KPOPPED!:

UNDERSTANDING THE FILIPINO TEENS' CONSUMPTION OF KOREAN POPULAR MUSIC AND VIDEOS

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Dedication

To the One above, my only Lord.

To Mama and Dad, my pillar and strength.

To Ate Agnes and Jed, my friends and confidant.

To Jimmybee, my life's happiness.

To all Kpop fans, this one's for you.

To Big Bang, the one who inspired all these.

And to you, who's actually reading

this two-year endeavor.

ABSTRACT

Alanzalon, S.M. (2011). *Kpopped! Understanding the Filipino Teens' Consumption of Korean Popular Music and Videos,* Unpublished Undergraduate Thesis, University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication.

This thesis looked into the popularity of Korean popular (Kpop) music among the Filipino teens aged 15-19 years. The study used the combined assumptions of Straubhaar's Cultural Proximity Theory, Ball-Rokeach and De Fleur's Media Dependency Theory, and Blumler and Katz's Uses and Gratifications Theory. The researcher conducted both traditional and online surveys among 270 Filipino teenage Kpop fans, and focus interviews to six (6) Filipino fans of the Korean groups *Girls' Generation, Super Junior, Shinee, SS501* and *U-Kiss*. The researcher determined the variables of *consumption of Kpop content, cultural offerings present in Kpop content,* and *needs of the fans satisfied by Kpop content*. The study found out that Filipino teens are highly exposed to Korean popular music, and consumed these media texts everyday by utilizing various media, most specifically the Internet. The Filipino fans are also attracted to the cultural offerings of Kpop content, especially the visual elements including the physical appearance of the artists (face, fashion, hairstyle) and visual aspects of the music videos (choreography, sets). It was found that consuming Kpop content gratified the entertainment need of the fans through its appealing visual elements and high-quality content (songs, choreography, and talented artists).

ABSTRAK

Alanzalon, S.M. (2011). *Kpopped! Pag-aaral ng Pagkonsumo ng Kabataang Pilipino sa Popular na Musika at Bidyong Koryano,* Tesis, Unibersidad ng Pilipinas Kolehiyo ng Pangmadlang Komunikasyon,

Ang tesis na ito ay sumuri sa kasikatan at kalaganapan ng popular na Koryanong (Kpop) mga awitin at bidyo sa mga tinedyer na Pilipino edad 15-19 taon. Sa pag-aaral ng kaganapang ito, ginamit ang pinagsamang asumpsyon ng mga teoryang *Cultural Proximity* ni Straubhaar, *Media Dependency* nina Ball-Rokeach at De Fleur, *at Uses and Gratifications* nina Blumler at Katz. Nagsagawa ang mananaliksik ng tradisyonal at *online* na sarbey sa 270 na kabataang Pilipino, at anim na pokus na panayam sa mga tagahanga ng mga sumusunod na grupong Koryano: *Girls' Generation, Super Junior, Shinee, SS501,* at *U-Kiss*. Sinuri ng mananaliksik ang mga konsepto ng *pagkonsumo, elementong kultural,* at *pangangailangan ng kabataang Pilipino*. Natuklasan ng saliksik na mataas ang pagkakalantad ng mga kabataang Pilipino sa Kpop, at ginamit nila ang iba't-ibang midya sa pagkonsumo, lalo na ang Internet. Nagustuhan nila ang Kpop dahil sa mga elementong kultural, higit lalo ang mga biswal na aspeto tulad ng panlabas na kaanyuan ng mga Koryanong artista (mukha, porma, ayos ng buhok) at ang kalidad ng mga *music video* (koryograpiya, set). Ang pagkonsumo ng Kpop ay nakatulong sa gratipikasyon ng kasiyahan at katuwaan ng mga kabataan dahil sa mga kahali-halinang biswal na elemento at mga dekalidad na produkto (awitin, sayaw, artistang may talento).

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Fandom is a way of life. Much like daily activities such as eating, walking, watching television, reading books and the like, fandom is a habitual activity for a fan. Sandvoss described fandom as the "regular, emotionally involved consumption of a given popular narrative or text".[1] There are emotions invested in the part of the fan such as adoration, idolization and other extreme feelings of fondness. A simple appreciation of a media text may result to repeated and regular consumption. This active consumption is the main subject of this research endeavor.

Background of the Study

Since the advent of media, there has been an influx of ways and opportunities for fans to express their admiration for a popular narrative or text. Fans send fan letters through snail mail, or visit their idols on shoots and productions. And now especially with the dawn of new media such as the Internet and cellphone, the audience and the fans have a faster avenue to express their thoughts. After an episode of a drama series aired, fans would rally online to talk about their thoughts on the recent episode minutes after the broadcast. Andrejevic's study on the productivity of online fans found that viewer thoughts on an episode can change the way writers and producers create future episodes.[2] Through different media, celebrities and broadcast programs are now more reachable for the fans. It is the same way that even fans from one country can access media content from another country. The world has become borderless, and media and fan activities are just two aspects of globalization that brought about the openness of the world.[3]

Therefore, it is no surprise that even a Mexicana named *Thalia* and four chinky-eyed men from Taiwanese group *F4* captured the hearts of the Filipinos. *Marimar* and *Meteor Garden* were game-changers in the programming landscape of the Philippines and created a cult-following among Filipinos.[4] Their penetration in the mainstream media and the openness of the Filipinos to foreign media products brought upon the *Korean Wave* in the country. Since 2003, Korean dramas have become a staple in Philippine television. Studies show that the Philippines was only one of the many shores that the Korean wave, also known as *Hallyu*, affected. *Hallyu* is the rapid spread of the Korean entertainment industry in Asia.[5] In addition, Korean pop music (Kpop) is also popular in Japan, China and Taiwan.[6]

In the Philippines, Filipinos were only drawn to Korean dramas. However, June 2009 saw the debut of Korean music videos (MVs) in MYX Music Channel. Since then, Kpop as a media content, has become a staple in the programming of said channel, and created a fandom especially among the Filipino teenage fans. Korean songs entered MYX music charts and stayed for weeks.[7] Music companies distributed Korean albums in the country, and most of these albums were best sellers in music stores.[8] As an answer to the fans' clamor for Kpop content, MYX channel launched *Asia Myx* in December 2009, and *Pop Myx Kpop Edition* in May 2010. The year 2010 marked another milestone for the Kpop fandom among Filipino teens. Numerous Kpop groups like Shinee,[9] 4minute,[10] FT Island,[11] Super Junior,[12] U-kiss,[13] Beast, Kim Hyunjoong[14] and Rain[15] visited the Philippines to perform.

In addition, more than two thousand Kpop fans gathered for the first ever *Philippine Kpop Convention* held in the Philippines International Convention Center on December 10, 2009.[16] Various fan clubs and organizations joined hands to establish the Philippine Kpop Committee, and since its inception in late 2009, numerous projects and events have been held

like parties and charitable events. From observation, it is clear that Filipino fans join social groups to mingle with people with the same interest, as proven by the subculture of Kpop fans in the country flamed by activities of fan clubs and organizations.

However, it is very interesting to note that there have been no studies attempting to understand the Kpop fandom among the Filipino teens. What is the reason for their active consumption of Kpop media texts? What aspects of Kpop media content contribute to the Filipino teens' liking and appreciation? Do Kpop media texts gratify the various needs of the Filipino fans which contribute to their regular consumption? These questions fueled the researcher's interest in understanding the Filipino teens' consumption of Korean popular music, videos and artists.

Research Problem

Why do the Filipino teens consume Korean popular music and videos?

Objectives of the Study

In general, the study attempted to understand why the Filipino teens are active consumers of Korean popular music and videos.

Specifically, the study aimed:

a. To measure the consumption of the Filipino teens through their frequency of consuming Korean popular music and videos;
b. To determine the different ways Filipino teens' consumed Korean popular music and videos;

c. To identify the different cultural offerings present in Korean popular music texts that appealed to the Filipino teens;
d. To determine how the presence of cultural offerings influenced the consumption of the Filipino teens;
e. To know how the consumption of Kpop content gratified the different needs of the Filipino teens;
f. To find out how the gratification of needs served as a motivation for the Filipino teens' continued consumption of Korean music and videos.

Significance of the Study

The primary reason for the researcher's interest in undertaking a study about Kpop was her own fascination for it. Although guided by her own reasons for consuming Kpop, she wanted to objectively look at the phenomenon. The researcher was also surprised that no other studies have tackled the Kpop fandom in the country considering the multitude of Filipino Kpop fans and its overwhelming popularity since 2009.

The researcher firmly believes that through this study, the Filipino teenage kpop fans may gain understanding of their fandom, and how their consumption of Kpop media content affects their decisions and participation in many activities in their lives. The study could encourage fans to be critical of the media's direct effects on their daily decisions. Also, the researcher was convinced that Kpop fans spend a considerable amount of their allowances on buying Kpop media products. This study could make Filipino parents understand their children's fascination for such foreign media products.

The findings of this study could strengthen and contribute to the studies on the appreciation of Filipinos of foreign media content. Also, it is an update on the studies of phenomenon and mania produced by the media, and the formation of fandom in the Philippines based on novelty and fads. Consequently, this research probed on the effects of the media on its audience, and posited that the audience is active.

The study may become the basis for Korean entertainment companies to recognize the Philippines' strong potential as a market for their products. This would also be beneficial to Kpop fans who demand easier access. Although some companies, both local and Korean, already recognize the Filipino market, it can't be denied that Kpop's reach in the Philippines is still not as widespread as compared to other Asian countries.

Also, this study maybe a basis for broadcast networks and producers to create strategies targeting Kpop fans as potential audience. The local media may also use the findings to recognize the factors that attract Filipino fans to Kpop content and use these strategies to improve local media content.

This study also encourages the audience to become critical and responsive to the media content presented to them. This way, they can contribute to the betterment of the local media through their active participation in the feedback process, thus creating a healthy relationship between the media and the society.

Lastly, the spread of Kpop may cultivate a better relationship between Filipino and Korean nationals residing in the Philippines, fostering an open society as it promotes intercultural relativism which opens the critical minds of the Filipinos to foreign cultures.

Scope of the Study

This study focused primarily on the Kpop fandom among the Filipino teens, regardless of gender and socio-economic status. Using the methods of survey and focus interviews, the study described the processes of the fans' consumption of Kpop media. It also determined the cultural aspects present in Kpop that Filipino teens could relate with, and how the content gratified the needs of the fans.

In this study, it shall be understood that Kpop not only refers to the music per se, but also the videos with Kpop idols and group in it including official music videos and other television shows featuring Kpop artists. In South Korea, Kpop artists frequently appear in talk, variety, and reality shows. These television shows were included in the media text that served as the basis of the Kpop audience's response. Only the television shows featuring Korean artists *Girls' Generation*, *Super Junior*, *Shinee*, *SS501* and *U-Kiss* were included in the study.

In addition, the researcher focused on understanding the consumption of the fans by describing the cultural offerings of Kpop in the survey questionnaires, as well as the different ways of how Kpop gratified the needs of the fans. It did not attempt to look into other reasons such as other economical, psychological and sociological reasons, but only focused on the four different cultural offerings (language, visuals, cultural capitals, story) and the gratification of the four types of needs (information, personal identity, social interaction, entertainment). The term "fandom" in this study shall be understood as the emotionally-involved consumption of media texts, as opposed to the gathering of people with the same interest for an artist or media content.

Also, the study did not attempt to generalize the Filipino teenage Kpop fans, but rather isolated cases and attempted to understand the individual fandom of the Filipino fans by means of focus interviews.

Definition of Terms

The following terms shall be understood in context with the study. The researcher provided this section in order to inculcate the meaning of various terms in relation with the current research endeavor.

Active Consumption – consuming Kpop texts repeatedly and in a regular basis.

Consumption – the act of using/utilizing Kpop media content.

Convention – a big scale gathering of fans with the same interest, most of the time filled with activities relating to the object of fandom.

Cultural offerings – facets of the Cultural Proximity Theory used in this study to describe the content of foreign media texts.

Entertainment company – the agency that manages the assets, schedules, and production of materials of the Kpop artists (e.g.: YG Entertainment, SM Entertainment, JYP Entertainment).

Fan – a person with an intense enthusiasm or attachment to Korean popular music, videos and artists.

Fan Club – an organized fandom established by a group of Kpop fans who share the same interest for a certain subject of their attention and enthusiasm.

Idol – a singer trained by an entertainment company marketed as an idol for the general public (e.g.: *Girls' Generation, Super Junior, Shinee, SS501, U-Kiss*).

Korean Popular Music (Kpop) – a genre of pop music that originated from South Korea and performed by Korean idol singers and groups.

Kpop Music Video (MV) – the official music video of a Kpop song originally performed by a Kpop artist and produced by their official Korean entertainment companies.

Kpop Video Clips – clips containing Kpop artists or their music; maybe videos from television shows.

Media Content – other music, video clips, and music videos which contain or are related in anyway to Kpop or Kpop artists.

Needs – the different psychological or sociological necessities/wants of the fans that are gratified by consuming Korean popular music and videos.

Online Forums – Internet communities where fans can post, download, and exchange comments, messages, pictures, videos with fellow fans.

Teenager – in this study, Filipinos of age 15-19.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Anchoring on the objectives of this study, the researcher reviewed related studies that are significant to the following concepts: reasons for the fans' active media consumption; Filipinos as active fans; popular foreign media content in the Philippines; and the Korean Wave in Asia and the Philippines.

There was a considerable amount of studies found especially regarding the media consumption of fans and the proliferation of Korean media content in Asia. Most of the related literatures were unpublished theses and books found at the College of Mass Communication's library in the University of the Philippines, Diliman. Online journals and scholarly articles were retrieved from online sources such as Sage Publications, and All Academic Inc.

This chapter was organized based on the researchers' grouping of general to specific topics, delimiting in the main topic of the study. The subsections are presented in this order: a) media consumption and fan subculture; b) the Filipino fans; c) foreign media content and the Filipino audience; d) the Korean wave; e) integration of related literature; f) research gap: Kpop as the new leader of the Korean wave in the Philippines.

Media Consumption and Fan Subculture

Fans are textual poachers, and Jenkins proved this in his book with the same title.[17] In his attempt to understand the participatory culture of television fans, Jenkins provided a list of stereotypes associated with fans:

1. brainless consumers who buy anything associated with the program or its cast
2. devote their lives to the cultivation of worthless knowledge
3. place inappropriate importance on devalued cultural material
4. are social misfits who have become obsessed with the show
5. are feminized and/or desexualized through their intimate engagement with mass culture
6. are infantile, emotionally and intellectually immature
7. are unable to separate fantasy from reality.[18]

But why is there such a negative connotation on the fans? Jenkins added that it may have stemmed out of the fanatical, bordering on obsessive, consumption of fans of popular media. In fact, Sandvoss also said that there is an "emotional commitment"[19] on the part of the fans, which is mirrored in the "regularity of which they visit and revisit their object of fandom".[20] Both Jenkins and Sandvoss said that fans consume media over and again to consummate their needs. This is the reason why some label them the stereotypes listed above. Sandvoss added that the subculture in which fans belong to, simply because they consume a common media text, reflects the consumption patterns of its members. He said that "most – maybe all – of those who participate in subcultures which evolve around a given media text or genre conform to the patterns of regular and emotionally committed consumption".[21] Based on this assumption, it can be concluded that fans are very active media consumers.

In one study conducted by Phua,[22] he tried to understand the effects of sports fans' media consumption on their fan identity salience and self-esteem. Phua's findings reflected that sports fans are not merely "brainless consumers" who consumed media texts and "devoted their lives to the cultivation of worthless knowledge", as what the stereotypes in Jenkins' book said. Rather, they consumed media for various reasons, such as the formation of their fan identity salience and self-esteem. As a result of his quantitative interviews and surveys, Phua concluded that:

> As predicted, media consumption enhances positive distinctiveness for fans of the sports team, leading to enhanced self-esteem due to the ability to seek information about the team through the various media during the season. By reading newspapers, magazines and articles about the team as well as individual players, watching or listening to commentaries and sports programs, logging on to the Internet to read and post messages on fan forums, and also receive text message updates on their cell phones, sports fans are able to create solidarity with fellow fans, and categorize themselves as part of their in-group.[23]

Although the framework of Phua was based on the Social Identity Theory, which involves fans' membership in different social groups, it posited that the fans' membership to a fandom is one form of consumption because of different group activities involved, as mentioned in his conclusion. In relation to this, Whiteside and Hardin conducted another study about sports media consumption.[24] In this study, they tried to understand women's patterns of consumption of sports-related media. The study found out that women consumed sports media for various reasons, including the following:

> For the participants, the decision to watch sports was not made in a vacuum; rather, it involved weighing the opportunity to spend time with their husbands and families against choosing to do other activities that were perhaps more suited to their interests, but likely done alone. [25]

Whiteside and Hardin's conclusion was very strong, as it resonates the fact that fans, or even audiences in general, consume media most likely because of precise psychological reasons, and not because of worthless meanings. In addition, many other mass media audience studies tackle media consumption as means to consummate other psychological needs and behavior. These studies will be tackled in the succeeding sections of this chapter.

Meanwhile, Andrejevic studied the productivity of online fans through their active consumption of television drama serials.[26] In the study, fans of certain television shows gathered online and utilized the Internet, particularly the website *Television without Pity*, to

produce feedback on the latest episodes. Again, there is a factor of media consumption and usage to gratify a need for feedback. Andrejevic said that:

> The site may have the potential to serve as an instant focus group, as one respondent put it, but perhaps even more importantly, it helps draw viewers to particular shows and allows them to build up social and information capital that increases their commitment to viewing.[27]

Although Andrejevic's study focused mainly on the new role of the Internet as a tool for audience feedback, it touched on the assumption that audiences use and reuse media for psychological reasons, such as the need for feedback.

Phua, Whiteside and Andrejevic all studied the subcultures of fans, and how they consumed media to satisfy various reasons. These studies proved that media consumption contributes to the formation, development, and/or maintenance of the sport fans' and television fans' media dependency. Therefore, fans are active media consumers.

The researcher of the current study also believes that Kpop fans, like sports fans and television fans, actively consumed Kpop content because of many psychological and sociological factors, which this study tried to find out.

The Filipino Fans

Various studies say that fans are the most active media poachers. However, most of the studies mentioned in the previous section involved audiences from foreign countries such as the United States of America. Filipinos have also proven to be very active media consumers.[28] But what kind of fans are the Filipinos, most specifically, the youth? How do they use the media in worshipping their idols and favorite media texts?

Ramos and Tanglao attempted to understand the Filipino teens as fans.[29] In their highly quantitative study, they tried to find out how Filipino adolescents in the multimedia society worshipped their favorite celebrities. It described the different ways of how Filipino teens consumed media content related to their idols. This is exactly what the current study also tried to do. Ramos and Tanglao's study purported that there are various psychological implications on the part of the fans as a result of their media consumption. They noted that "media use (as well as access) facilitates fandom".[30] They added that "fandom cannot occur without media consumption" because it is through the media that audiences are able to "interact with and learn more about their favorite celebrities".[31]

Meanwhile, Parungao focused on the social interaction of fans who were members of fan clubs.[32] He studied fans as a small group of people interacting, as opposed to being individual consumers. Although his research mainly focused on Filipino adult fans who were members of *Nora Aunor* fan clubs, it supported the assumption that Filipinos, as fans, are active media consumers, to the point that they join organizations to identify with fellow fans. Parungao said that "a celebrity fan club is one of the life spaces that an individual could move or operate within".[33] Although the current study did not dwell on the formation and maintenance of fandom, still joining fan clubs is one form of consumption.[34]

Both Ramos & Tanglao's and Parungao's studies proved that Filipinos have a very active fan subcommunity – a phenomenon that is very prevalent nowadays with the multitude of fan clubs dedicated to Korean popular music.

Foreign Media Content and the Filipino Audience

The previous section discussed how Filipinos, as an audience, utilize the media for the gratification of their different needs. This section focuses on the other side of the pendulum – the media content.

From soap operas to game shows to Korean popular music, foreign media content have been a staple in the programming of Philippine broadcast media. Because of the continuing importation of foreign shows by the country's biggest networks, the researcher had reason to believe that the Filipinos have very positive response to these foreign products, including Korean popular music. This is the reason why this current study looked into three types of foreign material that created a huge impact on the Filipino audience in recent years. These materials included: Spanish-language soap operas; Japanese animated series, popularly known as *anime*; and Asian dramas, also known as *Asianovelas*. These three types of programs, in one way and time or another, affected the viewing habits of the Filipinos.

To begin with, it was the year 1996 when Mexican telenovelas pioneered by the drama *Marimar* created a huge impact on the television programming in the Philippines. According to Oting, *Marimar* "only didn't make the advertising revenues of RPN 9, the carrier station of Marimar, richer; it made the two broadcasting behemoths, ABS-CBN 2 and GMA 7, panic, temporarily forgetting their race for the ratings game".[35] From then on, Mexican telenovelas and other Spanish-language soap operas ruled Philippine television.

But what made the Filipinos like *Marimar* and other similar programs? Studies by Oting,[36] Peralta[37] and Parra[38] used both audience and textual analysis to understand the phenomenon.

Oting conducted focus interviews of TV network programmers, and *Marimar* viewers, in order to find out what contributed to *Marimar's* impact on the programming of Philippine television. Oting found out that *Marimar's* main appeal to the audience included her “beauty, good facial expression, and sex appeal”.[39] On the other hand, the male lead *Sergio's* appeal came from his “macho appeal, handsome face, and nice eyes”.[40] Oting's findings proved that somehow, the physical appearance and characteristics of the actors in the text contribute to the liking and appreciation of the viewers. Meanwhile, Peralta did a textual analysis of *Marimar*, and found out that primary texts included the narrative of a “poor-opressed girl,” “rags-to-riches lady” and “the avenger”.[41] Likewise, Parra did an audience analysis of the Filipino viewers' reading and usage of Spanish-language soap operas and the results of Parra's research echoed the findings of both Oting and Peralta. Employing interviews and group discussions, Parra found out that the leading factors that contributed to the Filipinos’ appreciation of Marimar included the values in the story and the beauty of the characters.

Aside from this, Oting found out that viewers preferred *Marimar* over local soaps because they thought local contents were “baduy, trying hard, corny”[42] proving the preference of the audience for foreign content. Aside from this, viewers found *Marimar* well-budgeted and well-conceptualized as opposed to local-soaps' low budget and shallow content. Based on Oting's study, it is clear that *Marimar* viewers found the show more relatable and more sophisticated compared to local content. On the other hand, Peralta concluded that the Filipino readers were “eager consumers”[43] of media content when they were given the chance to interpret it, supporting Parra's use of Uses and Gratifications theory

to prove that Filipinos continually watched Spanish soap operas because these dramas gratified their need for entertainment.[44]

But aside from the rise of Spanish soaps in the country, animated series from Japan also made way into the programming of Philippine television. According to Ong's documentary, anime gained popularity in the country after *Voltes V* aired in the late 1970s.[45] On 1999, GMA 7 created a regular anime programming line up to cater to the demand for anime shows. Abellar did an audience study on the children's perception of animes.[46] In a partial ethnography of children from Marikina, Abellar found out that children used animes to satisfy their entertainment, escapist, social integration and cognitive needs. Therefore, children utilized the media for their own needs, which supports the Uses and Gratifications approach Ong [47] and Parra [48] used.

In relation to this, Guiao and Kiocho also studied the anime program, *Samurai X*, and determined the characteristics of the main lead *Renou Kenshin* that made him popular among Filipino viewers.[49] The humaneness of *Kenshin*, his well-developed character, and the storyline were just three of the main reasons why Filipinos loved *Kenshin* and *Samurai X*. It also encouraged the fans' curiosity, creativity and imagination as they learned Japanese culture and improved their writing skills - another form of gratification also presented in the studies of Ong [50] and Abellar [51] and Parra.[52]

Both Spanish-language soap operas and Japanese-anime shows reached their peak on Philippine television in the late 1990's. But when the new millennium entered, another foreign media content ruled Philippine TV and created a mania that was so big it paved the way for an entire Asian drama wave in the Philippines. It was summer of 2003 when *Meteor*

Garden debuted in ABS-CBN's late afternoon programming. ABS-CBN used various promotional tools to popularize the show among the Filipino people.

In Brabante and Lastimoso's unpublished thesis, they cited promotional tools that proved to be very effective means to introduce a new show and sustain the audience's clamor for it.[53] These techniques created a very active audience, one that did not merely watch and absorb the media content, but rather actively consumed media content. In fact, Tumambing said that, “posters of F4 and Barbie Hsu, and MG and F4 stuff (playing cards, t-shirts, pirated CDs, bags, and other items) increased in the market and were everywhere”.[54] Catindig, Galang and Galias’s study aimed to determine the politics and economics in the promotion and consumption of Meteor Garden.[55] Most of their respondents were attracted to the F4 members because of their physical attributes and talent. This was similar to *Marimar* viewers' inclination to the good looks of the show's characters,[56] proving that sometimes, viewer consumption is partly based on the physical appearance of the show’s artists.

Spanish-language soap operas, Japanese animated series, and Asian dramas were all very well-received in the country. Most of the studies analyzed the audience and found out that their reason for the consumption of these products included the attractive physical appearance of the actors, the good values presented in the content, and the high-quality production of the TV shows. The researcher believed that the same elements were present in Korean popular music, and this presence was the reason why many Filipino teens became very much attracted to Kpop music, videos and artists.

The Korean Wave

In the previous section, the popularity of foreign media content in the Philippines was discussed. Among these television products, *Asianovelas* arguably created the biggest impact not just in the Philippines but in the whole of Asia. To be more specific, *Koreanovelas*, or Korean drama series, paved the way for the Korean Wave in the said continent. But why did Asians appreciate Korean pop culture?

Ryoo,[57] Shim,[58] Hyun[59] and Ju[60] all conducted in-depth analyses of the Korean Wave. *Hallyu,* or the rapid spread of Korean entertainment in Asia, took the continent by storm shortly before the new millennium started.[61]

Arguably the most cited paper about the Korean Wave is Shim's *Hybridity and the Rise of Korean Culture in Asia*.[62] In this paper, Shim's descriptive study was highly qualitative, which was the same approach that this current study utilized. He argued that the dominance of American media in the globalization is an unjustified claim, as South Korea was able to add twists and local tastes on an entirely western invention. Shim believed that *cultural hybridization* contributed greatly to the success of the Korean Wave. He said that "cultural hybridization has occurred as local cultural agents and actors interact and negotiate with global forms, using them as resources through which Koreans construct their own cultural spaces".[63] Through these cultural agents, Koreans were able to produce media content that were a "hybridization of well-embraced foreign styles",[64] and value-laden themes that were centered on their own culture. Koreans made use of their local identity to put flavor in an otherwise very western medium.

On the other hand, Ryoo explained the "formation process of Korean popular music in its present form".[65] He mentioned how Koreans appreciated and studied Western and

Japanese media content in order to produce their own media texts. Ryoo believed that Korean popular culture managed to penetrate the Asian market because of its ability to translate Western ideas to very identifiable Asian content. He also elaborated how the "modernity"[66] of South Korea served as an important factor in the success of the Korean Wave. Asians would like to emulate the good and beautiful life, including the advancement of technology, presented in Korean drama settings.[67] This finding is further supported by Chan's statement: "Structural changes in the economy and technology in East Asia surely have facilitated global and intra-regional flows of cultural-media products in the region".[68]

Both Shim's and Ryoo's studies support the current research's assumption that *culture* has something to do with the appreciation of content. Although both Shim and Ryoo didn't mention the Cultural Proximity Theory, their findings reflected the assumptions of the said theory.

In connection to this, Ju examined the Korean wave's popularity in East Asia, and she concluded the following:

> Seemingly, the cultural proximity toward Korean TV dramas is much closer to East Asian audiences' real life experiences than American dramas. East Asian audiences more easily relate to them, and thus can be fans of Korean dramas. The trend of Korean dramas' popularity in East Asian countries is embodied in the notion of cultural proximity within the East Asian regional media exchanges, and is not simple, linear, or symmetrical in nature, as suggested by the unified Confucian culture.[69]

Ju suggested that the similarity in culture contributed to the openness of Asians to Korean media products. Cultural proximity embodies factors that are widely understood by Asians, such as "norms of beauty (male and female), mannerism, style in clothing, and a sense of Asianness in contrast to perceived western outlooks".[70] Also, Lee[71] and Trepte[72] utilized Cultural Proximity Theory in examining the success of television shows. Trepte

explored the factors that made television shows successful. Lee, on the other hand, interviewed Japanese fans of the Korean drama *Winter Sonata*. Both studies proved how "cultural factors influence audience perceptions".[73] Lee's qualitative study concluded that physical appearance of the actors contributed greatly to Korean dramas' appeal, similar to the findings of Oting[74] and Cabato.[75] Trepte concluded that the audience looked for their "cultural and identity needs" in the television shows that they chose to watch.

All of the studies reviewed in this section analyzed the reasons why Korean media content became popular amongst Asians. Just like the findings in the previous section, familiar cultural constructs such as moral values and high-quality production values contributed to the appreciation of Korean dramas. Even the Philippines already rode the Korean wave, and more recently, Korean dramas are not the only Korean media products that can be found in Philippine media. Korean popular music slowly made way to the mainstream media and many Filipino teens became fans of the Kpop wave.[76]

Integration of Related Literatures

With the help of the literature review, the researcher was able to prove specific and significant aspects of the study. First, *fans use the media to facilitate their fandom because it is through the media that they can consume their favorite media content*. Aside from this, the *media satisfies their various needs*, may it be for entertainment,[77] self-concept and fan identity[78] or maybe for reasons outside a vacuum, like strengthening family ties.[79] In addition, repeated consumption of media forms subculture and involves the emotional involvement of fans[80] and this emotional commitment brings about the *poaching* nature of audience.[81]

In an attempt to understand the Filipino fans, the researcher chose studies specific to the Filipino audience. Through various studies, it was deduced that *Filipinos, as an audience, are very active* proven by the presence of fan clubs which they use as a life space.[82] Also, Filipino fans use the media to satisfy their fandom. Many studies suggest that *media and fandom are two ends of the pendulum, therefore one cannot exist without the other*.[83]

Next, *Filipinos are very open to and appreciative of foreign media content they can interpret and relate with*, proven by the mania created by three types of foreign television shows over the years, namely Spanish soaps, Japanese animes and Asian dramas.

And more importantly, *Korean Wave has hit Asia, including the Philippines because of its Asianess, value-laden content, good-looking actors and high-quality production.*[84]

Research Gap: Kpop as the New Leader of the Korean Wave in the Philippines

This subsection tackles the popularity of Korean Popular Music among the Filipino teens in recent times. Most of the resources came from newspapers and online articles, as studies about Kpop in the Philippines were lacking, if not non-existent.

When MYX aired an array of Kpop videos in June 2009, Kpop came to the limelight. Filipino fans, who were previously silent, came out and openly expressed their adoration for Korean music, videos and artists. As what Hicap said, “not only do they interact in their own forums, on blogs and networking sites, they also meet regularly, hold fan gatherings and dutifully buy their idols' CDs, photo books, T-shirts and other merchandise.”[85] What did these Kpop artists possess? In the words of Sablan in his article for the Philippine Daily Inquirer, “The world has gone crazy over Korean pop. Very popular right now are boy bands and girl groups with members who harmonize beautifully and showcase well-choreographed

dance steps."[86] He added that these artists were "good-looking, stylish, entertaining and hotter than kimchi." Perhaps these characteristics were some of the factors that attracted the Filipino teens, and this study aimed to find the truth behind this.

All of the four sections of the literature review (media consumption, Filipinos as fans, foreign media content in Philippines media, the Korean wave) were well-studied in the academe. There have been studies about the Filipinos' reception of other foreign products such as Korean dramas, but not with Korean popular music. No studies were found that delved on the popularity of Kpop before or after MYX aired Kpop music videos. In Asia, the Philippines is relatively new in the Kpop wave, and this is why no studies have tackled this phenomenon. This research tried to be the first study on the Kpop phenomenon among the Filipino teens.

Chapter 3

STUDY FRAMEWORK

In this study, the following theories were used: Cultural Proximity Theory by Joseph Straubhaar, Media Dependency Theory by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur and Uses and Gratifications Theory by Jay Blumler and Elihu Katz .

Theoretical Framework

In this section, the three theories are individually discussed. Then, important assumptions were taken to form the *Integrated Theoretical Framework* from which Conceptual and Operational frameworks were based.

Cultural Proximity Theory

In his attempt to understand the rise of Brazilian television content among Latin American audiences, Joseph Straubhaar developed the *Cultural Proximity Theory*.[87] Although the content of Brazilian television shows had American influences, the localization of texts enabled Latin Americans to relate with Brazilian shows.[88] In a series of studies about the flow of television content in South America,[89] Straubhaar fully developed his version of the Cultural Proximity Theory, especially in studies on the globalization of television.

His theory states that television audiences seek local media content because of its traditional and identifiable cultural content and language. But if the local media fails to deliver this, Elasmar noted Straubhaar's belief that the audience would prefer television content with similar texts from countries proximate in geography, culture and language.[90]

Although language is the main element that audiences identify with,[91] Straubhaar said that sometimes:

> "…they go beyond language to include history, religion, ethnicity (in some cases) and culture in several senses: shared identity, gestures and nonverbal communication; what is considered funny or serious or even sacred; clothing styles; living patterns; climate influences and other relationships with the environment.[92]

In his recent attempt to update Cultural Proximity Theory, Straubhaar argued that cultural proximities are dynamic based on the audiences' identification of the following cultural offerings:

a. Linguistic - local/national language, jokes, slang;
b. Visual - ethnic appearances, stars, clothing, style;
c. Cultural capital - knowledge, references, issues;
d. Values - religion, dress, gender roles, sexual imagery.[93]

The audiences' sense of proximity may vary, depending on their exposure to and identification of the cultural offerings mentioned above. Sometimes, exposure to the media comes before selection of content, but most of the time, selection of the texts occurs first, guided by their sense of cultural proximity. This is the case with the Korean Wave in Asia. Most of the studies about *Hallyu* used Straubhaar's Cultural Proximity Theory to explain the popularity of Korean dramas especially in East Asia.[94] Shim's study focused on the hybridization of culture, and how Korean producers were able to localize foreign content.[95] Hyun supported Shim's conclusion by stating that condensed cultures in Asia was reconciled by the modern Asian hybridity. This phenomenon is the same with the *Brazilianization* of Latin American television in the 70's-80's studied by Straubhaar.[96] These studies have proven how Cultural Proximity Theory accounts for the popularity of media content from one country to another, such as the spread of *telenovelas* from Brazil in South America, and the rise of the Korean Wave in Asia.

In this current research endeavor, the researcher attempted to translate Straubhaar's theory into the rise of Korean popular music (Kpop) in the Philippines. Although Straubhaar, and many other researchers (Shim, Hyun, Ryoo, Ju), used Cultural Proximity Theory in studying about the transnational flow of television content, the current researcher utilized the theory in understanding the transnational flow of Kpop content, not only through television, but also through the Internet and the local music market.

Media Dependency Theory

Media Dependency Theory was developed by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur in 1976. In its simplest sense, Dependency Theory states that the more the person depends on the media to provide his needs, the greater the importance of that media will be in the person's life, and thus, the greater the influence of the media on the person.[97]

There are two factors that shape the audience's degree of dependence on the media. First, the needs of the person that are being provided more by one media than another, and second, the social changes and conflicts that could make the audience reevaluate their needs, thus increasing their dependency. Dependency Theory also assumes that a person's needs are not always personal. There are other determinants of needs like various cultural or social conditions.

Dependency Theory has been used in mass media studies to explain mass media effects. In 2006, Botta used the theory in explaining how dependency of Zambians on television for information on HIV/AIDS resulted to the acceptance of condom use.[98] Similarly, Patwardhan and Ramaprasad studied the Internet activities of Indians, and employed dependency theory in explaining how the dependency of Indians on the Internet

influenced their activities.[99] The two studies greatly resonated how dependency on media caused the audience to perform a specific behavior.

Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur provided a model of the theory. In the model, the media is seen by both active and casual observers. Through the exposure, dependency is activated for various cultural and psychological reasons. The intensity of the dependency would rise for the arousal of cognition and affection. The greater the arousal of these two, the greater is the involvement in the information processing and the greater the influence on the observer's behavior, cognition and affection.[100]

The researcher utilized Media Dependency Theory in explaining the process of the Filipino teenage fan's consumption of Kpop and other related media content, and how their dependency on the media made way for certain behaviors, such as their greater involvement in the information processing of Korean media content.

Uses and Gratifications Theory

Uses and Gratifications Theory is one of the earliest theories that postulate the audience to be active. Developed by Elihu Katz and Jay Blumler, the key elements in this theory are the *uses* of the media, and the *gratifications* produced by those uses.[101] The audience is deemed to be "goal-directed in its media-use" as their main goal is to satisfy their different needs.[102]

In their 1974 article entitled *Uses and Gratifications Research*, Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch elaborated on the theory of Uses and Gratifications.[103] Using Lundberg and Huten's uses and gratifications model, the three authors singled out the following assumptions to further summarize the theory:

a. The audience is conceived of as active.
b. In the mass communication process much initiative in linking need gratification and media choice lies with the audience member.
c. The media compete with other sources of need satisfaction.
d. Methodologically speaking, many of the goals of mass media use can be derived from data supplied by individual audience members themselves.
e. Value judgments about the cultural significance of mass communication should be suspended while audience orientations are explored on their own terms.[104]

In the paper, the three authors postulated the sources of media gratification to be: a) media content; b) media per se; c) the social context of the exposure to the media.[105] In addition, Blumler and Katz identified four major purposes of the media: a) diversion or entertainment; b) personal identity; c) personal relationships; d) surveillance. McQuail developed his own summary of the different needs that media usage can provide:

a. Information
b. Personal Identity
c. Integration and Social Interaction
d. Entertainment[106]

In recent years, researchers have been using the Uses and Gratifications Theory to explain the dependence of users to the Internet. For instance, Cho et.al used the theory in understanding the Internet usage among Americans of different socio-economic status.[107] Also, Urista conducted group interviews to study the dependence of teenagers on social networking sites for information and entertainment.[108]

In this study, the researcher utilized Uses and Gratifications Theory to understand the Filipino teens' consumption of Korean popular music and videos. Using McQuail's ratified summary of media purposes,[109] she determined which of the Filipino teens' needs were being gratified by the consumption of Kpop content.

Integrated Theoretical Framework

Combining important propositions from the theories of Cultural Proximity, Media Dependency and Uses and Gratifications, the researcher used the following assumption as a framework for the study:

a. The audience prefers media content with familiar cultural offerings such as linguistics, visuals, cultural capital, and values.
b. If these content are not found in the local media, the audience would look for media content coming from other countries proximate in geography, culture, or language.
c. If the need for cultural offerings is satisfied, dependency is activated.
d. Once dependency is activated, the audience would be more involved in the information processing.
e. Other than the need for familiar cultural offerings, other needs are gratified, leading to the repeated consumption of media content.

Conceptual Framework

In translating the theoretical framework into specific concepts used in this study, the researcher specified the audience to be Filipino teenage Kpop fans. The media content was understood as Korean popular music, videos and television shows.

The facets of Cultural Proximity theory was translated into more specific concepts such as *language, visuals, cultural capitals,* and *stories*. *Language* referred to the languages present in Korean music and videos. On the other hand, *visuals* represented aesthetic elements in the media content. *Cultural Capital* included history, jokes, idioms and traditions

exclusive to the Korean culture, whereas *stories* referred to sets of values and themes present in the text.

The *information processing* of the Kpop fans referred to their different patterns and ways of consuming Kpop media content. On the other hand, the theoretical model of the different media purposes provided by McQuail [110] was retained in the conceptual framework. *Information* was the knowledge that fans gained from the exposure to Kpop media content. *Personal Identity* referred to the fans' personal growth, personality changes, dreams, goals and aspirations that were gained or lost during the process of consuming Korean music and videos. *Social Interaction* pertained to the social relationships with family, friends and fellow fans that have been affected by the fans' Kpop fandom. And lastly, *entertainment* denoted how Kpop provided happiness, amusement, diversion and other entertaining purposes to the consumers.

Operational Framework

To further elaborate the research framework, concepts were provided with indicators in order to measure the variables of the study. The researcher formulated a model (Figure 1) to illustrate the phenomenon being studied.

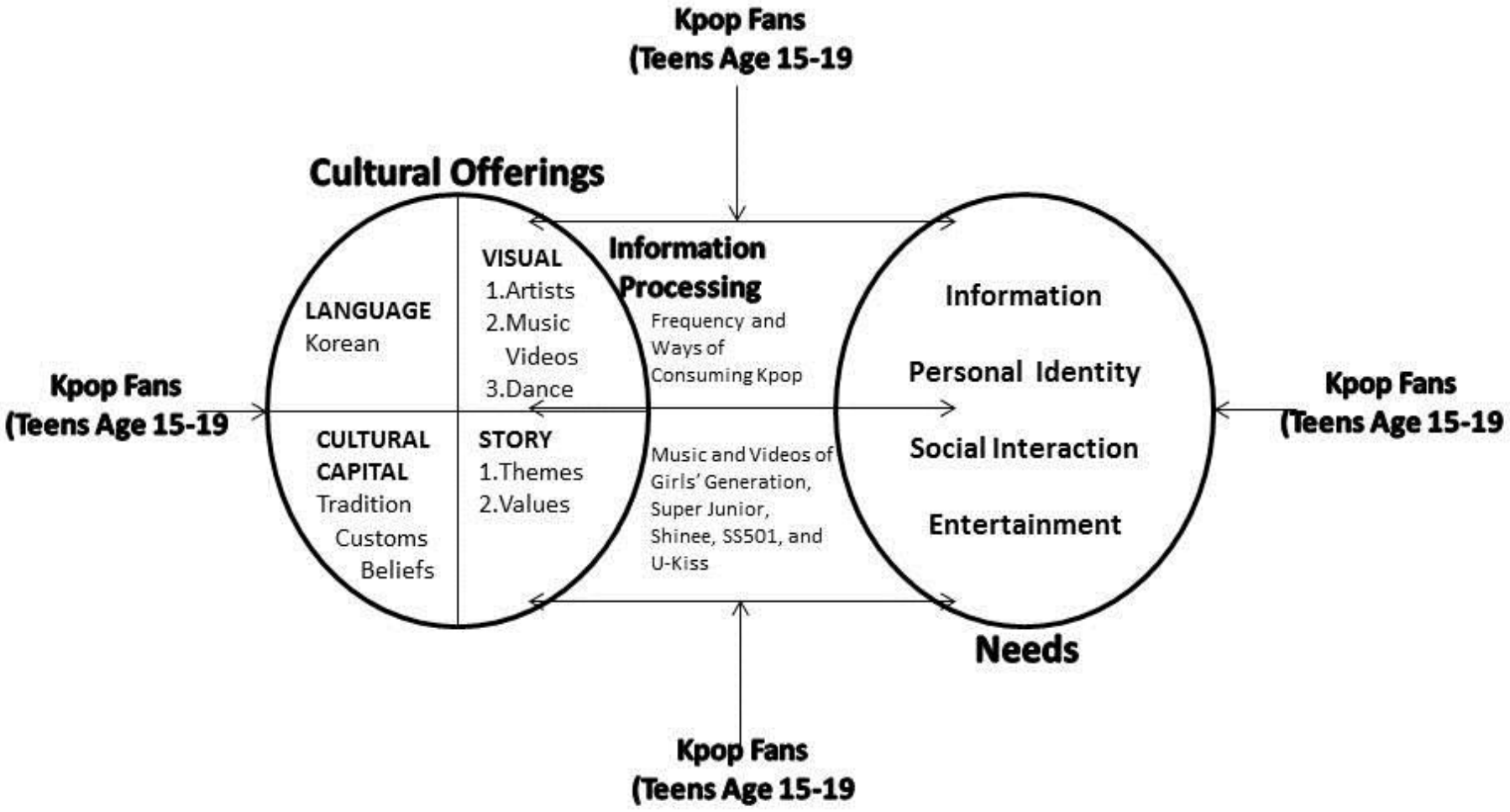
In the model, the Filipino Kpop fans were specified to be of age 15-19. Korean music was identified to be the music of Korean idol groups *Girls' Generation Super Junior, Shinee, SS501* and *U-Kiss*. Korean music videos included the MVs of the said Korean groups. Television shows pertained to the reality shows of the same set of Kpop artists, such as *Girls' Generation's Hello Baby, Super Junior's Full House, Shinee's Hello Baby 2*, and *U-Kiss's Vampire.*

The concept of *linguistics* was indicated as Korean. Whereas the concept *visuals* involved the Korean artists' face, body, height, fashion, hairstyle, music video concept, and choreography. *Cultural Capital* included Korean customs, traditions while history pertained to the values of family and friendship, and the themes of love and friendship.

The *information-processing* was measured through the fan's frequency and ways of media consumption.

The specific needs weren't specified per se, as they were identified by the respondents and interviewees during the data collection. Needs were operationalized to be the concepts of *information*, *personal identity*, *social interaction* and *entertainment.*

Figure 1. Visual model of the operational framework



Chapter 4

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

In this chapter, the research design and methods are discussed, along with the concepts and indicators, units of analysis and sampling, data gathering and data analysis.

Research Design and Methods

In understanding the phenomenon of Kpop fandom among the Filipino teens, the researcher chose both quantitative and qualitative paradigms. Two types of surveys (traditional and online) were employed in order to get a quantitative overview of the frequency, ways and reasons of the fans' consumption. The researcher also utilized focus interviews on six fans in order to isolate the phenomenon and the units of analysis. Since the researcher studied cases bounded by time and activity, it was more apt to use cross-sectional approach of data construction, analysis, and interpretation.

Survey

The researcher conducted a survey among the Filipino Kpop fans in order to collect quantified data regarding their patterns of consuming Korean music and videos. The survey sampling was purposive in order to specifically target the population of Kpop fans. Both traditional and online surveys were employed on a total of 270 respondents. Two surveys were conducted in order to give representation to both Kpop fans who were active attendees of fan club events, and also virtual Kpop fans who were active in various Internet Kpop communities. For the traditional survey, 120 members of the fan clubs *Girls' Generation Philippines, Super Junior United*, *Shinee World Philippines, Triple S Philippines*, and *U-Kiss*

Me PH answered the questionnaire. On the other hand, a total of 150 online Kpop fans participated in the online survey questionnaire posted in the following Internet Kpop communities: *Girls' Generation Philippines,*[111] *Super Junior United,*[112] *Shinee World Philippines,*[113] *Triple S Philippines,*[114] and *U-Kiss Me PH.*[115]

Focus Interview

The researcher chose six Kpop fans with varying degrees of fandom as units of analysis. The researcher chose focus interviews, as opposed to focus group discussions, because this method made possible richer, more in-depth discussion between the researcher and the Kpop fans.

The researcher conducted six different focus interviews of fans aged 15-19 years. These Kpop fans were members of the local fan club of the following artists: *Girls' Generation Super Junior, Shinee, SS501* and *U-Kiss.* These Korean groups were chosen for this study because of their popularity among the Filipino Kpop fans. *Super Junior* and *Girls' Generation* are arguably the most popular Korean groups in the country with multiple albums sold in the market, various songs in television music charts, and multitude of supporters in Kpop events like the *Philippine Kpop Convention* and *Kpop Culture and Fest*.

Meanwhile, in terms of online memberships, Kpop groups have relatively large local Internet communities (as of March 15, 2011). *Shinee World Philippines* has 2,892 registered members while *Triple S Philippines* has 2,692 members. On the other hand, *Girls' Generation Philippines* official website has 3,679 registered members while *U-Kiss Me PH* has 4,854. Lastly, *Super Junior United,* the unofficial unification of four different fan clubs

dedicated to the Korean boy group *Super Junior*, currently has 4,966 registered members on its official fan site.

Variables and Measures/Concepts and Indicators

The following concepts and indicators were used in the study:

1. **Consumption** –watching or listening to any Korean popular music related media including music, videos and online content. It was measured through the frequency of consumption, and the different way of consumption.
    a. Frequency of consumption – the incidence of consuming Kpop. It may refer to the number of times a fan consume Kpop, or the regularity and patterns of Kpop consumption.
    b. Ways of consumption – different ways and means of consuming Korean popular music using various media such as Internet and television.
2. **Cultural Offerings** – the different aspects of culture that may or may not be present in Kpop content, and that may or may not be the reasons for its appeal to the Filipino teens. This concept was measured through the following indicators:
    a. Linguistics – language spoken in the media content
    b. Visuals – aesthetic elements in the media content, such as artists' face, music video, etc.
    c. Cultural Capitals – cultural elements such as traditions, history, customs, etc.
    d. Stories – sets of values and thematic elements present in the narrative of videos and songs.

3. **Needs** – the different kinds of wants or necessities that were gratified by Kpop and were motivational in the fans' consumption of Kpop content. Needs were specifically classified as follows:
    a. Information
    b. Personal Identity
    c. Social Interaction
    d. Entertainment

Research Instruments

The survey questionnaire was divided in the following sections (each was a variable measured in this study): *1) profile of respondents; 2) consumption; 3) cultural offerings; 4) needs*. The questionnaire aimed to measure the Filipino fans' patterns of Kpop consumption. The instrument was validated through a mock survey on 30 respondents who were fans of Korean popular idol groups.

Meanwhile, the interview guide was outlined intro three basic sections based on the main concepts of the study: *1) consumption; 2) cultural offerings; 3) needs*. The main purposes of the instrument were: to ask the participants about the frequency and patterns of their Kpop consumption; to know the cultural aspects present in Kpop content that appeal to them; and to determine their different needs being gratified by Kpop.

The guide went through content validation. The pre-testing proved that focus interviews were more appropriate for the study. The researcher developed the instrument after conducting two focus group discussions on small groups of 4-6 participants who were all members of Kpop fan clubs.

Units of Analysis

Since the study focused on the consumption of Kpop, units of analysis were the Filipino teens who considered themselves *hardcore Kpop fans.* In addition, all units of analysis were members of at least one of the following fan clubs: *Girls' Generation Philippines, Super Junior United, Shinee World Philippines, Triple S Philippines,* and *U-Kiss Me PH*. The following criteria also served as bases for the chosen respondents and interviewees: 1) 15-19 years of age; 2) Filipino; 3) resident of Metro Manila; 4) has been a Kpop fan for no less than six months, 5) an active consumer of Kpop media content.

Data Gathering

The data gathering procedure covered a period of one month, beginning on the 5th of December 2010 to the 6th of January 2011.

As soon as the instrument was developed and validated, the online survey questionnaire was posted online using the survey tool *Kwiksurvey.* [116] The online survey was opened for a whole month (December 5, 2010 – January 6, 2011) to all Kpop fans who wished to answer the questionnaire. On the closing day of the online survey, a total of 349 online questionnaires were received.

Meanwhile, the traditional survey was conducted on the 11th of December 2010 during the *Philippine Kpop Convention* held at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) Tent in Pasay City. By purposively staying on the fan club booths, the researcher ambushed Kpop fans aged 15-19 years old and asked them to answer the survey questionnaires.

Lastly, the focus interviews also took place during the *Philippine Kpop Convention* in PICC Tent. Since the researcher interviewed members of specific fan clubs as units of analysis, she first asked the permission of the head of each fan club before interviewing the member as a representative of the group. Each interview lasted for half an hour minimum to forty-five minutes maximum.

The researcher recorded the focus interviews using a video camera and a digital audio recorder. These recordings helped in the transcription of data which was used as the main source of the discussion and analysis of findings.

Data Analysis

The researcher used *thematic* and *framework analysis* in analyzing the data. As what Rabiee mentioned, the main aim in the analysis of focus group interviews is to reduce the large amount of data generated from the data collection.[117] Using the two techniques mentioned, the researcher reduced and sifted through the most important findings.

The researcher made use of *themes* that were deduced in categorizing the findings. Meanwhile, Krueger's Framework Analysis guided the sifting of data. The five key stages of this analysis involved the following:

a. Familiarization – watching recorded discussions and interviews, reading transcripts and listening to tapes
b. Thematic Framework – developing categories and themes by lifting out texts and phrases from transcripts
c. Indexing – sifting the data by lifting quotes and comparing them
d. Charting – arranging lifted quotes into the newly-developed categories and themes
e. Mapping and Interpretation – managing the data and interpreting them accordingly.[118]

All these steps helped in managing the large amount of data and reducing them into more pertinent findings relevant to the study.

Expenses

The following list states the expenses spent in conducting the entire study:

Binding of final thesis (4 copies) – Php 1,000

Printing of documents – Php 500

Photocopy of final drafts – Php 300

Batteries and tapes for A/V recorder – Php 500

Token for interviewees – Php 500

Food and refreshment for interviewees – Php 300

Total – Php 3,100

Chapter 5

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the results and discussion of data from both the quantitative (survey) and qualitative (focus interview) methods are presented. Three variables were determined in the instruments: consumption of Kpop content, cultural offerings in Kpop music and videos, and needs of the fans satisfied by consuming Kpop media texts.

The researcher conducted two types of survey – traditional survey and online survey. This method was employed in order to get a quantitative overview of the consumption of the Filipino teen fans. The respondents for the two types of survey were chosen based on their age (15-19 years old). The traditional survey participants were also screened by their membership to at least one of the following fan clubs: *Girls' Generation Philippines, Super Junior United, Shinee World Philippines, Triple S Philippines*, and *Kiss Me PH.* Meanwhile, the participants of the online survey were active users of at least one of the following Internet communities: *Girls' Generation Philippines, Super Junior United Philippines, Shinee World Philippines, Ukissme PH, and Triple S Ph.* In interpreting the quantified data, frequency count and percentage equivalence were used.

The researcher chose six fans among the participants of the traditional survey for in-depth interviews. The focus interviews represented the qualitative phase of the study and provided a deeper analysis of the Kpop phenomenon among the Filipino fans.

Survey Results

Both traditional and online surveys were employed, and the combined number of participants totaled to 270 respondents. Respondents for the traditional survey comprised of

120 Filipino fans aged 15-19 years and were members of the fan clubs *Girls' Generation Philippines, Super Junior United, Shinee World Philippines, Triple S Philippines,* and *Kiss Me PH.* Meanwhile, 150 online respondents answered the online survey posted in the following Internet communities: *Girls' Generation Philippines, Super Junior United Philippines, Shinee World Philippines, U-Kissme PH, and Triple S Ph.* The survey aimed to determine the Filipino teens' *frequency* and *ways* of consuming Korean music and videos, as well as the different *cultural offerings* embedded in Kpop content which the Filipino fans could identify with. The researcher also determined if the consumption of Kpop content had an impact on the fans' four types of *needs* (information, personal identity, social interaction, and entertainment).

Profile of Respondents

There were 120 qualified respondents who participated in the traditional survey. They were all attendees of the *2010 Philippine Kpop Convention* held at the Philippine International Convention Center Tent last December 11, 2010. The survey participants were chosen based on their age (15-19 years old) and their membership to one of the following fan clubs: *Girls' Generation Philippines, Super Junior PH, Shinee World Philippines, Triple S Philippines,* and *Kiss Me PH.* On the other hand, a total of 150 respondents aged 15-19 years old answered the online survey posted on the following Kpop Internet communities: *Girls' Generation Philippines, Super Junior United Philippines, Shinee World Philippines, U-Kissme PH, and Triple S Philippines.*

Age

As shown in Table 1, 15-year old fans had the highest representation in the traditional survey respondents as they comprised 25% of the total sample. Meanwhile, those 19 years of age comprised 22%. Almost one-fifth (19%) were 16 years old while the rest were aged 17 (17%) and 18 (15%).

On the other hand, the table also shows that the online survey comprised of more 18-year old fans commanding 25% of the total number of online participants, while a fifth (20%) each were of age 15 and 16.

The ages of 15 and 18 led the percentage equivalence of the traditional and online survey, respectively. However, it can be observed that the other ages (16, 17, 19) were also well-represented in the survey sample.

Table 1. Age of the respondents

	Traditional Survey		Online Survey		Total	
Age	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
15	31	25.8	31	20.7	62	23.0
16	23	19.2	31	20.7	54	20.0
17	18	15.0	26	17.3	44	16.2
18	21	17.5	38	25.3	59	21.9
19	27	22.5	24	16.0	51	18.9
TOTAL	120	100.0	150	100.0	270	100.0

Gender

Table 2 shows that an overwhelming majority (62%) of the traditional respondents were females, while the remaining 37% were males. Similarly, nearly all (88%) online

respondents were females, while only 11% were males. The gap between the number of male and female respondents of the traditional survey was relatively smaller than that of the online survey. However, it is evident from both survey results that the female Kpop fans outnumbered the male fans by a huge margin. In fact, the combined results show that more than three-fourths of all the respondents were females.

Table 4. Gender of the respondents

	Traditional Survey		Online Survey		Total	
Gender	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Male	45	37.5	18	11.3	63	23.3
Female	75	62.5	132	88.7	207	76.7
TOTAL	120	100.0	150	100.0	270	100.0

Fan Clubs

The fan club is an important indicator in the study as it shows the artist supported by the respondents. The Korean girl group *Girls' Generation* had the most number of fans among the Filipino teens. In Table 3, nearly one-third (29%) of the traditional survey respondents were self-proclaimed *Sones*, the fandom name of those who considered themselves *Girls' Generation* fans. Only a fifth (20% each) of the respondents were members of *ELF* and *Shawol* (Shinee World), while only 11% belonged to the Triple S fan club.

The table also shows that among the online respondents, *Girls' Generation* was also the most popular choice with a third (32%) of the sample admitting to being fans. Meanwhile, just like in the traditional survey, 20% were supporters of boy group *Shinee*. The male groups *Super Junior* and *Ukiss* had 16% and 15% fan share among the respondents, respectively, while only 11% were SS501 fans.

It is observable that *Girls' Generation* had the most fans among the respondents, and even led the numbers in both traditional and online surveys. Also, both surveys reflected that the group *SS501* had the fewest number of fans among the Filipino teens. The other three male groups (*Super Junior, Shinee, U-Kiss*) had an almost equal amount of fans, with *Shinee* coming in a distant second to *Girls' Generation*.

Table 3. Respondents' top choice of fan club

	Traditional Survey		Online Survey		Total	
Fan Club	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Super Junior – E.L.F.	24	20.0	23	15.3	47	17.3
SS501 – Triple S	14	11.7	18	12.0	32	11.9
Girls' Generation – Sone	35	29.2	53	35.3	88	32.6
Shinee – Shinee World	24	20.0	31	20.7	55	20.4
Ukiss – Kiss Me	23	19.1	25	16.7	48	17.8
TOTAL	120	100.0	150	100.0	270	100.0

Consumption of Kpop Content

In this section, the variable *consumption* was measured by indicators such as *frequency* and *ways* of consuming Kpop content. The Kpop fans were asked about the number of times they listened to or watched Kpop music and videos weekly, and the different ways they consumed these media texts.

Frequency of Consuming Kpop Content

In Table 4, it is shown that a huge percentage (83%) of the traditional survey respondents consumed Kpop music and videos every day, while only a few (12%) consumed such texts every other day. Even fewer (4%) respondents consumed Kpop content only once or twice weekly.

The table also states that nearly all (91%) respondents of the online survey consumed Kpop music and videos every day while a minority of seven percent (7%) consumed Kpop content every other day. Only one percent (1%) of the online participants watched or listened to Kpop music or videos once or twice a week.

The data collected prove that the respondents were highly exposed to Korean popular media texts such as songs and music videos because almost all of the survey respondents consumed such text every day.

Table 4. Frequency of consuming Kpop content

	Traditional Survey		**Online Survey**		**Total**	
Number of times	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Once or twice a week	5	4.2	2	1.3	7	2.6
Every other day	15	12.5	11	7.3	26	9.6
Everyday	100	83.3	137	91.4	237	87.8
TOTAL	120	100.0	150	100.0	270	100.0

Ways of Consuming Kpop Content

A multiple-response question was posed to the respondents in terms of their ways of consuming Kpop content. Table 5 shows that of the nine choices provided, almost all (114) the 120 traditional survey respondents chose the *Internet as a source of free Kpop content.*

The table also shows that again, almost all (142) online respondents also preferred the Internet as a source of free Kpop music and videos.

Aside from being a source of free content, the Internet also served as a *tool for news and updates*. Eighty-nine (89) traditional survey respondents and 125 online respondents used the Internet for the said purpose.

The respondents also utilized other ways of consuming Kpop content. Seventy (70) traditional survey respondents said that they *attended fan convention and events*. On the other hand, 59 each chose *Free TV* and *Cable TV* as their sources of Kpop content. Meanwhile, 73 online respondents chose *Cable TV*. Other ways of consumption with their relative number of responses included *offline purchasing of merchandises* (51 traditional responses, 70 online responses) and *attending concerts and events* (41 traditional responses, 51 online responses).

The respondents of both surveys utilized various media in their consumption, most notably the Internet and the television. However, of the two, more survey participants preferred the Internet because most Kpop content online could be accessed for free. In fact, the choices referring to the free use of Internet (*Using the Internet for free content*, and *Using the Internet for news and updates*) were preferred by more survey respondents. Meanwhile it can be observed that the choices of paid Internet content (*Using the Internet for purchasing* and *Using the Internet for paid contents*) both received the fewest number of responses. Two television media *(cable TV* and *free TV*) were also utilized by some Kpop fans, with Cable TV being the more popular choice of the two.

Table 5. Respondents' ways of consuming Kpop content

Ways of consuming Kpop	Traditional No.	Online No.
Using the Internet for free contents (youtube, mediafire)	114	142
Using the Internet for news and updates (allkpop, soompi, fan forums)	89	124
Watching cable TV (Arirang, KBS World, MYX, channel V)	59	73
Fan conventions and events	70	55
Offline purchasing of merchandises (Odyssey, musicone, independent sellers)	51	70
Concerts and live performances	41	51
Watching free TV (ABS-CBN, GMA, TV5)	59	31
Using the Internet for purchasing (Yesasia, DVDHeaven etc)	17	30
Using the Internet for paid contents (iTunes, Melon etc.)	14	15
**Multiple-Response*	N = 120	N = 150

Cultural Offerings of Kpop Content

Korean media texts have embedded cultural elements to which the Kpop fans may or may not identify with. In keeping with the theoretical framework of this study, the researcher used the four basic cultural offerings as presented in Straubhaar's Cultural Proximity Theory.

These offerings included the language used in the music and videos (Korean language in this case), the visual elements present in the videos (physical appearance of artists, music video quality), the traditions contained in the messages (customs, practices, idioms, jokes), as well as the story of the media texts (song meanings, themes, values).

The questions were designed to measure whether or not the audience's familiarity with the cultural aspects mentioned above (which are contained in the Korean music and videos they consumed) motivated them to consume more Korean media content, or whether or not these cultural offerings influenced their consumption of Korean music and videos.

The Korean Language

Most Korean music and videos are spoken in the Korean language – a language unfamiliar to almost all the survey respondents. The most obvious concern with the idea of liking Korean pop music would be the foreign language content. One can assume that the language barrier would hinder the Filipinos' liking of Korean music, but this wasn't the case for the survey respondents.

Language Barrier and the Fans' Appreciation of Kpop Content

In Table 6, it is clear that 9 out of 10 (90%) traditional survey respondents did not consider the Korean language as a barrier to their appreciation of Kpop. Similarly, the table also shows that nearly all (92%) the online respondents believed that the language barrier did not affect their liking. When combined, a total of 248 (91%) traditional and online respondents out of the 270 who answered the survey said that the foreign language did not affect their liking for Korean music, videos, and artists.

Since the Korean language did not hinder the appreciation of the respondents, it can be said that they could identify with the language, even if they did not understand it.

Table 6. If the language barrier affected the respondents' appreciation of Kpop

	Traditional Survey		Online Survey		Total	
Response	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Yes	11	9.2	11	7.3	22	8.2
No	109	90.8	139	92.7	248	91.8
TOTAL	120	100.0	150	100.0	270	100.0

Learning the Korean Language

Despite the language barrier in almost all Kpop content such as songs, videos, and clips, most of the survey respondents disregarded the barrier and channeled their appreciation on other aspects of Kpop (such as music quality, artists' talents, etc.). The previous table showed that the respondents appreciated the Korean language even if they did not understand it. In fact, Table 7 shows that nearly all (88%) respondents of the traditional survey already started to learn the Korean language while only a few (12%) gave a negative response. Similarly, over three-fourths (78%) of the online respondents were also studying Korean.

Based on these data, a big number of the survey respondents were studying the foreign language. This huge number is an evidence that the respondents were actually reconciling with the language barrier in order to fully comprehend the content of the Korean media texts. This also explains why almost all of them did not consider the language barrier as a hindrance to their full appreciation of Kpop. A deeper analysis of this phenomenon is discussed in the focus interview results.

Table 7. If the respondents were learning the Korean language because of Kpop

	Traditional Survey		Online Survey		Total	
Response	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Yes	106	88.3	118	78.6	224	83.0
No	14	11.7	32	21.3	46	17.0
TOTAL	120	100.0	150	100.0	270	100.0

Visual Elements of Kpop Content

In Korean media texts, there are also cultural offerings in the visual elements such as the physical appearance of the artists as well as the production quality of the music videos. These cultural offerings may play a huge role in the respondents' attraction to Kpop because these were the initial elements seen when they were exposed to Kpop videos. Arguably, what the "eyes see" can determine whether or not the audience would become fans of a media text.

The Physical Appearance of Korean Artists

When asked whether the physical appearance of Korean artists positively affected their appreciation of Korean media content, Table 8 reveals that in the traditional survey, a huge percentage (83%) of respondents answered yes, while only 17% said otherwise. Similarly, a large number (118) of online respondents also said that the physical appearance of the artists had a positive effect to their liking.

The data revealed that the survey participants considered the good looks of the Korean idols as a huge factor in their consumption. This shows that there is a correlation between visuals and the audience's appreciation of media content. In this case, the

respondents appreciated Korean music and videos more because of the artists' attractive physical appearance.

Table 8. If the physical appearance of the Korean artists affected the respondents' appreciation of Kpop

	Traditional Survey		Online Survey		Total	
Response	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Yes	100	83.3	118	78.7	218	80.7
No	20	16.7	32	21.3	52	19.3
TOTAL	120	100.0	150	100.0	270	100.0

Most Appealing Visual Elements

The physical appearance of Korean artists in their music videos was further specified into more visual elements such the Korean idols' *face, fashion, hairstyles, body, height,* and *makeup*. The music videos also have their share of visuals such as the overall *concept* (lighting, effects, set), and the *dance choreography*. All these visual elements were presented to the respondents, and they were asked to choose the most appealing visual aspects.

In Table 9, the visual elements are listed down with their corresponding number of responses as given by the respondents. Of the 120 traditional survey respondents, 94 chose the *artists' face* as the most appealing aspect of music videos, while 93 preferred the *music video concept* (lighting, effects, set). The Korean idols' *fashion* also appealed to a big number (86) of respondents, while 76 chose the *artists' hairstyles*.

Meanwhile, nearly all (135) online respondents chose the *choreography* as the most appealing visual aspect, while 122 chose the *music video concept*. Other physical aspects

with remarkable number of responses included *face* (117 responses) and *fashion* (112 responses).

The results of the two surveys differed in terms of the respondents' top choice of most appealing visual aspect. While the traditional survey respondents picked the *artists' face* the most, the *choreography* appealed most to the online respondents. However, when data are combined, neither of the two aspects mentioned topped the survey. Out of 270 respondents, 215 chose the *music video concept* as most appealing visual aspect, with the artists' *face* coming in a very close second, and the *choreography* in third. Based on these data, it can be observed that the music videos appealed more to the respondents than the physical appearance of the artists in the videos. This is proven by the fact that physical characteristics such as *height, body* and *makeup* received the lowest number of responses.

Table 9. Most appealing visual aspects of Korean music videos

Visual Aspects	Traditional Survey No.	Online Survey No.
Music Video Concept	122	93
Face of Korean Artists	117	94
Choreography of songs	135	66
Fashion of Korean Artists	112	86
Hairstyles of Korean Artists	97	76
Body of Korean Artists	64	60
Height of Korean Artists	46	45
Makeup of Korean Artists	47	36
**Multiple Response*	N = 120	N = 150

Cultural Capital of South Korea

Traditions and history are also embedded in Korean music and videos, and they are cultural elements that can be identified by the audience. These cultural capitals include Korean practices, customs, beliefs, idioms, jokes, and history. Such cultural offerings are fundamentally Korean, therefore these maybe unfamiliar to foreign viewers of Korean media texts including the Filipino fans.

Unfamiliar Content in Korean Videos

An example of Korean custom includes the Korean people's high regard for the Lunar New Year and the Thanksgiving season. There are also idioms, sayings, and historical content that are often discussed in variety shows or are shown in music videos. These types of cultural content that are essentially Korean may leave the foreign audience clueless. Therefore, without extensive research, foreigners cannot fully understand the media texts.

In the survey, the respondents were asked about what they did whenever they watched videos with such unfamiliar Korean content. Table 10 shows that almost half (49%) of the traditional survey respondents chose to learn about unfamiliar Korean customs, beliefs, etc. that captured their attention. Meanwhile, less than half (45%) learned about every unfamiliar messages, regardless of whether or not the content captured their attention.

In connection with this, Table 10 also reveals that almost two-thirds (62%) of the online respondents chose to learn selected unfamiliar messages (only those that caught their curiosity), while the other one-third (33%) said they learned about every foreign cultural messages in Korean videos.

Of the 270 survey respondents, only a measly four percent (4%) (see Table 10) said they dismissed the unfamiliar messages in Korean media text. The results reveal that almost all the respondents tried to learn about Korean customs, traditions, history, etc. whenever they came across such messages in Korean music videos.

Table 10. Respondents' actions towards unfamiliar messages in Korean videos

	Traditional Survey		Online Survey		Total	
Response	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Dismiss it totally	6	5.0	6	4.0	12	4.4
Always learn about it	55	45.8	50	33.3	105	38.9
Learn about only those that capture my attention	59	49.2	94	62.7	153	56.7
TOTAL	120	100.0	150	100.0	270	100.0

South Korean Entertainment Industry's Practice of Training Talents

The training program of Korean entertainment companies is one of the unique characteristics of the Korean music industry. Management companies house multiple hopefuls and train them in the fields of singing, dancing, modeling, music writing, and other performing arts. In fact, Kim said that the biggest Korean music label SM Entertainment established the well- known SM Academy in 2003.[119] According to the institute's chairwoman Lee Sol-lim, the academy "was set up to share SM's know-how and experience to educate future entertainers".[120] As of 2008, the academy has over 300 students, and they were chosen through scouting, open auditions, and competitions. Kim also mentioned that the debut dates of the trainees aren't decided yet, and it's not always certain if they could actually make it.[121] Some trainees practice for three years to as long as seven years.

The fact that many idols trained for years is well-known among the Kpop fans. Some even attribute this process to the quality of the Korean artists' performances. Table 11 shows that 9 out of 10 (90%) traditional survey respondents believed that South Korea's practice of training talents was praiseworthy. Only five (4%) respondents thought that the long years of training programs was a waste of time.

Similarly, the online respondents also praised the training process with over three-fourths (76%) saying it was commendable. Just like in the traditional survey, only a mere portion (5%) of online respondents thought that training was a waste of time. Note that a big percentage of 83% of survey respondents praised the said practice, and believed that a similar system should also be applied in the Philippines.

Table 11. Respondents' opinions on South Korea's practice of training talents

	Traditional Survey		Online Survey		Total	
Response	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Commendable	109	90.8	115	76.7	224	83.0
Waste of time	5	4.2	8	5.3	13	4.8
Don't really care about it	6	5.0	27	18.0	33	12.2
TOTAL	120	100.0	150	100.0	270	100.0

Story of Korean Music and Videos

If the cultural capitals (traditions, customs, and beliefs) of South Korea may appear as an unfamiliar cultural offering for the foreign fans, more familiar cultural elements would be the narratives contained in Korean music videos and song lyrics. There are universal themes present in the texts, such as *romantic love, unrequited love, friendship,* and *hardwork*. Aside from themes, some Korean music videos and songs are also value-laden with content

promoting the values of *respect for elders* as well as *close family-ties*. The researcher specifically chose the themes and values mentioned above because she observed that these were the most common cultural offerings contained in the Korean videos featuring *Girls' Generation, Super Junior, Shinee, SS501,* and *U-Kiss.*

Themes and Values in Korean Music and Videos

The chosen themes and values were presented to the survey respondents, and they were asked which of these narrative elements appealed the most to them. Out of the 120 respondents of the traditional survey, Table 12 shows that the themes of *friendship and loyalty* (97 responses) and *hard work and determination* (87 responses) appealed the most to the Filipino fans. Similarly, the table also reveals that the same two themes also appealed most to the online respondents. Almost all (133) the online respondents also chose *friendship and loyalty* while 120 chose *hard work and determination.*

Meanwhile, only less than half (51) of traditional respondents chose *romantic love* while 70 online respondents also picked the said theme. Even lesser (36) traditional respondents chose *regard of family*, which was also preferred by 77 online participants. Only 24 offline participants chose *unrequited love*, and this choice had the fewest responses. It also received the fewest responses from the online survey, with only 52 respondents picking it.

The results show that the respondents greatly identified with the themes of *friendship* and *hard work* as can be seen by the big number of participants who chose both as the most appealing narrative elements. The friendship and loyalty between the idols are frequently exhibited in variety or reality shows, such as *Girls' Generations' Hello Baby,*[122] *Super Junior's Full House,*[123] *Shinee's Hello Baby Season 2,*[124] and *U-kiss's Vampire*.[125] The

Korean idols' hard work and determination, on the other hand, are shown in their documentary programs during their debut, including the reality show *Girls' Generation, Let's go to school.*[126] Meanwhile *unrequited love* (arguably the most common theme of Korean music and videos) received the fewest number of responses. The data imply that the respondents related more to the real-life sides of the Korean stars than the characters they portrayed in their music videos.

Table 12. Themes and values in Kpop videos that appealed to the respondents

Themes and Values	Traditional Survey No.	Online Survey No.
Friendship and loyalty	97	133
Hardwork and determination	87	120
Romantic Love	51	80
Regard of Family	46	77
Regard of elders	36	70
Unrequited Love	24	52
**Multiple Response*	N = 120	N = 150

The Meaning of the Songs

Narrative elements are also present in the actual Kpop songs, and these are communicated through the song lyrics. However, the language barrier prevents the immediate comprehension of the survey respondents. But amidst the foreign language, they still found a way to understand the stories behind the music.

Table 13 presents the respondents' actions toward the meanings of the Korean songs. In the table, nearly all (87%) the offline respondents said that they took effort in learning the meaning of the songs while only 13% said otherwise. Most of the online respondents did the same because 88% also learned the song meanings of the Kpop tunes. This data reveal that the respondents learned about the meanings behind the music, which was initially incomprehensible due to the language barrier.

Table 13. If the respondents bothered to learn about the meaning of the songs

	Traditional Survey		Online Survey		Total	
Response	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Yes	104	86.7	132	88.0	236	87.4
No	16	13.3	18	12.0	34	12.6
TOTAL	120	100.0	150	100.0	270	100.0

The Lyrics of the Songs

Aside from learning the song meanings, the respondents also admitted to memorizing the lyrics of the song, even if the songs were spoken in the Korean language. Table 14 shows that a huge percentage (90%) of the traditional survey respondents, and 85% of online participants, said they memorized the lyrics of Korean songs they liked. Altogether, the table also shows that 87% of all survey respondents said that they memorized Korean lyrics. The results communicate that amidst the unfamiliarity of the language, most respondents still took effort in memorizing the foreign lyrics of Kpop songs.

Table 14. If the respondents took effort to memorize the songs they liked

	Traditional Survey		Online Survey		Total	
Response	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Yes	108	90.0	127	84.7	235	87.04
No	12	10.0	23	15.3	35	12.96
TOTAL	120	100.0	150	100.0	270	100.0

Needs of the Fans Satisfied by Consuming Kpop Content

In this section, questions were designed to determine how the consumption of Korean music and videos satisfied the different needs of the fans. These were based on McQuail's classification of needs under the Uses and Gratifications Theory and included the audience's need for *information, personal identity, social interaction* and *entertainment.*[127] As what the proponents of the Uses and Gratification theory said, the audience generates certain expectations of the media, which in turn leads to their patterns of consumption.[128] If one particular medium provides the viewer a certain need, say *entertainment*, then that person would develop a pattern of consumption of that media. The survey participants' were asked if Korean music and videos satisfied their four types of need, and whether or not this satisfaction led to their repeated consumption.

Kpop Fans' Need for Information

McQuail classified the *information* as the first basic need of the audience.[129] This is similar to Katz, Gurevitch and Haas's (1973) category of *Cognitive needs* – the audience's need to acquire knowledge and comprehension of things.[130] According to McQuail, in consuming the media, viewers seek to find out about their immediate surroundings, the

society, or the world. He also said that general interest and curiosity also falls under the need for information, and sometimes the audience satisfies this by learning (self-education) from the media texts.[131]

In consuming Korean media content, respondents became exposed not only to the music, but to knowledge and learning about South Korea as well. One of the most basic knowledge contained in Korean music and videos included the culture and traditions of South Korea.

Knowledge of South Korea

Table 15 clearly shows that two-thirds (67%) of the traditional survey respondents believed that their exposure to Korean media contributed a lot to their knowledge about South Korea. Less than a third (30%) believed that it only contributed a little, while only four people (4) said that their consumption hadn't contributed to their knowledge at all.

The online respondents also gained knowledge from their exposure to Kpop, as nearly three-fourths (74%) admitted to learning a lot about the South Korean culture, and 20% said they learned a little about the said country.

Only 12 out of the 270 respondents said they didn't gain new knowledge, while the rest said otherwise. The overwhelming positive response of the respondents about their general interest and curiosity about the society of South Korea reveals that through their exposure to Korean songs and videos, their need for information about South Korean culture was satisfied.

Table 15. If consuming Kpop content contributed to respondents' knowledge of South Korea

	Traditional Survey		Online Survey		Total	
Response	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
A lot	80	66.7	111	74.0	191	70.7
A little	36	30.0	31	20.7	67	24.8
Not at all	4	3.3	8	5.3	12	4.5
TOTAL	120	100.0	150	100.0	270	100.0

Knowledge Gained and the Continued Consumption of Kpop Content

Since the consumption of Kpop content can lead to the satisfaction of audience's curiosity about the world, the Uses and Gratifications theory suggests that this could form the audience's patterns of consumption as their expectations of the media would increase. Out of all the survey respondents, 70% (see Table 15) said they acquired a lot of new learning about South Korea. The Uses and Gratifications theory proposes that respondents who learned a lot would consume more Korean media content in order to acquire information again. Table 16 reflects this theory, as 6 out of 10 (62%) traditional survey respondents said that their new knowledge about South Korea influenced them to consume more Kpop content, while more than a third (36%) thought that it influenced them just a little. Online respondents echoed the same belief, as only a small number (6%) said their knowledge did not influence them to consume more media content at all.

The results prove that the acquisition of new knowledge about South Korean culture affected the respondents' tendency to consume more of the Kpop media content to further add to their knowledge

Table 16. If new knowledge influenced respondents to consume more Kpop content

	Traditional Survey		Online Survey		Total	
Response	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
A lot	75	62.5	73	50.0	148	55.6
A little	43	35.8	59	40.4	102	38.4
Not at all	2	1.7	14	9.6	16	6.0
TOTAL	120	100.0	150	100.0	270	100.0

Kpop Fans' Need for Personal Identity

McQuail also cited that the audience repeatedly uses the media to seek for their personal identity.[132] This involves "finding reinforcement for personal values" as well as "personal models of behavior" among the actors portraying characters in the text. McQuail also suggested that upon watching media content, the audience gain insights and personal reflections about themselves.[133]

Kpop's Influence on the Respondents' Identity

In order to understand how the exposure to Korean music influenced the identities of the respondents, the researcher derived the choices in the question based on McQuail's study. The audience's pursuit of their personal identities may result to the formation of their fan identity (as avid supporters of the Korean idols), the changes in their habits and desires as they found "reinforcements for personal values" in the media texts they consumed, and the discovery of their models of behavior.

As a result, Table 17 shows that consumption of Korean music mainly influenced the respondents' *habits and desires.* As seen on the table, 82 traditional respondents and 113

online respondents said that Kpop influenced their habits and desires. Meanwhile, a significant portion of survey participants (74 traditional respondents and 99 online participants) also said that Korean music provided them idols to look up to. There was a minority of respondents comprising of less than half (50 traditional respondents and 74 online participants) the sample of both surveys who said that Kpop helped them realize their fan identity.

The results reveal that very few respondents have not been influenced by Kpop in any aspect of their identity. While the influence of Kpop was primarily on the fans' *habits and desires*, there were also significant numbers who have been influenced on their *models of behavior* and *fan identities*.

Table 17. Kpop's influence on respondent's identity

Influence	Traditional No.	Online No.
It has changed my habits and desires	82	113
It provided me icons/idols to look up to	74	99
It made me realize my own fan identity	50	74
It didn't influence me at all	4	11
* *Multiple Respone*	N = 120	N = 150

The Fans' Lifestyle

Since the reinforcement of certain values influenced the choices in life that the respondents make, it can be noted that there were aspects of the respondents' lifestyle that have been impacted by their consumption of Kpop. The researcher derived five aspects (see Table 18) based on the theory of Uses and Gratifications.

In effect, Table 18 shows the overwhelming lead of *music choices* as the top aspect of the respondents' lifestyle that has been influenced by Korean music. Nearly all (108) traditional survey respondents chose *music choices* while a big number of 131 online respondents also chose the same aspect.

Meanwhile, *fashion choices* and *habits* also had substantial portions of positive response. More than half (72) of traditional survey respondents were influenced fashion-wise, while 87 online respondents also chose *fashion choices.* Sixty-one (61) participants of the traditional survey said that their *habits* were influenced, while 84 online respondents said the same.

The results reveal that predominantly, the respondents' preference for music have been affected by their consumption of Korean music, since primarily, Kpop is a form of popular music. Significant portions of the respondents were influenced fashion-wise as well as with their habits. Both surveys, however, revealed that the respondents' *beliefs* weren't influenced, which negates their search for the strengthening of their values.

Table 18. Aspects of respondents' lifestyle influenced by Kpop

Aspects of Lifestyle	Traditional Survey No.	Online Survey No.
Music choices	108	131
Fashion choices	72	87
Habits	61	84
Social life	52	69
Beliefs	23	35
* *Multiple Response*	N = 120	N = 150

Kpop Fans' Need for Social Interaction

McQuail mentioned in his study that the audience may utilize the media in order to gain a sense of belongingness, and in order to do so, they need to interact with people around them.[134] Consuming media texts, such as Korean popular music and videos, encourages audiences to gain insights on the situations of fellow consumers of the same text. The researcher attempted to understand how the exposure to Korean pop music helped the Filipino fans satisfy their needs to interact with their fellow Kpop fans, and whether their need for social interaction pushed them to join social groups of Korean music fans.

Joining Social Groups

As shown in Table 19, nearly three-fourths (72%) of the traditional survey respondents have joined or participated in a social group or organization dedicated to Kpop, while only 15% haven't joined any form of social groupings.

On the other hand, the table also reveals that more than three-fourths (78%) of online respondents have also joined or participated in a social group dedicated to Kpop music and artists. Both traditional and online surveys reveal that 12% of the survey participants were just planning to join in the future.

Media audiences seek a sense of belongingness in order to gain understanding of the situations of fellow fans.[135] They also need social interaction in order to connect with their families, friends, and the society. Consuming media texts have the potential to meet these needs for social interaction, and the results of the survey reflect this fact. An overwhelming portion of the respondents were members of Kpop fan groups and organizations, while a few were planning to join in the future.

Table 19. If the respondents have joined or participated in a social group/s dedicated to Kpop music and artists

	Traditional Survey		Online Survey		Total	
Response	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Yes	87	72.5	118	78.7	205	75.9
No	19	15.8	14	9.3	33	12.2
I plan to	14	11.7	18	12.0	32	11.8
TOTAL	120	100.0	150	100.0	270	100.0

Fans' Choice of Social Groups

In addition, Table 20 shows that traditional survey respondents preferred *fan clubs* (82 responses) as their top choice of a social group. *Fan convention* was the second most popular choice of a social group, garnering 72 responses. More than half (67) of the traditional survey respondents preferred *online forums*, and only 48 opted for *fan meets and gatherings*.

Contrary to this, 126 online respondents chose *online forums* as their top choice of a social group. This is due to the fact that in the first place, these respondents were virtual fans who frequented Internet communities and forums. However, large portion (106) of online participants also picked *fan clubs*, while only a third each preferred *fan conventions* (57 responses) and *fan meets* (52 responses).

In total, *online forums* and *fan clubs* were the top choices of the respondents. The results can be attributed to the fact that 150 of the 270 respondents were online participants, while all of the 270 respondents identified themselves to be associated with the respective fan clubs of their favorite Korean artists.

Table 20. Respondents' Top Choice of Social Groups

Social Group	Traditional No.	Online No.
Online Forums	82	126
Fan clubs	72	106
Conventions	67	57
Fan meets/gatherings	48	52
* *Multiple Response*	N = 120	N = 150

Kpop Fans' Need for Entertainment

The media exists first and foremost as a medium of entertainment. According to McQuail, Blumler & Brown,[136] it may be used as a diversion from problems and routines. McQuail also mentioned that the media is utilized for relaxation and aesthetic enjoyment.[137] These factors are echoed in the results of the two questions in this section. The researcher studied how much Korean popular music met the Filipino fans' needs for entertainment.

South Korea's Quality of Entertainment

In Table 21, it is clearly shown that Filipino fans thought highly of South Korea's entertainment industry. In fact, 4 out of 5 (80%) traditional survey respondents thought that South Korea's entertainment had a very high quality. Likewise, 72% of the online respondents thought the same about Kpop's quality of entertainment.

Less than a fifth (18%) of traditional survey participants believed there was better entertainment elsewhere. More online participants echoed the same sentiment, as over one-

fourth (27%) said the quality was just right. Only two (2) respondents from both surveys said that Korean entertainment had an incompetent quality.

Three-fourths of all the participants thought highly of Kpop's ability to deliver entertainment to its audience. This finding reveals that exposure to Kpop music and videos provided the audience with their entertainment needs because of its high-quality and world-class appeal.

Table 21. Respondents' opinions on South Korea's quality of entertainment

	Traditional Survey		Online Survey		Total	
Response	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Very High-Quality (World-class)	97	80.8	108	72	205	75.9
Just right (there are better quality elsewhere)	22	18.3	41	27.3	63	23.3
Incompetent	1	0.9	1	0.7	2	0.74
TOTAL	120	100.0	150	100.0	270	100.0

Most Entertaining Aspects of Kpop

The respondents were also asked which aspects of Kpop appealed the most to their entertainment needs. In Table 22, the traditional survey respondents' top choice as the most appealing aspect was the *music video* (98 responses) while online respondents preferred the *artists' talent* (133 responses) the most.

The table also shows that 127 online participants said that *music video* appealed to them as well. Meanwhile, music elements such as *beat* and *melody* each received large portions of responses. In particular, 89 traditional respondents and 129 online participants

chose the *melody*, while the music's *beat* received 91 responses from the traditional survey and 121 responses from the online survey.

All the entertainment aspects of Kpop in the choices received particularly significant portions of responses, with the highest number of responses received by *music videos* and *song melody*. The choices' well-representation of frequency distribution reveals that the respondents found all aspects of Korean music and videos to be entertaining.

Table 22. Most Entertaining Aspects of Kpop

Aspects of Kpop	Traditional Survey No.	Online Survey No.
Music Video	98	127
Melody	89	129
Artists' Talent	81	133
Beat	91	121
Concept	81	114
Artists	62	125
Lyrics	73	98
Genre	68	90
* *Multiple Response*	N = 120	N = 150

Focus Interview Results

The focus interviews with the Kpop fans represent the qualitative part of this study. Like in the survey, three variables were studied including the Kpop *consumption* of the Filipino fans, *cultural offerings* of Korean media content, as well as the *needs* of the Filipino fans satisfied by consuming Kpop content.

After conducting the traditional survey, the researcher chose six interviewees from the 120 respondents. The selected participants came from the six Kpop fan clubs, namely *Girls' Generation PH, Super Junior PH, Kiss Me PH, Triple S Philippines,* and *Shinee World Philippines.*

The interviews were conducted in an informal but structured manner. These were held on December 11, 2010 at the Via Mare area of the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) Tent in Pasay City. This was the same day as the *Philippine Kpop Convention*, and all the participants were attendees of the said event. After answering the traditional surveys in the morning of the event (around 10:00 am), the researcher chose the six interviewees and scheduled them for an interview that same afternoon.

The Interviewees

The interviewees' age ranged from 16-19 years old, and of the six participants, four (4) were females and two (2) were males. All interviewees were fans of a Kpop group, and they acknowledged themselves to be affiliated with the fan clubs of their supported group. The following are the names, age, and the fan clubs of the interviewees:

1. Double X, 16 – Girls' Generation PH
2. Bryan, 19 – Girls' Generation PH
3. Winnie, 17 – Triple S Philippines
4. Ayesha, 18 – Super Junior PH
5. Margaret, 18 – Shinee World Philippines
6. Wendy, 19 – Kiss Me PH

The male interviewees (Double X and Bryan) were both fans of the Korean nine-member girl group *Girls' Generation.* The two of them actively participated in gatherings and events dedicated to Kpop, such as the *Philippine Kpop Convention* at the PICC Tent, and *Kpop Nation* in SM Megamall. While Double X often lauded the members of *Girls' Generation's* physical appearance and admitted to liking them because of their looks, Bryan, on the other hand, said that he was mainly attracted to the members' dancing abilities and choreography. The male interviewees' age also differed. Double X was 16, while Bryan was 19. However, both of them started to be Korean music fans at a young age. Double X was a relatively new Kpop fan who had been a fan for only eight months while Bryan had been following Korean music industry since he was 17.

On the other hand, the female interviewees were composed of a fan each of the male groups *Super Junior, Shinee, U-Kiss,* and *SS501.* All of them were active participants of various Kpop conventions and gatherings since they became fans of their supported groups. Two of them (Wendy and Winnie) have been fans for less than a year and they admitted to joining the bandwagon mania for Kpop during the first part of 2010. On the other hand, the other two (Ayesha and Margaret) have been fans for four years and two years, respectively. They told of their own self-discovery of Kpop artists through the Korean cable channel *Arirang* and Internet video sites like *Youtube.* All the female interviewees mentioned the catchiness of the music, the charms, and talents of the artists to be contributing factors to their appreciation of the foreign music.

Both the male and female interviewees were akin in their initial reasons for liking Kpop. They all mentioned the good looks of the Korean stars as well as their talents. Also, the six of them were very active fans, proven by their complete attendance in all big scale

events for Kpop. However, the respondents differed in the groups they supported, and the various ways in which they showed their support (which will be further discussed later in this chapter).

Consumption of Kpop Content

This section discusses the interviewees' patterns of consumption. In order to understand these patterns, the researcher used indicators such as *frequency* and *ways* of consuming Kpop content. In determining the frequency of their consumption, the interviewees were asked about the number of times they listened to or watched Kpop music and videos weekly. Also, the different ways they consumed these media texts were also determined. These indicators reflected the interviewees' level of exposure to Kpop.

Frequency of Consuming Kpop Music and Videos

When asked about their frequency of consuming Korean music and videos, all the interviewees answered "everyday" or "always." Everyone mentioned about consuming Kpop during their free time, or any possible time, using their portable music players and laptops. Each of the interviewee provided different situations in which they consumed Korean music and videos. Almost all of them listened to Kpop songs during their travel time. Half (3) of them also listened to Korean music before and while doing their school works while another three (3) of them still listened to Kpop songs or watch Kpop videos before they sleep at night. These various situations reflect the regularity of their consumption as proven by the variety of daily activities such as commuting and studying, during which they listened to Korean songs. Their consumption also had a schedule as it was scattered throughout the day,

from the moment they wake up, to the time they travel to school, up to the time they go home, do their home works and sleep. In these activities, listening to or watching Korean music and videos were inserted in all possible times.

Ways of Consuming Kpop Music and Videos

The interviewees have found various ways of consuming Kpop music and videos. Mass media such as the television and the Internet both offer Kpop content, but these media differed in the amount of content they provide. For instance, free television channels like ABS-CBN and GMA have little or no airtime for Korean music and videos, and this is why few of the interviewees patronized the said medium in consuming Kpop. Meanwhile, pay cable channels such as *Arirang* and *KBS World* have relatively more content available on scheduled air dates. However, most content are also available online in free media-hosting sites like *YouTube* and *MediaFire*. There are many Internet users worldwide who upload videos, songs, and other media content in the said media-hosting sites, which in turn become available for free to anyone who wishes to access the links. Aside from user-uploaded content, Korean entertainment companies such as *SM Entertainment,*[138] *YG Entertainment*[139] and *JYP Entertainment*[140] have official Youtube sites where they upload official music videos and clips for the international fans of their artists. Since Kpop content is proliferated in the World Wide Web, the interviewees patronized the Internet more than television.

Kpop in Free TV

Since Kpop has already penetrated mainstream media, it's not any more surprising to hear Korean songs playing in UHF channels like ABS-CBN, GMA, and TV5. In fact, Korean

music can be frequently heard in popular shows like ABS-CBN's *Showtime*, GMA's *Party Pilipinas* and TV5's *POV*. Korean artists have given exclusive interviews and performances in these channels. TV5 promoted Korean male singer *Rain* during his *Intensity* concert last September 11, 2010 and even provided the audience with an exclusive coverage of the event.[141] In addition, GMA has constantly been the media partner for *U-Kiss'* three consecutive visits in Manila.[142]

However, it is still a fact that Kpop content only gets limited airtime in free television. UHF channels provide Kpop content once or twice a week, or on special occasions, especially when certain Kpop acts visit the country. In fact, only one interviewee cited television as a medium that contributed to her consumption. The rest of the interviewees said they did not get any Kpop content from UHF channels at all. Winnie, on the other hand, mentioned that channels like ABS-CBN provided her with good Korean content such as Korean dramas with Kpop artists, and more specifically, the coverage of *SS501's* arrival and stay in Manila.[143] Bryan mentioned using these free channels as venue for news updates on events, conventions and concerts, as these happenings usually get advertisements on free channels.

While free television provides the Filipino audience its limited share of Kpop airtime, the interviewees' opinion on Kpop's exposure on Philippine TV was mixed. For instance, Ayesha didn't like the fact that the big networks allot broadcast time for Kpop artists, especially since producers were prone to errors on presenting information about Kpop. According to her, *"…mali iyong information na nilalagay nila… supposed to be, magtanong sila sa mga Kpop fan kasi alam na alam nila yun.*[144] […they broadcast the wrong information… They should ask Kpop fans because they would know.]

The incident that pissed off Ayesha, and many other Filipino Kpop fans, referred to the June 13, 2010 episode of GMA-7's *Showbiz Central.*[145] The said show aired a *U-Kiss* special, but mistakenly showed a wrong picture of one *U-Kiss* member. This enraged many Filipino fans because of the apparent lack of research by the segment producers. But while Ayesha was against the mainstream broadcast of Korean music and artists, the male interviewees had positive things to say about this. Double X said, *"Sign lang iyon ng pagkasikat nila, ganoon talaga kapag sikat ang artist."*[146] [It's just a sign of their popularity. It's really like that if the artist is popular.] In the same note, Bryan said it made him happy because mainstream broadcast meant he could see more of his favorite Kpop stars. But amidst their pride in the occasional mass exposure of their favorite Kpop stars, free television remains to be the lesser generous medium when it comes to delivering Kpop content.

Kpop in Cable TV

While UHF-channels did not provide the interviewees with enough Kpop content, Cable TV delivers Kpop music and videos on scheduled airtimes. Most of the interviewees have watched a lot of Kpop music videos and songs on cable channels such as *MYX*, *Arirang* and *KBS World*. Almost all of them, with the exception of Margaret, regularly watched MYX music channel to see if Kpop music videos have entered the MYX *Daily Top 10* and MYX *International Top 20*. MYX also has a weekly show *(Pop Myx Kpop Edition)* which airs five to six Korean music videos per episode. Both Ayesha and Bryan said they tuned in to *KBS World*, an all-Korean channel with English subtitles. The said channel has a weekly music program called *Music Bank* which airs on Friday nights, and is a staple in the viewing consumption of many Kpop fans including the interviewees. In addition, Bryan also regularly

surfed *channel V* for Korean music videos. *Arirang TV* was of big help for Ayesha and Winnie as the said channel provided them Korean content with English subtitles, and has a music program (*Pops in Seoul)* and an entertainment news program (*Showbiz Extra!).*

Kpop and the Internet

While most of the interviewees got a respected share of Kpop content in cable channels, the Internet remains to be the easiest, fastest and most practical source of Kpop music and videos for them. All of them said that the Internet played a big role in their Kpop fanship as it facilitated and sustained their fandom. In fact, Bryan said that the web was the start of his addiction to Korean music and artists. He shared that even before Kpop became popular in the country, he was already a fan of the Korean girl-group *Wonder Girls* because he discovered them through the Internet. Aside from the fact that most of them discovered Kpop through the World Wide Web, the Internet is first and foremost the most crucial and most generous medium in accessing Korean music and videos.

Double X regularly downloaded the performance videos of Girls' Generation in the fan site *soshified.com.*[147] Even Bryan always updated himself with the latest performance videos of the said group. Margaret said she used the Internet as a source for video cuts of interviews and variety shows featuring her favorite artists. Similarly, Wendy often downloaded images and videos of the Kpop stars while Ayesha used media-hosting sites like *Youtube* and *4shared* in downloading videos and songs.

Aside from being the main source of media content such as videos, songs, and images, the Internet also served as a tool for news and updates. Double X cited the news sites *allkpop*[148] and *dailykpop*[149] as the top sites for news feeds, while Bryan and Ayesha also

credited *allkpop* as their main source of the latest news. Bryan also mentioned being on alert for the latest releases. According to him: *"Minsan inaabangan ko pa kahit madaling-araw. Kapag nalaman ko na lalabas kinakabukasan, alas dose pa lang gising na ako."*[150] [Sometimes, I wait even at dawn. Once I learn that it will come out tomorrow, I wake up at 12 midnight.] In addition, Ayesha also mentioned that the micro-blogging site *Twitter* served as another venue for her to immediately see latest news feeds and posts of his favorite idols who have their own Twitter accounts.

The Internet also functioned as a venue for the Kpop fans' socialization. Margaret said, *"I can reach out to the Kpop world using the Net."*[151] There are various Internet communities dedicated to Kpop existing all over the World Wide Web, and the most popular of these communities are fan forums exclusive to one Korean artist. Currently, the biggest international Kpop forum in the Internet is *soshified.com*, a community for Girls' Generation fans. This forum has over 154,557 registered members (as of March 14, 2011).[152] The male interviewees Double X and Bryan mentioned *soshified.com* as the main forum they visited regularly, both for downloads and socialization with other fans. Ayesha named *Shinee SFI (Shine Fans International)*[153] and *SJ World (Super Junior World),*[154] the biggest forums for Korean groups Shinee and Super Junior, respectively, as the main sites she visited. She added that Internet communities enabled her to talk to the international fans and share experiences with them. On the other hand, Winnie and Wendy were active members of the Philippine-based forums *Triple S Philippines*[155] and *ukissme Philippines,*[156] respectively.

Other Ways of Consuming Kpop Content

Aside from watching television and downloading from the Internet, the interviewees also found other access to Korean music videos and songs. For instance, Bryan said he sometimes looked for people who were more knowledgeable than him about Kpop in order to become more informed on issues and news. Similarly, Winnie also asked her friends for content she might not have yet. Some of the interviewees chose to channel their Kpop fandom through their talents and skills. Wendy frequently tried to learn the choreography of her favorite songs. Margaret, who hadn't realized before that she could dance, started to learn Korean dance steps. On the other hand, Ayesha read and wrote fan fiction featuring her favorite Korean artists. However, channeling their fanship through their talents and skills is unique to each fan, and therefore isn't entirely representative of the entire Filipino Kpop fans.

Attending fan events and conventions is a common link between the interviewees, as evident by the fact that all of them were attendees of the 2010 Philippine Kpop Convention. According to them, conventions allowed them to socialize with Kpop fans and witness performances of Kpop songs and dances. Another means of consumption is to purchase merchandises on offline stores such as independent sellers and record stores. All of the interviewees said that they have purchased original merchandises more than once. Wendy regularly bought the albums of *U-Kiss* available in the Philippine market. Ayesha also purchased Super Junior albums both offline and online. Both the male interviewees (Double X and Bryan) purchased not just CDs and DVDs, but also posters, photobooks, and clothings. Double X even said that his parents often reprimanded him for spending thousands of pesos for his fandom. It is evident that the interviewees did not just depend on free content on cable television and the Internet, but also spent money in purchasing original products.

Cultural Offerings of Kpop Content

Korean music and videos have various cultural offerings embedded in the text, and this study tried to determine whether or not the Filipino teens can identify with these cultural elements. In keeping with the Cultural Proximity Theory, the researcher used the four basic cultural offerings (language, visuals, cultural capital, story)[157] present in all media texts, such as Kpop songs and videos, in understanding the Filipino fans' appreciation of the said media content.

Language used in Korean music and videos

Some of the interviewees found the Korean language interesting. According to Ayesha and Margaret, the said language appealed to them while Winnie described the Korean language as "cute".[158] As a result of the Korean language's appeal, many of the interviewees were already learning to read, write, and speak the language. Wendy, in particular, was serious in her Korean lessons. She already bought books and started to study by herself. She shared, *"…gusto ko kasi talaga maintindihan kapag nanonood ako ng mga videos para kahit walang subtitles, maiintindihan ko iyong mga sinasabi nila."*[159] [I really want to understand when I watch videos so that even without subtitles, I can comprehend what they are talking about.]

But if Wendy wanted to understand the language itself, the other interviewees relied on outside help in understanding the content. For instance, Double X said that Kpop fans already got the drill of watching subtitled videos or translations. On the other hand, Bryan has Korean friends who helped him in understanding the language of Korean artists.

But Ayesha's powerful words seemingly summarized what most Filipino Kpop fans thought. According to her, *"…there is no language in music. It's a universal language."*[160] This statement is actually a popular notion in the Kpop community, both online and among the local fan communities. Margaret supported Ayesha's statement and said that fans found understanding through the melodies and harmonies of the music. All the interviewees agreed with this saying, and believed that the language barrier was the least of their priorities, especially since Korean music has so much to offer. Double X mentioned that Kpop music has inherent catchy quality that made him dance to the music, even if they did not understand it. Bryan agreed and added that Koreans produce high-quality music and videos. Even Wendy said that though she didn't understand the language, she could feel the meaning of songs. Ayesha also looked for the song lyrics and meanings in order to decide whether or not a song is likeable. She also considered the song's rhythm and the performances of the artists. These acts prove that the interviewees overlooked the aspect of the language barrier, and in fact learned to understand the language, or found a way to comprehend the foreign content. Also, all the interviewees looked for other aspects other than the language, such as song quality, in order to truly appreciate the content.

Visual Aspects of Kpop

This section contains the discussion on the visual elements of Kpop that Filipino fans identified with. These visual elements are the most visible cultural offerings in Korean media content because these are seen through the physical appearance of the artists, as well as the production quality of the music videos. The interviewees initially saw these cultural aspects

on their first exposure to Kpop, and the visual aspects may have influenced their decision to consume more of the same media content.

Physical Appearance of the Artists

Aside from the argument that music is a universal language, the physical appearance of the Korean artists was also a major factor that contributed to the interviewees' appreciation of Kpop. Double X literally said he "fell in love"[161] with the members of *Girls' Generation* because of their natural beauty. Bryan identified the Korean girls' beauty, height, and complexion as added factors to his appreciation of their music and videos. Meanwhile, Ayesha commented that the Korean males' youthful looks fit her preference. Winnie also acknowledged that he first fell in love with SS501's Kim Hyun Joong because of his good looks in the drama *Boys Over Flowers.* But amidst the good looks of the artists, the interviewees believed that their appreciation and support for their Korean idols has gone beyond the physical appearance of the Korean stars. All the interviewees mentioned music, personality, and talent as other contributing factors to their appreciation.

Production Quality of Music Videos

Aside from the physical appearance of the artists, another visual aspect of Kpop is the production quality of the music videos. All the interviewees believed that Korean music videos were conceptualized and produced very well. They all mentioned about the high quality of the productions, which was very much evident in the finished products. Margaret said, *"Pinaggagastusan talaga nila… talagang sobrang bigay na bigay ang mga budget nila"*[162] [They really spend a lot…. they really give it all on their budget.] Ayesha also

couldn't get over the marvel of Korean music video budgets. She said, *"…binibigyan talaga nila ng panahon 'tsaka time ang damit, ang outfits, talagang pinagkakagastusan.*[163] […they really give time on the clothes, the outfit, they really spend well.]

As a result of these big budgets and good concepts, the interviewees believed that Kpop music videos were worth the wait. Double X shared, *"…every music video, talagang aabangan mo kasi… sa teaser pa lang magandahan ka na."*[164] […you really look forward to every music video because even the teaser is already beautiful.]

In Margaret's opinion, Korean producers aim for global music that's why they put so much effort in producing Kpop content. She added that the choreography, fashion and style of the artists all gave Korean music videos a distinctive style. Specifically, the dance and choreography increased the interest and admiration of the interviewees. Most of them praised the uniqueness of Kpop dances, and the meanings behind the choreography. Bryan commented that Kpop choreography was "the best"[165] and it gave the artists a better appearance in their music videos and performances. He also lauded Kpop choreography's ability to make all the group members shine.

In addition, the fans mentioned about the good editing and cinematography of the videos, as well as the unique and experimental fashion and hairstyle of the artists, that altogether contributed to the eye-catching and high-quality Kpop music videos.

Cultural Capitals of South Korea

Another cultural offering of Korean music and videos are the cultural capitals contained in the media texts. These include traditions, practices, customs, and beliefs that are essentially Korean. As these types of messages are highly-cultural, these may not be fully

understood by foreign audiences, including the Filipino fans. However, these types of content are often embedded in many Korean videos and clips that Kpop fans watch.

For example, all the variety shows starring Korean idols often exhibit practices that are exclusively Korean, such as bowing to others as a sign of respect, the popularity of sauna rooms in place of motels or hotels, the use of heated floor-matts as opposed to traditional beds, and the like. Aside from these practices, there are also jokes, idioms and beliefs that are often mentioned in many Korean shows.

When watching Korean shows containing traditions, practices, jokes or idioms, some of the interviewees said they disregarded unfamiliar messages and did not bother to learn them at all. Margaret, in contrast, tried to comprehend the messages in context with the contents she fully understood. The other interviewees took the effort to ask people who might understand the message. For instance, Bryan said he called his Korean friends whenever he came across unfamiliar content. Similarly, Ayesha sometimes found help on international fans who might explain the idioms on Twitter and other international fan communities. The easier route for some of them would be watching videos with subtitles and embedded explanations provided by online forums such as *soshified.com* and *SJ-World.* These fan sites provide the international fans with very informative explanations of the Korean traditions, customs and practices. This way, not only do the foreign viewers fully comprehend the video; they also learn about the South Korean culture.

South Korean Entertainment Industry's Practice of Training Talents

It has been a custom in South Korea that entertainment companies house talents and train them for long periods of time.[166] For instance, some members of the groups *Girls'*

Generation and *Super Junior* have trained for as long as seven years before debuting. It's one of the unique characteristics of the Korean music industry, and is a fact well-known among Kpop fans.

The interviewees believed that this practice is commendable as the training produced high-quality entertainment. For Double X, the training was evident on the talents of the artists. Bryan also said that the product of training Korean artists is great. He explained that the long process of training is evident in the presentation and live performances of the artists. Most of the interviewees agreed that Korean artists are polished in many aspects. For instance, they said that the dances are in-sync and crisp, and the live singing is effortless with less heavy breathing. Winnie and Wendy also believed that Kpop artists are multi-talented as many of them could act, dance and sing at the same time.

Aside from the polished talents and performances of the artists, the interviewees commended the hard work and determination of the Korean singers, especially those who trained for years. Double X said, *"Siguro pinaghirapan talaga nila kung nasan sila ngayon."*[167] [Maybe they really deserve where they are now.] Although for Margaret, the long trainings were harsh and difficult for her idols. *"…maaawa ka sa idols, kasi nakikita mo… umiiyak talaga sila kapag nananalo sila."*[168] […you can pity the idols, because you really see how they cry whenever they win.] But even so, the interviewees still believed that the training is crucial to the success and high quality of the Korean music industry.

Because of the evident good results of South Korea's training system, most of the interviewees said that a similar system should be implemented in the Philippines in order to improve the local music industry. According to Margaret, it's easy to be a star in the Philippines, and the instant success is a sign of devaluing the entertainment industry. She

suggested that a year or two of training wouldn't hurt and might even be beneficial for the Filipino talents. Many of the interviewees echoed the same sentiments. Wendy and Double X condoned the instant stardom of many Filipino hopefuls, especially those who joined television contests. Double X didn't like the fact the Filipinos imitate others, including Kpop. Because of this, the interviewees thought that the training of talents would be the key to a better entertainment industry. However, Ayesha thought otherwise, as she believed that the Filipinos' different values and morals as compared to the Koreans would result to the failure of the training system. She explained that Filipinos wouldn't stand the long years of training. According to her, "*Conservative nga tayo pero I think, hindi ganoong ka-desperate. Ang funds, talagang wala tayo."*[169] [We're conservative, but I don't think we're that desperate. And we really don't have the funds.] But in spite of Ayesha's doubts, all the other interviewees thought that a training system would be the answer to the country's low-quality entertainment.

Stories of Korean Music Videos

More familiar content than traditions and customs are the themes and values contained in the messages of the Korean songs and videos. Themes refer to a unified subject encompassing the overall text, such as *love, hatred, friendship, family* etc. Meanwhile, values refer to a set of ideologies such as *respect for others, love of country*, and the like. These cultural offerings are present in all kinds of media text, and oftentimes, the audience can identify these elements although they don't necessarily relate with them.

Values Present in Korean Media Content

The interviewees enumerated different themes and values embedded in Kpop texts that appealed to them. Although numerous answers came out, one of the common values mentioned included the Korean people's *respect for elders* and *close family ties*. Winnie elaborated:

> *"Ang galang kasi nila sa mga matatanda. Mapapansin mo ang pagsasalita nila… iba ang gamit nila kapag nagsasalita sa matatanda at sa mga kasing-edad nila."*[170] [They're really respectful to the elders. You can notice it in the way they speak. They use different words when they talk to elders and to people of the same age.]

Margaret also explained the close ties of Korean families. She said that she could relate well to the content regarding families. In one show she watched, the program helped the idols to reach out to their parents. After watching the show, Margaret was touched and wanted to reach out to her own parents as well. She added that such content added to her "self-reflection."[171]

Aside from the *high regard of family and the elders*, Bryan added that he appreciated the conservatism of the Koreans, and their ability to always incorporate their culture in all the content of their music and video. *Stewardship* and *hard work* were also mentioned in the course of the discussion. According to Margaret, the Korean people's ability to help each other was something she wanted to emulate. Wendy, on the other hand, picked up morals and lessons from some Korean shows, especially those that presented the real life of the artists such as behind-the-scene videos of their concerts. She explained that the way Korean idols helped one another and worked hard behind the cameras appealed to her. In addition to this, Winnie also liked the affection of the group members towards each other. For instance, she mentioned how she appreciated the fact that her favorite group SS501's leader Kim Hyun

Joong was never embarrassed to hug the members. ” *Ang sweet nila sa isa't isa. Kahit na isipin ng ibang tao na bakla sila… ayos lang sa kanila."*[172] [They're sweet to each other. Even if other people think they're gay… it's alright with them.]

Meanings of the Korean Songs

The lyrics of Korean songs also contain themes and values that the listeners can identify with. All the respondents said that they researched about the meaning of the Korean songs, and some even said that the meanings helped them to appreciate the music more. Bryan said that the songs with stories excited him. Wendy attested to this and said that some Korean songs contained not just stories but values as well. Most of the interviewees gave specific examples of song lyrics. For example, Margaret explained how she could relate well with the lyrics of girl group *miss A's* song *Bad Girl, Good Girl.*[173] The song talks about a girl who is misunderstood, and is asking a man to go beyond what people perceive of her. She expounded: *"…other people don't know who I really am… naju-judge ako."*[174] [Other people don't know who I really am. So I am judged.] This is the precise reason why she liked the song more after learning about its meaning.

Another example would be SS501's song *Grean Peas.*[175] According to the group, the said song is a dedication to all the loyal fans who stuck with them through the good times and the bad. Winnie was particularly touched by this song, as she felt elated since the group made a huge gesture to send a thank-you message to the fans. She said: "*Nakakatuwa kasi gumawa pa sila ng kanta para sa mga fans nila. Na-appreciate talaga nila ang effort ng mga fans nila."* [176] [It's elating because they made a song for their fans. They really appreciate the effort of their fans.]

On the other hand, Ayesha shared about the development of the group *Shinee's* lyrics over the years. According to her, when *Shinee* debuted in 2008, their lyrics leaned more towards *one-sided love, boy-liking-girl stories*, and the *challenges of chasing after a girl*. However, Ayesha added that recently, *Shinee* fans were shocked about *Shinee's* latest song lyrics as some contained mature lyrics. Ayesha exclaimed: *"… are they talking about doing 'it'?"* [177] Ayesha was referring to *Shinee's* song *Get It* which contains a subliminal message of going physical with a woman.[178]

The song meanings as well as the themes and values contained in the media text all played a role in the appreciation of the interviewees. Upon finding familiar content that they could identify with, all the interviewees became more attracted to Korean music and videos.

Needs of the Fans Satisfied by Consuming Kpop Contents

This research also explored how consuming Korean music and videos satisfied the different needs of the Filipino fans. The study probed on the four types of needs cited by the Uses and Gratifications Theory, namely *information, personal identity, social interaction,* and *entertainment*. The interviewees were asked how their consumption of Kpop content met the desire to satisfy a certain need.

Kpop Fans' Need for Information

As mentioned earlier, the interviewees were interested in the culture of South Korea. They specifically mentioned the new knowledge about the Korean culture which they have gained through watching Korean videos. Winnie said that most of the time, variety shows exhibited the different traditions and values of South Korea. In detail, Bryan explained about

how he learned that South Koreans were respectful of and obedient to their elders. He further explained, *"… madali agad silang sumusunod, hindi sila nagdadahilan. Basta gagawin nila agad iyong tama."* [179] […they immediately obey without reasons. They would just do the right thing.] Furthermore, Ayesha shared about the Confucianism of the Koreans, and how Kpop videos paved way on how foreigners will view South Korea and its people. However, Ayesha also learned about the negative side of the country, specifically the *netizens* (Internet citizens). She realized how harsh the Korean netizens could get, and how issues involving them sometimes led to the suicide of the Korean artists.[180]

Since they have learned a lot about South Koreans, three of the interviewees said they felt more motivated to consume more Kpop content because of the new knowledge they gain. Bryan said that his curiosity for many things fueled his consumption. Similarly, both Winnie and Wendy were motivated by the knowledge since they found the Korean culture interesting. However, Ayesha said that the knowledge wasn't her main motivator, but the quality of the songs. Based on the answers of the interviewees, they patronized Korean artists and media texts not primarily because of the information, but because of the entertainment they got. Therefore, the new knowledge came just as a bonus to the package, and was not the element mainly sought for in consuming Korean music and videos.

Kpop Fans' Need for Personal Identity

Not only did exposure to Kpop contributed to the knowledge of the respondents about the South Korean culture, it also brought about some changes in their identities because of their newfound discovery about their selves, as well as the changes in their attitudes. Some fans also came to a point of finding idols they looked up to and wanted to emulate. Their

lifestyle was also influenced because of the change in their preference and habits. The researcher probed on the role that Kpop exposure played on these changes.

Newfound Fan Identity

All of the interviewees found something new about their personalities, while some came to the point of discovering about their fan identity. To put in Double X's words: *"…lumabas iyong pagkatao ko."* [181] […my personality came out.] It was clear from all the interviewees' response that it was a novelty for them to discover their "fanatic" and "obsessed" sides. Most of them were surprised at the extent of their fanaticism for the Kpop idols. Bryan said, *"Sobrang fanatic pala ako kapag naging fanatic ko."* [182] [I learned that I am super fanatic when I become fanatic.] On the other hand, Double X, Wendy and Winnie commented on how "crazy," "obsessed," and "addicted" they became after discovering these Kpop idols. In fact, Ayesha discovered that she could actually "scream" for idols. She explained that on ordinary days, she was not the type to scream in delight because of her boyishness. However, since she became a fan, screaming of delight and *kilig* were already common for her.

The interviewees further explained their leveled-up fanaticism. Double X recognized Kpop's impact on his life. He said that many changes came to his life after he became a *Girls' Generation* fan. He said his parents wanted to "kill" him for spending thousands of pesos just to buy merchandises and attend certain events. He continued, "…*lagi na akong nagko-computer, sumasali sa mga ganito (conventions), gumagastos na ako ng libu-libo sa isang event."* [183] […I always use the computer, participate in conventions, spend thousands on one event.]

When he started following Korean artists, Bryan, like Double X, also chose to show his support by purchasing the albums of the artists. He expounded: *"First time ko maging fan ng mga Kpop artists… I support them by buying their albums online…. pinapalawak ko iyong influence nila… para mas marami ring maging fans."* [184] [It's my first time to be a fan of Kpop artists… I support them by buying their albums online… I widen their influence so that they'll have more fans here."] Just like Double X and Bryan, the other interviewees also purchased merchandises of the Korean artists. They saved their allowances to buy products. For instance, the Philippine Kpop convention that they all attended had various merchandises like t-shirts, pens, posters, etc. Wendy even said that she intentionally missed classes just to attend the convention. As for Winnie, she surprised herself by buying even the most trivial things. She explained, *"Kaya ko pala na gumastos ng ganito para lang sa kanila. Kahit wala sila dito, kahit hindi ko sila makita… Adik pala ako sa kanila."* [185] [I learned that I can spend this much just for them. Even if they're not here, even though I don't get to see them… I'm really addicted to them.] She also said that even the simplest video of her favorite group would bring her happiness and put a smile on her face. She went on to explain how she came to the point that instead of going out to enjoy outside with friends, she'd rather stay home to watch the videos or listen to Korean songs because it made her happier.

On the other hand, while the other interviewees discovered their inner fan identities, Margaret discovered her hidden confidence. Since many Kpop songs are catchy and danceable, she found herself with confidence to actually dance to the music. She said, *"Hindi ko akalain na when I want to, I can have the self-confidence."* [186]

Discovery of Personal Icons/Idols

While Kpop made the Filipino fans discover their inner fanaticism, it also provided them with icons and idols to look up to. The interviewees specifically mentioned Korean artists they idolized because of their certain qualities and personalities. These artists gave the interviewees inspirations and motivation for self-reflection.

To specify, Bryan confidently answered that he idolized the girl-group *Kara* because of the dynamics between the members. According to him, he liked the equality and family atmosphere between the members. Meanwhile, Margaret specifically mentioned the boy group *Dong Bang Shin Ki (DBSK)* mainly for their determination and success in penetrating the Japanese market. After achieving huge success in their homeland South Korea, DBSK flew to Japan and started from scratch in penetrating the Japanese market. They fought through the cultural and language barrier and eventually became successful as well. Margaret said she looked up to the determination and confidence of the group to succeed through the difficulties. This served as an inspiration for her to study well to make her parents proud.

On the other hand, Wendy cited two *U-Kiss* members *Alex* and *Dongho* as her idols. She explained that Alex's friendliness and closeness to the fans and Dongho's humility to his fans were two things she looked up to. As for Ayesha, she idolized the U-kiss member *Eli* because of his ability in the martial arts and multiple talents. Lastly, Winnie mentioned the sweetness and expressiveness of SS501's leader *Kim Hyun Joong* as something she found incredibly endearing.

Most of the interviewees found the presence of their idols as a motivator to continue consuming more Kpop content. Since Wendy idolized U-Kiss members because of their closeness to their fans, Wendy felt that the artists valued them, thus she wanted to support

them more. Margaret even said that the personality of her idols was something she wanted to emulate. She added that whenever she saw the attitude of the idols especially in their reality shows, she became inspired to be like them in terms of loving their jobs as well as their parents. In connection to this, Winnie also repeatedly watched more Kpop videos because she wanted to see more of her idols' personalities and reactions.

Kpop Fans' Need for Social Interaction

Becoming a Kpop fan not only has impact on the fans, but on the people around them as well. They can either be understood or misinterpreted because of their novel interest for foreign media content. This was the reason why the researcher asked the interviewees about the impact of their Kpop interest on their relationships with their families and friends. Most of them said that at first, their immediate friends and families found their interest strange, especially considering the language barrier. As time passed by, their friends and families eventually learned to accept their fandom. However, many of the interviewees said that their parents reprimanded them for the time and money they invested in consuming and buying Kpop media content. On the other hand, some of the respondents' friends have been influenced by their interest in Kpop and have become fans themselves. They have also found ways of obtaining new social interaction, this time with people with the same interest.

There are various groups and organizations dedicated to Kpop and Kpop artists that have already been established in the Philippines. However, there are also groups that solely exist online through Internet communities and fan sites. Most of the interviewees were members of the said organizations. According to them, they joined such groups because of the needed to meet up and interact with people who completely understood their attraction to

Korean music and artists. Aside from this, nearly all of them said that such interaction with fellow Kpop fans allowed them to obtain news, updates, and new information about their favorite artists and Kpop-related events. As a result, these new forms of social interaction and the new people they met through Kpop somehow motivated most of the interviewees to continually consume more Kpop content, and they even practiced certain ways of consuming Kpop such as attending fan conventions, gatherings or other events.

Kpop Fans' Need for Entertainment

First and foremost, Kpop music and videos are media texts that aim to provide entertainment to the people. It's fairly observable that many Filipinos got hooked in Kpop because it provided them the kind of entertainment they need. All the interviewees admitted to being entertained well by the Korean artists. In fact, they said that the South Korean music industry was of high quality and was globally competitive. One of the reasons they attributed to this high quality was the apparent good planning and execution of the song and music video productions. Ayesha even pointed out: "*… alam nila kung paano mag-entertain. Kaya nga meron tayong term na Hallyu Wave, or Korean wave*."[187] [They really know how to entertain. That's why we have a term called Korean Wave.] Hallyu, of course, refers to the phenomenon of Korean entertainment industry's rise as an epicenter of pop culture in Asia.[188] The interviewees also attributed the talents of the artists as a huge contribution to the good quality of Kpop content.

The interviewees enumerated the different aspects of Korean music, videos and artists that specifically appealed to their entertainment needs, such as *the music video concept, choreography, fashion* and *style of artists,* and the like. When asked which of these aspects

appealed the most to them, many of the interviewees exclaimed “many” or “all,” proving that they found Kpop a complete package of entertainment. They also pointed out that the *beat* and *melody* of the music were two of the most entertaining aspects of Kpop. In describing the choreography and dance of the songs and artists, many of the interviewees exclaimed that it was “the best” while many also praised the fashion and style of the artists.

As a result of these aspects that appealed to the interviewees’ entertainment needs, they said that they would continue consuming Korean music and videos because Kpop entertained them. Some of them said that as long as Kpop continues to produce good music and videos, they would also continue patronizing their products. Margaret acknowledged Kpop’s addictive quality that made the fans want to “know more, hear more, dance more.” [189] The addictive melody, lyrics, and choreography were some aspects that they said they would pay close attention to.

It is apparent that consuming Korean music and videos greatly satisfied the entertainment needs of the interviewees, and was therefore very effective in meeting this certain need. While other types of needs were somehow satisfied because it came as a bonus in the package (such as new knowledge about South Korea, as well as meeting new friends), the entertainment aspect was first and foremost the main character of Korean music’s appeal to the interviewees.

Synthesis of the Results

This the third part of Chapter 5. The results of the two surveys (traditional and online) and the focus interviews were synthesized to facilitate easy understanding of the analysis. In order to understand the Filipino teens as media consumers of Korean music and videos, the

researcher conducted surveys and focus interviews among the fans to probe deeper on the phenomenon. Three variables were studied: Filipino fans' *consumption* Kpop music and videos (measured by their frequency of consumption, as well as their different ways of consuming Korean music and videos); *cultural offerings* of Kpop texts which appealed to the Filipino audience; and the gratification of the fans' *needs* through consumption of Kpop media content.

To represent both virtual and offline fans, the researcher conducted two surveys on 120 offline fans, and 150 online fans, or a total of 270 survey respondents. The respondents comprised of Kpop fans aged 15-19 years, and the results revealed that these age brackets were well-represented (as seen on Table 1) in the survey. However, the survey showed that an overwhelming number of respondents were females (see Table 2). The Korean girl group *Girls' Generation* also had the most fans among the survey participants, while boy group *SS501* had the fewest fans. The other three groups (*Shinee, Super Junior, U-Kiss)* had an almost equal representation among the respondents.

The survey results also revealed that the Filipino teens were very active consumers of Korean media texts (see Table 4). Table 6 showed that the respondents were highly-exposed to Kpop content because most of them consumed Korean music and videos everyday. The fans also had various ways of consuming Kpop, and most of these ways utilized television and Internet. However, of the two media, the Internet proved to be the most efficient source of free Korean content because it provided fans with ease of access to unpaid media texts (see Table 5). Paid Internet content was the least chosen access to Kpop, while cable television came in second to the Internet as the most useful medium.

The study determined four cultural offerings (language, visuals, cultural capital, story) in Korean media texts. The surveys reflected that the Filipino fans could identify all of these cultural offerings, but did not necessarily relate with them. For instance, the respondents recognized the Korean language, but many of them did not understand it. However, the language barrier did not prevent their appreciation of Korean media texts (see Table 6). Table 5 also showed that most of the respondents were already learning the Korean language in order to resolve the language barrier.

Visual elements are also cultural offerings present in Kpop content, and all the respondents were able to identify the two visuals determined in this study: the physical appearance of the artists, and the production quality of the music videos. Nearly all of the respondents said the attractive physical appearance of Korean artists influenced their consumption (see Table 8). The results show that the good looks influenced the active consumption of the Filipino fans. However, Table 8 shows that the most appealing visual aspect was the music video concept, while the face of Korean idols came in second.

The cultural capitals were discussed, but the respondents weren't asked to provide specific traditions or customs. They were only asked about their actions when they encountered unfamiliar content in video, which included Korean cultural capitals such as practices, beliefs, traditions and customs. Table 10 showed that almost all the respondents learned about unfamiliar concepts. One Korean custom was singled out by the researcher – the Korean entertainment industry's training of talents. This practice was highly applauded by the respondents, such that they said it should also be applied to the Philippine's entertainment industry (see Table 11).

The last cultural offering determined in the study was the story of Korean media texts. The results revealed that the Filipino teens identified most with the values of *friendship* and *hard work,* which were often exhibited in variety shows and documentaries featuring the Korean artists. This revealed that the Filipino fans could relate to the real personalities of the Korean idols, as opposed to their fictional selves presented in dramas or music videos. The Filipino fans also learned about the meanings of the songs in order to fully comprehend the messages and stories of Korean music, while some also memorized the song lyrics amidst the unfamiliarity of the language (see Tables 12 and 13). This fact proved that the Filipino teens actually took effort in order to understand the content of Korean media texts.

Based on McQuail's classification of needs (Uses and Gratifications Theory), the researcher determined how the consumption of Kpop media texts gratified the needs of the fans. The survey results showed that Kpop consumption satisfied some of the needs of the Filipino teens.

The need for information stems out from the audiences' desire to find out about their immediate surroundings, the society, or the world. The respondents' interest and curiosity about the society of South Korea was satisfied by their exposure to Korean songs and videos (see Table 15). The survey showed that almost all the respondents gained new knowledge about the Korean culture, and Table 18 also shows that almost all of them agreed that their new knowledge about South Korea influenced them to consume more Kpop content. Their active consumption also had a huge impact on their habits and desires as well as their personal models of behavior (see Table 17). The changes in their habits and desires influenced some of their choices, especially when it came to their music and fashion choices (as seen in Table 18).

Consuming Korean popular music and videos also encouraged the Filipino audiences to seek a sense of belongingness. Social interaction is one of the basic needs, and this could be achieved through gaining insights on the situation of fellow fans. Table 20 showed that most of the survey respondents have joined social groups in order to acquire this sense of belongingness. The respondents'' top choices of social groups were online forums and fan clubs.

Lastly, media audiences seek entertainment, and the survey revealed that Filipino teens got this entertainment from Korean popular music. More than three-fourths (see Table 21) of all the survey participants believed that Kpop's high-quality and world-class appeal contributed to its ability to deliver entertainment. Also, there was an almost equal representation of frequency count of the different aspects of Kpop (see Table 22) which reflected that respondents' belief that all aspects of Korean music were entertaining.

Six focus interviews were conducted after the survey. Of the six interviewees, four were females while two were males, which further reflect that the women outnumbered the men among Korean music fans in the Philippines. All six interviewees were very active fans. Each of them was a fan of the following groups: *Girls' Generation, Super Junior, U-Kiss, SS501,* and *Shinee.* The females were fans of the boy groups, while the two males were both fans of *Girls' Generation.* This implies that females are oftentimes attracted to male artists, while male fans like female artists.

The interviewees were also highly exposed to Korean popular music because all of them admitted to consuming Kpop content every day, during all possible times. They all did their daily activities while inserting their consumption in between studying, eating, sleeping, and other activities. They also utilized various ways of consuming Korean media texts, with

emphasis on their use of the Internet. They did not find much use of free television channels like ABS-CBN, GMA and TV5 in their consumption, as these channels provided very little Kpop content. However, the interviewees found some use of cable channels like *Arirang TV, KBS World,* and *MYX* because those channels provided fans with Kpop content on scheduled broadcast dates and times. However, the Internet is found to be the easiest, fastest and most practical source of Kpop music and videos because it provided the fans with free media content. The Internet also served as a tool for free news and updates about their favorite artists, as well as an avenue for the socialization of Kpop fans around the world. Aside from cable channels and the Internet, the interviewees also acquired content from their peers, or fellow fans, and through their attendance in fan events such as conventions.

The interviewees found the Korean language attractive, and therefore admitted to their fascination for the foreign language. Because of this, they did not find the language a barrier to their full appreciation of Korean media content. In fact, they were already learning to read, write, and speak the language. However, they also relied on outside help in order to understand the language, such as asking Korean friends, those who understand Korean, or acquiring subtitled videos or translations online. The interviewees also believed that music is a universal language, thus they believed that Kpop spoke to them even if they did not understand Korean. They believed that the melodies and harmonies of the music, as well as song lyrics and song quality, contributed to the ability of Korean popular music to transcend the language barrier.

Aside from the language, the visual elements were also identified by the interviewees. They all mentioned that the attractive physical appearance of the artists contributed to their liking. Aside from the looks of the idols, the respondents also believed that Korean music

videos were very well produced, proven by its high production quality. This quality is reflected in the choreography, fashion, and style of the artists, which altogether contributed to Korean music video's distinctive style.

Cultural capitals such as traditions, customs, practices, jokes or idioms were also familiar with the interviewees, but they did not always understand the content of these cultural elements because of their Korean history. The interviewees disregarded unfamiliar messages and did not bother to learn them at all. They either tried to understand them in context with familiar elements, or they asked the help of Korean friends, or those who knew about Korean. Same with the survey, the interviewees also commended the Korean practice of training talents. According to them, the long training was evident on the very polished performances of the Korean idols, as well as the high-quality entertainment that Korean artists deliver to the audience.

When it comes to the stories of Korean videos, the interviewees enumerated specific themes and values present in Kpop content that appealed the most to them. The interviewees all mentioned *respect for elders* and *close family ties* as the most identifiable values in Korean videos. The interviewees also commended the South Korean's conservatism, as well as the hard work and friendship among the Korean idols. While one would expect romantic love to be a common theme that appealed to the fans, none of the interviewees actually found romance an interesting topic in Korean songs and videos.

Like the survey participants, the interviewees gained a lot of new knowledge about South Korea, and in turn, they felt more motivated to consume more Korean media texts in order to learn more. However, some explained that aside from the information, other factors

actually fueled their repeated consumption such as song quality and the value of entertainment they acquired.

The consumption of Korean music also became an avenue for the fans to discover something new about their personalities. Some interviewees even realized their fan identities, especially their “fanatic”, “addicted” and “obsessed” sides. They were all surprised about the level of fanaticism and support they have endowed to the Korean artists, whether the support maybe financial (in terms of purchasing merchandise) or emotional. Aside from their personalities, they also found personal models of behavior among the Kpop idols. The interviewees mentioned specific Korean artists they wanted to emulate in terms of talent and personality.

The interviewees also joined social groups because they needed to get to know fellow fans who actually fully understood their support for Korean artists. These social groups also provided them with news, updates, and information about their favorite artists and other fan events about Kpop. Since they have already formed alliances and relationships with fellow fans, the interviewees said that their social groups actually contributed a lot to their continued consumption as these provided them more venues to acquire Kpop content.

Chapter 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study attempted to understand the Filipino teens as active consumers of Korean popular music and videos. To achieve this objective, the researcher employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. A survey on 270 teenage Kpop fans (150 respondents online, 120 respondents offline) provided a quantified overview on the Filipino teen respondents' patterns of consumption, as well as their reasons for consuming Korean music and videos. In order to qualify for the survey, respondents had to be 15-19 years of age and members of the fan clubs or Internet communities of the following artists: *Girls' Generation*, *Super Junior*, *Shinee*, *U-Kiss* and *SS501*. Also, the researcher chose six traditional survey respondents for focus interviews. This research method provided a more in-depth analysis of the phenomenon.

Summary

Most of the fans were females as proven by the gender ratio of the random survey conducted both online and offline. By surveying 120 offline fans and 150 online fans, and interviewing six respondents, the researcher found out about the Filipino teens' patterns of consuming Korean music and videos. The cultural offerings present in Korean media texts were also identified as well as the Filipino fans' needs that Kpop consumption may have or may have not satisfied.

This study found out that the Filipino teens were very active consumers of Kpop, as seen in their everyday consumption of Korean music and videos. Their daily schedule consisted of listening to Korean music on their way to and from school through their music

players and watching Korean videos on their laptops or computers. The Internet also played an important role on the respondents' consumption as it was used as a tool to acquire free Kpop content in websites like *Youtube*, to be updated on news and events through blogsites like *Allkpop*, and also to socialize with fellow fans, both locally and internationally, through fan forums and online communities. The UHF television played a minor role as a medium for Kpop media texts, as the fans all said they got very few Kpop content from it. However, many of them used cable channels like *MYX, KBS World* and *Arirang* as venues to watch Korean videos. Other ways of consuming Kpop content included purchasing merchandises like CDs and DVDs on both online stores and offline sellers. Other respondents also acquired Korean texts through their peers and fellow fans. There were also some who channeled their consumption through their talents and skills, such as writing fan fiction and dancing to Korean music.

The Korean language is first and foremost the most obvious cultural offering of Korean music and videos. As the Korean language wasn't understood by nearly all the units of analysis, it was assumed to be a barrier to the appreciation of Kpop. However, the study found out that majority of the respondents did not find the language barrier as a hindrance to their liking of Korean music, videos and artists. In fact, almost all of them were already learning the said foreign language. The saying *Music is a universal language* applied to this phenomenon as the respondents said that the music spoke to them and enabled them to appreciate Kpop. They also looked at other aspects of Kpop to reconcile with the language barrier such as the music's melody, harmony, lyrics, meanings and production value.

Aside from the language, the study also looked into the visual cultural offerings such as the artists' physical appearance, and the visual qualities of the music videos. The

respondents said that the physical appearance of the Korean artists positively affected their liking. The good looks and charisma of the idols served as an added factor to the overall entertaining quality of Kpop. Specifically, the physical aspects of the face, hairstyle, as well as the fashion and style of the Korean idols attracted the respondents and interviewees. The music videos also contributed to Kpop's appeal to the respondents. They found Korean music videos to be well-produced. The overall concept and the choreography of the songs were most lauded, as well as the fashion and style of the artists in those music videos.

Cultural capital is another cultural offering of South Korean media content which includes the customs, traditions, and actual historical accounts of the said country and its people. These types of content may be misunderstood by foreign audience, including the Filipino fans. This study found out that nearly all the respondents tried to decode the meaning of the foreign content. However, the respondents were split into finding out about absolutely everything, or learning only about content that captured their attention. In learning about these content, some respondents asked their Korean friends or fellow fans who knew, or sometimes acquired videos with subtitles and transcriptions. One South Korean custom was specifically discussed in the study: the long years of training of artists. Nearly all the respondents found this custom commendable, while many said that it should also be applied in the Philippines. They believed that the training was particularly evident in the polished talents and performances of the artists and the high quality of Kpop as a whole.

The story also served as an important cultural offering for the fans. This aspect includes the themes and values in the actual content of the songs and videos. Most of the respondents and interviewees memorized the lyrics of the songs as well the meanings behind the songs. Through the translations of lyrics, respondents found it easier to relate with the

songs and their messages. Some of the respondents enumerated lyrical contents and themes that they highly appreciated most specifically *romance, appreciation of fans,* and *self-transparency*. Other themes and values they were able to identify with in Kpop content included *hard work* and *determination,* as well as the *regards for elders and family*.

The study also found out that consuming Korean popular music and videos satisfied certain needs of the Filipino fans, most specially their need for entertainment. In some levels, it also fulfilled the needs of the fans for information, personal identity, and social interaction.

The survey showed that the Filipino teens have gained new knowledge about South Korea's society and culture through their consumption of Korean music and videos. It also showed that the respondents actually consumed more Korean media texts because of the knowledge they acquired. The new knowledge gained included particular practices of the Koreans (bowing as a sign of respect for seniors), as well as the attitudes of the Korean general public (such as the very passionate idol culture of Korean society).

On the other hand, the active consumption of Kpop content influenced the respondents' need for personal identity, particularly in forming their fan identity. Most of the respondents have discovered their ability to be fans, as evident in their use of words such as "obsessed," "addicted," and "fanatic." The respondents were pleasantly surprised at the extent of their support and loyalty to a particular Korean group. Aside from this, the survey also showed that the respondents' and interviewees' habits and desires, as well as their choice for music and fashion, have been altered since they've started following Korean artists. This was particularly evident in the patterns of consumption they formed such as consuming selected Korean content regularly. Many of the respondents also admitted to having found idols that they particularly looked up to.

Meanwhile, there was also satisfaction fulfilled on the aspect of the respondents' social interaction. While some of their friends and families initially found their attraction for foreign content and artists weird, it didn't necessarily affect their relationships with these people. The biggest change in their social life involved meeting and socializing with people who had the same interest for Kpop. Many Filipino fans have joined or participated in organizations or groups dedicated to Kpop, including fan clubs, online forums, gatherings and conventions. Meeting new people served as another motivator for the respondents to consume more Kpop content because through these social groups; they were able to acquire new media texts and updates on latest news and events relating to Kpop.

The need for entertainment was found to be hugely satisfied by consuming Korean music and videos. Most of the respondents found Kpop to be of high-quality and globally competitive. The entertainment aspects that particularly engrossed the fans included the music video, the artists' talents, as well as the music's beat and melody. The respondents believed that the Kpop industry has the complete package as well as the ability to fully cater to the entertainment of its audience. This innate ability translated to the active consumption of the respondents in order to further satisfy their thirst for entertainment.

Conclusion

The results of the study generated the following conclusions:

a. Filipino teenage fans are very active consumers of Korean popular music and videos and are highly exposed to Kpop;
b. Filipino fans could identify with the four cultural offerings determined in the study (language, visuals, cultural capital, story) but not all these aspects contribute to their

repeated consumption of Kpop content. Of the four cultural offerings, only the visual aspects and the story have a huge impact on their repeated consumption;

c. Consuming Korean music and videos gratify the Filipino fans' needs on some levels, but not all these gratifications serve as motivators for repeated consumption. New knowledge about South Korea, the fan identity of the fans, and the social interaction formed out of their fandom, are only a part of the whole package that comes with consuming Korean content. The main fuel for repeated consumption is found to be the entertainment aspects of Korean music; and
d. Filipino fans' active consumption of Korean music stems out primarily from the entertaining qualities (attractive visual aspects and catchy melody) of Korean music and videos.

Chapter 7

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter contains all the implications that have been encountered during the course of the research endeavor. Issues on the theoretical and methodological levels are discussed, followed by appropriate recommendations for future researchers and related studies.

Implications

In studying the popularity of the Korean popular music among the Filipino teens, the researcher used the theories of *Cultural Proximity, Media Dependency,* and *Uses and Gratifications.* Fusing these three theories, the researcher modeled a framework stating that Filipino fans initially relate with the cultural offerings in a foreign media text (Cultural Proximity Theory). Upon relating with these cultural elements, they become greatly involved in the information processing of the said media content (Media Dependency Theory) which results to their dependency on the media, as they find that it provides their different needs (Uses and Gratifications Theory).

Two of the three theories proved to be apt for the phenomenon. Cultural proximity theory explained the attraction of the Filipino fans on the foreign media content because of the presence of familiar cultural offerings (language, visuals, cultural capital and story). These cultural offerings, in turn, gratified the needs of the Filipino fans, especially in terms of their needs for entertainment (satisfied by visual and narrative aspects) and information (satisfied by language and cultural capital). Together, the appeal of the cultural aspects and

the ability of Kpop to gratify the fans' needs resulted to their active consumption of Korean music and videos.

However, although the framework applied to the phenomenon of Kpop's popularity among the Filipino teens, the researcher found out that in reality, the fandom of the Filipino youth do not always happen in the order posed by the framework. The framework posed that the fandom begins with the identification of cultural offerings such as language, visuals, cultural capital, and story. Although for some, this was the case, other fans became Kpop fans because of the bandwagon effect, while some were influenced by their peers. The cultural offerings weren't always the aspects that brought about the fans' initial exposure.

Also, the framework suggested that the gratifications of needs come after the great involvement in the information processing, which means that only after repeated consumption do the gratification of needs takes place. However, the results showed that gratification could actually occur in the beginning of the exposure, and the gratification of needs could actually become the prerequisite for the continued consumption. For instance, the respondents found that Kpop actually satisfied their entertainment needs, and therefore to further achieve this satisfaction, their patterns of consumption changed. They became more involved in the information processing through their more frequent exposures to Korean music and videos. This meant that the gratification of their entertainment needs took place before their active consumption of Korean music and videos. This was the opposite of what the framework posed.

The Media Dependency Theory was not also utilized as much as the other two theories. This study's framework used the said theory's assumption that the audience becomes greatly involved in the information processing, as a result of the media's importance

to them. The study's results did not reflect the importance of Kpop in the lives of the respondents, as it only looked into their main reasons of consumption. The media dependency theory also tackles the various behavioral and cognitive effects as a result of the audience's high exposure to media content, and although the respondents were highly exposed to Korean media, the effects of this exposure on their cognition and behavior did not come out in the study.

Two methods were employed in the study: survey (quantitative), and focus interview (qualitative). Aside from the traditional face-to-face survey, online survey was also conducted in order to give representation to the virtual fans who were not active attendees of fan conventions. However, this proved to be disadvantageous. Out of the 349 online participants who answered the survey, only 150 survey sheets were valid because some online respondents did not complete the questionnaire. Invalid answer sheets were also gathered because there was a lack of clarity and understanding between the researcher and the participants, therefore some answered the survey wrongly or incompletely.

The study also specifically chose four male groups and one female group idolized by the Filipino fans, resulting to the huge number of female respondents (in both the survey and focus interviews) as compared to the male fans. Although gender was not an important indicator in the study, the unequal representation of the sexes did not provide the voices of the male fans, as much as it did the females.

The biggest issue, however, came from the survey instruments. Most survey questions were designed to be answerable with a yes or a no, when these could have been through open-ended questions in order to obtain an explanation of the respondents' answers. As a result, the survey acted nothing more than a quantified overview of the fans' patterns and

reasons for consuming Kpop content. Without the focus interviews, the survey could not have answered the research problem by itself.

In contrast, the focus interviews proved to be a very effective method in eliciting answers from the interviewees. This method actually allowed the researcher to understand the reasoning behind the survey answers. Only six interviews were conducted, and although this number of interviews already provided the data needed, more interviews would have made the results stronger and more representative of the Filipino fans in general.

The study found out that Filipino fans consumed Korean music and videos repeatedly because of the visually appealing aspects, such as the attractive Korean artists, and the high-quality music videos. The main implication of this finding targets the local media producers. As it was proven that there are certain qualities in media content that attract the Filipino teenagers, the producers of music and television content in the country could use this finding in order to improve the production of local media content so that Filipino media texts could also gain the loyalty and support of the young Filipino media consumers.

Recommendations

The researcher recommends future researchers to tackle the cognitive and behavioral effects of foreign media content, such as Kpop, on the Filipino fans. The current research almost touched on this subject, but failed to do so even though it already incorporated Media Dependency Theory in the framework. The same theory could explain the effects of consuming Kpop content on the fans' actions, personalities, lifestyle, etc. For scholars planning to understand the content of foreign media texts that makes it attractive for Filipino

audiences, the Cultural Proximity Theory serves as a good backbone, especially in understanding the similarities or difference of the foreign culture to the Filipino culture.

Focus interview is a very effective method in understanding the audience, and the greater number of interviews would provide greater amount and quality of data. Aside from this, focus group discussions could also be an effective method in order to elicit group views among the Filipino audience, especially since Kpop fandom in the Philippines appear to be a "bandwagon" phenomenon among the Filipino youth. A gender study is also recommended, as this study revealed that female fans outnumbered male Kpop fans. The difference between the fanship of males and females may also be researched.

Lastly, a study on the a comparative analysis between Kpop content and Filipino music content can also shed light on which of the two media texts is more preferred by the Filipino audience and the reasons for their preference. The results of such studies would be beneficial for the improvement of the local media industry.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Survey Questionnaire

KPOPPED!
Understanding the Filipino Teens' Consumption of Korean Popular Music and Videos

Annyeonghaseyo Kpop fans! I am Sarah Kristine Alanzalon, a fourth year Broadcast Communication student from the University of the Philippines, Diliman. This semester, I am studying the popularity of Kpop music, videos and artists among the Filipino teens. In connection to this, I am asking a small favor from you dear Kpopper! Kindly answer the survey questions below as part of my pursuit to understand the Kpop phenomenon. Hopefully, my thesis can make the world understand why you think Kpop rocks. Just check the line before your answer. Kamsahamnida! :-)

I. PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Gender:
4. Fan club:
5. Contact no. (optional):

II. FREQUENCY AND WAYS OF CONSUMING KPOP CONTENTS

6. In a weeks time, how often do you watch and listen to your favorite Kpop music, videos and artists?
   _ Once or twice
   _ Three to five times
   _ Everyday

7. What are your ways of consuming Kpop music, videos and artists (you can answer more than 1, and you may also provide other answers)
   _ Watching free TV (ABS-CBN, GMA, TV5, Studio 23)
   _ Watching Cable TV (Arirang, KBS World, MYX, channel V)
   _ Using the Internet for free contents (youtube, mediafire)
   _ Using the Internet for paid contents (iTunes, Melon, etc.)
   _ Using the Internet for purchasing (Yesasia, DVDHeaven etc)
   _ Using the Internet for news and updates (allkpop, soompi, fan forums)
   _ Offline purchasing of merchandises (Odyssey, musicone, independent sellers)
   _ Concerts and live performances
   _ Fan conventions and events
   Others (please specify): _____

III. CULTURAL OFFERINGS

A. Language

8. Does the language barrier affect your liking?
   _ Yes
   _ No

APPENDIX A

Survey Questionnaire

9. Are you learning the Korean language because of Kpop?
   _ Yes
   _ No

B. Visuals

10. Does the physical appearance of the Korean artists affect your appreciation?
    _ Yes
    _ No
11. What physical aspects of the Korean artists and the music videos appeal the most to you? (you can answer more than 1, and you may also provide other answers)
    _ Face _ Hairstyles _ Music video concept
    _ Height _ Fashion _ Choreography
    _ Body _ Make up
    Others (please specify): _____

C. Cultural Capitals (Korean Culture, Traditions, Customs, History)

12. When you are watching Kpop videos and you stumble upon unfamiliar jokes, messages and other contents, what do you do?
    _ Dismiss it totally
    _ Always learn about it (all of it)
    _ Learn about only those that capture my attention

13. What is your opinion in South Korea's regard on training of talents?
    _ Commendable (We should do it here in the Philippines)
    _ Waste of time (5-7 years is too long)
    _ I don't really care about it

D. Story (Contents, Messages, Narrative)

14. What themes and values present in Kpop videos appeal to you? (you can answer more than 1, and you may also provide other answers)
    _ Regard of elders _ Hard work and determination
    _ Regard of family _ Unrequited love
    _ Friendship and Loyalty _ Romantic love
    Others (please specify): _____

15. Do you bother to learn about the meaning of the songs?
    _ Yes
    _ No

16. Do you take the effort to memorize the songs you like?
    _ Yes
    _ No

APPENDIX A

Survey Questionnaire

IV. NEEDS

A. Information

17. Has consuming Kpop contributed to your knowledge of South Korea?
    _ A Lot (if you answered this, proceed to 18
    _ A little (if you answered this, proceed to 18)
    _ Not at all (if you answered this, proceed to 19)

18. Does this new knowledge influence you to consume more Kpop contents?
    _ A lot
    _ A little
    _ Not at all

B. Personal Identity

19. How did Kpop influence you identity (you can answer more than 1, and you may also provide other answers)
    _ It provided me icons/idols to look up to
    _ It made me realize my own fan identity
    _ It has changed my habits and desires
    _ It didn't influence me at all
    Others (please specify): _____

20. Which aspects of your life have been influenced by your Kpop consumption?
    _ Fashion choices
    _ Music choices
    _ Habits
    _ Social life
    _ Beliefs
    Others (please specify): _____

C. Social Interaction

21. Have you joined or participated in a social group/s or organization/s dedicated to Kpop music and artists?
    _ Yes (if you answered this, proceed to 22)
    _ No (if you answered this, proceed to 23)
    _ I plan to (if you answered this, proceed to 22)
22. Which social groups have you joined/are you planning to join? (you can answer more than 1, and you may also provide other answers)
    _ Fan clubs
    _ Online forums
    _ Conventions
    _ Fan meets/gatherings
    Others (please specify): _____

APPENDIX A

Survey Questionnaire

D. Entertainment

23. What is your opinion on the quality of entertainment present in Kpop music, videos and artists?
    _ Very High-Quality (World-class)
    _ Just right (there are better quality entertainment elsewhere)
    _ Incompetent

24. Which aspects of Kpop appeal most to your entertainment needs? (you can answer more than 1, and you may also provide other answers)

_ Melody	_ Lyrics	_ Artists' Talents
_ Beat	_ Music Video	_ Artists
_ Genre	_ Concept	

Others (please specify): _____

APPENDIX B

Focus Interview Guide

Part I: CONSUMPTION

Frequency of Consumption

1. How often do you watch/listen to Korean music, videos and artists?
2. What is your daily schedule of consuming Kpop?

Strategies of Consumption

3. How do you utilize free and cable tv in consuming Kpop?
4. What is the role of the Internet in your Kpop fandom?
5. What are your other strategies for consuming Kpop contents?

Part II: CULTURAL OFFERINGS

Language

6. How does the Korean language appeal to you?
7. How do you reconcile the language barrier in your appreciation of Kpop contents?

Aesthetic Appeal

8. How does the physical appearance of the Korean artists affect your appreciation?
9. In Korean music videos, what is your opinion on its production quality?

History

10. How can you relate with the contents of Korean music videos, especially those that are exclusively Korean in culture?

Story

11. What are the themes and values present in Korean music videos and Kpop shows that attract you?
12. How do the lyrics of the Korean songs appeal to you? Are there familiar values present that appeals to you?

Others

13. What is your opinion on the talents and training of the Korean artists?

APPENDIX B

Focus Interview Guide

PART III: NEEDS

Information

14. How does exposure to Korean music, videos and artists contribute to your cultural knowledge of South Korea?
15. Do you feel motivated to consume more Korean pop media contents because of the new information you gain by doing so? Why or why not?

Personal Identity

16. How does your active consumption of Kpop contents influence your personal identity? How about your fan identity?
17. Have you found icons/idols among the Korean artists you follow?
18. How does the presence of your personal icons and idols, and the influence of Kpop on your personal and fan identity affect your consumption?

Social Interaction

19. How does your Kpop fandom affect your relationship with your friends and families?
20. How does your Kpop fandom influence your social groups, especially among those with similar interest in Kpop?
21. Do you feel motivated to consume more Kpop contents because of its influence in your social groups and interaction? Why or why not?

. Entertainment

22. What is your opinion on the quality of entertainment present in Kpop music, videos and artists?
23. Which aspects of Kpop appeal most to your entertainment needs?
24. How does the entertainment aspect of Kpop influence your tendency to consume more of its contents?

APPENDIX C

Song Lyrics: Bad Girl, Good Girl (miss A)

You Don't Know Me, You Don't Know Me.
You Don't Know Me, You Don't Know Me.

So, Shut Up, Boy.
So, Shut Up, Boy.
So, Shut Up, Shut Up.

You couldn't say a thing in front of me, but you could talk badly about me behind my back.
I'm dumbfounded.

Hello, Hello, Hello.
It seems like the first time, time, time you've seen a girl like me.
Why do you judge me?
Are you afraid of me, perhaps?

On the outside, I'm a Bad Girl.
On the inside, I'm a Good Girl.
You don't even know me well, you only look at me from the outside.
I find your gaze to be funny because you see me as a pitiful girl.

When I dance, I'm a Bad Girl.
When I love, I'm a Good Girl.
When you watch me dance, you become mesmerized, but are you done after you watch?
I find your hypocrisy to be funny because you point at me.

These kind of clothes, this kind of hair, a girl who does these kind of dances is obvious.
You're even more obvious.

Hello, Hello, Hello.
If you don't have any confidence, go to the back, back, back.
You just need to step back.
Why do you keep making noise?
Don't you know that your heart can clearly be seen?

I'm looking for a man who can handle me.
I'm looking for a real man, not a man who acts like one through words.
Isn't there a man who won't make me anxious because he overflows with confidence?
So that I can be me, so that I can watch him freely from afar?

APPENDIX D

Song Lyrics: Green Peas (SS501)

One summer, in my eyes
Shine a green star, You
With each other, our love blossomed
Like the stars in the night sky
Sparkling green star
That look is lovely

And every moment that we're together
And every promise that we made
Also, every hour that we're together
All of it Forever, we will hold on to

I want to become a star
Wherever on this earth
No matter at what time
(I want to) shine for you all
24/7 from Monday to Sunday night
Together with us, (you) will be happy

And as I cry and as I laugh
No other than you, always at my side

And whoever can say whatever (they want)
Unchanging, one and the same
Our love will be together forever

Always, like sparkling stars
In all the time that we are together

Will shine even more brightly forever
Precious green star my love

I want to become a star
Wherever on this earth
No matter at what time
(I want to) shine for you all
24/7 from Monday to Sunday night
Together with us, (you) will be happy

(All of you) your love, thank you
We swear we love you
All for you

APPENDIX D

Song Lyrics: Get It (Shinee)

Get it, get it, get it, get it on
Get it, get it, get it, get it on
Get it, get it, get it, get it on
Get it, get it, get it, get it

The man you were waiting for, that's me
I'm ready to steal your heart
If you want me, then say so, it's now time
I need you in order to make that possible

Look at me roughly, my appearance is like boom
Now I'm gonna hold onto you for sure
The glare I'm giving out is like toxic
Everything rolls down, one by one

I know what you want
I can feel that even if you don't say so
I can see that
I could never feel it
From anyone else
To the end of this night
Get it, get it, get it, get it on
Get it, get it, get it, get it on
Get it, get it, get it, get it on
Get it, get it from me, don't stop
Get it, get it

Baby, the moment you see
Your eyes come to know
I don't allow myself to others easily
If it's not you
I don't need any other attraction
Show me yourself, embrace me
Let me be your lover

Don't think about a thing and just feel it
Take me who's been thrown into the music
Tonight, this time where you and I become one
Don't stare at me with those eyes
Don't worry, don't even mind it
Even in these hesitant times, the end comes near
Stare at me in your perfectly normal state
Say that you want me and change your chance