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THE EFFECTS OF POPULAR CULTURE ON JAPANESE AND SOUTH KOREAN ATTITUDES

by

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September 2022

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**THE EFFECTS OF POPULAR CULTURE ON JAPANESE AND SOUTH
KOREAN ATTITUDES**

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ABSTRACT

Japanese and South Korean attitudes toward each other have often been strained, in turn putting stress on formal relations between both countries. However, both countries are experiencing a growth in consumption of the other's popular culture. This thesis asks: Does increasing popular culture consumption create more favorable attitudes in these two countries toward each other, as many analysts expect? Although citizens in both countries consume more of the other's popular culture than might be expected, and all else being equal, this does appear to improve mutual attitudes although it has apparently not been enough to improve mutual overall impressions. Consumption is restricted to certain portions of the population, and any positive impact that it yields appears outweighed by other issues, particularly disputes over differing interpretations of Japan's past colonial rule.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

anime	animation
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
EAI	East Asia Institute
JLPT	Japanese Language Proficiency
KOFICE	Korea Foundation for International Culture Exchange
METI	Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PM	Prime Minister
ROK	Republic of Korea
TOPIK	Test of Proficiency in Korean

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Since the Republic of Korea's (South Korea, ROK) independence, Japanese and South Korean attitudes toward each other have often been strained, in turn putting a strain on formal relations between both countries. However, both countries are also actively trying to increase their soft power globally and are using popular culture as a means of doing so. This exporting of popular culture has led to growing consumption in both countries. Does increasing popular culture consumption create more favorable attitudes in these two countries towards each other, as many people expect? Or do consumers separate their enjoyment of culture from their political views and attitudes toward the other country more generally? If the answer is that cultural consumption does *not* lead to an increase in favorable opinion toward the other, then why not? This thesis finds that popular culture consumption does *not* increase favorable views of the culture-providing country—or, at least, only in certain population segments—due to other more significant factors in Japan-South Korea relations.

B. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Japanese and South Korean attitudes toward each other have varied considerably in recent decades. There are times when the Japanese and South Koreans seem to have turned a corner (i.e., co-hosting the 2002 FIFA World Cup). However, disagreements on historical issues during Korea's time as a Japanese colony, such as comfort women and forced labor, repeatedly start a chain reaction of events that brings the relationship down. One example is the 2019 South Korean boycott of Japanese goods, which was sparked by the Japanese government's placement of export restrictions on semiconductor materials and display panels to South Korea. Analysts speculate the Japanese government's reason for placing export restrictions was a 2018 South Korean Supreme Court ruling calling on Japanese companies to pay compensation for their use of forced Korean labor, although the Japanese government

denied this.¹ The Supreme Court ruling stemmed from actions that took place during Korea's time as a Japanese colony and demonstrates the failure of both countries to come to a final agreement on Japan's and Korea's past.

Japanese government surveys on Japanese affinity toward South Korea (Figure 1) reported positive affinity in the first decade of the century but a decline in the next decade.² In 2011, 63% of Japanese surveyed held affinity for South Korea; the following year, that number dropped to 39%. One possible explanation for the drop is South Korean President Lee Myung-bak's visit to the disputed Dokdo/Takeshima Island, which caused anger in Japan toward South Korea.³ After this visit, Japanese affinity toward South Korea never returned to the levels before President Lee's visit to Dokdo/Takeshima Island, though new sources of disagreement beyond the island visit have also emerged to sustain this pattern since.

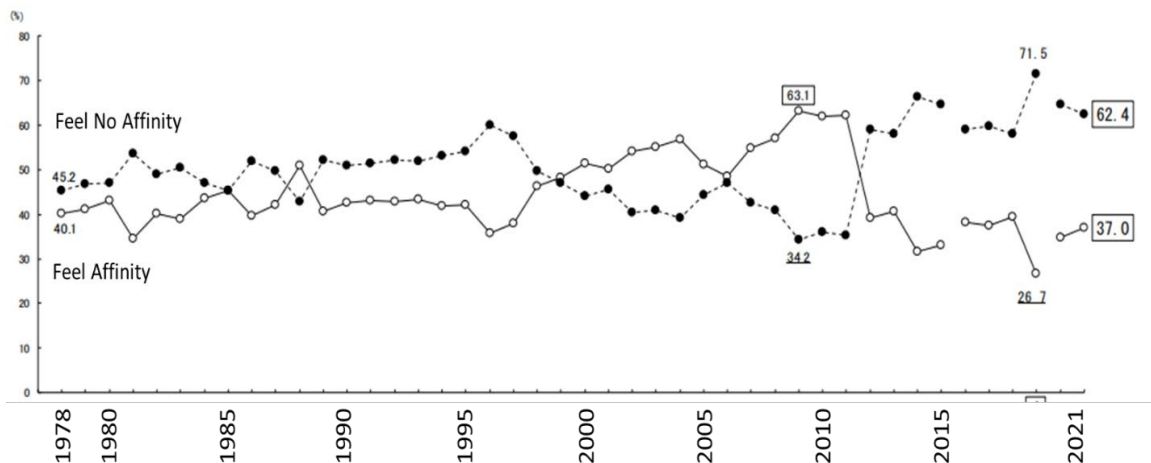


Figure 1. Japanese Affinity toward the Republic of Korea Survey⁴

¹ Justin McCurry, "South Korean Boycott of Japanese Goods Hits Beer and Carmakers," *The Guardian*, September 4, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/sep/04/south-korea-boycott-japanese-goods-beer-car-sales>.

² Government of Japan, 外交に関する世論調査 [Public Opinion Polls on Diplomacy] (Tokyo: Government of Japan, 2021). <https://survey.gov-online.go.jp/index-gai.html>.

³ "South Korea's Lee Myung-bak Visits Disputed Islands," BBC, August 10, 2012, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-19204852>.

⁴ Adapted from Government of Japan, 外交に関する世論調査.

However, South Koreans consistently held negative opinions toward Japan impressions of Japan, according to a survey done jointly by GENRON NPO, a Japanese think tank, and East Asia Institute (EAI), a South Korean Non-Governmental Organization (Figure 2).⁵ The same survey found in 2019 that 32% of South Koreans surveyed had a favorable opinion toward Japan—a low number, but the highest since the survey started in 2013. In 2020, that number had dropped to 12%, the lowest in the survey’s history, though it rebounded to 20% in 2021. The drastic fall is attributed to the Japan-South Korea trade dispute, which led to a boycott of Japanese products.⁶ Both examples show how attitudes toward the other can change due to shifting politics.

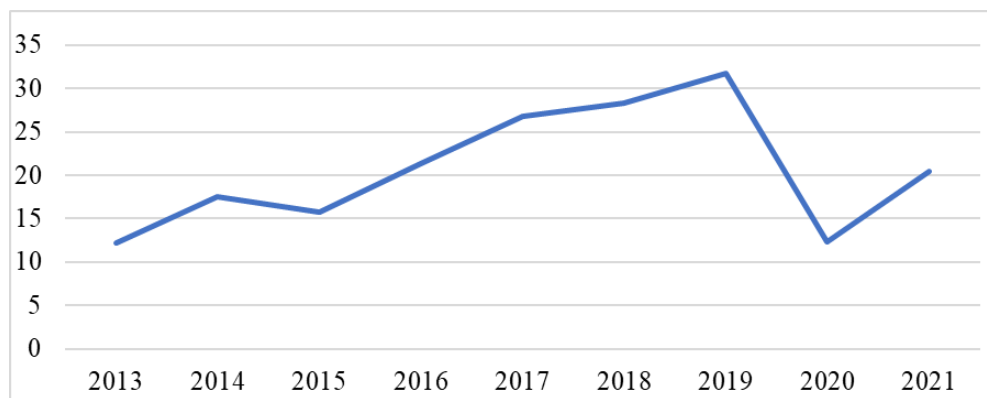


Figure 2. Percentage of Favorable Perception of Japan by South Koreans⁷

Both countries try to expand their soft power by promoting their respective cultures; they also have many domestic consumers of the other’s culture. While ample research exists on Japanese and South Korean cultural consumption as a potential source of soft power, it rarely examines the effect of cultural consumption *inside* Japan and South Korea, perhaps disregarding that Japanese and South Koreans consume as much of each other’s cultural

⁵ Yasushi Kudo, “What Signs are There that the Relationship Between Japan and South Korea Will Improve? Public Sentiment Less Acrimonious, but Still Chilly,” Genron NPO, November 30, 2021, https://www.genron-npo.net/en/opinion_polls/archives/5589.html.

⁶ McCurry, “South Korean Boycott of Japanese Goods Hits Beer and Carmakers.”

⁷ East Asia Institute and Genron NPO. *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll* (Seoul and Tokyo: East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, 2021), 13, http://eai.or.kr/new/en/project/view.asp?code=54&intSeq=20810&board=eng_event&keyword_option=&keyword=&more=.

products as they actually do. Oh and Lee, who analyzed Japanese consumption of Korean popular culture, argue that culture consumption does improve relations between both states.⁸ If this cultural consumption effectively creates soft power (as Nye puts it, “making others do what you want without threats and coercion”),⁹ then culturally driven soft power is working to improve the relationship—or, in other words, making it less fraught than it would otherwise be, all else equal. However, given that we observe negative attitudes from each country toward the other, it may be that popular culture consumption is not, in fact, a source of soft power for either country, even in an “all else equal” sense, let alone as a factor that outweighs others in the Japan-South Korea relationship. This both challenges more optimistic expectations on analysts’ part and suggests that those seeking to improve bilateral relationships need to look toward other methods. Since both countries have governmental policies of promoting and exporting popular culture, determining if popular culture consumption is a viable source of soft power in the Japan-South Korea relationship also essentially becomes an assessment of whether government culture-promotion policy has been appropriate for or effective at improving the relationship.

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review focuses on six different topics related to the effects of Japanese and South Korean cultural soft power on public opinion toward the other country. It examines the literature on soft power, the cultural soft power of Japan and Korea in general, the consumption of Japanese and South Korean culture in each other’s countries in particular, and those who are optimistic that it will improve attitudes between both countries.

1. Soft Power

Soft power comes in three main forms: culture, political values, and foreign policies.¹⁰ Culture is comprised of values and practices that create society. Culture can be consumed

⁸ Ingyu Oh and Choong-Mook Lee, “A League of Their Own: Female Supporters of Hallyu and Korea-Japan Relations,” *Pacific Focus* 29, no. 2 (August 2014): 284–302. <https://www.doi.org/10.1111/pafo.12026>.

⁹ Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 11.

¹⁰ Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 11.

through commerce, literature, art, music, movies, and education. However, it can also be exchanged through personal contact, visits, and exchanges. Nye argues that soft power is not simply popular cultural power.¹¹ Nye states those who believe that it is just a popular cultural power “make the mistake of equating soft power behavior with the cultural resources that sometimes help produce it. They confuse the cultural resources with the behavior of attraction.”¹²

A government can undercut the effectiveness of soft power through its political values or foreign policy.¹³ For example, Japanese prime ministers’ visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, where war criminals are buried, often provokes emotions in China and South Korea that undermine the soft power Japan has cultivated in the region.¹⁴ Sometimes non-state actors within the state, too, can undercut the state’s soft power. For example, a fundamentalist Christian group that describes Islam as evil may undercut relations between its own country and Islamic countries.¹⁵

¹¹ Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 11.

¹² However, Nye states that some skeptics disregard soft power as something other than “true” power because they view power in terms of commands and active control. These skeptics hold that soft power might create the appearance of attraction to a country – but merely that, and not power. Meanwhile, some argue that soft power may change the opinions of the public, but it is policymakers who, in the end, make the decisions; and so, if soft power does not lead policymakers to be attracted to a given country, then the soft power has failed (or never existed). Realist theorists in international relations argue that soft power is not true power because they believe that the state is the sole actor. They hold that while international institutions, businesses, and non-governmental organizations have global reach, their effect on international relations is minimal. It is the state that makes decisions on international policy. Since soft power is an idea and not an actor, soft power is not easily reconciled in realist assumptions of international relations. Soft power tends to fit better with liberal and constructivist theories of international relations, given those schools’ belief that there are also other sources of power besides the state in the international order. However, soft power can also derive from material sources of power, which do not fit in perfectly with liberal and constructivist theories. (Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 17; Christopher Layne, “The Unbearable Lightness of Soft Power,” in *Soft Power and U.S. Foreign Policy*, ed. Inderjeet Parmar and Michael Cox (New York: Routledge, 2010), 56; Craig Hayden, “The Rhetoric of Soft Power Public Diplomacy” in *Global Context* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2011), 28. ProQuest.

¹³ Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 13.

¹⁴ Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 86–87; Koichi Iwabuchi, “Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of ‘International Cultural Exchange,’” *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 21, no. 4 (February 2015): 425. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2015.1042469>.

¹⁵ Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 14.

Although a government (or non-state actor) may pursue a policy that undermines its soft power in another state, this does not necessarily eliminate the existence of that soft power. It may instead lead people to distinguish between culture and policies. After the U.S. invasion of Iraq, many people worldwide disliked the growing overall influence of the U.S. on their country but still admired the U.S. for its technology, music, movies, and television.¹⁶

For some (to continue with the American example), this separation between liking U.S. products, on the one hand, and disliking U.S. policies and influence on one's country, on the other, reflects the degree to which U.S. products have become ingrained in foreign societies.¹⁷ Bohas argues that there were no anti-American boycotts during the invasion of Iraq in 2003 because American companies such as McDonald's and Coca-Cola are so ingrained in the society of other states that they are essentially sheltered from anti-American boycotts. Thus, cultural consumption does not automatically create soft power.¹⁸ Soft power, again, would imply others' becoming attracted to the state whose culture they are consuming (with "attraction," again, defined as bringing others to your side without using fear or coercion).¹⁹ If this attraction stops at only the culture, then cultural consumption has not produced soft power.

The literature also demonstrates that "soft power can generate unintended outcomes and repulsion rather than attraction."²⁰ Just because one country's culture or values create effective soft power in one state, that does not imply it will be effective in all others. For example, a Hollywood movie showing women to be "liberated" and scantily clad may be popular in more liberal countries but shunned in conservative countries. Similar variation can be seen across generations within the same state. For example, attraction to American culture

¹⁶ Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 14.

¹⁷ Alexandre Bohas, "The Paradox of Anti-Americanism: Reflection on the Shallow Concept of Soft Power," *Global Society: Journal of Interdisciplinary International Relations* 20, no 4 (December 2006): 399–401. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13600820600929721>.

¹⁸ Bohas, "The Paradox of Anti-Americanism: Reflection on the Shallow Concept of Soft Power," 399–401.

¹⁹ Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, X.

²⁰ Yee-Kuang Heng "Beyond "Kawaii" Pop Culture: Japan's Normative Soft Power as Global Trouble-Shooter," *Pacific Review* 27 no 2, (February, 2014): 170. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09512748.2014.882391>.

may be more attractive to the younger generation but rejected by the older generation, thus canceling each other out in terms of soft power creation.²¹

2. Japanese Soft Power

The literature finds that between the late 1980s and the mid-2000s, Japan was the Asian country with the most significant soft power.²² However, many point out that Japan's soft power has been limited in China and Korea because Japan has never fully come to terms with its aggression in the first half of the 20th century.²³

Japan's soft power reflected its superior economic influence and mass media development. Japan's economically driven soft power included not only pure trade-driven elements, but also public and economic diplomacy. Japan used its public diplomacy to help promote solutions to global issues; its main pillar was official development assistance: Japan has been the fourth largest donor country in the world and the largest in Asia.²⁴ Japan also promotes regional security in East Asia and spreads its postwar economic model to developing nations worldwide. Japan also raises its profile through efforts to combat climate change—for example, using its technology to help create greener cities.²⁵

Besides public diplomacy, Japan has vast cultural soft power. Iwabuchi describes Japanese cultural soft power as driven by traditional culture, language education, intellectual exchange, people-to-people exchange programs, food, and popular culture, including

²¹ Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 13–15.

²² Koichi Iwabuchi, "Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of 'International Cultural Exchange,'" *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 21, no. 4 (February 2015): 425 – 422; <https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2015.1042469>. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 86–87.

²³ Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 86–87; Iwabuchi, "Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the question of 'International Cultural Exchange,'" 425.

²⁴ Nissim Otmazgin, "An 'East Asian' Public Diplomacy? Lessons from Japan, South Korea, and China," *Asian Perspective* 45, no. 3 (Summer 2021): 629. <https://doi.org/10.1353/apr.2021.0029>.

²⁵ Heng, "Beyond 'Kawaii' Pop Culture: Japan's Normative Soft Power as Global Trouble-Shooter," 169–192.

television shows and movies, and music.²⁶ It also includes Japanese technological innovations.²⁷

Japan's cultural exports partly reflect the Japanese government's attempts to rehabilitate its image in Asia without having to directly address its historical issues and give Japan a more friendly face, behind that provided by its already-established industrial soft power sources (for example, automobiles, electronics, and animation).²⁸ Other literature states that Japan pursued using culture as a way to create soft power to overcome other power deficiencies: lack of an offensive military and economic stagnation.²⁹ In the mid-2000s, the government of Japan saw South Korea's success in promoting Korean culture and formalized its campaign, "Cool Japan," to promote Japanese culture worldwide.³⁰

The Japanese government's campaign did not see the same levels of success that the South Korean government was experiencing, perhaps due to the Japanese government's not creating clear goals it wanted the campaign to accomplish.³¹ The lack of goals led to different approaches between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI). MOFA focused on nation branding, which sought to enhance Japan's cultural standing in the world, while METI focused on market promotion of Japanese

²⁶ Iwabuchi, "Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of 'International Cultural Exchange,'" 420.

²⁷ Kripendra Amatya, "Japan the Titan of Soft Power," *Modern Diplomacy*, October 31, 2020. <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2020/10/31/japan-the-titan-of-soft-power/>.

²⁸ Iwabuchi, "Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of 'International Cultural Exchange,'" 421.

²⁹ Heng, "Beyond 'Kawaii' Pop Culture: Japan's Normative Soft Power as Global Trouble-Shooter," 171.

³⁰ In 2001, the South Korean government established the Korea Creative Content Agency (KCCA) with the purpose of promoting the Korean media industry abroad. The KCCA promoted the media industry by holding international fairs to introduce Korean media to possible buyers, hosting K-Pop concerts globally, assisting in global branding of Korean products and opening Korean cultural centers around the globe.

³¹ Iwabuchi, "Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the question of 'International Cultural Exchange,'" 423–424.

content.³² The “Cool Japan” campaign continues to this day; however, there are increasing calls to change the way Japan promotes its culture.³³

Meanwhile, the Japanese government undercuts the gains that soft power achieves in East Asia when Japanese leaders visit Yasukuni Shrine, promote textbooks that whitewash events that occurred under Japanese colonial rule, or otherwise contribute to historically rooted tensions. While Japan has success with its soft power globally, its soft power in East Asia has been limited due to historical differences, allowing poor opinions of Japan to persist.³⁴ Many individuals in Japan’s own cultural and academic spheres have viewed the government’s plan with suspicion for another reason: their belief that the government’s meddling in culture would ultimately blunt dynamism in cultural production to the point that it would become ineffective.³⁵ This concern is that government interference will ultimately slow down the ability for the industry to respond to new trends and challenges.³⁶ In any case, Iwabuchi speculates that one-way cultural projection may lead to increased popular culture consumption in Asia but not develop into anything more significant.³⁷

3. Attitudes of South Koreans Who Consume Japanese Culture

Japanese cultural imports have only been legal in South Korea for the past twenty years. The government of South Korea banned the import of almost all Japanese popular culture exports from the end of World War II to the early 2000s to allow Korean culture to

³² Iwabuchi, “Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of ‘International Cultural Exchange,’” 423–424.

³³ Koya Jibiki, “Japan may change cultural strategy, learning from Indonesia’s JKT48,” *Nikkei Asia*, August 27, 2022, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Comment/Japan-may-change-cultural-strategy-learning-from-Indonesia-s-JKT48>

³⁴ Iwabuchi, “Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of ‘International Cultural Exchange,’” 423–424.

³⁵ Stephanie Christine Winkler. “‘Soft Power is Such a Benign Animal’: Narrative Power and the Reification of Concepts in Japan,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 32, no. 4 (June 2019): 491, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09557571.2019.1623171>.

³⁶ Nissim Otmazgin, “State Intervention Does Not Support the Development of the Media Sector: Lessons from Korea and Japan,” *Global Policy* 11, supplement 2 (June 2020): 45, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.12821>.

³⁷ Iwabuchi, “Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of ‘International Cultural Exchange,’” 425.

grow and to remove Japanese cultural residue from the colonial period.³⁸ This ban covered movies, popular music, and almost all comic books, television shows and cartoons. However, Japanese classical music, folk art and some children's programming and documentary films were allowed during the ban.³⁹ Although Japanese animation (anime) did appear on South Korean television during the ban, it was scrubbed by Korean television networks to remove all mention of Japan or Japanese culture: names of the writers and actors were changed to make it appear that the anime were made in South Korea or Europe and the United States. This content scrubbing made many Korean viewers unaware that they were consuming Japanese culture.⁴⁰ Once South Korea dropped its ban on Japanese media starting in 1996, the number of consumers of Japanese culture in South Korea was quite large, but as South Korean culture has rapidly grown more developed, it has also displaced Japanese culture consumption within South Korea.⁴¹

But while Japan exports many cultural products to South Korea, their Japanese origin often remains obscured – even now, after the legal ban on their consumption has been lifted.⁴² Japan successfully sells television shows scripts to Korean television studios, which translate the script into Korean, change the setting to Korea, and cast South Korean actors. In the 1990s and 2000s, many Korean production studios began to copy Japanese production styles. Since South Korean viewers were watching content in Korean with Korean actors, they largely

³⁸ Dong-ho Lee, "Cultural Contact with Japanese TV Dramas: Modes of Reception and Narrative Transparency" in *Feeling Asian Modernities: Transnational Consumption of Japanese TV Dramas*, ed. Koichi Iwabuchi (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2004): 251–252. ProQuest.

³⁹ Kevin Sullivan, "S. Korea Loosens Strictures on Japanese Culture," *The Washington Post*, July 7, 1996. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1996/07/07/s-korea-loosens-strictures-on-japanese-culture/03fe68d0-91a7-4c37-9b4d-0d8b01c2e55a/>.

⁴⁰ Suen Noh Kelsey, "I Hate You, No I Love You: Growing Up with Japanese Media in (Postcolonial) South Korea," in *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Media*, ed. Fabienne Darling-Wolf (London: Routledge, 2018): 375–386. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315689036>.

⁴¹ Iwabuchi, "Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of 'International Cultural Exchange,'" 426–427.

⁴² This obscurity is a general phenomenon and happens to other foreign cultural material also. U.S. productions studios also sell scripts for television shows and movies to Korean studios. (Gabriela Silva, "5 Best Korean Remakes of American Movies/TV (& 5 Vice Versa)" ScreenRant, February 28, 2021. <https://screenrant.com/korean-american-best-movie-tv-remakes/>.)

remained unaware of the Japanese influence behind the programming.⁴³ Unlike with anime, manga, and — to a lesser extent — video games, everyday consumers might not catch that the South Korean show they are watching is a remake of a Japanese television show. A final example of hidden Japanese origin is the Japanese discount chain Daiso. Daiso is abundant in South Korea and Taiwan; however, it uses different marketing strategies in these two countries. In Taiwan, Daiso overtly advertises that it is Japanese in a bid to attract customers; in South Korea, its marketing strategy does not mention its national origins.⁴⁴

Korean nationalists have also attempted to undercut the popularity of Japanese cultural products. During the Japanese product boycott in 2019, South Korean boycott activists monitored who went in and out of Japan-based Uniqlo's clothing stores in South Korea to make South Korean consumers feel guilty about purchasing Japanese products.⁴⁵ Another example involves the film *Demon Slayer*, which was quite popular in South Korea: Daum, South Korea's second-largest portal site and one frequented by pro-government and nationalistic users, gave the film 5.9 stars out of 10.⁴⁶ Many of the users who gave one star also provided comments that criticized Japan and did not mention the film (though this can be contrasted with the film's treatment on Naver, South Korea's largest and a more politically neutral portal site, where the film received a rating above 9 stars).⁴⁷

⁴³ Lee, "Cultural Contact with Japanese TV Dramas: Modes of Reception and Narrative Transparency," 251–274.

⁴⁴ Tom Coyner, "A Tale of Two Ex-Colonies: Korea and Taiwan," *Asia Times*, March 16, 2020, <https://asiatimes.com/2020/03/a-tale-of-two-colonies-korea-and-taiwan/>.

⁴⁵ Sotaro Suzuki, "Boycott Japan: How Young South Koreans Keep the Anger Alive," *Nikkei Asia*, October 28, 2019, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Comment/Boycott-Japan-How-young-South-Koreans-keep-the-anger-alive>.

⁴⁶ Seoho Lee, "Despite Political Tensions, Japan's 'Demon Slayer' Top South Korean Book Market and Box Office," *The Diplomat*, May 1, 2021. <https://thediplomat.com/2021/05/despite-political-tensions-japans-demon-slayer-tops-south-korean-book-market-and-box-office/>.

⁴⁷ Lee, "Despite Political Tensions, Japan's 'Demon Slayer' Top South Korean Book Market and Box Office."

4. South Korean Soft Power

South Korean cultural exports began to grow in popularity in the 2000s.⁴⁸ Like Japanese popular culture, Korean popular culture includes not only movies, dramas, and music but also online games, animation, food, fashion—even medicine, and plastic surgery.⁴⁹ Some attribute the popularity of Korean culture (especially within East and Southeast Asia) to its display of Confucian values such as harmony in the community, respect for elders, and loyalty to family and friends.⁵⁰ Others argue that Korean popular culture displays Western values: a highly modernized lifestyle embracing wealth and democracy.⁵¹ Still, others point to a combination of Asian and Western values.⁵² A simple market logic might also be at work: while some argue that Korean popular culture is a successful counter-reaction to Western globalization, others hold that Korean culture penetrates and dominates less developed regions in Southeast Asia, due to these states' growing consumer demand for cultural content absent domestic competitors able to compete with the quality of foreign production.⁵³

South Korea is considered a middle power in East Asia because it cannot compete directly with Japan or China in hard power. However, unable to rely on hard power tactics,

⁴⁸ Woongjae Ryoo, "Globalization, or the Logic of Cultural Hybridization: The Case of the Korean Wave," *Asian Journal of Communication* 19, no. 2 (June 2009): 139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01292980902826427>

⁴⁹ Hwa Kyung Kim, Andrew Eungi Kim and Daniel Connolly, "Catching Up to Hallyu? The Japanese and Chinese Response to South Korean Soft Power," *Korea Observer* 47, no 3 (Autumn, 2016): 530. ProQuest; Bongchul Kim and Kristina Vasileva, "Popular Culture as an Important Element in Creating a National Image of Korea," *Advanced Science Letters* 23, no. 10 (October 2017): 9867. <https://doi.org/10.1166/asl.2017.9813>.

⁵⁰ Ryoo, "Globalization, or the Logic of Cultural Hybridization: The Case of the Korean Wave," 140; Hyun-key Kim Hogarth, "The Korean Wave: An Asian Reaction to Western-Dominated Globalization," *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology* 12, no. 1–2 (January 2013): 135. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15691497-12341247>; Kim, Kim and Connolly, "Catching Up to Hallyu?" 531.

⁵¹ Kim, Kim and Connolly, "Catching Up to Hallyu?" 531.

⁵² Hyeri Jung, "Agenda-Setting in the Realm of Popular Culture: The Case of the Korean Wave in East Asia," *Global Media and Communication* 15, no 3 (September 2019) 363. <https://doi-org.libproxy.nps.edu/10.1177/1742766519872782>.

⁵³ Kim, Kim and Connolly, "Catching Up to Hallyu?" 531.

Korea has turned to soft power to gain a foothold in the global community.⁵⁴ The South Korean government aims to use its cultural industry to enhance its soft power and create sources of revenue, export products, unite people, and create regional relationships via popular culture.⁵⁵ While Korea has used mega-events to help its soft power, such as joint-hosting the World Cup in 2002 or the Winter Olympics in 2018, South Korea is hoping that its popular culture will establish long-term influence over other states.⁵⁶ Compared to Japan, which has no clear strategy on promoting its popular culture, South Korea has established a government office with the sole purpose of promoting its popular culture. While conducting official business, the Korean government has used Korean popular culture to help advance its own agenda. It has used actors and actresses in diplomatic events and meetings to help further its soft power influence.⁵⁷ Similarly, sometimes it is the diplomatic arm promoting Korean popular culture rather than the reverse, such when the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced a 2012 concert in Canada “as part of diplomatic efforts to further spread Hallyu, the popularity of the K-popular culture.”⁵⁸ Of course, much of the global spread of Korean popular culture can be attributed to private efforts, too, on top of government campaigns.⁵⁹ Localized companies in foreign states have a significant role in spreading Korean popular culture, perhaps even more so than the government (or the internet as an emerging cultural infrastructure).⁶⁰

⁵⁴ Sook Jong Lee, “South Korean Soft Power and How South Korea Views the Soft Power of Others,” in *Public Diplomacy and Soft Power In East Asia*, ed. Sook Jang Lee and Jan Melissen (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) 140; Beng Huat Chua, *Structure, Audience and Soft Power in East Asian Pop Culture* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press 2012) 128. <https://doi.org/10.5790/hongkong/9789888139033.001.0001>

⁵⁵ Jung, “Agenda-Setting in the Realm of Popular Culture: The Case of the Korean Wave in East Asia,” 364; Kim, Kim and Connolly, “Catching Up to Hallyu?” 528. Kim, Kim and Connolly argue that the South Korean government’s aggressive approach to promoting Korean pop culture has encouraged Japan and China to do the same. This aggressive promotion of culture could lead to a policy of cultural protectionism

⁵⁶ Kim, Kim and Connolly, “Catching Up to Hallyu?” 534.

⁵⁷ Kim, Kim and Connolly, “Catching Up to Hallyu?” 534–535.

⁵⁸ Kim, Kim and Connolly, “Catching Up to Hallyu?” 534–535.

⁵⁹ Kim, Kim and Connolly, “Catching Up to Hallyu?” 533.

⁶⁰ Kim, Kim and Connolly, “Catching Up to Hallyu?” 532.

5. Attitudes of Japanese Who Consume South Korean Culture

Ryoo states that the Korean Wave in Japan (2003-present) has done more politically for Korean-Japanese relations than co-hosting the FIFA World Cup. He argues that this is because the Korean Wave has changed perceptions of South Korea by showcasing it as a trendy and technologically savvy country and producing a passion for all things Korean.⁶¹ Lie similarly observes Japanese impressions of South Korea changing through interaction with Korean popular culture. Before the Korean Wave in Japan, he writes, Japanese women would describe South Korea as poor and a sex tourism destination for their husbands and male counterparts. However, as more Korean dramas appeared on Japanese television, their emphasis shifted to Korea's natural beauty and sophisticated culture.⁶²

The growing influence of Korean culture in Japan has also been accompanied by backlash, though. Most scholarly literature on Japanese consumption of Korean culture points out the emergence of *Manga Kenkanryū* (Anti-Korean Wave Manga), a manga that denounces Korean culture and emphasizes anti-Japanese sentiment in Korea. While sales of this manga may not be significant, it did create large anti-Korean movements in Japan.⁶³ In 2011 anti-Korean hate groups demonstrated against Japanese broadcaster Fuji T.V., demanding that Fuji not broadcast Korean dramas or programs that positively depict Korea or the Korean Wave. In 2012, this protest and others essentially put an unofficial "freeze" on Korean Wave content in the Japanese mass broadcasting media to avoid the wrath of anti-Korean protests.⁶⁴ Korean broadcasts in Japan have not returned to pre-2012 levels. The

⁶¹ Ryoo, "Globalization, or the Logic of Cultural Hybridization: the Case of the Korean Wave," 140.

⁶² John Lie, "Why Didn't 'Gangnam Style' Go Viral in Japan?: Gender Divide and Subcultural Heterogeneity," *Cross-Currents* 3, no. 1 (May 2014): 9. <https://doi.org/10.1353/ach.2014.0005>. Lie describes a Japanese woman's opinion on her travels to South Korea. When she visited South Korea in the 1990s on a guided tour, she stated that her memory of South Korea involved pushy vendors and rude pedestrians. However, when she travelled a decade later, after viewing the South Korean film *Irumare*, she stated that she had a different vision of the country. Instead of finding poverty and rude behavior, she found romance and elegance.

⁶³ Chua, *Structure, Audience and Soft Power in East Asian Pop Culture*, 134; Ahn and Yoon, "Between Love and Hate: The New Korean Wave, Japanese Female Fans, and Anti-Korean Sentiment in Japan," 179–196.

⁶⁴ Ahn and Yoon, "Between Love and Hate," 192

freeze on Korean content on broadcast television has pushed culture consumption to the internet, where it favors a younger and more technological savvy generation.⁶⁵

6. Increased Culture Consumption Will Lead to an Improved South Korean–Japan Relationship

Many infer that the growing culture consumption between both countries will lead to an improvement in attitudes between both countries.⁶⁶ These articles use evidence of Japanese consumption – such as Korean dramas or K-pop or South Korean consumption of anime and travel to Japan – to infer that consumption of these activities will lead to improved relations between Japan and South Korea.⁶⁷

However, others point out the limits of cultural consumption and its ability to improve the relationship between Japan and South Korea. Green states that “the people who consume Korean popular culture do not really care about diplomacy nor Japan-South Korean relations.”⁶⁸ Gibson adds that Japanese younger people (those who are the primary consumers of South Korean popular culture) are less politically engaged than older

⁶⁵ Ahn and Yoon, “Between Love and Hate,” 192

⁶⁶ Jason Bartlett, “Domestic and Global Political Impact of K-Pop: BoA, BTS, and Beyond,” *The Diplomat*, June 28, 2022, <https://thediplomat.com/2022/06/domestic-and-global-political-impacts-of-k-pop-bo-a-bts-and-beyond/>; Brandon Valeriano and Aleydis Nissen, “This Is South Korea’s K-pop Soft Power Moment,” *The Diplomat*, February 16, 2022, <https://thediplomat.com/2022/02/this-is-south-koreas-k-pop-soft-power-moment/>; Ryoo, “Globalization, or the Logic of Cultural Hybridization: the Case of the Korean Wave,” 140.

⁶⁷ Kim Eun-young, Lee Kyoung Mi and Hahm Hee-eun, “‘Third Korean Wave’ Becomes Part Of Everyday Japanese Life,” Korea.net, May 18, 2018, <https://www.korea.net/NewsFocus/Society/view?articleId=159139>; Eugene Lang, Chuni Kim and Sei Matsumoto, “K-pop and Job Pressures Connect Students in Japan and South Korea,” *Nikkei Asia*, December 14, 2019, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Education/K-pop-and-job-p pressures-connect-students-in-japan-and-south-korea>; Lee, “Despite Political Tensions, Japan’s ‘Demon Slayer’ Top South Korean Book Market and Box Office;” Takuya Suzuki, “S. Koreans enjoy Japanese culture as bilateral ties remain strained,” *The Ashai Simbun*, April 4, 2022, <https://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/14568852>.

⁶⁸ Terrence Matsuo, “The Korea Wave and the Japanese Wall: The Limits of Korean Soft Power,” Korea Economic Institute, February 2, 2022, <https://keia.org/the-peninsula/the-korea-wave-and-the-japanese-wall-the-limits-of-korean-soft-power/>.

generations.⁶⁹ Glosserman argues that there are more significant issues between both countries that cultural goodwill will not fix.⁷⁰

D. RESEARCH DESIGN

The primary means to determine if culture consumption impacts attitudes will be to directly compare data on each, supplemented by secondary-source research on this data. Although there is no expectation of an exact match between changes in cultural consumption and changes in attitudes in each country, the thesis attempts to discern rough trends over time, and to distinguish the effects of cultural consumption from those of political developments between the two nations.

To establish working definitions of key concepts:

- The term “popular culture” is defined in this thesis as movies, television programming, music, books, comics, video games (including consoles), fashion, travel, and food.
- The term “attitudes” is operationalized in this proposal in terms of reported affinities in government or research-institute surveys.
- The term “salience” is the degree to which consumers associate a cultural item with country X in the first place.

The primary survey data used when analyzing Japanese attitudes will be the Japanese government survey on International Relations, with the EAI/GENRON NPO surveys as secondary. The trends for both surveys are similar; however, the Japanese government survey has been conducted for longer (since 1977 vs. 2013); since 2000 it also shows data by age group and gender, which is not apparent with the EAI/GENRON NPO surveys. The primary survey data that will be used when analyzing South Korean attitudes is the EAI/GENRON NPO surveys. These survey data are the only continuous data available in English.

⁶⁹ Matsuo, “The Korea Wave and the Japanese Wall: The Limits of Korean Soft Power.”

⁷⁰ Brad Glosserman, “The Limits of Soft Power in Japan-South Korea Relations,” in *The Case for South Korean Soft Power*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, December 15, 2020, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/12/15/limits-of-soft-power-in-japan-south-korea-relations-pub-83412>.

II. SOUTH KOREA

A. INTRODUCTION

Many casual observers assume that there is no Japanese popular culture consumption in South Korea due to historical grievances toward Japan, the emergence of the Korean Wave, and a lack of English literature covering the subject.⁷¹ Consumption numbers, however, do show a significant amount of Japanese culture consumption happening in South Korea; at the same time, those who identify themselves as Japanese culture consumers are a small minority.⁷² Meanwhile, two-thirds of South Koreans who identify as Japanese popular culture consumers state that their culture consumption does give them a positive image of Japan.⁷³

In short, despite Japanese cultural consumption in South Korea, it is not a significant driver of Korean attitudes toward Japan. According to GENRON NPO/EAI, the primary reason for negative attitudes toward Japan from 2013 to 2021 was historical grievances, followed by the Dokdo Island dispute. In the 2021 survey, only about 20% of respondents stated that Japanese popular culture influenced their opinion, demonstrating that while Japanese popular culture does provide a positive image of Japan, other factors are more significant.

1. Japanese Imports Historically Banned

Readily identifiable Japanese cultural imports have only been legal in South Korea for twenty-five years. The government of South Korea banned the import of almost all Japanese popular culture exports from the end of World War II to 1996 to allow Korean

⁷¹ Majority of articles tend to focus on Japanese consumption of South Korean culture and do not explore South Korean consumption of Japanese culture. Matsuo, “The Korea Wave and the Japanese Wall: The Limits of Korean Soft Power;” Glosserman, “The Limits of Soft Power in Japan-South Korea Relations;” Yoon Min-sik, “[Anniversary Special] 21 Years After ‘Japanese Invasion,’ Korean Pop Culture Stronger than Ever,” *The Korea Herald*, August 14, 2019, <https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190814000566#:~:text=in%20the%20country,-.Since%20South%20Korea%20opened%20its%20gates%20to%20Japanese%20pop%20culture,to%20Japan%20than%20vice%20versa>.

⁷² East Asia Institute and Genron NPO *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 60.

⁷³ East Asia Institute and Genron NPO *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 61.

culture to grow and to remove Japanese cultural residue from the colonial period.⁷⁴ During this time, those who wanted to consume Japanese popular culture had to buy these products from the black market or travel to Japan to bring popular culture to South Korea. Once South Korea dropped its ban on Japanese media in 1996, the number of consumers of Japanese culture in South Korea grew quite large. As South Korean culture has rapidly developed, though, it has also displaced Japanese culture consumption within South Korea.⁷⁵

2. Boycotts of Japanese Goods

Since 2000, there have been four South Korean boycotts of Japanese goods. The first was in 2001, when 40 civic groups led a boycott in protest of revisions by Japan of its history textbooks and Japan's overall distortion of history.⁷⁶ It appears that this boycott in 2001 had little success. The next was in 2005, when citizen groups called for a boycott of Japan, in response to a Japanese prefecture creation of "Takeshima Day" to reiterate the Japanese claim to the South Korean-controlled Dokdo Islands.⁷⁷ Despite a Honda dealership in South Korea being set on fire, the boycott soon fizzled out without much success.⁷⁸ The subsequent boycott was in 2013, which, like 2005's, was motivated by Japan's continuous claim on Dokdo. However, this boycott was more organized and considered to be the first nationwide version.⁷⁹ An association of South Korean grocers and corner shop owners initiated the boycott by refusing to sell Japanese goods and urged consumers to refrain from purchasing Japanese products. Despite its being a nationwide

⁷⁴ Lee, "Cultural Contact with Japanese TV Dramas: Modes of Reception and Narrative Transparency," 251–252.

⁷⁵ Iwabuchi, "Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of 'International Cultural Exchange,'" 426–427.

⁷⁶ Kim Da-sol, "[From the Scene] Rising #boycottJapan campaign faces mixed reactions," *The Korea Herald*, July 10, 2019, <https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190710000682>.

⁷⁷ Anthony Faiola, "Japanese Claim Touches Nerve in South Korea," *The Washington Post*, March 20, 2005, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2005/03/20/japanese-claim-touches-nerve-in-south-korea/125fca41-f4e5-4333-a4ed-4479574d6f63/>; Suzuki, "Boycott Japan: How young South Koreans keep the anger alive."

⁷⁸ Suzuki, "Boycott Japan: How Young South Koreans Keep the Anger Alive."

⁷⁹ Song Jung-a, "S Korean Grocers Threaten Japan Boycott," *Financial Times*, February 25, 2013, <https://www.ft.com/content/3a8e6114-7f31-11e2-89ed-00144feabdc0>.

boycott, the South Korean government was silent on its stance.⁸⁰ While it appeared that this boycott was better organized, it, like the 2005 boycott, had limited success and fizzled away.⁸¹

The most recent boycott from 2019 to 2020, was more successful than the other three, and the first in which the government played a role. The origins of this boycott date to October 2018, when the South Korean Supreme Court affirmed a previous lower court ruling that ordered Japanese companies to pay compensation for forced labor during WWII.⁸² On the day of the ruling, Japan's Foreign Minister stated that the Supreme Court's decision violated the agreement of 1965, which normalized diplomatic relations between both countries.

Japan and the Republic of Korea have built a close, friendly and cooperative relationship based on the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea and other relevant agreements that the two countries concluded when they normalized their relationship in 1965. The Agreement on the Settlement of Problems concerning Property and Claims and on Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea (hereinafter referred to as "the Agreement"), which is the core of these agreements, stipulates that Japan shall supply to the Republic of Korea 300 million USD in grants and extend loans up to 200 million USD (Article I), and that problems concerning property, rights and interests of the two Contracting Parties and their nationals (including juridical persons) as well as concerning claims between the Contracting Parties and their nationals are "settled completely and finally," and no contention shall be made thereof (Article II). As such, the Agreement has provided the basis for the bilateral relationship up until now.⁸³

In August 2019, Japan, angered over the South Korean government's unwillingness to intervene in the Supreme Court Ruling that shelved the 2015 Comfort Women Agreement – as well as over a radar incident involving both militaries – removed South

⁸⁰ Song, "S Korean Grocers Threaten Japan Boycott."

⁸¹ Suzuki, "Boycott Japan: How Young South Koreans Keep the Anger Alive."

⁸² "Timeline of Japan-South Korea Relations," Center for Strategic and International Studies, accessed August 3, 2022, <https://japankorea.csis.org/>.

⁸³ Taro Kono, "Regarding the Decision by the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea, Confirming the Existing Judgments on the Japanese Company," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, October 30, 2018, https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press4e_002204.html.

Korea from its trade “whitelist.” This removal from the whitelist affected South Korea’s companies’ ability to produce electronic products, since these require certain chemicals produced in Japan for semiconductors and displays.⁸⁴ If Japanese exporters wanted to continue to do business with Korean companies, they would have to apply for a permit to export to Korea.

After South Korea’s removal from the whitelist in 2019, South Korean President Moon stated, “What we take more gravely is the fact that the Japan’s measures intend to attack our economy and hamper our economy’s future growth.... As we have warned earlier, if (Japan) intentionally hits our economy, Japan must be prepared for greater damages,”⁸⁵ and “We will never lose to Japan again.”⁸⁶

While Moon’s statements did not mention a boycott of Japanese goods, his comments could be portrayed as a message calling the Korean public to act against Japan. A few days after his comments, Moon received pan-partisan support from the leaders of the five main political parties in Korea for curbs on Japanese exports.⁸⁷ This action demonstrated to the people of Korea that the government felt limiting the consumption of Japanese products was necessary. Regional governments across South Korea also decided to act. Many approved laws that boycotted purchasing supplies from Japan as long as South

⁸⁴ The Japanese government denied that these events had any bearing on South Korea’s removal from whitelist. Japan stated that it was due to national security concerns over South Korean exports of highly sensitive materials (Kathryn Botto, “Overcoming Obstacles to Trilateral U.S.-ROK-Japan Interoperability,” in *Korean Net Assessment 2020: Politicized Security and Unchanging Strategic Realities*, March 18, 2020, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/03/18/overcoming-obstacles-to-trilateral-u.s.-rok-japan-interoperability-pub-81236>). Shin Ji-hye, “[News Analysis] Why is Korea so Dependent on Japanese Materials?,” *The Korea Herald*, July 11, 2019, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190711000653>.

⁸⁵ Choi He-suk, “President Moon Warns of Retaliation, Urges Japan to Negotiate,” *The Korea Herald*, August 2, 2019, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190802000501>.

⁸⁶ Hiroshi Minegishi, “South Korea’s Moon Torn by ‘Split Personality’ When It Comes to Japan,” *Nikkei Asia*, August 25, 2019, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Comment/South-Korea-s-Moon-torn-by-split-personality-when-it-comes-to-Japan>.

⁸⁷ Lee Hana, “President Moon, 5 Party Chiefs Discuss Japan’s Export Curbs,” *Korea.net*, July 18, 2019, <https://www.korea.net/NewsFocus/policies/view?articleId=173093>.

Korea was blacklisted.⁸⁸ However, some critics in Korea stated that politicians proposing these bills were pandering to the public for support.⁸⁹

With the government pushing for a boycott of Japanese goods, the Korean population also rallied to support the boycott. While leaderless, the boycott of Japanese goods lasted longer than the previous two boycotts because people in their 30s used social media to spread awareness of the boycott.⁹⁰

In October 2019, when the boycott was fizzling out, and consumers were slowly returning to consuming Japanese products, Uniqlo (a Japanese fashion company) aired a commercial that rekindled the fire. In the commercial, which is in English, a 13-year-old girl asks a 98-year-old woman what she wore when she was her age. The women respond, “I cannot remember that far back.” However, in the Korean version, the subtitles read, “No way! How can I remember something from 80 years ago?”⁹¹ Eighty years ago was 1938, a time when Korea was a colony of Japan. Those who protested the commercial stated that Uniqlo was mocking comfort women.⁹² Although some Koreans found that argument farfetched, social media commentators amplified the argument that it was offensive, which reignited support for the boycott.⁹³

In a survey of Koreans in December 2020, 70% of those surveyed stated that they took part in one form or another in the Japanese boycott.⁹⁴ The most targeted Japanese brands were Uniqlo, Japanese beer brands Asahi, Sapporo, and Kirin, shoe store ABC

⁸⁸ “S. Korean Regional Gov’ts Boycott Japanese Products, Bilateral Exchanges,” KBS World, August 8, 2019, http://world.kbs.co.kr/service/news_view.htm?lang=e&Seq_Code=147196.

⁸⁹ “South Korea’s 2 Major Cities Pass Bill to Boycott ‘War Crime’ Firms,” Nikkei Asia, September 6, 2019, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Japan-South-Korea-rift/South-Korea-s-2-major-cities-pass-bill-to-boycott-war-crime-firms>.

⁹⁰ Suzuki, “Boycott Japan: How Young South Koreans Keep the Anger Alive.”

⁹¹ Suzuki, “Boycott Japan: How Young South Koreans Keep the Anger Alive.”

⁹² Suzuki, “Boycott Japan: How Young South Koreans Keep the Anger Alive.”

⁹³ Suzuki, “Boycott Japan: How Young South Koreans Keep the Anger Alive.”

⁹⁴ “Over 70 Pct of S. Koreans Joined Boycott of Japanese Goods: Survey,” Yonhap News Agency, December 22, 2020, <https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20201222007600315>.

Mart, and retailer Muji.⁹⁵ It appears that the brands targeted the most by those surveyed were ones that other brands could easily replace. In fact, on social media, commentators provided a list of Korean brands and stores that a consumer could use to replace the Japanese brands and stores.⁹⁶ Also, it appears that sales of Japanese beer and cigarettes declined due to retailers choosing to not sell the products, giving the consumer no choice but to look for an alternative.⁹⁷ However, businesses that were thought to be Japanese companies (such as 7/11) saw a decrease in business, as did Japanese restaurants and bakeries owned by Koreans.⁹⁸ Those who maintained their consumption of Japanese products took measures to conceal this for fear of being criticized for not participating in the boycott.⁹⁹ It does seem that the 2019–2020 boycott was more successful in disrupting sales of Japanese products in South Korea, but it also appears that it was unsuccessful in forcing Japan to make concessions. It appears that the boycott fizzled out in 2021, as some Japanese products began to enjoy increasing sales.¹⁰⁰

B. SOUTH KOREAN CONSUMPTION OF JAPANESE GOODS/CONTENT/ SERVICES

In 2021, a GENRON/EAI survey (Figure 3) included a question that asked South Korean survey participants if they enjoyed Japanese popular culture. Only 18% stated that they somewhat enjoyed it or enjoyed it a lot. Those who stated that they enjoy consuming

⁹⁵ Yonhap News Agency, “Over 70 Pct of S. Koreans Joined Boycott of Japanese Goods: Survey.”

⁹⁶ Yonhap News Agency, “Over 70 Pct of S. Koreans Joined Boycott of Japanese Goods: Survey.”

⁹⁷ Chun Su-Jin, “Changing the Anti-Japanese Frame,” *Korea JongAng Daily*, August 3, 2022, <https://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/2022/08/03/opinion/fountain/Korea-Japan-antiJapan-frame/20220803200047173.html>.

⁹⁸ Kelly Kasulis, “South Korea’s ‘No Japan’ Boycott is New. But the Wounds Are Old,” *The World*, August 12, 2019, <https://theworld.org/stories/2019-08-12/south-korea-s-no-japan-boycott-new-wounds-are-old>.

⁹⁹ Kim Ha-kyung and Choi Mira, “Sales of Japanese Cosmetics Brands in Korea Plunge Amid Consumer Boycott,” *Pulse by Maeil Business News Korea*, July 29, 2018, <https://pulsenews.co.kr/view.php?year=2019&no=577099>.

¹⁰⁰ It is too early to see if travel to Japan has returned to normal due to Japan only being limited open to travelers Chun, “Changing the anti-Japanese frame;” Jeong-cheol Bae, Hyung-kyu Kim and Yoo-chung Roh, “End of No-Japanese Boycott? Uniqlo Korea Turns to Black,” *The Korea Economic Daily*, December 5, 2021. <https://www.kedglobal.com/newsView/ked202112050001>; “South Korea Yearly Box Office,” *Box Office Mojo* by IMDB Pro, accessed May 7, 2022, <https://www.boxofficemojo.com/year/?area=KR>.

Japanese popular culture were relatively balanced by gender but tilted significantly toward the younger generation (20s and 30s).¹⁰¹ Over half replied that they are not interested in Japanese culture, and an additional quarter stated that they do not really enjoy it. This shows that those who identify as consumers of Japanese culture regularly are a small minority.

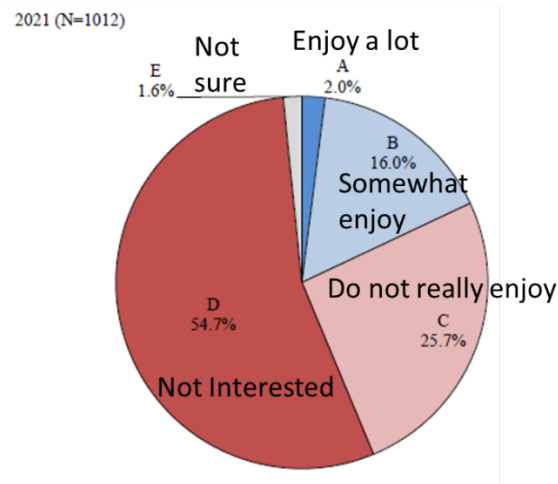


Figure 3. Does Japanese Popular Culture Bring Enjoyment?¹⁰²

Research on why individuals are not interested in Japanese popular culture is difficult to come by. While it could be assumed that historical and political disputes play a role between both countries, ease of access and the content in a foreign language could also be factors. Also, there could be forms of Japanese popular culture that are popular in South Korea that are not recognized as Japanese (except during a boycott). For example, Japan's Pokémon characters are quite popular in South Korea. In 2022, a Pokémon bread craze led individuals to wait outside stores for a chance to buy bread that contained a Pokémon

¹⁰¹ Yul Sohn, *Korea-Japan Relations in Crisis: People Want a Change* (Seoul, South Korea, East Asia Institute: 2020), 6, [http://www.eai.or.kr/avanplus/filedownload.asp?o_file=2020112714234519352552.pdf&uppath=/data/bbs/eng_reports/&u_file=\[EAIIssueBriefing\]Korea-JapanRelationsinCrisis_Peoplewantachange.pdf](http://www.eai.or.kr/avanplus/filedownload.asp?o_file=2020112714234519352552.pdf&uppath=/data/bbs/eng_reports/&u_file=[EAIIssueBriefing]Korea-JapanRelationsinCrisis_Peoplewantachange.pdf); East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 60.

¹⁰² Adapted from: East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 60.

sticker.¹⁰³ It is unclear whether individuals collecting Pokémon stickers would identify themselves as Japanese popular culture consumers.

Despite previous bans and boycotts, consumption of Japanese products is significant in South Korea. In 2020, South Korea imported \$42.9 billion of goods from Japan, making it the third largest importer of Japanese products.¹⁰⁴ However, although data is limited, South Korean consumption of Japanese popular culture that occurred immediately after the end of the ban of it (late 1990s - early 2000s) was higher than it is now.¹⁰⁵ This decline might be attributed to the recent growth of homegrown Korean cultural products.

This thesis analyzes Japanese products, content, and services that individual South Korean consumers consume to determine if they influence South Korean impressions of Japan. Services have been included alongside products and content and include travel to Japan and learning Japanese. Japanese cultural products, content, and services that South Koreans significantly consume thus include travel to Japan, movies, books, game consoles, Japanese restaurants, miscellaneous prepackaged food, and beer. Korean consumption of beauty products is modest, as is the consumption of designer brand clothing, Japanese music, television shows, Japanese language learning, and studying in Japan. Only comparatively few Koreans consume cars, food products, or manufactured goods.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Kim Dahee, "FEATURE: Pokemon Bread Sets Off Craze in South Korea, Fueled by Nostalgia," Kyodo, March 29, 2022, <https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2022/03/7f3df5bcd459-feature-pokemon-bread-sets-off-craze-in-s-korea-fueled-by-nostalgia.html>.

¹⁰⁴ "South Korea/Japan," Observatory of Economic Complexity, accessed May 1, 2022, <https://oec.world/en/profile/bilateral-country/kor/partner/jpn>.

¹⁰⁵ Iwabuchi, "Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of 'International Cultural Exchange,'" 426–427.

¹⁰⁶ Koreans do consume food products classified as miscellaneous edible preparations include sauces and preparations therefor, mixed condiments, mustard flour meal soups, broths, preparations therefor, homogenized composite food; extracts, essences, concentrates of coffee, tea, mate, roasted chicory; yeasts, other single-cell micro-organisms, prepared baking powders; ice cream, other edible ice. For manufactured goods ("Japan Exports of miscellaneous edible preparations to South Korea," Trading Economics, accessed May 16, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/japan/exports/south-korea/miscellaneous-edible-preparations>). Japan does not export many manufactured consumer goods to South Korea. This lack of export of manufactured goods has less to do with the Korean consumer refusing to purchase them and more to do with the Japanese economy not manufacturing them ("Japan Exports," Trading Economics, accessed August 8, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/japan/exports>).

C. PRODUCT/CULTURE/SERVICE SALIENCE ASSOCIATED WITH JAPAN

Although a substantial amount of Japanese products, content, and services are consumed, not everyone who consumes them recognizes them as Japanese. During the 2019 boycott, a Korean shopper quoted by the *Korea Herald* noted, “In the same way that I don’t really think of Korea when I buy a pair of Samsung headphones, I don’t really think of Japan when I buy Japanese products. I’m just looking for designs (I like).”¹⁰⁷ This quote highlights that a product may be from Japan without being highly salient for the consumer as Japanese. This raises the question: which Japanese products have enough country salience to lead the consumer to recognize them as such?

Determining the degree of salience is also difficult. This is best illustrated anecdotally by @mykoreandic’s TikTok video discussing the Japanese boycott.¹⁰⁸ The video begins with an American and a South Korean meeting. The American asks the Korean what she wants to eat. The Korean replies with sushi, stating it is her favorite. The American says he likes sushi, too. The American suggests that they order sake with their meal at the restaurant. The Korean says no sake. When pressed why she does not want sake, she says sake is Japanese, and she does not buy Japanese products. The American, now confused, exclaims, “Look at you, you are eating sushi!” The Korean explains that sushi is an idea and not a product. The American agrees. When the food comes out, the Korean says she wants to take a picture and pulls out a Sony camera. The American states the Sony camera is a Japanese product. The Korean explains again that cameras do not count because every camera company is Japanese, which is inevitable. The American agrees, and they go back to eating. Then the Korean asks the American if he has watched *Attack on Titan* (a Japanese anime). The American, hearing enough, exclaims, “You actually love Japan a lot!”

¹⁰⁷ Kim, “[From the Scene] Rising #boycottJapan campaign faces mixed reactions.”

¹⁰⁸ @Mykoreandic, “It’s a Love-Hate Relationship,” TikTok, accessed August 3, 2022, https://www.tiktok.com/@mykoreandic/video/7119892217208081666?is_copy_url=1&is_from_webapp=v1.

The scene described above illustrates Koreans' complex relationship with Japanese products: in order to counter historical grievances of Koreans toward Japan, they might find reasons to justify consuming a specific Japanese product. Because of these reasons, it is difficult to determine the product, content, or service's country salience: the degree to which consumers associate a cultural item with Japan in the first place (hereafter often simply referred to as "salience").

Different Japanese products, contents, and services have varying degrees of salience. However, it would seem that most Japanese products contain at least a low level of salience, since the 2019 to 2020 boycott demonstrated that Korean consumers are more aware of what products are Japanese than perhaps an average consumer elsewhere in the world. The lowest degree of product or content salience might be that a consumer can identify that a product is of Japanese origin (for example, that Sony is a Japanese company). Products that South Koreans consume that provide low salience are beauty products, pre-processed food, clothes, game consoles & video games, and cars. However, some products have higher salience – more acute recognition of their Japanese origins or content – such as travel to Japan, language, movies, TV shows, books, and cuisine.

D. PRODUCT AND CONTENT ANALYSIS

In this section, this thesis individually analyzes the level of consumption of a Japanese product, content, or service, followed by the degree of country salience it holds. This section will be arranged by products, contents, and services that are most consumed, descending to content that is rarely consumed.

1. Travel

Travel to Japan is one of South Koreans' most consumed Japanese product, content, or service, as shown in Figure 4. Travel to Japan likely also has the highest salience of any Japanese product, content, or service South Koreans consume. From 1990 to 2018, the number of South Korean travelers steadily increased, with dips occurring during the Asian Financial Crisis and the 2008 Financial Crisis. In 2018, Japan was the number one foreign

destination for South Korean tourists.¹⁰⁹ In 2019, the trend of steady growth ended as the boycott of Japanese goods, which directly impacted Korean travel to Japan, was followed by the complete crash of tourists due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

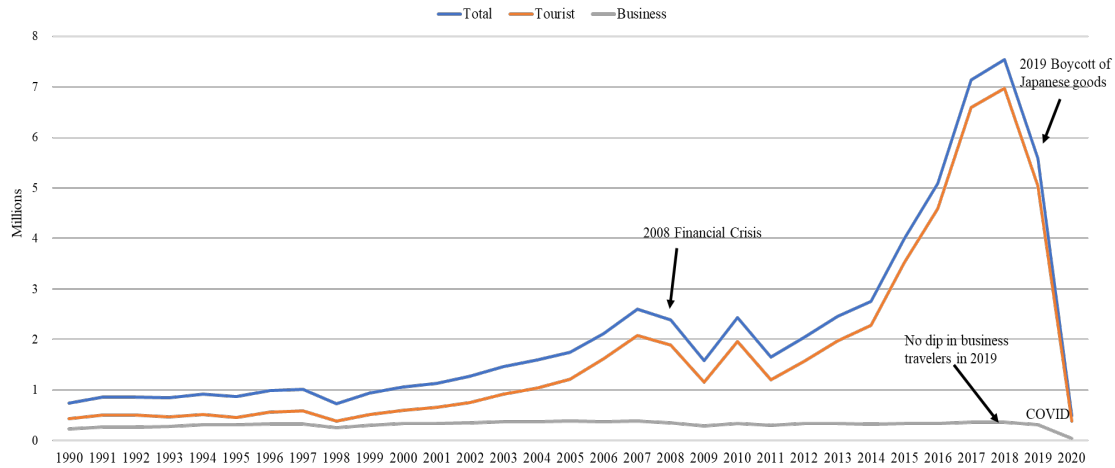


Figure 4. South Korean Travelers to Japan¹¹⁰

When analyzing the percentage of all outbound South Korean travelers (Figure 5), 15% and 20% of all Koreans traveled to Japan from 1996–2015, before rising to 30% from 2016–2018. This data demonstrated that Japan was a popular destination for South Korean travelers.

¹⁰⁹ Statista Research Department, “Number of outbound tourist departures from South Korea in 2018, by destination,” Statista, July 8, 2021, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1142544/south-korea-top-destinations-outbound-tourism/>.

¹¹⁰ Adapted from “Japanese Bound Statistics,” JTB Tourism Research & Consulting Co., accessed May 3, 2022, <https://www.tourism.jp/en/tourism-database/stats/inbound/>.

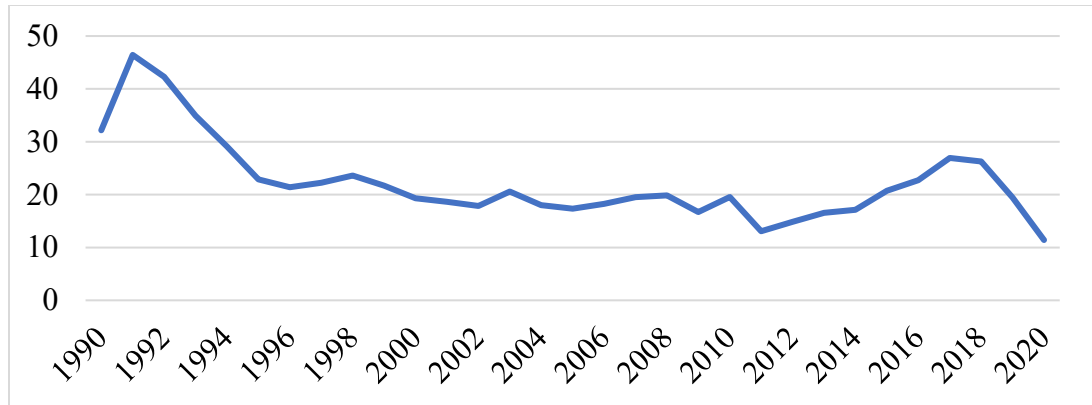


Figure 5. Percentage of All Outbound South Koreans Who Travelled to Japan¹¹¹

A yearly joint survey conducted by GENRON NPO and the EAI recently asked South Koreans if they hoped to travel to Japan (Figure 6). Despite the survey's being conducted in 2020, when relations between both countries were at their lowest, more than half of Koreans surveyed stated that they hoped to travel to Japan.

¹¹¹ Adapted from JTB Tourism Research & Consulting Co, "Japanese Bound Statistics; 연도별 통계(1975년-2021년) [Yearly Statistics (1975-2021)], Korea Tourism Organization, date access August 8, 2022, <https://kto.visitkorea.or.kr/eng.kto>.

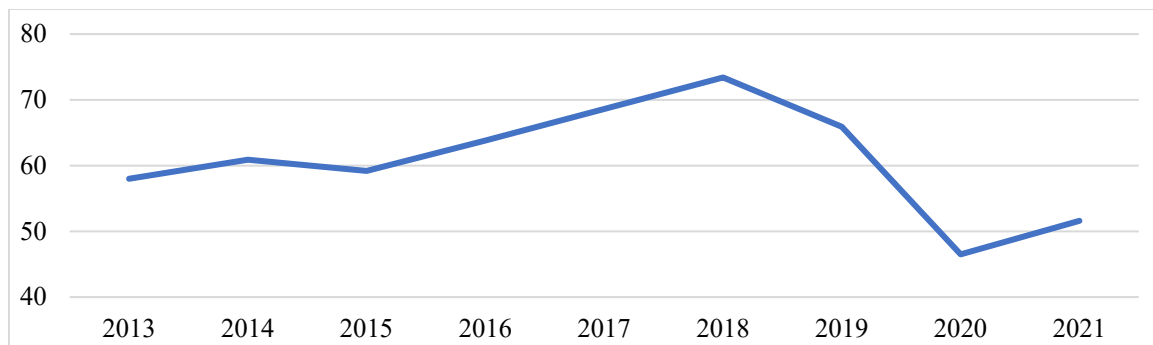


Figure 6. South Koreans Who Hope to Visit Japan¹¹²

Travel to Japan likely has the highest salience of all the Japanese products, content, and services that South Korean consumers consume. This high salience is likely aided by South Korean tourist travel habits in Japan. South Koreans tend to favor large cities, directly exposing Korean tourists to Japanese culture rather than being secluded in a tourist enclave.¹¹³ Travel to Japan, among all products, should have the greatest potential to significantly impact attitudes toward Japan given the combination of the large amount of consumers with the high country salience of the experience.

2. Movies

Japanese movie consumption by South Koreans is fairly high (Figure 7); however, since most of these movies are anime, the salience derives from an artistic interpretation

¹¹²Adapted from East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 7th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2019) Analysis Report on Comparative Data June, 2019*, (Seoul and Tokyo: East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, 2019) 19, https://www.genron-npo.net/en/opinion_polls/archives/5489.html; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 8; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 6th South Korea Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll (2018) Comparative Analysis Report* (Seoul and Tokyo: East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, 2018) 15, http://www.eai.or.kr/avanplus/filedownload.asp?o_file=20180801163755100539352.pdf&uppath=/data/bbs/eng_report/&u_file=2018Korea-JapanJointpublicopinionpollEnglishversion.pdf; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 2nd Joint Korea-Japan Public Opinion Poll (2014) Comparative Data* (Seoul and Tokyo: East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, 2014), 17, <https://www.genron-npo.net/en/pp/archives/5142.html>; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 3rd Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, (Seoul and Tokyo: East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, 2015), 19, https://www.genron-npo.net/en/opinion_polls/archives/5251.html; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 4th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2016) Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, (Seoul and Tokyo: East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, 2016), 17, https://www.genron-npo.net/en/opinion_polls/archives/5305.html.

¹¹³ Ko Dong-hwan, “More Korean tourists shunning Japan for Taiwan,” *The Korea Times*, September 1, 2019, https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/world/2021/09/501_274838.html.

which may limit its effectiveness. Since 2005, Japanese movies in South Korea have had moderate success, generating between \$10 million and \$20 million per year. The only exception was in 2020, when there were numerous factors behind a drop in revenue. To limit the 2019 boycott's impact, Japanese movie companies delayed the release of many of their films in South Korea.¹¹⁴ Besides the boycott, the global pandemic in 2020 forced many theaters to close due to health concerns.

Despite the ongoing boycott of Japanese goods in 2020, Japanese movies occupied almost 10% of all positions on the South Korean Netflix Daily Top 10 (Figure 8). Korean consumers who enjoy Japanese movies but not comfortable going to a theater to watch a Japanese film during the boycott might have been more comfortable watching in their homes. In 2021, Japanese films saw a rebound, with *Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba the Movie - Mugen Train* finishing the year in fifth place for gross Korean box office receipts.¹¹⁵ Most Japanese movies that succeed in South Korea are anime films, most of which are established series (Pokémon, Detective Conan, Doraemon, and Crayon Shin-Chan).¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Lee, "Despite Political Tensions, Japan's 'Demon Slayer' Tops South Korean Book Market and Box Office."

¹¹⁵ Box Office Mojo by IMDB Pro. "South Korea Yearly Box Office."

¹¹⁶ Box Office Mojo by IMDB Pro. "South Korea Yearly Box Office."

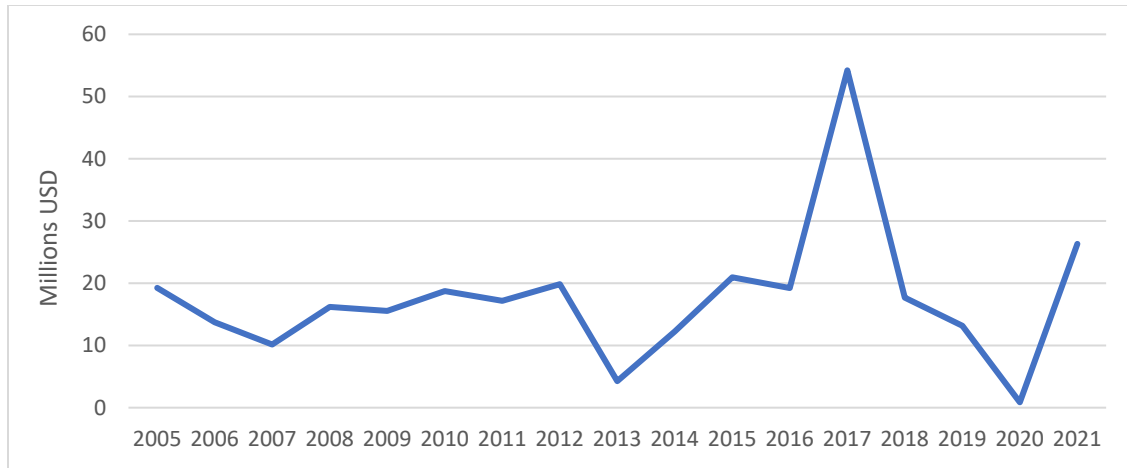


Figure 7. Box Office Gross Yearly Revenue of Japanese Produced Films in South Korea.¹¹⁷

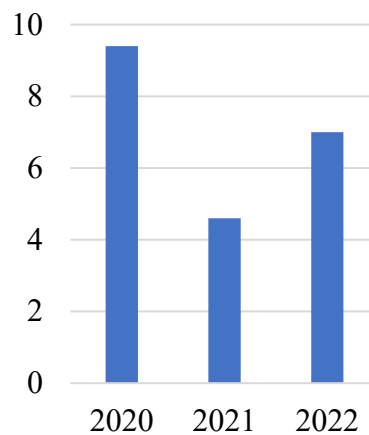


Figure 8. Percentage of Japanese Movies that Made the Daily Top 10 on South Korean Netflix per Year¹¹⁸

Most Japanese movies South Koreans consume are anime, providing the audience Japan country salience more through artistic inspiration than direct images of Japan and Japanese people. Some popular movie series, such as Pokémon, are based in a fantasy world that further distances itself from any particular image of Japan. However, Korean

¹¹⁷ Adapted from Box Office Mojo by IMDB Pro. “South Korea Yearly Box Office.”

¹¹⁸ Note: 2020 data covers March 28 – December 31; 2022 Cover January 1- May 12. Adapted from “TOP 10 on Netflix in Japan in History,” Flix Patrol, accessed May 12, 2022, <https://flixpatrol.com/top10/netflix/south-korea/history/>.

audiences usually choose whether to watch Japanese movies dubbed or with subtitles (if there is no choice, then the default is subtitled). Over 50% of South Koreans surveyed stated that they preferred to watch with subtitles only, due to wanting to hear the original soundtrack and believing that dub actors are not skilled.¹¹⁹ Watching the original soundtrack exposes Korean viewers to the Japanese language, even if they do not understand it, which adds to the salience that the movie contains.

However, Korean censors scrub Japanese anime for inappropriate content. This scrubbing is due to Korean laws on Japanese symbolism, but some networks are more stringent than others. Often, symbols that were widely used during Japan's colonization of Korea (rising sun flag) are censored or removed, and characters are often given more clothing (cleavage is often covered up).¹²⁰ In the popular film and television series *Demon Slayer*, censors and Netflix changed the design of one character's earrings, which resembled the rising sun, a symbol in Korea associated with its time as a colony of Japan, to one that reflected Japan's current, post-imperial flag (Figure 9).¹²¹ This scrubbing of possible offensive content creates an altered, more positive salience.

¹¹⁹ Statista Research Department, "Preference of Watching Animation in Cinemas Dubbed or With Subtitles South Korea 2021," Statista, January 17, 2022, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1043914/south-korea-cinema-animation-dubbed-or-subtitles/>.

¹²⁰ U.S. channels are also known to add clothing to characters as well. Vincent Hughes, "Demon Slayer Censored in South Korea: Why the Animated Series Was Edited," Shogi Pineapple, November 10, 2021, <https://shogi-pineapple.com/demon-slayer/demon-slayer-censored-in-south-korea-why-the-animated-series-was-edited/>.

¹²¹ Lee, "Despite Political Tensions, Japan's 'Demon Slayer' Tops South Korean Book Market and Box Office."



Figure 9. Left: Tanjirō’s Earrings Depicting the Rising Sun “From the International Version of *Demon Slayer: Kimetsu No Yaiba the Movie - Mugen Train*. Right: Tanjirō’s Earrings Depicting the Current Flag of Japan from the Korean Version¹²²

3. Books

Japanese authors have found considerable success in South Korea; however, these books’ salience varies. It is not uncommon for a Japanese author to appear on the South Korean bestseller list. The top-selling author in South Korea from 2009 to 2019, according to the country’s biggest bookstore chain, Kyobo Book Centre, was Japanese mystery writer Keigo Higashino, followed by another Japanese author, Haruki Murakami.¹²³ Japanese author Kaori Ekuni placed 19th; however, she was number two on the same list covering 2004–2008.¹²⁴ Higashino sold over 1.27 million copies of his books in those ten years, nine of which were bestsellers 18 times. His most popular work in Korea is *Miracles of the Namiya General Store*, which has sold 360,000 copies and remains a Kyobo Top 10 bestseller. Murakami topped the Korean chart in book sales in 2015 and has had nine books

¹²² Source: Hughes, “Demon Slayer Censored in South Korea: Why the Animated Series Was Edited.”

¹²³ Eun-Kyung Kim, “For 10 Years, Korea’s Most Beloved Novelist Is Keigo Higashino,” Yonhap News Agency, January 30, 2019, <https://www.yna.co.kr/view/AKR20190129174800005>.

¹²⁴ Kim, “For 10 Years, Korea’s Most Beloved Novelist Is Keigo Higashino;” Chung Ah-young, “Publications Faltering Amid Downturn,” *The Korea Times*, January 30, 2009, http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/art/2009/01/142_38684.html.

become bestsellers 25 times, with *Norwegian Wood* being a best seller 11 times.¹²⁵ In a 2013 survey, 24% of Koreans stated that they had read a book by Murakami.¹²⁶ While Ekuni has recently fallen in popularity in South Korea, her book *Twinkle* became a bestseller in South Korea in 1991, and her stories are popular with female readers.¹²⁷

Japanese novels' level of country salience ultimately depends on the book. Japanese books are translated into Korean, making the book more Korean. However, if the book is based in Japan, the reader will encounter and interact with Japanese culture while reading. The plot in Haruki Murakami's popular story *Norwegian Wood*, for example, revolves around two Japanese characters and is set mainly in Tokyo.¹²⁸ This story inevitably carries high Japan salience.

Japanese manga are also popular in South Korea and can sometimes enter the charts as a best seller. The third manga of the Demon Slayer series, *Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba*, was the top-selling title for numerous South Korean booksellers in March 2021.¹²⁹ *Jujutsu Kaisen Fan Book*, another Japanese Manga, reached number three in best sellers in October 2021.¹³⁰ Another genre of Japanese literature popular in South Korea is children's books. South Korea is the largest market for children's books outside of Japan.¹³¹

Manga and children's books, general, offer less Japan salience than novels. While some manga do portray life in Japan, others take place in fantasy worlds, which lessens the salience. *Otsukisama konbanwa* by Akiko Hayashi, a popular Japanese children's story in

¹²⁵ Chung Ah-young, "Publications Faltering Amid Downturn."

¹²⁶ Jin Eun-soo "Haruki Murakami Most-Read Foreign Novelist in Korea: poll," *The Korea Herald*, August 8, 2013, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130808000700>.

¹²⁷ Chung, "Publications Faltering Amid Downturn."

¹²⁸ "Norwegian Wood Summary & Study Guide," Book Rags, accessed August 5, 2022, <http://www.bookrags.com/studyguide-norwegian-wood/#gsc.tab=0>.

¹²⁹ Lee, "Despite Political Tensions, Japan's 'Demon Slayer' Top South Korean Book Market and Box Office."

¹³⁰ "Bestsellers in October 2021," K Lit Reads, January 5, 2022, <https://klitreads.com/news/bestseller-trends-in-the-four-biggest-online-bookstores-in-korea/>.

¹³¹ "Part 1: Tower of Publication," National Diet Library, International Library of Children's Literature, accessed August 5, 2022, <https://www.kodomo.go.jp/anv10th/e/publishing/korea.html>.

South Korea, is about cats that watch the moon rise in the night sky.¹³² This story does not describe Japan, nor do the illustrations give an impression of Japan. However, for all books, even if the story does not describe Japan, the author's being Japanese is enough to produce a small degree of salience when the reader reads the author's name.

4. Game Consoles and Video Games

Japanese game consoles and video games are popular in South Korea. However, the salience of the game console or the game characters (such as Pikachu) is low. The most popular console operating system by market share in South Korea over the past ten years is Sony's (Japan) PlayStation (Figure 10). Microsoft's (USA) Xbox in 2020 and 2021 challenged its popularity in South Korea by releasing a fourth-generation console. However, PlayStation was able to hold its top spot. Nintendo's market share peaked in 2013 at around 10% before declining. In 2016 Nintendo experienced its worst year of revenue in South Korea; however, has since it has recovered, with revenue surging tenfold in four years.¹³³ During the COVID-19 pandemic, Nintendo saw a surge in its Nintendo Switch sales. These sales were driven by women, who traditionally are non-console consumers.¹³⁴

¹³² International Library of Children's Literature, "Part 1: Tower of Publication," National Diet Library; "おつきさまこんばんは Otsukisama Konbanwa 絵本読み聞かせ (Japanese Children Book Read Aloud) [Good evening Otsukisama Konbanwa Picture Book Reading], Asobo Club," February 26, 2019, video 1:43, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmggEh3FJNk>.

¹³³ Joo-wan Kim, "Nintendo Korea logs record-high revenue despite boycott of Japanese goods," The Korea Economic Daily, Jul 20, 2021, <https://www.kedglobal.com/korean-games/newsView/ked202107200014>.

¹³⁴ Kim Byung-wook, "Nintendo Switch sales spike 30% in Korea amid COVID-19 outbreak," The Korea Herald, June 12, 2020, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20200612000537>.

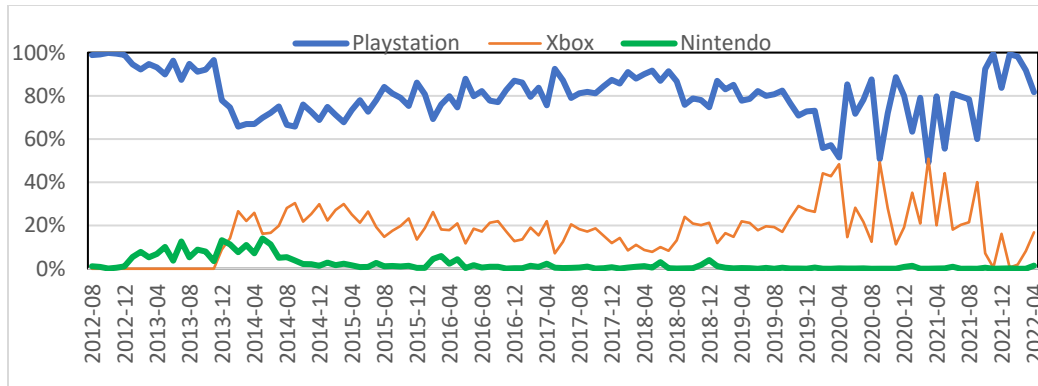


Figure 10. Console Operating System Market Share in the Republic of Korea¹³⁵

Comparing game console hardware (device) sales in South Korea (Table 1), Japanese companies have topped the (device) sales in South Korea in the previous three years. The results of comparing software (games) sales (Table 2) over the same period are similar to hardware sales. In 2020, the top ten games sold were all for the Nintendo Switch, and nine of those ten games were created by the Japanese gaming company Nintendo or Koei Tecmo.¹³⁶

Table 1. Game Console Hardware (Devices) Sales¹³⁷

2019	2020	2021
Nintendo Switch (386,251)	Nintendo Switch (792,953)	Nintendo Switch (672,002)
PlayStation 4 (149,754)	PlayStation 4 (42,350)	PlayStation 5 (132,012)
New Nintendo 2DS XL (20,645)	PlayStation 5 (37,689)	PlayStation 4 (4,4221)
	New Nintendo 2DS XL (6,381)	

Number of devices sold in parentheses

¹³⁵ Source: “Console Operating System Market Share in Republic of Korea,” Statcounter GlobalStats, accessed May 14, 2022, <https://gs.statcounter.com/os-market-share/console/south-korea>.

¹³⁶ Lite_Agent, “Media Create White Book 2021: sales data for Japan, South Korea, Taiwan in 2020,” Perfectly Nintendo (blog), accessed June 20, 2022, <https://www.perfectly-nintendo.com/media-create-white-book-2021-sales-data-for-japan-south-korea-taiwan-in-2020/>.

¹³⁷ Adapted from Lite_Agent, “Media Create White Book 2022: Sales Data for Japan, South Korea, Taiwan In 2021.”

Table 2. Game Console Software (Games) Sales¹³⁸

2019	2020	2021
Nintendo Switch (1,564,125)	Nintendo Switch (2,738,421)	Nintendo Switch (2,493,299)
PlayStation 4 (844,641)	PlayStation 4 (576,879)	PlayStation 4 (231,429)
Nintendo 3DS (57,676)	Nintendo 3DS (41,945)	PlayStation 5 (114,487)
	PlayStation 5 (18,270)	Nintendo 3DS (22,203)

Number of devices sold in parentheses

Nintendo and Sony were the few Japanese companies that were not impacted by the boycott of 2019–2020. Nintendo posted an all-time high in revenue in the country, whereas Sony sales rose 19.5%, with operating profit spiking 35.6%.¹³⁹ Nintendo saw its revenue increase by 73% and its operating profit increase by 111% compared to the previous year.¹⁴⁰ Its impressive performance was driven by its popular original games and the COVID-19 pandemic, as those bored at home looked for ways to stay entertained.¹⁴¹ Another example of the popularity of Japanese game consoles in 2020 can be seen with Sony’s PlayStation 5, where preorders sold out in an hour.¹⁴² Takayasu Yuichi, a professor at Daito Bunka University’s Faculty of Economics, stated that the success of Nintendo and Sony in South Korea, even during the boycott, is attributable to the fact that there is no South Korean equivalent to them to fill in the void.¹⁴³

¹³⁸ Adapted from Lite_Agent, “Media Create White Book 2022: Sales Data for Japan, South Korea, Taiwan In 2021.”

¹³⁹ Kim, “Nintendo Korea Logs Record-High Revenue Despite Boycott of Japanese Goods.”; Nana Shibata, “South Korean Boycott Hammers Sales of Japanese Consumer Goods,” Nikkei Asia, August 2, 2020, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Business-trends/South-Korean-boycott-hammers-sales-of-Japanese-consumer-goods>.

¹⁴⁰ Kim, “Nintendo Korea Logs Record-High Revenue Despite Boycott of Japanese Goods.”

¹⁴¹ Kim, “Nintendo Korea Logs Record-High Revenue Despite Boycott of Japanese Goods.”; Kim Byung-wook, “Animal Crossing Exposes Korea’s Selective Boycott of Japanese Products,” April 10, 2020, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20200409000821>.

¹⁴² “PlayStation 5 Preorders Sell Out in Korea,” *The Korea Times*, October 7, 2020, https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/tech/2021/06/134_297180.html?tw.

¹⁴³ Shibata, “South Korean Boycott Hammers Sales of Japanese Consumer Goods.”

Most gaming consumers have a basic understanding of the company who makes their game consoles. Those consumers with Sony's PlayStation or a Nintendo Switch or DS would understand that these companies are Japanese. However, the image of Japan ends at that. Playing a Nintendo Switch in public became taboo during the boycott of Japanese goods in 2019–2020. When a famous Korean comedian uploaded a series of YouTube videos of him playing Nintendo's *Animal Crossing*, he faced criticism for not participating in the boycott.¹⁴⁴ Although nothing references Japan in the game *Animal Crossing*, South Koreans are aware that it is a Japanese product due to its Nintendo affiliation. Despite the backlash against Nintendo during the boycott, Nintendo (and PlayStation) saw sales rise, partly due to people stuck at home during the pandemic. As @mykoreandic's TikTok skit mentioned before, it could be that all video console companies are Japanese, which makes them impossible to avoid.

Certain video games do provide more Japan salience than others. For the 2014 FIFA World Cup, Adidas, the sponsor of Team Japan, announced that Pikachu and friends were the official mascots for Team Japan during the World Cup.¹⁴⁵ Pikachu was picked because of widespread recognition that that character is Japanese. In the closing ceremony of the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics, then-Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe appeared dressed as the Mario character to represent the next summer Olympics in Tokyo.¹⁴⁶ Since these game mascots are being used on the global stage to promote Japan, it is justified to infer that they carry Japan salience.

5. Cuisine

Japanese restaurants are growing in popularity in South Korea and have high salience. Japanese restaurants are experiencing the most significant growth among

¹⁴⁴ Kim, "Animal Crossing Exposes Korea's Selective Boycott of Japanese Products."

¹⁴⁵ Michelle Lynn Dinh, "Japan Chooses Pikachu as Its Official Mascot for World Cup," Japan Today, March 19, 2014, <https://japantoday.com/category/sports/japan-chooses-pikachu-as-its-official-mascot-for-world-cup>.

¹⁴⁶ Motoko Rich, "A morning Surprise for Japan: Shinzo Abe as Super Mario," *The New York Times*, August 22, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/23/world/asia/shinzo-abe-super-mario-tokyo-rio-olympics.html>.

international cuisine restaurants in South Korea.¹⁴⁷ According to Statistics Korea, the number of Japanese restaurants increased by over 4,000 in four years (2013-2017).¹⁴⁸ Demand is also growing for learning how to cook Japanese food. For example, Tatsuone Japanese Cooking School, based in Seoul, saw a 40% increase in students from 2017 to 2018. Many of its students are already chefs who want to open Japanese restaurants or add Japanese food to their menus.¹⁴⁹

Restaurants have high salience, but not to the same degree as traveling to Japan. In the process of eating at a restaurant, the consumer uses all five senses, which are absent in watching television, reading a book, or playing video games. Despite the consumers eating authentic (or believed to be authentic) Japanese food, most Japanese restaurants are owned by Koreans. Even if a restaurant is tailored to appear like a Japanese restaurant, there will be features or items that will be tailored to a Korean consumer. For example, the menu will be in Korean and Korean waiters will serve them. Still, it can be argued that restaurants do have high salience since they do provide significant consumer exposure to Japanese culture, even if not to the same degree as traveling to Japan.

6. Beauty

The South Korean market has a significant number of consumers of Japanese beauty products, as seen through its large import quantity (Figure 11).¹⁵⁰ However, Japanese beauty has low salience due to the consumer's interaction with Japanese people or culture being minimal. From 2015 to 2020, Japan was the third largest exporter of cosmetic products to South Korea, exporting \$207 million in cosmetics in 2019 and \$119

¹⁴⁷ Min Jung Kim, "In Seoul, Authentic Japanese Food Inspires Everyday Happiness," *The Japan Times*, June 8, 2019, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/life/2019/06/08/food/seoul-authentic-japanese-food-inspires-everyday-happiness/>.

¹⁴⁸ Kim, "In Seoul, Authentic Japanese Food Inspires Everyday Happiness."

¹⁴⁹ Kim, "In Seoul, Authentic Japanese Food Inspires Everyday Happiness."

¹⁵⁰ Japanese beauty refers to essential oils, perfumes, cosmetics, toiletries.

million in 2020.¹⁵¹ Between 2016 and 2019, Japan held about a 2.5% market share in cosmetics.¹⁵² However, when essential oils, perfumes, cosmetics, and toiletries are grouped, Japan is the largest exporter to South Korea.¹⁵³ Although South Korea and Japan are both producers of beauty products, they differ in application. Korean beauty is known for its ten-step routine, whereas Japanese beauty has a much simpler regimen.¹⁵⁴ Also, Japanese beauty products are more expensive than their Korean counterparts.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ “Nina Jobst, “Value of Cosmetics Imported into South Korea in 2020, By Country Of Origin,” Statista, November 8, 2021, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/830674/south-korea-cosmetics-import-value-by-origin/>; “South Korea-Country Commercial Guide ‘Cosmetics,’” U.S. International Trade Administration, last modified August 2, 2022, <https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/south-korea-cosmetics#:~:text=South%20Korea%20is%20one%20of,respectively%20from%20the%20previous%20year>.

¹⁵² The South Korean domestic market share is over 50%. “U.S. International Trade Administration, “South Korea-Country Commercial Guide ‘Cosmetics;”” Deok-cheol Kwon, *2020 Cosmetic Industry Analysis Report* (Osong: Korea Health Industry development Institute, 2020) 76, https://kcia.or.kr/home/industry/industry_01.php?type=view&no=13874&ss=page%3D%26skind%3D%26sword%3D%26ob%3D.

¹⁵³ “Japan Exports of essential oils, perfumes, cosmetics, toiletries to South Korea,” Trading Economics, accessed May 16, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/japan/exports/south-korea/essential-oils-perfumes-cosmetics-toiletries>

¹⁵⁴ Vinny Halo, “Japan’s Shu Uemura to Exit Korea,” Retail in Asia, April 7, 2021, <https://retailinasia.com/in-markets/japans-shu-uemura-to-exit-korea/>.

¹⁵⁵ Lim Li Ying, “Japan or Korea? How J-beauty and K-beauty cosmetics and skincare compare,” *South China Morning Post*, July 17, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/magazines/style/fashion-beauty/article/3018766/japan-or-korea-how-j-beauty-and-k-beauty-cosmetics>.



Figure 11. Japan Exports of Essential Oils, Perfumes, Cosmetics, and Toiletries to South Korea in USD¹⁵⁶

Japanese beauty products have low salience. The brand name of the beauty company is perhaps the only thing that may offer any association with Japan. However, in the boycotts of 2019–2020, Japanese beauty products saw a decline in sales, indicating that the average Korean consumer knew of their Japanese origins. Those who did continue to shop for Japanese beauty products during the boycott did so discreetly by placing the product in a bag or shifting their purchasing online.¹⁵⁷ If consumers are going to great lengths to hide their product, it can be assumed that they are doing so because most everyday Koreans would recognize that the product is Japanese. This knowledge demonstrates that Japanese beauty products have some country salience.

7. Japanese Clothing

Although Japan does make clothes and export them to South Korea, the volume is quite low, especially compared to China and other garment manufacturing powerhouses (Figures 12 and 13).¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Source: Trading Economics, “Japan Exports of essential oils, perfumes, cosmetics, toiletries to South Korea.”

¹⁵⁷ Kim and Choi, “Sales of Japanese cosmetics brands in Korea plunge amid consumer boycott.”

¹⁵⁸ “Japan Exports of Clothing & Clothing Accessories,” Trading Economics, date accessed August 25, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/japan/exports-of-clothing-clothing-accessories>.



Figure 12. Japan Exports of Articles of Apparel, Knit or Crocheted to South Korea in USD.¹⁵⁹

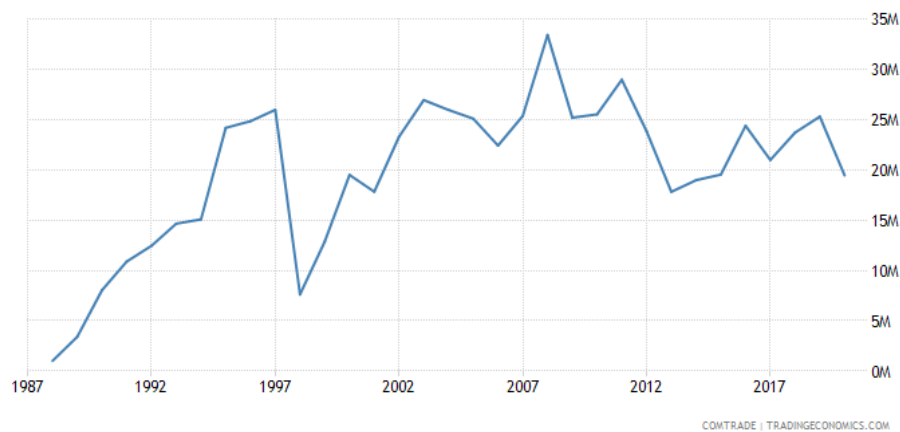


Figure 13. Japan Exports of Articles of Apparel, Not Knit or Crocheted to South Korea in USD¹⁶⁰

Although Japanese-made clothing is not extensively purchased in South Korea, Japanese clothing company Uniqlo (Figure 14) and shoe and clothing company ABC Mart (Figure 15) operate in South Korea. They have had relative success in the country, which

¹⁵⁹ Source: "Japan Exports of Articles of Apparel, Knit or Crocheted to South Korea," Trading Economics, accessed May 16, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/japan/exports/south-korea/articles-apparel-accessories-knit-crocheted>.

¹⁶⁰ Source: Trading Economics, "Japan Exports of Articles Of Apparel, Not Knit Or Crocheted to South Korea."

may be due to South Korean fashion firms' currently experiencing slow growth due to poor domestic sales.¹⁶¹ Both Japanese retailers were specifically identified by South Koreans as a brand to boycott. This impacted Uniqlo significantly: it had to downsize its operations, closing 60 out of its 190 stores in the country.¹⁶² ABC-Mart also saw sales decrease and recorded a loss in 2020.¹⁶³ Although Uniqlo has been closing stores in South Korea, it has seen an increase in sales post-boycott, and the company itself predicts revenue and profits will grow in 2022.¹⁶⁴

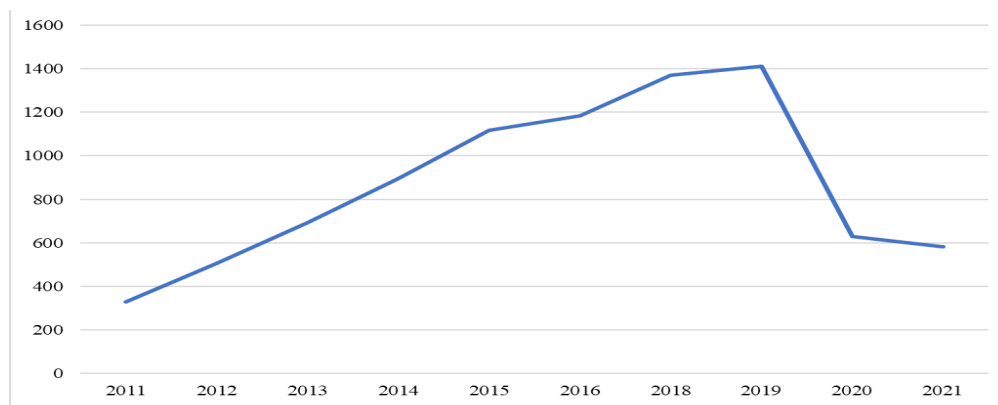


Figure 14. Uniqlo South Korea Fiscal Yearly Sales in South Korea (in billion won)¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ Sungmin Lee et al., *Hallyu White Paper, 2019*, (Seoul: Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (KOFICE), 2020), 220, [https://tradenavi.or.kr/CmsWeb/resource/attach/report/%5B38%5D%5BKOFICE%5D%20Hallyu%20White%20Paper%202019\(3\).pdf](https://tradenavi.or.kr/CmsWeb/resource/attach/report/%5B38%5D%5BKOFICE%5D%20Hallyu%20White%20Paper%202019(3).pdf).

¹⁶² Kim Jae-heun, "Uniqlo to close more stores while enhancing online options," *The Korea Times*, February 5, 2022, https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/tech/2022/02/419_323303.html.

¹⁶³ "ABC-MART KOREA INC. (SOUTH KOREA)," EMIS, November 23, 2021, https://www.emis.com/php/company-profile/KR/Abc-mart_Korea_Inc_en_3519733.html.

¹⁶⁴ "Results Summary for FY2022 First Half (Six Months to February 2022)," Fast Retailing, April 14, 2020, <https://www.fastretailing.com/eng/ir/news/2204141800.html>.

¹⁶⁵ No data for 2017 could be found. Adapted from Eun-Jee Park, "Uniqlo Hits 1 trillion Won Revenue in Style," *Korea JoongAng*, December 1, 2015. <https://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=3012250>; Gyeong-sik Nam, "Uniqlo profits hit hard by boycott in South Korea," *UPI News Korea*, December 31, 2019. https://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2019/12/31/Uniqlo-profits-hit-hard-by-boycott-in-South-Korea/2801577805077/; "Japanese Brands Making Rapid Growth in South Korea," *Korea Herald*, February 28, 2017. <http://www.koreaherald.com/common/newsprint.php?ud=20170228000710>; Bae, Kim and oh, "End of No-Japanese Boycott? Uniqlo Korea Turns to Black."

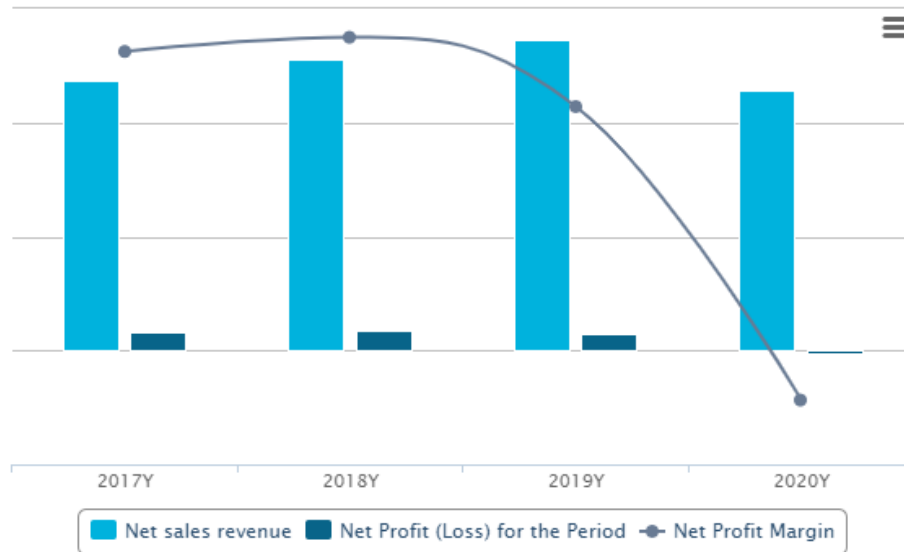


Figure 15. ABC-Mart Korea Performance Between 2017–2020¹⁶⁶

Japanese fashion brands have low salience. Besides identifying that the companies are Japanese, South Korean consumers' association with Japan while shopping at these stores is quite small. The two biggest differences between ABC-Mart and Uniqlo are that ABC-Mart's own brand is quite small (limited to only socks, shoe laces, and shoe soles), whereas Uniqlo's brand makes up the majority of the store. Besides its own brand, ABC-Mart sells brands such as Nike and Adidas that have no connection to Japan. So, a shopper in ABC-Mart could receive associations with other countries (Nike-USA, Adidas-Germany) instead of Japan. Uniqlo has a large brand that it sells, but its clothes are modern-looking and not traditional Japanese clothing. This modern design could limit its association with Japan, especially if one is wearing the article of clothing outside the store. During the boycott, ABC-Mart's and Uniqlo's Japanese ties were more known by the public, but knowing the store is Japanese is likely the extent of the association with Japan.

8. Food

Japan does not export many food products to South Korea; the few consumable products South Korea imports from Japan are alcohol and miscellaneous edible

¹⁶⁶ Source: EMIS, "ABC-MART KOREA INC. (SOUTH KOREA)."

preparations (Figure 16).¹⁶⁷ After the 2019–2020 boycott of Japanese goods, Japanese beer sales did not immediately return to pre-boycott sales, but this was because most stores were not selling it (Figure 17). In 2022, Japanese beer is beginning to appear back on the shelves of Korean stores for purchase.¹⁶⁸

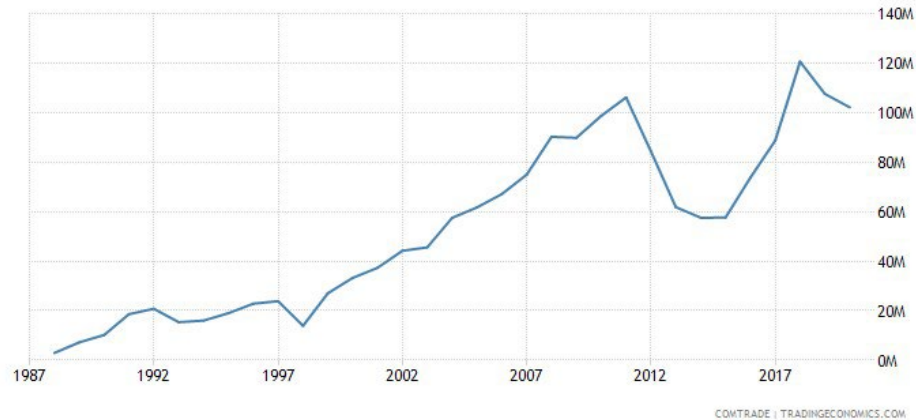


Figure 16. Japan Exports of Miscellaneous Edible Preparations to South Korea in USD¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ Miscellaneous edible preparations include sauces and preparations therefor, mixed condiments, mustard flour meal soups, broths, preparations therefor, homogenized composite food; extracts, essences, concentrates of coffee, tea, mate, roasted chicory; yeasts, other single-cell micro-organisms, prepared baking powders; ice cream, other edible ice.

¹⁶⁸ Chun, “Changing the anti-Japanese frame.”

¹⁶⁹ Source: Trade Economics. “Japan Exports of Miscellaneous Edible Preparations to South Korea.”

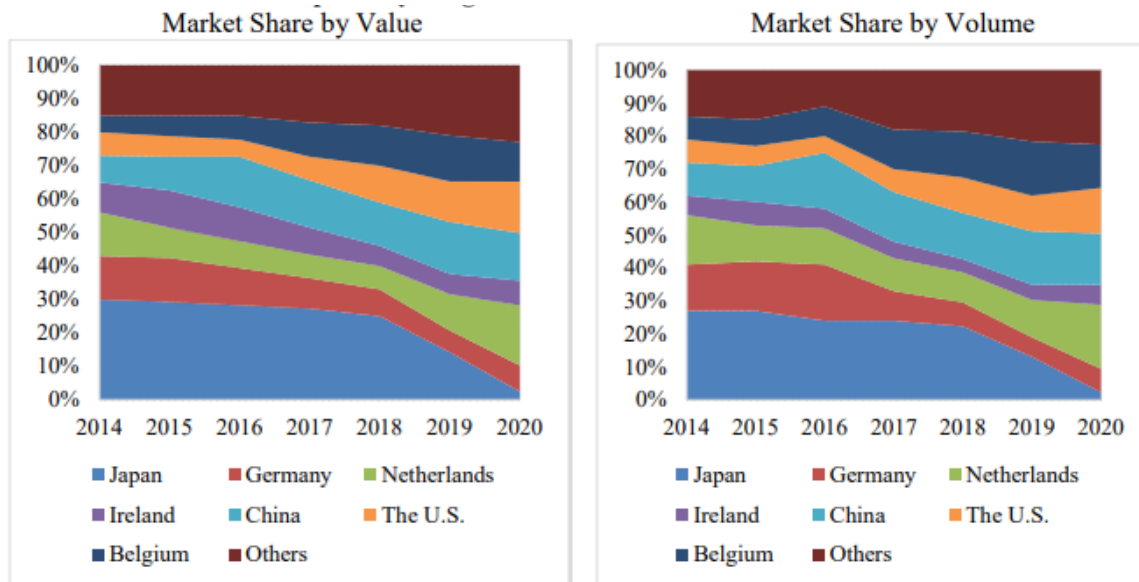


Figure 17. Korean Beer Imports by Origin¹⁷⁰

Japanese food has comparatively low salience: it is often difficult for the consumer to associate the product with Japan. Consumers who buy most of their Japanese food products at a local convenience store or grocery have to go to a specialty store, leading the consumer to associate the product as local rather than foreign. However, products such as whisky and beer are well associated with Japan.

9. Music

Although Japanese music does not dominate the South Korean market, J-Pop has had some success in the country, with albums by Japanese artists charting in the Gaon Monthly Hot 100 albums (figure 18). Japanese artists have never sold enough albums to reach South Korea's yearly charts. From 2018 until the present, no Japanese artists appeared. This current drought of charting could be that Korea's own music industry is

¹⁷⁰ Source: Sangyoung Oh, "Beer Market Report," U.S. Department of Agriculture, Report No. KS2021-0005 (Washington, DC, Dept. of Agriculture, 2021), 4, https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Beer%20Market%20Report_Seoul%20ATO_Korea%20-%20Republic%20of_03-01-2021#:~:text=South%20Korean%20beer%20imports%20toaled,during%20the%20COVID%2D19%20pandemic.

displacing foreign music. A secondary explanation for the sudden drop-off is that more famous J-Pop groups have gone on hiatus, and J-Pop has been unable to fill that void.¹⁷¹

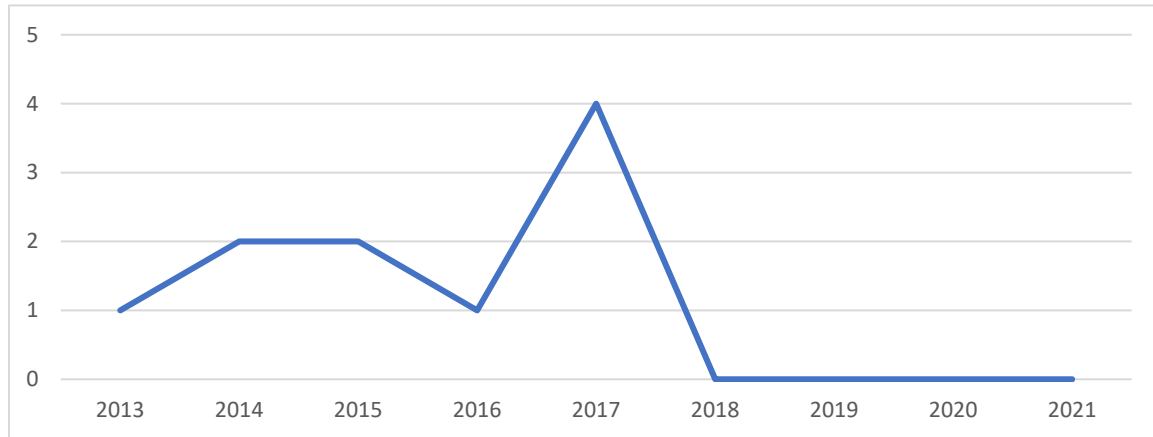


Figure 18. Number of Albums by Year for a Japanese Artist to Chart in the Hot 100 Monthly Charts¹⁷²

Japanese artists may have found some success in South Korea because of the lack of musical options in South Korea. The Korean music industry is dominated by K-pop, which heavily features idols.¹⁷³ Korean consumers who want different types of music must look elsewhere, with some choosing Japanese artists to fill that void.

¹⁷¹ Ahn and Yoon, “Between Love and Hate,” 191.

¹⁷² Adapted from “Album Charts,” Gaon Music Charts, accessed June 20, 2022, <http://gaonchart.co.kr/main/section/chart/album.gaon?nationGbn=T>.

¹⁷³ John Lie, *K-Pop: Popular Music, Cultural Amnesia, and Economic Innovation in South Korea*, (Oakland: University of California Press: 2015), 128. <https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520958944>.

Besides charting on South Korean charts, many Japanese musical acts have also held concerts in South Korea.¹⁷⁴ However, Japanese musicians were banned from performing in South Korea until 2000.¹⁷⁵ Whereas Korean musical acts study Japanese to be able to interact in Japanese during their concerts in Japan, these Japanese musical acts speak Japanese with only a few Korean words in their concerts in South Korea.¹⁷⁶ That South Korea hosts fairly large concerts demonstrates that some Japanese artists are popular there, and the variety of genres by these artists demonstrates the diversity of the Japanese music industry.

Japanese music has high salience because its association with Japan is quite strong: the music is sung in Japanese by Japanese artists, since many Japanese artists do not learn how to speak Korean. The association with Japan is unavoidable.

10. Television Shows

Japanese television shows are broadcast on South Korean television; however, most are anime. Although there are live action television shows, viewers must be more proactive in finding it.¹⁷⁷ Exact data for minutes or percentage of Japanese shows shown in South Korea is unavailable, but television scheduling in one representative month, May 2022,

¹⁷⁴ Japanese rock band L'Arc-en-Ciel has held concerts in 2005, 2007, and 2012 and participated in a music festival in 2007 (Lee Woo-young, "Legendary Japanese Rock Band to Hold Concert in Seoul," *The Korea Herald*, May 4, 2012, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20120504000930>.) R&B artist, MISA, hosted a concert in 2008 (Min Hee-young, "Japanese Singer MISIA's First Performance in Korea," *The Korea Times*, August 15, 2008, https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2022/05/719_29443.html?KK). In 2006, the Japanese boy band Arashi was the first boy band to perform a concert in South Korea. Arashi sold 10,000 albums on the first day and topped local sales for the 3rd week of July 2006 ("Japanese Group Arashi to Give Concert in Korea," *KBS World*, September 1, 2009, http://world.kbs.co.kr/service/contents_view.htm?lang=e&menu_cate=culture&id=&board_seq=121373&page=83&board_code=at_event). The group held four more concerts in 2008 (Cathy Rose Garcia, "Arashi Whips Fans into Frenzy," *The Korea Times*, November 4, 2008, http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/art/2009/06/201_33833.html).

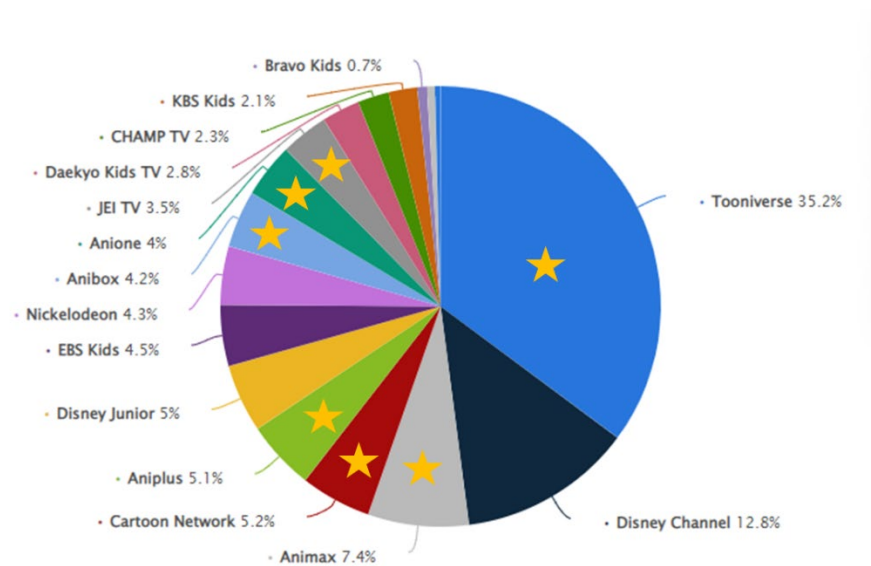
¹⁷⁵ Ng Wai-ming, "The Rise of J-pop in Asia and its Impact," *Japan Spot Light*, March/April 2004, https://www.jef.or.jp/journal/pdf/cover%20story%207_0403.pdf.

¹⁷⁶ *KBS World*, "Japanese Group Arashi to Give Concert in Korea."

¹⁷⁷ This author was unable to find Japanese live action television shows on Korean network television. Streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime do carry such shows, but neither service discloses the number of viewers.

shows Japanese animation programming airing on Tooniverse, Animax, Aniplus, Anione, Anibox, Cartoon Network Korea, and Daekyo Kids TV (Figure 19).

Besides broadband television, South Korean consumers of television shows can access content through streaming services. Netflix, the most popular streaming site in South Korea, contains Japanese television shows in its library.¹⁷⁸ Although, unlikely Japanese movies, few Japanese shows make it to the Daily Top Ten list, they are still available for Japanese culture consumers to watch.



Channels with a star mean those channels air Japanese animation.

Figure 19. The Most Popular Animation-Focused TV Channel Among Animation Watchers in South Korea as of August 2021¹⁷⁹

Japanese television shows' level of country salience depends on the type of show. Live-action television shows have high salience because the audience sees images of Japan

¹⁷⁸ "Top 10 on Netflix in South Korea in history," Flix Patrol, accessed May 12, 2022, <https://flixpatrol.com/top10/netflix/south-korea/history/>.

¹⁷⁹ Adapted from "Most Popular Animation Focused TV Channel Among Animation Watchers in South Korea As Of August 2021," Statista, January 17, 2022, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1044365/south-korea-preferred-animation-focused-tv-channel/#:~:text=According%20to%20a%202021%20survey,by%20Disney%20Channel%20and%20Animax.>

and Japanese actors. Saliency varies more widely for anime shows. Anime based in contemporary Japan (e.g., *Detective Conan*) have higher saliency than those based in fantasy worlds (e.g., *Pokémon*) or a different country (e.g., *Lupin*), although some not based in Japan still have moderate saliency because aspects of Japanese culture are present.

The saliency of Japanese anime shows is lowered by South Korean censorship of for “inappropriate” content. This scrubbing is due to South Korean laws on Japanese symbolism, but some networks are more stringent than others. As noted above, symbols widely used during Japan’s colonization of Korea (rising sun flag) get censored or removed, and characters are often given more modest clothing.¹⁸⁰ Sometimes, references to Japan will be censored as well. South Korean networks have censored the television show *Pokémon* the most compared to other countries: one entire episode was not allowed to be aired due to a character’s wearing a kimono, while another was banned for a tower taking inspiration from traditional Japanese architecture. South Korea has also censored ninjas and sumo wrestling in other episodes.¹⁸¹ Removing particular symbols associated with Japan limits the viewer’s ability to associate the content with Japan, thus lowering the saliency.

Since live-action Japanese shows are rarely shown on South Korean broadband television, those who consume this type of media often will watch an unedited version of the show from a streaming site. Since the programming is unedited, its Japan country saliency remains high.

Japanese television shows’ saliency is also weakened on South Korean broadband television because they are almost always dubbed, as they are more often marketed to children. However, streaming networks that host anime allow the consumer to choose the preference for the language of the soundtrack. Over 50% of South Koreans surveyed stated

¹⁸⁰ U.S. channels are also known to add clothing to characters as well. Vincent Hughes, “Demon Slayer Censored in South Korea: Why the Animated Series Was Edited,” Shogi Pineapple, November 10, 2021, <https://shogi-pineapple.com/demon-slayer/demon-slayer-censored-in-south-korea-why-the-animated-series-was-edited/>.

¹⁸¹ Daniel Wylie, “10 Banned Pokemon Episodes from Around the World (And Why),” What Culture, January 18, 2022, <https://whatculture.com/tv/10-banned-pokemon-episodes-from-around-the-world-and-why?page=10>.

that they preferred to watch with subtitles only, due to a desire to hear the original soundtrack and a belief that dub actors are not skilled.¹⁸² This increases Japanese shows' salience.

11. Japanese Language

Many South Koreans are learning the Japanese language. Japanese language learning has a very high salience that might only be surpassed by travel to Japan. The number of Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) takers and the number of Japanese teachers hired have been on the increase. Although data from the start of the JLPT is not available, the average from 2009 to 2019 is 75,820 (Figure 20). This average is double that of Japanese citizens taking the Korean equivalent of the JLPT.¹⁸³

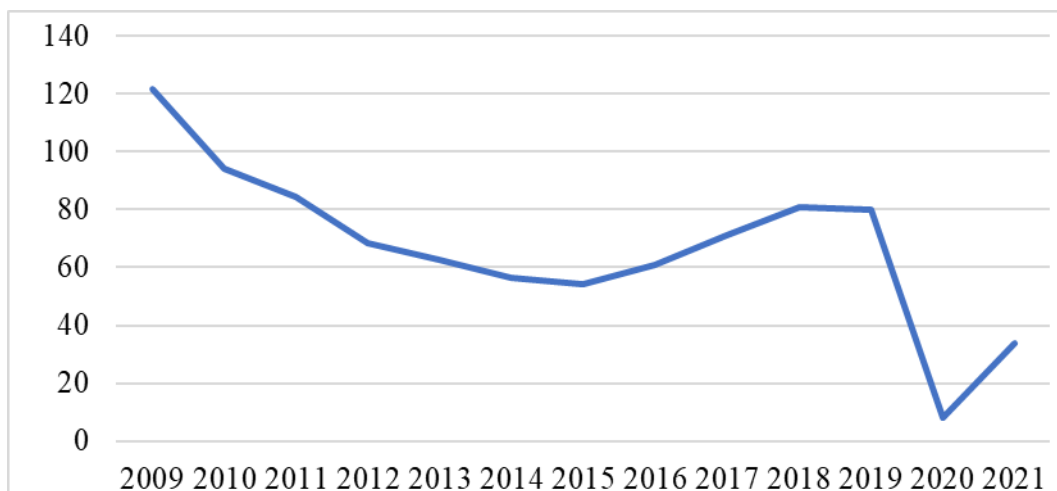


Figure 20. Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) Takers in Thousands in South Korea¹⁸⁴

¹⁸² Statista Research Department, "Preference of watching animation in cinemas dubbed or with subtitles South Korea 2021," Statista, January 17, 2022, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1043914/south-korea-cinema-animation-dubbed-or-subtitles/>.

¹⁸³ "Applicants Status," TOPIK, accessed May 2, 2022, <https://www.topik.go.kr/TWGUID/TWGUID0010.do>.

¹⁸⁴ JLPT was only offered once in 2020 and 2021. Adapted from "Past Test Data," Japanese Language Proficiency Test, accessed May 15, 2022, <https://www.jlpt.jp/e/statistics/archive.html>.

The number of Japanese language teachers at South Korean schools is increasing, aside from the 2019 boycott year (Figure 21). The Japan Foundation believes that the number of Japanese teachers in South Korea will only increase.¹⁸⁵

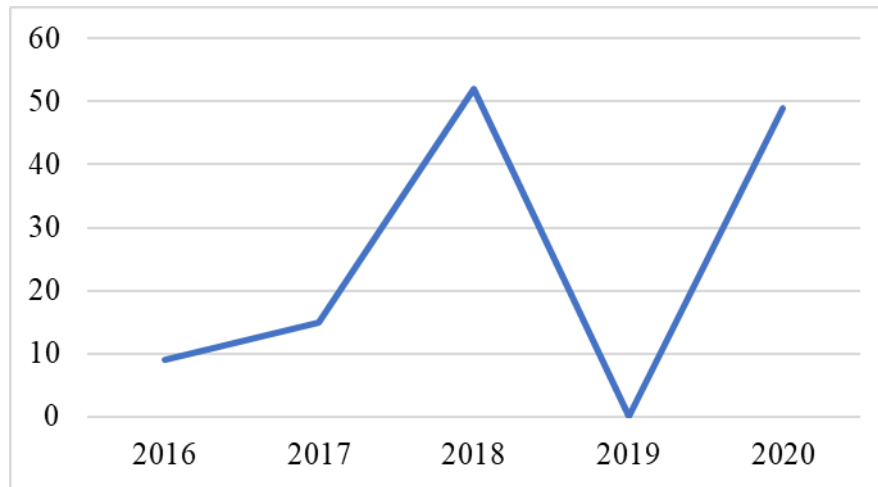


Figure 21. The Number of Hirings of Japanese Language Teachers at South Korean Secondary Schools¹⁸⁶

It is believed that many South Koreans studying Japanese are doing so to be able to study at Japanese universities or work in Japan.¹⁸⁷ Their reason for attending university in Japan is to forgo the ultra-competitive exam in South Korea.¹⁸⁸ Many students have decided to study in Japan: since 2001, the number of South Koreans studying in Japan has

¹⁸⁵ Japanese Foundation, “Korea.”

¹⁸⁶ Adapted from “Korea,” Japanese Foundation, accessed May 15, 2022, <https://www.jpf.go.jp/j/project/japanese/survey/area/country/2020/korea.html>.

¹⁸⁷ Lang, Kim and Matsumoto, “K-pop and Job Pressures Connect Students in Japan and South Korea.”

¹⁸⁸ Lang, Kim and Matsumoto, “K-pop and Job Pressures Connect Students in Japan and South Korea.”

remained around 15,000 (Figure 22).¹⁸⁹ The main reason for studying Japanese is to work in Japan, whose unemployment rate is lower than South Korea's.¹⁹⁰

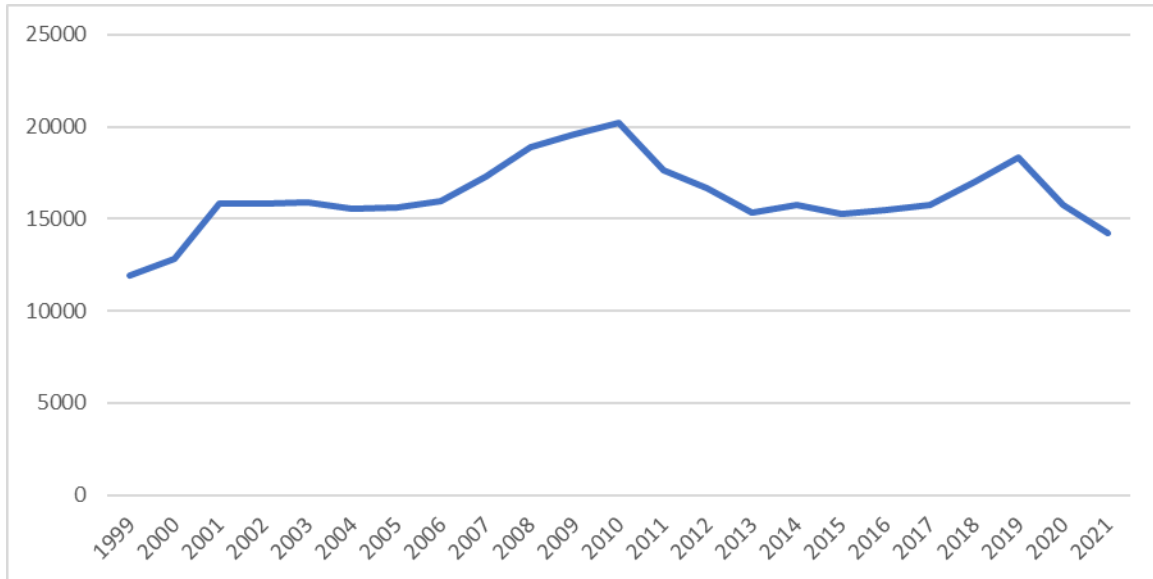


Figure 22. South Korean Students Studying in Japan¹⁹¹

While it appears that most Koreans who learn Japanese do so for education or work and not for cultural consumption for its own sake, this still amounts to high-salience consumption, as students are inevitably exposed to Japanese culture when learning the language. This is especially so if the teacher is Japanese, providing direct person-to-person interaction.

¹⁸⁹ “外国人留学生在籍状況調査[Foreign Student Enrollment Status Survey],” Japan Student Service Organization, accessed May 17, 2022, <https://www.studyinjapan.go.jp/ja/statistics/zaiseiki/index.html>.

¹⁹⁰ Lang, Kim and Matsumoto, “K-pop and Job Pressures Connect Students in Japan and South Korea.”

¹⁹¹ Adapted from Japan Student Service Organization, “外国人留学生在籍状況調査.”

12. Vehicles

Japanese automakers have had limited success operating in South Korea (Figure 23). While these manufacturers cannot outcompete their South Korean counterparts, they have found success among Koreans looking to purchase a foreign car.

Lexus was the first Japanese automaker to enter the Korean market in 2001. Lexus is known as a luxury brand in South Korea. However, it has not been able to compete directly with popular German car brands such as Audi or Mercedes-Benz.¹⁹² During the 2013 Japanese boycott, Japanese car brands were explicitly targeted and experienced a 20–30% decline in sales.¹⁹³ However, this dip was only temporary. In 2015, “the Dieselgate scandal, where it was discovered that Volkswagen and Audi had falsified the emissions data from their diesel engines, which helped Japanese automakers regain ground in 2016 and 2017,” with market share going from about 2% in 2016 to 3% in 2017 of new cars registered in South Korea.¹⁹⁴ The 2019–2020 boycott hit Japanese automakers severely, with Japanese exports of cars to Japan dropping over \$200 million USD in the time frame.¹⁹⁵ Japanese automakers saw their market share fall from 2.4% to 1.1% in 2020.¹⁹⁶ In 2020 Nissan pulled out of the Korean market, stating the need for global restructuring and shutting down plants elsewhere in the world.¹⁹⁷ Although Nissan did not specifically

¹⁹² Jang Seob Yoon, “Lexus Car Registration Number South Korea 2001–2020,” Statista, January 7, 2022, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1097174/south-korea-lexus-car-registration-number/>.

¹⁹³ “Trading Economics “Japan Exports of Motor Cars and Vehicles for Transporting Persons to South Korea.”

¹⁹⁴ Yoon, “Number of Japanese Cars Registered in South Korea from 2001 to 2020;” “Japan’s Share in S. Korean Auto Market Dwindles to 1.1% Mainly Due to Unattractive Design,” *Econo Times*, January 11, 2021, <https://www.econotimes.com/Japans-share-in-S-Korean-auto-market-dwindles-to-1-1-mainly-due-to-unattractive-design-1599935>; “South Korea New Car Registrations,” Trading Economics, accessed August 9, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-korea/car-registrations>.

¹⁹⁵ Trading Economics “Japan Exports of Motor Cars and Vehicles for Transporting Persons To South Korea.”

¹⁹⁶ *Econo Times*, “Japan’s Share in S. Korean Auto Market Dwindles to 1.1% Mainly Due to Unattractive Design;” Trading Economics, “South Korea New Car Registrations.”

¹⁹⁷ Park Yun-gu and Kim Hyo-jin, “Nissan to Exit Korean Market This Year Amid Global Restructuring,” *Pulse by Maeil Business News Korea*, May 29, 2020, <https://pulsenews.co.kr/view.php?year=2020&no=550671>.

state the boycotts as a reason for leaving South Korea, it did refer to internal and external factors for the pullout.¹⁹⁸

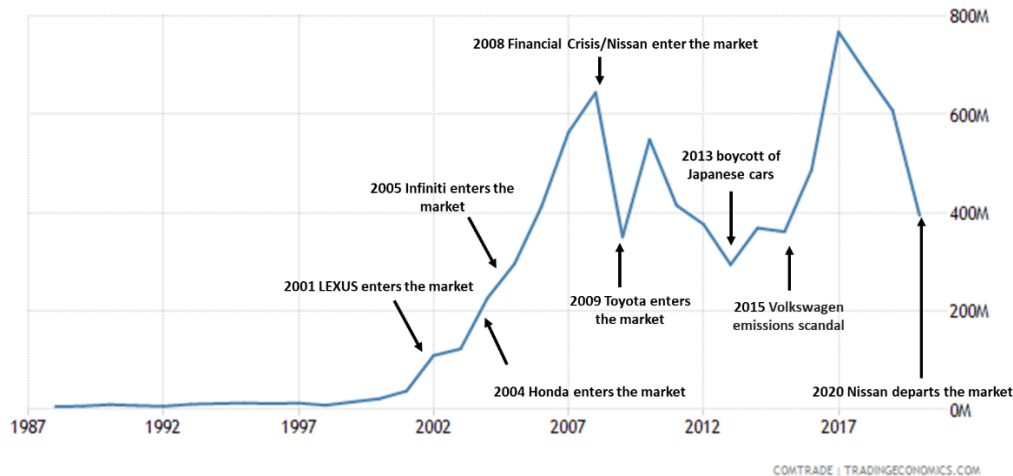


Figure 23. Japan Exports of Motor Cars and Vehicles for Transporting Persons to South Korea in USD.¹⁹⁹

Japanese vehicles apparently have low salience: even if it is known that the manufacturer is Japanese, the motivation to buy a Japanese-produced car seems more driven by the features of the cars than their ties to Japan.²⁰⁰

13. Conclusion

Most of the Japanese products, contents, and services that South Koreans consume do have at least some level of Japan country salience. Travel to Japan has the highest; movies and books also have both high consumption and a relatively high degree of salience. However, despite significant consumption of Japanese products, contents, and services,

¹⁹⁸ Kim Da-sol, "Nissan to Pull Out from South Korea," *The Korea Herald*, May 28, 2020, <https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20200528000916>.

¹⁹⁹ "Japan Exports of Motor Cars and Vehicles for Transporting Persons to South Korea," Trading Economics, accessed May 16, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/japan/exports/south-korea/motor-cars-vehicles-transporting-persons>.

²⁰⁰ Lee Sae-ha and Jenny Lee, "Japan-Made Car Sales Recover in Korea on Popular Hybrid Models, Fast Delivery," *Pulse by Maeil Business News Korea*, January 11, 2022, <https://pulsenews.co.kr/view.php?year=2022&no=30478>.

South Korean attitudes towards Japan remain quite negative. The following section will show how other significant issues ultimately tarnish the positive image of Japan that its culture consumers might be receiving.

E. SOUTH KOREAN ATTITUDES TOWARD JAPAN

South Korean attitudes toward Japan have been fairly negative since 2004, as shown in Figures 24 and 25. The main driver of these negative attitudes is visits by Japanese politicians to the Yasukuni Shrine and historical grievances.²⁰¹ However, there was a three-year period of positive attitudes, from 2009 to 2011. During these three years, the longtime opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) finally took power.²⁰² The DPJ signaled its intention to uphold the Murayama Statement, a Japanese prime ministerial statement from 1995 that took a well-received (in Korea) position on historical recognition and reconciliation in Asia.²⁰³

²⁰¹ Han Wool Jeong, *Misunderstandings in the Mutual Perceptions of Citizens from South Korea and Japan and Finding Solutions for Improving Relations*, (Seoul: East Asia Institute, 2015) 5.

²⁰² Jeong, *Misunderstandings in the Mutual Perceptions of Citizens from South Korea and Japan and Finding Solutions for Improving Relations*, 5.

²⁰³ Jeong, *Misunderstandings in the Mutual Perceptions of Citizens from South Korea and Japan and Finding Solutions for Improving Relations*, 5; Tomiichi Murayama, "On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the war's end," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, August 15, 1995, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/pm/murayama/9508.html>.

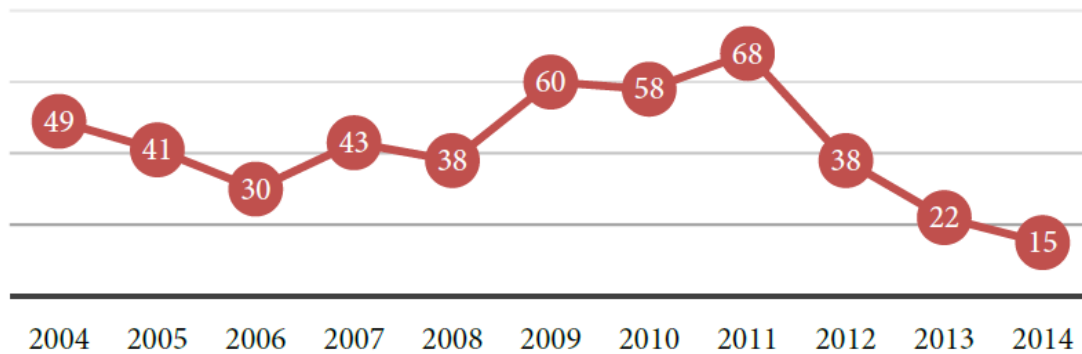


Figure 24. Percentage of Korean Citizens Who Have a “Positive View of Japan’s International Role”²⁰⁴

However, in 2012 the Liberal Democratic Party and Shinzo Abe re-took power in Japan. Abe’s historical revisionism and drive to expand the Japanese military led to a negative opinion of Japan. Despite the dip, positive attitudes would triple from 2013 to 2019, before dropping in 2020. As discussed previously, tensions between both countries boiled over in 2019 (after that year’s survey was conducted), leading to a drop in favorable perceptions of Japan by South Koreans. While tension remain between both countries, the boycott ultimately fizzled out due to the COVID pandemic and internal scandals.²⁰⁵ In 2021, South Korean positive attitudes toward Japan almost doubled again. However, their absolute level is only 20.5%. In 2022, Yoon Suk-yeol was elected president of South Korea, campaigning in part on a desire for better relations with Japan.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ Jeong, *Misunderstandings in the Mutual Perceptions of Citizens from South Korea and Japan and Finding Solutions for Improving Relations*, 5.

²⁰⁵ Choe Sang-hun, “The Den of Thieves’: South Koreans Are Furious Over Housing Scandal,” *The New York Times*, March 23, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/23/world/asia/korea-housing-lh-scandal-moon-election.html>; Chun, “Changing the anti-Japanese frame;” Bae, Kim and Roh, “End of No-Japanese Boycott? Uniqlo Korea Turns to Black;” Box Office Mojo by IMDB Pro, “South Korea Yearly Box Office.”

²⁰⁶ Hiroshi Minegishi, “Yoon era stokes hope in Japan for better South Korea relations,” *Nikkei Asia*, May 11, 2022, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Yoon-era-stokes-hope-in-Japan-for-better-South-Korea-relations>.

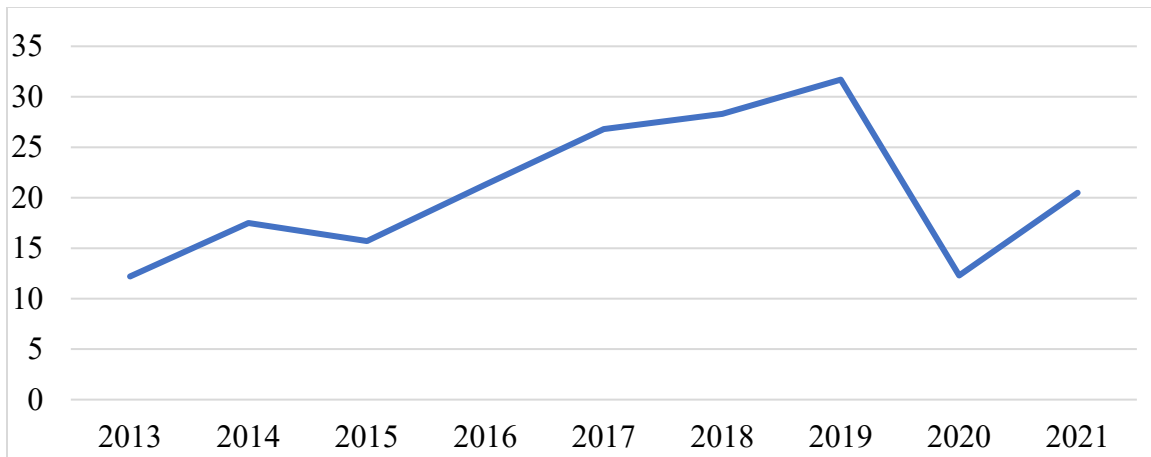


Figure 25. Percentage of Favorable Perception of Japan by South Koreans²⁰⁷

1. Reasons for Impressions

In 2014, the GENRON/EAI survey began asking respondents the main reason behind their impressions of Japan. The most significant issues that create negative impressions towards Japan are the perceived failure of Japan to adequately acknowledge its historical faults and the Dokdo/Takeshima island dispute, with a minor factor being anti-Korean sentiment in Japan (Figure 26). That these reasons are consistent over time demonstrates that the drivers of South Korean unfavorability toward Japan are tied to larger issues and not certain Korean or Japanese administrations. For example, when favorable attitudes toward Japan plummeted in 2020, the reasons for negative attitudes remained consistent.

²⁰⁷ East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 13.

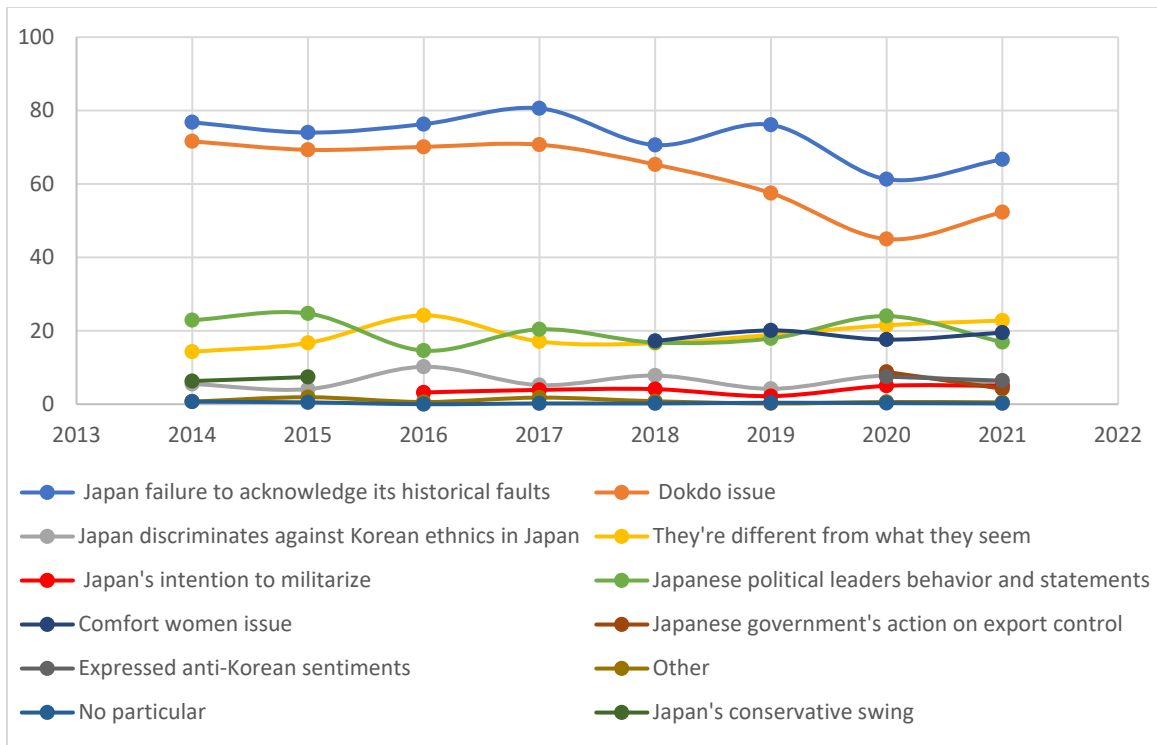


Figure 26. Reason for Unfavorability toward Japan²⁰⁸

The same survey shows that the biggest positive influencers on South Korean impressions of Japan are the perception that Japanese people are kind and hardworking and that it is a developed country (Figure 27). Japanese culture and products are influencers on positive impressions; however, their influence is smaller. As will be discussed in Chapter IV, over 20% of Koreans report getting a positive impression from the high quality of Japanese products and the appeal of Japan's food and culture. In 2021 almost 20% responded that they received a positive impression of Japanese popular culture, showing that although it has limited reach in South Korea, it can still influence impressions. In 2015 to 2018, the response "interest in traditional Japanese culture" was the only choice that

²⁰⁸ Adapted from East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 7th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2019) Analysis Report on Comparative Data* June, 2019, 6, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 15, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 6th South Korea Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll (2018) Comparative Analysis Report*, 4, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 2nd Joint Korea-Japan Public Opinion Poll (2014) Comparative Data*, 4; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 3rd Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, 6; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO *The 4th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2016) Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, 6.

referred to Japanese culture, implying that some of those who chose this response may be referring to Japanese popular culture. On the contrary, those who enjoy Japanese popular culture may not have selected the response “interest in traditional Japanese culture,” which limits the measurement of the effect of Japanese popular culture. Available data thus shows that Japanese popular culture is not the most significant factor in South Korean impressions in Japan, though it does play a role with a minority.

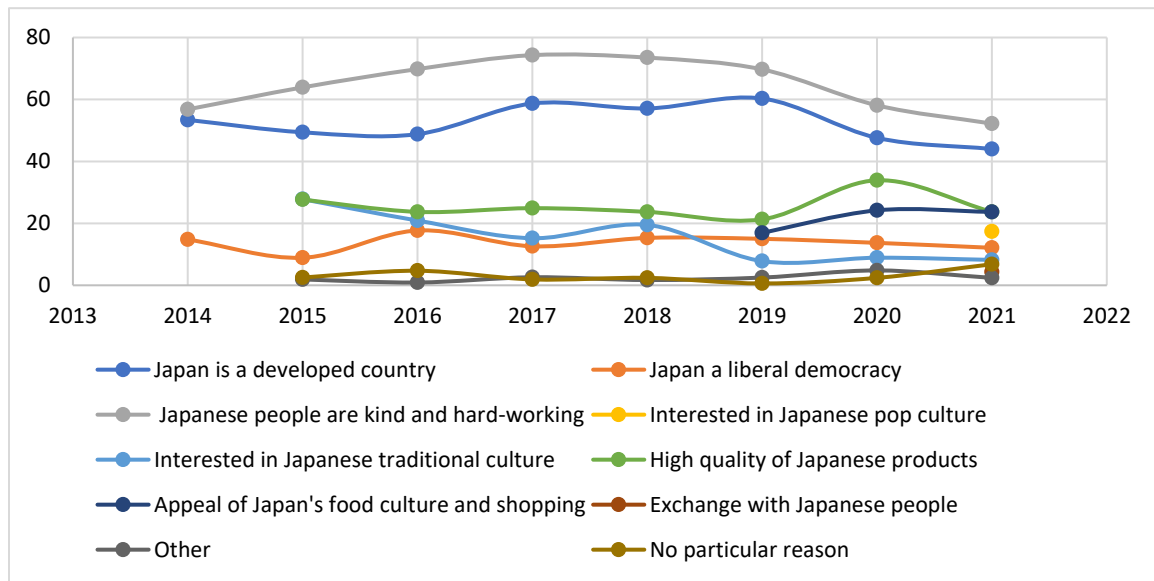


Figure 27. Reason for Favorability toward Japan (May Pick up to Two)²⁰⁹

2. Effects of Japanese Pop Culture

GENRON NPO/EAI, in its 2021 survey, asked those who stated that they somewhat enjoyed or enjoyed a lot of Japanese culture what kind of impression they received when consuming it (Figure 28). Of the 182 people surveyed who stated that Japanese culture

²⁰⁹ Adapted from East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 7th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2019) Analysis Report on Comparative Data* June, 2019, 5, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 14, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 6th South Korea Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll (2018) Comparative Analysis Report*, 5, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 2nd Joint Korea-Japan Public Opinion Poll (2014) Comparative Data*, 4; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 3rd Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, 5; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 4th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2016) Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, 6.

brought somewhat or a lot of enjoyment, 66.4% stated that it gave a good impression of the country, while another third stated that they were unsure what kind of impression it gave them about Japan. An explanation for the significant number of users who are unsure what kind of impression it gave them about Japan may be that these consumers have conflicting preconceived views on Japan. Kelsey's individual case study on South Koreans who consume Japanese cultural finds several individuals who state they hate Japan despite consuming its culture.²¹⁰

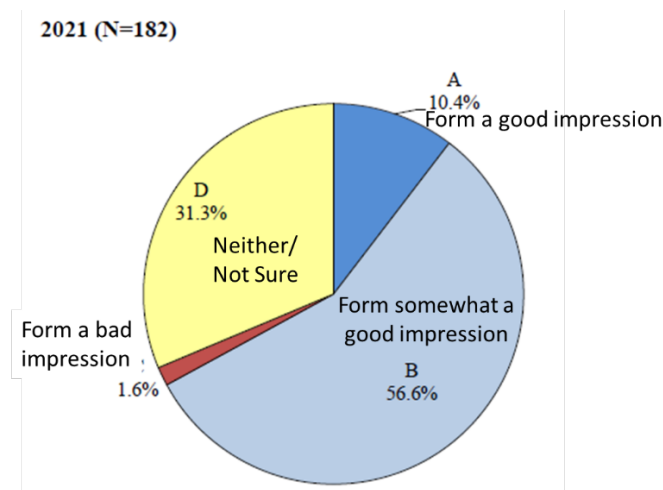


Figure 28. If You Enjoy Japanese Culture, What Is Your Impression of the Country Through Popular Culture?²¹¹

The 49.5% of South Koreans who enjoy Japanese culture stated that they would reduce their consumption if the relationship between Japan and South Korea worsened (Figure 29). This number suggests that most Korean consumers of Japanese culture will not or cannot separate the two countries' political relationship from cultural consumption. The boycott of Japanese goods does display this belief in practice. Many South Korean consumers refrained from Japanese goods in protest. However, many consumers continued

²¹⁰ Kelsey, "I Hate You, No I Love You: Growing Up with Japanese Media in (Postcolonial) South Korea," 375–386.

²¹¹ Adapted from East Asia Institute and Genron NPO *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 61.

their consumption, although more privately, by streaming movies and television shows and shopping online.²¹² Also, the effects of these boycotts appear only to be temporary and not long-lasting, as South Korean consumption of Japanese goods is returning to normal, indicating that the situation has been only temporary.

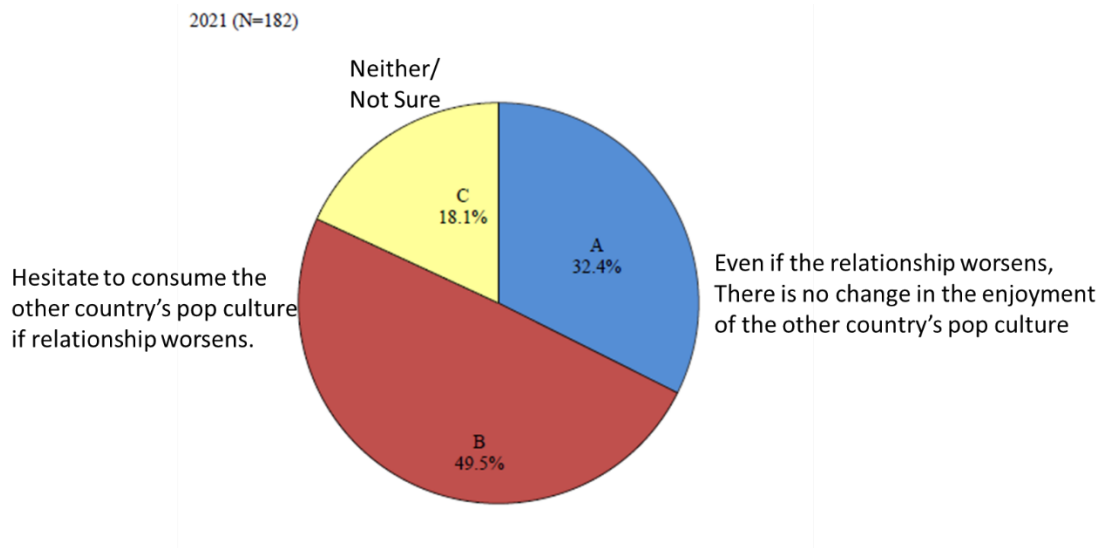


Figure 29. For Those Who Enjoy Japanese Culture, Do Worsening ROK-Japan Relations Affect Your Japanese Popular Culture Consumption?²¹³

F. CONCLUSION

Despite Japanese popular culture having being historically banned and recently boycotted numerous times, South Koreans do consume a significant variety of Japanese products and content. Many of these products, such as travel to Japan, Japanese language, cuisine, movies, television shows, and books have significant Japan salience. However, their influence on changing impressions is relatively low, as historical grievances and the Dokdo/Takeshima island dispute prove to be more significant influencers on negative impressions. Of South Koreans who reported a positive impression of Japan in 2021, only

²¹² Flix Patrol. "TOP 10 on Netflix in Japan in history," Flix Patrol; Kim, "Uniqlo to close more stores while enhancing online options."

²¹³ Adapted from East Asia Institute and Genron NPO *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 62.

20% stated that this stemmed from Japanese culture. When South Koreans are asked if they enjoy Japanese popular culture, only 18% of respondents report that they do. This finding shows that only a minority of South Koreans enjoy consuming Japanese popular culture (however, there may be more South Koreans who do enjoy it but meanwhile do not *view* themselves as consumers of Japanese popular culture).

While available data are limited to only a few years, it does appear that Koreans in their 20s and younger have a more favorable impression of Japan than the overall average.²¹⁴ GENRON NPO/EAI found that the younger generation had a higher percentage of those who identify as Japanese popular culture consumers, which may influence their opinion towards Japan. The younger generation has lived most or all of their life in a South Korea where Japanese popular culture was not banned, increasing their chances of being exposed to it during their formative years. Also, the connectivity of the internet has made it easier for this generation to receive Japanese popular culture than other generations.

There is a strong correlation between enjoyment of Japanese popular culture and a positive impression of Japan. Two-thirds of those surveyed stated they enjoyed Japanese popular culture and received a positive impression of Japan through their consumption. However, it is unknown if popular culture influences these attitudes or if the consumer starts out with a positive view of Japan, which in turn drives cultural consumption. Although it could be argued that South Korean attitudes toward Japan would be worse without Japanese cultural consumption, its effects only go so far, as a majority of South Koreans are willing to temporarily cease consumption of Japanese products when relations between both countries worsen, limiting its potential effects.

²¹⁴ Yul, *Korea-Japan Relations in Crisis: People Want a Change* (Seoul, South Korea, East Asia Institute: 2020), 3–5.

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III. JAPAN

A. INTRODUCTION

Japanese consumption of South Korean popular culture content has grown since the early 2000s. Many expect this increased consumption to lead to more positive Japanese attitudes toward South Korea. However, these assumptions are too simple, as Japanese attitudes toward South Korea are more complex. First, while it is true that Japanese consumption of South Korean cultural content is increasing, it is still only consumed by a minority of Japanese. Also, while Japanese who consume South Korean culture have stated that it gives them a positive impression of South Korea, other factors may influence their overall impression of South Korea, such as South Korean criticism of Japan. While it can be argued that if it were not for Korean popular culture consumption in Japan, impressions, and attitudes toward South Korea would be worse than they currently are, Korean culture consumption may ultimately be an insufficient fix for Japanese impressions of South Korea.

B. JAPANESE CONSUMPTION OF SOUTH KOREAN GOODS/CONTENT/ SERVICES

In 2021, GENRON/EAI asked Japanese respondents if they enjoyed South Korean culture (Figure 30). Only 34.5% (345 people) said they somewhat enjoyed it or enjoyed it a lot. On the other hand, over half replied that they are not interested in it or do not enjoy it, which shows that those who consume South Korean culture regularly are a minority.

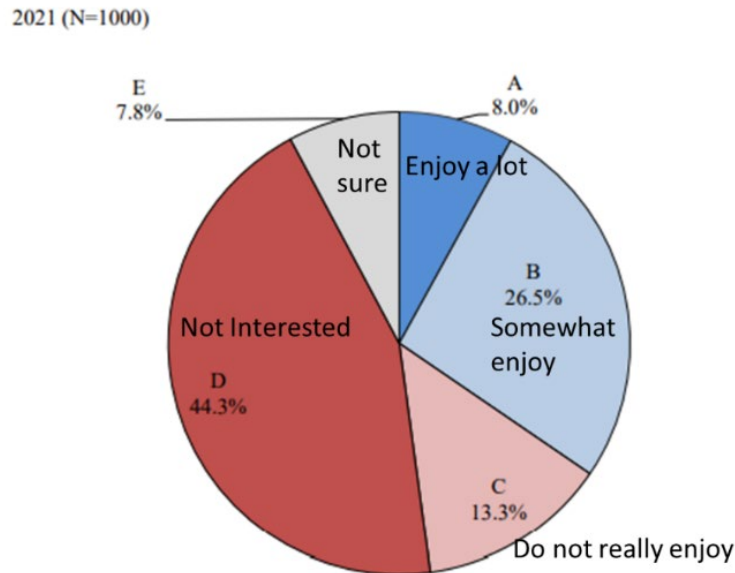


Figure 30. Does South Korean Culture Bring Enjoyment? (i.e., K-Pop, Dramas, Movies) ²¹⁵

In 2020, the Observatory of Economic Complexity estimated that South Korea exported \$25.1 billion USD to Japan, making Japan the fifth largest importer of South Korean goods.²¹⁶ This thesis will examine products, content, or services most likely to be consumed by a Japanese household consumer. Japanese have comparatively high consumption of Korean cuisine, beauty products, music, and television shows. Japanese moderately consume travel to South Korea, fashion, and learning Korean. Korean manufactured goods, food products, cars, and movies have low consumption in Japan.

C. PRODUCT/CULTURE/SERVICE SALIENCE ASSOCIATED WITH SOUTH KOREA

To understand if South Korean culture consumption affects attitudes, it must first be determined if the product, content, or service being consumed has country salience: the degree to which consumers associate a cultural item with South Korea in the first place. Some South Korean products, contents, or services have higher salience than others.

²¹⁵ Adapted from “East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 60

²¹⁶ Observatory of Economic Complexity, “South Korea/Japan.”

Products, contents, or services with high salience include travel to South Korea, learning the Korean language, cuisine, television programming, music, and movies. Fashion and beauty products may have high salience for some but not for others. Processed food, vehicles, and manufactured goods have little to no salience.

D. PRODUCT AND CONTENT ANALYSIS

This section finds that South Korean products, content, and services that the Japanese consume the most also have the highest country salience. In contrast, products, content, and services not being consumed tend to have little salience. This section will be arranged by content that is most consumed, in decreasing order.

1. Cuisine

Perhaps the most popular South Korean product that Japanese consume is the cuisine, which has a high degree of salience (this does not refer to food made in South Korea and shipped to Japan, whose salience is relatively low and will be discussed in a later section). The Korean Foundation for International Culture Exchange (KOFICE) asked Japanese survey participants what they believed was the popularity of certain South Korean products in Japan, and most participants stated that Korean food is very popular (Figure 31).

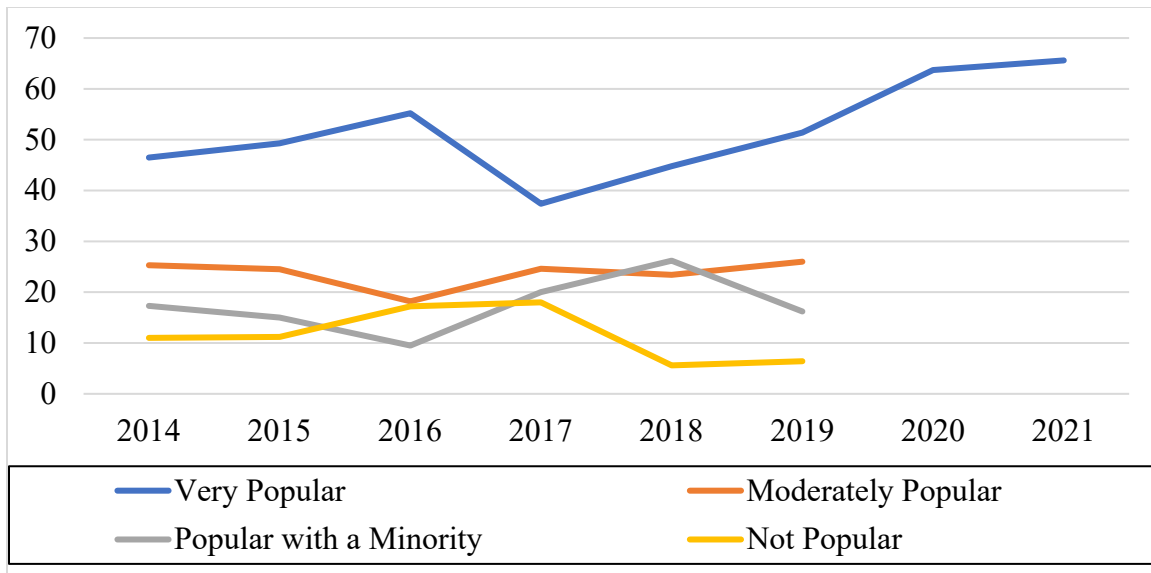


Figure 31. How Popular is Korean Food in Japan?²¹⁷

The consumption of Korean food is an interesting case. KOFICE, in its *2019 Hallyu White Paper*, describes Korean food as not Hallyu (creating a true image of South Korea) in Japan due to Korean restaurants being owned and operated by Japanese and not being located solely in “Korean towns.”²¹⁸ Also, KOFICE describes food as Hallyu when one

²¹⁷ For 2020 and 2021, only data on the amount who responded with very popular is available. Adapted from Park Seong-hyeon, *3rd 해외한류실태조사* [3rd Overseas Hallyu Survey], (Korean Foundation for International Culture Exchange), 280, http://kofice.or.kr/b20industry/b20_industry_00_view.asp?seq=126&page=1&find=&search=; Korean Foundation for International Culture Exchange, *2015 해외한류실태조사* [2015 Overseas Survey], (Korean Foundation for International Culture Exchange), 107 http://kofice.or.kr/b20industry/b20_industry_00_view.asp?seq=245&page=1&find=&search=; Kwak Young-jin *2016–2017 해외한류실태조사* [2016 - 2017 Overseas Hallyu Survey] (Seoul: Korea Foundation for International Culture Exchange, March, 2017), 110, http://kofice.or.kr/b20industry/b20_industry_00_view.asp?seq=295&page=1&find=&search=; Yong-rak Kim, *2018 해외한류실태조사* [2018 Overseas Hallyu Survey] (Seoul: Korean Foundation for International Culture Exchange, 2018), 120, http://kofice.or.kr/b20industry/b20_industry_00_view.asp?seq=978&page=1&find=&search=; Kim Ji-yeon, *2019 해외한류실태조사* [2019 Overseas Hallyu Survey], (Seoul: Korea Foundation for International Culture Exchange, 2019), 108 http://kofice.or.kr/b20industry/b20_industry_00_view.asp?seq=995&page=1&find=&search=; Yong-rak Kim, *2020 해외한류실태조사* [2020 Overseas Hallyu Survey], (Seoul: Korea Foundation for International Culture Exchange, 2020), 43, http://kofice.or.kr/b20industry/b20_industry_00_view.asp?seq=1049&page=1&find=&search=; Yong-rak Kim, *2021 해외한류실태조사* [2021 Overseas Hallyu Survey], (Seoul: Korean Foundation for International Culture Exchange, 2021), 30, http://kofice.or.kr/b20industry/b20_industry_00_view.asp?seq=1200&page=1&find=&search=; Gil-Hwa Jeong, *2022 해외한류실태조사* [2022 Overseas Hallyu Survey], (Seoul: Korean Foundation for International Culture Exchange, 2022), 43, http://kofice.or.kr/b20industry/b20_industry_00_view.asp?seq=1235&page=1&find=&search=.

²¹⁸ Lee et al., *Hallyu White Paper*, 2019, 2019,” 253.

wants to consume it after watching Korean television shows or movies and wants to try the food they see. This is not the case in Japan due to Japan's long history of Korean food consumption.²¹⁹ During Japan's colonization of Korea, many Koreans migrated (whether willingly or forced) to Japan. After World War II, some ethnic Koreans stayed in Japan and opened Korean restaurants. These restaurants often took Japanese names to avoid discrimination, thus partially obscuring their Korean identity. As their food grew in popularity, many Japanese entrepreneurs began to capitalize on Korean food by opening their own restaurants and tweaking the recipes for Japanese consumer. As a result, many Korean restaurants in Japan are owned and operated by Japanese.

KOFICE does not classify Korean food as Hallyu in Japan, on the grounds that there is no cultural interaction with Korea when eating Korean food.²²⁰ But while the Japanese may not directly interact with a Korean or eat in a Korean town when at a Korean restaurant, they associate Korean food with Korea. In yearly surveys from 2017 to 2021, when asked what they first associate with Korea, the top response for Japanese every year was Korean food. Korean food tops many options, including K-pop, taekwondo, and the North Korean nuclear threat.²²¹ These data shows that although there may be limited cultural interaction while eating Korean food, Japanese consumers associate it with Korea.

However, when analyzing why Korean food is popular in Japan, it can be seen that the Korean culture is being lost with the food. In the same survey, the top answer on why Korean food is popular in Japan is that it is tasty.²²² This response can be an expected response to popular food. From 2019 to 2021, Japanese consumers were able to give two answers: Korean food was healthy and inexpensive received the second and third amount of responses. Being influenced by Hallyu stars or wanting to experience Korean culture

²¹⁹ Christopher Laurent, "THINK PIECE: Diaspora, Exclusion, and Appropriation: The Cuisine of the Korean Minority in Japan," *Asia Pacific Perspectives* 16, no. 2 (2020), 28 – 66, https://www.usfca.edu/sites/default/files/admission/pdf/app_v16n2_laurent.pdf.

²²⁰ Lee et al., "Hallyu White Paper, 2019," 253.

²²¹ Kim, 2019 *해외한류실태조사*, 103; Kim, 2020 *해외한류실태조사*, 38; Kim, 2021 *해외한류실태조사*, 18; Jeong, 2022 *해외한류실태조사*, 28.

²²² Kim, 2019 *해외한류실태조사*, 113; Kim, 2020 *해외한류실태조사*, 48; Kim, 2021 *해외한류실태조사*, 40; Jeong, 2022 *해외한류실태조사*, 55.

has seen a decrease in responses from 2019 to 2021.²²³ It appears Japanese views on Korean food are being further separated from its Korean cultural identity. This trend should be expected as Korean food has been popular in Japan for 40 to 50 years and has become ingrained in Japanese society. As Bohas states, when foreign products become ingrained into a society, they lose their association with their country of origin.²²⁴ Although it appears that Korean food is becoming ingrained in Japanese society, Japanese are aware of the association of the cuisine with South Korea. Because of this knowledge, cuisine has high salience.

2. Beauty

South Korean beauty products are popular in Japan; however, Korean beauty products have low country salience for most consumers. South Korean exports of essential oils, perfumes, cosmetics, and toiletries has tripled in market size in Japan in the last decade (Figure 32), up to about 17% of all exports. In 2020, South Korea was the second-largest exporter to Japan of essential oils, perfumes, cosmetics, and toiletries after France.²²⁵

²²³ Kim, 2020 *해외한류실태조사*, 48; Kim, 2021 *해외한류실태조사*, 40; Jeong, 2022 *해외한류실태조사*, 55.

²²⁴ Bohas, “The Paradox of Anti-Americanism: Reflection on the Shallow Concept of Soft Power.”

²²⁵ France exports \$620.83 million USD of essential oils, perfumes, cosmetics, and toiletries to Japan, whereas South Korea exports \$585.22 million USD. Trading Economics, “Japan Imports from South Korea of Essential oils, perfumes, cosmetics, toiletries;” “Japan Imports from France of Essential oils, perfumes, cosmetics, toiletries;” Trading Economics, *accessed* May 1, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/japan/imports/france/essential-oils-perfumes-cosmetics-toiletries>.

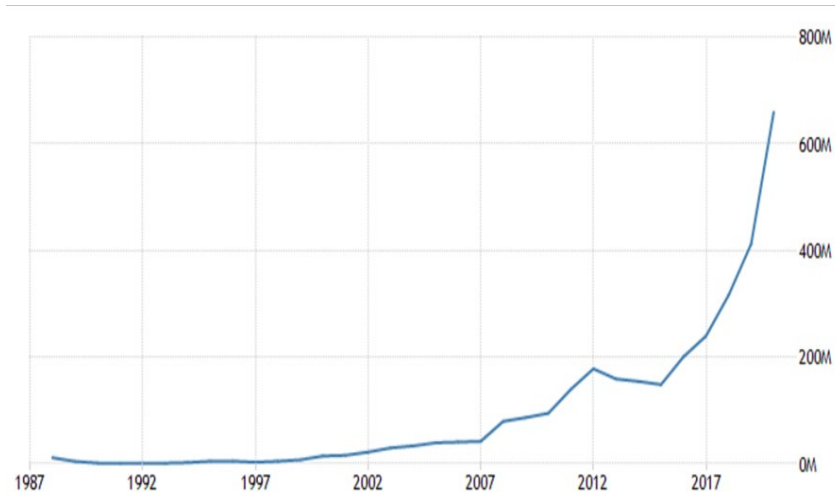


Figure 32. Japan Imports from South Korea of Essential Oils, Perfumes, Cosmetics, Toiletries in USD²²⁶

Regarding cosmetics only, South Korea was the fifth largest exporter to Japan in 2018 and rose to third in 2020 with a 13.6% market share.²²⁷ South Korean cosmetics continue to see growth in Japan, whereas China's cosmetic products have leveled off (Figure 33).

²²⁶ Source: "Japan Imports from South Korea of Essential Oils, Perfumes, Cosmetics, Toiletries," Trading Economics, accessed May 1, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/japan/imports/south-korea/essential-oils-perfumes-cosmetics-toiletries>.

²²⁷ Sarah Chea, "Korean Cosmetics Win in Japan with Price, Quality And Idols," *Korea JoongAng Daily* May 5, 2021. <https://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/2021/05/05/business/industry/cosmetics-korean-cosmetics-missha/20210505154300356.html>.

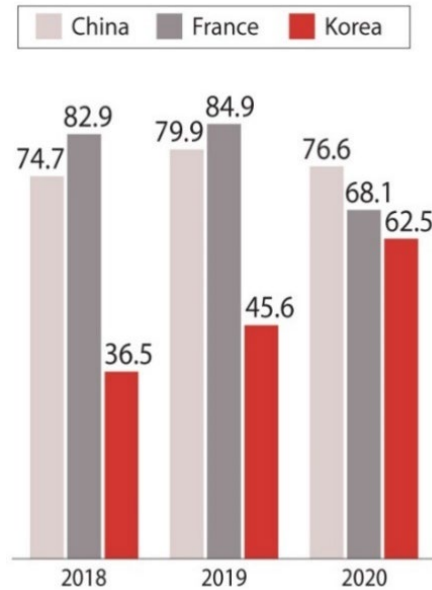


Figure 33. Japan's Top Three Cosmetics Product Trading Partners in Billion Yen²²⁸

Japanese surveyed by KOFICE from 2018 to 2021 who identified as consumers of Korean beauty products stated that the top reason these products were popular was the low price for the quality, followed their excellent quality itself (table 3). The response option that Korean beauty products are popular due to Korean stars' using or promoting the products received less than 20% of responses throughout the four years. In contrast, the "low price for the quality" option received a 40% or greater response from 2019 to 2021.²²⁹ This suggests that consumption of Korean beauty products has less to do with cultural association than with price and quality.

²²⁸Source: Chea, "Korean Cosmetics Win in Japan with Price, Quality and Idols."

²²⁹ In 2019–2021 respondents were able to pick two choices, whereas in 2018 they were able to only able to pick one choice, which led to a lower percentage of everything in 2018. Data compiled from: Kim, 2019 *해외한류실태조사*, 113; Kim, 2020 *해외한류실태조사*, 48; Kim, 2021 *해외한류실태조사*, 39; Jeong, 2022 *해외한류실태조사*, 54.

Table 3. Why Is Korean Beauty Popular?²³⁰

Top 2 choices by year			
2018	2019	2020	2021
Low price for the quality	Low price for the quality	Low price for the quality	Low price for the quality
Excellent quality	Excellent quality	Excellent quality	Excellent quality

When looking at negative influences on Korean beauty products' popularity, the 2021 survey's top answer, with 36.7% responses, was “no reason,” followed by “excessive promotion” at 22.2%.²³¹ Relations with South Korea were the third factor, with only 18.3% of responses. In 2020, when relations were at a low point between both countries, “no reason” was still the top response with 30.2%, followed by “relations with Korea” at 23.9%.²³² These responses for negative reasons suggest that cosmetics' being from Korea play a comparatively minor role in attitudes toward them.

Also, since Korean beauty is so prevalent in Japan, it leads some not to associate it with Korea. A Japanese shopper of Korean cosmetics stated, “I don't really recognize the style as being ‘Korean’ because everyone does it nowadays.”²³³ Again, as Bohas states, once a piece of culture becomes ingrained in a society, it loses its association with the country it comes from.²³⁴ Due to Korean beauty products' great popularity and consumption in Japan, they may be starting to be ingrained in Japanese society. There does not seem to be a strong association between South Korea and Korean beauty products.

²³⁰ Adapted from Kim, 2019 *해외한류실태조사*, 112; Kim, 2020 *해외한류실태조사*, 47; Kim, 2021 *해외한류실태조사*, 39; Jeong, 2022 *해외한류실태조사*, 53.

²³¹ Jeong, 2022 *해외한류실태조사*, 64.

²³² Jeong, 2022 *해외한류실태조사*, 49.

²³³ Kim, Lee, and Hahm, “‘Third Korean Wave’ Becomes Part Of Everyday Japanese Life.”

²³⁴ Bohas, “The Paradox of Anti-Americanism: Reflection on the Shallow Concept of Soft Power.”

3. Music

Korean music, more commonly known as K-pop, has grown in Japan and has been so successful that these K-pop acts can compete directly with Japanese groups for fans and money. Besides its rapid growth in Japan, Korean music has high South Korean country salience. K-pop first entered Japan in 2001, when Bo-ah Kwon (known professionally as BoA) became the first Korean artist to have an album reach number one in Japan.²³⁵ For BoA to break into the Japanese market, her record company had her study Japanese for two years before debuting there. Her knowledge of Japanese and Korean would lead her record label to record songs in Japanese for the Japanese market and in Korean for the South Korean market.²³⁶ By releasing songs in both languages, BoA had success in both markets. BoA's success in Japan would be the model for future Korean musical acts in Japan, who followed the model of releasing songs in Japanese.

Consumption of K-Pop in Japan has been occurring for over a decade. An explanation for the rise of K-Pop in Japan is that it may have benefited from some recent setbacks in Japan's own "J-Pop" industry. Some of the leading J-pop bands have broken up or have gone on hiatus (i.e., SMAP, V6, and Arashi), while other groups have been criticized for their over-commercialization (e.g., AKB48).²³⁷ The void created by J-Pop groups may have given K-Pop an opening in Japan. Figure 34 shows that K-Pop singles have been popular enough to top the Weekly Billboard Charts in Japan every year since 2010. Topping the weekly charts as a non-Japanese artist is a difficult feat, as all other non-Japanese artists have only topped the charts for three weeks since 2008. However, no song recorded in Korean has reached number one on the charts.²³⁸ All Korean artists that topped the charts had their songs recorded in Japanese. The exception is BTS's "Butter" and

²³⁵ Robert Michael Poole, "No Constrictions on BOA's Ambitions," *The Japan Times*, March 20, 2009, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/culture/2009/03/20/music/no-constrictions-on-boas-ambitions/>

²³⁶ Poole, "No Constrictions on BoA's Ambitions."

²³⁷ Ahn and Yoon, "Between Love and Hate."

²³⁸ "Hot 100," Billboard Japan, accessed March 15, 2022, <https://www.billboard-japan.com/charts/detail?a=hot100&year=2009&month=01&day=19>.

“Permission to Dance,” which were recorded in English.²³⁹ This data shows that it is difficult for a song not in Japanese to top the chart and that only five non-Japanese songs (all English) have topped the chart since 2008. The highest-charting song in Korean was Twice’s “Likey,” which reached number two.²⁴⁰ A possible explanation for the success of “Likey” is that three members of Twice are Japanese, which may have given the song a boost in popularity despite being in Korean.

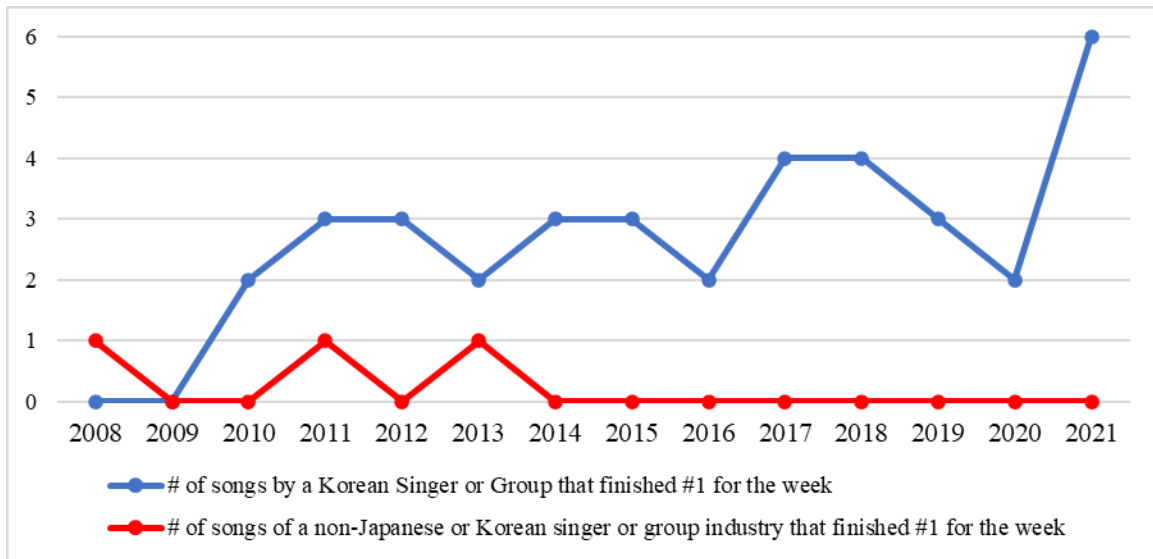


Figure 34. Weeks that Non-Japanese Musical Acts Appeared Number 1 On the Japan Weekly Hot 100²⁴¹

Among Japanese surveyed by KOFICE from 2014 to 2018, the top two reasons K-pop was popular were excellent performance and attractive singer/appearance style (table 4). These two choices may not seem to be associated with South Korea, especially as mentioned above, as most charted K-pop songs in Japan are sung in Japanese. However, the performance and appearance of K-pop acts distinguish them from J-pop acts. K-pop acts are professionals who train and execute flawless choreography and carefully manage

²³⁹ Billboard Japan, “Hot 100.”

²⁴⁰ Billboard Japan, “Hot 100.”

²⁴¹ Adapted from Billboard Japan, “Hot 100.”

their fashion, whereas J-pop acts are known for their amateurism.²⁴² Ha Jae-Keun, a culture critic, states that the most significant difference between the J-pop and K-pop systems is that music idols in Japan are seen differently from artists. Japanese fans expect cuteness from their idols, and skills are only expected from artists.²⁴³ “Idols’ main task is to please fans and develop and improve skills as they interact with their fans.”²⁴⁴ This setup leads to more of an amateur feeling in J-pop and over-commercialization, as the acts market not only music, but a wide array of products and “meet-and-greets.” K-pop artists, meanwhile, are marketed to Korean fans who prefer professionalism, which involves vigorous training.

Table 4. Why Is K-pop Popular?²⁴⁵

(Top 2 choices by year)		
2014	Excellent performance	Attractive singer/Appearance style
2015	Excellent performance	Attractive singer/Appearance style
2016	Attractive singer/Appearance style	Excellent performance
2017	Excellent performance	Attractive singer/Appearance style
2018	Attractive singer/Appearance style	Excellent performance
2019	Attractive singer/Appearance style	Excellent performance
2020	Excellent performance	Attractive singer/Appearance style
2021	Excellent performance	Attractive singer/Appearance style

This contrast between J-pop and K-pop idols can be seen in the third season of the Korean show *Produce 101*, in which people compete for a spot in a K-pop group. The show’s third season three included some members of the Japanese girl group AKB48

²⁴² Ahn and Yoon, “Between Love and Hate,” 191.

²⁴³ Park Jin-hai, “Why Japanese Pop Idol Trainees Are No Match for South Korean Rivals,” South China Morning Post, July 6, 2018, <https://www.scmp.com/culture/music/article/2153915/why-japanese-pop-idol-trainees-are-no-match-south-korean-rivals>.

²⁴⁴ Park, “Why Japanese Pop Idol Trainees Are No Match for South Korean Rivals.”

²⁴⁵ In 2019–2021 and 2015 – 2014 respondents were able to pick two choices, whereas in 2016 – 2018, they were able to only able to pick one choice. Data from: Park, *3rd 해외한류실태조사*, 358 - 359, Korean Foundation for International Culture Exchange, *2015 해외한류실태조사*, 124; Kwak *2016–2017 해외한류실태조사*, 112; Kim, *2019 해외한류실태조사*, 110; Kim, *2021 해외한류실태조사*, 34; Jeong, *2022 해외한류실태조사*, 43.

competing for a place in the K-Pop group. The audience and AKB48 were astonished at the talent difference between the Korean and Japanese idols. Some described the Japanese idols as amateurs, and many of the Japanese idols received low marks from the judges and the audience voting at home.²⁴⁶ This professionalism – not simply the desire to consume Korean culture for its own sake – is a main factor behind the popularity of K-pop in Japan. Meanwhile, most idols are Korean; and while they may sing in Japanese for Japanese fans, fans who follow their favorite idols on social media are exposed to them speaking Korean and living in South Korea. This increased association with South Korea signifies that Korean music has high salience.

4. Television Programming

South Korean television programming is highly consumed in Japan and has high country salience. In 2004, the Japanese Broadcast Corporation (NHK) aired the Korean drama *Winter Sonata*, the first Korean drama to gain widespread popularity in Japan, and its success led to more Japanese television networks airing more Korean dramas.²⁴⁷ *Winter Sonata*'s success led then-Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to say, "Bae Yong-joon [the show's lead actor] is more popular than I am in Japan."²⁴⁸

In 2011 anti-Korean hate groups demonstrated against Japanese broadcaster Fuji T.V., demanding that it not broadcast Korean dramas or programs that positively depict Korea or the Korean Wave. In 2012, this protest and others essentially put an unofficial "freeze" on Korean Wave content in Japanese mass media to avoid the wrath of anti-Korean protests.²⁴⁹ As Figure 35 shows, Korean broadcasts in Japan peaked in 2013 and have not returned to pre-peak levels. However, Japan remains the largest importer of Korean broadcast content. Since its low point in 2015, Korean broadcast exports have

²⁴⁶ Park, "Why Japanese Pop Idol Trainees Are No Match for South Korean Rivals."

²⁴⁷ Ahn and Yoon, "Between Love and Hate," 181 - 182.

²⁴⁸ "Remembering 'Winter Sonata,' the start of hallyu," *Korea Herald*, December 30, 2011, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20111230000497#:~:text=The%20show's%20popularity%20in%20Japan,soon%20rose%20to%20cult%20status>.

²⁴⁹ Ahn and Yoon, "Between Love and Hate," 192.

leveled off at around \$90 million USD.²⁵⁰ This dip in Korean content on Japanese broadcast television significantly impacts the Japanese consumer since data from 2018 and 2019 indicate that about 82% of Japanese Korean drama consumers consumed them through television broadcasts.²⁵¹

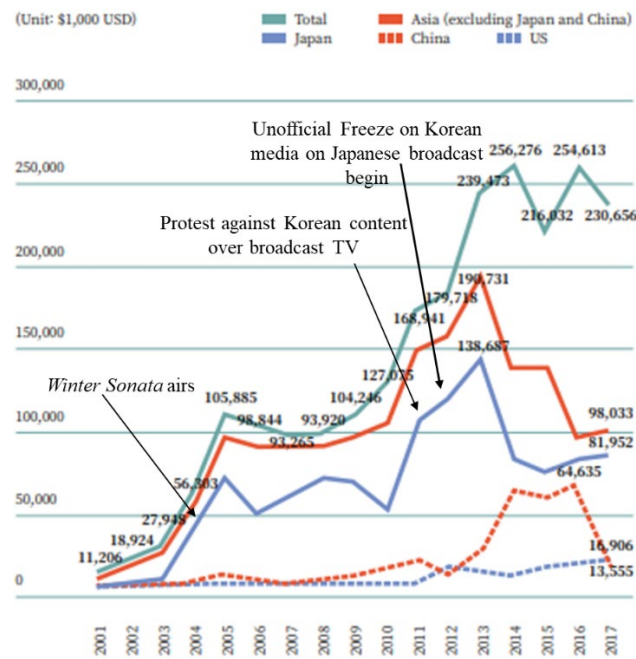


Figure 35. Exported Korean Broadcast by Country²⁵²

Despite the high numbers for television, there is a growing shift toward consuming Korean dramas online. Online video streaming services such as Netflix and Hulu have been

²⁵⁰ Lee et al., “Hallyu White Paper, 219; Ki-young Choi and Han Sang-hyuk, “2020 년 방송산업 실태조사 보고서,” [2020 Broadcasting Industry Survey Report] No. 920010 (Sejong City, South Korea: Korea Communications Commission and Ministry of Science and ICT, 2020) 153 & 156, https://kcc.go.kr/user.do?sessionId=8aTK4U5VSf31qZqKyfb8YK3TbZVFFx8B_9MZc7nA.servlet-aihgldhome10?mode=view&page=A02060100&dc=60100&boardId=1027&cp=1&boardSeq=50588; Im Hye-sook and Han Sang-hyuk, 2021 년 방송산업 실태조사 보고서” [2021 Broadcasting Industry Survey Report], No. 920010 (Sejong City, South Korea: Korea Communications Commission and Ministry of Science and ICT, 2021), 149 and 153, <https://kcc.go.kr/user.do?sessionId=tsRNSnCHRVFWYnZLgPAXtajQdEqNd0FyCO0pPwOj.servlet-aihgldhome10?mode=view&page=A02060100&dc=K00000001&boardId=1027&cp=1&boardSeq=52404>.

²⁵¹ Kim, 2020 *해외한류실태조사*, 106.

²⁵² Source: Lee et al., Hallyu White Paper, 2019, 16.

experiencing difficulties breaking through the Japanese market. In 2018 only 15.2% of Japanese used such services; however, these services are experiencing growth more recently.²⁵³ In 2018 and 2019, about 34% of Japanese who consume Korean dramas stated that they did so through online services.²⁵⁴ In this survey, the most preferred service was YouTube, with 63.8%, followed by Amazon Prime, with 50.9% users.²⁵⁵

The difficulty in measuring the amount of online streaming video consumption is that these companies do not release streaming numbers. Since 2019, though, Netflix, the second-largest online video streaming service, has been providing *Daily Top 10* lists for each country in which it operates.²⁵⁶ About 40% of Netflix Japan's Top 10 shows for 2020 and 2021 were Korean. In the first three months of 2022, almost 70% of shows in the Top 10 were Korean (Figure 36).²⁵⁷

²⁵³ Jiji Press Survey, "Survey shows 15.7% of Japanese subscribe to video streaming services to watch movies," *The Japan Times*, August 27, 2018, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/08/27/business/survey-shows-15-7-japanese-subscribe-video-streaming-services-watch-movies/>

²⁵⁴ Kim, 2020 *해외한류실태조사*, 106.

²⁵⁵ Kim, 2020 *해외한류실태조사*, 108.

²⁵⁶ Patrick Frater, "Amazon Leading in Japan's Booming SVoD Market, Study Shows," *Variety*, October 4, 2021, <https://variety.com/2021/global/asia/amazon-japan-streaming-svod-market-1235080084/>.

²⁵⁷ "TOP 10 on Netflix in Japan in history."

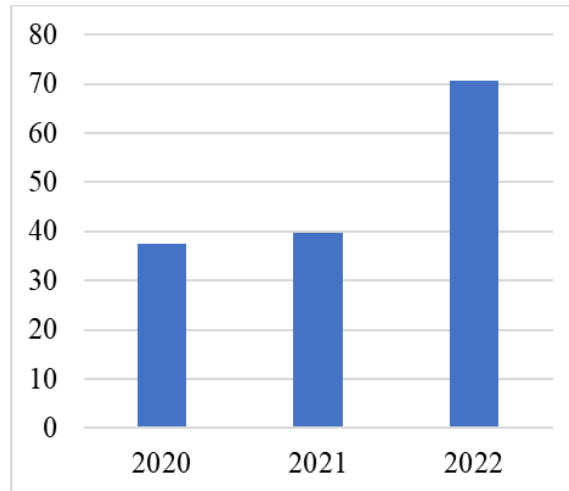


Figure 36. Percentage of Korean TV Shows Made the Daily Top 10 on Japanese Netflix Per Year²⁵⁸

Media Partners Asia, similarly, finds that Netflix has an edge on Korean content, which helps give it an edge over other competitors.²⁵⁹ Media Partners Asia estimates that 25% of Japanese consumption on Netflix is by Korean dramas.²⁶⁰

When asked why Korean dramas are popular in Japan, the top survey choice from 2015 to 2021 was “an attractive actor,” followed by “good stories” (Table 5). Actors’ attractiveness directly correlates to the cultural influence of Korean dramas: Hogarth states that Korean male actors and singers appeal to Japanese women because the “men are often depicted as gentle, romantic, caring lovers and fathers, and sometimes uxorious husbands. This modern image of men appeals to Asian women viewers, who have long suffered in a male-dominated society.”²⁶¹ Lie also comes to this conclusion when analyzing Bae Yong Joon’s popularity with women who viewed *Winter Sonata*: “Although tastes vary, a long-

²⁵⁸ Note: 2020 data covers March 28 – December 31; 2022 Cover January 1- April 5. Adapted from “TOP 10 on Netflix in Japan in history,” Flix Patrol, accessed April 6, 2022, <https://flixpatrol.com/top10/netflix/japan/history/>.

²⁵⁹ Frater, “Amazon Leading in Japan’s Booming SVoD Market, Study Shows.”

²⁶⁰ Frater, “Amazon Leading in Japan’s Booming SVoD Market, Study Shows.”

²⁶¹ Hogarth, “The Korean Wave: An Asian Reaction to Western-Dominated Globalization.”

standing idea among Japanese women for attractiveness for a man is an androgynous or even effeminate man. Bae has an effeminate visage and gentle demeanor.”²⁶²

Table 5. Why Are Korean Dramas Popular?²⁶³

(Top 2 choices by year)		
2015	Attractive actor	Good story
2016	Attractive actor	Favorite K-pop Star appearance
2017	Attractive actor	Good story
2018	Attractive actor	Good story
2019	Good story	Uniqueness of Korean culture
2020	Attractive actor	Good story
2021	Good story	Attractive actor

When *Winter Sonata* first aired in Japan, it was dubbed in Japanese; when it was re-aired, due to its popularity, it was only shown with subtitles to allow fans to hear Bae’s voice. After this positive feedback on using Korean audio with subtitles, many Korean dramas began to be shown with subtitles. This ran counter to the norm of dubbing into Japanese foreign shows and movies (mostly Hollywood) airing in Japan.²⁶⁴ Watching Korean dramas in Korean, a language not spoken by many in Japan, further enhances these shows’ Korean country salience.

5. Travel

After the United States and China, South Korea is the most popular destination for Japanese tourists (Figure 37). Travel to South Korea has high salience – perhaps more than that of any other product, content, or service.

²⁶² Lie, “Why Didn’t “Gangnam Style” Go Viral in Japan?: Gender Divide and Subcultural Heterogeneity,” 10.

²⁶³ In 2019–2021 and 2015 – 2014 respondents were able to pick two choices, whereas in 2016 – 2018, they were able to only able to pick one choice. Adapted from Korean Foundation for International Culture Exchange, 2015 *해외한류실태조사*, 122; Kwak 2016–2017 *해외한류실태조사*, 110; Kim, 2019 *해외한류실태조사*, 109; Kim, 2021 *해외한류실태조사*, 31; Jeong, 2022 *해외한류실태조사*, 46.

²⁶⁴ Lie, “Why Didn’t “Gangnam Style” Go Viral in Japan?: Gender Divide and Subcultural Heterogeneity.”

The top destination for Japanese tourists visiting South Korea is Seoul, followed by Busan.²⁶⁵ About 70% of Japanese tourists to South Korea are repeat visitors.²⁶⁶ In a 2019 survey, 86.4% of Japanese tourists who visited South Korea stated that they were satisfied with their trip, meaning they most likely received a good impression of South Korea during their trip.²⁶⁷

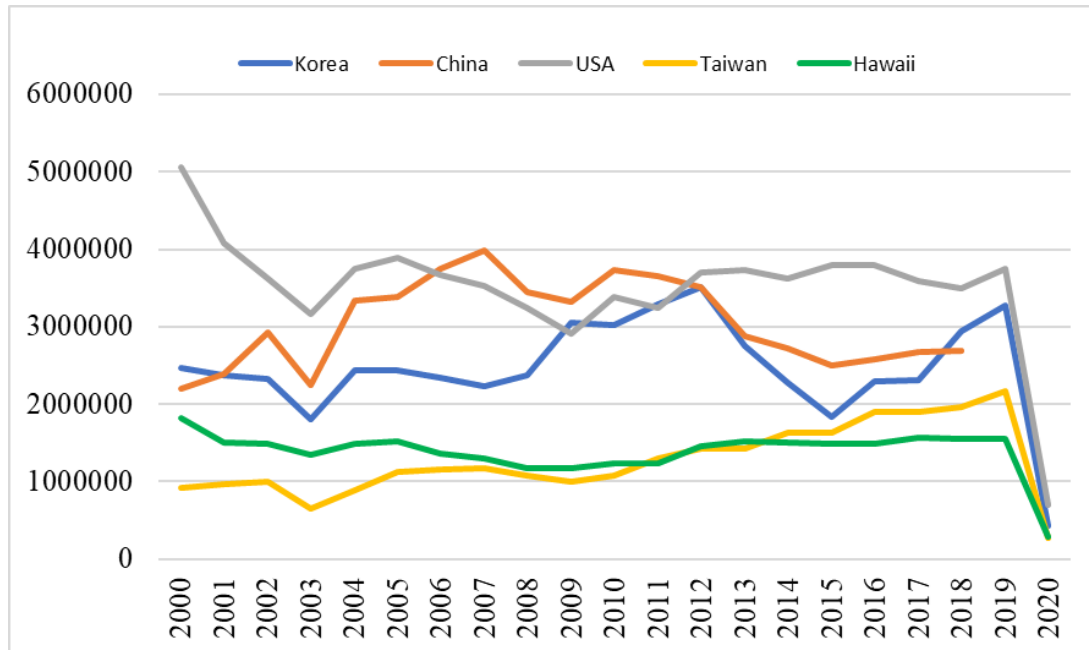


Figure 37. Japanese Visitors by Country²⁶⁸

Since Japanese mostly travel to large Korean cities like Seoul or Busan, as opposed to a resort area, Japanese tourists tend to interact with Korean culture as they travel.²⁶⁹ A resort can tailor its culture around the tourist who visits, but this is impossible in the large

²⁶⁵ Hyun-bin Kim, "Japanese Tourists Come to Korea for Food, Chinese for Shopping," *The Korea Times*, June 12, 2019, https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/06/281_270503.html.

²⁶⁶ Kim, "Japanese Tourists Come to Korea for Food, Chinese for Shopping."

²⁶⁷ Kim, "Japanese Tourists Come to Korea for Food, Chinese for Shopping."

²⁶⁸ Adapted from "Japanese Outbound Tourists Statistics," JTB Tourism Research & Consulting Co., accessed May 3, 2022, <https://www.tourism.jp/en/tourism-database/stats/outbound/#annual>.

²⁶⁹ Kim, "Japanese Tourists Come to Korea for Food, Chinese for Shopping."

cities of Seoul and Busan (the opposite pattern can be seen for Chinese tourists who visit Jeju Island, who often stay, eat, and shop in Chinese-controlled hotels, restaurants, and shops).²⁷⁰ When asked their number one reason for traveling to South Korea, 42.2% of Japanese referred to “food and gourmet experience.”²⁷¹ The desire to consume Korean food culture and interact with the culture only enhances the salience of travel to South Korea.

6. Fashion

Korean fashion continues to grow (Figure 38) in Japan but has low country salience. The continued growth of Korean fashion can be seen in retail, as Amazon Japan recently opened a store solely dedicated to Korean fashion.²⁷² However, the Korean fashion industry faces some global difficulties that hamper its growth. It sometimes experiences slow growth due to poor sales domestically (in South Korea) and external factors such as the U.S. and China trade dispute and growing protectionism in the United States.²⁷³ Korean fashion products also mostly appeal to millennials and “Generation Z,” limiting their ability to penetrate throughout Japanese society.²⁷⁴

²⁷⁰ Choe Sang-Hun, “South Korean Island Grows Wary After Welcoming the Chinese,” *The New York Times*, February 25, 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/26/world/south-korean-island-grows-wary-after-welcoming-the-chinese.html>.

²⁷¹ Kim, “Japanese Tourists Come to Korea for Food, Chinese for Shopping.”

²⁷² Sungmin Lee et al., Hallyu White Paper, 2019.

²⁷³ Lee et al., Hallyu White Paper, 218.

²⁷⁴ Lee et al., Hallyu White Paper, 225.

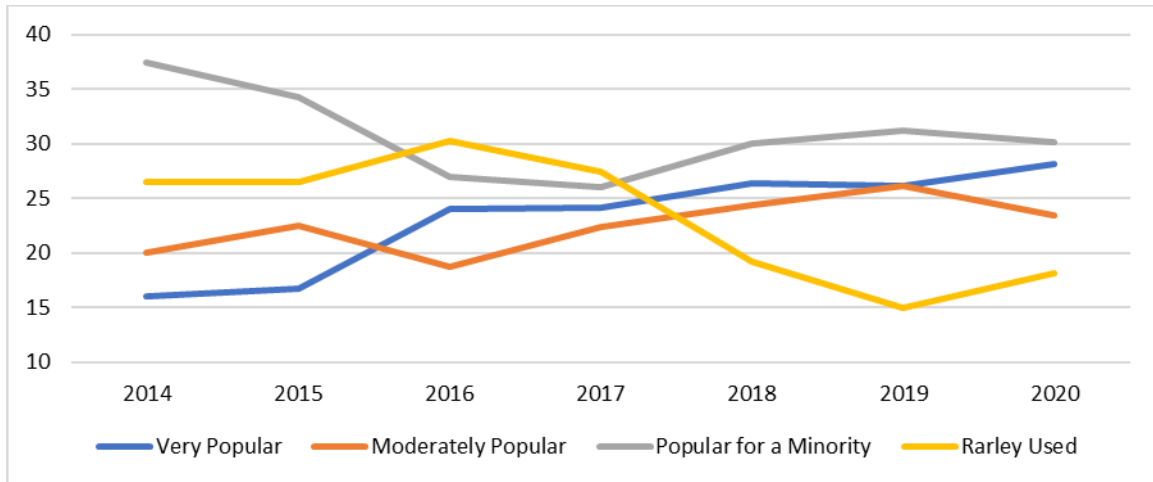


Figure 38. How Popular Is Korean Fashion in Japan?²⁷⁵

Survey results show the top driver of Korean fashion's popularity in Japan from 2018 to 2021 was its low price for its quality and design preference (Table 6). Design preference does seem imply some added value to Korean fashion design beyond what other countries' fashion industries offer. This suggests that Korean fashion has some country salience for the consumer, though this might be limited to Japan's most fashion-conscious consumers – those able to discern design differences in the first place.

Table 6. Why Is Korean Fashion Popular?²⁷⁶

Top 2 choices by year			
2018	2019	2020	2021
Low price for the quality	Low price for the quality	Low price for the quality	Design preference
Design preference	Design preference	Design preference	Low price for the quality

²⁷⁵ Adapted from Park Seong-hyeon, 3rd *해외한류실태조사* (Korean Foundation for International Culture Exchange), 280, http://kofice.or.kr/b20industry/b20_industry_00_view.asp?seq=126&page=1&find=&search=; Korean Foundation for International Culture Exchange, 2015 *해외한류실태조사*, 107; Kwak 2016–2017 *해외한류실태조사* 110; Kim, 2018 *해외한류실태조사*, 120; Kim, 2019 *해외한류실태조사*, 105; Kim, 2020 *해외한류실태조사*, 43; Kim, 2021 *해외한류실태조사*, 30.

²⁷⁶ In 2019–2021 respondents were able to pick two choices, whereas in 2018 they were able to only able to pick one choice, which led to a lower percentage of everything in 2018. Adapted from Kim, 2019 *해외한류실태조사*, 112; Kim, 2020 *해외한류실태조사*, 47; Kim, 2021 *해외한류실태조사*, 39; Jeong, 2022 *해외한류실태조사*, 53.

7. Korean Language

The number of Japanese learning the Korean language has steadily increased – and language learning likely has the highest degree of Korean country salience other than travel to Korea itself.

From 2009 to 2019, the number of Japanese test takers of the Test of Proficiency in Korean (TOPIK), a test that measures proficiency in the language, increased by 160% (Figure 39).²⁷⁷ When the test was introduced in 1997, it was only offered once a year, but due to increasing demand, it is now offered three times a year at 30 locations across Japan.²⁷⁸

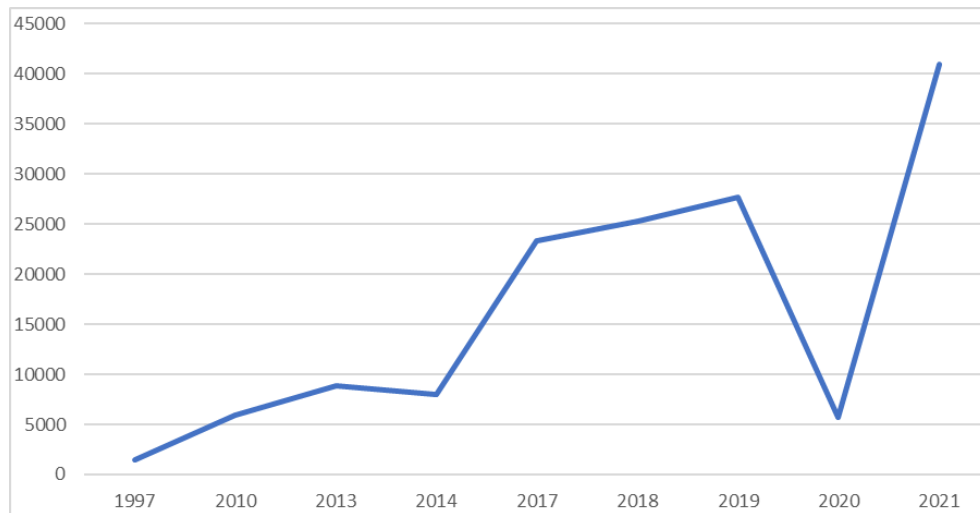


Figure 39. Number of Test Takers in Japan for the Test of Proficiency in Korean²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷ Lang, Kim and Matsumoto, “K-pop and Job Pressures Connect Students in Japan and South Korea.”

²⁷⁸ Lang, Kim and Matsumoto, “K-pop and Job Pressures Connect Students in Japan and South Korea.”

²⁷⁹ Missing data from 1998–2009; 2011–2012; 2015–2016. Data adopted from: Anil Giri, “36,000 Nepali Attended for Korean language Test,” The Seoul Times, accessed May 2, 2022, <https://theseoultimes.com/ST/?url=/ST/db/read.php%3fidx=9940>; Satish Satyarthi, “Number of TOPIK Test takers hits record-high level,” TOPIK Guide, April 23, 2014, <https://www.topikguide.com/number-of-topik-test-takers-hit-record-high-level/>; TOPIK, “Applicants Status.”

Kanto International Senior High School in Tokyo started its Korean language course in 2000 with only six students; today, the school receives more than double the applicants for its annual 40-student quota. Other schools and universities offering Korean courses have also seen a large number of applicants.²⁸⁰

Besides learning the Korean language, many Japanese also study in South Korea (although these numbers pale in comparison to the number of Japanese students studying in the United States [Figure 40]).²⁸¹ Compared to other non-English speaking countries (for which study abroad is facilitated by mandatory English-language study in Japan), since 2012, South Korea has been one of the most popular countries to study in.²⁸²

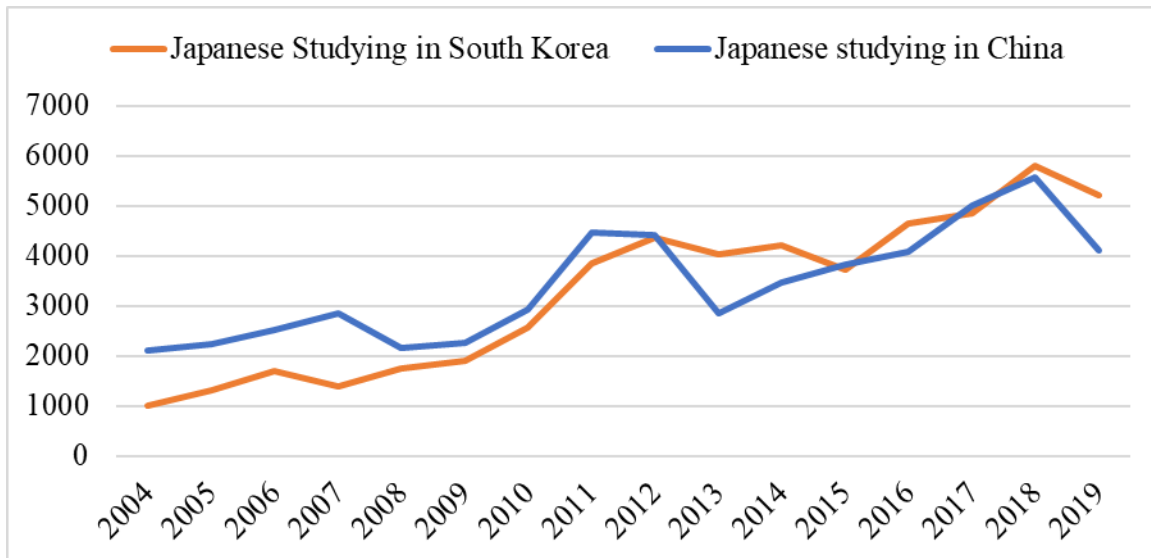


Figure 40. Japanese Students Studying in South Korea and China²⁸³

²⁸⁰ Lang, Kim and Matsumoto, “K-pop and Job Pressures Connect Students in Japan and South Korea.”

²⁸¹ “日本人学生留学状況調査 [Survey of Japanese Students Studying Abroad],” Japan Student Service Organization, accessed May 17, 2022, <https://www.studyinjapan.go.jp/ja/statistics/nippon/index.html>.

²⁸² Japan Student Service Organization, 日本人学生留学状況調査.

²⁸³ Adapted from Japan Student Service Organization, 日本人学生留学状況調査.

A survey by the language learning app Duolingo asked Japanese students of Korean language why they chose to study it (Figure 41). Most responses indicated that learning Korean would allow easier interaction with Korean culture.²⁸⁴ This suggests high country salience and potential for impact on positive attitudes toward Japan: Japanese learning Korean are doing so in order to understand South Korean popular culture better.

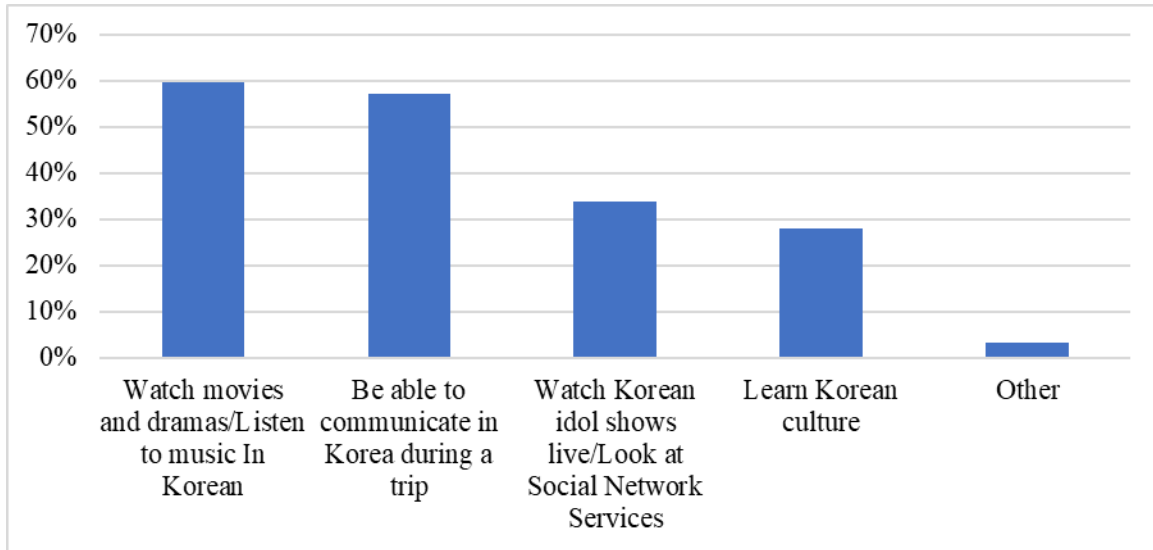


Figure 41. Why Do You Want to Learn Korean?²⁸⁵

8. Movies

Although movies, like television programming, have high salience, the consumption volume of Korean films in Japan is relatively low (Figure 42). In 20 years, only three Korean films have had success: *Parasite*, *A Moment to Remember*, and *Windstruck*.²⁸⁶ *Parasite* is the number-one grossing Korean film in Japan, grossing \$43

²⁸⁴Duolingo Inc., “【日本人の語学学習に関する調査】約 6 割が「韓国映画やドラマ、音楽を楽しむため」 [Survey on Japanese Language Learning, About 60% said, “To Enjoy Korean Movies, Drama and Music”],” *PR Times*, May 31, 2021, <https://prtimes.jp/main/html/rd/p/000000007.000069537.html>.

²⁸⁵Adapted from Duolingo Inc., “【日本人の語学学習に関する調査】約 6 割が「韓国映画やドラマ、音楽を楽しむため。」

²⁸⁶ “Japanese Yearly Box Office,” Box Office Mojo by IMDB Pro, accessed May 7, 2022, <https://www.boxofficemojo.com/year/?area=JP>.

million and finishing the third in gross income for the year in Japan.²⁸⁷ It is believed that *Parasite*'s success is due to its international success: the film was released in Japan in 2020, a year after its worldwide release; and since the film won numerous awards before its Japanese release, these accolades motivated Japanese filmgoers to watch the movie.²⁸⁸ The second-best year for Korean cinema was 2005, when *A Moment to Remember*, and *Windstruck* both enjoyed moderate success, although less than that of *Parasite*. *A Moment to Remember* starred Bae Yong-joon, the star of the Korean drama *Winter Sonata* discussed above.

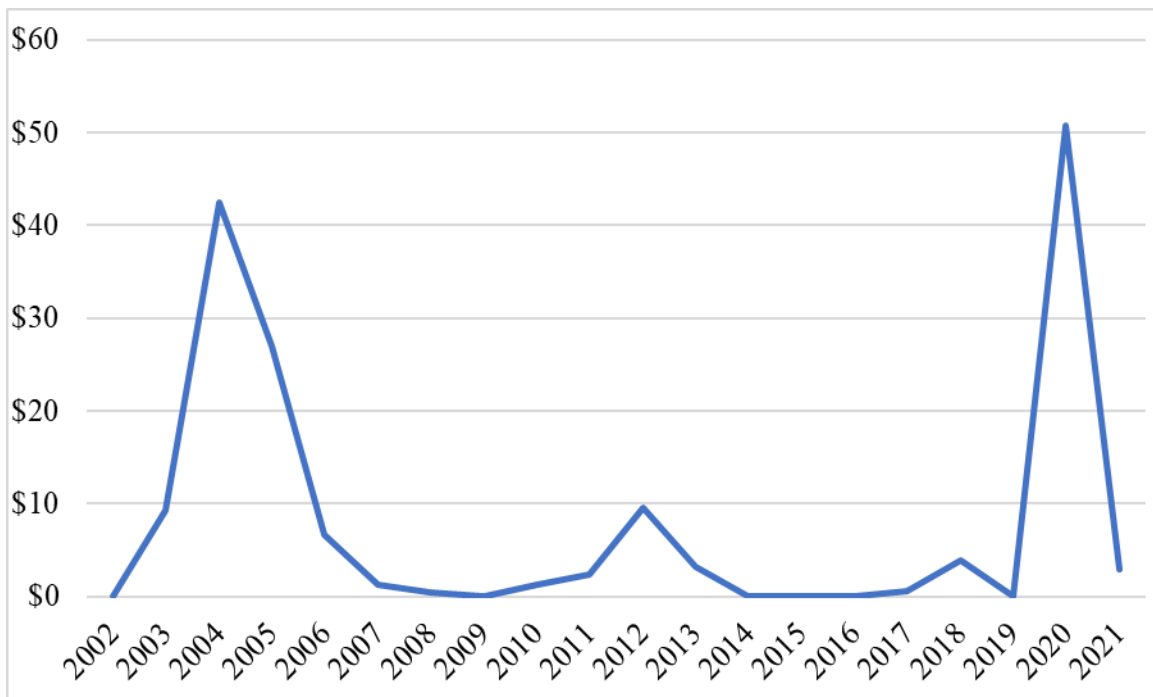


Figure 42. Gross Yearly Revenue of Korean Produced Films in Japan in Million USD²⁸⁹

²⁸⁷ Box Office Mojo by IMDB Pro, "Japanese Yearly Box Office."

²⁸⁸ Yonhap, "Oscar-winning 'Parasite' tops Japanese box office," *Korea Herald*, Last modified February 18, 2020, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20200217000924>.

²⁸⁹ Adapted from Box Office Mojo by IMDB Pro, "Japanese Yearly Box Office."

Korean movies have high salience given their strong association with South Korea through the use of Korean actors, images of Korea, and Korean language without Japanese dubbing. In a survey that asked why Korean films are popular, one of the top answers from 2019 to 2021 was that Korean films are “unique,” which suggests that Japanese movie consumers distinguish South Korean films from others – that is, that Korean films have strong country salience.²⁹⁰

9. Processed Food

While “Korean food” as a distinct cuisine is popular in Japan, general consumption of food produced in South Korea is relatively low (Figures 43, 44, and 45). South Korea is not a major food exporter.²⁹¹ These numbers might be underestimated, though, since it overlooks food produced for the Japanese market in Korean companies’ Japanese factories.²⁹²

²⁹⁰ Kim, 2020 *해외한류실태조사*, 48; Kim, 2021 *해외한류실태조사*, 35; Jeong, 2022 *해외한류실태조사*, 33.

²⁹¹ “South Korea Exports by Category,” Trading Economics, accessed August 25, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-korea/exports-by-category>.

²⁹² “Locations of Lotte Japan’s factories, “Office & Plants,” Lotte, accessed May 3, 2022, <https://www.lotte.co.jp/english/outline/list.html>.

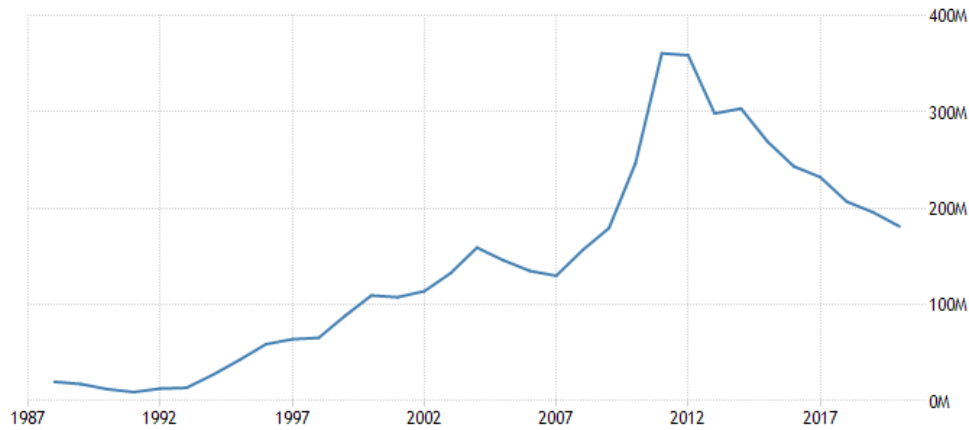


Figure 43. South Korea Exports of Beverages, Spirits and Vinegar to Japan in USD²⁹³

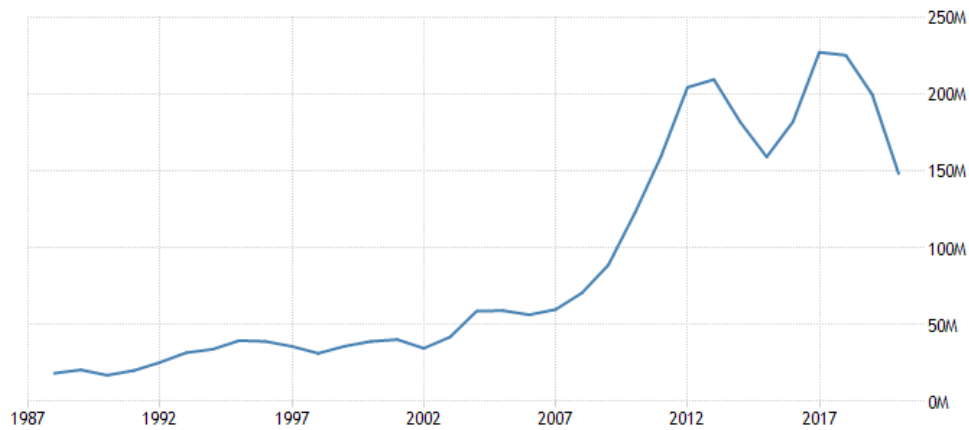


Figure 44. South Korea Exports of Miscellaneous Edible Preparations (Ice Cream, Sauces, Soup Broths, Etc.) to Japan in USD²⁹⁴

²⁹³ Source: “South Korea Exports of Beverages Spirits and Vinegar,” Trading Economics, accessed May 3, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-korea/exports/japan/beverages-spirits-vinegar>.

²⁹⁴ “South Korea Exports of Miscellaneous Edible Preparations to Japan,” Trading Economics, accessed May 3, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-korea/exports/japan/miscellaneous-edible-preparations>.

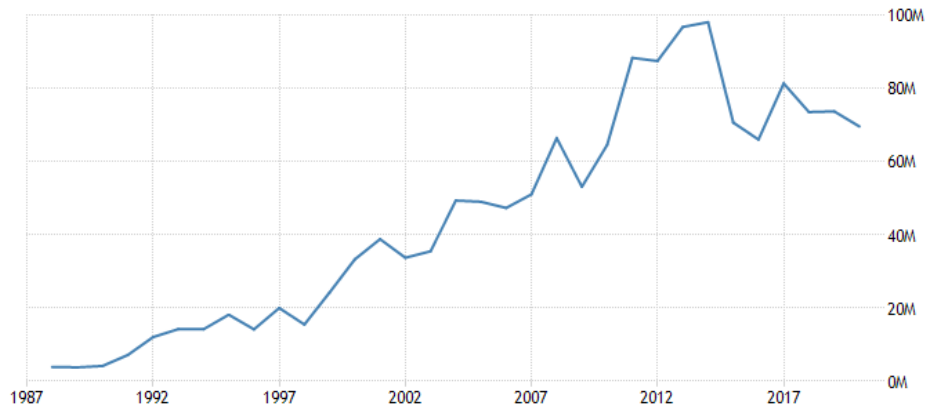


Figure 45. South Korea Exports of Sugar Confectionery (Including White Chocolate), Not Containing Cocoa to Japan in USD²⁹⁵

Korean food imported to Japan has low salience, as its association with South Korea is obscured by Japanese packaging. Also, Korean conglomerate Lotte, a large producer of processed food, has factories in Japan. Any product it produces in its Korean factories may be mistaken for one made in Japan, dissociating the product from South Korea.

10. Vehicles

Korean automakers have not gained a foothold in the Japanese market (Figure 46). The low number of sales does not mean South Korean auto manufacturers did not attempt to enter the Japanese market. Hyundai operated in the Japanese market from 2001 to 2010 but ultimately left the Japanese market due to poor sales.²⁹⁶ Korea's auto manufacturers' poor performance in Japan can be attributed to competition from established domestic auto manufacturers rather than attitudes. This renders the question of salience – likely at least moderate but uncertainly so – less important, since consumption in recent years has been low-volume in the first place and not often mentioned by analysts optimistically linking cultural consumption with attitudes toward products' country of origin.

²⁹⁵ "South Korea Exports of Sugars and Sugar Confectionery to Japan," Trading Economics, accessed May 3, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-korea/exports/japan/sugars-sugar-confectionery>

²⁹⁶ Tim Kelly and Maki Shiraki, "South Korea's Hyundai Motor to Take a Fresh Crack at Japan Sales," Reuters, February 7, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/business/autos-transportation/south-koreas-hyundai-motor-take-fresh-crack-japan-sales-2022-02-08/>.

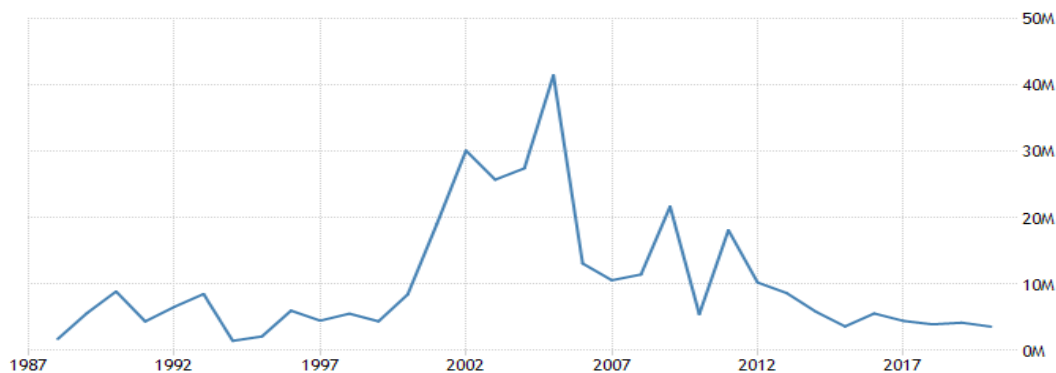


Figure 46. South Korea Exports of Motor Cars and Vehicles for Transporting Persons to Japan in USD²⁹⁷

11. Manufactured Goods

The export of manufactured goods to Japan has also declined to a low level (Figures 47 & 48). This is consistent with South Korea's worldwide export pattern, not only its exports to Japan (Figure 49 & 50). It can be assumed that Japan's low consumption numbers reflect the decline of this export category for South Korea in the first, not Japanese decisions not to consume otherwise-available products.

²⁹⁷ "South Korea Exports of Motor Cars and Vehicles for Transporting Persons to Japan," Trading Economics, accessed May 3, 2020, <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-korea/exports/japan/motor-cars-vehicles-transporting-persons>.

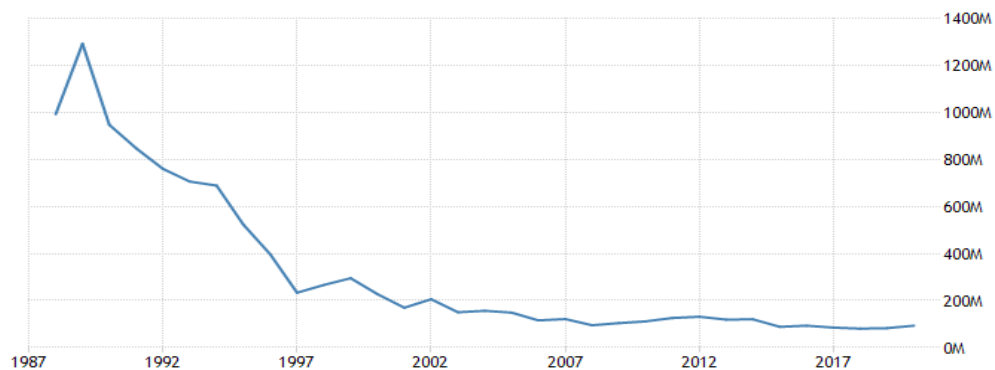


Figure 47. South Korea Exports of Articles of Apparel, Not Knit or Crocheted to Japan in USD²⁹⁸

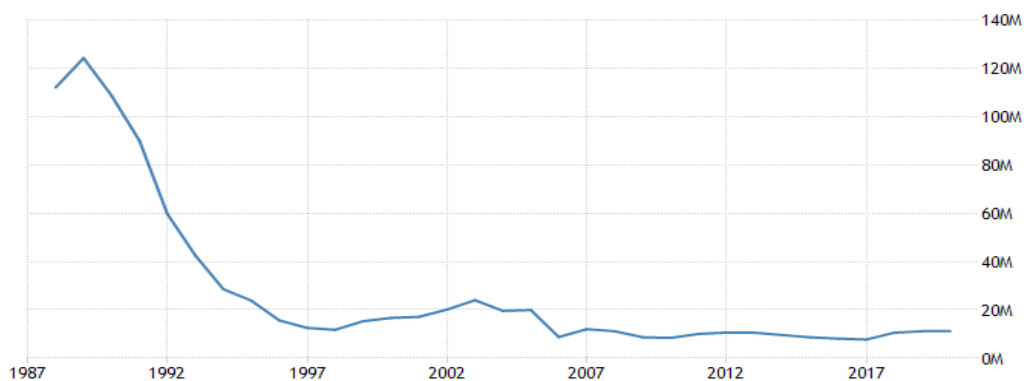


Figure 48. South Korea Exports of Other Toys; Scale Models; Puzzles to Japan in USD²⁹⁹

²⁹⁸ “South Korea Exports of Articles of Apparel, Not Knit or Crocheted to Japan,” Trading Economics, accessed May 3, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-korea/exports/japan/articles-apparel-accessories-not-knit-crocheted>.

²⁹⁹ “South Korea Exports of Other Toys; Scale Models; Puzzles to Japan,” Trading Economics, accessed May 3, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-korea/exports/japan/toys-scale-models-puzzles-parts>

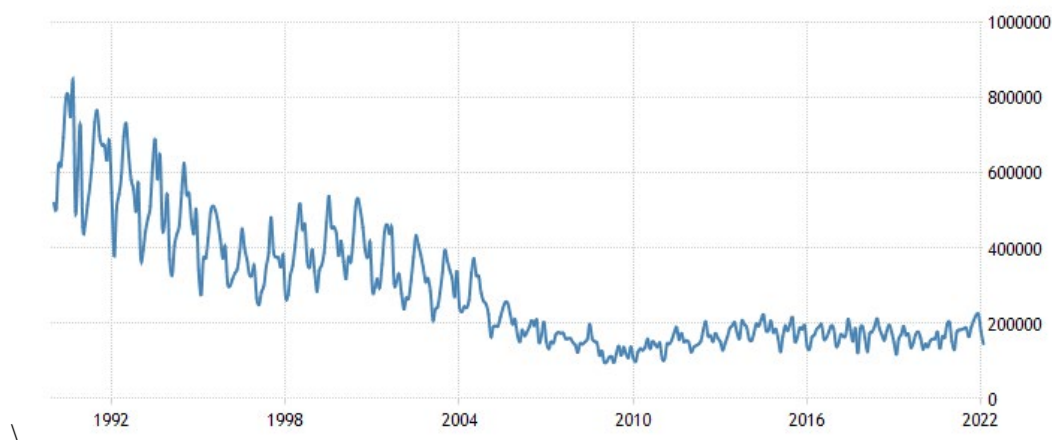


Figure 49. South Korea Exports of Clothing in USD³⁰⁰

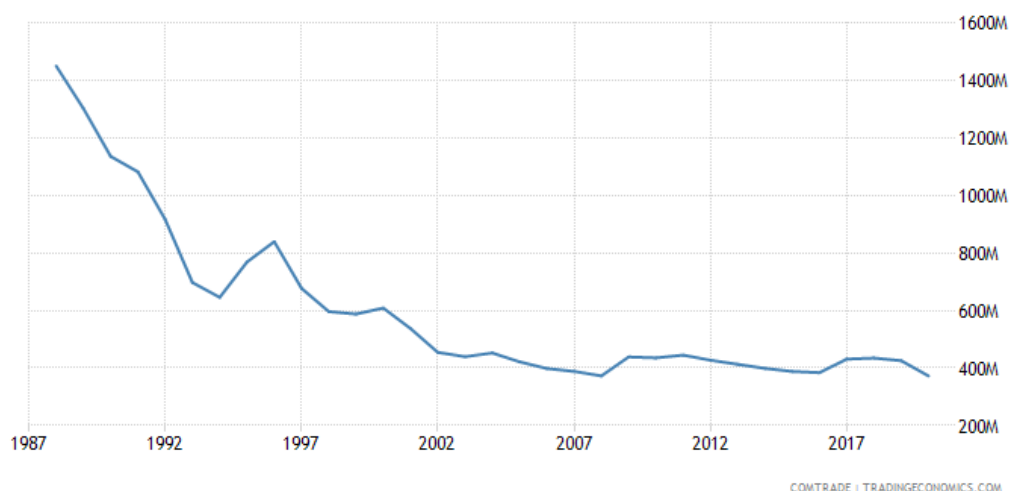


Figure 50. South Korea Exports of Toys Games, Sports Requisites in USD³⁰¹

Even if they were consumed at higher levels, Korean textiles and consumer goods manufacturing would have little country salience in the first place: these products may have been produced for non-Korean companies, which lose all attachment to Korea. Even for

³⁰⁰ “South Korea Exports of Clothing,” Trading Economics, accessed May 3, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-korea/exports-of-light-industry-products-clothing>.

³⁰¹ South Korea Exports of Toys Games, Sports Requisites,” Trading Economics, accessed May 3, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-korea/exports/toys-games-sports-requisites>.

those manufactured for a Korean company, the use of these products carries little association with South Korea.

12. Conclusion

South Korean products, content, and services that Japanese mostly consume, such as cuisine, music, television, and travel, involve the highest degree of salience, whereas products, content, and services that have no salience are rarely consumed. This data shows that Japanese, through their consumption habits, are indeed being exposed to high-salience Korean products, a foundation for the notion that cultural consumption might yield positive attitudes towards South Korea. However, as discussed in the next section, other factors also influence attitudes; and only a minority (although significant) of Japanese citizens identify themselves as self-aware Korean culture consumers in the first place.

E. JAPANESE ATTITUDES TOWARD SOUTH KOREA

The Government of Japan has conducted yearly surveys on Japanese affinity toward South Korea since 1978 (Figure 51). The survey shows that from 1978 to 1995, affinity toward South Korea remained stable at around 40%. In 1996, there was a dip, but this quickly rebounded; and by 2000, more Japanese surveyed felt affinity than those who did not. This trend would last for about the next decade, with affinity toward South Korea reaching 63.1% in 2009. This positive trend would abruptly end in 2012, when the percentage of Japanese who felt affinity fell steeply and remained low. In 2019, those who felt an affinity toward South Korea reached a record low, bottoming out at 26.7%, and those who did not feel affinity peaked at 71.5%.

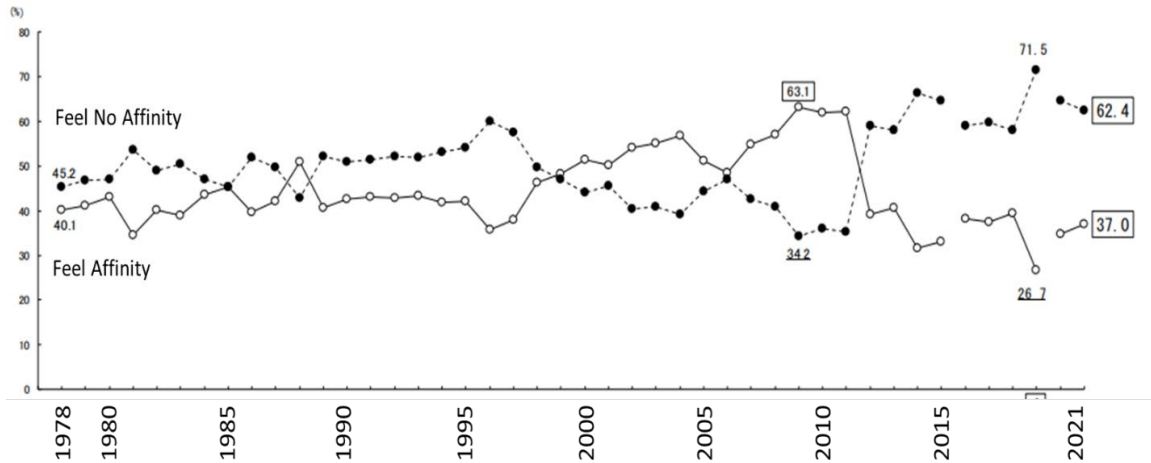


Figure 51. Affinity toward the Republic of Korea Survey³⁰²

The crash of affinity in 2012 is generally attributed to South Korean President Lee Myung-bak's visit to the disputed Dokdo/Takeshima Island, which surprised South Koreans and Japanese alike.³⁰³ President Lee's visit to Dokdo/Takeshima Island was thought to build on the nationalist wave that began after South Korea's strong performance at the Summer Olympics that year, with an eye toward helping raise his poor domestic ratings.³⁰⁴ This visit angered the Japanese, especially because President Lee was a conservative (conservatives in South Korea tend to favor better relations with Japan than liberals), suggesting to Japan that no political leader in Korea was above playing the "Japan card" to advance political fortunes.³⁰⁵

The following year, a court in Seoul denied Japan's request for extradition of a Chinese man found guilty of throwing a Molotov cocktail at the Japanese embassy in Seoul. While in court for his actions at the Japanese embassy, he admitted to starting a fire at the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo in 2010.³⁰⁶ Japan wanted him extradited, but Korea's judge

³⁰² Adapted from Government of Japan, 外交に関する世論調査.

³⁰³ Brad Glosserman, "Japanese Views of South Korea: Enough is Enough," *Joint U.S.-Korea Academic Studies* (Washington, D.C.: Korean Economic Institute, 2020) 190, http://keia.org/sites/default/files/publications/kei_jointus-korea_2020_2.5.pdf.

³⁰⁴ Glosserman, "Japanese Views of South Korea: Enough is Enough," 190.

³⁰⁵ Glosserman, "Japanese Views of South Korea: Enough is Enough," 190.

³⁰⁶ Glosserman, "Japanese Views of South Korea: Enough is Enough," 190.

ruled that the Chinese suspect would be returned to China. This court ruling only fed the growing negative sentiment toward South Korea.

In 2016, there was a small recovery of affinity, which can be attributed to Japan and South Korea signing an agreement to solve the “Comfort Women” issue in late 2015. However, this agreement created intense anger in South Korea and is believed to have helped lead to President Park Geun-hye’s impeachment in 2016.³⁰⁷ President Moon Jae-in succeeded Park in part on a campaign to revise the comfort women agreement. Under President Moon, South Korea’s government took a more hostile approach to Japan, leading to the ultimate collapse in affinity in 2019. Early in Moon’s term, South Korean politicians, including Moon, became more vocal in calling on Japan to make a sincere apology for its past. These comments went against the 2015 Comfort Women agreement, whose stated aim was to end public criticism over the issue, and added fuel to the growing negative sentiment in Japan. Toward the end of 2018, relations spiraled out of control. In October of that year, a South Korean court ruled that two Japanese companies could be held responsible for forced labor during the colonial occupation of Korea and were required to compensate the Korean victims. Japan held that this ruling went directly against the 1965 treaty that normalized relations between both countries and that agreed that claims had been settled. In November, another similar court ruling followed. The South Korean Government stated that it would dissolve the foundation established to help execute the 2015 Comfort Woman agreement.³⁰⁸ In December, matters escalated even further when Japan accused a South Korean destroyer of locking its radar on a Japanese patrol aircraft.³⁰⁹

In 2019, the relationship continued to slide further. In February, the South Korean speaker of the House called on the Japanese emperor to apologize to still-surviving comfort women. The following month, a local South Korean court ordered the confiscation of assets

³⁰⁷ Glosserman, “Japanese Views of South Korea: Enough is Enough,”191.

³⁰⁸ Glosserman, “Japanese Views of South Korea: Enough is Enough,”191-192.

³⁰⁹ Glosserman, “Japanese Views of South Korea: Enough is Enough,”192-193.

of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries to compensate victims of forced labor cases. From October 2018 to March 2019, Japan felt the entire Korean state and society mobilized against it.³¹⁰

In the summer of 2019, Japan announced that it was restricting the export of high-tech materials to South Korea. Although the Japanese government stated that this had nothing to do with the court cases over the forced labor, many South Koreans perceived a connection.³¹¹ The anger over this restriction led South Koreans to boycott Japanese goods. As discussed above, this boycott was quite successful, as many Japanese companies saw profits and sales drop in Korea.³¹² The accumulation of these actions led to the steepest drop in Japanese affinity toward South Korea. After this low point between both countries, the leaders of Japan and South Korea agreed to work together to improve the relationship between both countries. Although anti-Japanese sentiment arising from South Korea reached its lowest point during South Korean President Moon's 2017–2022 term, . the COVID-19 pandemic and internal Korean scandals have also helped take the Japan relationship out of the spotlight.³¹³ In 2020, there was a rebound in affinity toward South Korea, which increased in 2021.

Since 2013, GENRON NPO and EAI have conducted surveys on Japan – South Korea relations and asked Japanese participants about their perceptions of South Korea. As with Japanese Government surveys, the GENRON/EAI survey shows low favorability toward South Korea by the Japanese (Figures 52 and 53).

³¹⁰ Glosserman, “Japanese Views of South Korea: Enough is Enough,” 193.

³¹¹ Glosserman, “Japanese Views of South Korea: Enough is Enough,” 193.

³¹² McCurry, “South Korean Boycott of Japanese Goods Hits Beer and Carmakers.”

³¹³ Choe, “The Den of Thieves’: South Koreans Are Furious Over Housing Scandal.”

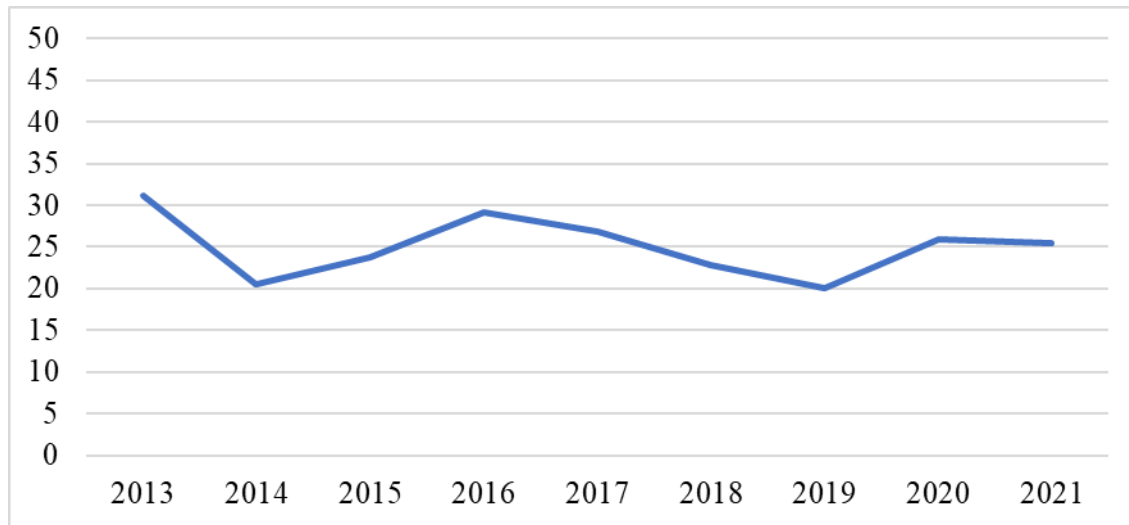


Figure 52. Percentage of Favorable Perception of South Korea by Japanese³¹⁴

Both surveys show similar patterns over the same time period, suggesting they reliably capture the opinion of the Japanese public. For simplicity's sake, the remainder of this chapter will refer only to the Japanese Government survey results, since those data covers a more extended period and, since 2000, also provide a breakdown of responses by age group and gender.

³¹⁴ Adapted from East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 13.

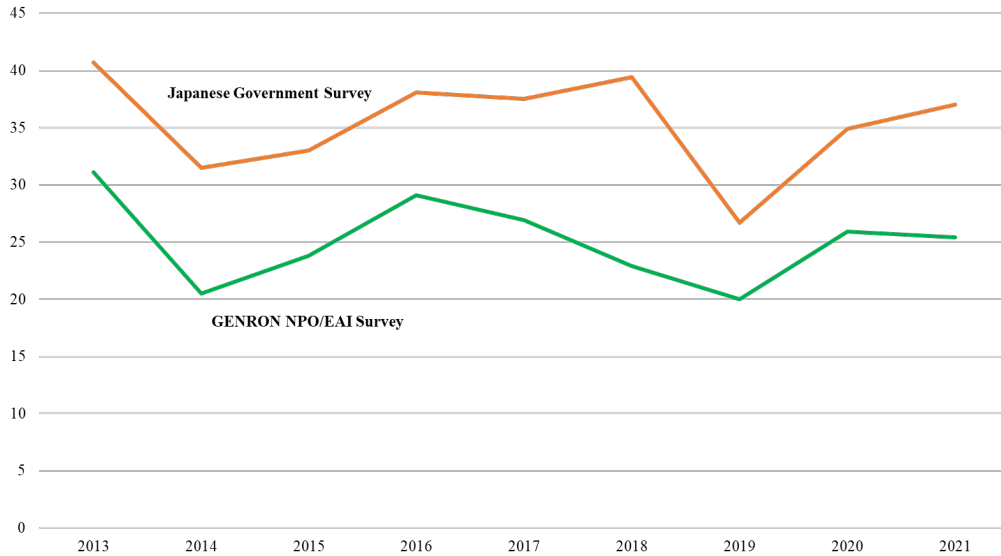


Figure 53. Comparing Results from Both Surveys of Affinity toward South Korea³¹⁵

Starting in 2002, K-Pop broke through in the Japanese market, and the following year, Japanese broadcasts began airing Korean dramas.³¹⁶ Consumption of Korean music and television show has continued to grow to the present day. It appears that the correlation between the consumption of these cultural products has not led to an increase in affinity toward Korea, though, but the opposite (Figure 54). However, this likely reflects not so much a *negative* impact on attitudes as a neutral or insufficiently strong positive one, since factors other than cultural consumption also influence affinity toward Korea.

³¹⁵ Adapted from East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 13; Government of Japan, 外交に関する世論調査.

³¹⁶ Ahn and Yoon, “Between Love and Hate,” 181–182; Poole, “No constrictions on BoA’s ambitions.”

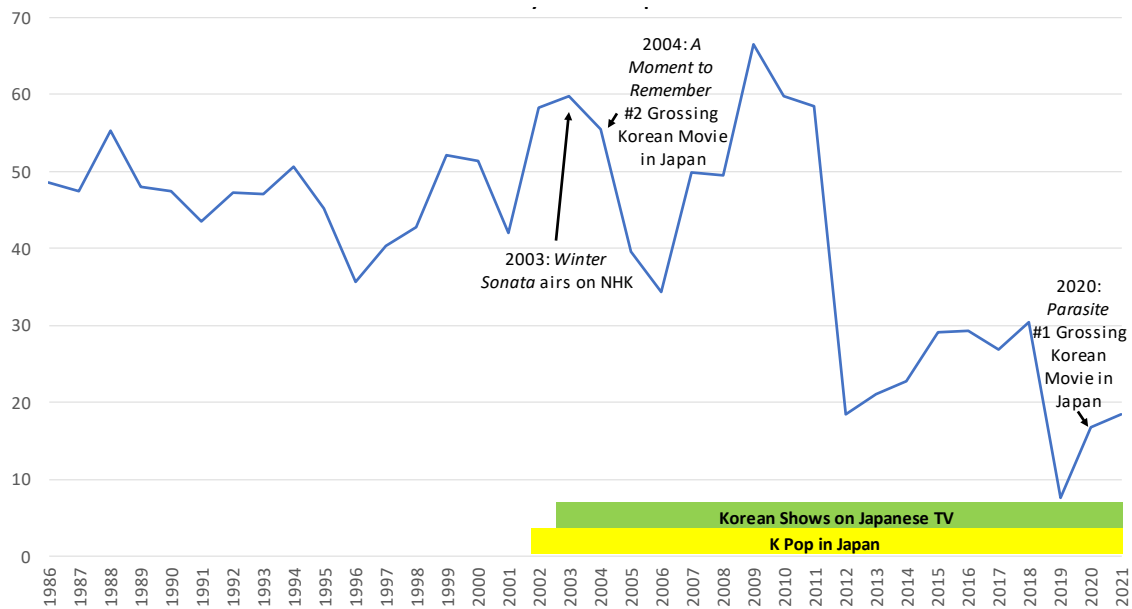


Figure 54. Affinity toward South Korea with Important Pop Culture Events³¹⁷

1. Reasons for Impressions

When asked why they had a negative impression, the majority throughout the eight years was criticism of Japan over historical issues, followed by confrontation over Dokdo/Takeshima (Figure 55).

³¹⁷ Adapted from Government of Japan, 外交に関する世論調査.

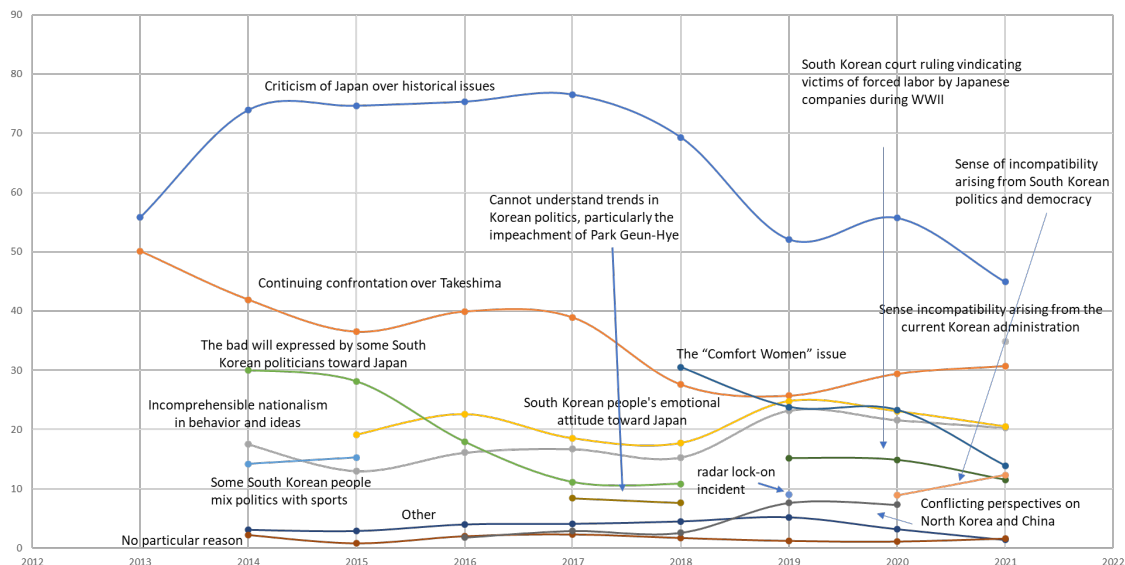


Figure 55. Reason for Unfavorability toward South Korea (May Pick Up to Two Choices)³¹⁸

However, as Figure 56 shows, once the survey's smaller categories are consolidated, the two largest categories are Historical Grievances and Current South Korean Attitudes Toward Japan.

In 2015, Japan and South Korea's Comfort Women agreement led to a decrease in current Korean attitudes toward Japan as a cited reason for negative Japanese attitudes toward Korea; however, historical grievances reason continued to rise slightly.

³¹⁸Adapted from East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 7th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2019) Analysis Report on Comparative Data* June, 2019, 5, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 14, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 6th South Korea Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll (2018) Comparative Analysis Report*, 5, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 2nd Joint Korea-Japan Public Opinion Poll (2014) Comparative Data*, 4; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 3rd Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, 5; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO *The 4th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2016) Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, 6.

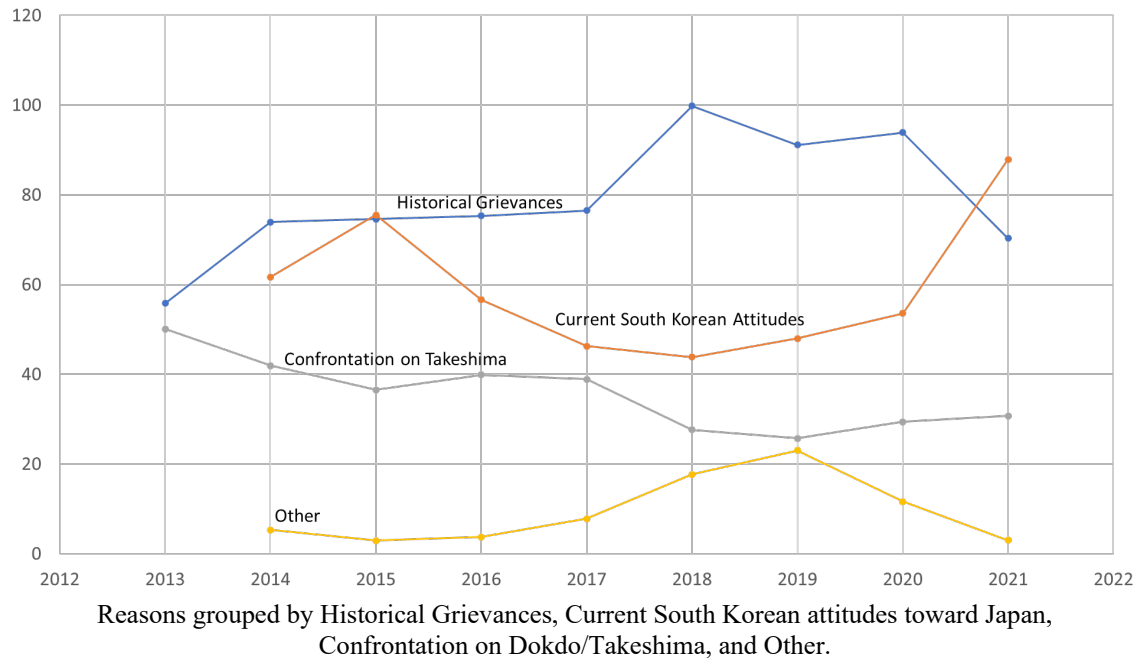


Figure 56. Reasons for Unfavorability toward South Korea³¹⁹

In 2017, South Korean President Moon took office on a pledge to revise the 2015 Comfort Women agreement. Meanwhile, South Korean government leaders became more vocal in demanding Japan offer a sincere apology for its actions on the Korean peninsula during Japan’s colonial rule.³²⁰ These actions by the Korean government most likely drove the sharp rise the following year in “historical grievances” as a reason for negative impressions of Korea.

In 2018, the South Korean Supreme Court ruled that two Japanese companies must pay compensation to Koreans who were forced into labor during Japanese colonial rule. A month later, a local court issued a similar ruling. These episodes decreased the role of

³¹⁹ Adapted from East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 7th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2019) Analysis Report on Comparative Data June, 2019*, 5, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 14, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 6th South Korea Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll (2018) Comparative Analysis Report*, 5, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 2nd Joint Korea-Japan Public Opinion Poll (2014) Comparative Data*, 4; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 3rd Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, 5; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO *The 4th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2016) Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, 6.

³²⁰ Glasserman, “Japanese Views of South Korea: Enough is Enough,” 192–193.

historical grievances and increased that of current South Korean attitudes toward Japan. The heavy politicization of Japan's history by President Moon's administration may have led many Japanese to view the administration's policy as a reflection of current attitudes vice that of historical grievances.

In 2019 (after the 2019 survey was conducted), South Koreans boycotted Japanese goods in response to Japan's limiting the export of high-tech materials to South Korea. The boycott made "current South Korea Attitudes toward Japan" surge as the primary reason for a bad impression of South Korea, clearly surpassing "historical issues" for the first time, by almost 20%.

Figure 57 shows reasons for *favorable* attitudes toward South Korea. The first main category is an interest in Korean culture and products; the second is that South Korea is an economically developed democratic country. However, interest in Korean culture is the dominant reason for positive attitudes, with over half of the responses. It can be inferred that without South Korean popular culture, Japan's impression of South Korea would be significantly worse.

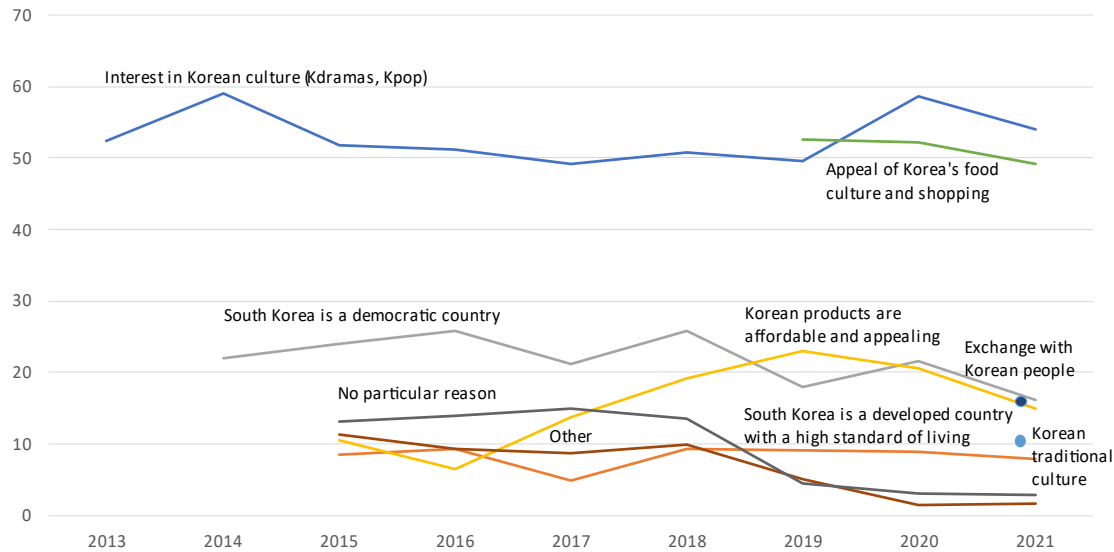


Figure 57. Reason for Favorability toward South Korea (May Pick Up to Two)³²¹

2. Effects of South Korean Popular Culture

Since Korean content consumers are a minority, not all positive movement in perception of South Korea necessarily reflects the influence of Korean culture on perception.³²² Figure 58 shows that of the 345 people surveyed who stated that South Korean culture brought some or much enjoyment, 76.2% (280 people) of them stated that pop culture gave a good impression of the country. This data shows that a significant majority of those who consume South Korean culture receive a positive impression of South Korea. However, it may just be those who already had a positive impression of South Korea are more willing to consume Korean culture, growing their already positive impression.

³²¹ Adapted from East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 7th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2019) Analysis Report on Comparative Data June, 2019*, 5, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 14, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 6th South Korea Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll (2018) Comparative Analysis Report*, 4, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 2nd Joint Korea-Japan Public Opinion Poll (2014) Comparative Data*, 4; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 3rd Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, 6; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO *The 4th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2016) Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, 6.

³²² Oh and Lee, "A League of Their Own: Female Supporters of Hallyu and Korea-Japan Relations."

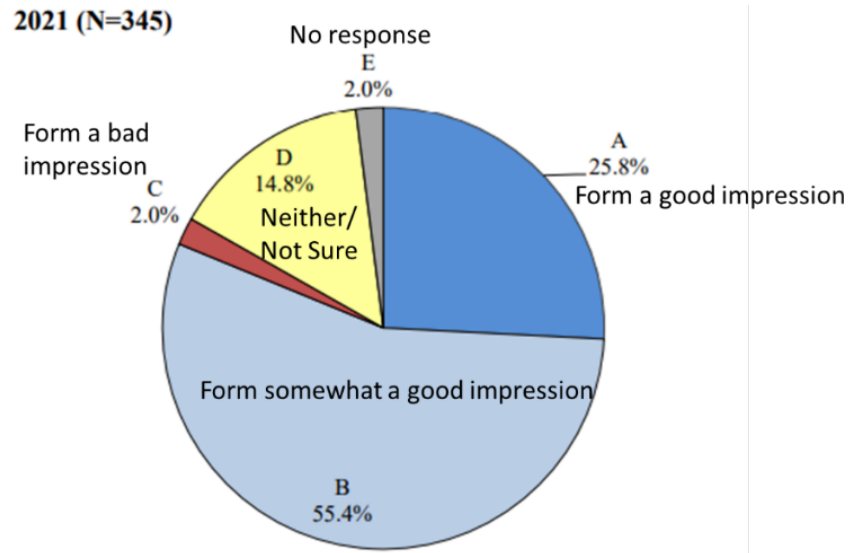


Figure 58. If You Enjoy SK Culture, What Is Your Impression of the Country Through Popular Culture?³²³

Only 28% of survey participants reported enjoying consuming Korean culture and receiving a positive impression of South Korea. However, this does not signify that South Korean culture is the most dominant factor in impressions. Only 53.9% of Japanese who had a positive impression of South Korea attributed it to their interest in Korean culture. Also, in the 2021 survey, only 254 Japanese said they had a good impression of South Korea.³²⁴ However, in the same survey, 280 individuals stated that Korean popular culture gave them a good impression. This case demonstrates that at least 26 individuals (9%) had stronger reasons for their impression of South Korea to make them respond in the survey that they had a negative impression of the country overall. However, popular culture consumption did form a good impression, demonstrating that culture consumption may not be the dominant reason for attitudes.

In a 2019 survey, Figure 59, 61.8% of Japanese stated that their perception of Korea did not change when they contacted Korean culture. While it is easy to conclude that this shows that Korean culture cannot change perception, it may not tell the whole story. Those

³²³ Adapted from East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 61.

³²⁴ East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 61

who already have a positive perception of South Korea may be the ones who are willing to consume Korean culture. If this is the case, those who already like South Korea and consume its culture will not have their opinion change. Also, this question was asked to all 500 participants, some of whom stated they consumed very little to non-Korean culture, which means that they may consume such a small amount of Korean culture content that their views of South Korea are an afterthought. If these individuals' only interaction is occasionally hearing a K-pop song on the radio, this minimal culture consumption may also result in the answer of no change.

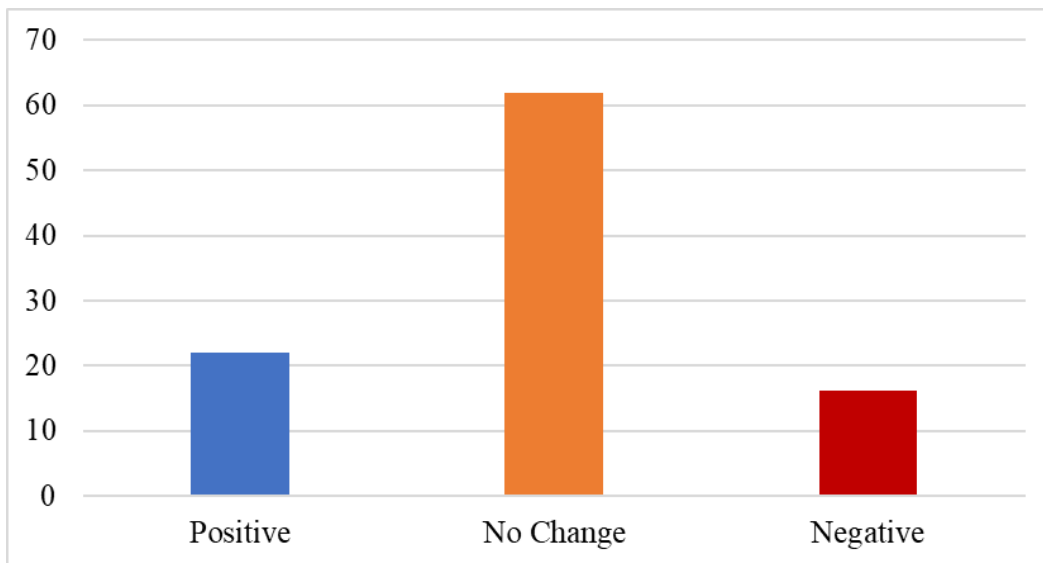


Figure 59. How Has Your Overall Perception of South Korea Changed After Your Contact with Korean Cultural Contents?³²⁵

From 2016 to 2020, the Korean Office for International Cultural Exchange (KOFICE) polled people in Japan and asked if they had a negative perception of Hallyu (the Korean Wave [Table 7]). Survey participants were chosen randomly, including some participants who rarely consumed Hallyu or some who had minimal knowledge about it. The response of those with negative perceptions toward Hallyu has been around 30%, except for in 2017.

³²⁵Adapted from Kim, 2020 해외한류실태조사, 104.

Table 7. Negative Perceptions toward Hallyu³²⁶

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
26.8	34.7	28.3	23.6	29.8	31.4	33.2	29.2

The percentage of Japanese who feel an affinity for South Korea compared to those with negative perceptions toward Hallyu loosely follows the same pattern, signaling that there may be some correlation between both (Figure 60). As affinity rises, there is a decrease in the negativity of Hallyu and vice versa. However, the years 2018 and 2020 do not follow this trend.

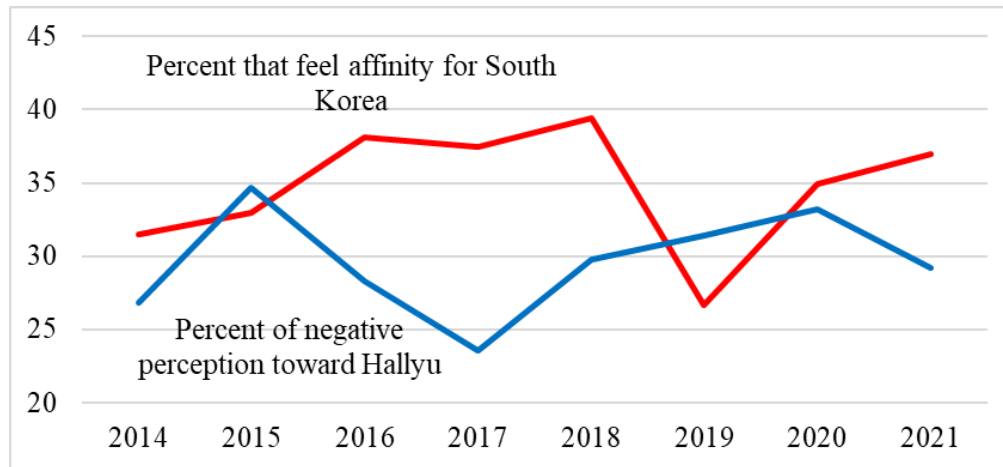


Figure 60. Percent of Japanese that Feel Affinity for South Korea Compared to the Percent of Negative Perception toward Hallyu

The same KOFICE survey that asked about the perception of Hallyu also asked about reasons for negative perceptions (Table 8). Throughout the survey's history, a response option concerning political, diplomatic, and historical tensions has made the top three choices. For reference, the 2021 survey found the top global responses for negative perception to be excessive commercialization, the need to protect locally produced content, and that Hallyu is excessively sensational and provocative. In Japan, 2011 and 2012 were

³²⁶ Korean Foundation for International Culture Exchange, 2015 *해외한류실태조사*, 133; Kwak 2016–2017 *해외한류실태조사* 116; Kim, 2018 *해외한류실태조사*, 128; Jeong Gil-hwa, 2021 *Global Hallyu Trends* (Seoul: Korea Foundation for International Culture Exchange, July 2021), 68; Jeong, 2022 *해외한류실태조사*, 30.

the only years in which the top reason for negative perceptions was related to the content of Hallyu rather than political, diplomatic, and historical tensions between both countries. That the Japanese responses include political, diplomatic, and historical tensions between both countries demonstrates that Korean culture in Japan faces extra hurdles to its potential to change perceptions.

Table 8. Reason for Negative Perception toward Hallyu³²⁷

2011	Content is similar and boring	Overly commercial	Led by the Korean Government
2012	Content is similar and boring	Led by the Korean Government	Overly commercial/ Historical & political relations with Korea
2013	Historical & political relations with Korea	Content is similar and boring	Overly commercial
2014	Korea criticizes other countries	Historical relations with Korea	Korea has poor national character
2015	Korea criticizes other countries	Korea has poor national character	Historical relations with Korea
2016	Korea has poor national character	Political and diplomatic conflict with Korea	Content is similar and boring
2017	Korea has poor national character	Political and diplomatic conflict with Korea	Historical relations with Korea
2018	Political and diplomatic conflict with Korea	Korea has poor national character	Overly commercial
2019	Political and diplomatic conflict with Korea	Historical relations with Korea	Korea has poor national character
2020	Political and diplomatic conflict with Korea	Korea has poor national character	Historical relations with Korea
2021	Political and diplomatic conflict with Korea	Korea has poor national character	Historical relations with Korea

³²⁷ The option for Historical & political relations with Korea was not an option in the 2011 survey. Adapted from KOFICE, *해외 한류 조사 결과 보고- 아시아, 미주, 유럽 지역 대상* [Report on the results of the Overseas Korean Wave Survey - Asia, the Americas and Europe] (Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism/Korean Foundation for Cultural Exchange, December 2012), 22. http://kofice.or.kr/b20industry/b20_industry_00_view.asp?seq=97&page=1&find=&search=; Park, 3 *자해외한류실태조사*, 328–239. Korean Foundation for International Culture Exchange, *2015 해외한류실태조사*, 133; Kwak, *2015–2016 해외한류실태조사*, 116; Kwak, *2016–2017 해외한류실태조사*, 116; *2018 해외한류실태조사*, 128; Kim, *2019 해외한류실태조사*, 59; Jeong, *2021 Global Hallyu Trends*, 68; Jeong, *2022 해외한류실태조사*, 30.

The Japanese Government survey on affinity toward South Korea shows a substantial fall in affinity in 2012 and has remained low. Perhaps the drop in affinity toward South Korea, rooted in perceptions of South Korea's increased criticism of Japan, has also impacted the main reason for negative perceptions of Hallyu content. Again, after 2012, Japan's top reason for negative perception is related to content over political, diplomatic, and historical tensions rather than the actual content.

The GENRON/EAI survey of reasons for poor impressions showed that historical relations with South Korea were the top factor from 2013-to 2020. The survey by KOIFCE shows that historical relations play a less significant role in the negative perception of Hallyu. Responses in the GENRON/EAI survey show that Korea's political and diplomatic conflict had a minor effect on impressions. However, it has had the largest effect on the perception of Korean culture. This may mean that historical grievances and current attitudes play a significant role in their impression of South Korea.

Since 2014, most of the top three reason deals with relations between both countries and not the content itself, which may explain why the affinity to South Korea and negativity toward Hallyu appear to follow a pattern loosely. The pattern is most likely loose because there are individuals who do not feel an affinity toward Korea but like Hallyu, like the 9% case discussed above, or there could be others who can separate their attitudes toward Korea and Hallyu.

Figure 61 shows that 64.6% of Japanese who enjoy Korean culture stated that they would not change their consumption if the relationship between Japan and South Korea worsened. This number suggests that most Japanese consumers of Korean culture separate politics from their cultural consumption (this, in turn, might explain why at least 26 people who enjoy consuming Korean culture and receive a good impression of South Korea from it did not have a positive impression of South Korea overall). Separating the politics between both countries from their cultural consumption can lead Hallyu consumers to have both positive and negative impressions of South Korea.

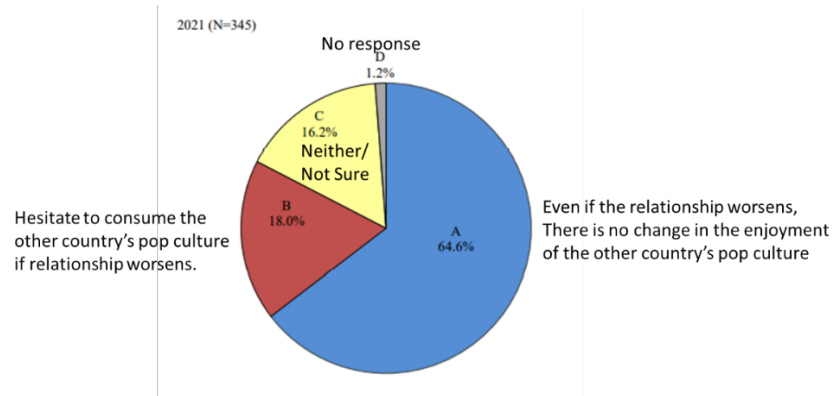


Figure 61. For Those Who Enjoy Korean Culture, Do Worsening ROK-Japan Relations Affect Your South Korean Pop Culture Consumption?³²⁸

In one 2018 example of culture and politics intersecting, a member of the boy band BTS was photographed wearing a shirt with an image of an atomic bomb mushroom cloud. After backlash online, Japanese T.V. programs canceled scheduled BTS appearances. Even Japanese fans of BTS showed disappointment with the group, believing that the band held anti-Japanese views.³²⁹ However, these cancellations and dissatisfaction were short-lived as BTS would be able to appear on the Top 100 on the Japanese charts multiple times the following year.³³⁰

Fukushima states that Japanese who consume Korean culture can separate politics from their consumption because they engage with South Korea through their relationships with K-pop and drama and think these have nothing to do with history and past events. She says this is attributed to the tendency in Japanese society to instill the belief that one should keep distance from politics.³³¹ Ahn and Yoon counter Fukushima's argument that Japanese Korean culture consumers separate politics from culture as a way to adapt to the growing political tensions between Japan and South Korea. By separating politics and

³²⁸ Adapted from East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 61.

³²⁹ Yukinao Kin, ““What’s Behind The Mix Of K-Pop Culture Boom And Anti-Korean Sentiment in Japan?”” *The Mainichi*, October 29, 2021, <https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20211028/p2a/00m/0na/021000c>.

³³⁰ Billboard Japan, “Hot 100.”

³³¹ Kin, ““What’s Behind the Mix Of K-Pop Culture Boom and Anti-Korean Sentiment in Japan?””

culture, Korean culture consumers can consume Korean culture without conflicts or discomfort.³³²

F. PARTS OF THE POPULATION WHERE IT APPEARS THE KOREAN CULTURE CONSUMPTION IS HAVING AN IMPACT ON ATTITUDES

While Korean culture consumption in Japan is consumed by a minority overall, there is a significant difference in consumption by women and younger people than the rest of the population. That attitudes of these groups toward South Korea are significantly higher than the average, suggesting that Korean consumption does affect attitudes, even if only in a segmented way.

1. Women

Globally, Korean cultural content is consumed more by women than men, and Japan is no different.³³³ Middle-aged women mainly drove the first, *Winter Sonata*-inspired wave.³³⁴ The popularity of Korean dramas with women at this time could be seen when Bae Yong-joon, the lead actor in *Winter Sonata*, visited Japan in 2004. Many fans of the drama, mostly women, rushed to see him at the airport, causing a spectacle.³³⁵ The second Korean wave in Japan spanned the late 2000s to the early 2010s. Unlike the first, the second wave saw a shift from drama and film to music, from middle-aged women to those in their 20s and 30s, and from traditional mass media to social media and digital culture.³³⁶ The third wave started in the mid-2010s and is arguably ongoing, shifting consumption to teenagers, whose fandom is rooted in social media and who make a greater effort to incorporate Korean culture into their daily lives.³³⁷

The gender gap continues, as shown in the 2021 GENRON/EAI survey. The proportion of women that consume Korean pop culture is more than 10% higher than that

³³² Ahn and Yoon, “Between Love and Hate,” 193.

³³³ Oh and Lee, “A League of Their Own,” 286 – 287.

³³⁴ Ahn and Yoon, “Between Love and Hate,” 181–182.

³³⁵ Kin, ““What’s Behind the Mix Of K-Pop Culture Boom And Anti-Korean Sentiment In Japan?”

³³⁶ Ahn and Yoon, “Between Love and Hate,” 182.

³³⁷ Ahn and Yoon, “Between Love and Hate,” 182.

of men. Although a small sample size, Ahn and Yoon, conducted in-depth personal interviews with 15 self-identified Korean culture fans. While gender was not a factor in selecting participants, the participants were all female. Ahn and Yoon state this result “reflects the gendered nature of the consumption of Korean culture in Japan.”³³⁸

In a survey asking individuals if they enjoyed their recent consumption of Korean products, women overwhelmingly received more enjoyment than their male counterparts (Figure 62, 63, 64, and 65). Those who are more likely to enjoy consuming these products are more likely to be consumers of them.

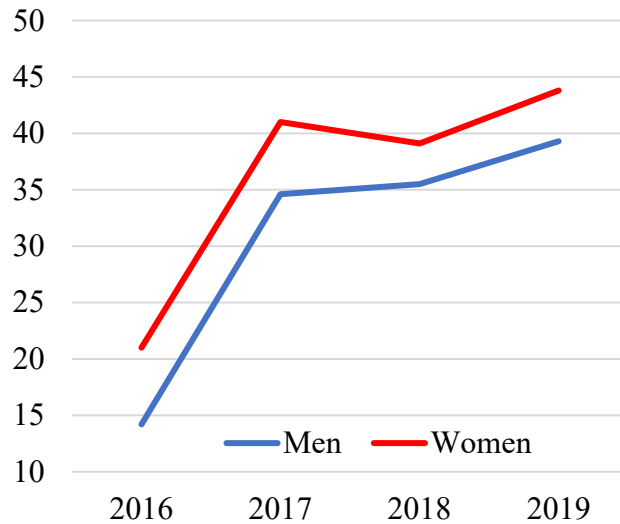


Figure 62. Those Who Enjoyed the K-Pop that They Listened to Recently³³⁹

³³⁸ Ahn and Yoon, “Between Love and Hate,” 182.

³³⁹ Adapted from Kwak, 2016–2017 해외한류실태조사, 116; 2018 해외한류실태조사, 414; Kim, 2019 해외한류실태조사, 588; Kim, 2020 해외한류실태조사, 42

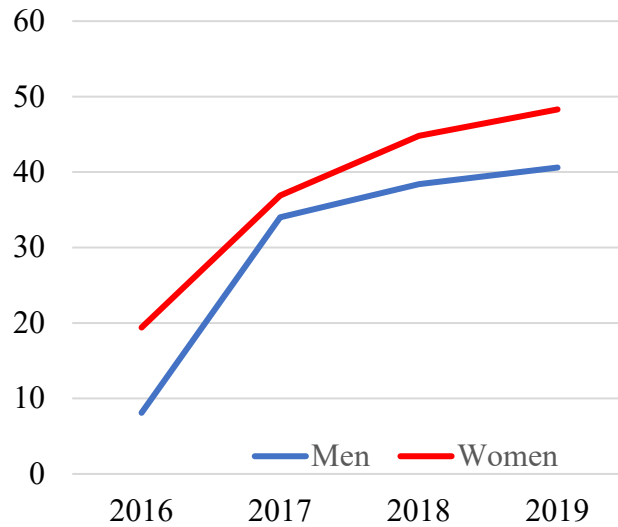


Figure 63. Those Who Enjoyed the Korean Drama that They Watched Recently³⁴⁰

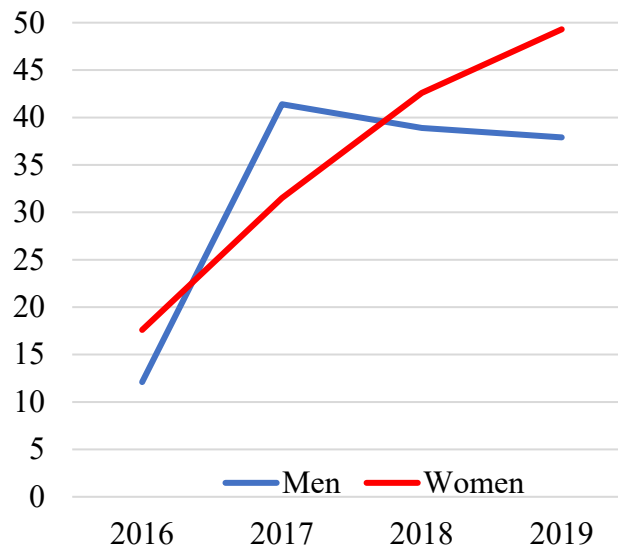


Figure 64. Those Who Enjoyed the Korean Movies that They Watched Recently³⁴¹

³⁴⁰ Adapted from Kwak, 2016–2017 *해외한류실태조사*, 116; 2018 *해외한류실태조사*, 414; Kim, 2019 *해외한류실태조사*, 588; Kim, 2020 *해외한류실태조사*, 42.

³⁴¹ Adapted from Kwak, 2016–2017 *해외한류실태조사*, 116; 2018 *해외한류실태조사*, 414; Kim, 2019 *해외한류실태조사*, 588; Kim, 2020 *해외한류실태조사*, 42.

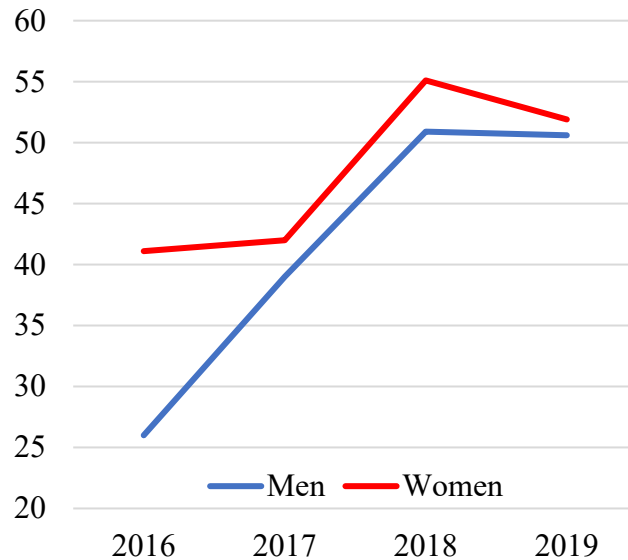


Figure 65. Those Who Enjoyed the Korean Food that They Consumed Recently³⁴²

Similarly, of the 11,000 Japanese applicants who signed up to take the October 2019 TOPIK test, 90% were women³⁴³ (these are proportions similar to traditionally gendered products such as cosmetics: in a 2020 survey, 7% of Japanese men stated that they had bought makeup products other than those for skin care, suggesting the perhaps more predictable pattern that large consumption of Korean cosmetics can be attributed chiefly to women as well).³⁴⁴ Travel to Korea is also dominated by women. In 2008, 57% of all Japanese tourists to South Korea were women; in 2018, that number increased to 63%.³⁴⁵

When breaking down Japanese affinity toward South Korea by gender (Figure 66), men from 1999 to 2010 had a stronger affinity than women. However, the gap between men and women closed around 2004, which is when the Korean wave began in Japan. In

³⁴² Adapted from Kwak, 2016–2017 *해외한류실태조사*, 116; 2018 *해외한류실태조사*, 414; Kim, 2019 *해외한류실태조사*, 588; Kim, 2020 *해외한류실태조사*, 42.

³⁴³ Lang, Kim and Matsumoto, “K-pop and job pressures connect students in Japan and South Korea.”

³⁴⁴ Yuki Masuda, “Makeup for men? How male cosmetics became the new normal in Japan,” *Nikkei Asia*, November 21, 2021, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Consumer/Makeup-for-men-How-male-cosmetics-became-the-new-normal-in-Japan>.

³⁴⁵ Lee et al., *Hallyu White Paper*, 267.

2007, men and women were almost identical in affinity as the second wave began to take off. After the drop-off of affinity in 2012, women emerged to have a stronger affinity toward South Korea. Since 2018 the gap between the genders has grown.

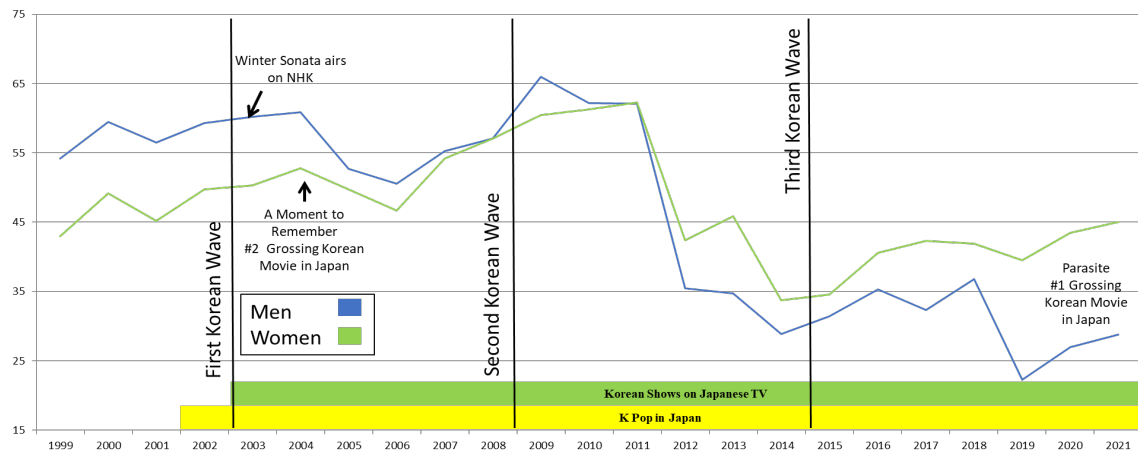


Figure 66. Affinity toward the Republic of Korea Survey by Gender³⁴⁶

Women's increased consumption of Korean culture has given them a more favorable impression of Korea. If it were not for the positive impressions of women toward South Korea, the overall perception of South Korea would be worse than it is currently.

2. Younger Generation

Another demographic that is consuming more Korean culture is the younger generation, defined as those in their 30s and younger. While the first Korean wave in Japan targeted middle-aged housewives, the second wave shifted to those in their 20s and 30s, and teenagers drove the third wave. These second and third waves shifted Korean culture consumption from one form of media (dramas) to a wide variety of content, increasing the breadth of exposure to Korean culture. In 2019, "85.9% of Japanese teenagers said Hallyu is a hot topic."³⁴⁷

³⁴⁶ Government of Japan, 外交に関する世論調査.

³⁴⁷ Lee et al., Hallyu White Paper, 321.

This younger generation of Korean content consumers appears more willing to separate politics from cultural consumption. Ahn and Yoon's research found that 13 of the 15 survey participants stated that increased political tensions and poor relations between both countries would not affect their cultural consumption. One survey participant stated, "historical and political issues have no impact at all on my consumption...I consider political issues and cultural issues to be completely separate."³⁴⁸ Others had similar feelings.

In 2012 shortly after President Lee visited the Dokdo/Takeshima Island, Japanese women's magazine *Josei Seven* surveyed 100 Korean culture fans about their consumption during times of low relations between countries. Seventy-one percent of survey respondents agreed with the statement that "politics and entertainment are separate, so I won't stop being a fan."³⁴⁹ However, when broken down by age, about half of those who were over 50 years old agreed with the statement that they would not forgive South Korea for President Lee's visit. Most of those who agreed with the statement that they were not interested in the subject of Dokdo/Takeshima Island were in their 20s and 30s.³⁵⁰ However, these fans believe there is a tradeoff because they think politics and consuming culture should be separate, and they also prefer that their favorite Hallyu stars avoid politics.³⁵¹

Although the younger generation tends to be less political when comparing their age group to voter turnout, a more significant reason could be how Korean culture is consumed compared to other generations.³⁵² The younger generation is more active on social media and relies more on it for content than traditional channels. By consuming content on the internet, Korean culture consumers can effectively avoid political content,

³⁴⁸ Ahn and Yoon, "Between Love and Hate," 190.

³⁴⁹ Ahn and Yoon, "Between Love and Hate," 190–191.

³⁵⁰ Ahn and Yoon, "Between Love and Hate," 190–191.

³⁵¹ Ahn and Yoon, "Between Love and Hate," 191.

³⁵² Anthony Kuhn, "Low Turnout among Young Voters in Japan May Mean the Ruling Party Stays in Power," NPR, October 29, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/10/29/1050620562/low-turnout-among-young-voters-in-japan-may-mean-the-ruling-party-stays-in-power>.

vice those consuming Korean culture content the traditional way. The older generation is more apt to watch Japanese news programs or read Japanese newspapers for news on their favorite Hallyu stars. While consuming these products, these consumers would be exposed to politics and commentary that alters or influences their views on Korea, thus intertwining politics with their consumption of politics.³⁵³

When comparing the younger generation (18-29 and 30-39) against the overall average (Figure 67), the younger generation has typically had a higher affinity than the overall average. The 18-29-year-old demographic did not experience a steep decline in 2012. It appears to mirror the shape of the overall average, although its responses are 10-15% higher than the average. The 30-39-year group also illustrates the same sharp change as the overall average, although their margin is smaller. However, this margin does appear to be getting larger since 2015.

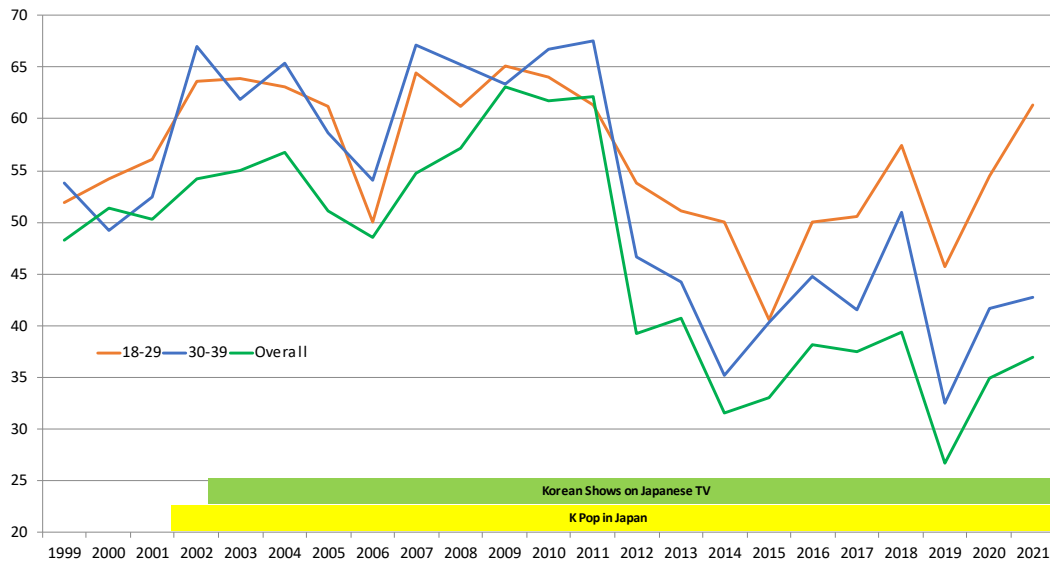


Figure 67. Affinity toward Republic of Korea Survey by Gender³⁵⁴

³⁵³ Ahn and Yoon, “Between Love and Hate,” 192.

³⁵⁴ Adapted from Government of Japan, 外交に関する世論調査.

Since the second wave targeted those in their 20's and early 30's around 2010, those who were in their 20's in the 2010s are now moving to the 30–39 age group.³⁵⁵ As time passes and these people move to the next age bracket and are being replaced by those consuming Korean content, affinity toward South Korea is also increasing in this age group. However, it is unknown how long Korean popular culture will be popular to influence future generations or whether these consumers will carry their positive impressions of South Korea intact as they get older.

G. CONCLUSION

Although Korean culture consumption continues to grow in Japan, the effect on perceptions of South Korea is limited: Korean culture is consumed by a minority, and the ongoing historical and political disputes between both countries counteract what consumption does occur. Globally, Korean culture is more likely to be consumed by younger citizens and women, and the demographic of Japan's avid Korean culture consumers are no different. Consumption by these two groups appears to positively influence the perception of South Korea compared to the overall average. It can be assumed that without the positive influence of these two groups, the overall perception of South Korea in Japan would be significantly worse. Although the belief that widespread Korean culture consumption to fix the Japanese perception of South Korea is oversimplified, these groups, after the 2012 drop-in affinity, have peaked at over 50% in affinity toward South Korea a few times. This means most of those in these demographic groups do *not* feel affinity toward South Korea.

³⁵⁵ Government of Japan. Government of Japan, 外交に関する世論調査.

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IV. CONCLUSION

In Japan, overall consumption of South Korean products and content is increasing. This is especially true of cuisine, beauty, music, and television shows. There is moderate consumption of travel, fashion, and Korean language learning; and low consumption of movies, processed foods, vehicles, and manufactured goods. In South Korea, although observers have not focused as much on a corresponding “Japan wave,” consumption does exist and is significant, perhaps more than realized; however, it has tapered off since the early 2000s due to the emergence of Korea’s own popular culture.³⁵⁶ However, it should be noted that due to the ban on Japanese popular culture, the consumption of Japanese popular culture in South Korea is a relatively new phenomenon. South Koreans show significant consumption of Japanese travel, movies, books, game consoles and video games, and cuisine. Koreans moderately consume Japanese beauty products, designer brand clothing, music, television shows, Japanese language learning, and study abroad in Japan. Only a few Koreans consume Japanese cars, food products, and manufactured goods.

Absolute consumption by both countries is undertaken by only a minority. In Japan, consumption of South Korean popular culture is greater than that of South Koreans consuming Japanese popular culture; it is primarily consumed by women and the younger generation, with women as the most loyal consumers.³⁵⁷ In South Korea, Japanese cultural consumption is more balanced by gender; however, it is mainly consumed by the younger generation.³⁵⁸

Despite increased consumption, positive attitudes toward each other’s countries have not increased significantly. In fact, increased cultural consumption has coincided with a decline in positive attitudes in Japan. However, this crash in positive attitudes can be

³⁵⁶ Iwabuchi, “Pop-Culture Diplomacy in Japan: Soft Power, Nation Branding and the Question of ‘International Cultural Exchange,’” 426–427.

³⁵⁷ East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 60.

³⁵⁸ East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 60.

more attributed to increasing South Korean criticism towards Japan.³⁵⁹ In South Korea, attitudes toward Japan remain relatively negative, but there was a small increase in positive attitudes before crashing to new lows in 2020. If popular culture had led to positive views, this crash should not have happened, since popular culture was still being consumed.

In both countries, an increased but still modest consumption of the other's popular culture coexists with poor attitudes overall, but among specific groups who consume each other's culture the most, positive attitudes are greater. Women and the younger generation in Japan and the younger generation in South Korea appear to have more positive attitudes towards the other than the rest of the population. With this data, it can be inferred that without culture consumption attitudes would be lower than they currently are. However, there is no conclusive trend of cultural consumption driving attitudes, and there might also be the reverse phenomenon, with positive attitudes leading to consumption in the first place. Little data exists to suggest that people with negative/neutral attitudes tend to grow more positive after cultural consumption.

It appears that popular culture consumption does not drive impressions for numerous reasons. Some products do not register as being from the other country in the first place (e.g., makeup). Consumers in each country are a minority in the first place, limiting the influence of popular culture consumption. 93% of Japanese and 95% of South Koreans use their home country's media to gather news about the Japan-South Korean relationship; only a small minority also consume the other country's media.³⁶⁰ Consuming home-country news for information on the Japan-South Korea relationship will give the consumer a country-specific bias that will influence attitudes towards the other country. Those who tend to consume the other country's culture the most also tend to be demographics that are less politically active (especially in Japan). Their attitudes are reflected in opinion polls, but since they are less likely to vote, their positive views are less reflected in the political process. Also, since most consumers are the younger generation who rely less on traditional media and instead use social media, their political message is

³⁵⁹ Glosserman, "Japanese Views of South Korea: Enough is Enough," 190 - 193.

³⁶⁰ East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 10

less influential, as it does not reach the older generation with a smaller presence on social media. Last, culture-consumption-driven attitudes simply might not be strong enough to withstand overwhelming political events (especially in South Korea), and consumption itself may be curtailed due to the political events (boycotts).

It must be cautioned that culture consumption will not solve the issues hindering Japanese-South Korea relations. In South Korea, the dominant influencer on attitudes is Japan's failure to resolve historical issues.³⁶¹ In Japan, the dominant influencer is the critique of Japan over historical issues and the perceived hostility towards Japan.³⁶² Therefore, major influencers of negative attitudes in both countries feed off each other, creating a cyclic effect. When there are growing demands in South Korea for Japan to properly resolve historical issues, this has a direct impact on Japanese attitudes towards South Korea. When the Japanese government refuses to meet the demands of South Korea or when Japanese politicians do or say something that South Koreans view as insulting, this lowers Koreans' positive attitudes towards Japan.

Also, the demographics of both countries tend to favor negative attitudes toward each other. The older generation, the majority in both countries, hold very negative views of each other.³⁶³ This is most likely due to historical issues, but the older generation is also less likely to have interacted with the other's culture during their lifetime, whether due to

³⁶¹ East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 7th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2019) Analysis Report on Comparative Data June, 2019*, 6, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 15, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 6th South Korea Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll (2018) Comparative Analysis Report*, 4, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 2nd Joint Korea-Japan Public Opinion Poll (2014) Comparative Data*, 4; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 3rd Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, 6; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO *The 4th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2016) Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, 6.

³⁶² East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 7th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2019) Analysis Report on Comparative Data June, 2019*, 5, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 14, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 6th South Korea Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll (2018) Comparative Analysis Report*, 5, East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 2nd Joint Korea-Japan Public Opinion Poll (2014) Comparative Data*, 4; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 3rd Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, 5; East Asia Institute and Genron NPO *The 4th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll (2016) Analysis Report on Comparative Data*, 6.

³⁶³ Government of Japan, 外交に関する世論調査; Jeong, *Misunderstandings in the Mutual Perceptions of Citizens from South Korea and Japan and Finding Solutions for Improving Relations*, 5; Yul, *Korea-Japan Relations in Crisis: People Want a Change*, 1.

bans (Japanese culture in South Korea) or limitations (South Korean culture in Japan in earlier years).³⁶⁴ As the current younger generation matures, and if they maintain their attitudes toward the other and the younger generation receives similar attitudes through cultural contact, it is possible that attitudes will improve.

There are other factors that might improve attitudes between Japan and South Korea. The first, of course, is the potential for improved bilateral relations. In a 2021 GENRON NPO/EAI survey, 76% of South Korean and 65% of Japanese supported resolving the historical issues between both countries.³⁶⁵ However, the general public is quite negative about whether this is possible in the near future. In the same survey, when asked what they believe the future of relations will become between both countries, only 16.4% of South Koreans and 17.2% of Japanese said they believe there will be an improvement in relations.³⁶⁶ While it seems unlikely, resolving historical grievances and improving relations would have a more significant impact than culture consumption.

Another factor that may help improve attitudes between the two countries is China. China's rise in the world and perceived aggressive actions towards both states have soured attitudes towards China.³⁶⁷ In an SSAIN 2021 survey and a 2022 Stanford survey of South Koreans, China had lower favorability than Japan.³⁶⁸ Both surveys also found that the younger generation, those in their 20s and younger, had a more significant negative view

³⁶⁴ This statement is referring to South Korean popular culture, which was quite limited until the 2000, not traditional Korean culture.

³⁶⁵ In 2020 those numbers were 72% of South Koreans and 57% of Japanese. East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 22.

³⁶⁶ East Asia Institute and Genron NPO, *The 9th Korea-Japan Joint Public Opinion Poll*, 20.

³⁶⁷ China perceived aggressive actions towards South Korea include China's boycott of South Korean goods in protest to South Korea hosting U.S. air defense missile system, China's crackdown on K-pop, and China's claim that kimchi and the hanbok have Chinese origins. China perceived aggressive actions towards Japan is China's increased attention to territorial disputes.

³⁶⁸ Gi-Wook Shin, Haley Gordon, and Hannah June Kim, "South Koreans Are Rethinking What China Means to Their Nation," Stanford University Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, February 8, 2022, <https://fsi.stanford.edu/news/south-koreans-are-rethinking-what-china-means-their-nation>; Choe Sang-Hun, "South Koreans Now Dislike China More Than They Dislike Japan," *The New York Times*, August 20, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/20/world/asia/korea-china-election-young-voters.html>.

towards China than the older generation, those in their 50s and over. In the 2021 survey, the older generation disliked Japan more than China, highlighting the generation gap.³⁶⁹

A yearly GENRON NPO survey on Japanese towards China has found that since 2012, over 80% of survey respondents held a negative impression of China.³⁷⁰ A Government of Japan survey found similar negative attitudes towards Japan.³⁷¹ However, unlike South Korea, the younger Japanese generation, although still negative overall, has a greater affinity towards China than the older generation.³⁷² If China continues its perceived aggressive actions as it continues to rise in the world, this might help improve attitudes between Japan and South Korea as citizens direct their anger towards China rather than each other. However, this could also have the opposite effect: if Chinese behavior were to provoke significantly different policy responses from Japan and South Korea, this might become another source of tension between those two countries.

Japan and South Korea are important allies to the United States in the region. Bad relations and poor attitudes between Japan and South Korea hinder the United States' ability to achieve its regional objectives. Although each country's consumption of the other's popular culture is encouraging and seems to have an all-else-equal positive effect on attitudes toward each other's countries, widespread consumption and its effects cannot be relied upon to significantly improve citizen attitudes overall.

³⁶⁹ Shin, Haley Gordon, and Hannah June Kim, "South Koreans Are Rethinking What China Means to Their Nation."

³⁷⁰ Yasushi Kudo, *Japan-China Public Opinion Survey 2021* (Tokyo: Genron NPO: 2021), 2, <https://www.genron-npo.net/en/pp/docs/211025.pdf>.

³⁷¹ Government of Japan, 外交に関する世論調査.

³⁷² Government of Japan, 外交に関する世論調査.

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