

KOREAN WAVE: PHILOSOPHY, EXISTENCE, PHENOMENON, AND RESPONSE OF YOUNG MUSLIM

M. Agung Pramana¹; Masduki²

^{1,2}Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau

¹agungpramana369@gmail.com; ²masduki@uin-suska.ac.id

Abstract: *This article analyzes the Korean wave, which is intensively entering the transnational market. Focusing on Korean dramas, which are mushrooming in Indonesia, previous studies only focused on the development of the Korean wave in the world. They only took into account the values contained therein. More than that, this research comes as a novelty with a discussion of young Indonesian Muslims who consume Korean dramas as active consumers. This research collaborates with young Muslims, most of whom consist of students, especially in Riau province, regarding the meaning of Korean dramas in Indonesia. This article attempts to answer the main questions, such as how young Muslims in Riau respond to interpreting the Korean dramas shown. Meanwhile, further questions, such as how the journey and development of Korean dramas are in the Indonesian context, are also asked. The author used a qualitative method to answer this question based on online interviews with 24 young Indonesian Muslims via a Google form link. Then, it will be analyzed using relevant previous literature. The research results show that young Muslims consume Korean dramas not only as passive recipients. Do not just watch it. More than that, they are also active consumers who are critical in learning, teaching new insights, and learning the Korean language and the good values contained therein. They appear as active consumers who can take lessons and even teach from the Korean dramas they watch.*

Keywords: *Korean Wave; Hallyu; Globalization; Young Muslim*

Introduction

As is known, globalization has been very massive lately. An example of globalization itself is Hallyu. Hallyu, or Korean wave, is a phenomenon of the active and massive spread of Korean popular culture throughout the world in the form of pop music, films, dramas, fashion, cell phones, and lifestyle.¹ Korean popular culture has become widely

¹Jong-Ho Jeong, "Ethnoscapes, mediascapes, and ideoscapes: Socio-cultural relations between South Korea and China," *Journal of international and area studies*, 2012, 77–95; Dal Jin, *New Korean Wave: Transnational cultural power in the age of social media*

consumed internationally. Focus on Korean drama, a form of Korean popular culture much sought after by all groups and incredibly trendy among young people. Based on Korean drama export data, China is among the first countries to distribute Korean dramas to the transnational realm. Japan and Taiwan are big importers of Korean dramas.² Several Southeast Asian countries have increased imports of Korean dramas due to regional popularity and significant demand from local audiences.³

Korean dramas are more than just television shows. Korean dramas are examples of cultural hybridization and globalization.⁴ For instance, Korean dramas are popular in the United States because the stories presented are interesting. The pioneers also put English subtitles on the dramas to attract a large audience and so that the audience understood the storyline. The plot offered is based on family situations in the real world; characters can conquer obstacles and have a definite ending between 16 and 20 episodes.⁵

It does not stop there, Türkiye, for example. Based on a study conducted by Statistica in 2019, it was found that 33.5% of participants thought Korean dramas were top-rated there. Korean dramas are also flooding India, and many Indians are starting to learn Korean. The development of Korean drama has entered all areas, such as Thailand,

(University of Illinois press, 2016); Hyejung Ju, "National Television Moves to the Region and beyond: South Korean TV Drama Production with a New Cultural Act," *The Journal of International Communication* 23, no. 1 (2 Januari 2017): 94–114, doi:10.1080/13216597.2017.1291443; Youna Kim, "Korean wave pop culture in the global internet age: Why popular? why now?," *The Korean Wave* (Routledge, 2013), 75–92; Sang-Yeon Sung, "K-pop reception and participatory fan culture in Austria," *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review* 3, no. 1 (2014): 56–71.

²Hyejung Ju, "The korean wave and korean dramas," *Oxf. Res. Encycl. Comm* 10 (2018).

³Dani Madrid-Morales dan Bruno Lovric, "'Transatlantic Connection': K-Pop and K-Drama Fandom in Spain and Latin America," *Journal of Fandom Studies*, The 3, no. 1 (1 Maret 2015): 23–41, https://doi.org/10.1386/jfs.3.1.23_1.

⁴Woongjae Ryoo, "Globalization, or the Logic of Cultural Hybridization: The Case of the Korean Wave," *Asian Journal of Communication* 19, no. 2 (Juni 2009): 137–51, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01292980902826427>.

⁵Lisa M. Chuang dan Hye Eun Lee, "Korean wave: Enjoyment factors of Korean dramas in the US," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 37, no. 5 (2013): 594–604.

Vietnam, Japan, and Indonesia.⁶

This research focuses on Korean dramas, which have recently become an exciting phenomenon to research. Previous studies discussing Korean dramas included in Korean popular culture and have reached transnational reach have been carried out by many scholars, taking their respective focuses. Like Hyun Mee⁷, who discovered that Taiwan had become one of the largest importers of Korean dramas, this even influenced Taiwanese society as if they considered contemporary Korean society an elegant, modern country.⁸ Imron et al said that in Indonesia, the development of Korean dramas cannot be separated from the influence of the popularity of Korean dramas in other countries. Community contributions have a significant impact on the popularity of Korean dramas.

Ariffin et⁹ also mentioned that in Malaysia, Korean dramas are a favorite trend among Malaysian viewers compared to other Asian dramas. Behind the success of Korean dramas on the international stage is comprehensive support from the government regarding technological assistance, infrastructure development, and export programs. As a result, with this support, Korean media that broadcast dramas are increasingly working hard and creating creativity in the creative industry to campaign Korean dramas on the transnational stage. It is known through data from the Statista Research Department, which surveyed Malaysia, that as of November 2023, around 32% of respondents agreed that Korean dramas were very popular among the general public in Malaysia.¹⁰

⁶Jose Karlo Mari Tottoc, "15 Negara yang Paling Banyak Menonton Drama Korea Insider Monkey," 22 Agustus 2023, <https://www.insidermonkey.com/blog/15-countries-that-watch-the-most-k-dramas-1183260/>.

⁷Rosidi, Masduki, dan Triantoro, "Nilai-nilai Islam dalam Drama Korea Perspektif Anak Muda Muslim Pekanbaru," *Jurnal Dakwah Risalah* 30, no. 2 (2019): 215–26.

⁸Kim Hyun Mee, "Korean TV dramas in Taiwan: With an emphasis on the localization process," *Korea Journal* 45, no. 4 (2005): 183–205.

⁹Julina Tajul Ariffin, Hassan Abu Bakar, dan Nor Hafezah Yusof, "Korean media strategies in promoting Korean dramas in Malaysia," *International Journal of innovative research in engineering & management* 5, no. 1 (2018)

¹⁰Statista Research Department, "K-drama popularity level in Malaysia 2023," Statista, 25 Juni 2024, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1017835/south-korea-korean-drama-popularity-malaysia/>.

Lee¹¹ also argues that fans consume Korean dramas to increase their knowledge and broaden their cultural views, and fans emphasize the quality and aesthetics of Korean dramas to legitimize and express their normative identity. Rosidi¹² explained that Korean dramas encourage young Muslims to negotiate the Islamic values displayed in the drama, such as aspects of hard work and never giving up.

This differs from previous studies, which only considered the development of the Korean wave worldwide and the values emphasized in Korean dramas. Furthermore, this research focuses on young Muslims, especially in Riau, one of the provinces in Indonesia, who are active consumers of Korean dramas. They not only consume the storyline but can also take positive things and learn from the Korean dramas they watch. So far, many people have researched the Korean wave, which has become a global phenomenon in various dimensions and contexts. However, very few discuss the reception of Korean popular culture in Indonesia.¹³ This study also strengthens Lee's argument that fans use Korean dramas as a tool to gain knowledge, broaden their cultural views, and express their normative identities,¹⁴ as well as examining the perspective of young people when watching Korean dramas. The audience's perspective also contributes to the popularity of Korean dramas.

This article will answer the central question: How do young Muslims respond to interpreting the Korean dramas shown? Meanwhile, the author will explore further questions, such as how Korean drama developed into global popular culture in the Indonesian context. To answer this question, the author will divide it into four parts. The first part provides an introduction to the research topic that is the focus of this study. In the second part, the author explores the entry and development of Korean drama over time in the Indonesian context. Next, the author also examines the responses of young Muslims regarding the presence of

¹¹Hyunji Lee, "A 'Real' Fantasy: Hybridity, Korean Drama, and Pop Cosmopolitans," *Media, Culture & Society* 40, no. 3 (April 2018): 365–80, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443717718926>.

¹²Imron Rosidi, Masduki Masduki, dan Dony Arung Triantoro, "Nilai-nilai Islam dalam Drama Korea Perspektif Anak Muda Muslim Pekanbaru," *Jurnal Dakwah Risalah* 30, no. 2 (2019): 215–26.

¹³Jae-Seon Jeong, Seul-Hi Lee, dan Sang-Gil Lee, "Korean Wave| When Indonesians Routinely Consume Korean Pop Culture: Revisiting Jakartan Fans of Korean Drama Dae Jang Geum," *International Journal of Communication* 11 (2017): 20.

¹⁴Lee, "A 'Real' Fantasy."

Korean dramas. Finally, this article concludes with a conclusion.

Method

This research used qualitative methods by interviewing 24 young Muslims, especially in Riau province. Qualitative methods rely on observation and in-depth interviews.¹⁵ Apart from that, this qualitative research also relies on qualitative research standards by O'Brien et al., which state that data reporting is presented narratively.¹⁶ This research also depends on netnography through data available on social media regarding the study topic.¹⁷ Interviews were conducted via online media, namely from a Google form containing questions relevant to the study topic, distributed as an online link, and then filled in by the informant.

Table 1. Research Informant Data

No	Name	Age	Gender	Domicile
1	Qodariah	22 years old	Woman	Riau
2	Pratiwi	22 years old	Woman	Riau
3	Karenia	22 years old	Woman	Riau
4	Agustin	25 years old	Woman	Riau
5	Windri	22 years old	Woman	Riau
6	Febri	26 years old	Man	Riau
7	Tri	17 years old	Woman	Riau
8	Ramansyah	23 years old	Man	Riau
9	Rizka	26 years old	Woman	Riau
10	Fina	24 years old	Woman	Riau
11	Yuliana	23 years old	Woman	Riau
12	Santika	22 years old	Woman	Riau
13	Ardila	19 years old	Woman	Riau
14	Pramudya	18 years old	Man	Riau
15	Ramadhani	19 years old	Woman	Riau
16	Nadika	19 years old	Woman	Riau

¹⁵Michael S. Northcott, "Pendekatan Sosiologi" dalam Peter Connolly, ed," *Aneka Pendekatan Studi Agama*, 2016.

¹⁶Bridget C. O'Brien dkk., "Standards for reporting qualitative research: a synthesis of recommendations," *Academic medicine* 89, no. 9 (2014): 1245–51.

¹⁷Robert V. Kozinets, *Netnography: The essential guide to qualitative social media research* (Sage, 2019).

No	Name	Age	Gender	Domicile
17	Dilla	19 years old	Woman	Riau
18	Rahma	19 years old	Woman	Riau
19	Wulan	20 years old	Woman	Riau
20	Robiatul	18 years old	Woman	Riau
21	Utela	19 years old	Woman	Riau
22	Anisah	20 years old	Woman	Riau
23	Kalsum	17 years old	Woman	Riau
24	Ramadhan	23 years old	Man	Riau

Before sending the online form, the author asked for the informant's willingness to participate in an online interview in the form of a form containing questions about Korean dramas. They all agree to provide their perspective in this study by fill in the names listed in google form. The author also included criteria in selecting informants, young Muslims who like Korean dramas, both men and women. After the informants were willing, the author sent an online form link, which the informants answered. Authors also maintain the confidentiality of their answers by making settings on the Google Form that can only be seen by the author, and the author does not ask for things of a private nature, such as their email addresses. And the author emphasized that he only wanted to see their perspective on Korean dramas. The author also makes it more flexible for informants to respond to questions asked on the Google form, not having to answer all the questions. Furthermore, when the answers from the informants have been collected, the author will use data analysis techniques in the form of data reduction. Data reduction is carried out by sorting data that matches the research focus. If an informant's answer is unclear, the writer will filter it. Then present the data that has been sorted and selected, and then draw conclusions.¹⁸ Apart from that, the author also inserts previous studies that are relevant to the study topic to generate innovative ideas.

¹⁸John Cresswell, "Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches.," 2013,

Result and Discussion

Korean Drama: Identity of Young Indonesian Muslims

As is known, the Korean wave has spread throughout the world due to globalization. Korean drama was one of the most massive Korean waves.¹⁹ So far, only two academic trends regarding Korean drama research focus on Asia. The first focuses on the reception of Korean dramas in East Asia, which may influence perceptions about Korea and Korean people in other countries.²⁰ The second trend focused on how watching them helps people to cope with daily life in their country.²¹ The success of the Korean wave is also based on the ability of Korean media and culture to translate Western culture to suit American or Asian tastes.²²

In the Indonesian context, the popularity of Korean cultural products was seen in the 2000s. It is important to remember that East Asian pop culture existed before the Korean wave phenomenon. An example is the TV drama from Taiwan entitled *Meteor Garden* in 2002, which recorded the highest rating in the history of Indonesian broadcasts. This phenomenon started the explosion of East Asian pop culture entering Indonesia after the New Order. The success of the drama *Meteor Garden* immediately gave rise to Korean dramas such as *Endless Love*, which were considered a breath of fresh air compared to other Korean dramas such as *All About Eve*, *Full House*, *Hotelier*, *Friends*, and *Glass*

¹⁹Marion Schulze, "Korea vs. K-dramaland: The culturalization of K-dramas by international fans," *Acta Koreana* 16, no. 2 (2013): 367–97.

²⁰Millie Creighton, "Japanese Surfing the Korean Wave: Drama Tourism, Nationalism, and Gender via Ethnic Eroticisms.," *Southeast Review of Asian Studies* 31 (2009), https://www.academia.edu/download/4740766/seras_2009.pdf#page=36; Toru Hanaki dkk., "Hanryu Sweeps East Asia: How Winter Sonata Is Gripping Japan," *International Communication Gazette* 69, no. 3 (Juni 2007): 281–94, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1748048507076581>; Kaori Hayashi dan Eun-Jeung Lee, "The potential of fandom and the limits of soft power: Media representations on the popularity of a Korean melodrama in Japan," *Social science Japan journal* 10, no. 2 (2007): 197–216; Soobum Lee dan Hyejung Ju, "Korean Television Dramas in Japan: Imagining 'East Asianness' and Consuming 'Nostalgia': Imagining 'East Asianness' and Consuming 'Nostalgia,'" *Asian Women* 26, no. 2 (2010): 77–105.

²¹Brenda Chan dan Wang Xueli, "Of Prince Charming and Male Chauvinist Pigs: Singaporean Female Viewers and the Dream-World of Korean Television Dramas," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 14, no. 3 (Mei 2011): 291–305, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367877910391868>.

²²Sue Jin Lee, "The Korean Wave: The Seoul of Asia," *The Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications* 2, no. 1 (2011): 85–93.

Shoes. This drama attracts many young audiences.²³ After around 2010, the Korean wave in Indonesia began to spread to K-Pop and entertainment. This is marked by the proliferation of K-pop music videos on YouTube, and Indonesia has become one of the fastest-growing K-pop markets in Southeast Asia. In a survey conducted by Polls in 2022, Indonesian viewers watched, on average, four times a week. Meanwhile, the average viewing duration is around 2 hours 45 minutes in one sitting.²⁴ In the poll survey data, it was also seen that 90% of respondents watched Korean dramas, with the majority of viewers being women at 68%, followed by men at 32%. On the other hand, Korean drama viewers are dominated by the 20 to 24-year age group at 22% and the 25 to 29-year age group at 20%. This means Korean dramas are popular among Gen Z and millennials in Indonesia.²⁵

Nowadays, Korean dramas tend to become the philosophy and self-existence of Indonesian society, especially among young people, as a phenomenon that can entertain and bring about growing interest and response to the increasing number of Korean popular culture products. Young people are about sharing ideas, expressing their views effectively, planning, and actively participating in decision-making.²⁶ The author argues in this research that young Muslims are especially active actors in consuming Korean dramas; they are not only passive recipients of what they watch, but they can also take messages, ideas, and knowledge through the presented Korean dramas.

²³; Ariel Heryanto, *Identity and pleasure: The politics of Indonesian screen culture* (nus Press, 2014); Rachmah Ida, "Consuming Taiwanese boys culture: Watching meteor garden with urban kampung women in Indonesia," dalam *Popular culture in Indonesia: Fluid identities in post-authoritarian politics* (Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2008), 93–110,

²⁴Fahlevi, "Studi JakPat: Demam K-Pop, Orang Indonesia Habiskan 1,5-3 Jam Nonton Drakor | Databoks," 24 Agustus 2022, <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/media/statistik/d925b49cec4285b/studi-jakpat-demam-k-pop-orang-indonesia-habiskan-15-3-jam-nonton-drakor>.

²⁵Diva Angelia, "Demam K-Drama di Indonesia, Seperti Apa?," GoodStats, 11 September 2022, <https://goodstats.id/article/demam-k-drama-di-indonesia-seperti-apa-pwOqc>.

²⁶M. Agung Pramana, "Representasi Kesenangan Dalam Gerakan Dakwah Anak Muda Komunitas Jaringan Pemuda Dan Remaja Masjid Indonesia (Jprmi) Pekanbaru" (Phd Thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, 2023), <Http://Repository.Uin-Suska.Ac.Id/76311/>.

Korean Drama: Phenomenon and Responses of Young Indonesian Muslims

Korean dramas are in great demand, especially among young people, because they always highlight culture in their dramas, such as showing clothing, typical food, or typical regions of South Korea. Things like this can hypnotize the audience so that, indirectly, the audience likes and loves what the characters in the drama do. Then, they desire to follow South Korean culture.²⁷

The author focuses on young Muslims, especially in the Riau province of Indonesia. As Qodariah stated:

*“It is no problem, and it is perfectly legal. It is each individual's right to watch dramas other than Indonesian dramas. The proliferation of Korean dramas in Indonesia is because their industry has successfully broadcast much-loved dramas in genres ranging from romance, comedy, thriller, action, and other exciting genres. Apart from being entertaining, it provides many impressions and inspirational messages from the drama. Unlike films/dramas in Indonesia, which are boring and the storyline could be more interesting, there is minimal interest in watching. “The proliferation of Korean dramas in Indonesia can also inspire the film industry in Indonesia to improve its quality”.*²⁸

He stated that it would be fine if Korean dramas were present and mushrooming in Indonesia because they present interesting, entertaining stories. They contain many impressions and inspirational messages. Unlike Indonesian dramas, which seem boring, the storyline could be more enjoyable. This is also a slap for Indonesia's film and drama industry, which needs to improve its quality with a unique approach and attract the audience's attention.

Agreeing with Qodariah, Agustin also said that the proliferation of Korean dramas in Indonesia will improve Indonesian soap operas or dramas in the future to produce dramas with exciting and fun storylines. He also likes Korean dramas because of their plot twists and handsome actors. Felia stated:

²⁷Mirna Nur Alia Effendi, Elly Malihah, dan Siti Nurbayani, “Impact of Korean Drama in Indonesia Through the Spread Moral Values for Young Generation,” dalam *1st UPI International Conference on Sociology Education* (Atlantis Press, 2016), 478–81, <https://www.atlantis-press.com/proceedings/icse-15/25852569>.

²⁸Qodariah, interview, Google Form, 2024.

*“The story is not like Indonesian soap operas; there are plot twists, and the actors are handsome. “As a fan of Korean dramas, that is okay; it is good if Indonesian soap operas or dramas make a little progress”.*²⁹

Raman and Fina also said that the proliferation of Korean dramas entering Indonesia is improving our film industry. They and the Indonesian audience gain broad knowledge and insight because of the exciting storyline. As well as providing learning for the audience.

*“It is quite good because it can add insight into the world of cinema, and the storyline is interesting to watch.”³⁰ “It is okay, as long as it provides learning. I like Korean dramas because they are packed with long series”.*³¹

Interestingly, the author got the answer from Santika, one of the informants. He said that the proliferation of Korean dramas in Indonesia could also activate a person's high imagination to achieve something the Korean drama shows.

*“Yes, that's okay because more and more young Indonesians are ambitious and trying to achieve what they desire”.*³²

Agreeing with the informant's previous argument, informant Ardila also said that Korean dramas entering and developing in Indonesia due to globalization will make it easier for us to access information and watch Korean dramas from various streaming platforms.

*“Korean dramas are top-rated in Indonesia, and globalization plays a big role in the spread of Korean culture in Indonesia. With massive information technology, Indonesian people can easily access information about Korean dramas. Apart from that, the many streaming platforms that offer Korean dramas with Indonesian subtitles also make it easier for Indonesians to watch Korean dramas. This makes Korean dramas very popular among Indonesians, especially young people”.*³³

However, some hold the view and warn that Korean dramas entering Indonesia may forget native Indonesian culture and follow

²⁹Agustin, Interview, 2024.

³⁰Raman, Interview, 2024.

³¹Fina, Interview, 2024.

³²Santika, Interview, 2024.

³³Ardila, Interview, 2024.

culture from outside, like Robiatul, who explained that Indonesian citizens must love local products. Purba et al also highlighted cultural changes because the entry of Korean culture into Indonesia could have a significant impact on Indonesian society.³⁴

*“We as Indonesian citizens should love local products, but because of the big influence of globalization, young people now prefer to see Korean drama because they are very curious about how they dress and talk. That is why young people prefer Korean drama. It is not good either. Therefore, for the development of the Indonesian nation, watch less Korean drama and read more news about Indonesia”.*³⁵

Ultimately, Ramadhani argued that this debate would be long and emphasized it to everyone again. If we can take positive things, we must take them. It depends on our wisdom to filter out positive and negative things; he gave an example, such as law enforcement officers who are always ready to ward off crime.

*“There are many positive and negative impacts because many people who do not think critically about foreign cultures follow their culture. I take much of the positive side because it can also be a lesson for this country, like their police. Who is ready”.*³⁶

Ramadhani argued that this debate would be very long and emphasized it again to each person. If we can take positive things, we must take them. It depends on our wisdom in filtering out positive and negative things, he gave an example, such as law enforcement officers who are always ready to ward off crime. Even though Korean culture is mushrooming in Indonesia, young people are expected to be critical in filtering it and still be able to preserve local Indonesian culture.³⁷

³⁴Herman Purba dkk., “Menganalisa Perkembangan Budaya Korea Dan Pengaruhnya Di Indonesia Melalui Perspektif Teori Komunikasi: Sebuah Tinjauan Literatur,” *NIVEDANA: Jurnal Komunikasi dan Bahasa* 4, no. 1 (2023): 110–23.

³⁵Robiatul, Wawancara Mengenai Globalisasi dan Drama Korea di Indonesia, 2024.

³⁶Ramadhani, Interview, 2024.

³⁷Rike Erlande dan Novita Sari, “Perspektif Mahasiswa UNISKI Terhadap Fenomena Budaya Korea (Korean Wave) dan Budaya Lokal (Local Wisdom),” *ASANKA: Journal of Social Science and Education* 4, no. 2 (2023), <https://jurnal.iainponorogo.ac.id/index.php/asanka/article/view/6359>.

Turning to another discussion, it turns out that young Indonesian Muslims, especially Riau, have particular criteria for watching Korean dramas. The authors gained this knowledge through the answers they echoed during data collection. Like Qodariah, she watches Korean dramas to learn about the players and the storyline. As for the genre, he prefers romantic and comedy genres because they create a cheerful and happy atmosphere.

“I made criteria such as the players and the storyline. The most popular genre is romance comedy. It is not dull and creates a happy atmosphere”.³⁸

In line with Qodariah. Agustin, Ramadhan, Yuliana, Rizka, Tri, Tiara, and Windri also note that the drama Korea he saw had to be played by handsome and beautiful actors and actresses, the genre had to be romantic, comedy and fantasy. Rifat emphasized that he prefers thriller and mystery genres, so he must consider the events in the drama's plot as a viewer. Trimaharani prefers romance and thriller dramas like Little Women. This is also in line with the data presented by Goodstats, which found that most favorite and best-selling genres in Indonesia choose the romance comedy genre with a score of 79%, followed by the action genre at 61%.³⁹ Regarding the actors, they stated,

“The actor must be handsome and also entertaining, such as in the romance and comedy and fantasy genres”.⁴⁰ *“The actor must be beautiful, like Yoona”*. *“For genre, I choose thriller and mystery because it makes us think, and there are many plot twists”*.⁴¹ *“The players are handsome and have good visuals, and the genre is romance”*.⁴² *“The genre is at least romance and comedy so that it is entertaining and exciting”*.⁴³ *“I prefer the romance genre. I also like thrillers like the Korean drama Little Women”*.⁴⁴ *“I do not like Korean dramas, but I followed them because they came through my social media fyp, and the actors were handsome and beautiful”*.⁴⁵ *“The actors and actresses are handsome and beautiful. As well as the romance genre”*.⁴⁶

³⁸Qodariah, Interview, 2024.

³⁹Diva Angelia, “Demam K-Drama di Indonesia, Seperti Apa?”

⁴⁰Agustin, Interview, 2024.

⁴¹Ramadhan, Interview, 2024.

⁴²Yuliana, Interview, 2024.

⁴³Rizka, Interview, 2024.

⁴⁴Tri, Interview, 2024.

⁴⁵Tiara, Interview, 2024.

⁴⁶Windri, Interview, 2024.

This is in line with the opinion of Kim and Ryoo⁴⁷ that the success of Korean dramas in the transnational market and being accepted by the audience is due to their beauty, good looks, and being infiltrated by celebrity culture and the price is relatively affordable compared to Japanese and Hong Kong dramas.

Young Muslims also choose the criteria for watching Korean dramas with an action genre. Like Febri, who stated that Korean dramas have unique stories like the Korean drama *Squid Game*, he prefers plots with challenges and the action genre. Ardila also agrees with Febri's opinion by stating the criteria when watching Korean dramas, she chooses genres that have a lot of action and romance.

"I prefer the action genre. "This Korean drama has a unique story, and I am interested in watching Squid Game".⁴⁸ "I choose the action and romance genres when watching Korean dramas".⁴⁹

This is what the author emphasizes: young Indonesian Muslims, especially in Riau, who are the focus of this study, are not passive recipients of what they watch. He is also actively sorting and choosing Korean dramas that suit him, such as the genre, actors, actresses, endings, etc.

Korean Drama and Active Indonesian Consumers

Furthermore, in interpreting young Muslims and Korean dramas, the author also asks questions to young Muslims in Indonesia, especially in Riau, regarding Korean dramas, such as what platform to watch them on, when is the right time to watch them, and how do you interpret Korean dramas yourself? You watch. Is there any motivation for you when watching Korean dramas? The author got answers like Qodariah, who usually watches on the LokLok platform in her spare time.

"I usually watch from the LokLok platform, and my viewing time is usually in my free time or holidays, sometimes before bed".⁵⁰

⁴⁷Jeongmee Kim, "Why Does Hallyu Matter? The Significance of the Korean Wave in South Korea," *Critical Studies in Television: The International Journal of Television Studies* 2, no. 2 (September 2007): 47–59, <https://doi.org/10.7227/CST.2.2.6>; Ryoo, "Globalization, or the Logic of Cultural Hybridization."

⁴⁸Febri, Interview, 2024.

⁴⁹Ardila, Interview, 2024.

⁵⁰Qodariah, Interview, 2024.

Agree with Qodariah. Pratiwi, Karenia, Ramadhan, Febri, Yuliana, and Kalsum also use the LokLok and Telegram platforms as viewing places and choose times in the evening when watching Korean dramas.

“I am usually from the LokLok app and, of course, on holidays when I watch”.⁵¹ *“I am from LokLok and Telegram”*. *“For screen time, when there is no work and weekends or evenings before bed”*.⁵² *“Usually, the LokLok application and several others cannot be mentioned one by one because there are many platforms that provide Korean dramas, and when I watch them, I prefer to watch them at night”*.⁵³ *“I usually use Telegram and watch it at night to get that vibe”*.⁵⁴ *“Usually, I am from LokLok and Telegram, and it is the right time at night to watch them”*.⁵⁵ *“I am from Telegram and watch it at night”*.⁵⁶ *“I am from LokLok and Telegram. For screen time, when there is no work and weekends or evenings before bed”*.⁵⁷

Unlike other informants, Rizka and Pramudya access the Bstation platform to consume Korean dramas. This indicates that Korean dramas have spread and are easily accessible from streaming platforms.

*“I usually come from Bstation and watch it on weekends or holidays.”*⁵⁸ *“From Bstation and time at night if watching”*.⁵⁹

Most of this study also comprises people who consume Korean dramas via the Viu and Netflix platforms. Agustin, Windri, Ramansyah, Fina, Ardila, Ramadhani, Dilla, and Anisah said they watched it via the Netflix or Viu platforms. The precise time to watch it is when you are on holiday, some are during the day, at night or when you have finished your activities. This activity has become their habit of consuming Korean dramas when free. They also choose this platform to watch because of the complete range of Korean dramas available on that platform. This activity has become their habit of consuming Korean dramas when free. They also

⁵¹Pratiwi, Interview, 2024.

⁵²Karenia, Interview, 2024.

⁵³Ramadhan, Interview, 2024.

⁵⁴Febri, Interview, 2024.

⁵⁵Kalsum, Interview, 2024.

⁵⁶Yuliana, Interview, 2024.

⁵⁷Karenia, Interview, 2024..

⁵⁸Rizka, Interview, 2024.

⁵⁹Pramudya, Interview, 2024.

choose this platform to watch because of the complete range of Korean dramas available on that platform.

“Watch it on Viu, Netflix, Drakor id. Moreover, usually, there are times during the day and at night”.⁶⁰ “I usually use the Viu platform and watch it at midnight”.⁶¹ “I am on Netflix and watch it at night”.⁶² “From Netflix, and it is the weekend if you watch”.⁶³ Usually from Netflix, I watch it when I want to”.⁶⁴ “I am from Viu or Netflix, and also when I have finished my activities at night and want to sleep”.⁶⁵ “If I am from Netflix and watch it at night”.⁶⁶ “I am usually from Netflix, Viu, etc. When it comes to watching, I usually do it on holidays”.⁶⁷

This data shows that the Viu and Netflix platforms are very popular with young Indonesian Muslims who want to watch Korean dramas. This data is also confirmed by Goodstats which stated in its survey that the Viu platform was the best-selling platform for watching Korean dramas with 57%, while Netflix reached 54% of respondents.⁶⁸

Finally, the author also examines in more depth related to young Indonesian Muslims, especially in Riau, who are the author's informants in interpreting Korean drama shows, like Qodariah, who said that every Korean drama she has watched has good values that can motivate her and she can emulate these. This is based on a study conducted by Irham et al. that says every film, drama, or soap opera will insert a message of kindness. Like the Indonesian soap opera, Preman Pensiun contains many good elements, such as migration and piety.⁶⁹

“Every Korean drama I have watched has good values that motivate me. For example, in the drama Reply 1988, I took values to motivate myself, such as

⁶⁰Agustin, Interview, 2024.

⁶¹Windri, Interview, 2024.

⁶²Ramansyah, Interview, 2024.

⁶³Fina, Interview, 2024.

⁶⁴Ardila, Interview, 2024.

⁶⁵Ramadhani, Interview, 2024.

⁶⁶Dilla, Interview, 2024.

⁶⁷Anisah, Interview, 2024.

⁶⁸Diva Angelia, “Demam K-Drama di Indonesia, Seperti Apa?”

⁶⁹Muhammad Irham, M. Agung Pramana, Dan Pipir Romadi, “Dakwah Kontemporer Di Layar Kaca: Analisis Drama Televisi’preman Pensiun 2’sebagai Media Penyebaran Pesan Kebaikan Dan Representasi Hijrah,” *Jurnal Manajemen Dakwah* 9, No. 1 (2023): 81–101.

the quote 'Everyone has their strengths and weaknesses, so do not think that you are inferior'.⁷⁰

He gave the example of the Korean drama Reply 1988, which was about motivation for himself. Agustin is the same; she also learns a lot about life and self-motivation when watching Korean dramas; she has watched hundreds of Korean dramas so far. He also gave an example from the drama Reply 1988, which conveys that family is the best place for us to return home, even though many problems exist.

"I have watched more than a hundred Korean dramas. I also learned many lessons, one of which is not to get discouraged easily, whatever the storm, if we do not give up, we will be safe. Reply 1988, the message: Whatever happens out there, whatever problems come, family is still the best place to come home to".⁷¹

Febri, Utela, Kalsum, Renadilla, and Yuliana also think that Korean dramas contain goodness, for example, teaching us not to give up easily and not to give up in life to keep trying to be the best version of ourselves.

"I can take the value that we should not give up easily when living our lives".⁷² "Like the drama School 2017, which teaches Ra Eun Ho, the actor, not to give up on anything and to always be strong".⁷³ "Never give up, like the drama True Beauty, which teaches that and always be confident".⁷⁴ "Continue trying to be the best version of yourself, learn every day to improve yourself, and be kind to everyone so that good things also come to us".⁷⁵ "Like the drama Big Mouth, which says, It does not matter if you fail as long as you never give up. If you fall, you must get up again without giving up".⁷⁶

Apart from that, the Korean dramas shown can entertain young Muslims and also provide teaching to them. They also took the positive things promoted by the Korean drama. For example, Rahma said "Watching Korean dramas can also relieve fatigue and reduce anxiety".⁷⁷

⁷⁰Qodariah, Interview, 2024.

⁷¹Agustin, Interview, 2024.

⁷²Febri, Interview, 2024.

⁷³Yuliana, Interview, 2024.

⁷⁴Dilla, Interview, 2024.

⁷⁵Utela, Interview, 2024.

⁷⁶Kalsum, Interview, 2024.

⁷⁷Rahma, Interview, 2024.

Ramansyah also argued that Korean dramas also teach compassion. He gave an example of the drama Tunnel, which conveys the message of a father's infinite love for his daughter.⁷⁸ Fina argues that the value of honesty is also displayed in Korean dramas. Ardila also took several Korean dramas, which became references that taught the audience about learning in life.

“Like the drama Descendants of The Sun, which teaches about hard work and dedication to a job. The drama The Doctors teaches about prioritizing patient interests. “Hospital Ship about science making progress from failure”.”⁷⁹

Pratiwi and Ramadhani also argue that Korean dramas teach a lot about life, there are many positive things that we can take and examples from them. Pratiwi emphasized that the lesson she learned was that life does not always go according to what we plan. Therefore, we fight and try hard for what we want.⁸⁰ Agreeing with Pratiwi, Sherly also said that Korean dramas motivate her to remain enthusiastic about living life; we can achieve our goals, always do good, and be kind to family, friends, and other people.⁸¹

More complexly, Rahma explained the meaning of watching Korean dramas, which can be used as a reference in everyday life.

“As far as I watch Korean drama, the message values are various, such as their manners when dealing with old people or young and old, polite greetings, bowing down like that, and sometimes every drama has a message with a moral impression, too, so you can learn Korean a little and get to know their food. Watching Korean dramas is sometimes related to life, forgetting the emptiness, and there is also motivation that can be taken, like the one in the film Home Town Cha Cha, life is not like mathematics; there are no answers, and the most correct way to calculate, we are only given questions, and the solution is up to us.”⁸²

He emphasized that watching Korean dramas implicitly teaches us to respect and maintain our manners towards our elders and that young people must be polite, greet, be courteous, and bow to their elders. Apart

⁷⁸Ramansyah, Interview, 2024.

⁷⁹Ardila, Interview, 2024.

⁸⁰Pratiwi, Interview, 2024.

⁸¹Ramadhani, Interview, 2024.

⁸²Karenia, Interview, 2024.

from that, he also knows a little about the Korean language and its food. It contains the motivation that life is not like mathematics; there are no answers and the correct way to calculate; we are only given a problem, and then the way to solve it is up to us.

From the data presented above, the author's argument is clear that when consuming Korean dramas, young Muslims are not just passive recipients. They are not just watching, but they become active consumers who are critical in taking learning, knowledge, new insights, self-motivation, and good values from the Korean dramas they watch. This aligns with Lee, who stated that fans also use Korean dramas to gain knowledge, broaden their cultural views, and express their normative identities.⁸³

Conclusion

The Korean wave is currently intensively entering the transnational market. One of them is Indonesia. The author focuses on the Korean wave of Korean dramas. Korean dramas are currently very popular with Indonesians, especially young people. The author takes young Muslims, especially in Riau province. They become active consumers in interpreting the Korean dramas shown. Young Muslim people take away many positive things, such as increasing knowledge, learning, new insights, self-motivation, learning Korean, and good values. The author emphasizes that young Indonesian Muslims are not passive recipients of the Korean dramas they watch. He is also actively involved in filtering, sorting, and selecting the good things Korean dramas show. This research is hoped to add new insight into the Korean wave and the activeness of young Muslims as consumers. This research is based on qualitative research involving online interviews with young Muslims via a Google Form link. Therefore, this research is limited to online data, relies on the Riau region, and does not involve many young Muslims. It is recommended that future research focus on a broader scope so that we find out whether young Muslims in other areas share the same Korean drama-watching habits as young Riau Muslim people. Therefore, for further research, the author hopes it will take quantitative aspects and be based on fieldwork.

⁸³ Lee, "A 'Real' Fantasy."

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