also known as "Hallyu", is a term used when describing the sudden upsurge of Korean culture overseas. The term Korean Wave refers to South-Korean popular culture contents that include music, dramas, movies, and other entertainment forms. Originally, the word was used in China to describe the phenomenon of young Chinese people being enthusiastic about Korean popular culture. (Bae, Chang, Park, & Kim 2017.)

Nowadays it is used when describing the global phenomenon of Korean culture spreading overseas (Bae & al. 2017). The Korean Wave can be divided into different generations: Hallyu 1.0 (1997-2005), Hallyu 2.0 (2006-2015) and Hallyu 3.0 (2016-present). The summary of the three Korena Wave generations can be seen in figure 1 below. The different generations of Korean Wave will be discussed further in the next three chapters.

Table 2. The different stages of Korean Wave (adapted from Bok-rae 2015, 158)

All the stages of Korean Wave			
Stage	**Hallyu 1.0**	**Hallyu 2.0**	**Hallyu 3.0**
Time period	1997-2005	2006-2015	2016-present
Diffusion area	Asia (China, Taiwan, Japan, Hong Kong & South-East Asian countries)	Asia, North-America, Europe	Global
Focus	K-dramas and movies	Mainly K-pop	K-pop, K-dramas, food & pop culture
Consumers	Middle-aged women	Teenagers & people in their 20s	All ages
Distribution	Overseas Korean society	Online circulation (YouTube, Facebook)	All social media platforms (Twitter, TikTok, fan created communities)
Popular cases	"What is Love?" (1992), "Winter Sonata" (2002) & "Jewel in the Palace" (2003-2004) HOT (band)	Girls Generation, BIGBANG, Super Junior, 2PM	BTS, BLACKPINK, Squid Game (TV drama), Parasite

2.1.1   Hallyu 1.0

The first generation of Korean Wave started with K-drama exports to China in the late 1990s. The first successful K-drama that started the Korean Wave was called "Jewel in the Place". To this day, the drama is the 10th highest rated Korean drama of all time. After the success of "Jewel in the Palace", there were other dramas, such as "What Is Love?" in 1992 and "Winter Sonata" in 2002, that brought a lot of attention to the South-Korean film industry. Following the success of previously mentioned K-dramas, the Korean movie exports increased dramatically, and more attention was

also paid to Korean idol groups. Idol group called H.O.T performed in China in 2000, which was a historic mark of Hallyu 1.0. (Song 2020, 128-129.)

According to Song the first generation of Korean Wave had three characteristics. First, the popularity of the Korean Wave was only limited to Asian countries, such as China, Japan, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. Hallyu 1.0 was based on the cultural similarities to other Asian countries, which is why the popularity was geographically limited to Asia. Second, the main audience for K-dramas were middle-aged women. Some idol groups were popular among teenagers, but the driving force behind Hallyu 1.0 was K-dramas and their fanbase of middle-aged women. (Song 2020, 129.)

Lastly, there was no interaction between fans and artists. The first generation of Hallyu was a one-way communication from Korean media and their artists to the fans in other Asian countries. There were no social media platforms where fans and artists could communicate, so fans could only watch K-dramas and adore the culture and artists from overseas. (Song 2020, 130.)

In conclusion, the first Korean Waves focus was on K-dramas, and there were multiple dramas that enjoyed success outside of South-Korea. The first Korean Wave was also mainly popular in Asian countries, as there were no methods to spread the Korean Wave other than mouth-to-mouth or trough traveling.

2.1.2   Hallyu 2.0

Hallyu 2.0, which spawned from 2006 to 2015, was a lot different from the first generation and had different characteristics:

1. Diversity of popular Korean cultural products
2. Geographical expansion of Korean cultural products
3. Changes in fans' age group
4. Two-way communication between entertainers and fans
5. Substantial increase in the exports of cultural products and related goods. (Song 2020, 130.)

First, as mentioned in the earlier chapter, the first Korean Wave was mainly focused on K-dramas. K-pop was starting to get popular at the end of Hallyu 1.0, and its popularity continued to grow throughout the second generation of Korean Wave along with K-dramas. Hallyu 2.0 was different from the first one, as while the first Korean Wave was popular due to K-dramas, Hallyu 2.0 had huge success due to K-pop and idol groups. (Song 2020, 130.)

Second, the diffusion area of Hallyu 1.0 was limited to Asia, and it was characterized that the popularity was based on "inter-Asian cultural affinity" (Ainslie 2016, 7). The second Korean Wave was

more known globally, and some K-pop groups, such as BIGBANG and 2NE1, had their first world tours. BIGBANG had their first world tour in 2012 and they had 48 shows, seven of them being in Unites States and Europe (Benjamin 2013). 2NE1 also had their first world tour in 2012. They had 10 shows, two of them in United States (KBS World 2012).

Also, Hallyu 2.0 had a more diverse age group of fans. The first Korean Wave fans were mostly middle-aged women that liked K-dramas. At the beginning of Hallyu 2.0, there was a shift from K-dramas to K-pop, which resulted in the fanbase being younger, usually in their 20s or even in teens. (Song 2020, 130.)

Fourth, while Hallyu 1.0 was one-way communication between fans and artists, the second Korean Wave was marked as a two-way communication between artists and fans (Sons 2020, 130). Hallyu 2.0 is more diverse because of new media outlets, such as YouTube and social network sites and smartphones. These new media outlets became a significant part of the second generation of Korean Wave (Jin 2012). Fans and artists could communicate through websites like Twitter and Facebook and share their favorite artists' music through YouTube and I-tunes. A good example of the new generation's popularity through social networking sites was Psy's Gangnam Style in 2013.

> Success of Psy's Gangnam Style in 2013 would have not been possible without YouTube. The most popular K-pop groups such as Big Bang and Girls Generation were also acknowledged by the world through two-way communication. (Song 2020, 131.)

Finally, the second Korean Wave had significant financial profit. K-dramas were getting more popular after the initial success in 1992, and the total amount of television program exports increased 27.4 % between 1995 and 2007. It went from $ 5.5 million (€ 5.1 million) in 1995 to $ 150 million (€ 139 million) in 2007 (Jin 2012). In 2013, exports of K-dramas reached $252 million (€ 235 million) (Song 2020, 131). As for K-pop, Korea exported $ 80.9 million (€7 5.5 million) worth of music in 2010, and in 2011, the number reached $177 million (€ 165 million), which was a 122 % increase from the previous year (Jin 2012).

To summarize, Hallyu 2.0 was a lot more popular compared to Hallyu 1.0. Kpop started to take off at the beginning of 2006 and thanks to artists like Psy, BIGBANG and 2NE1, the second Korean Wave was brought to a more global level. Also due to technological developments and the creation of different social media platforms and services, communication between fans and artists became easier. Hallyu 2.0 exports in K-dramas grew significantly from $ 150 million (€ 139 million) in 2007 to $ 252 million (€ 235 million) in 2013. As for K-pop, the growth percentage from 2010 to 2011 was 122 %.

2.1.3   Hallyu 3.0

The third Korean Wave, started from 2016 to the present, is a global phenomenon. The main forces behind the global success of Hallyu 3.0 are K-pop, groups such as BTS and BLACKPINK, K-fashion and food, mukbang's, and Korean movies and dramas, such as Parasite and Squid Game, that are produced by Korean companies but also by major global media companies such as Netflix. (Song 2020, 133). I will not dive deeper into K-fashion, cuisines and mukbang's, as they are not part of the topic of this thesis. Instead, the terms "Kpop" and "K-drama" will be explained in future chapters.

The key elements of Hallyu 3.0 are streaming platforms, social media and fan engagement, diversity in content, and crossover collaborations. The rise of streaming platforms like Netflix Viki and Weverse has made it easier for international viewers to access Korean content with subtitles and dubbing options. While Netflix and Viki are streaming services that have Korean dramas and movies on their websites, Weverse is a live video streaming service that a lot of K-pop groups use to communicate with fans. This variety of different websites and accessibility has led to a surge in the global audience for K-dramas, films, and K-pop. (Hong 2022.)

Social Media and fan engagement has improved a lot since Hallyu 2.0, due to social media platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. These websites have become powerful tools for K-pop idols and actors to connect with fans worldwide. The intense fan engagement on these platforms has contributed to the global spread of Hallyu 3.0. (Souders, A. 2019.) The growth of Hallyu fan communities from 2016 to 2022 can be seen in figure 2 below.
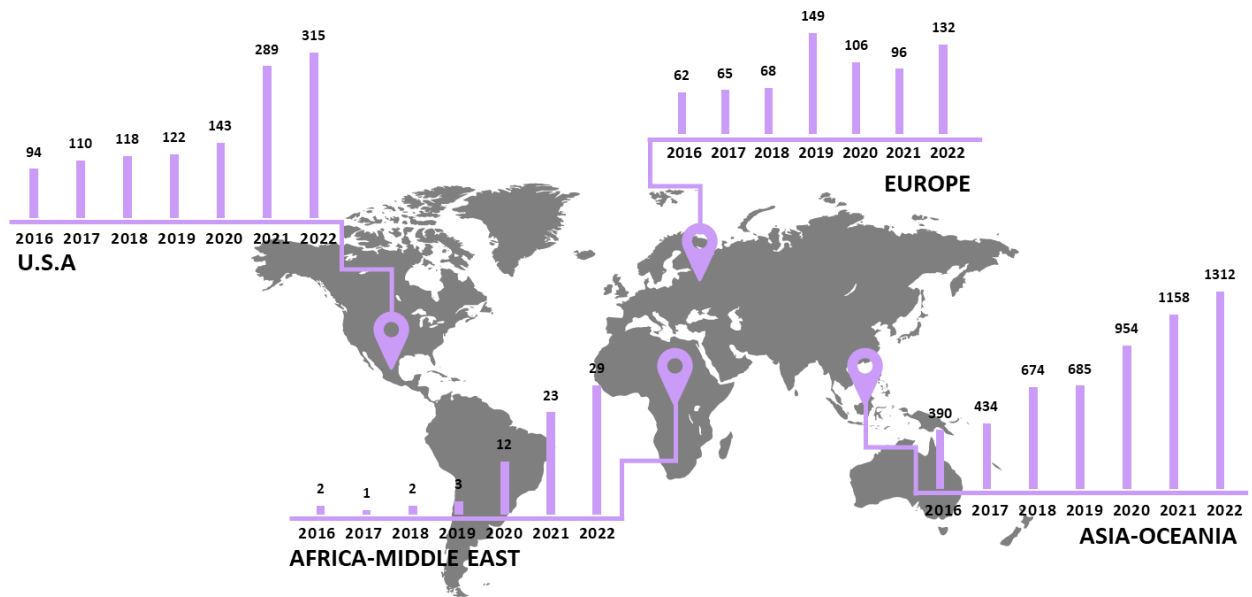
Figure 1. Changes in the number of Hallyu community members by region (Adapted from The Korean Foundation 2023)

Hallyu 3.0 showcases a broader range of content, and it expands to other sectors, ranging from beauty and fashion to games, animations and webtoons. South Korean creators have become more experimental, appealing to diverse tastes and preferences among global audiences. (Gibson 2018.)

Collaborations are also a big part of Hallyu 3.0. There have seen more collaborations between South Korean and international artists during Hallyu 3.0, further blurring cultural boundaries and expanding the reach of Korean culture. According to Gibson (2018) Hallyu 3.0 uses collaborations to achieve two goals: expand audiences beyond die-hard K-pop fans, and reward loyal international fans with music that caters to their culture and language. A successful example of this would be BTS' "Mic Drop Remix" with Steve Aoki, that was released in 2017 and has gathered over billion views on YouTube (HYBE LABELS October 2017, description box).

2.2 K-pop

K-pop, short for Korean popular music, is known as a popular genre of music that originated from South Korea. There is no set genre of music in Kpop, as it draws influence from other genders of music, such as pop, rock, hip-hop, R&B and dance. K-pop has solo artists, but it is usually performed by groups featuring from four to 23 members. The K-pop groups' members undergo a period of training that varies from a couple of months to sometimes 10 years, after which they will

debut in a group. (Masterclass 2021.) K-pop trainees are highly manufactured, and they endure harsh training to perfect themselves in multiple fields, such as rap, singing, dancing and songwriting.

> K-pop is more than just music. It's style. It's artwork. (YouTube Originals 2021, min. 0:37-0:43.)

The K-pop industry has a lot of different entertainment companies that poach and train idols to debut. The big four agencies that have popular K-pop groups under them are SM Entertainment, YG Entertainment, JYP Entertainment and HYBE. SM Entertainment represents groups like Super Junior, EXO, Red Velvet, NCT and Aespa. SM Entertainment was also the agency that represented H.O.T. YG Entertainment has groups like Sechskies BIGBANG, 2NE1, BLACKPINK and iKON. JYP Entertainment represents groups like TWICE, Stray Kids and Itzy. HYBE is the latest addition to the big agencies, and they have groups like BTS, TXT, ENHYPEN, SEVENTEEN and New Jeans. (Moya 2021.)

2.2.1   Kpop generations from 1990 to present

K-pop can be divided into four different generations, but the exact time of each generation is hard to say, as a lot of sources have different opinions about the start and end of each generation. The rough estimate is that the first generation lasted between 1990s to 2004, the second generation was from 2005 to 2011, the third went from 2012 to 2017, and the fourth generation of K-pop went from 2018 to present. (Verma 2023.) According to Choi (2023) the fifth generation of K-pop is starting in 2023 with a rush of new K-pop boy groups.

> K-pop is entering a new era, with rookie boy bands rushing to open doors (Choi 2023).

The predecessor of the first K-pop groups were Seo Taiji and Boys, that debuted in 1992. They released their breakout track, "I Know," which topped the Korean music charts for 17 weeks. The group revolutionized Korean Pop music by merging it with popular American music and adding choreography to the songs. The group cultivated a large following and inspired a slew of bands with a similar sound, giving birth to Idol Culture, an umbrella term for the fandom that follows popular musical acts (also known as Idols) in Japan and Korea. (Masterclass 2021.)

The first generation of K-pop started in the 1990s, when groups like H.O.T, Sechskies, S.E.S and Shinhwa debuted. While Seo Taiji and Boys debuted in 1992, they were not considered to be an idol group, as they did not go through a training period like the K-pop groups after them. H.O.T is the first true K-pop idol group because the group was highly manufactured and made up of trained idols. They released a song called "Candy" in 1997 that become a huge hit in Korea. The first

generation of K-pop was mostly popular in East Asia, and the term K-pop was created. (Los Angeles Film School s.a.)

The second generation is when K-pop became highly commercialized. The industry established its current structure and began to expand overseas in with a "localization" strategy as the domestic market shrank. Big Bang, f(x), Super Junior, Girls' Generation, SHINee and Four Minute are the prime examples of successful second generation of K-pop. The idols of the second generation were a lot more manufactured than the previous generation, and they evolved beyond music: Appearances in variety shows, Korean dramas and own reality shows become part of being an idol. (Squib 2020.)

The third generation of K-pop was the most successful one to date and was kickstarted by Psy's "Gangnam Style" in 2012. In the figure below the YouTube view count for "Gangnam Style" from 2012 can be seen.
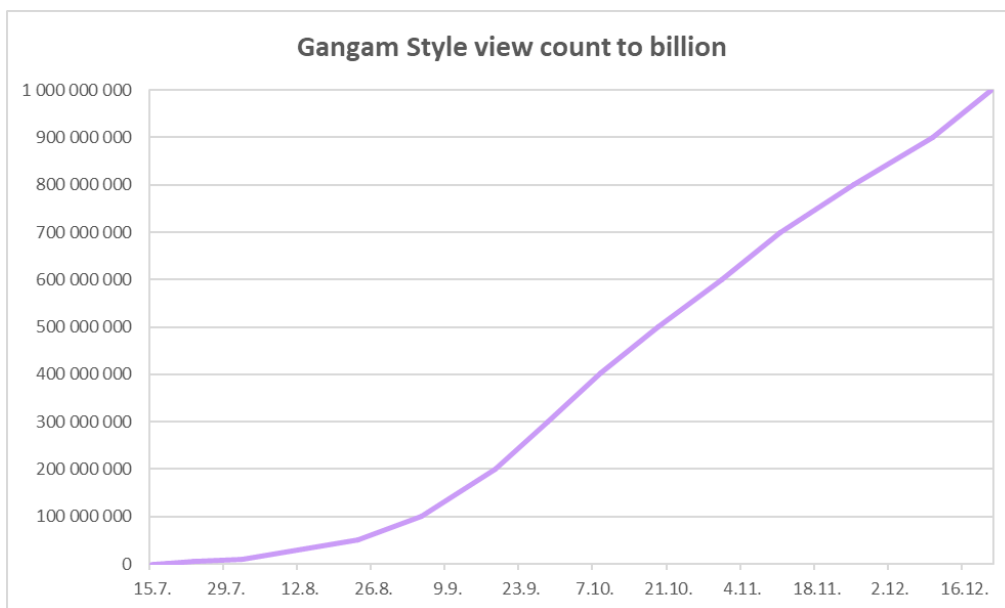

Figure 2 Gangnam Style view count in 2012 (Adapted from Acuna 2012.)

"Gangnam Style" hit million views just after a couple days of releasing and continued to accumulate views quickly in 2012. It hit billion views in the end of 2012 and in 2023 it has almost 5 billion views (Gruger 2012). It is the 11th most viewed music video on YouTube. (officialpsy July 2012, description box.)

The growth of social media platforms such as YouTube made the third generation of K-pop more accessible to international fans, which made breaking overseas much easier. The third generation of K-pop included groups like EXO, BTS, BLACKPINK and Twice that have been internationally

successful. BTS is to this day known as the group that paved the way for other Korean artists to enter the American music industry and they are the most known K-pop group in the world. They have won over 483 awards, and they have sold 3.6 million album equivalent units since 2021. According to Peoples (2022) in 2021 BTS sold more albums on CD in the U.S than any other artist, with 1.03 million copies sold, representing 2.5 % of total CD album sales in the U.S. across all genres of music.

> The group's total share of the U.S. album sales market in 2021, across all formats (CD, digital download, vinyl LPs and other formats) was 1% (Peoples 2022).

The fourth generation of K-pop has bigger influence and more consumers than the previous three generations. K-pop is no longer just based in Korean, and the industry aims to please foreign fans just as much as Korean fans. The noteworthy groups of fourth generation are Stray Kids, TXT, Itzy, aespa, ATEEZ, New Jeans and Enhypen. All the groups mentioned before were successful right at their debut, some even before it. They have all earned the title of "monster rookies". (Fashion Chingu 2023.) In the figure below, the popularity of K-pop worldwide in 2022 can be seen.
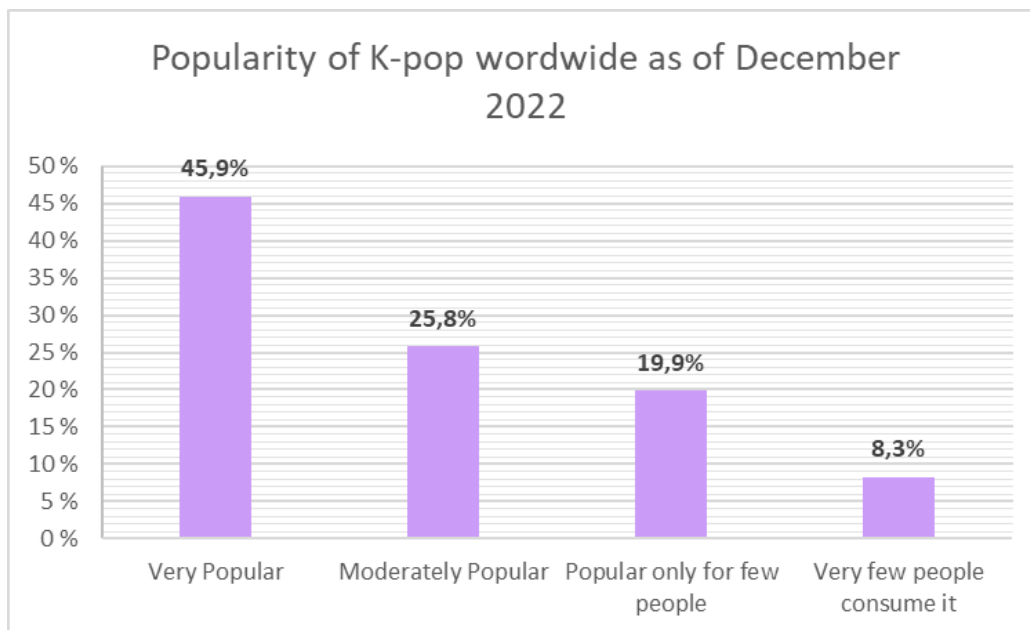

Figure 3. The popularity of K-pop worldwide as of December 2022 (Adapted from Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange, 2023a).

Overall, K-pop has evolved a lot from the 1990s. It is more international than before, and idols have become more than just their groups. Debuting in the foreign markets, especially in the U.S.A, has become the norm and something that was only a dream 10 years ago.

2.3   K-dramas and movies

As mentioned in the earlier chapters, Korean dramas, also known as "K-dramas", and movies have become a big part of the Korean Wave. They started the Korean Wave and have been a crucial part of the evolution of Hallyu to this day. While Korean dramas and movies in the past were mainly exported to and watched in other Asian countries, in this century big streaming services like Netflix and Disney+ have started to include and produce their own K-dramas. (Song 2020, 138.)

K-dramas are distinct in their style compared to Western TV shows. According to Canola, K-dramas are shorter, the romance in the dramas is paced differently, they have more visual and sound effects, are full of cliches and they always have some kind of tragedy or health complication. In the past, a basic K-drama had episodes ranging from 20 to 35, but nowadays most of the K-dramas are usually anywhere from 10 to 16 episodes. As for the romance aspect, usually it is slow paced and almost innocent. The focus of romance in K-dramas is on the emotional aspects of the relationship rather than the physical aspects. For the visual and sound effects, K-dramas add a lot of non-diegetic sounds to amplify scenes and reactions. A good example of a K-drama that uses a lot of visual and sound effects is "Yumi's Cells" that was released in 2021. In the picture below the visual effects of "Yumi's Cells" can be seen. The K-drama used a lot of visual effects to demonstrate the feelings of each character. (Canola, 2022.)

Figure 4. Yumi's Cells Poster (The KDrama Playbook 2023).

K-dramas tend to stick to the same plots and overused tropes, and they are almost every time end the same way. As for the tragedy or health complication, almost evert K-drama has either of these tropes. It's very common to see a significant character suffer an injury they must overcome, then recuperate shortly after. (Canola 2022.)

As mentioned in the early chapters, K-dramas kickstarted the Korean Wave in the late 1990s. Dramas like "Jewel in the Place", "What Is Love?" and "Winter Sonata" where the first major K-dramas that were popular East Asian region, especially in China, Japan, and Hong Kong. (Song 2022, 128-129.) They were the most popular dramas of the nineties and yearly 2000s. In the 2010s K-dramas that were popular overseas but did not break into the mainstream media were shows such as "Descendants of the Sun" (2016), "Legend of the Blue Sea" (2016-2017), "Goblin" (2016-2017) and "Crash Landing on You" (2019-2020) (Nguyen 2022). These shows enjoyed success among K-drama fans, but it was not until shows like "Parasite and "Squid Game" were released that K-dramas become more globally known.

"Parasite" was released in 2019 and it won four awards in the 92nd Academy Awards and become the first non-English language film to win Best Picture award (Chow, 2020). In the figure below, the box office revenue and audience number of "Parasite in February 2020 can be seen.
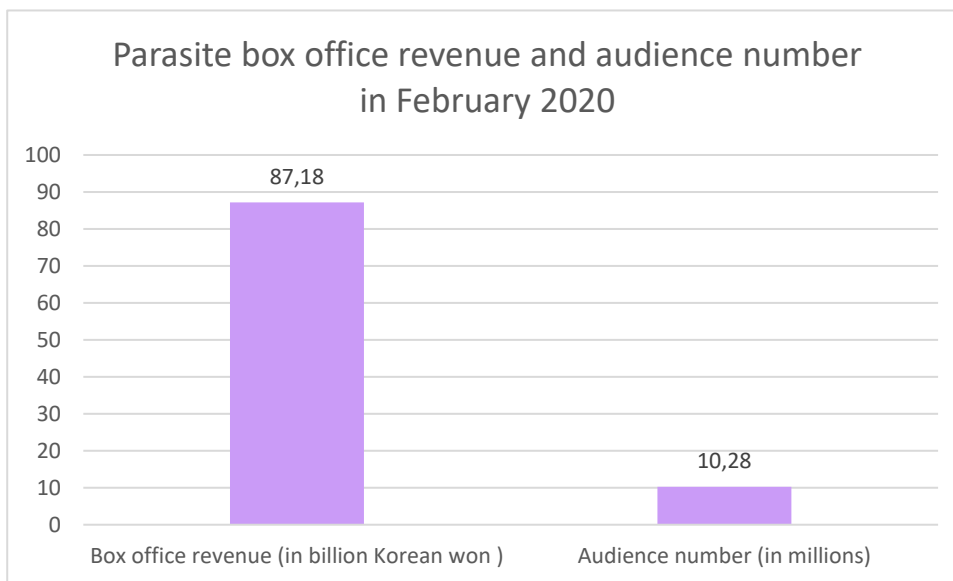

Figure 5. Parasite box office revenue and audience number in February 2020 (Adapted from KO-FIG 2020).

"Squid Game" was released in 2021 and the show shot to popularity quickly after the release. It was published to Netflix and had 265.2 million views as of October 29, 2023. (Netflix, 2023.) The show received 14 Emmy nominations and won six awards. The main actor of the show, Lee Jung-

jae, was the first Asian actor to win the outstanding lead actor in a drama series award. (Yeo 2022.)
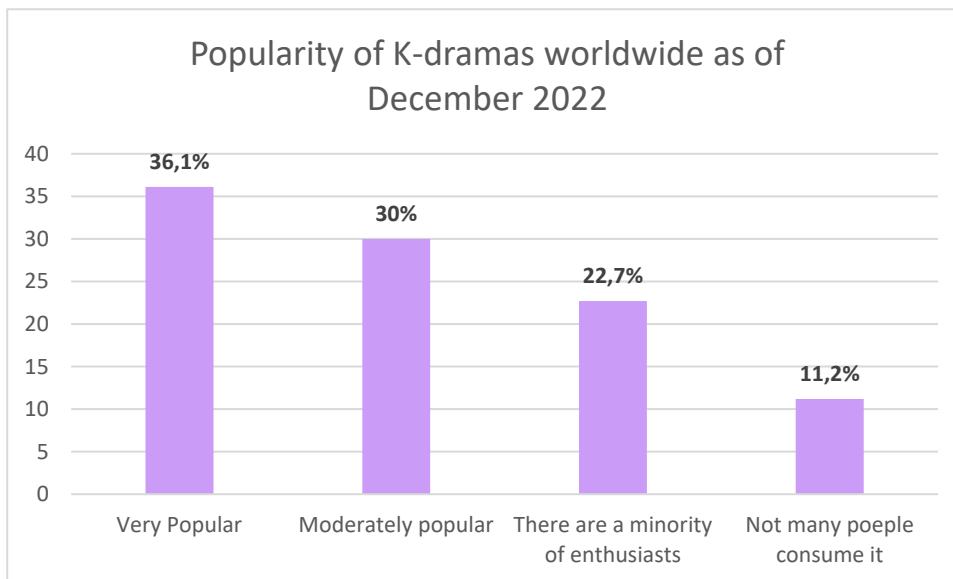

Figure 6. The popularity of K-dramas worldwide as of December 2022 (Adapted from Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange, 2023b)

Overall, Korean dramas have been popular since the early nineties and their popularity continues to grow alongside K-pop and other aspects of Korean culture. In 2021s the popularity has skyrocketed and has reached bigger audiences due to popular releases like "Crash Landing on You", "Parasite" and "Squid Game". In the figure above the popularity of K-dramas as of December 2022 can be seen.

3   Travel motivations

Travel motivations are the underlying psychological reasons why we travel, and they reflect the needs of the individual and can be hard to explain. Travel motivations can change depending on the destination, the amount of people traveling and if the traveler has low or high travel experience. (Travel & Climate s.a.)

There have been many theories that have been important in trying to find out what the travel motivations are, and the ones that will be explained in this chapter are the hierarchy of needs and the push and pull motivations. The two theories are the most popular ones and are often used when trying to answer the question "why do people travel?". The reasons for explaining the two theories are because they explain travel motivations clearly, approach it differently and give unique perspectives to travel motivations.

3.1   Maslow's Hierarchy of needs theory

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is one of the first motivational theories in psychology that comprises a five-tier model of human need. It has been used in the field of tourism as it helps clarify travelers' varied motivations and thereby explain tourists' travel behaviors. The theory divides human behavior into four distinct levels of human needs, in which you fulfill one of the needs, it leads to another one on a higher level, thus forming a hierarchy. In the most basic sense, Maslow's pyramid demonstrates that to be truly motivated, a person must meet all the need levels in the hierarchy. In the figure below the theory's hierarchy can be seen. (Yousaf, Amin, Santos 2018, 201.)
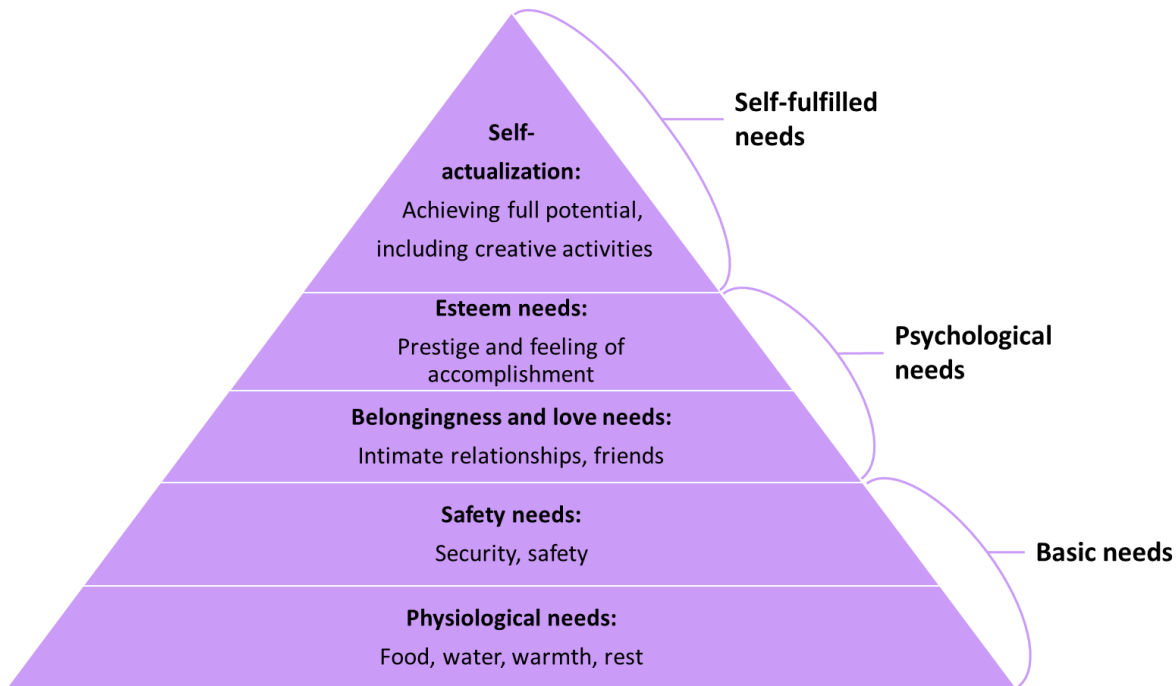
Figure 7. A picture of the Hierarchy of needs (Adapted from McLeod 2018).

Starting from the bottom, the first set of motives are physiological needs, which are associated with individuals' basic needs, such as food, shelter, and water. When applied to traveling, physiological needs are the basic requirements that travelers expect destinations to meet. These requirements include facilities provided to travellers during their stay, and among others, include suitable accommodations, potable water and restaurants providing good food and/or cuisine. These needs are so basic in nature that they can be regarded fundamental motivations for all travellers. (Yousaf, Amin, Santos 2018, 201.)

The second need in the motivational pyramid is safety needs, which is associated with travellers' safety-related issues. These can be the safety level of the accommodations, overall safety of the destination and travellers' own sense of safety during the stay. Accommodations and destinations can attract more visitors if they are able to provide safe environment in which travellers feel protected from any threats during their stay. When visitors are convinced that the facilities of their destination are safe and remain stable during the stay, the probability of choosing these destinations is higher. (Yousaf, Amin, Santos 2018, 201.)

The third need refers to forming relationships with people to create a sense of social belonging and confirm their ability to develop healthy relationships. Social belonging plays a clear, positive role in motivating travellers to visit destinations. Individuals tend to travel to specific places to develop strong bonds with family and friends or to become familiar with destinations' local communities. (Yousaf, Amin, Santos 2018, 202.)

After the third need is fulfilled, the fourth motivation arises, which is self-esteem. When applied to tourism, this simply means that people travel to impress their relatives and those in their social group to gain higher social status, or to seek out a holiday that will make them feel fulfilled and content. (Tourism Teacher 2023.) The final need in the hierarchy is self-actualisation. Travellers see tourism as an activity to better themselves and improve skills by doing something that is challenging. Self-actualisation in tourism can also be related to activities in which people get involved in doing something that benefits society. (Yousaf, Amin, Santos 2018, 202.)

3.2   Dann's theory of Push and Pull Motivations

Dann's theory of push and pull factors is also something that is often seen used when talking about travel motivations in tourism. It was proposed by Dann in 1997 and is a widely accepted theoretical framework in tourism research. (Yousaf, Amin, Santos 2018, 202.) According to the theory, multiple factors motivate travelers to visit destinations, and those factors can be categorized as either pull or push motivations. In the picture below some examples of push and pull factors can be seen.
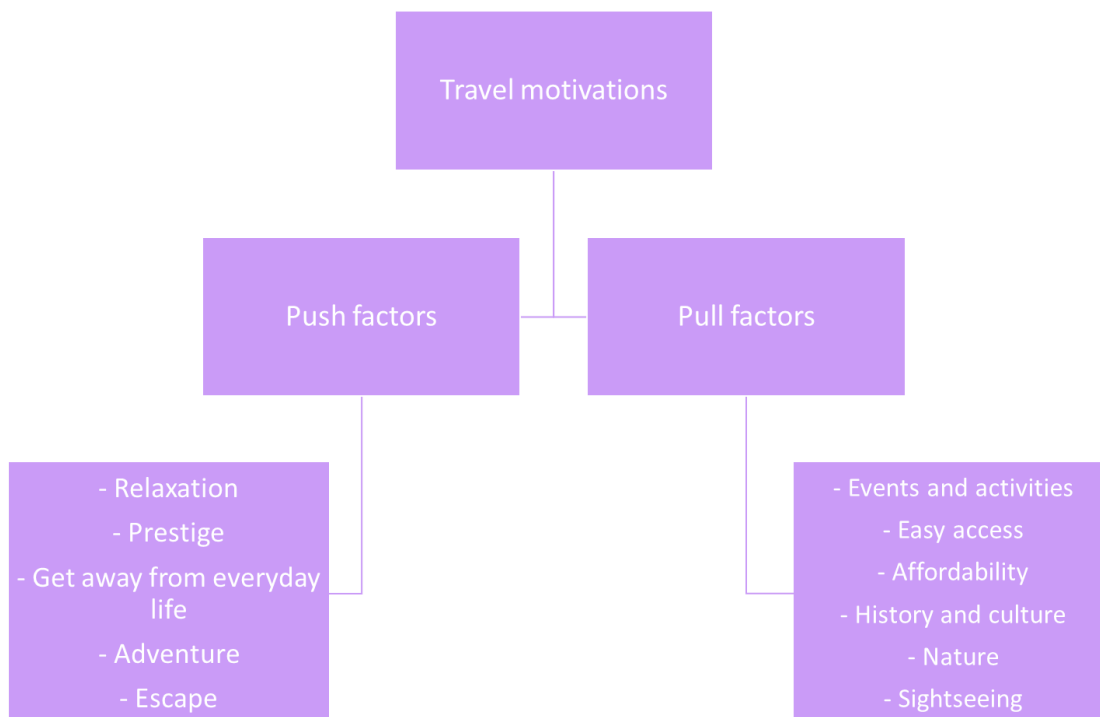
Figure 8. Push and Pull theory travel motivations (Adapted from Banya, Paudel 2016, 21).

Push factors are related to the desire to travel of the tourist while pull forces are associated with the qualities of the destination which tend to attract the tourist (Kassean, Gassita 2013, 43). Push factors are associated with factors such as longing for rest, recreation, adventure and escape and a desire to get away from everyday life. In summary push factors are things that encourage people to travel, and they represent individuals' socio-psychological needs. On the other hand, pull factors

are mostly associated with destinations' amenities, such as service quality, price, and infrastructure. (Yousaf, Amin, Santos 2018, 202.)

4 Tourism in South Korea

Tourism in South Korea is considered a sector for economic growth in Korea. In 2019 tourism directly contributed to 2.5 % of total GDP. Tourism-related businesses employed 275 620 people in 2019, which fell to 191 520 people in 2020, representing 0.7 % of total employment. (OECDiLibrary s.a.) In the figure below the number of employees in tourism in Korean between the year 2011 to 2021 can be seen.
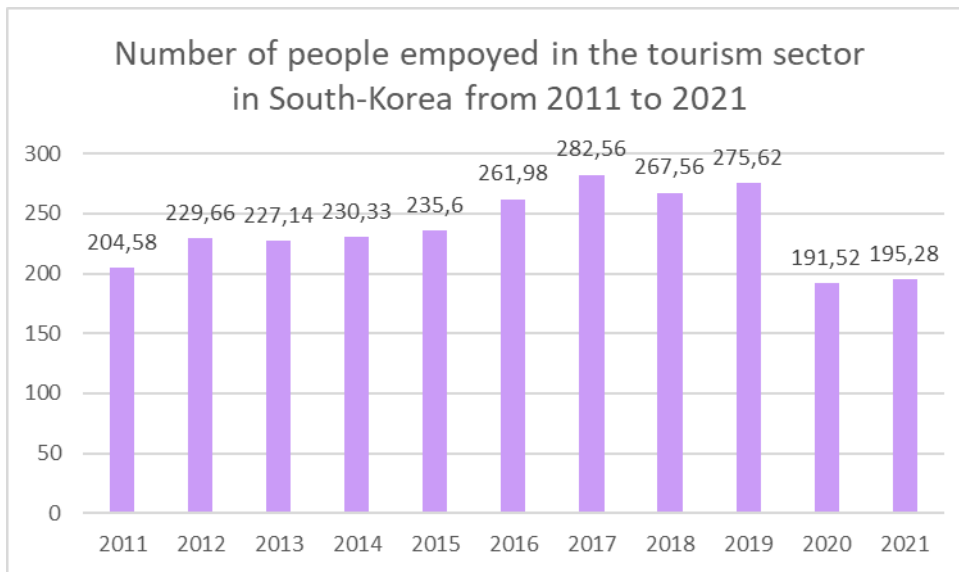

Figure 9. Number of tourism employees between 2011 to 2021 (Adapted from MCST 2023).

Travel exports represented 11.5 % of total service exports in 2020, down from 20.1 % in 2019. 2019 was an excellent year of tourism in South Korea, as they had a record high of 17.5 million international arrivals. In 2020, because of COVI-19, the arrivals to Korea fell by 86 % to 2.5 million and continued to decline in 2021. United States, China, Japan, and Hong Kong account for more than 70 % of the number of foreign tourists entering Korea. Domestic tourism is also a big sector, and it contributes to approximately two-thirds of total tourism pre-pandemic. In 2020, it fell 45 %, but recovered slightly in 2021, returning to 43.8% of pre-pandemic levels. (OECDiLibrary s.a.)

4.1 The impact of Hallyu on South Korea's tourism

The primary source of tourism in South Korean comes from Korean Wave. Korea's exports of cultural contents doubled from $ 5.1 billion (€ 4.6 billion) in 2016 to $ 10.3 billion (€ 93.3 billion) in 2019. Medical tourism (cosmetic), cosmetics industry and beauty industry are directly affected by the Korean Wave. Fashion and style products, which are often promoted by Hallyu stars, are gaining image and reputation by promoting and creating the latest trends. (Bae, Chang, Park & Kim 2017, 2.)

BTS, the biggest boy band in the world, is one of the main reasons why South Korea's tourism sector has grown so much in the last 5 years. In 2018, the Hyundai Research Institute reported that the economic value generated by BTS was estimated to be around 4 trillion won (€ 283 trillion) annually. While an average mid-sized firm in South Korea posted annual sales of 160 billion won (€ 113 billion) in 2016, BTS's production inducement effect was the size of 26 average companies. The research institute also claimed that BTS's global popularity had a significant impact on exports of consumer goods, such as clothes, cosmetics, and foodstuffs. In 2017, South Korea exported 65.2 billion worth of consumer goods, and BTS alone was estimated to have been responsible for 1.1 billion, or 1.7 % of the exports. (Kan 2018.)

BTS had a world concert in 2019 called "Love Yourself: Speak Yourself" and the final stop was in Seoul. It was estimated that the concert had a direct economic impact of 331 billion won (€ 234 billion) and an indirect impact of 592 billion won (€ 418 million). The total direct and indirect impact immediately from the concert was 923 billion won (€ 652 million), very nearly reaching 1 trillion won. According to research done by Professor Pyun Joo Hyuk, the concert attracted some 187,000 foreign visitors to the country, of whom approximately 23,000 attended the concerts, and an average of 3 in 10 visitors went to Seoul. This resulted in approximately 87,000 more people than average visiting Korea in 2019. (Baek 2019.)

South Korea's capital city Soul has also been affected by Hallyu, as some places in Soul has become notably popular due to K-pop. Gangman district became popular due to Psy's "Gangnam Style". Gangnam is also the preferred place for entertainment companies, such as SM Entertainment, JYP Entertainment and Pledis Entertainment, which in turn make the place even more attractive to K-pop fans. Another notable attraction in Seoul is K-star Road, also located in Gangnam. It is a street decorated with sculptures of relevant K-Pop groups. Visitors can walk around and find their favorite artist sculpture as well as taking a picture with it. Nowadays, it accounts for a total of 17 sculptures including ones of INFINITE, 2PM, EXO, BTS, Girls Generation, and FT Island. Hongdae district is largely known for its music culture and artistic background. Busking is popular in the area and K-idols and amateur performances can be seen in the streets when visiting the district. (Barros 2019.)

K-dramas have also contributed to the rising popularity of certain locations. K-drama sets that are accessible to the public have become popular places to visit. For example, Lotte World, a popular theme park in Korea, is often used in K-dramas such as "Business Proposal", "True Beauty" and "Love Alarm", and it's a popular stop to visit. Another example is Namsan Tower, also known as N Seoul Tower, is one of the main attractions in South Korea. It is one of the main tourist attractions and a lot of K-drama scenes have been filmed there. (Ong 2023.)

5   Research methology

The topic of Hallyu and its impact on Finnish travelers is not widely researched, which is why it was chosen for this thesis, alongside the researchers own interest on the topic. The aim of the thesis is to gain a better understanding on how Hallyu has impacted Finnish travelers and was the impact positive (has affected travels) or negative (has no effect on travels) This chapter focuses on explaining the research methology, data collection methods, the structure of the survey.

5.1   Research methods

Research methods are the strategies, processes or techniques utilized in the collection of data or evidence for analysis to uncover new information or create better understanding of a topic. Research methods are qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods of data collection. In the picture below the data collection tools for qualitative and quantitative methods can be seen.

Table 3. Data collection tools (Adapted from University of Newcastle Library Guides 2023).

Qualitative	Quantitative
Interviews: can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured in-depth sessions with the researcher and a participant.	**Surveys or questionnaires**: ask the same questions to large numbers of participants or use Likert scales which measure opinions as numerical data.
Focus groups: with several participants discussing a particular topic or a set of questions. Researchers can be facilitators or observers.	**Observation**: can either involve counting the number of times a specific phenomenon occurs, or the coding of observational data in order to translate it into numbers.
Observations: On-site, in-context or role-play options	**Document screening**: sourcing numerical data from financial reports or counting word occurrences
Document analysis: Interrogation of correspondence (letters, diaries, emails) or reports	**Experiments**: testing hypotheses in laboratories, testing cause and effect relationships, through field experiments, or via quasi- or natural experiments.
Oral history of life stories: Remembrances or memories of experiences told to the researcher	

Quantitative research is often used when the research is descriptive, correlational, or experimental. It is said to be an inquiry into a social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analyzed with statistical procedures, to determine whether the predictive generalizations of the theory hold true. Quantitative research uses statistical techniques to analyze data, thus generalizing the findings. (Durbarry 2018, 5.) Quantitative statistics

can summarize the sample data, make estimates about the population and test hypotheses. Surveys are a type of research method that involves collecting data from many people through questionnaires or interviews. Surveys are often used to gather information about attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. (Kevin 2023.)

In this thesis, the main research method used was quantitative survey. The reason for choosing quantitative survey method was based on the research question and what would be the best way to approach it. After debating between quantitative and qualitative methods, the conclusion was that quantitative method would serve the purposes of this thesis better.

5.2   Data collection methods

Secondary data is the data that have been already collected for another purpose and it has been collected in the past by someone else. It is a second-hand information, and it is typically found in resources like internet, libraries, and reports. Some popular examples are web information, business reports, mass media products, encyclopaedias, and government statistics. (Valcheva s.a.) The secondary data sources for the theoretical part of this thesis were collected from already published books, articles, and documents.

Secondary data can help researchers in multiple ways. It can answer research questions and solve research problems, help in problem formulation and devise more concrete and focused research questions, decide on appropriate research methods, or suggest better ones, and provide benchmarking methods and other findings that can be compared later on with the results from the study at hand. (Ghauri, Grønhaug, Strange 2020, 154.) The advantages and disadvantages of secondary data can be seen in the figure below.

Advantages

- Easy access
- Time saving
- A lot of free data available
  - Most of the data published by governments and organizations have been compiled and checked by specialists
- Allows to generate new insights from previous analysis

Disadvantage

- No data for specific needs
- Accuracy and reliability
- No way to check how the raw data was check and cleaned
- Can be biased in favor of the person who gathered it

Figure 10. Pros and cons of secondary data (Valcheva s.a.; Ghauri & al. 2020, 158).

Sometimes, when secondary data sources do not meet the needs of the research, primary data can be collected through surveys, questionnaires, quizzes, interviews, and observations. The goal of primary data collection is to collect data that is as accurate and complete as possible. This data can be used to improve the quality of life for people and the environment or used in research of specific topics. (Maione 2023.) The pros and cons of primary data can be seen in the figure below.

Advantages

- Researcher can collect data with specific objectives/questions in mind
- Timeliness
- Unique due to being for a specific research project
- Research continuity

Disadvantage

- Often slow and expensive
- May be difficult to obtain suitable access or build a database of suitable size

Figure 11. Pros and cons of primary data (Maione 2023; Ghauri & al. 2020, 160-161).

The primary data for the thesis was collected through an online survey. Online survey or internet survey is one of the most popular data-collection sources, where a set of survey questions is sent out to a target sample and the members of this sample can respond to the questions over the internet. Respondents receive surveys via various mediums such as email, embedded over website and social media. Online surveys are a fast way of collecting required data, but there are advantages and disadvantages about them. (Figure 14.)
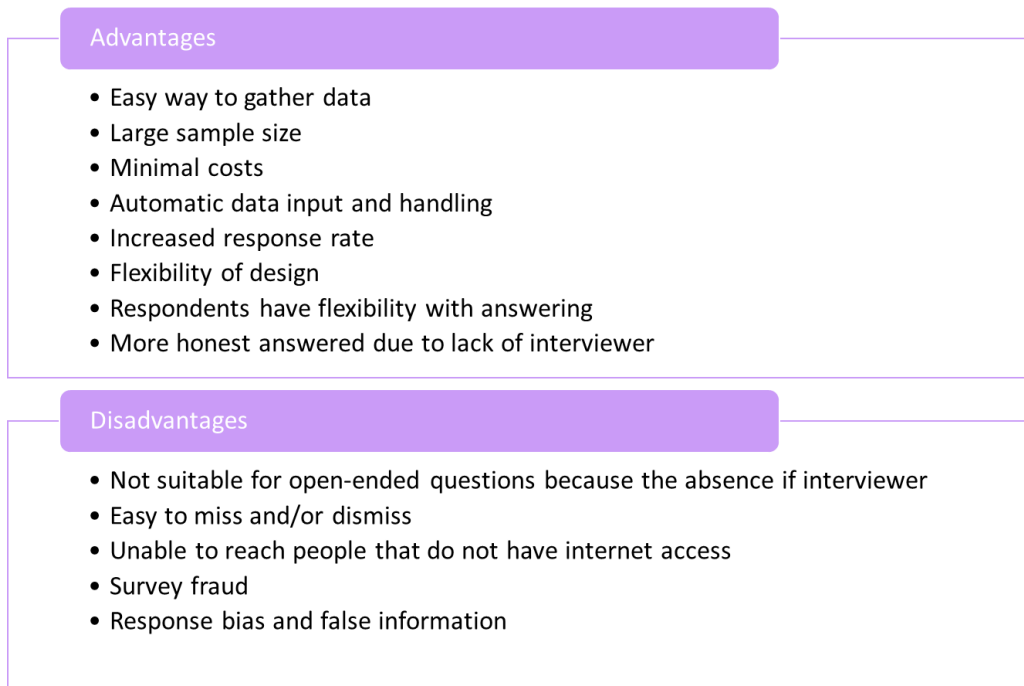
Advantages

- Easy way to gather data
- Large sample size
- Minimal costs
- Automatic data input and handling
- Increased response rate
- Flexibility of design
- Respondents have flexibility with answering
- More honest answered due to lack of interviewer

Disadvantages

- Not suitable for open-ended questions because the absence if interviewer
- Easy to miss and/or dismiss
- Unable to reach people that do not have internet access
- Survey fraud
- Response bias and false information

Figure 12. Pros and cons of online surveys (Adapted from Trustmary team 2023; Sincero 2023).

5.3 The structure of the survey

The survey had 11 questions, which one of them was a consent question, four of them were personal questions, and the rest were related to the thesis subject. The questions regarding the thesis subject were divided into three sections: personal questions (2-5), travel motivation question (6) and questions about the Korean Wave (7-11). The first question in the survey was about consenting to the answer data being collected for the purpose of the thesis. If the respondent answered "No" to the first question, the survey would end there, and the answers would not be recorded.

The survey had open-ended and closed-ended questions. The closed-ended questions (1-5, 9) were included to capture simple answers to some of the questions, and the open-ended questions (6-8, 10-11) were included to capture more complicated answers that closed questions would not give and would give the respondents a change to answer in a longer format and with more details. All the questions were required to be answered, except for questions about gender, as the

researcher did not think that data of respondent's gender was important regarding the result of the survey.

The survey was published 26.10.2023 and was open until 10.11.2023. The survey was created in Google Forms, and all the answers went automatically to an Excel sheet for easier analyzing. The survey was posted on two social media platforms, Facebook, and WhatsApp. The reason for choosing these two platforms was the researcher's familiarity with the platforms and the reach these social media platforms had considering the target group was people who have traveled to South Korea and those who might be a fan of Korean Wave.

The prerequisites for the survey were age and nationality. As the topic of the thesis was "The impact of Korean Wave on Finnish travelers", the researcher only accepted people with Finnish nationality. As for the age restriction, the desired age range for the respondents was 20 to 30 years old, due to the topic of the thesis being catered towards those in early adulthood.

6   Survey results

In the next couple of chapters, the results of the survey will be discussed in chronological order. First the background information of the respondents will be discussed, after that the travel motivations of the respondents will be summarized, and finally the questions about the Korean Wave and its effect on the respondents.

The first question of the survey was a consent to share the collected data, which every one of the respondents answered positively. Overall, the survey had 44 respondents, and since most of the questions were required to be answered, every one of the respondents answered all of them.

6.1   Background information

The second question of the survey was about the respondents' age. (Appendix 1.) The possible answers were "Under 20", "20-25", "26-30", and "Over 30". As can be seen in Figure 15, 52,3 % of the respondents were between the ages of 20 to 25, which was 23 individuals. 27,3 % of the respondents were between the ages of 26 to 30, which is 12 individuals. People over 30 were 15,9 % of the respondents, which was 7 individuals, and people under 20 were 4,5 % of the respondents, which was 2 individuals. From this statistic can be said that most of the respondents fell under the wanted age group for the survey, which was 20 to 30 years old.
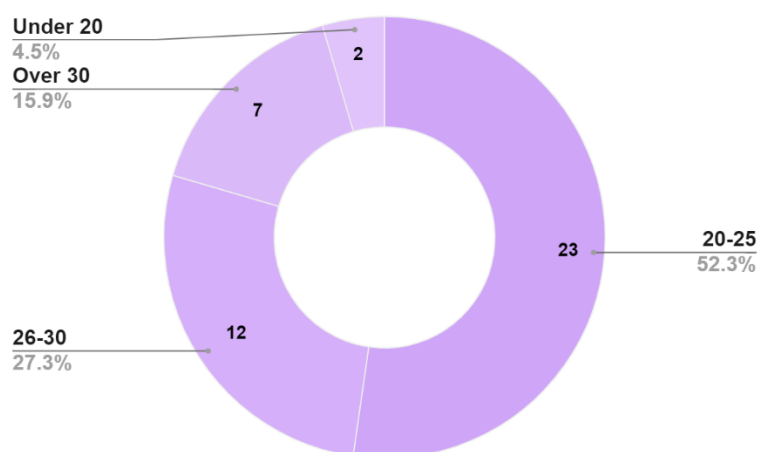
Figure 13. The respondents age distribution

The next question in the survey was gender. The options were "Female", "Male", "Other" and "Prefer not to say". Most of the respondents, 90,9 %, identified as female, which was 40 individuals. 2 of the respondents identified as male (4,5 %) and 2 chose the answer "Other" (4,5 %). The researcher would have hoped for more balanced results for this question, but he social media

platforms where the survey was published had mostly active female users, which explains the 90,9% female respondents. This was a mistake on the researcher's part.
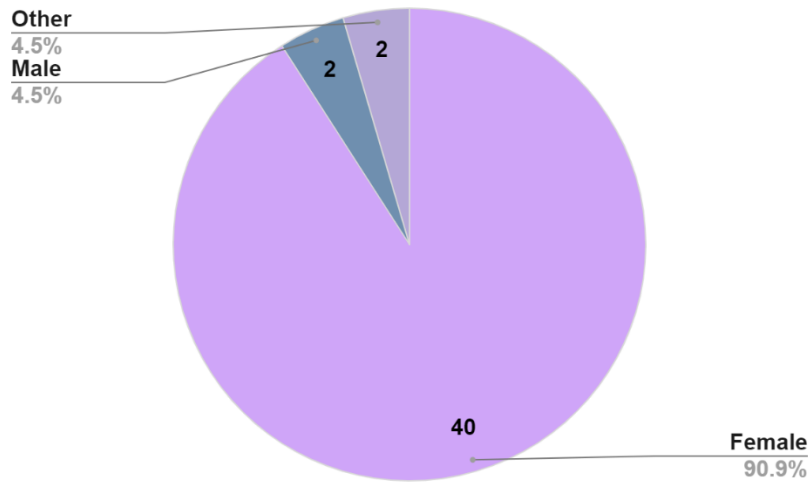

Figure 14. Gender distribution of respondents

The fourth question of the survey was nationality, and since the survey was published in Finnish groups in social media, all of the respondents were Finnish. This was the hoped result, as the whole thesis and the research object was to figure out the impact of Korean Wave to Finnish travelers.

The next question in the survey was "Where in Finland do you live?". The results of this question were more diverse, but there was also a lot more options.16 of the respondents (36,4 %) lived in Uusimaa, 8 of the respondents (18,2 %) lived in Pirkanmaa, Southwest Finland, Central Ostrobothnia and Lapland all had 3 residents, which was 6,8% each. North Savo and Central Finland had both 2 answers, which was 4,5 % each. South Karelia, South Savo, Ostrobothnia, Kanta-Häme, Satakunta, South Ostrobothnia and North Ostrobothnia had all 1 response, which was 2,3 % each.
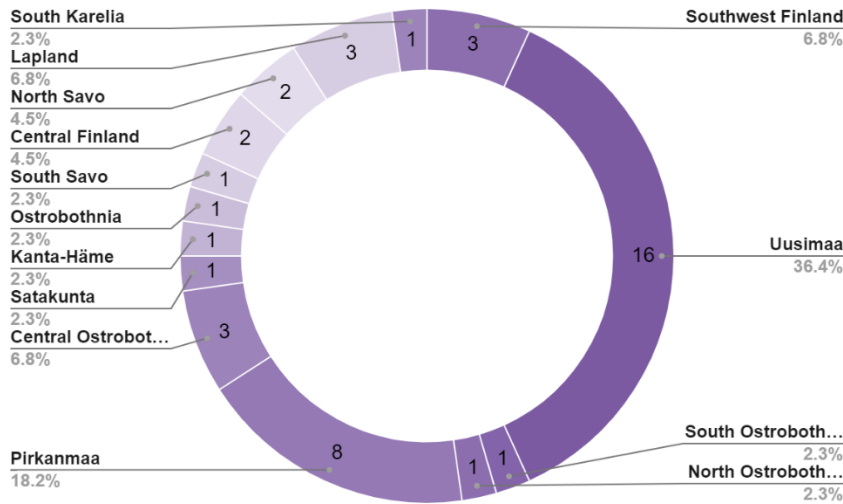
Figure 15. Fifth question of the survey: "Where in Finland do you live?"

6.2 Travel motivations

The sixth question of the survey was about travel motivations. The question was "What motivates you to travel?". This question was open-ended, and all of the respondents gave multiple answers which made pinpointing the exact reasons hard, but the researcher was able to summarize the results (Figure 18). Most of the respondents answered wanting to experience new things (new counties, people, and experiences) and different cultures (food, architecture, history). Personal reasons included inspiration, fun and escape of everyday life, ad nature and sightseeing included tourist attraction and popular places.
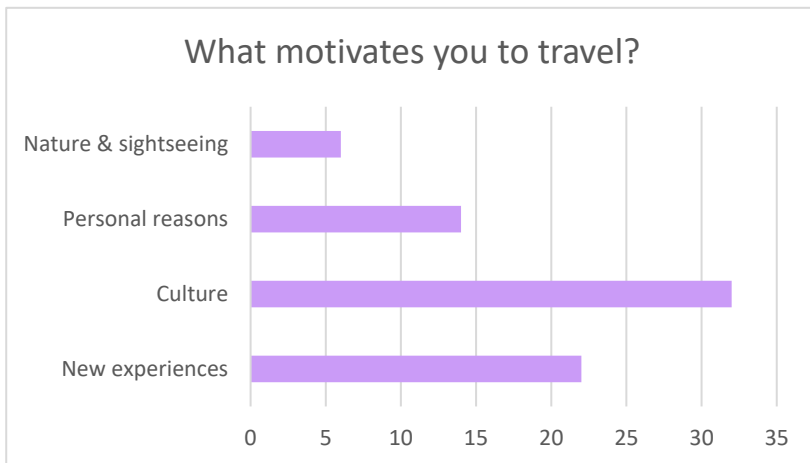

Figure 16. Travel motivations of respondents

6.3 Korean Wave

The seventh question, and the first about Hallyu, was "How and when did you learn about the Korean Wave (also known as Hallyu)?". This question was open-ended, and there were a lot of different answers. The question asked when had the respondents learned about the Korean Wave, and most of the answers were between the years 2009 to 2019 (69 %). 13 % of the responses were between 2020 to 2023, and 5 % were between 2000 to 2008. 13 % of individuals did not know anything about the Korean Wave or just knew the word.
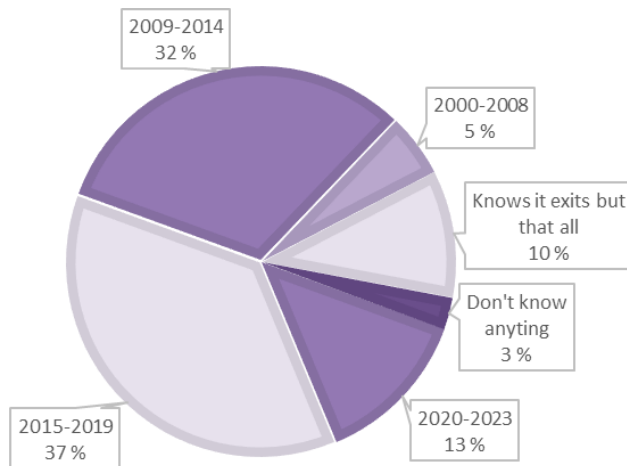

Figure 17. " When did you learn about the Korean Wave?"

Most of the respondents answered that they learned about Korean Wave through friends and family, and K-pop. K-pop is a crucial part of Korean Wave, which is why a lot of the responders first learned about K-pop, and afterwards about Hallyu. Some smaller answers were through the internet, K-dramas, and anime.
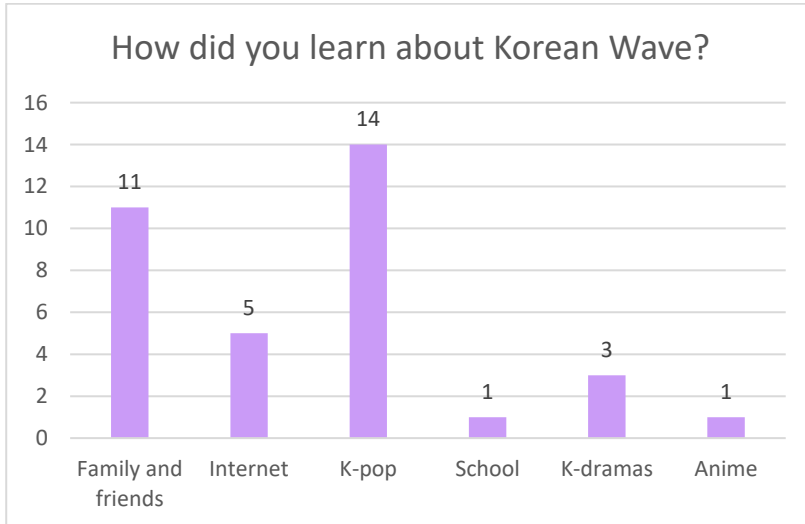
Figure 18. Question" How did you learn about Korean Wave?"

The next question was about what part of the Korean Wave the respondents consume the most. The options for that questions were "K-pop", "K-dramas and movies", "Entertainment shows (variety shows, dating shows etc.)", "Food", "Culture" and "Other". Respondents could choose more than one option. 35 out of the 44 respondents chose K-pop, which was clearly the main part of the Korean Wave that the respondents consumed. After that, 24 respondents chose K-dramas and movies, 16 chose culture and food, and 13 chose entertainment shows. Couple of the respondents answered "Other" option was well, and they said they consume language, manhwas (Korean genre of comic books and webtoons) and K-beauty the most alongside the other options. One of the respondents did not answer to this question at all.
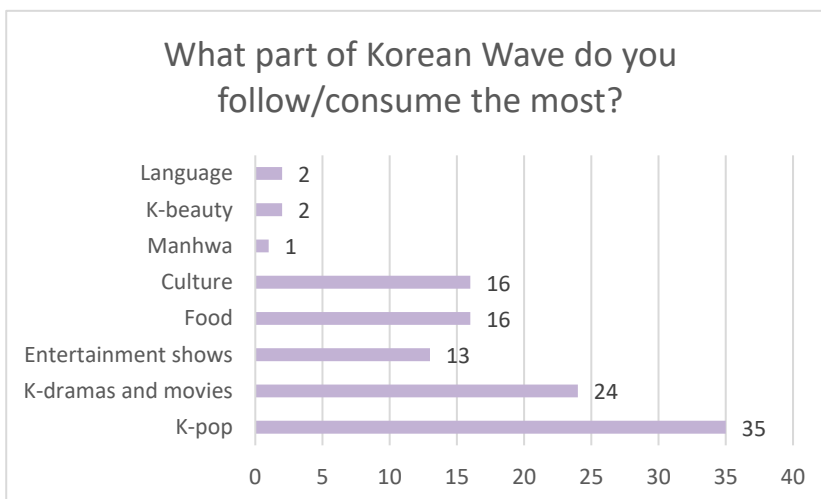

Figure 19. What part of Korean Wave do people consume the most?

The ninth question in the survey was "Has learning about Korean Wave made you want to travel to South-Korea?". This question was closed-ended question, and the answer options were "Yes", "No", and "Other". 36 out of the 44 respondents said yes, 5 said no and 3 maybe.

Figure 20. Question number nine.

The 10th question asked if any of the respondents had traveled to South Korea before, and if they had what the reason was. This question was an open-ended question. The result was that 64 % of the respondents (28) said they had never traveled to South Korea, 32 % (14) said they had, and 4 % (2) was planning on traveling there soon.
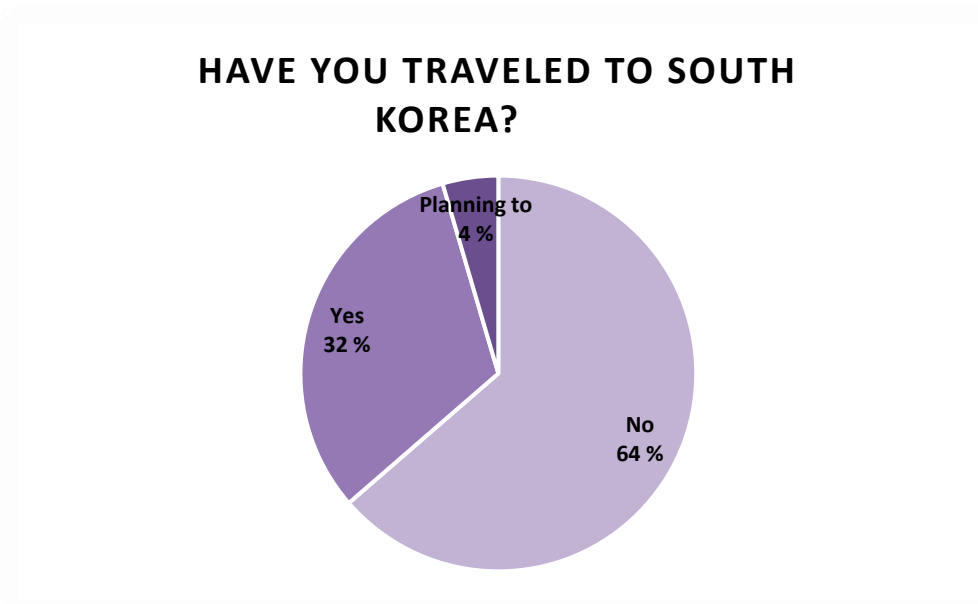

Figure 21. Have you travelled to South Korea, and if you have, when and what was the reason?

The next part of the question was, if they have travelled, why and when. All of the travels happened between 2012 to 2023. Many of the respondents had travelled to South Korea multiple times and plan on going again in the next couple of years. The main reasons for traveling to South Korea seemed to be for a pleasure, or as an exchange student. Some went because of K-pop concerts and minority visited family or was just interested because of Korean Wave.
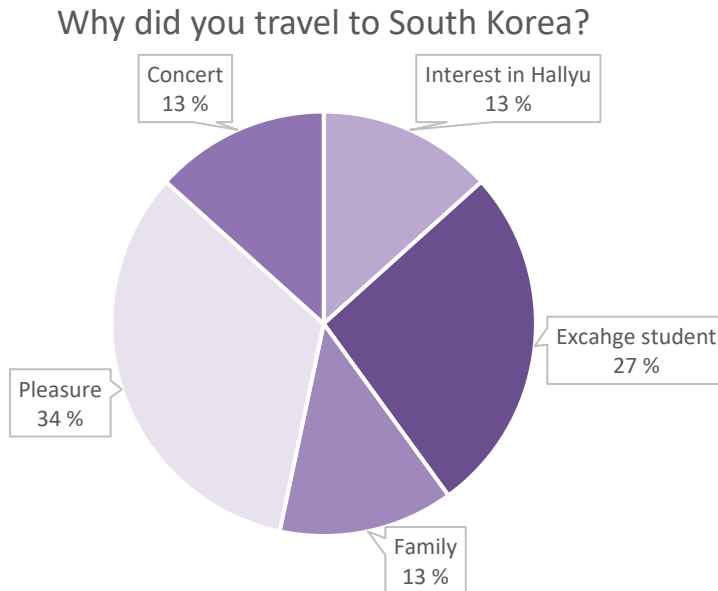

Figure 22. Question 10: Have you traveled to South-Korea, and if you have, when and what was the reason?

The last question of the survey was "How has Korean Wave affected to your traveling?" This question was an open-ended question, and every one of the respondents answered. 41 % of the individuals (18) said that Korean Wave has made them want to travel to South Korea. 41 % of individuals (18) also said that it has increased their want to travel. 18 % of the respondents (8) said that it had no effect on their travels.

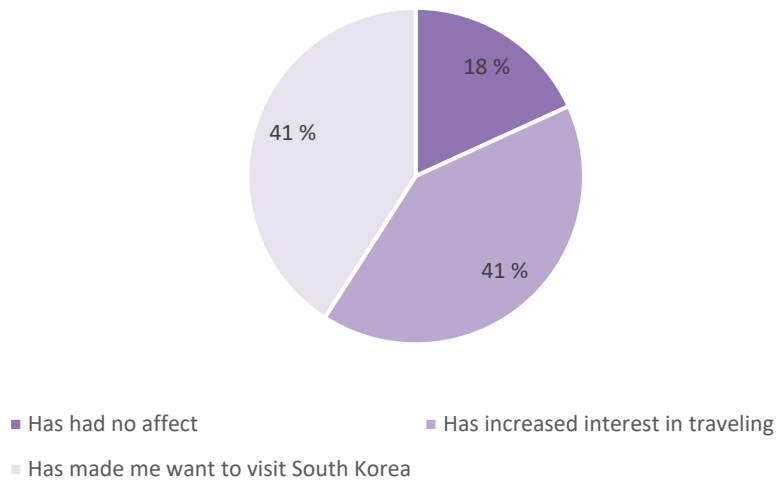How has Korean Wave affected to your traveling?

- Has had no affect
- Has increased interest in traveling
- Has made me want to visit South Korea

Figure 23. Question "How has Korean Wave affected to your traveling?"

7 Discussion

This chapter reviews the main findings of the study, the conclusions drawn from the findings and suggestions for further research. The chapter also discusses the reliability of the study in terms of validity and reliability. The chapter also includes a self-evaluation by the researcher.

7.1 Conclusions

The purpose of this thesis was to find out if Korean Wave had any impact in Finnish travelers. The survey was published in two social media platforms, which both had different participants. The other participants were not necessarily interested in Korean Wave or only knew about it a little bit. The other group of participants were aware of Hallyu and most likely followed it closely. This gave the researcher a bigger sample size on both perspectives. All the survey questions received a variety of answers.

Based on the findings, the conclusion is that Korean Wave has had an impact on Finnish travelers. Most of the respondents had learned about the Korean Wave in the years 2009 to 2019. From this the conclusion is that most of the respondents were aware of Korean Wave during Hallyu 2.0 or 3.0. (2000 to present). The most common way the respondents had learned about it was through friends and family and K-pop. This tells that most of the respondents knew K-pop before they knew about Korean Wave. From the respondents' answers, it seems to be a process of first learning about Kpop, and later coming across the work "Korean Wave". This indicates that the word "Korean Wave" is not as known as the researcher thought. This is also prevalent when analyzing the results of the eight-survey question (Figure 21.) Most of the respondents said that they consume K-pop and K-dramas the most from Korean Wave. This, once again, solifies the role of K-pop and K-dramas as a major part of the Korean Wave, and thanks to them, the respondents learned about Hallyu. Most of the respondents said that after learning about Korean Wave, their interest to travel had increased, whether it be to South Korea or other parts of the world. Still, even though their interest had increased, not a lot of the respondents had traveled to South Korea. The ones that had, did it because of pleasure, family of as an exchange student.

7.2 Ideas for further research and application

Further research regarding this topic needs to be done to further improve knowledge of Korean Wave's effects on Finnish travelers. There is a lot of qualitative and quantitative research done of Korean Wave, but its specific effects on Finnish travelers is nonexistent. The main research found for this thesis was limited to K-pop, K-dramas, and movies, as research done on other aspects of Korean Wave, such as food, culture, e-sports, and entertainment shows, was difficult to find. Due

to the recent popularity of the Korean Wave, especially K-pop and K-dramas, finding good sources and reliable research was difficult. So further research on those topics is important for any further quantitative research done.

This research was created to study the impact of Korean Wave, and the relationship between popular culture (Korean Wave) and its effects on Finnish travelers. This thesis is possible to use in further research of the topic. The research done in this thesis can also be applied to the tourism industry in Finland and South Korea. Traveling agencies in Finland and South Korea who's target groups are Finnish people traveling to South Korea can use the data from this thesis to create new tour packages gathered towards Finnish people who are traveling to South Korea based on the survey questions 6 (Figure 18.) and 8 (Figure 21.)

7.1 Reliability and validity of the survey

Reliability and validity are concepts used to evaluate the quality of research. They indicate how well a method, technique. or test measures something. Reliability is about the consistency of a measure, and validity is about the accuracy of a measure. It is important to consider both concepts when creating the research, planning methods or and writing up the results. Failing to do any of the mentioned things can lead to severe types of research bias and affect the end results negatively. (Middleton, F. 2019)

The survey's reliability and validity are questionable, as the low number of respondents do not give concrete proof to make confidential claims about the results. The factors contributing to the low number of respondents was due to the researchers lack time, and because one of platforms where the survey was published did not gather any respondents, making the survey biased towards those who were aware of Korean Wave and follow it regularly. Despite that, the consistency of the survey answers was good. The researcher believes that while this research could have been conducted more thoroughly to ensure more validity and reliability, it does reach the level for scientific research.

7.2 Self-evaluation

This thesis topic was of interest, but due to work, fully investing in the research and survey process was difficult. The process of writing this thesis was challenging, due to not being able to focus for a long period of time. The theoretical framework of this thesis took the longest, as finding reliable sources proved to be more difficult than expected.

As much as this process was enjoyable due to the topic, writing this level of research proved to be difficult. Coming up with the chapters and trying to make everything make sense was hard.

Creating the survey proved to be way more difficult, and after compiling the results of the survey, there were similar questions that could have been avoided if I had put more time into the research. But, even with all the difficulties, the promise to graduate was too tempting to pass, which is why towards the end of this thesis process, writing and concentrating became easier. Overall, this was a good learning experience, and will probably help in further studies of work.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Survey

The impact of Korean Wave on Finnish travelers

I am a 3rd year student of hospitality management at Haaga-Helia, and this survey is part of my Thesis "The Impact of Korean Wave on Finnish Travelers". The goal of this survey is to figure out if and how Korean Wave (also known as Hallyu) has affected Finnish travelers.

This survey is a anonymous and will take only 5-10 minutes to answer and questions marked with an asterisk (*) are required. All the data collected from the survey will be deleted after the thesis is finished. The thesis will be published in Theseus online library for public viewing. The participation in the survey is voluntary, and consent can be withdrawn any time without giving a reason. Please note that once the research results have been analyzed, the contribution of a single participant cannot be retrospectively removed.

If you have any questions regarding the survey, contact me:
Santra Turja
santra.turja@gmail.com

turjasantra@gmail.com Switch accounts

Not shared

* Indicates required question

I have reviewed the research announcement, and I give my consent to participate *
in the research.

○ Yes

○ No (Completing the form requires giving consent. Responding "No" will end the survey)

Next   Page 1 of 4   Clear form

Age *

○ Under 20

○ 20-25

○ 26-30

○ Over 30

Gender

○ Female

○ Male

○ Other

○ Prefer not to say

Nationality *

○ Finnish

○ Other

Where in Finland do you live? *

○ Lapland

○ Kainuu

○ North Ostrobothnia

○ Central Ostrobothnia

○ Ostrobothnia

○ South Ostrobothnia

○ North Savo

○ South Savo

○ North Karelia

○ South Karelia

○ Central Finland

○ Pirkanmaa

○ Satakunta

○ Päijät-Häme

○ Kanta-Häme

○ Kymenlaakso

○ Uusimaa

○ Southwest Finland

○ Åland

What motivates you to travel? *

Your answer

How and when did you learn about Korean Wave (also known as Hallyu)? *

Your answer

What part of Korean Wave do you follow/consume the most? *

☐ K-pop

☐ K-dramas and movies

☐ Entertainment shows (variety shows, dating shows etc.)

☐ Food

☐ Culture

☐ Other:

Has learning about Korean Wave made you want to travel to South-Korea? *

○ Yes

○ No

○ Other: _____

Have you traveled to South-Korea, and if you have, when and what was the reason?   *

Your answer

How has Korean Wave affected to your traveling? *

Your answer