

Impacts of the Korean Wave and the Conundrum of Malaysian Young Female Muslims*

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Abstract

There has been increasingly harsh criticism of the Korean Wave's negative influence on young Malaysian women and girls since the early 2000s. This resulted from several untoward incidents that triggered the wrath of Malaysian Muslim society. From Muslim society's point of view, young female Muslims in Malaysia seem to be deviating from Islamic norms and teachings due to the detrimental impact of Korean popular culture. This study examines the impact of Korean popular culture on young female Muslims in Malaysia. It looks, in particular, at whether they are exhibiting i) deviant behaviors, ii) erosion of moral standards, and iii) signs of identity crisis due to the negative influence of certain cultural elements in Korean popular culture that they passionately love. Their predicament was examined from the perspective of anomie through an analysis of data obtained from a survey of 643 female Muslim respondents between the ages of 13 and 40. The findings indicated that the majority of young female Muslims in Malaysia have not yet presented symptoms of anomie, as they are fully aware of the disparity between Korean and Islamic culture and norms. Nevertheless, amidst harsh criticism by the mass media and society of the deviations of some Korean Wave enthusiasts, some teenage respondents displayed uncertainty about the cultural disparity between their own Islamic norms and their beloved Korean culture. To overcome the prevalent skeptical view of the Korean Wave in Muslim society, it is imperative that all stakeholders provide Muslim youth with optimal guidelines and strategies to prevent potential anomie and deviance while ensuring their social, mental, and emotional well-being.

Key words

Korean Wave, young female Muslims, Malaysia, Islam, anomie

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Introduction

The Korean Wave, or Hallyu, is a unique global cultural phenomenon that has affected diverse audiences worldwide. Korean popular culture, in the form of dramas, movies, music, language, and other cultural aspects, has attracted the interest and devotion of people throughout the world. Hallyu has had an impact on its fans' preferences in terms of fashion, beauty, lifestyle, music, entertainment, food, and many other cultural aspects (Bae, Chang, Park, & Kim, 2017; Lee, Lee, Kwak, & Kim, 2017; Kim, Kim, Chang, & Park, 2021; Rou & Kim, 2021; Sembiring & Prabandari, 2021). Its influence is expected to expand more rapidly and widely through various online platforms, such as YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook. From South Korea's perspective, the Korean Wave has been beneficial in that it enables other countries to have a better understanding of Korean society and culture while promoting more favorable views of Korea. In addition, the popularity of the Korean Wave has also contributed to South Korea's economy, thanks to an upsurge in the purchase of Korean products, the growing tourism industry, and further development of the Korean cultural industry (Jang & Paik, 2012; Bae et al., 2017; Lee, Rou, & Kim, 2021; Kim et al., 2021; Simanjuntak, Hambali, & Primahardani, 2022).

Despite its remarkable success and popularity, various parties, such as anti-Hallyu groups, religious authorities, traditionalists, and even stakeholders, have questioned the sustainability of the Korean Wave. Its popularity could be transient as the longevity of Hallyu rests on its ability to leave its own, distinct imprint not only on its receivers and consumers, but also on the rest of the globalized world (Kim, 2011; Kang, 2022; Kim & Lee, 2022). In fact, the more popular the Korean Wave becomes, the greater the resistance to it in some countries. For instance, neighboring Asian countries began to display hostile attitudes and growing emotional responses through their local news reports when the Korean Wave reached its peak in 2005. In the case of China and Japan, hostility to the Korean Wave seems to originate from deeply rooted ethnocentric views of their own cultural superiority and nationalism, combined with concerns about economic competition with the native cultural industry, cultural heritage, the dusting off of old historical issues, and various other issues (Jang & Paik, 2012; Chen, 2017).

Some Southeast Asian communities have also expressed their concerns over the negative impacts of the Korean Wave on their youth despite these countries' positive views of South Korea's achievements in economic, political, and social development and their support for measures to emulate Korea's success. However, the

emergence and engulfing influence of the Korean Wave on certain groups of their population, especially the youth, have triggered a backlash and criticism due to deep concerns and fear. As reported by the Korea Herald (2015), the phenomenal popularity of the Korean Wave has prompted traditionalists in Asian countries such as Thailand, Bhutan, and Mongolia to express concerns over the harmful effects of Korean TV shows and K-pop stars on their societies (Jung, 2014).

Malaysia fits into the same pattern; as the popularity of Korean dramas and K-pop music has grown, criticism of the Korean Wave has also increased. The Muslim community, in particular, has continuously expressed its concerns about the negative influence of this popular culture on Malaysian Muslim youth. Amidst these concerns, several disrespectful incidents related to K-pop have exacerbated the already negative perceptions of the Korean Wave in Malaysian Muslim society. In January 2015, three hijab-clad female Muslim teenagers were harshly criticized by Malaysian Muslims on social media when video clips of them being hugged and kissed on their foreheads by members of the B1A4 group in their fan club meeting went viral on the internet (The Star, 2015). Another alarming incident occurred in December 2017, when Malaysian K-pop fans, mostly women, expressed their grief at the suicide of SHINEE's lead singer, Kim Jonghyun. His Malaysian Muslim fans mourned Kim's death by holding a candlelight vigil. Their participation in this event appalled the Muslim community, which perceived it as absolutely contrary to Islamic teachings (Quran 4:29 and 6:151) in that people who kill themselves should not be exalted by Muslims (Berita Harian, 2015; New Straits Times, 2017; JAKIM, 2019). These incidents provoked the wrath of Muslims and Islamic authorities at the unbridled passion of some Muslim youth for all things Korean. They suggest that some Muslim fans seem to have deviated from their religious norms and become confused about their identity as Muslims. Regarding these incidents, the ex-Mufti of Perak, Tan Sri Dr Harussani Zakaria, responded that the actions were absolutely prohibited (haram) in Islam and represented behavior associated with a non-Muslim culture that should not be followed by Muslim youth (Amly, 2017; Syed & Kwon, 2019).

As a Muslim majority country, the ethics found in Islamic teachings are generally strictly adhered to by Malaysian Muslims, which has prompted concerns about the deleterious influence of the Korean Wave on Muslim society. Various parties in Malaysian society have been engaging in heated debates about the external influences of popular culture on Muslim women, which they fear may undermine the local cultural identity and derail Malaysia's modernization project (Syed & Kwon, 2019). Some Muslims have gone so far as to urge the government

to “haramkan” (ban as unIslamic) the Korean Wave in Malaysia.

Globally, Hallyu has been the subject of criticism, particularly in respect to its effects on Islamic youth. Certain K-pop songs and dramas have been criticized for having materials that contradict Islamic values. For instance, some Muslim youth have condemned the depiction of premarital relationships, alcohol usage, and immodest apparel as being at odds with Islamic beliefs in some Korean entertainment. Muslim youth identity and beliefs are allegedly being compromised by the prevalence of Korean culture and entertainment.

Concerns regarding the disrespectful usage of Islamic symbols and expressions in K-pop music and Korean dramas have also been voiced by several Muslims. Some have seen the use of Islamic expressions or writings without sufficient context or comprehension of their significance as insulting to Islamic principles and values. In terms of problems with Islamic principles, eroding Islamic identity, and disregarding Islamic beliefs, Hallyu has been perceived as having a detrimental influence on Islamic youth. These instances emphasize the significance of cultural awareness and respect for various religious and cultural beliefs, as well as the necessity of critical engagement with Hallyu’s effects on various Muslim groups. Some detractors contend that the growing attention given to Korean trends and culture could lead to the neglect of Islamic traditions and culture and the undermining of Islamic identity.

Considering the Malaysian Muslim community’s concerns about and reactions to the Korean Wave, several questions have been raised regarding its influence on Muslim youth. First, has the Korean Wave led Muslim youth to deviate from their religious teachings and practices when they are being entertained by Korean popular culture? Second, has the Korean Wave brought about any changes in the values and norms of Muslim youth? Third, has the Korean Wave caused Muslim youth to become confused about their Muslim identity?

Taking these issues into account, this paper aims to examine the impact of Korean popular culture on young female Muslims, particularly the presence of deviant behaviors or confusion about identity. The main objectives of this research are therefore to verify the situation of young Muslim women and girls due to the Korean Wave by: i) identifying the deviant behaviors of young female Muslims ii) examining the changes in Islamic values and norms among young female Muslims; and iii) verifying whether there is a confusion of identity between Muslim culture and Korean popular culture.

Literature Review

Influence of the Korean Wave on Behaviors of Malaysian Youth

Regarding the influence of Korean media on attitudinal and behavioral changes, as more people become engaged in the cultural wave being spread by the media, especially TV, the more likely they are to purchase culturally conditioned products or learn about the culture, which can, in turn, affect their overall attitude and behavior (Lita & Cho, 2013; Kim et al., 2021; Simanjuntak et al., 2022). Many Asian countries, including Malaysia, Thailand, Bhutan, and Mongolia, have expressed negative perceptions and concerns about the detrimental impacts of the Korean Wave on their people (Jung, 2014).

In the case of Malaysia, society's main concerns are the detrimental influence of the Korean Wave on Malaysian youth who are infatuated with it and blindly imitate this foreign culture, causing them to deviate from social and religious teachings and thereby instigating an identity crisis. These concerns have been growing and their validity is supported by the mass media, previous research findings, and religious parties' opinions that have highlighted the negative effects of the Korean Wave. Meidita (2013) claimed that Hallyu causes adverse effects on female teenage fans, as they spend their money buying Korean products and cosmetics while emulating Korean drama characters and personifying the characters in the dramas. Their obsession can lead to hallucinations in which they imagine themselves marrying celebrities.

Abd Rahim (2016) also expressed his concern over lavish expenditure, unhealthy lifestyle, and deviation from religious practice among the youth. He claimed that Korean Wave fans are willing to spend thousands of ringgits on clothes and items related to the artists they admire or on going to Korea to attend concerts and find opportunities to meet specific artists. The fans are prone to emulate the fashion of their idols, which is not in compliance with Shariah, and are tempted to lead an unhealthy lifestyle by eating inappropriate foods to look as slim as the Korean celebrities. They are willing to spend a massive amount of money to attend concerts or idols' fan-signing events or to buy albums using their "study loans." This concern was exacerbated by a report that Muslim teenagers, especially females were showing their Celebrity Worship Syndrome (CWS) to the K-poppers and some Muslim Korean Wave fans have been labeled as fanatic fans who have fallen victim to this syndrome. (Abdul Rahim, 2016).

Anomie

Young female Muslims have been admonished, as some of them have deviated from Islamic norms and irrationally breached some rules in their fascination with the new culture, blindly following the behaviors of their favorite celebrities. Their obsession with Korean popular culture may cause them to forget about God and their Muslim identity, and neglect their obligations and responsibilities due to confusion between Korean and Islamic culture. This situation can be examined from the perspective of anomie and strain theories, as articulated by Durkheim, Merton, and Agnew. These theories are considered the foremost elucidations of the causes of deviant behavior from a sociological perspective. They can enlighten us regarding the Korean Wave phenomenon and help us investigate the dilemma of young female Muslims who are torn between it and Islamic norms.

Anomie theory refers to an absence of norms, manifested either as an absence of explicit norms in a society or the condition of an individual with an absence of standard values or standard norms due to the lack of social control during economic turmoil, political changes, and social revolutions (Giddens & Sutton, 2009; Macionis & Gerber, 2010). For Durkheim, social change and assimilation are crucial elements of deviant behaviors. When a society experiences rapid transformation, social values and norms can become uncertain and anomie can occur, whereby the society fails to successfully control the expectations or behaviors of its members. Thus, anomie can be caused by a lack of control and by members' ambitions and desires becoming unrestricted, leading to deviant behaviors (Giddens & Sutton, 2009). Anomie theory was later elaborated by Merton (1968), who added the concept of social anomie.

For this research, anomie theory is appropriate for investigating the predicament of Muslim youth and the confusion of values and norms among them. This theory could further explain the impact of the Korean Wave on young Muslims' perspective if they are on the brink of anomie. Therefore, this paper aims to verify the presence of or potential for anomie through an examination of deviant behaviors, erosion of moral standards, and confusion of identity among young female Muslims.

Research Methods

The purpose of this research was to assess the impact of the Korean Wave on young female Muslims in Malaysia. A series of fieldwork studies was carried out

on targeted groups using the sample convenience method during April–June 2019. The survey was conducted at universities and secondary schools in the Klang Valley around Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. The respondents comprised 643 young female Malaysian Muslims living in Klang Valley. The rationale for choosing young women at universities and secondary schools in Klang Valley was based on three facts. First, researchers have been observing the impact of the Korean Wave on Malaysians since 2016. Its impact is more significant in cities than in rural areas, where both access and influence are greater owing to the availability of facilities. Second, universities and secondary school students are the groups most affected by the Korean Wave. This is because they are in the early stages of life and are looking for self-identity through what they like to be an example. Teenagers are also the most influential group on social media. Third, based only on preliminary observations, society raises questions about the relationship between the Korean Wave and youth in Malaysia.

Data were collected using structured questionnaires. The questionnaires included several types of questions: dichotomous questions, multiple-choice questions, 5-point Likert scale questions, rating scale questions, and open-ended questions, to obtain a comprehensive set of data covering all the issues in the research questions. The questionnaire items were designed to gauge the predicaments and challenges respondents were experiencing, such as behaviors that deviate from socially and religiously accepted norms, and confusion of identity due to their involvement in the Korean Wave events. The themes covered in the questionnaire were the following: i) change of lifestyle; ii) change of standards and perceptions in terms of morals, values, and norms; and iii) identity crisis.

To assist in this effort, Google Form applications were used as a medium to gather additional online information from respondents. Prior to that, a series of pilot studies was conducted on 60 respondents to evaluate the reliability of the questionnaires. When the questionnaires were assessed for internal consistency, the resulting Cronbach's Alpha was 0.728, well above the 0.6 value that is considered desirable. Hence, the questionnaires were adjudged valid and reliable.

Table 1
Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
0.728	41

Source: Survey April–June 2019

Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 22.0. This was to guarantee that the data could be broken down, properly processed, and the responses comprehended accordingly.

Next was the analysis of the questionnaires in scale questions, wherein three scales of points were used, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Respondents' Answer Scale

Answer Scale	Rating	Score Range
Disagree	Low	0-2
Agree	Medium	3-4
Strongly Agree	High	5 and over

Source: Ariffin et al., 2022

From Table 2, the three rating classifications were set as low, medium, and high. In this way, the pertinence of the appropriate response scale from the respondents' answers could be calculated.

This research is focused on three main issues. Has the Korean Wave led young female Muslims to deviate from their religious teachings and practices when they are being entertained by Korean popular culture? Second, has the Korean Wave brought about any changes in the values and norms of young Muslims? Third, has the Korean Wave caused young Muslims to become confused about their Muslim identity? This study provides critical evidence in assessing the impact of the Korean Wave on Malaysian young female Muslims.

The study was conducted based on the following three null hypotheses:

1. Deviations from religious teachings and practices are occurring among young female Muslims as a result of the Korean Wave.
2. The values and norms of young female Muslims are changing.
3. There is a significant relation between the Korean Wave and young female Muslims' identity crisis.

Results

Table 3 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. This consisted of three questions on age, employment status, and respondents' educational background.

Table 3
The Demographic Background of Respondents

Demographic Background	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Age (years)		
13-17	150	23.3
18-24	340	52.9
25-30	87	13.5
31-40	66	10.3
2. Employment Status		
Student	483	75.1
Working full time	119	18.5
Working part time	20	3.1
Not working	21	3.2
3. Educational Background		
<i>Secondary Level</i>		
Religious Education	51	7.9
Non-Religious Education	130	20.2
<i>Tertiary Level</i>		
Religious Education	131	131
Non-Religious Education	330	330

Lifestyle Change and Deviant Behavior

Regarding deviant behaviors due to the negative influences of Korean popular culture on daily life, respondents were asked about lifestyle changes, such as their spending of time and money in relation to the Korean Wave and were asked questions such as if they thought they were wasting their time by watching Korean dramas or K-pop music.

Overall, the majority of respondents did not agree that they wasted their time on the Korean Wave, as seen in Table 4. A total of 354 respondents (55%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that they wasted their time due to the Korean Wave, whereas only 26% agreed or strongly agreed with the view, and 19% of respondents remained neutral.

However, the cross-tabulations indicate that 38.7% of young people aged 13-17 disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were wasting their time on activities related to the Korean Wave, whereas 40% of them agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. The percentages of agreement on the question decreased with older age groups, as shown in Table 4, with the lowest percentage of 10.7% for the oldest age group (31-40 years old).

Table 4
Wasting Time on the Korean Wave

Age	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
13-17	16.7%	22%	21.3%	27.3%	12.7%	100%
18-24	20.9%	33.8%	20%	17.6%	7.6%	100%
25-30	37.9%	31%	14.9%	13.8%	2.3%	100%
31-40	31.8%	43.9%	13.6%	7.6%	3.1%	100%
Total	150	204	122	118	49	643
	23.3%	31.7%	19.0%	18.4%	7.6%	100.0%

Thus, the findings suggest that the majority of the respondents felt they were not wasting their time due to the Korean Wave; however, their responses vary according to their age. Interestingly, the average number of hours they spent watching Korean dramas was almost the same across all four age groups.

Regarding spending money on Korean Wave-related products, the majority of respondents did not agree that they wasted their money on the Korean Wave, as seen in Table 5. A total of 72.3% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they wasted their money due to the Korean Wave, whereas only 14.7% agreed or strongly agreed, and 12.9% of respondents remained neutral.

Although the findings suggest that the majority of the respondents felt they were not wasting their money due to the Korean Wave, their responses again varied according to their age. The cross-tabulations showed that young respondents aged 13-17 were most inclined to feel they were wasting their money on the Korean Wave activities; 18.7% of them agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. The percentages decreased with older age groups (18-24, 16.5%; 25-30,

Table 5
Wasting Money on the Korean Wave

Age	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
13-17	30.0%	31.3%	20.0%	14.0%	4.7%	100%
18-24	34.4%	39.7%	9.4%	10.9%	5.6%	100%
25-30	48.3%	28.7%	14.9%	2.3%	5.7%	100%
31-40	47.0%	34.8%	12.1%	3.0%	3.0%	100%
Total	235	230	83	62	33	643
	36.5%	35.8%	12.9%	9.6%	5.1%	100.0%

8.0%; 31–40, 6.0%) as shown in Table 5, with the lowest percentage of 6.0% in the oldest age group.

Changes in lifestyle seem to be minimal among young female Muslims in terms of health problems, lack of sleep, disruption to their studies, work and social life, escapism, and breaches of Islamic norms, including the neglect of their responsibilities as Muslims.

Overall, the majority of respondents did not agree that they were negatively influenced by the Korean Wave, as seen in Table 6; 91.0% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were neglecting their responsibilities as Muslims due to the Korean Wave, whereas only 3.5% agreed or strongly agreed with the view, and 5.4% remained neutral. A total of 77.3% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that their studies or work was disturbed due to the Korean Wave, and 63.1% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were experiencing lack of sleep due to the Korean Wave. Furthermore, 90.7% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were experiencing unhealthy weight loss in an effort to imitate celebrities and 76.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were distracted from their daily activities.

Table 6 shows that the negative effect of Korean popular culture is insignificant in terms of the lifestyle of young female Muslims as only a small percentage of respondents admitted that they were negatively affected by the Korean Wave.

Table 6
The Negative Influences of the Korean Wave on Daily Life

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
Neglecting responsibilities as a Muslim	402 62.5%	183 28.5%	35 5.4%	15 2.3%	8 1.2%
Face disturbance in your study	240 37.3%	257 40.0%	84 13.1%	51 7.9%	11 1.7%
Experience lack of sleep due to K-pop	189 29.4%	217 33.7%	86 13.4%	102 15.9%	49 7.6%
Try/experience unhealthy weight loss to look slim like favorite celebrities/idols	333 51.8%	250 38.9%	48 7.5%	8 1.2%	4 0.6%
Distraction in daily activity due to interest in the Korean Wave	232 36.1%	260 40.4%	95 14.8%	34 5.3%	22 3.4%

Erosion of Moral Standards

Respondents' level of awareness of cultural differences between Muslim and Korean Wave cultures is a crucial element that enables them to avoid deviant behaviors and the erosion of moral standards that could lead them to anomie. These standards include appreciation of appropriate behaviors, dress codes, self-control, limits on enjoying entertainment, and awareness of contradictions between K-pop and Islamic teachings.

Table 7
The Dress Code, Limitation on Exposure to Entertainment, and Self-control

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Some Korean celebrities' fashion styles are too sexy and not appropriate	6 0.9%	21 3.3%	67 10.4%	307 47.7%	242 37.7%	643 100.0%
Muslims should limit their exposure to some Korean entertainment/music that is not proper for Muslims	15 2.3%	41 6.4%	100 15.6%	237 36.9%	250 38.9%	643 100.0%
Muslim fans need to exercise self-control during meeting/events with their celebrities	2 0.3%	5 0.8%	37 5.8%	192 29.9%	407 63.3%	643 100.0%

Overall, a majority of respondents agreed that they realized their responsibilities and limits as Muslims in terms of dress code, exposure to entertainment, and self-control, as seen in Table 7. An aggregate of 85.4% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that some Korean celebrities' fashion styles are sexy and inappropriate in terms of the Islamic dress code, and 75.8% agreed or strongly agreed that Muslim fans should avoid listening to and watching some Korean music videos that are too sensual in nature, while 15.6% of respondents remained neutral regarding the latter point. Finally, 93.2% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that Muslim fans need to exercise self-control when meeting celebrities.

Identity Confusion

To measure the Muslim respondents' identity confusion or crisis, they were asked if they had ever been accused of being a bad Muslim or of being fanatical due to their interest in the Korean Wave. Regarding Muslims' religious and social identity and social sanctions such as "labeling" and "guilt," most respondents have

never considered themselves as immoral Muslims despite liking Korean popular culture, although some of them have felt a sense of guilt when people use religious arguments to disapprove of Korean culture.

Table 8
Feeling Guilty as Korean Wave Fans

Ages	Feeling guilty when facing people who disapprove of the Korean Wave and use religion as the basis of their opposition			Total
	Yes	Maybe	No	
13-17	73	40	37	150
	48.7%	26.7%	24.7%	100.0%
18-24	137	92	111	340
	40.3%	27.1%	32.6%	100.0%
25-30	28	18	41	87
	32.2%	20.7%	47.1%	100.0%
31-40	14	14	38	66
	21.2%	21.2%	57.6%	100.0%
Total	252	164	227	643
	39.2%	25.5%	35.3%	100.0%

Regarding the respondents feeling guilty for being Korean Wave lovers, the answers were diverse, as seen in Table 8. An aggregate of 39.2% of the respondents felt guilty when faced with people who disapprove of Korean culture on the basis of religion, while 35.3% did not feel guilty and 25.5% remained neutral. The results also showed that the younger group, aged 13-17, were more sensitive to the criticism as they had more guilty feelings, 48.7%, as compared to the older groups. The oldest group, in particular, displayed the lowest sense of guilt, 21.2%.

Table 9
Contradiction between the Korean Wave and Islamic Teachings

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Total	17	161	282	133	50	643
	2.6%	25.0%	43.9%	20.7%	7.8%	100.0%

Regarding compatibility or contradiction between elements of Korean entertainment and Islamic teachings, respondents presented various views, as seen in Table

9. On aggregate, 28.5% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Korean entertainment is contrary to Islamic teachings, whereas 27.6% of respondents disagreed with the view, and 43.9% remained uncertain.

More than half of the respondents (56.1%) presented their clear evaluation criteria for making judgments on some elements of the Korean Wave, either they agree or disagree, as they were fully aware of their righteous behaviors based on Islamic teachings and practices. On the other hand, the other half (43.9%) seemed not to have a very clear idea of the criteria for evaluating the contradictions between Korean entertainment and Islam.

Analysis and Discussion

Behaviors Deviating from Normal Lifestyle or Neglecting Responsibilities

The majority of young female Muslims in this study did not neglect their studies or find them disturbed, did not face health problems, and did not waste a considerable amount of time and money out of a fanatic zeal for Korean popular culture or in imitation of their favorite celebrities' inappropriate behaviors. On the contrary, they realize their priorities, responsibilities, and obligations in their daily life as students, workers, and housewives. In other words, they have not deviated from their normal lifestyle due to the alleged detrimental effects of the Korean Wave.

This result contradicts some previous studies that have focused on the deviation of a few young Malaysians who were willing to spend thousands of ringgits to visit Korea to attend concerts or find opportunities to meet specific artists or buy and wear non-Shariah-compliant clothes and items to emulate their adored celebrities. Abd Rahim (2016) and Betty (2016) found that teenagers spent a considerable amount of money to attend concerts and wear specific clothes as a result of following Korean celebrities or idols. However, the behavior of young Muslims should not be overgeneralized on the basis of the deviations of a few fans. The findings of this study indicate that an interest in Korean popular culture does not lead to any financial, health, or time management problems in the respondents' lives, or to the neglect of their social and religious lives as Muslims, and only a few of them think that K-pop disturbs their sleep.

Erosion of Moral Standards

Most of the respondents displayed adherence to their social and religious

norms, being fully aware of the cultural differences between Korean and Muslim values and norms. They also presented a firm standpoint on the Korean cultural elements that are against their religious teaching and practices to avoid deviant behaviors. These results establish that the respondents did not experience a change in their moral standards. In relation to this standard, some Islamic norms have been the center of controversy, such as *aurah*, inappropriate fashion, obsession with entertainment, and an emphasis on sensuality that might cause moral decadence among Muslim youth. Islam places great emphasis on *aurah*, and Muslim women are expected to avoid publicly revealing it. In this regards, Nasrum and Bungawati (2017) highlighted Muslim society's deep anxiety that underage Muslim children might wear skimpy dresses to imitate pop idols' latest fashion style and avoid being considered outdated. This would be against Islamic principles and would lead to an erosion of Muslim teenagers' moral standards.

However, the results suggest that the respondents were aware of possible conflicts between Islamic teachings and Korean popular culture norms. In addition, most respondents try not to be immersed in activities that contravene Islamic teachings, as they are aware of their obligations and limitations as Muslims. However, the findings reveal that some of the respondents are uncertain about the criteria of Islamic teaching in some areas, which makes them uncertain and confused.

Identity Crisis

In terms of Muslim identity, the young women and girls in this research indicated their acknowledgement of their identity and the limits entailed by it in pursuing and enjoying Korean popular culture. They did not show any confusion about their proper appearance due to the influence of Korean celebrities. There was no obsession with foreign values infused from Korean popular culture, as the respondents displayed their disapproval of some elements of the Korean Wave, particularly K-pop music. They seem to uphold their religious and social values and norms when evaluating matters.

As a result, there is no sign of identity crisis, as most young female Muslims have a firm religious standpoint. The Korean Wave does not make its Muslim fans stray from Islamic religion and social norms as long as the fans themselves are faithful and devout.

Despite these results, however, there are signs of confusion among some young female Muslims, especially teenagers, in determining which cultural elements are

unacceptable. The youngest group of respondents, aged 13–17, expressed feelings of guilt, fear of labeling, and uncertainty about their behavior, which they think might be fanatical, and they fear they may be wasting their time and money. All these issues are markedly less common in the older groups. This means there are signs of confusion and that these young female Muslims could be on the brink of anomie if society does not provide them with clear and concrete guidance. Instead, mass media and certain groups of people are labeling them as fanatical fans of a foreign culture or Muslims who have gone astray without fair investigation or a comprehensive understanding of their behavior and the challenges they face. They are quite vulnerable during the transitional process from childhood to adulthood. Support and understanding are crucial in this interim stage of learning societal and religious values and norms in order to lead them to the path of righteousness.

Conclusion

Contrary to Muslim society's grave concerns, the research findings indicate that most of the young female Muslims in this study have not experienced anomie because of the disparity between Islamic values and norms and cultural elements in the Korean Wave. This is because they stick to essential religious Muslim values and norms while taking advantage of their fascination with the Korean Wave in order to enrich some aspects of their lives. The study conducted by Delener (1994) proves that a person's life is influenced by religion in making decisions. When a Muslim has a high level of religion, then he or she will not be influenced by any elements that violate Islamic norms. However, the study also indicated that some teenagers are manifesting early signs of confusion, particularly among respondents aged 13–17. They have more feelings of guilt, are more afraid of labeling, and are more uncertain about their behavior as they wonder if they might be fanatical about the Korean Wave and are wasting time and money. Instead of criticizing this young and naive group of young girls for their confusion and digression, they should be provided with guidance and education by various relevant parties like Islamic authorities, media, educational institutions, and family members for their well-being.

The study also highlights the need for cultural sensitivity and new content in the Korean Wave to ensure social benefits for Islamic societies as well as the sustainability of the Korean Wave itself. First, a deep understanding of cultural and religious differences along with consideration and sensitivity on the part of Korean Wave content creators (entertainment companies, producers, and celebrities) are

required for the future success and sustainability of the Korean Wave in Islamic countries. Second, the study results imply the possibility of the sustainability of the Korean Wave in Islamic countries and a co-existence between Korean popular culture and Islamic teachings if the involved parties wisely take measures to minimize potential conflicts and select educational elements from Korean culture for Muslim youth. On top of that, bespoke Hallyu or Muslim-friendly Korean Wave materials could be offered to Muslim Korean Wave consumers based on the local social and religious context while providing young Korean Wave fans with various models for their social learning.

In short, these findings could be utilized to measure the potential adjustment of approaches for the sake of Muslim youth, as well as the sustainability of the Korean Wave in Islamic societies. However, this study is a preliminary study, aiming to examine the impact of the Korean Wave, particularly the potential for anomie, among young female Muslims. Thus, it only examined the possible negative influence of foreign culture on the respondents. It did not investigate the positive emulation of Korean culture and values, as there must be some young female Muslims who have learned positive Korean values (Kim, Rou, Ali, & Kim, 2019; Abd Rahim et al., 2013; Jalaluddin & Ahmad, 2011; Amaran & Wen, 2018). This study also shows the need to thoroughly explore the market strategies for the Korean Wave as an ideal social learning model and in terms of entertainment education (Singhal, Cody, Rogers, & Sabido, 2004). The contents of the Korean Wave could be utilized as a tool for entertainment education, as various attributes of entertainment like popularity, pervasiveness, enjoyment, and feasibility have been used to disseminate messages with positive social characteristics. To upgrade the Korean Wave, globalized content could expand the market for the Korean Wave among Islamic communities.

In conclusion, all the hypotheses stated earlier were rejected. The findings showed that first, the Korean Wave did not cause young Muslim women and girls to deviate from religious teachings and practices; second, it did not affect values and norms of young female Muslims; and third, there was no significant evidence that the Korean Wave is causing young female Muslims' identity crisis.

Hallyu has significantly influenced young people worldwide, notably young Muslims. However, there is no concrete proof that Hallyu has a substantial impact on the religious habits or views of these Muslims. Some Hallyu material may be in opposition to Islamic principles, including such lifestyle influences as dress, make-up, and haircuts. Certain K-pop and Korean drama materials have also provoked debate among Muslims owing to situations that go against Islamic principles, such as drinking alcohol or engaging in sexual activity.

In positive ways, many also embody principles such as love, kindness, and bravery, which may reinforce universal principles and promote tolerance and inclusiveness. There is little proof that Hallyu substantially alters the ideas or religious habits of young Muslims, even though it has affected their society. However, the effect of Hallyu on young female Muslims is still under discussion and may alter in the future as global culture and entertainment evolve.

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