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NATION BRANDING WITH DRAMAS – CASE OF THE KOREAN WAVE

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## ABSTRACT

Nations just like products have a brand image and are susceptible to the likes or dislikes of consumers. If likeable, nations are in better standings with stronger economies due to consumers' higher consumption of that nation's goods. The popularity can also have position affect on the nations' citizen or the view on the nationality in general and can even positively affect businesses and political activities. Although continuously happening and changing, a nation's brand image can also be molded and influenced by the nation's own nation branding attempts.

One great example is South Korea, which has gained economic success and culture popularity in the past 20 years. Although there are many factors which could have contributed to South Korea's success, this studies looks at one particular factor – the “Korean Wave” and South Korea's active nation branding utilizing the “Korean Wave” as a nation branding campaign.

The Korean Wave is the phenomenon of a sudden growth in interest in South Korea and increased demand for South Korean products, culture, and people among the international markets. The Korean Wave is believed to be driven by increased interest in South Korean entertainment media, particularly dramas. This study looks at why there is such strong interest in South Korean dramas and how that interest can push up demand for South Korean products, culture, people, etc. and create economic success for South Korea. Basing off Conrad's theory of perceived relevance, where “perceived relevance increases consumption of related goods”, this thesis theorizes that Conrad's theory can explain the Korean Wave and that the international viewers do perceive relevance with South Korean dramas. With personal interjections from observations and support from previous studies and researches, this thesis will show that the connection between perceived relevance and increased South Korean goods consumption is built from viewers interacting with the dramas and developing a relationship that later gets transformed into a relationship between the viewers as consumers and South Korea.

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## I. Introduction

As a passionate follower of East Asian culture and events, I noticed during my trips to East Asia that South Korean culture was appearing everywhere – from being the origin of the new fashionable products I was purchasing to becoming the prevalent new restaurants everyone was clamoring about. Later on I noticed that it wasn't just in East Asia but globally, even in my small Pennsylvania college town, that South Korean culture was growing in awareness and popularity. How did South Korea suddenly become so popular? South Korea was now a brand that was giving products higher status and was gaining recognition itself.

South Korea's brand situation is possible because nations just like products have a brand image and are susceptible to the likes or dislikes of consumers. If likeable, nations are in better standing with stronger economies due to consumers' higher consumption of that nation's goods. The popularity can also have positive effect on the nations' citizens or the nationality and can even positively affect businesses and political activities. Although a nation's brand image is a continuous process, strategic nation branding can mold the image.

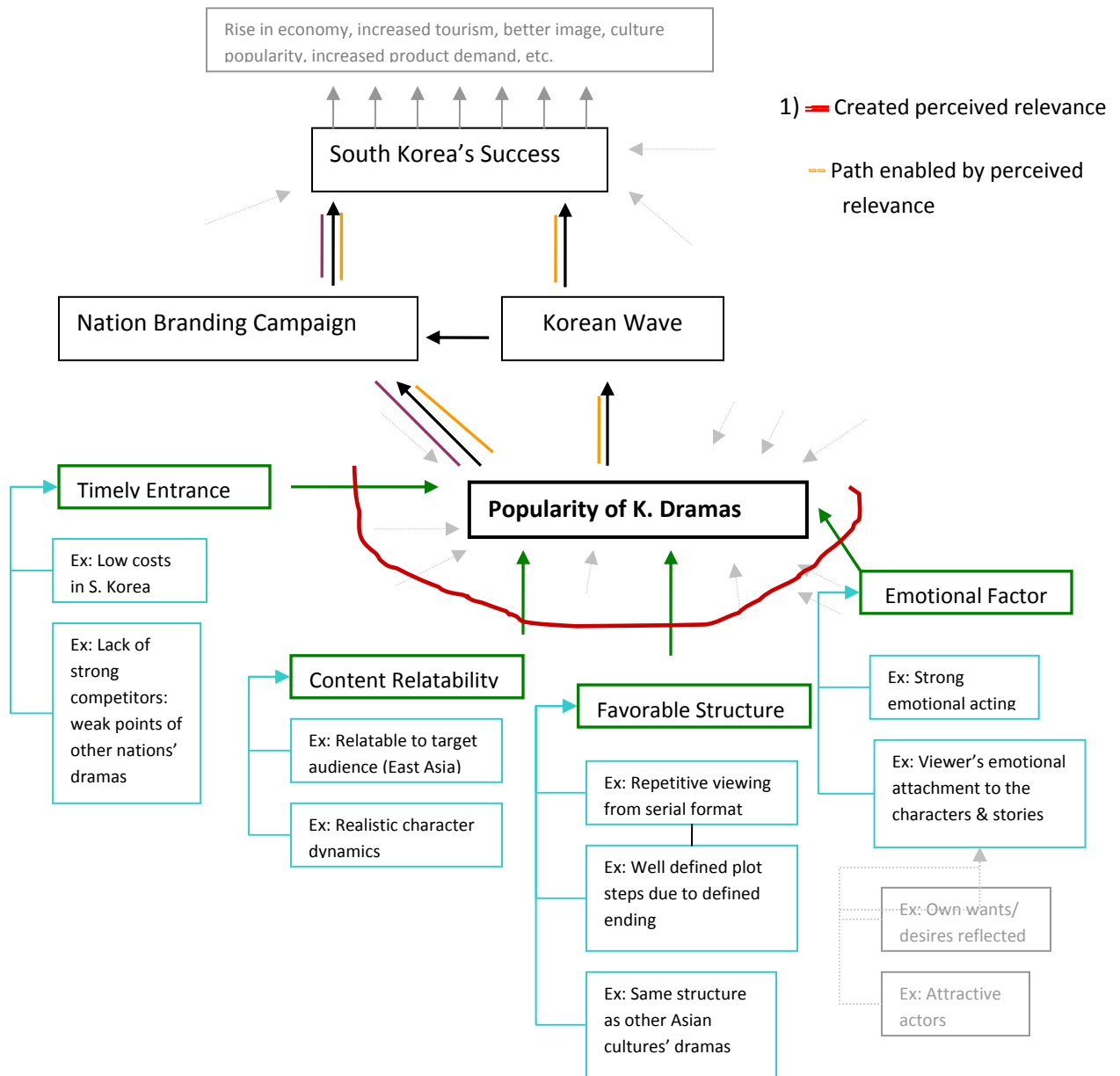
So how did South Korea's brand image improve? What is encouraging consumers to demand South Korean goods and has South Korea's economy positively reflected its brand image change? Intrigued by this trend, I began to research the reason for the increased interest in South Korean culture. In the various forums and internet searches, I came across the term used to represent the sudden growth in interest for South Korean culture - Korean Wave. More precisely, the Korean Wave connected the growth to the increased popularity of South Korean media and entertainment, or specifically South Korean dramas (Kim, 2009).

As an avid East Asian drama and media watcher with a consistent diet of South Korean, Japanese, Taiwanese, Chinese, and Hong Kong dramas, the possibility of a popular pastime becoming a factor of an entire nation's success was astonishing but believable. From previous studies, viewer testimonies, and my own observations, I believe that the connection between how the popularity of dramas can influence the success of a nation can be explained by C.Conrad's study on perceived relevance. Viewers, when watching dramas perceive relevance from the dramas. With South Korea's dramas, some of the factors I found as contributing to the viewers perceived relevance are South Korea's timely entrance, relatable content, favorable structure, and emotional factor. A few examples are also given to support these factors.

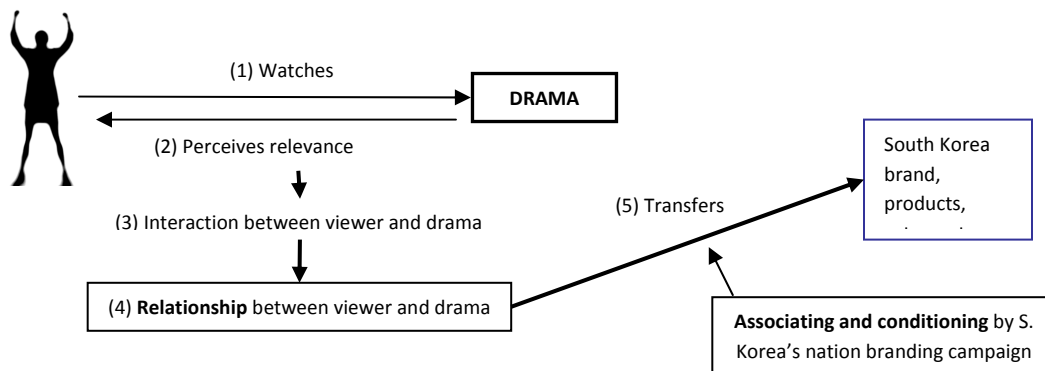
The perceived relevance enables interaction between the viewers and the drama, which in turn build a relationship. That relationship is then transferred to a relationship between the viewers and relatable products like the South Korea brand, memorable products, etc. through South Korea's nation brand campaign. The campaign activities associate the South Korea brand with the Korean Wave and South Korean dramas. This association is a type of conditioning, which conditions the viewers to connect their appreciation for the dramas with South Korea. The result of the conditioning and association is that viewers are reminded of the dramas they like or the experiences they had with the drama when they see the South Korean brand or related goods, pushing up their consumption. The connection and process I theorize are demonstrated in figure 1: Thesis Outline.



Figure 1: Thesis Outline



2) — Connection between perceived relevance and consumption of related goods



Thus, this thesis will be exploring this connection and process, and attempt to support it with other previous research, viewer testimonies, and examples. The analysis will be enhanced with an additional perspective from my own updated observations and knowledge from frequenting the East Asian drama world and drama market in America, Japan, and China.

## II. South Korea

In the past 20 years, South Korea as a country has become more developed and its economy has grown stronger. South Korea's Gross Domestic Production (GDP) as shown in figure 2, shows the changing economy and wealth.

GDP stands for Gross Domestic Product and is an economic statistical value that represents the “total market value of all final goods and services produced in a country in a given year”. It is equal to total consumer, investment, and government spending plus the value of exports and minus the value of imports.

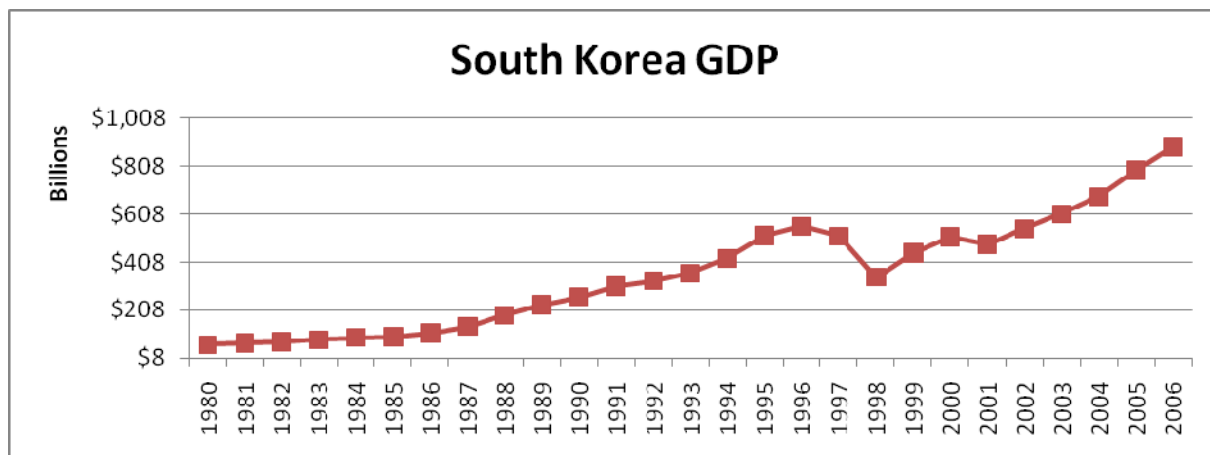


Figure 2: Korea's GDP – raw historical data (NationMaster.com)

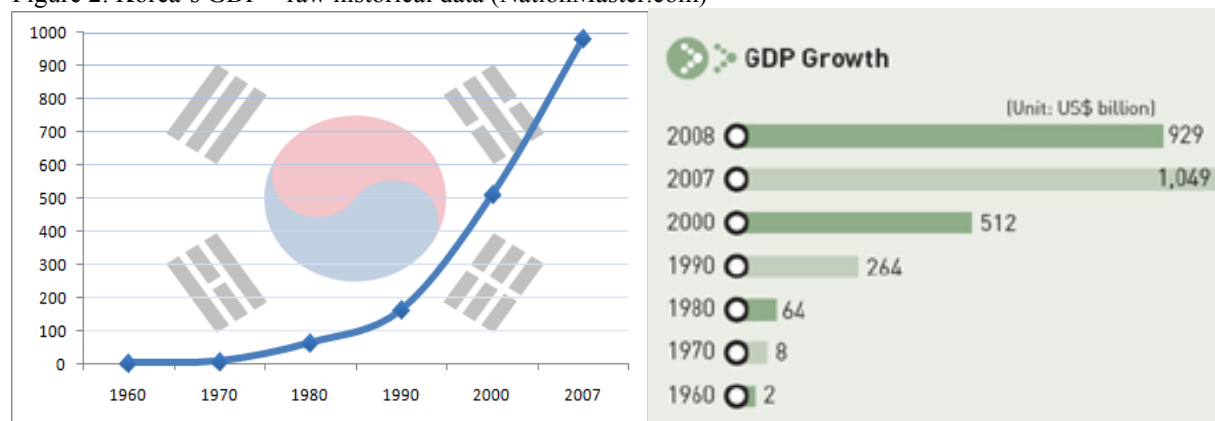


Figure 3 (left): Korea's GDP Trend – trend line for historical data (NationsMaster.com)

Figure 4 (right): Most recent GDP growth (Bank of Korea)

Figure 2 shows that South Korea's raw GDP has grown since the 1980s from around \$8 billion to over \$808 billion in 2006. Figure 3 and Figure 4 have a longer time range showing the general upward trend of South Korea's economy from 1960 to 2008. From just looking at the graphs, it seems that South Korea's GDP upward trend grows the fastest after early 1900's and late 2000s.

Per Capita GNI in figure 5 shows that South Korean citizens grew richer during South Korea's rise in economic success. Per Capita GNI reflects the average income of a country's citizens as

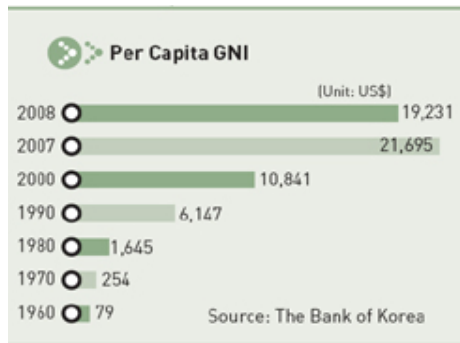


Figure 5: Per Capita GNI (Bank of Korea)

Regarding South Korea's interaction with the world, data on South Korea's export records from the 1990s to 2007 (Figure 6-7) reveal that South Korean goods have met increasing demand since the 1990s.



Figure 6: Built from historic goods and service export data provided by NationMaster.com, sourced from World Development Indicators database. Data is shown in Figure 7

Date	Amount	Rank
2005	345,209,200,000	#6
2004	318,056,800,000	#9
2003	265,990,500,000	#11
2002	230,088,600,000	#11
2001	203,158,500,000	#11
2000	208,857,700,000	#11
1999	175,298,800,000	#12
1998	152,936,600,000	#12
1997	135,759,900,000	#12
1996	111,620,600,000	#13
1995	99,514,610,000	#13
1994	80,005,250,000	#14
1993	68,803,530,000	#15
1992	61,347,290,000	#15
1991	54,674,280,000	#15
1990	49,223,600,000	#18

Figure 7: Goods and Services Exports 1990-2005 (NationMaster.com).

Overall South Korea's economy has been rising since the 1960s, with a drastic increase starting from the 1990s continuing until present with only a few slight drops in between. How did South Korea improve its country's state? Political movements, successful investments, famous South Koreans are all probable means that fueled South Korea's growth but here we will take a look at a widespread belief stating that South Korea's culture products and entertainment and media sector pushed the change (Ramstad, 2009). Specifically, that is the belief that Korea's success is highly attributed to the phenomenon that began in the late 90s and is sweeping the world with South Korean influence – The Korean Wave.

### III. The Korean Wave

The Korean Wave is recognized as the phenomenon or trend of increased interest in and increased desirability of South Korean culture and products. The increased interest pushed up the demand and acceptance for South Korean goods, services, and South Korea in general. The Korean wave is also titled Korean Fever, Hallyu, or Hanliu, etc. and gained its name in the late 90s from Chinese journalists commenting on the sudden increase in demand for Korean culture and products in China's market when Korean television dramas first aired in China (Chua 2008). How the Korean Wave started has not been fully proved but it is hypothesized and assumed that it started from the global introduction of Korean entertainment, specifically South Korea's most profitable Korean pop culture export - Korean dramas (Kim 2009). The countries that are most influenced and receptive of the Korean Wave and its products, are primarily across North and Southeast Asia particularly in Japan, China, Mongolia, Vietnam, Taiwan, and Thailand (Kim). However, the Korean Wave is spreading to other parts of the world as there is a growing presence in the Middle East, and North, Central, and South America, particularly in the States, Mexico, and Argentina. Surprisingly, it has also affected Africa, especially north; there is a sizable niche audience in Egypt (Korean Wave).

Although South Korean entertainment's popularity also includes music, this study will specifically look at drama from the drama and film sector as it considers the increased music demand a result of the drama/film sector's increase in demand. Furthermore, Korean music didn't successfully debut internationally until a year after South Korean films and dramas rose in popularity (Chua, 2008).

#### a. "Winter Sonata" – Start of the Korean Wave

We can better understand the Korean Wave by looking at a recognized main contributor to the Korean Wave - one particular drama "Winter Sonata" or "Gyeongseong" (Tan, 2009; Kim, 2009). "Winter Sonata" aired in Korea in January of 2002 and is a melodrama that is part of a four seasonal drama series directed by Kim Ki-duk. Although showed in Korea in 2002, Korean Tourism Organization (KTO) reports its first release to be 2001 in Hong Kong. Then it was released on Japan's NHK network in spring 2003 and finally the rest of Asia afterwards. "Winter Sonata" is not the first Korean drama released to foreign markets but it is considered as one of the main reasons the Korean Wave grew. It is also believed to have made the first biggest impact that snowballed into a huge Korean drama and media consumption explosion.

Its story that enraptured so many viewers, centers on four main characters - two male and two female - who were high school classmates in a small town outside of Seoul. Two of the characters, Jun-sang and Yu-jin, became first loves with a sweet romantic period but Jun-sang is suddenly killed in a car accident. After 10 years, the characters reunite accidentally and Yu-jin finds out that Jun-sang didn't die but lost his memory and became another person. Dealing with oppositions in their current life and confusions from being in relationships with others already, Yu-jin and Jun-sang struggle to regain their love and come back together (Winter Sonata).

It was such a captivating drama that Japan became infatuated and re-aired it immediately afterwards in winter 2003. Japan also produced an anime series from it, which started airing October 2009 (Winter). The four seasonal dramas series, that include "Winter Sonata", won

major international film honors and in 2005 first prize at the Berlin Film Festival (Cho, 2007). Winter Sonata contribution to increasing interest in South Korea can be seen in the “Winter Sonata” stars’ increased popularity, rise in tourism to the drama’s shooting locations on Nami Island in South Korea, and the increase in the amount of available “Winter Sonata” merchandise and fashion goods stylized after the characters (Kim, 2009; Winter Sonata).

#### IV. Perceived Relevance

So how is the popularity of a drama like *Winter Sonata* connected to the increase in South Korea's economic success and desirability of South Korea as a nation? C. Conrad's study of perceived relevance gives insight on that connection. Through his research on identification with song lyrics, he found that texts that consumers perceived relevance with "guided consumers' consumption of text that was congruent with that reconstructed experience" (Kim, 2009; Conrad, 1988). Using Conrad's find, the connection between increased viewership of Korean dramas and increased consumption of Korean goods and dramas can be explained to be that viewers perceived relevance with Korean dramas and thus increased their consumption of goods that reminded them of the perceived relevance; those goods also happen to be related to South Korea. This explanation can also be supported by the Cultivation Theory, which argues that television viewing may elicit certain audience behaviors such as purchasing of goods (Kim, 2009; Meyer, 1989). In such consumption of "related" goods, the Social Action theory gives support with its observation that human beings perceive their surroundings through "referencing others in ongoing and emerging performance" and "mediated communication can influence the ongoing daily social routines of individuals, including their daily buying behavior" (Kim, 2009; Meyer, 1989).

Therefore, the question actually lies in what is "perceived relevance" and why do international viewers have "perceived relevance" with Korean dramas and films. First, what does "perceived relevance" mean? Webster dictionary provides "relevance" as "**1 a** : relation to the matter at hand **b** : practical and especially social applicability **2** : the ability (as of an information retrieval system) to retrieve material that satisfies the needs of the user".

For "perceived", the definition Webster provides is "**1 a** : to attain awareness or understanding of **b** : to regard as being such <perceived threats> <was perceived as a loser> **2** : to become aware of through the senses".

From the official English definition, "perceived relevance" refers to how much viewers regard something as being attainable and applicable to themselves and their own lives. Furthermore, a subject that has "perceived relevance" must have elements that are important enough to viewers for them to remember and capable of satisfying the viewers' needs and wants. Whereas "relevance" alone may mean applicable and relatable to real human life, behavior, and interaction, "perceived relevance" has pertinence to the viewers' own experiences, wants, dreams, and lives, etc.

In the article "Television Drama, Narrative Engagement and Audience Buying Behavior: The Effects of *Winter Sonata* in Japan", Kim (2009) links perceived relevance to Burkean's (1950) "notion of Identification" and Cheney's (1983) definition of identification, which is in terms of television viewers. According to Cheney (1983: 146), television viewers see identification with the characters as "having idea, attitudes, or intentions similar to those of the appealing character, or acting in a manner similar to the character". Kim ties Conrad's "perceived relevance" to Cheney's "identification" stating that Conrad and Cheney both share similar views. Furthermore, Conrad himself defines materials with high level of perceived relevance as capable of articulating "dialectical relationships which parallel readers' everyday experiences" (Conrad



1988; Kim 2009). Thus in summary, viewers perceive relevance in films and dramas that have a certain degree of relatability to the viewer's everyday experiences and have logical and realistic relationships and events with which the viewers can relate personally to and follow, participating with their own experiences, emotions, and wants, etc.

Therefore, a film with perceived relevance can be theorized to have a high degree of interaction between the viewers and the drama and/or film. With Cheney's idea of "identification", viewers may even self-project themselves onto the characters if the characters' behaviors, decisions, and wants, etc. are applicable to the viewers. This concept of perceived relevance building high degrees of interaction is greatly supported by many. One is by Gunter (1988) who discusses audiences' level of engagement with television drama as being measurable by how much their "real-life experiences compare to television portrayals" (Kim, 2009). Fisher's paradigm of narrative fidelity is another similar theory. Fidelity refers to the truthfulness of a story as assessed by "logic of good reasons" while stating that the stories people watch "ring true with the stories they know to be true in their lives" (Fisher, 1987; Kim, 2009).

As the Korean Wave is an international phenomenon with a larger variety of viewers and consumers from other nations, Korean dramas must have a high level of interaction and perceived relevance, and a good amount of broadly relatable content.

## V. South Korean Dramas “Perceived Relevance”

With so many different forms of media and dramas from various countries, why are South Korean dramas and films strong enough to invoke a culture-moving phenomenon? What about Korean dramas and films make them able to gain perceived value from so many viewers of diverse nationalities and backgrounds? There are several possibilities that contribute to viewers perceiving relevance from South Korean dramas; the factors this study will look at are a timely entrance into the global market, relatable content, favorable structure, and the dramas’ emotional factor.

### a. Korean Dramas and their Timely Entrance

Korean dramas are episodic with various lengths from short 10 episodes to longer 40 episodes. Although with current technology the dramas can be viewed online often illegally or purchased on discs and watched at one’s own leisure, the dramas typically play on the television periodically from daily, biweekly, to weekly. Unlike American soap operas or television shows though, Korean dramas have a determined ending and length.

Other Asian cultures like Japan, China, and Taiwan, etc. also have similar format dramas and their viewers are more used to such formats, which is one of the reasons why Korean dramas are most popular in East Asia. Those East Asian countries’ dramas also have international popularity but not large enough to be causing a similar culture wave like the Korean Wave. The only other country with similar format dramas that successfully started a wave was Japan, whose wave appeared in the early 80s - 90s. Its dramas and films are still very popular with a diverse group of viewers but Japan’s dramas unfortunately still reflect culture aspects that aren’t as relatable to other cultures (ex: I observed dramas depicting demure and soft-spoken female roles). The modern dramas for the working young generations often reflect unreachable lifestyles; like characters with rich habits in the expensive city of Tokyo. Furthermore, Japan’s historical actions and negative relationships with many countries have limited the growth of their media. Viewers consciously limit their appreciation of Japanese dramas because of their negative attitude towards Japan as a country (Chua 2008).

Japan did not push as hard for its media to be international hits either. With the size of Japan’s viewer market and ease of profit, producers and companies often measured a film or drama’s success only by its home sales and viewing figures. Not needing exports for profits, few Japanese dramas or films were released internationally so many of the ones that were viewed by international audiences were viewed illegally. As the films and dramas made in Japan were calculated with costs of producing for the more expensive Japanese market in mind, it was hard to sell the films and dramas to other nations’ markets where accustomed prices were much lower. The failed attempts to market Japanese productions abroad, like with the drama “Romance 2000”, further deterred Japanese producers and companies from trying to push international acceptance. On the other hand, smaller domestic viewer market combined with lower production costs with South Korea’s less developed economy and lower won currency helped convince South Korean producers and companies to push their dramas and films into international markets (Chua, 2008; Free). Thus with the timely dissipation of Japanese dramas’ international dominance in the late 90s, an immediate opening was left for the fresh Korean dramas already at the front door.

Looking at the different nationalities' similar format dramas and their demand from just international viewers who interact and watch the dramas online, it can be seen that Japan and Korea are still the two strongest providers with Taiwan closely behind. From my personal viewership experience and observations from others' reactions, I observed some possible reasons for the weaker demand for the other nationality dramas. Chinese dramas are more popular in epic or historical dramas while its modern dramas are still not as well known because they do not share the same level of relevancy as Korean and Japanese dramas do. Many of the international online sites for East Asian drama related information or online viewings with translations and subtitles have plenty of modern dramas and films for South Korea, Japan, and Hong Kong but very few for mainland China. As modern dramas reflect the country's culture and lifestyle, Chinese modern films and drama still often reflect a communistic view with many stories centered on farmers. The portrayed lifestyles also reflect China's current developing but not yet very westernized life, which is harder for viewers to relate to (Freeze). Taiwan and Hong Kong are reflecting more internationally relatable content but their cinematic style and entirety are still in the developing stage to gain international viewership. Taiwan is also in an adaptive stage and trying to find its own style while it is learning by mimicking South Korean and Japanese drama styles (Sung, 2008). As a growing art, Taiwanese dramas are also lacking in the content and plot departments. They are currently viewed as simple, straightforward, and "a lot of silly fun" by many viewers and online commentators (Freeze; KoreanDrama).

A Malaysian online blogger who is a self-proclaimed "Drama King" did his own analysis comparing Korean, Japanese, and Chinese dramas and writes that Korean and Taiwanese dramas are the most westernized dramas and although Japanese dramas are more intricate, engaging, and original, they tend to implement their own culture making their dramas less susceptible to international relatability. He also gives a few important insights as a viewer and customer, stating that it is harder to find Taiwanese dramas in "DVD forms that have English/Malay subtitles compared to Korean or Japanese dramas", which are also cheaper, and that Korean dramas have good-looking, well-built actors/actresses and are the best in the "emotional department (inducing overflow tears)" (Korean Drama). This insight brings up the suggestion of how viewers' emotions and wants and desires and preference of actor images play into their "perceived relevance" of the dramas and films they watch.

#### b. Korean Dramas and the Relevance of their Content and Structure

Tests measuring the level of viewer appreciation found series and movies with a drama story line are watched more in general than compared to other media categories like sports, documentaries, etc. (Barrie 1992). However in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, society has changed a lot since the old days and many media are drastically entering fields outside of the proper and safe values and guidelines society is supposed to hold; horror films like the Saw series are rising with an increased amount of gruesome scenes and storylines. There are more movies about war and destruction and media no longer feels shunned when portraying irregular family and love lives (ex: in "Atonement" and shows like "Desperate Housewives", there are themes about divorced families, single parents, runaways, etc.). With the advancement in technology and CG, films are also portraying more futuristic storylines that are moving further away from reality (American, 2001). Even recent attempts to capture reality through "reality TV", has met failure as viewers perceive nothing realistic from them (Perkins, 2009).

Thus precisely answering to the definition of “perceived relevance”, South Korean dramas are attracting audiences with plots, themes, and characters’ behaviors and goals or wants that are more pertaining to realistic life, more relatable to a larger, international audience and in a way answering to the needs and wants of the viewers. As Korean producers and companies have a mindset of introducing the film or drama internationally, their focused goal of gaining international viewership may have influenced their pieces to be more universal and realistic. With more easily relatable content, viewers are able to have more interaction and identification with the stories and in doing so, the identification gives insight on how South Korean drama’s relatable stories and content answer to the viewers wants and desires.

From my observations, Korean dramas and films tend to be more in the life categories – stories about life with relatable themes of love and family – and the characters have aspirations – job aspirations, family aspirations, romantic aspirations, etc. in areas that aren’t limited by culture and background. The characters also seem more “real”. They have more attainable personalities that audiences can mimic and pursue to be like. Often the characters have desirable features, careers or career goals, and live through the real pains and struggles that viewers can easily share or relate to. The characters will also have understandable reactions, making decisions viewers themselves can see themselves making. For example, some characters deal with pains from single-side loves, losing a loved one, not being able to financially obtain what he or she wants, not gaining the family’s support and acceptance, etc (KoreanDrama). As Cheney (1983) says, viewers can identify with the characters and in a way be the characters when interacting with characters that are more “real”.

In addition, the Korean dramas have stories portraying good morale and effective character qualities that emphasize the desirable societal behaviors and qualities. For example, some Korean dramas revolve around main characters that are hard workers, family and friends oriented, innocent, and well behaved, etc. Even the famous and popular “Winter Sonata” had the main theme of first and pure love, platonic and non-sexual (Kim 2009). The type of themes with innately good characters representing values appraised by society combined with being happy with traditional family and love, actually bring back Confucius values. The reintroduction to Confucius themes is a major reason why other cultures can perceive relevance from South Korean dramas – particularly other Asian cultures. The following are a few dramas and films I have seen that display such values:

- “My Name is Kim Sam Soon” – An average sized, middle age female goes against society’s flaw of favoring the pretty, young, bone-skinny, and superficial. She honestly pursues her relationships and wins over the man with her genuineness, warm demeanor, and passionate dream of wanting to become a great pastry chef who brings warmth to others through her pastries (My).
- “200 Pounds Beauty” - An overweight and ugly girl is the real voice of a pop icon. After accidentally hearing a rejection with the reasons of her body image from the man she loves, she tries to commit suicide but fails and instead goes through intense plastic surgery. The story is about how she lost her true self by focusing just on her body image. She doesn’t gain happiness or acceptance from others until she is honest about herself (200).

- “Cat on the Roof” - A hardworking girl needs to raise her brother and herself due to lack of parents. She has no time for love and doesn’t often receive love due to her average looks and personality. However, in the end she moves a guy by how hard she works and tries at life (Cat).
- “18 vs. 29” – A 29-year-old wife of a famous actor gets into a car accident on the way to filing their divorce papers. Their relationship started from high school, was strong and romantic as she supported his way to fame. However once he gained fame, she felt he no longer loved her and insecure, decided to divorce. After the accident, her memory reverts to when she was 18 and first met her husband. Living as an “18 year old”, she and her husband start over and relearn why they fell in love and married; a story of true love (18).

South Korea’s dramas and films’ traditional Confucian themes and values regarding, love, career, and family brought back stable virtues and traditional values. As the Korean Wave influence was strongest in North, East, and South East Asia, these values are particularly more relatable to the Asian audiences in those regions. A South Korean blogger comments on these Confucian values sharing her thought that they are an attracting factor as they are “assuring in today’s rapidly changing and diverse society and viewers can more easily relate and emotionally connect with the stories in reflection of their own lives” (Cho). From the articles on Winter Sonata’s fan groups, Kim (2009) found that Japanese viewers liked “Winter Sonata” for its Confucian value of “pure love”. A pure love story is a type of story “that does not exist in Japan anymore” and is a tale of “lost love”. Many of the viewers that became fans of the lead actor (Bae Yong-Joon), fell in love with his image that was constructed by the narrative of the drama, portraying him as “charmingly old-fashioned”, “caring”, and “devoted” (Kim).

Another type of Korean drama narrative that attracts viewers is the common story type “about urban professionals in Seoul”. The stories are “not overtly political” and have “present images of modern lives centering on individual happiness and sophisticated consumerism” (Onishi). They again share a Confucian theme of striving to be happily living and working hard to be honest to one’s emotions and dreams. Although the culture and life philosophies in the dramas may not be exactly the ones held by most religions or cultures, the “enduring Confucian-rooted values” is something that can communicate across language barriers as the general notion of family is shared.

One of the reasons why South Korean dramas’ Confucian element resonates with its largest group of viewers, the other Asian cultures, is because Asian cultures share that history of Confucius values. Utilizing that connection, South Korean dramas are easily relatable to Asian viewers. The Confucian value particularly resonates with Chinese consumers as it reminds them of “what was lost during the Cultural Revolution” and portrays South Korea as “an example of an Asian country that has modernized and retained its traditions” (Onishi).

Just like the Confucian component, local broadcasters have also made other efforts to transnationalize Korean TV dramas. In Kaori Yoshida’s review of the book “East Asian Pop Culture: Analysing the Korean Wave”, she mentions how the contributors Tania Lim and Lisa Leung discuss Korean dramas to have used intraregional “renting” strategies, “by which local networks in East Asia ‘share common stories, icons, talents and even histories’” (Yoshida 2009; Chua 2008). Thus, Korean drama and films’ incorporate intraregional content that the East Asian

cultures all share or can relate. In Sang-Yeon Sung's dissertation "The role of the Korean Wave in the Construction of Taiwanese Identities and Asian values", Sung gives insight on how Korean drama and culture is so big in Taiwan to the point of culture emulation. With Taiwanese people struggling to construct their own national and cultural identity, South Korean dramas and culture has its appeal in its ability to "reflect transnational flows in Asia, globalization, self-identity, and concepts and practices involved in Asian regionalism and identity" (Sung 2008).

Production companies have also introduced a modern pan-Asian femininity in the Korean dramas, where "tradition and modernity uniquely coexist" (Chua, 2008). In an analysis of the Korean Wave, Chua finds that Korean dramas have attracted audience because they have successfully combined traditional and modern values. The dramas have molded them together to form "hybridized modern" characters that "reconcile contradictory (modern and Confucian) subjectivities" (Chua 2008). The relativity of that type of character to the modern day East Asian viewers touch on their own challenges in achieving that balance between the traditional values of their East Asian country and the more modernized views of the encroaching Westernized world.

Going back to Fisher's paradigm of narrative fidelity, Fisher claims that with serialized narratives or drama, "audiences perceive fantasies in public narrative with which they wish to identify either because they are true to the lives of the audience, or they are what the audience wishes were true in their reconstructions of the narrative" (1985, 1987, 1989; Kim, 2009). The combination of relevance and reflection of want and desire combine to form an active want for the viewers and watching the fantasy is addressing that want momentarily as the viewers are immersed in their fantasies.

### c. Emotional Attachment

In "TV Living", study of the relationship between watching TV and living, David Gauntlett and Annette Hill bring up the research of David Morley (1992) and Ann Gray (1992). Both studies found that females tend to watch romantic films more than men, who prefer action, and like to steal "moments of guilty pleasure from romantic love stories on video". Females are also the ones that cook and clean more so during that household time to rid of loneliness they tend to turn on the TV (Gauntlett 1999). That holds true for the Korean Wave as well as a good portion of the Korean drama viewers are made up of females, particularly housewives. That calls into question the need for viewers to have an emotional connection with their media. What is their emotional state when watching the dramas and does the drama answer to their emotional needs?

An emotional attachment with the dramas fulfilling a want can explain why some viewers continuously watch dramas and maintain interaction, even after the drama ends, with other forms of interaction like buying the merchandise, following star news, or visiting the shooting sites. From my personal experience and reasons for watching dramas, I believe that dramas can be a form of escape where you get to busy your mind with another's life. It can also generate attachment when the viewers do identify with the characters and project themselves onto the characters, experiencing the same wants and dreams as the characters. That is even more possible when the dramas are like Korean dramas, containing realistically possible events with attainable results.

Korean dramas also invoke strong emotions. With strong plots and powerful acting, Korean films and dramas derive strong emotions from when viewers share similar wants as the characters and from intense plot twists. Many of the Korean dramas invoke positive emotions, like *Winter Sonata*, which invoked positive emotions from its pure love story. Emotions play in on viewers' "perceived relevance" as a 1994 study on the relationship between consumers mood and perceived relevance found that the consumers that were in good moods ranked what they watched as more important and memorable (Curren, 1994).

To consider the possibility, we can take a look at the blog of one wife in Singapore who wrote about her experience with "*Winter Sonata*". She actively keeps a blog called Tiffany in Kimchiland dedicated to blogs on Korea entertainment. This example also shows how the audiences' viewing experience translates into thoughts of Korea and Korean culture.

"...for the first time, I cried buckets and my heart broke over a drama and I ended up with red, puffy eyes almost everyday for work. Not to mention that I was dead tired too as I would be watching up till 4 to 5 am every morning... So just why do we love this drama so much? I think a large part is because it was just such a refreshing change from our usual diet of Japanese and Hong Kong dramas. The cast was wonderful and the chemistry between Bae Yong Joon and Choi Ji Woo was keenly felt... And the scenery, ahh... the scenery... winter never looked more beautiful and it captured just the right feel of the drama.. first love, innocent love. For the first time, I realised that Korea was not just kimchi and LG. It made me want to go Korea. Me and thousands other fans. And I've been to Korea every year since 2003" (The Classic).

For another example of a South Korean drama attracting viewers with the strong emotions it generates, we can look at the previously mentioned drama "*My Name is Kim Sam Soon*" or "*My Lovely Sam Soon*". Aired in summer 2005, the series was a major hit in South Korea with more than 53.4% of Korean households tuning in to the end (ratings from TNS Media Korea). It connected viewers, especially women, globally due to its sweet story and highly relatable female character.



"*My Lovely Sam Soon*" is about a 29-year-old insecure female pastry chef named Sam Soon who lost her job and boyfriend on Christmas and the cold, aloof but handsome Jin Heon who is the young owner of the restaurant she works at. Sam Soon agreed to become Jin Heon's fake girlfriend so that he can avoid his mother's matchmaking schemes but eventually Sam Soon really falls in love with him. Jin Heon is cold because he went through a lot of pain and tragedy and somewhere in the middle his ex-girlfriend, who broke his heart, comes back. Sam Soon is not the usual gorgeous, slim heroine and is in fact a representation of most women. With a plumper figure, average looks and family background, she sincerely puts her passion into her work, and although dumped by her cheating boyfriend who chose to date more attractive women, she still hopes one day to find love.

Sun-a Kim, the actress who plays Sam Soon, describes the secret of the soap's success in one word, "sympathy". She says how viewers try to catch every single line and gesture, since many of them identify with Sam-soon. "When Sam-soon has problems in her relationship with Sam-sik, my fans on the web go nuts". But fans of the drama aren't only attracted to fictional story and characters. The efforts and heart the actors put into the drama have also touched viewers and



Sun-a Kim

showed them a new side to South Korean acting professionals and Korean culture. Sun-a Kim refused to have the character lose weight to fit the beautiful transformation fictional heroines often go through at the end when love is achieved as she felt that that beautified person would not be Sam-soon anymore and in reality, no one would lose weight so fast even if they were in love. Sun-a Kim actually had to be hospitalized during the film due to getting only an hour of sleep for 3 weeks straight due to the hectic shooting schedule (Kim Sun-a).

“My Lovely Sam Soon” receives a lot of attention from bloggers internationally. Below are a few posts giving insight on how viewers of different cultures and regions felt about the drama:

(Fili An from Israel, currently working in HK) “She is not your usual slender and beautiful heroine. Her chubby troubled life allows viewers to fall in love with her, relate to her, and cheer her own, similarly to the Hollywood movie ‘Bridget Jones’s Diary’...In Vietnam and in Taiwan, people, mostly women, were over obsessed... In Saigon 12:30, there was nobody to talk to, as the women were the ones to run the small businesses and they all gathered around TV sets to follow this show” (An).

(Israel girl whose’ favorite Spanish Telenovelas were replaced by “My Lovely Samsoon” on the VIVA channel in Israel) “I have to admit it’s surprisingly good, especially when compared to the other cr\$@ that’s running on that Telenovela channel. It’s sweet, it’s funny, it’s touching, it gives a feeling of authentic life in Korea” (An).

(Anonymous blogger) “I swear here in morocco evryone watch ‘my lovely sam-soon’ but i don’t understand the korean but really its so cuite but she’s not fat and yan yon so hand-some wow i love the Korean ;)” (An).

Kim’s (2009) study on “audience engagement with narratives” discovered from audience testing that the biggest factor for viewers when watching shows or media is the emotional appeal or emotional involvement. The example of “My Lovely Sam Soon” clearly displays that the viewers of the show have definitely invested large amounts of emotions and emotional interest in the show.

#### d. Strengthened Interaction Through Repetition

Besides viewers’ interaction with dramas deriving from the Korean dramas’ relatable content, Korean dramas also gain the interaction from their structure and viewing process. Unlike films, dramas have many episodes that continuously build on the same story to build a stronger level of involvement with the viewers. Interested viewers may watch the drama periodically, following the dramas’ television schedule bi-weekly, weekly, or daily, etc. They can also view continuously as the dramas can be bought on DVDs or watched online to fit the viewers’ schedule. When Korean dramas first came out, the circulation of Korean dramas was a non-stop cycle with “one drama series followed hot on the heels by another”. “Korean dramas became part of the daily programming of many free-to-air and satellite television stations in East Asia” and became “part of the routine viewing habits of their respective audiences” (Chua, 2008).

Unlike many American soap operas and serialized TV shows, Korean dramas have defined endings. They wrap up the stories and have a pre-determined beginning, middle, and end. Having



a set number of episodes also helps the drama to have more structured and well thought out plot steps. Lengthier dramas like American TV shows or soap operas and Mexican telenovelas have less appeal and connection because although the characters transition through life with the viewers year after year, the overdone plot twists begin to appear fake as in reality humans usually don't have that many incidences. Furthermore, actors that play certain characters change. In Korean dramas, the actors stay onboard and complete the story, remaining "that character" forever from beginning to end. That helps viewers associate the show with that actor as they are the sole actor portraying that character.

South Korea's serialized form combined with the viewers' invested interest forms a constant interaction that makes viewing the drama a regular event in the person's life - almost as natural as eating or going to work. The high degree of viewing interaction requires viewers to have a high commitment towards that show to watch daily. High commitment is usually the case of invested interest, which can lead to high degree of involvement with the story and character; sometimes viewers even project themselves onto the characters. The Cultivation Theory helps explain the effects of such repetition as the theory explains the relationship between audience perception of dramas and films and their consequent behaviors. It explains how "mass media effects the individual's construction of social reality" and supports television as the medium that "exerts the strongest influence on people's everyday lives" (Lee, 1989; Meyer, 1989; Kwak, 2002; Kim 2009).

## VI. How the South Korea Brand is Related to the Dramas

Viewers interacting with the dramas and projecting themselves onto the characters can feel like they have a connection to South Korean culture. The Korean Wave started a “cross-national identity” among citizens of Korean Wave countries as “ready consumers” of Korean culture (Kim, 2009). Interacting with the drama enough to feel a connection and kinship to South Korea and South Koreans, viewers become consumers who project themselves onto the “South Korean” image. After the viewers complete the dramas and films, their strong interaction and feeling of attachment spills over, transferring to other subjects related to the drama: the actors, the styles and merchandise consumed in the drama, the locations of the sets, South Korea, and South Koreans.

One such example is where the viewers actively tried to expand their interaction with the dramas and films. Viewers who desire more interaction and direct engagement attempt to watch the dramas without the aid of subtitles or dubbing. The motivation for this behavior for every viewer can’t be generalized but it can be theorized that the viewers try to create a closer connection to the characters and drama through the medium of language. As the dramas are based in South Korea, the characters are South Korean, and the language of communication is Korean, viewers may try to set up a connection with the characters and drama by sharing the culture and nationality of the drama and becoming a bit South Korean themselves. In Do Kyun Kim’s study on “The Effects of Winter Sonata in Japan”, Kim mentions two news articles that announce how Japanese viewers who wished to watch Korean dramas without the help of subtitles were competing to register at Korean language schools and watching Japanese Broadcasting Corporation’s (NHK) Korean-language programs (Kim, 2009; Japan 2004; Demick 2005).

## VII. South Korea's Nation Branding

This study believes that the factors that help viewers perceive relevance with South Korean dramas (particularly the dramas' timely entrance and lack of strong competitors, universally relatable content, ability to bring forth strong emotions and create emotional attachment, and repetitive viewing style creating familiarity and habit) combine to form a strong enough interaction to build a relationship. Once that story and drama and/or film is over, that relationship may then transfer over to other things that can remind the viewers of the relevance they perceived in the dramas and the feelings and memories that the drama brought up. Those relatable things that invoke the reconstructed experience can be the actors that played the drama, other physical items like memorabilia or even South Korea itself. That transferrable relationship can be used as a nation-branding tool and in South Korea's case that is exactly what they did with their nation branding campaign featuring the Korean Wave.

South Korea's official nation branding campaign was launched in 2004 through the Ministry of Tourism and its branch organization Korea Tourism Organization (KTO). KTO is a statutory organization of South Korea under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, commissioned to promote the country's tourism industry.

The campaign, titled "Korean Wave" focused on promoting South Korea through "stars, fashion, and tourism". KTO declared its strategy as capitalizing on the Korea's pop culture with a tourism marketing scheme that promotes "Korean destinations and culture through various entertainment, soap opera clips and images, and famous actors and actresses as PR ambassadors". The theme markets South Korea as the hub in Asia for culture-oriented tourism with the concepts of "Dramatic Encounter", "Colorful Adventure", "Exciting Land", and "Friendly Neighbor" geared towards South Korea's three largest markets: Japan, China, and South East Asia (One-Stop).



KTO's Korean Wave campaign launch event

With use of the Korean drama stars and dramas as representation of the campaign, South Korea is relating to the dramas and relying on the relationship consumers built with South Korea's dramas to push their consumption of South Korean products. It has reminded viewers of the relationship and interaction they felt with the dramas and stars and associated them with South Korea's nation branding campaign and South Korea.

Some of the techniques KTO has employed are:

### (1) Conditioning association :

The campaign has utilized repetitive and unified logos associating dramas and stars to the campaign. The Korean Wave Brand Logo established for all promotional activities is displayed in popular events and on drama related promotions.



## (2) Maximizing exposure

South Korea is maximizing exposure of its advertisements featuring Korean dramas and films. The government is pushing forward deals with nations to have more Korean media and advertisements displayed on channels, newspapers, and various public locations. They have also increased global news coverage and asked for celebrity support. In addition, South Korea is working to build more relationships and improve relations with foreign news media and journalists. KTO pushed the expansion of the campaign's publicity by inviting over 1,000 foreign journalists from China, Japan, and South Eastern Asia to write articles about the Korean Wave (Tourism).



## (3) Famous Koreans cooperation:

Popular entertainers like Kim Hee-sun, Lee Byung-hun, and Choi Ji-woo have become PR Ambassadors for the Korean Wave. Bae Yong-joon, the main lead for “Winter Sonata”, is the honorary chairperson of a government-led committee on the globalization of Korean cuisine and an honorary ambassador that often meets with South Korea’s first lady for the collaboration of promoting South Korea (First). PR ads with famous Korean entertainers have been broadcasted in target markets like on Japan’s FujiTV, China’s CCTV, etc. and Korean entertainer images have been inserted in various media sources from outside street advertising to cooperative online marketing (Tourism).

## (4) Promotional material and events:

Recently, KTO has made a series of Korea tourism TV commercials titled “Korea Sparkling”, highlighting both the modern and traditional culture sides of Korea and with pop icon Rain as the spokes-model. In addition, KTO holds live events overseas to introduce various sides of Korean culture and to promote the Korean Wave campaign with a slew of top Korean entertainer appearances. So far, KTO has held these concert shows at various cities in Japan, China, and Thailand and also at the 53<sup>rd</sup> Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Annual Conference (Tourism).



Event locations

#### (5) Twist to tourism – unique form of attraction

One of KTO and South Korea's nation branding campaign's marketing strategy ingenuities is giving tourists exactly what they want and creating new tourists out of avid Korean media fans. KTO got Korea's entertainment industry to cooperate and expose drama and movie shooting information like site locations. KTO publicizes the information constantly and has refurbished many of the sites to become more tourist-friendly; the sites are equipped fully with tourist facilities, merchandisers, site information, maps, drama/film momentums like costumes and scene props, and actor signage. Visiting the sites, tourists can recreate the moments from the scenes and experience a realistic reliving of the moment. Essentially South Korea is helping the viewers to maintain their relationship with the dramas, even after the dramas have ended, with another way of further projecting their self-image onto the drama or further identify with the characters. A popular one is the film location for "Winter Sonata". Tourists can walk down the same roads the characters walked by, have a meal at the same restaurant the characters ate at, and even visit the house the main character stayed at (Winter Sonata).

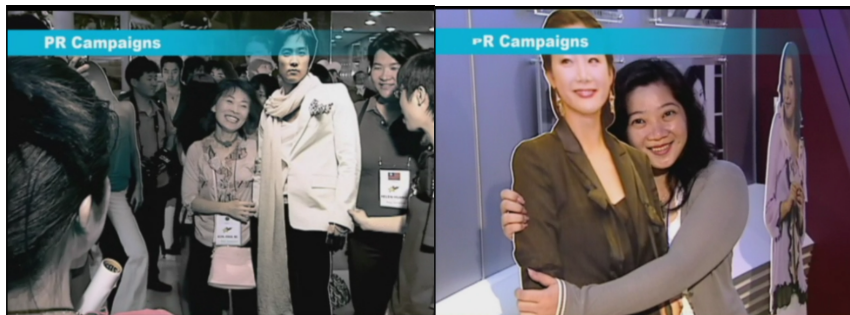


Tourists taking pictures of production pictures at "Winter Sonata" site

KTO has full government support and municipal governments like Seoul even provide free Seoul Hallyu or Korean Wave maps pointing out the most famous places in various scenes in Korean dramas; some sites include the high school from "Winter Sonata", Changdeokgung Palace from "Jewel in the Palace", and Myeongdong from popular movie "200 Pounds Beauty" (Tan, 2009). With these new attractions, tourists have flooded to the sites; statistics released by the South Korean Embassy in Beijing reported that the number of Chinese tourists who travel to South Korea actually jumped from 500,000 people in 2003 to 900,000 in 2007.

KTO has also built a Korean Wave Hall of Fame, which is a big attraction for foreign tourists and created various new Korean Wave merchandise with Star support. Some examples are star autograph booklets, watches with their faces, actual costume pieces from the dramas, etc.





(above) Fans posing with star cardboard cutouts at the Hall of Fame



Korean Wave Hall of Fame photos (courtesy of “KTO Marketing of Korean Wave” video)

Overall, KTO has encouraged the start of new tour programs centered on Korean Wave, opening up information on film locations used by dramas and movies and even developed the sites for tourism. It has also developed more concerts and fan meetings with Korean performers in South Korea and organized Korean Wave global fan clubs, which are used as overseas marketing bases. Maintaining the activities related to the drama, KTO has renewed that relationship viewers have with the dramas. KTO’s Korean Wave campaign has already generated over 100 million dollars just from its promotional material and activities (One-Stop). KTO believes that the best achievement is that the campaign was able to bring about new changes in South Korea tourism, taking it to a new level with improved services and it was able to show tourists a new Korea. The increased tourism from the campaign also brought success to South Korea’s industrial and economic growth and helped South Korea venture into a new type of industry, the culture industry - which is the third type of the new form of industries in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. 2004 was the first time KTO tried such a nation branding campaign.

South Korea’s nation branding campaign thus employs a type of strategic marketing. Campaign advertising using popular South Korean entertainers that have been in popular dramas and creating relatable goods essentially remind consumers or viewers of the emotions they felt when watching the Korean dramas. As the emotions they had while viewing the dramas can be very strong ones of happiness or sadness, the return of that emotion as Curren (1994) mentions, can

turn into a greater buying interest. Then, heavily enforcing a connection between the “South Korea” brand and the dramas/films and actors, the campaign has created an association between those two and has associated the “South Korea” brand with those strong emotions. This is a type of conditioning, particularly classical conditioning which “deals with the process of associating messages, feelings or situations with a brand” (Kumar, 2001).

Marketing the “specific situations” or marketing with the drama and/or film reminders trigger off pleasant sensations and feelings, associating such situations with the “South Korea” brand. Such specific situations are referred to as “relevant stimuli” (Kumar, 2001). The campaign creates brand messages that make an “impact on the consumer psyche reminding the consumer about the functional and/or emotional proposition of the brand” giving the “South Korea” brand a personality. When the brand “aggressively creates visibility” using the relevant stimuli “over a period of time”, consumers may internalize the brand as part of the feelings and experiences associated with the relevant stimuli (Kumar).

South Korea’s nation branding campaign is also a form of experiential marketing. Viewers “experience” the interaction and culture of Korea through the character in the dramas or films. That type of behavioral training or conditioning can explain the attachment consumers have to Korean culture after becoming fans of Korean media and why the campaigns interactive events and promotion through tourism having fans “relive” the drama works as a marketing strategy. In Ramesh Kumar’s “Consumer Psyche and Principles of Association” in India, his study on how Wrangler’s brand promotion failed in India due to associating with an unappealing celebrity, shows how consumers can associate brand image with celebrities and how the celebrity is a form of relevant stimuli.

#### a. Entertainment Sector

Knowing South Korea’s nation branding campaign target areas and the way dramas and films have perceived relevance, we can study whether that relationship does indeed push up related product consumption by looking at the changes in the entertainment sector, the reception of South Korean actors, and the tourism sector for some correlating evidence.

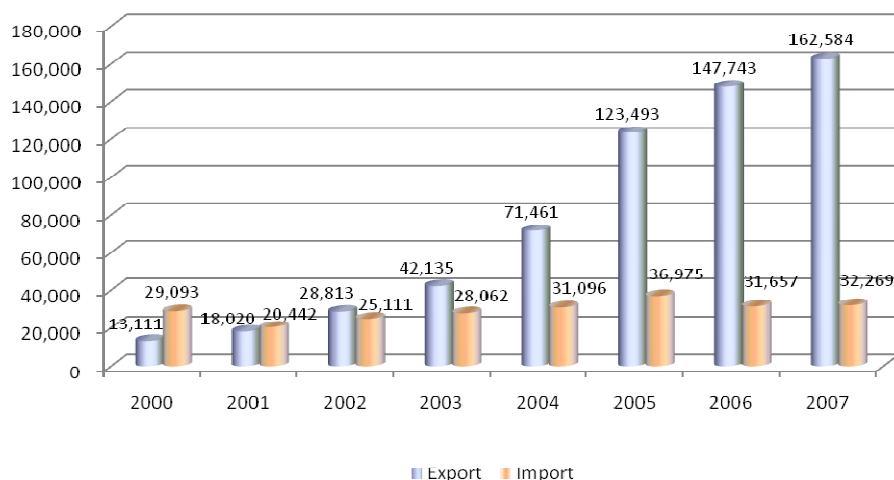


Figure 8: Export and import of TV programs in South Korea 2000-2007 (2007 Korean Movie Year Book)

From the 2007 Korean Movie Year Book by the Korean Movie Council, it can be seen that there has been drastic growth in the export volume of TV programs from South Korea. As figure 8 shows, import volume in South Korea shows a regular growth while exports shot up 1140% from 2000 to 2007.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Number of Movies	133	164	193	303	202	208
Export(\$)	11,249,573	14,952,089	30,970,000	58,284,600	75,994,580	24,514,728
Increase Rate	59%	33%	107%	88%	30%	-68%
Average price	110,238	112,422	188,896	301,993	376,208	118,429

Table 1: South Korean movie exports 2001-2006 (2007 Korean Movie Year Book)

There has also been an increase in movie exports, with a drastic increase in year 2003 to 2004. With an increase in demand, the average price of movies also rose contributing to Korea's economic success. Overall South Korea's movie export revenue rose by 576% from 2001 to 2005 and number of movies rising most in 2004 by 128% from 133 to 303.

Japan and China are the largest markets for Korean dramas or TV shows. According to South Korean government statistics, South Korean programs now broadcast on China's government TV networks account for more than all other foreign programs combined, including those from the United States and Japan (Faiola).

South Korean entertainers have also received greater popularity in the global market and are seeing that in an increased amount of foreign jobs, increased fan base and fan action, and even higher paychecks. Besides Hollywood actors, Jackie Chan, and Jet Li, Korean actors are now the highest paid entertainers (Korean). According to South Korean media, Korean drama "Winter Sonata" star Bae Yong Joon now charges around \$5 million, compared to the previous \$1 or \$2 million, for a film and is said to have accumulated a merchandising and acting-fee empire worth an estimated \$100 million. Seoul-based Sports Hankook newspaper published a list in June 2006 revealing that at least nine other Korean male stars earn more than \$10 million a year (Faiola). A-list Hollywood stars are typically earning an average of 5 to 25 million per film but there are those well below or above that range as well (Ultimate). Yoon Eun Hye, the face of Korea's fashion, is one of the ten Korean Wave stars of 2007 which made her one of the most highly paid actresses in television at the age of 23 (Yoon Eun).

Korean stars have increased appearances in other countries' entertainment industries, being invited to guest or star in shows and participate in regions previously untouched by South Korean entertainment. Recently Chinese, Taiwanese, and Japanese films and dramas and Hollywood productions have used South Korean stars as supporting actors or even main stars for



roles that are not even Korean but other Asian ethnicities. In the Chinese market, Choi Siwon, a



(Left) “A Battle of Wits”

(Right) Choi Siwon

Korean pop group singer, played a main character in Hong Kong historical action film “A Battle of Wits”. The 2006 film was a big budget joint collaboration amongst Korea, China, and Japan starring Andy Lau. After that debut, Choi Siwon became one of the first Korean artists to be on Chinese postage stamps (Choi). Other appearances include Chae Rim, a well known and loved face in China who has played the main female lead in many Chinese dramas already; Kim Hee Sun who appeared in Jackie Chan’s historical/modern movie “The Myth”; Jang Na Ra who also played in Chinese historical dramas and even appeared in the “Beijing Welcomes

You” marketing song for the 2008 Beijing Olympics; and most recently actor So Ji-sub who just starred in a Chinese film with female lead Zhang Ziyi, famous actress to even the western world for films like “Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon” and “Hero” (Exporting).

In Hollywood, South Korean actor appearances were at the start of a large new trend of Asian oriented stories and actors. Since early 2000s, starting from the prominent appearance of the Ring (a 2002 adaption of Japanese horror flick “Ringu”), Hollywood has been adapting or remaking many Asian films and stories like “Lakehouse”, which starred Sandra Bullock and Keanu Reeves, and movies from the horror genre. With the increase in Asian culture influenced productions, Hollywood also increased the number of Asian actors. Surprisingly the new Asian roles are filled with Korean actors even if the characters are of other Asian descents like Japanese in “Speed Racer” and “Ninja Assassin”, which both used Korean pop icon Rain; Japanese in “The Warrior’s Way” which used Jang Dong-kun; and Japanese in “G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra” of 2009 with Lee Byung-hun playing Japanese ninja Stormshadow. “Blood: The Last Vampire”, a movie co-created by France, Japan, and Hong Kong in 2009 also uses Korean sweet-heart actress Jeon Ji-hyeon for the lead female Japanese character while the supporting Japanese characters are still Japanese actors and actresses. For all the just mentioned Korean actors, they have no previous experience in foreign films or English role films (Yoon). Another blatant display of Korean Wave success and demand of Korean entertainment is with Daniel Henney, a Korean actor of British, American-Korean descent who played Agent Zero in “X-men Origins: Wolverine”. Prior to X-men, Daniel career was only in South Korea but the casting director of X-men Origins automatically contacted him and cast him for the role without even an audition after seeing him in “My Father”, a 2007 Korean film that was only distributed in Asia (Daniel).

The success of South Korea’s entertainment/media sector with international viewers may not be a coincidence though, as just like how producers and production companies saw profitable opportunities outside of South Korea, Korean agencies and companies seemed to share that goal. They strived to place their top stars in films and dramas produced in Hong Kong, Taiwan and China, training their stars in Mandarin or Japanese in China and Japan (Chua, 2008). South Korean dramas connections with its international viewers may have been planned as South Korea consciously made efforts to cater to its target viewers.

## b. Tourism Industry

The 2004 Korean Wave Marketing and Nation Branding Campaign was organized by KTO, Korea Tourism Organization. Indeed South Korea's tourism would be directly affected by the likeability of the nation and it is a direct measurement of the results of the Korean Wave and South Korea's attempt of good nation branding. Whatever the reason is for each individual tourist, wanting to visit an unrelated country or location is because that place holds a certain attraction and interest to him or her. Looking at the types of tourists that have visited and the activities they have chosen can provide insight on what part of South Korea attracts them and how they became attracted.

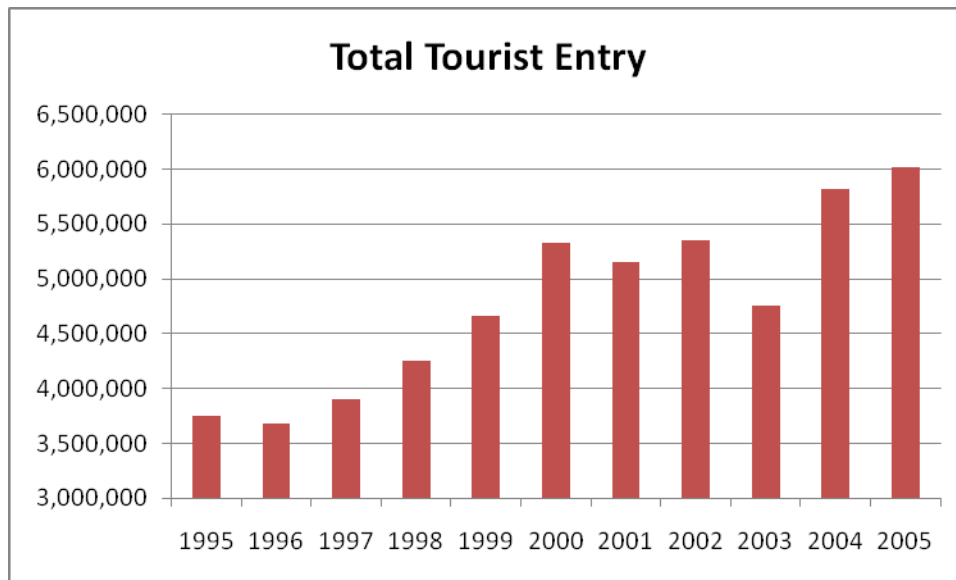


Figure 9: International Tourism Number of Arrivals 1995-2005 graph built from Table 2 data

Year	Amount	Change
1995	3,753,000	
1996	3,684,000	-69,000
1997	3,908,000	224,000
1998	4,250,000	342,000
1999	4,660,000	410,000
2000	5,322,000	662,000
2001	5,147,000	-175,000
2002	5,347,000	200,000
2003	4,753,000	-594,000
2004	5,818,000	1,065,000
2005	6,022,000	204,000

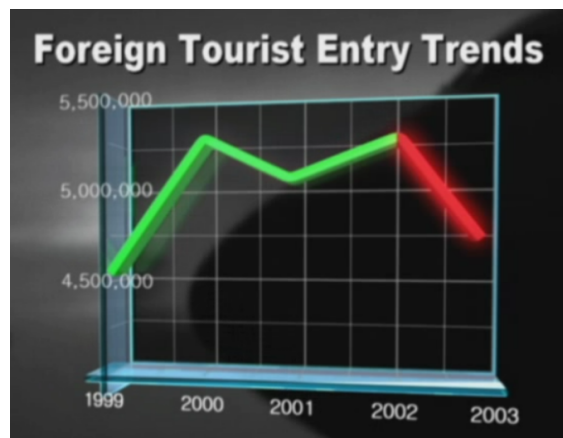


Table 2 (left): International Tourism Number of Arrivals data (World Development Indicators database)

Figure 10 (right): Foreign Tourist Entry 1999-2003 Total KTO version ("Tourism Marketing" video)

With the rise in economic power and improvements to the country, South Korea's appeal to tourism also rose as available data from 1995 shows an overall continued increase in annual

tourists visiting South Korea. Ever since 1997, tourism growth rate sped up with a large jump from 1999 to 2000. At 2000, a mountain effect appeared with tourism decreasing then rising slightly and drastically decreasing in 2003. KTO explains that the decline in 2003 is due to SARS, the Iraq War, and the North Korean Controversy. The nation branding campaign in 2004 was partially started to relieve tourists' fears and bad images of the 2003 South Korea. Tourist entries between 2003 and 2004 rose from 4.75 million tourists to 5.82 million visitors in 2004, with a record increase of close to 1.1 million visitors from 2003 numbers.

From the 5.8 million foreign tourists that visited South Korea in 2004, a 26% increase over the preceding year, KTO broke down the places from where the tourists came from and declared that the countries with the heaviest Korean Wave influence and coverage have seen a 37% increase in tourists compared to the 10% increase of other countries. KTO also support the belief that the increase in tourism is due to the Korean Wave with the fact that from 2004 to 2005 foreign media and online coverage on Korean Wave tourist spots and such site visits have also nearly doubled (Tourism).

The Korean Wave countries that KTO mentions are actually the East Asian countries that South Korea has targeted due to similarity in culture and close proximity and are currently the countries with the largest reaction to the Korean Wave. China and Japan are the main two Korean Wave countries with a few South Asian nations as well. Looking at a breakdown of tourist entry data by region can give some insight on the success of the Korean Wave campaign KTO says has occurred, who are the "Korean" brand's main consumers, and where South Korea's brand actually reaches.

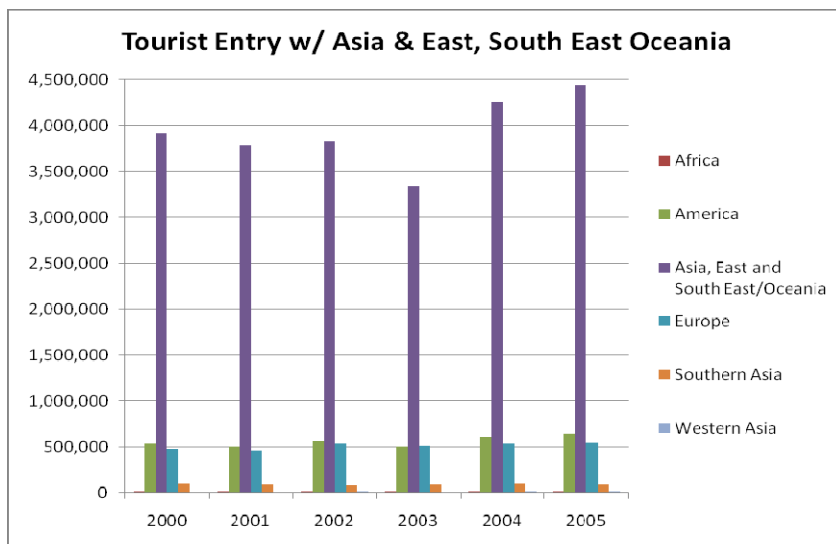


Figure 11: Built from region tourist entry figures (World Tourism Organization Statistics Database and Yearbook)

The majority of the tourism to Korea comes from Asia and Oceania reaching the millions, where as the next large regions of tourists are from Europe and America in the hundred thousands. Each regions' population, wealth distribution, and closeness to Korea (location, politically, and culturally) are all factors which could explain these factors. The other aspect of contribution is the amount of interest towards South Korea generated in each region and how well South Korea has reached out to each region.

## VIII. The “South Korea” Brand

With South Korea’s active nation branding connecting the “South Korea” brand image to the dramas and films, viewers have a solid conditioned perception of the South Korea as a brand. With such a strong association, Conrad’s theory of “perceived relevance” increasing consumption of related goods can affect products now related to the “South Korea” brand.

Consumers perceive the type of lifestyle that owning Korean products represents. From the obtained data and the fact that Korean products are able to be priced higher, the image can be summarized and estimated to present Korean style as more expensive, classy, and stylish. Owning that South Korean product helps the viewers and consumers to experience that lifestyle they associate with the product (Kim Hee, 2010). Thus the South Korea “brand” is now sufficient enough to incur positive reactions from consumers and can also create better business for “Korean” businesses. It increases demand for South Korea associated products that don’t even relate to dramas anymore, like Hyundai cars, and even promotes positive political views on South Korea.

### a. Transfer of Character Fantasies to Perceived Portrayals of South Koreans



Besides desirable plotlines and stories, the Korean dramas and films have introduced new, attractable type characters that viewers have projected to represent real South Koreans and South Korea. As Europe seems cool or trendy, etc. in America, Korean is the new chic of East Asia. One Korean American who visited China wrote on her experience on how it felt like being Korean was now “cultural currency” (Cho). The Korean Wave

has given Koreans and Korean lifestyle a new image.

One large brand representation that has created a huge sensation is the brand image of Korean men. The characteristic male hero of Korean entertainment is charming, smart, kind, and takes great care of his heroine. Online media and viewers have characterized them as “strong, silent type”, “typically rich, kind men with coincidentally striking looks and a tendency to shower women with unconditional love”, and “sensitive men but totally ripped”, etc. (Faiola; Japanese Women). "It's a type of character that doesn't exist much in Asian movies and television, and now it's what Asian women think Korean men are like," said Kim Ok Hyun, director of Star M, a major star management company in Seoul (Faiola). Transferring that perceived image into real

life, viewers are searching for that type of character.



(1) Daniel Henney, (2) Rain, (3) “Winter Sonata”

The South Korean man image has taken over the screen on Asian television and become the latest ideal male for many East Asian women. In Japan in 2004, four Korean actors took the top in the list of

favorite Asian actors and actor Bae Yong-joon, lead actor from Korean drama “Winter Sonata” placed second on a list of hottest marketable items in Japan. Bae was also received by over 5,000 fans upon arriving at the airport in April (Japanese Women). Besides male South Korean entertainers setting trends in choices of consumer goods, hairstyles, fashion, and services, etc. they and the new image from the Korean Wave have brought on a new demand for South Korean men and created business.

Women from the Korean Wave target countries are looking to find a South Korean man and besides constant traveling to South Korea or Korean events to search, they even use South Korean matchmaking company services. Matchmaking services that find Korean matches, like Rakuen Korea, have found sudden success after 2004 when many Korean dramas first entered Japan. Rakuen Korea now has over 6,400 female clients after its popularity jumped in 2004 and states that due to the rise in popularity of Korean men, the number of Japanese women marrying Korean men rose by 30 percent in 2003 from 2002 (Japanese Women). During that period, Tokyo also saw an increase in “Korean” themed entertainment service businesses like bars and restaurants (Faiola).

In a 2006 article from the Washington Post Foreign Service, a Japanese female consumer gives insight on the effect the Korean Wave has had on women like herself. 26-yr-old Kazumi Yoshimura, a trend follower, admits to having spent thousands of dollars and has flown to Seoul 10 times in the past two years for her quest to find a Korean husband. She shares, “South Koreans are so sweet and romantic -- not at all like Japanese guys, who never say ‘I love you,’” and “‘maybe I’m looking for the TV stars I can’t really have. But we are all allowed a dream, aren’t we?’” (Faiola).

In another example, a female contestant in the fourth annual Korean speech contest held jointly by the second largest university in Egypt Ain Shams University and the Korean Embassy in Cairo gave a speech about why she started learning Korean. “You know the handsome actors from ‘Boys over Flowers?’ They are the type of guys that I want to marry” (“Boys over Flowers” is a recent Korean remake of popular Japanese anime Hana Yori Dango; it follows the successful Japanese and initial Taiwanese remakes). Most of the contestants in the contest traced back their early motivation for studying Korean to Korean TV dramas and the rising status of the country, listing several drama titles like “Autumn Fairy Tale,” “Sorry I Love You” and “Full House” (Kim Hee, 2010).

In this example, viewers are transferring the image the drama created onto real life and the “South Korea” brand in the form of people and branding of South Koreans. The happening can be explained with Li-wei Mai and Georgia Schoeller’s paper on “consumer-end-benefit” or “emotional attachment”. They discuss how due to the disparity between products narrowing, the “actual product benefits are no longer the principal factors that appeal to consumers” as the “emerging emphasis is the emotional additive benefit known as ‘consumer end-benefit’ or ‘emotional attachment’” (Mai, 2009). Like how consumers like the type of character displayed in the dramas, they pursue South Korean men with that emotional attachment after they are conditioned to associate the emotions achieved from the Korean dramas as the same as the end benefits the “South Korea” or “South Korean” brands will deliver. Without any consideration for the actual personality or quality of the individual South Korean men they meet, consumers



blindly pursue that emotional attachment and conditioned brand image, which lead to a form of stereotyping of South Koreans as a nationality.

The “emotional attachment” or “consumer end-benefit” theory can also be used to explain the increased consumption of goods with the South Korea origin branding, or the effectiveness of the “South Korea” brand in general.

#### b. South Korean Brand in Business

Over the past few years, as shown in the previous section analyzing South Korea’s GDP and exports, etc., South Korea’s economy has risen. Besides the increased success in Korea’s entertainment industry, related merchandises are seeing profits. In Japan, one of Korean Wave’s largest markets, where icon stores are a familiar type of store, lucrative “official stores” for Korean male stars have been popping up. Ryu Si Won, a Korean actor and singer, has a three-story boutique in Tokyo with the top floor being an actual recreation of his own living room complete with a life-size high-tech plastic model of himself lounging on the sofa. The boutique has become a meeting place for his fans and constantly has many women ages ranging from 17 to 61, visiting the top floor to admire the life-size model (Faiola).

Businesses are realizing the profits association with Korean entertainers can bring and have actively recruited Korean entertainers to be spokes-models or have used their images for advertisements, sometimes even illegally. Jang Dong Gun who appeared in Hollywood’s “Warrior’s Way” was hired in 2001 to be Seoul-based manufacturer Daewoo Electronics’ Vietnam spokesman. Particularly popular in Vietnam, Jang admitted his shock in an interview how during his first trip to Vietnam in 1998 to promote his new Korean TV drama, thousands of women mobbed his plane at the Hanoi airport and an armada of female fans on motor scooters chased his car all the way to his hotel. Daewoo shares that for 5 years with Jang as their spokesman, Daewoo refrigerators' market share in Vietnam went from a “blip to a robust 34 percent” (Faiola).



Fake Commax Computer and Samsung DVD featuring Korean pop star Lee Hyo-lee

In China, images of Korean entertainers have appeared all over products in the recent years and in store windows of relatable products, like fashion stores or jewelry stores. The pictures show the Korean stars sporting similar jewelry or garments to the products found in the store. Even products that have no relation to Korean entertainers’ use have been using Korean faces for advertisements. China’s large black market

has seen the profitability of association and illegally photoshopped Korean pop images on packaging. But what’s even more obvious is that the black market has produced fake Korean goods, like Commax computer and Samsung imitations, which mirror the successes of Korean businesses. Besides copying name-brand Korean companies, black market products are also faking country of origin, with many featuring “Made In Korea” labels or Korean designs and styles. Some products with no connection to South Korea are also being pushed by sales reps as “Made in Korea”. A few examples are:

Products I bought in China in 2008:

- (1) Children's Notebooks, bought in a supermarket in Changchun, China – feature Korean writing and animation designs even though manufacturer is a domestic Chinese company. Manufacturer GuangBo Group discusses on its website about soliciting designs from Japan and Korea.



- (2) Made in Korea labels – backings for earrings and jewelry



Such backings are mass produced and bought by jewelry sellers. One street vendor had a whole bag and was openly putting them on new merchandise bought from one of Shanghai's black market wholesalers.

- (3) Korean design and labeled makeup bag bought at Changchun black market



- (4) Korean styled earrings

Besides an increase in “Korean goods”, the use of “Korean origin” also means a jack up in prices. Products that supposedly came from Korea are labeled as the latest fashion and have a higher asking price. When googling Korean products, like earrings, such examples come up.



The bear earrings on the left are actual earrings purchased in Shanghai China from a street vendor and in a “Korean origin” store (golden bow). They are copies of the Korean products circled in blue in the google search above. The street vendor products had an initial high asking price around 50 yuan but the final price the products

were purchased at were 15 yuan and 5 yuan. The bow shaped earring, sharing similar structure and design with the first bear earring, was bought in an actual jewelry store that claimed Korean style and products. The store’s products had asking prices ranging from from 60 yuan to 200 yuan. After being marked 50% down, the final sale price of the third earring was 45 yuan or now about 7 dollars. I confirmed with the store attendants about how the earring is not made out of any special expensive material that would truly warrant a high price. In the Chinese markets such type of earrings have varying prices but typically earrings of such quality can be purchased from 5 yuan to about 20 yuan.

The possibility for “Korean of Origin” products to be priced at a higher price hints at the bigger picture that with the increased demand for Korean products, companies that merely hold the of South Korea origin factor, are also meeting more success and feeling the popularity. One such case is with Hyundai, the 5<sup>th</sup> largest car manufacturer in the world, and its success in the Chinese market. Although a latecomer to China’s automobile industry, later than its already established competitors General Motors and Volkswagen, Hyundai is now the second-best-selling automaker in China and holds 11% of the market. It entered a joint-venture agreement with Beijing Automotive Industry Holdings in 2002 but is already opening up its third manufacturing plant in China after just recently opening up its second in 2008 (Alberts). Jae-man Noh, president of Beijing Hyundai Motor Company, says that the third plant will increase production capacity by 50% to meet the foreseen future rise in demand of Hyundai vehicles. As international rivals are reporting losses and stocks are dropping, Hyundai’s stock just rose another 6.3% and year-to-year gains have reached 177%. Ahn Young Hoe, chief investment officer at fund manager KTB Asset Management says that no auto company has outperformed during the industry turmoil. Hyundai is considered a rarity among global automakers during this global financial crisis as its net profit hit a new record of \$832 million in the past September, breaking its previous record of \$690 million registered in June (Ihlwan). Besides the fast growth in business, Hyundai has also received special attention and favor from other Chinese companies and the Chinese government. Prior to the 2008 Beijing Olympics, with the help of Hyundai’s local partner, Hyundai vehicles were chosen by the Beijing government as the replacements for the city's aging taxis, making 60% of the current total amount of taxis in Beijing Hyundai cars. Hyundai managers believe that the company's success in China stems from good fortune. Um Kwangheum, president of



Hyundai's Chinese division, proclaims Hyundai's success as the benefit from the Korean Wave's "positive effect" (Onishi). Since 2008, South Korea has become one of China's top import suppliers.

Rank	Country/Region	Volume	% Change*
1	Japan	150.7	12.5
2	South Korea	112.2	8.1
3	Taiwan	103.3	2.3
4	United States	81.4	17.4
5	Germany	55.8	23.0
6	Australia	37.4	44.8
7	Malaysia	32.0	11.8
8	Saudi Arabia	31.0	76.6
9	Brazil	29.7	62.2
10	Thailand	25.6	13.2

\*Percent change over 2007

Table 3: China's Top Import Suppliers 2008 \$ billion (PRC General Admin. Of Customs)

Hyundai in particular definitely does use the Korean Wave to its benefit as many of its marketing strategies remind consumers of the romantic Korean dramas. One of its models has a name sounding similar to "falling in love with you" in Chinese while another series actually sports the name "Sonata" (New).

### c. Political Benefits.

The relationship that the viewers have with the South Korean dramas and films, which is now also with the "South Korea" brand, have brought South Korea political benefits in that it has created a positive image for South Koreans and positive political changes. Viewers are more open-minded about South Korean culture, South Korea, and South Koreans and more willing to try South Korean culture. For example, viewers are more open to South Korean culinary ventures and the country has become a considered vacation spot. Many are also more open or interested in making South Korean friends, talking with South Koreans, and noticing South Korean news. During South Korean President Roh Moo Hyun's recent visit to Mexico, the land of the telenovela (Spanish language TV drama form), a flock of local women stood outside his hotel holding placards with Korean stars' names ( Faiola).

The changed view and attitude towards South Korea have helped South Korea overcome some historical political barriers. For example, Japan and South Korea have had strained relations ever since the confliction that occurred between Japan and South Korea during World War II. Many of the South Korean drama fans in Japan are the middle age and older women who grew up postwar during the peak of "animosity and hostility towards Koreans". However they are now avid fans and viewers of South Korean dramas, falling in love with the dramas' actors and consuming the related merchandise and services like traveling to film shoots and/or learning Korean, etc. (Kim, 2009). In Chua and Koichi's book "East Asian Pop Culture: Analysing the Korean Wave", Yukie Hirata and Yoshitaka Mori study Korean drama fans in Japan and confirm a resulting potential improvement in the relationship between the two nations (Howard, 2010; Chua, 2008). Kim (2009) believes that "Winter Sonata" and the Korean Wave represent a possible perpetual change in Japan towards Korea-Japanese history and diplomatic relations with South Korea.

Another particular political accomplishment achieved through Korean dramas is the effect they have had on some North Koreans. Oct. 29<sup>th</sup> 2009's edition of Time magazine reported that foreign films, especially South Korean dramas, were rising in popularity in North Korea. Although many of them are banned and illegal in North Korea, there is a high volume of South Korean films being smuggled into North Korea and secretly watched, especially amongst the younger university student generation. The North Korean government put a stricter limit on South Korean dramas as North Korean citizens are "starting to ask, 'Why are we poor?' and they point to South Korea" (North).

#### d. Downsides of Marketing Relationships

Although the Korean Wave and Korean dramas did promote such a big effect and even a cross-nationalism in other countries for South Korean culture, the South Korea film and drama industry is feeling repercussions as other countries are now rising against the culture invasion. Foreign governments are putting restrictions on or even banning South Korean movie and film imports and broadcasts. China in 2005 cut airtime for Korean dramas by 50% because of an unbalanced trade of cultural products. Korean drama exports to China dropped from \$9.7 million in 2006 to \$6.5 million in 2007 (Kim Sue, 2010).

The Korean Wave became big too quickly, taking many by surprise and instilling fear of a Korean culture takeover. Besides government opposition, nationalists have started a "Hating the Korean Wave" and are taking countermeasures. In 2005, a web comic called 'Manga Kenkanryu', about the Anti-Korean Wave, triggered a massive internet movement Japan wide (Cho, 2007).

Of course with all relationships, there is also the struggle to maintain them and keep them fresh. Many of the viewers were attracted to the dramas and films because of the refreshing changes. But now, trend analysts say that viewers are starting to feel a repetition in the drama and film plots that used to attract them (Kim Sue, 2010). That freshness is fading and viewers' attraction to the dramas and films are declining in interest as fans and viewers veer off in search of something new. South Korea's brand image and economy are feeling the impact of the Korean Wave's diminishing effects as their brand image is built off of that relationship its consumers have with South Korean films and dramas.

According to the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the nation exported about \$1.4 billion worth of entertainment products in 2006, a figure higher than 2005's, but the export of dramas, films, and music are showing a decline. In 2007, exports dropped 20% to \$17.7 billion from 2006's \$22.2 billion. Music industry exports dropped to \$16.6 million in 2006 after reaching a record \$22.2 million in 2005. The film industry took a huge hit when it only sold \$24.5 million in 2006 after \$75.9 million in 2005 (Kim Sue, 2010).

## Exports of Korean Cultural Products

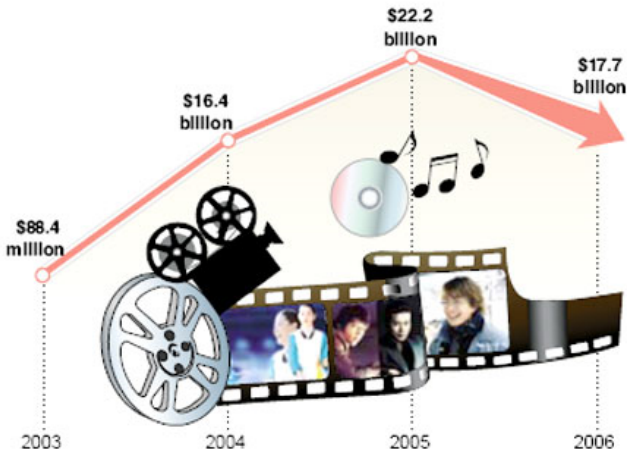


Figure 12: Exports of Korean Cultural Products 2003-2006 (Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism)

Tourism is also feeling the decline, specifically cities with the Korean Wave attraction sites. Chuncheon in Gangwon Province, home to “Winter Sonata”, was once crowded with foreign tourists but Chuncheon City’s government reports a decrease in 40% from 2006 to 2008. In 2003 and 2005, 139,000 and 390,000 foreigners visited the city respectively but in 2007, the numbers dropped to 230,000. The prop house of Bae Yong-joon’s character, lead male actor from “Winter Sonata” is no longer so crowded with fans anymore (Kim Sue, 2010).

## Number of Tourists to Chuncheon

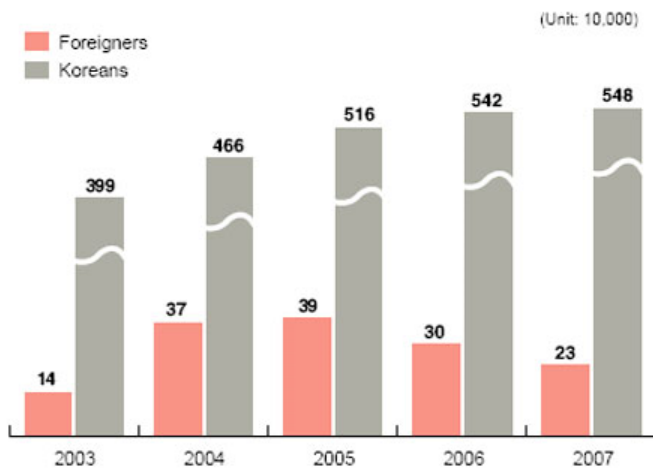


Figure 13: Number of Tourists to Chuncheon 2003-2007 (Chuncheon City records)

## IX. Conclusion

Nation branding, the active establishment and maintenance of a country's image can be a powerful tool. By increasing a nation's image in others' minds, it can indirectly bring the nation power, boost the nation's economy, and even provide a better life for the nations' people. From studying the latest nation trend, South Korea's "Korean Wave", it is learned that entertainment and media can be a key factor in nation branding. It is an industry that can reach across language and culture barriers and after making an emotional and personal connection with the opposite side, interest in the nation's other areas will grow, like in other business products and in the nation's people.

In this study, it was found that the recent rise in South Korea's economy and culture popularity was connected to the Korean Wave. More specifically, the Korean Wave is greatly fueled by the popularity of South Korea's dramas and entertainment industry. Through C. Conrad's theory of perceived relevance, we learn that viewers perceiving relevance in the media they view, have an increased consumption in related goods. Evaluating the possibility for perceived relevance in South Korean drama, the study finds that South Korean drama's high international relevance or ability to relate to a more diverse audience; more relatable and desired content; repetitive structure and viewing timeline that creates commitment and familiarity; emotional factor; and timely entrance into the market are all factors that help viewers interact with the dramas and perceive relevance. All combined, that interaction becomes a relationship and after the drama ends, that relationship is transferred to relatable products. Through associating and conditioning, South Korea's nation branding campaign has actually helped associate the South Korea brand to South Korea media and dramas. Perceiving that connection, viewers are sold on the South Korea brand and consuming South Korea brand products, like increased tourism to South Korea. The association has also developed a higher political acceptance and demand for South Korean goods, services, and even people. However recently, although South Korea saw a huge increase in its economic success overseas, it is now facing a decline and obstruction to its culture expansion as other countries are starting preventive methods or even banning South Korean culture good imports in response to the culture invasion and takeover.

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## ACADEMIC VITA of Wendy Xiang Shi

### WENDY XIANG SHI

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### EDUCATION

- ❖ **Pennsylvania State University**, *Schreyer Honors College, Smeal College of Business*, University Park, PA  
*Majors: B.S in Finance, B.A in Film Minor: International Business, Honors: Marketing*  
*Cumulative GPA: 3.56/4.00* *Graduating May 2010*  
*Undergraduate Honors Thesis: "Nation Branding with Dramas – Case of the Korean Wave"*
- ❖ **Kanda University**, Chiba, Japan, IES Study abroad program **Fall '09**
- ❖ *Standardized Tests - GMAT: 710/800 (August '09), LSAT: 164/180 (Dec. '09)*

### BUSINESS and WORKING EXPERIENCE

**Yellow Ruby**, Tokyo, Japan **Fall '09**  
*Business & Store Intern*

- Initiated and managed project establishing English and user-friendly online site features helping international customers to stay connected with brand; resulted in increased sales and traffic
- Advised management on marketing strategy and venues for promoting brands to international customers
- Learned about Japanese business and sales customs; was responsible for foreign customers
- Worked with original and import brands; learned about and worked in store, business operations

**Boston Herald, TV 38**, Boston, MA **Summer '09**  
*"Track Girls" Intern*

- Helped with marketing conception; gave input on show structure and ways to capture target audience
- Helped in planning and production of new show "Track Girls"

**Accenture**, Philadelphia, PA & Shanghai, China **Summer - Fall '08**  
*Global Business Consulting Intern*

- Managed center logistics and technology; supported team in client reception, presentations, and other roles
- Started a leading consumer insights practice; produced and taught new client service to global retail teams
- Researched and analyzed business and market data; created content and presented on innovation to clients
- Created promotional marketing pieces that gave insight on marketing IT and bettered internal communication
- Consulted clients and Accenture team on media projects; taught new technology
- Helped better prepare new hires and ease project transitioning by creating an interactive ACIN workshop guide

**Wyeth Pharmaceuticals & INROADS**, Philadelphia, PA **Summer '07**  
*Sales Planning & Insights Intern*

- Designed an information collection structure that produced greater productivity in help desk communication
- Supported marketing and IT teams in commercial sales solutions' strategy development, implementation
- Helped management improve HR training course with customer insight analysis and advising on improvements

**Beijing Pharmaceutical Group Companies**, Beijing, China **Summer '06**  
*International Affairs & Communications Coordinator*

- Managed foreign accounts, transactions, and communications serving as the American culture consultant to the executives; supported the Global Beijing Pharmaceutical Conference as the only bilingual committee member

**C/S Group**, Beijing, China **Summer '06**  
*(Part-time) China Business Assistant*

- Helped setup a business and manufacturer partnership in China; supported negotiations and communications
- Learned how to deal with issues and complicated communication created from cultural differences

**Vector Marketing**, Willow Grove, PA **Spring '06**  
*Cutco Knives Sales Representative*

- Trained in selling techniques and developed skills in customer approach and persuasion: 1st sale > \$400

**Jiling Electronic Power Corporation**, Changchun, China

**Summer '05**

*Language and Documentation Consultant*

- Advised management in business document translation issues and initiated awareness for need of better translations services; raised the bar of expectation for future translation services

**Penn State University** University Park, PA

*ITS Computer Lab Consultant*, IT Services

**Spring '07 – '09**

- Supervised computer labs solving real time technical/non-technical issues and users' questions; practiced consumer service

*Chef Assistant and Cashier*, Food Services

**Fall '05 – Spring '06**

- Initiated day of traditional Chinese cuisine and made improvements to menu; increased eatery's popularity

### ACTIVITIES and LEADERSHIP

**Journalist & Student Leader**, *FastStart Student Mentoring*, Penn State Alumni Association **Fall '06 – Spring '09**

- Student leader and journalist on Advisory Board: managed mixers, developed newsletters, and spoke at promotional events

**Monster Diversity Leadership Program**, New York City

**Summer '09**

**Public Relations Chair**, Penn State Japanese Culture Society

**Spring '08**

- Built new relationships with local community businesses; managed publicity team and promotion campaign

**Marketing Director**, *TechnoClassica Concert at Penn State*

**Fall '07 – Spring '08**

- Led a marketing campaign that overcame generation gap in music tastes; managed publicity

**Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE)**, Penn State

**Spring '07**

- Presenter and student ambassador to Santiago, Chile: taught American business etiquette and English

**Mentor**, *Asian American Students in Action (AASIA)*

**Fall '06**

- Mentored Asian freshmen: aided their transition to college and helped them to appreciate their heritage

### LANGUAGES and SKILLS

**Languages:** Fluent in English and Mandarin Chinese, basic Japanese and Spanish, and some knowledge in Korean

**Computer:** Adobe Suite, Microsoft Office (expert in PowerPoint, Excel, Word; proficient in Access, Publisher, Outlook), site creation; online social marketing

**Video Production:** Final Cut Pro, PC & Mac movie software, lighting, make-up, etc.

### AWARDS

**Dean's List** ('05-'09)

**Penn State Schreyer Honors Scholarship** ('05-'09)

**Penn State SFO Film Award** ('08)

**AASIA Mentor Appreciation Award** ('06)

**Kerrigan Scholarship** (Merck pharmaceutical company –'05)

**Science Fair Awards: 7 Years Continuous 1<sup>st</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> Place** (county, state, tri-state level '99 –'05)

### ADDITIONAL SKILLS - FILM WORK

**No-Refund Theater**, University Park, PA – "*Nickelodeon Parody*" *Leading Actress*

**Spring '09**

**Anthem Film Company**, Bellefonte, PA - "*GULA*" *Leading Actress*

**Spring '09**

Feature length zombie action/thriller; <http://www.gulathemovie.com>

**Accenture**, Shanghai, China, *Corporate Film Cinematographer, Editor*

**Summer - Fall '08**

Created marketing media documenting client events and China's ad technology; used varying styles

**Penn State University Student Films**, University Park, PA

*Art Director, Makeup Artist*

**Spring '08**

"Once Upon a Time": narrative short on film; make-up for 20 yr old male turning into 50 yr old homeless man

*Director, Cinematographer, Editor, Makeup Artist*: "Shoko" - shot on film with Bolex camera

*Leading Actress*: "Holder" - won at Penn State Student Film Organization