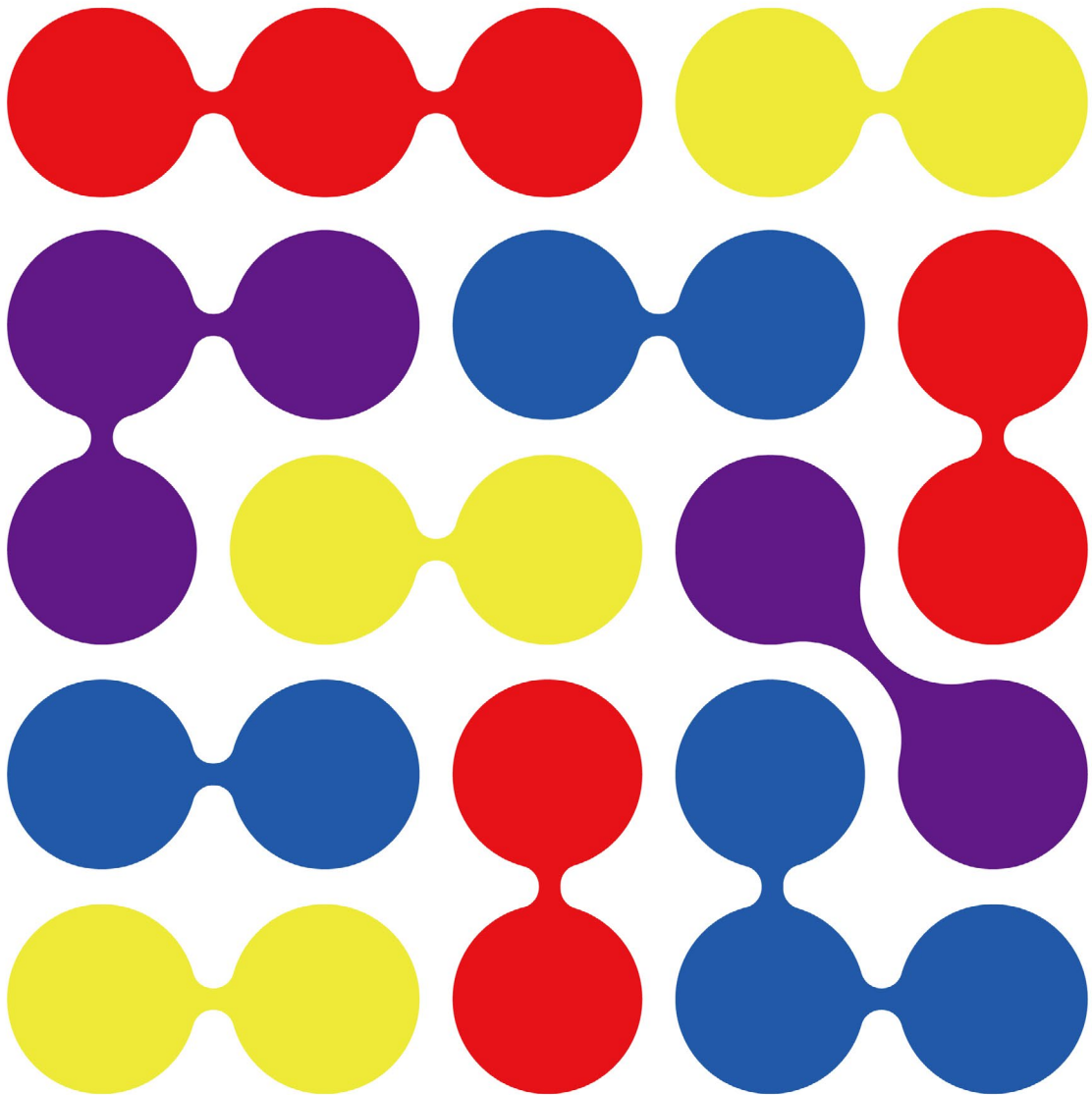


GLOBAL HALLYU
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HALLYU NOW

HALLYU STORY
WITH STATISTICS
JAPAN



KOFICE
한국국제문화교류진흥원

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GLOBAL HALLYU ISSUE MAGAZINE

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A Deep Dive Into Hallyu in Japan



Hallyu (Korean Wave) began in Japan earlier than any other country in the world, and it has stabilized after more than 20 years have passed. However, it needs to be developed more delicately and sensitively. The root of this is the “political/diplomatic relationship” with Korea, which is the primary factor for the unfavorable perception of Korean cultural content. While this hindrance factor cannot be overcome in a short period of time, analyzing and overcoming other factors could open up a new chapter. This chapter analyzed the Japanese perception of Hallyu and its status before and after the COVID-19 pandemic, including the most popular daily consumer goods such as Korean food, fashion, and beauty, as well as K-video content such as dramas and movies, and webtoons which are gaining popularity at an alarming rate. The analysis found that for online K-content to grow, it is important to not only focus on universal sentiments and standards aimed at the global market but also to plan and process content in a way to reveal the unique characteristics of Korea. The need to diversify access channels that are currently focused on online and smartphones was also highlighted.

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1. Introduction: Stagnating Hallyu in Japan

The end of the COVID-19 pandemic is upon us, and the demand for traveling between Korea and Japan is mounting, which has not been easy due to pandemic sanctions. This is evidenced by the numerous daily articles about Korean travelers visiting Japan(Choi, Seung-pyo, 2022. 9. 20). It has also been reported that Japanese interest in visiting Korea is also quite high(Jung, Sanghyuk, 2023. 3. 4). As such, unlike the past pandemic situation, it is expected that mutual interest between Korea and Japan and direct exchanges will increase in 2023. For detailed analysis, we analyzed the actual changes in Japanese perceptions of Korea and their use and consumption of cultural contents.

It may be due to the close geographic proximity, but Hallyu has began in Japan earlier than in any other region in the world. According to a study that divided the Hallyu in Japan into four phases, the phases are as follows (Gyuhyun Cho, 2021). The first phase of Hallyu was led by *Winter Sonata* in 2003, which aired on Japan's terrestrial TV channel NHK. The second phase from 2008 to 2012 was led by Korean dramas and K-pop such as Girls' Generation and Kara. However, anti-Korean sentiment increased during this time, as can be seen by the emergence of anti-Korean manga. The third phase was from 2013 to 2017 due to the rise of new K-pop stars such as BLACKPINK and BTS who received worldwide love. On its tailgate, Hallyu expanded to include Korean lifestyles, such as beauty, fashion, and food. This third stage was led by those in their 10s and 20s who are familiar with online social network services (Seok Lee, 2019). The fourth phase began in 2018, when K-drama and K-movies, such as *Crash Landing on You*, *Parasite*, and *Squid Game*, were expanded and disseminated worldwide through global OTT platforms, continuing the global popularity of Korean cultural content. It was during this period that Korean lifestyle, which is not limited to video contents, began to be consumed in Japan. In this fourth wave, Korean culture consumption in Japan is no longer bound by the Hallyu label, but is now a depoliticized part of everyday life. However, some studies have pointed out that consumption of Korean culture does not have a direct impact on improving Korea's image(Han, Young-gyun, 2020).

However, right after the fourth phase began, the global pandemic hit the Japanese "use and consumption of Hallyu cultural content" to online. Given this shift, this study aims to analyze the changes in the state of Hallyu in Japan by comparing the second half of 2021 data from "2022 Global Hallyu

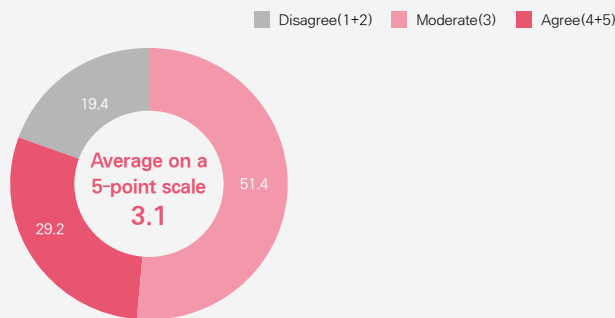
Trends(Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange, 2022)” and the second half of 2022 data from “2023 Global Hallyu Trends(Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange, 2023).” Through this analysis, we aim to predict and offer recommendations for future trends in Hallyu in Japan.

Along with China, Japan has been one of the first countries where Hallyu started. Despite its long popularity, Japan still has a relatively high level of negative perception towards Hallyu(negative perception: moderate 51.4%, agree 29.2%). The cause of this negative perception towards Hallyu lies in the long-standing political and diplomatic conflicts between Korea and Japan, such as political/diplomatic conflicts (39.0%) and historical relations (29.5%).

Negative Perception of Hallyu

BASE: All, n=500, Unit: %

Q. How much do you agree with the negative perceptions of Hallyu? (5-point scale: 1,2. negatively changing / 3. moderate / 4,5. positively changing)

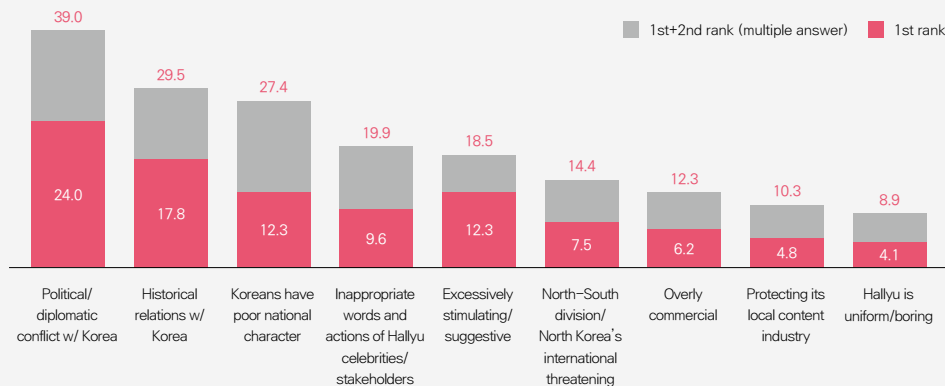


Source : Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2022). “2022 Global Hallyu Trends.”

Cause of Negative Perception of Hallyu

BASE: Those who have a negative perception of Hallyu, n=146, Unit: %

Q. Why do you agree with the negative perceptions of Hallyu? Please select the top two, in order.



Source : Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2022). “2022 Global Hallyu Trends.”

Not only were there “anti-Korean” factors in Japan, but the debasement of Korean fandom culture was also happening in the US, called Koreaboo (Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange, 2023). The Koreaboo phenomenon is becoming more active through online cultural contact, and it is possible that the Japanese negative perceptions of Hallyu and Koreaboo may be reiterated online and cause stronger negative effects. Therefore, in order to establish evolutive Korea-Japan relations beyond the hatred and animosity against Korea, this study investigates characteristics unique to the Hallyu in Japan amid the global Hallyu, examines the trends of Hallyu in Japan before and after the pandemic, and ultimately proposes future directions for Hallyu in Japan.

2. The Popularity of Korean Cultural Content & the Future of K-video Content

The most popular foreign cultural content in Japan is undoubtedly the US. However, a comparison of 2021 and 2022 shows that Korea was ranked first in beauty (Korea 41.7%, France 23.3%, US 17.2%) and fashion (Korea 34.4%, US 30.1%) in 2021, but the US (34.8%) narrowly surpassed Korea (31.9%) in fashion content in 2022. A great change was seen in food content. The US was ranked first by a landslide (US 62.2%, Korea 27.0%) in 2021, but Korea and the US both fell to third and fourth place, respectively, in 2022 (Korea 20.7%, US 13.7%), while China and Italy ranked first and second, respectively (China 24.4%, Italy 24.1%). These changes show that there are diverse preferences for foreign cultural content within Japan. However, with the exception of beauty-related content and food-related content, for which Korea ranked first and third respectively, Korea ranked second for all other cultural content, which is evidence that Hallyu is still ongoing in Japan. As for dramas, Korea was able to significantly narrow the gap with the first rank from 12.9% in 2021 (US 53.7%, Korea 40.8%) to 4.5% in 2022 (US 48.7%, Korea 44.2%). Also, in 2022, there was a steep growth of Korean webtoons (31.0%), which closely followed US webtoons (36.5%), which is a noteworthy growth of new cultural content that was not captured in the 2021 statistical data.

Favorite Country for Each Cultural Content

Base: Those who experienced Korean cultural content, n=(), unit: 1st rank %

Q. For each content type, which foreign cultural content is popular in your country?

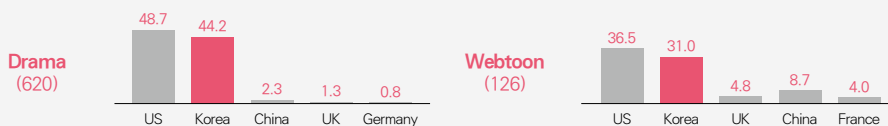
	Beauty	Drama	Variety Show	Fashion	Music	Publications	Animation	Game	Food	Movies
No. of responses	(180)	(311)	(138)	(163)	(352)	(110)	(100)	(128)	(398)	(241)
Korea	41.7	40.8	36.2	34.4	27.0	23.6	23.0	19.5	27.0	14.9
France	23.3	0.6	2.2	12.3	1.7	3.6	2.0	3.1	1.7	0.4
US	17.2	53.7	50.0	30.1	62.2	48.2	55.0	54.7	62.2	78.8
China	5.0	1.3	2.9	1.8	0.9	4.5	6.0	10.9	0.9	0.8
UK	4.4	1.9	2.2	6.7	4.8	7.3	3.0	3.9	4.8	1.7
Germany	3.9	0.3	0.7	3.1	1.7	0.9	1.0	6.3	1.7	1.2
Italy	2.8	0.3	1.4	9.8	0.9	3.6	2.0	0.8	0.9	1.7
India	-	-	1.4	-	-	4.5	2.0	-	-	0.4
Brazil	-	0.6	1.4	-	-	2.7	4.0	-	-	-
Thailand	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vietnam	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spain	-	-	-	1.8	-	-	-	-	-	-
Turkey	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

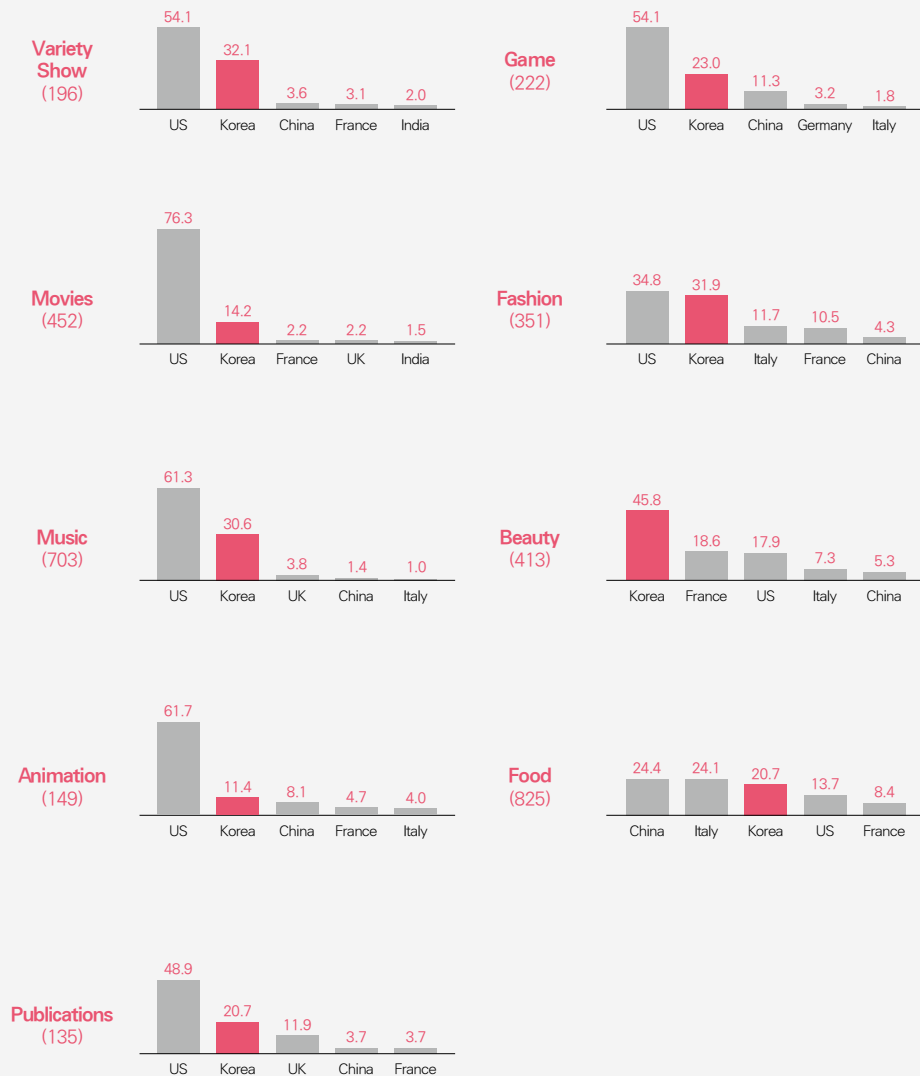
Source : Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2022). "2022 Global Hallyu Trends".

Favorite Country for Each Cultural Content (2022)

Base: Those who experienced Korean cultural content, n=(), unit: %

Q. For each content type, which foreign cultural content is popular in your country? Please select the top three, in order.





Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2023). "2023 Global Hallyu Trends".

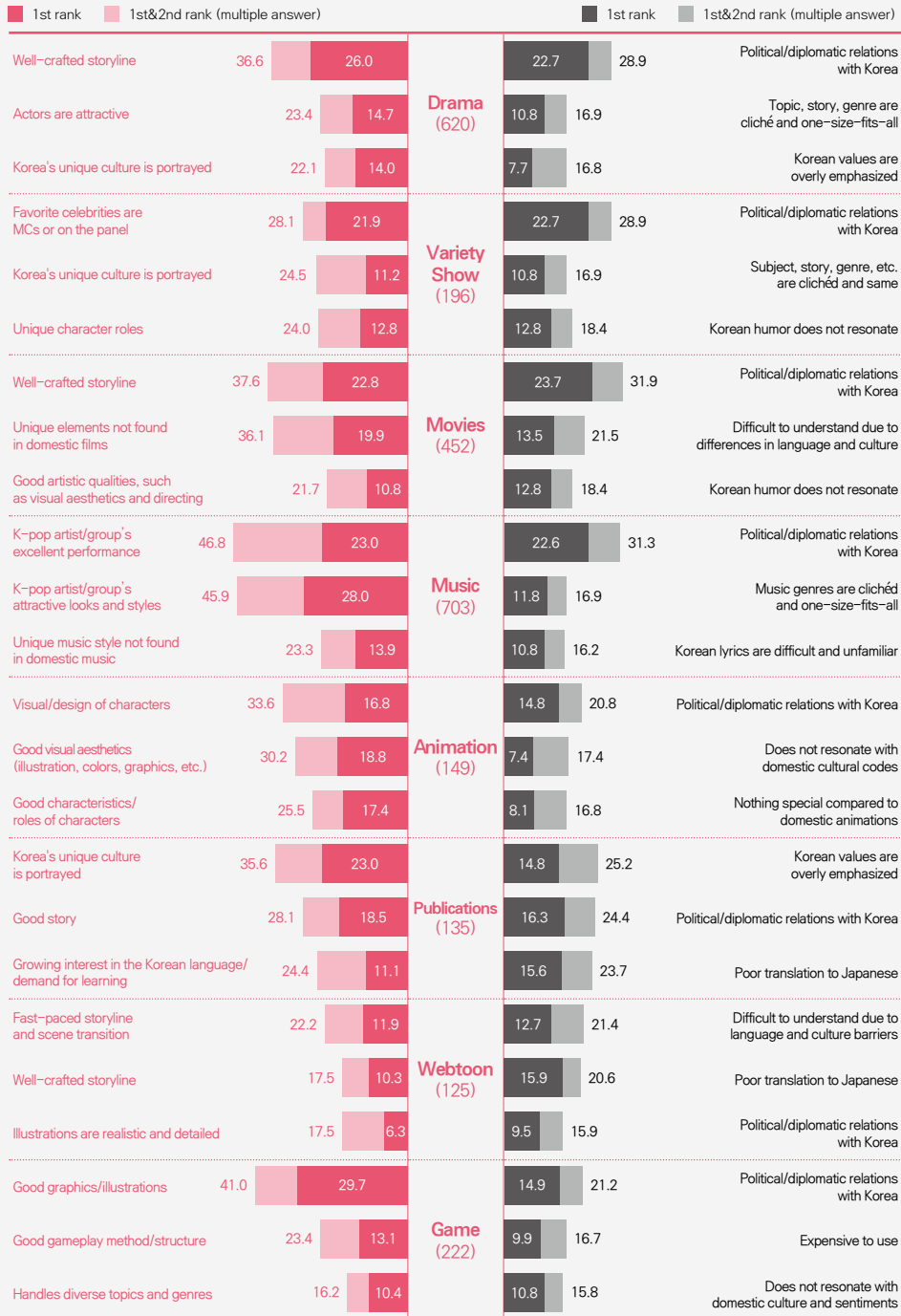
The Korean webtoon platform is continuously achieving high sales in not only Japan, but also in the global app market (Heung-soon Park, 2022. 11. 4; Dae-un Jung, 2022. 12. 25). Such development of Korean cultural content platform before and after the pandemic is growing at an alarming rate, and it is inspiring that it is becoming another axis of Hallyu in Japan. Meanwhile, it is significant to note that the number one factor in decreasing favorability toward the overall Korean cultural content remains to be “political/diplomatic relations with Korea” in 2021 and 2022.

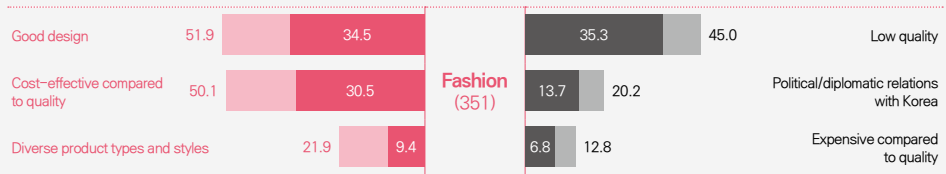
Factors contributing and hindering the popularity of Korean Cultural Content

BASE: Person who experienced Korean cultural content, n(), unit: %

**Q. What do you think contributes to the popularity of Korean cultural content in your country?
Please select the top two, in order.**

**Q. What do you think is a hindrance factor to the popularity of Korean cultural content in your country?
Please select the top two, in order.**





Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2023). "2023 Global Hallyu Trends".

While “political/diplomatic relations with Korea,” a hindrance factor for Hallyu in Japan, cannot be overcome in the short term, other factors that contribute to a negative perception can be reduced within a short period of time by changing the perceptions of those involved in the industry. In addition, each hindrance factor may be a general problem of Korean cultural content that goes beyond Japan, so analyzing and responding to them is an important aspect of the overall development of Korean cultural content.

For example, factors that contribute negatively to the perception of K-content such as K-drama, K-Variety show, and K-movies, such as “Korean humor does not resonate” and “difficulty in understanding the content due to differences in language and culture” can be addressed through different translations or interpretations, or by providing context and background information. These linguistic and cultural barriers are not unique to Korean cultural content, and can be addressed by changing the perceptions of those involved in the industry. Such changes will be the key to Korean cultural content's gradual success.

In 2021 and 2022, factors behind K-video content popularity were in the order of “well-written stories(39.2% → 36.6%)” and “attractive looking actors and actresses(29.6% → 23.4%)” for K-dramas, and “well-written story(42.3% → 37.6%)” and “unique elements not found in domestic films(28.2% → 36.1%)” for K-movies. For Variety shows, the first-ranked factor for popularity in 2021, “unique character roles(32.6% → 24.4%)” became third-ranked in 2022, and the second-ranked factor in 2021, “MCed by favorite celebrities star(28.3% → 28.1%)” became the first-ranked in 2022. These results indicate that the popularity of Korean video content is still determined by the quality of the work and the popularity and talent of the cast. However, there has been a subtle change in these factors, which suggests that Korean content with distinctive and unique qualities is beginning to ascend to the dominant position in Japan. In other words, discovering the uniqueness of K-video content, rather than relying on the popularity of actors or hosts, is expected to

contribute to the development of the Hallyu in the future.

As if to prove this, on March 1, 2023, the Japanese ranking site “Everyone’s Ranking (みんなのランキング)” ranked the most popular K-dramas in the order of *Crash Landing on You*, *Guardian: The Lonely and Great God*, *Itaewon Class*, and *What’s Wrong with Secretary Kim*. This is related to the 2022 Global Hallyu Trend results for the “Favorite Korean Cultural Content: Dramas” section, which showed *Crash Landing on You* as third(7.1%) and *What’s Wrong with Secretary Kim* as seventh(1.0%). It is to note that all of these dramas have the following in common: they develop romance, a universal human emotion, without any political or diplomatic ties to Korea; they have a cohesive storyline and unique theme; the actors are popular and talented; and the Korean values are not overly emphasized. However, this does not imply K-video should completely exclude Korean elements in the content. For example, the dramas *Moon Lovers: Scarlet Heart Ryeo* and *Dae Jang Geum*(2.9%) which ranked fifth and second respectively in the “Favorite Korean Cultural Content: Dramas” on the Japanese ranking site “Everyone’s Ranking” both embody strong Korean elements. The former is a fusion historical drama, which successfully developed a storyline that was easy for modern audiences to follow, and the latter gained popularity with its interesting story that intertwines both food and romance. In fact, both works were a hit as they portrayed Korean elements harmoniously with the storyline. To continue to attract Japanese fans, K-video content must use themes that do not immediately relate to “political/diplomatic relations with Korea,” while still conveying Korean language and culture in an easy-to-understand manner. Also, it is important to continually develop the strengths of K-video content, including well-crafted stories, unique themes, and popular and talented actors.

3. K-lifestyle in Japan

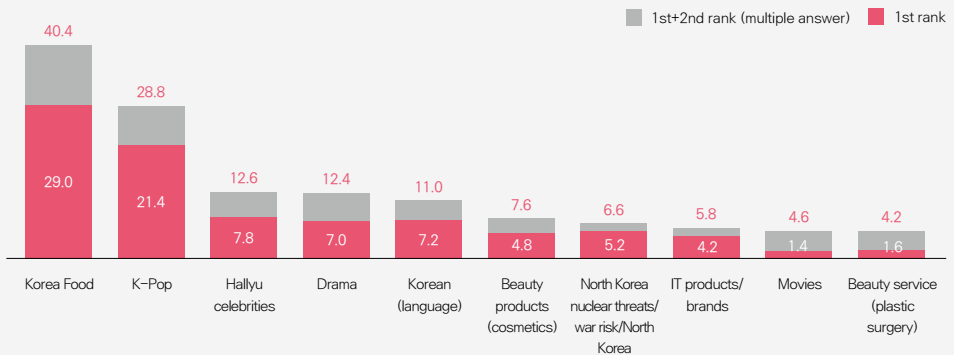
It is not an exaggeration to say that Hallyu in Japan began with the drama *Winter Sonata*. In both the 2022 and 2023 Global Hallyu Trend survey’s “Favorite Korean Cultural Content: Dramas” section, *Winter Sonata* was

ranked first by a landslide, with 11.9% and 10.6%, respectively. However, it is worth noting that statistics show that in both 2021 and 2022, Japanese people mostly associated Korea with Food(40.4% → 36.6%) rather than K-dramas or videos.

Image Associated with Korea (2021)

Base: All, n=500, Unit:%

Q. When you think of Korea, what's the first thing you think of? What's the second?

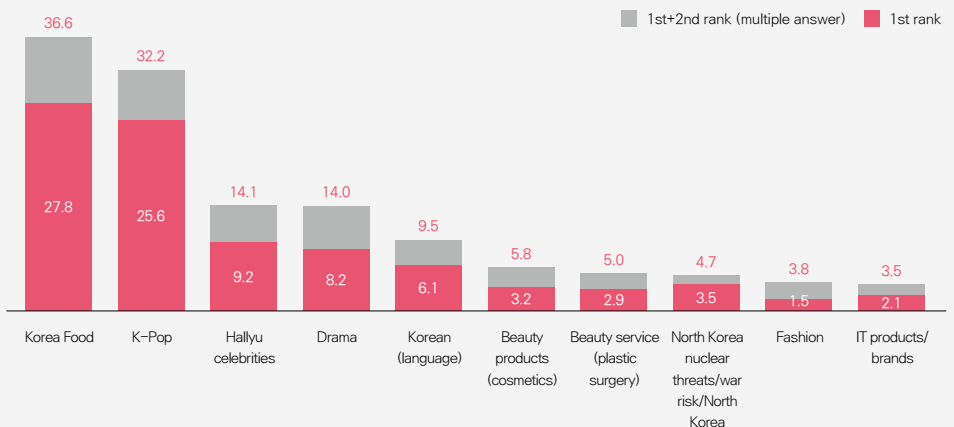


Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2022). "2022 Global Hallyu Trends".

Image Associated with Korea (2022)

Base: All, n=1100, Unit:%

Q. When you think of Korea, what's the first thing you think of? What's the second?



Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2023). "2023 Global Hallyu Trends".

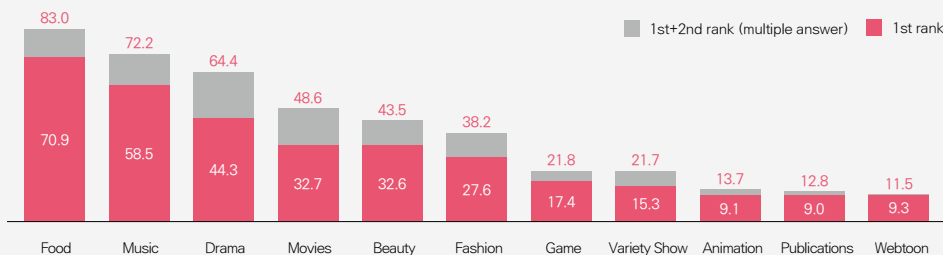
As seen in above Figure, it is noteworthy that Korean food is the most popular among other cultural content.

Rate of experience with Korean cultural content (2022)

Base: All, n=1100, Unit:%

Q Please select all Korean cultural content that you have experienced before.

Q. Please select all Korean cultural content that you have experienced within the past year.



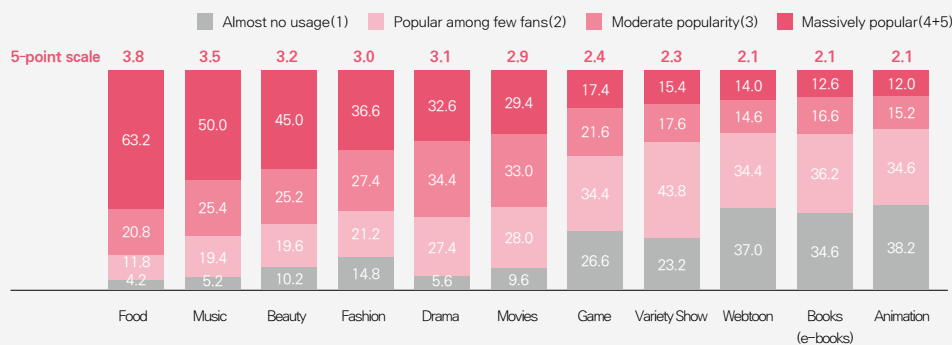
Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2023). "2023 Global Hallyu Trends".

In the Korean cultural content popularity survey in 2021, the ratio of people who "rarely had Korean food" was quite low at 4.2%, but in 2022, the experience ratio of people who actually "had Korean food within the past year" reached 70.9%. Also, according to the data below, the experience rate of Korean food is evenly high regardless of gender or age. This finding does not align to other cultural content usage. For example, there were large age differences in music(teens 81.1%, in 50s 65.9%) and drama(teens 56.0%, in 40s 73.4%). Also, there was a big gap between gender in the usage of everyday consumer goods such as beauty(male 23.5%, female 63.5%) and fashion(male 26.7%, female 49.6%). In other words, regarding Hallyu in Japan, Korean food is the only cultural content that does not show large gender and age differences.

Popularity of Korean Cultural Content (2021)

Base: All, n=500, Unit: %

Q. How popular do you think Hallyu is in your country right now?(5-point scale: 1. Almost none / 2. Popular among few fans / 3. The general public is aware / 4. The general public is aware and related products are sold / 5. General public is very aware and related products are sold well)



Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2022). "2022 Global Hallyu Trends".

Rate of Experience of Korean Cultural Content by Characteristics of Respondents (2022)

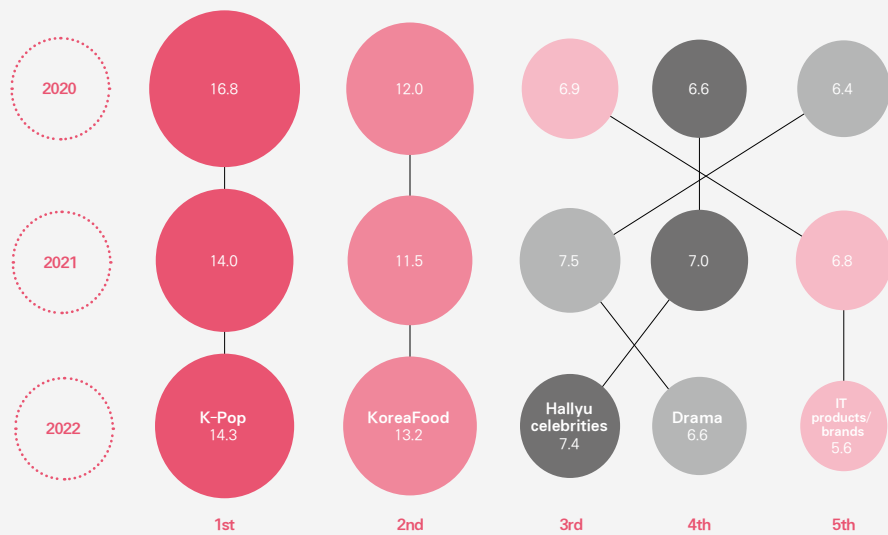
Base: All, n=(), Unit: %

Content	Total	Gender		Age				
		Male	Female	10s	20s	30s	40s	50s
No. of responses	(1100)	(550)	(550)	(275)	(275)	(275)	(143)	(143)
Food	83.0	82.0	84.0	76.4	81.1	86.9	84.6	90.9
Music	72.2	69.3	75.1	81.1	66.2	73.8	69.2	65.9
Drama	64.4	62.0	66.7	56.0	65.5	64.4	73.4	69.7
Movies	48.6	50.9	46.4	41.8	41.5	50.5	62.9	58.3
Beauty products	43.5	23.5	63.5	36.7	46.5	49.8	44.1	37.1
Fashion products	38.2	26.7	49.6	37.1	36.0	41.5	41.3	34.8
Game	21.8	30.7	12.9	22.9	23.3	22.2	26.6	10.6
Variety Show	21.7	22.0	21.5	25.1	18.9	19.3	24.5	22.7
Animation	13.7	15.6	11.8	14.2	14.9	10.9	18.2	11.4
Publications	12.8	13.8	11.8	9.8	14.5	13.1	17.5	9.8
Webtoon	11.5	13.3	9.8	8.4	12.7	15.6	15.4	3.0

Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2023). "2023 Global Hallyu Trends".

Image Associated with Korea (2022)

Unit: %



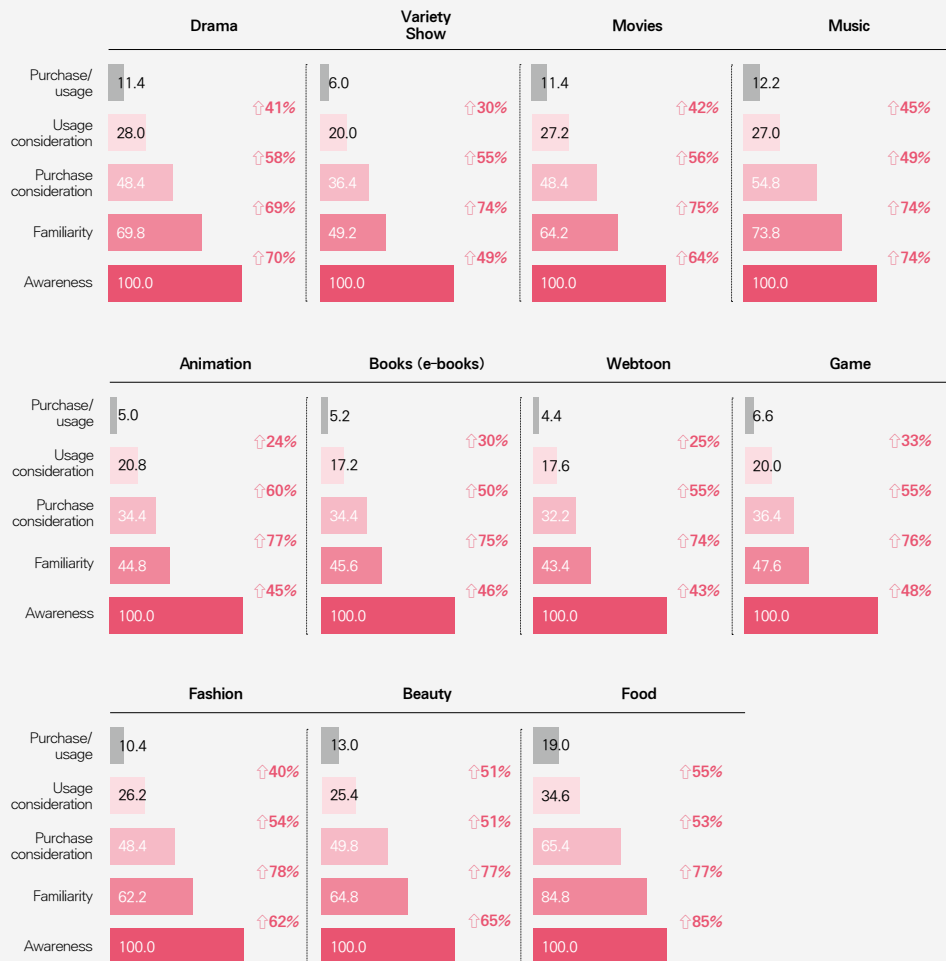
Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2023). "2023 Global Hallyu Trends".

However, it should be pointed out that in other countries other than Japan, the top image associated with Korea is not food but K-pop. Hallyu in Japan is unique in that daily consumer goods such as food get more attention than K-pop. According to the statistics of Korea Cultural Content Brand Funnel, food alone shows a familiarity conversion rate of 85%, which is significantly higher than other Korean cultural content.

Korean Cultural Content Brand Funnel (2021)

Base: All, n=500, Unit: %

Q. Which of the following views best describes your attitude toward Korean cultural content? (1. I've heard of it but don't know much about it / 2. I know and am familiar with it / 3. It is content that I could use / 4. I would like to use it, but not worth the time and money / 5. I would like to use it, even if it costs me time and money)



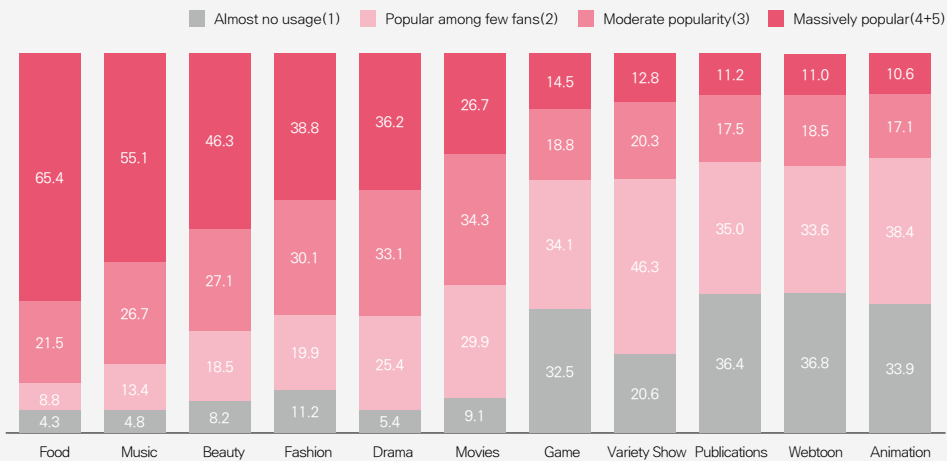
Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2022). "2022 Global Hallyu Trends".

Cultural content other than food have a similar 50~60% rate of conversion from “purchase consideration” to “usage consideration,” and a 24~33% rate of conversion from “usage consideration” to “actual purchase/usage,” which is relatively lower. And it is noteworthy that the rate of conversion to actual purchase/usage increases in the order of fashion(40%), beauty(51%), and food(55%).

Evaluation of the Popularity of Korean Cultural Content in Japan (2022)

Base: all, n=1100, Unit: %

Q. How popular do you think Hallyu is in your country right now?(5-point scale: 1. Almost no one uses it / 2. Popular among few fans / 3. The general public is aware / 4. The general public is aware and related products are sold / 5. General public is very aware and related products are sold well)



Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2022). "2022 Global Hallyu Trends".

As shown above Figure, three (food, beauty, and fashion) out of the top five popular Korean cultural content in 2022 are daily consumer goods. In Japan, daily consumer goods such as food, fashion, and beauty can lead to actual purchases or usage if consumers have the interest. The Hallyu-related industry, which has established itself as a kind of lifestyle, is now more than an image or perception and has already taken root in the lives of the Japanese people. In fact, Lee & Ko(2022) have stated that “as of 2022, Hallyu is no longer a social phenomenon only within Japan, and Hallyu terms combined with ‘K’ have become more frequent in the fourth Hallyu period. We can observe from the media that not only pop cultures such as video content and K-pop, but also daily consumer goods such as food, beauty, fashion, webtoons, books,

etc. are gaining global attention.”

Meanwhile, it has been confirmed that the access paths for daily consumer goods such as food, beauty, and fashion, as well as K-content such as videos and publications, are mainly online/mobile or non-face-to-face channels such as social media. This trend was observed in 2021, but in 2022, there was a significant change where all categories of content including dramas(64.8%), Variety show(75.5%), and movies(65.0%) had higher online/mobile contact rates than through TV, unlike in the previous year where the TV was the primary means of access. That is to say that the tendency to access Korean cultural content through online/mobile channels has become even stronger.

Channel through which Korean Cultural Content is Accessed (2021)

Base: Those who have experienced Korean cultural content, n=(), Unit: multiple %

No. of responses	Drama (311)		Variety Show (138)		Movies (241)		Music (352)		Animation (100)	
	1st	TV	70.4	TV	64.5	TV	62.7	Online/mobile	65.1	Online/mobile
2nd	Online/mobile	56.3	Online/mobile	64.5	Online/mobile	58.1	TV	59.9	TV	53.0
3rd	CD/video/etc	20.6	CD/video/etc	15.2	CD/DVD	21.6	CD/video/etc	14.8	CD/video/etc	24.0
No. of responses	Publications (110)		Game (128)		Fashion (163)		Beauty (180)		Food (398)	
	1st	Online/mobile	57.3	Online play	65.6	Videos/pics on social media	71.8	Videos/pics on social media	74.4	Videos/pics on social media
2nd	Domestic retail	48.2	Mobile play	52.3	Korean video content	39.3	YouTube	37.8	YouTube	44.7
3rd	Online/mobile	34.5	Video	32.0	YouTube	33.7	Korean video content	30.0	Korean video content	29.9

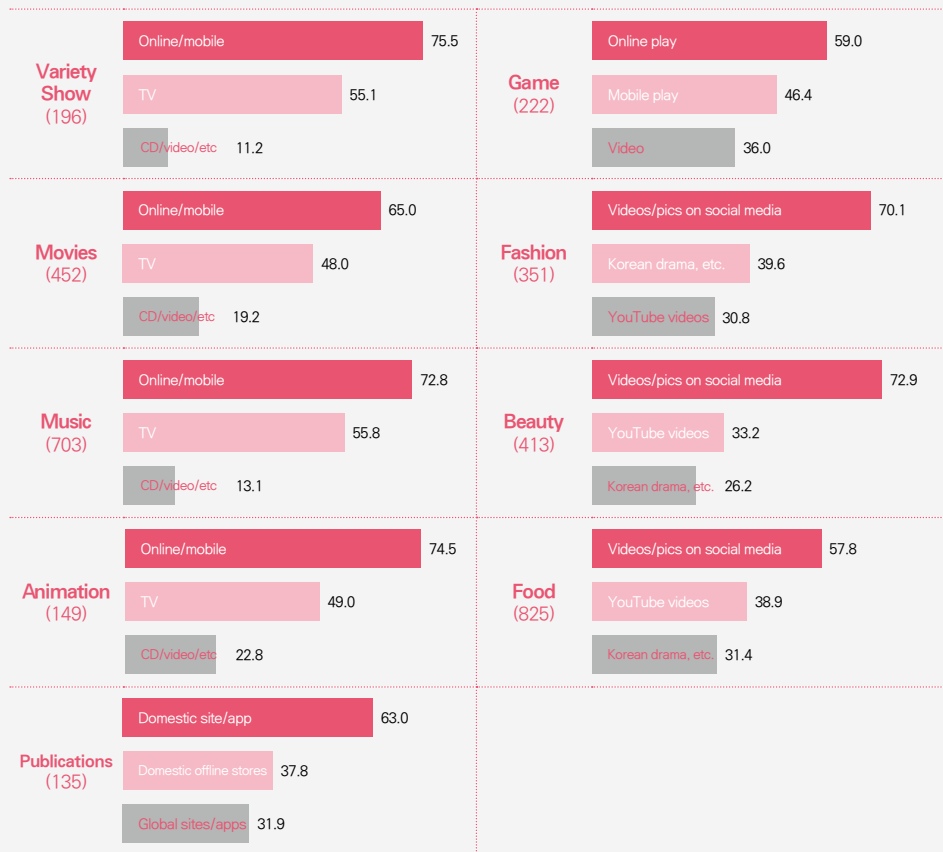
Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2022). "2022 Global Hallyu Trends".

Channel through which Korean Cultural Content is Accessed (2022)

Base: Those who experienced Korea cultural content, n=(), Unit: multiple answer %

Q. Please select all channels through which you access Korean cultural content.

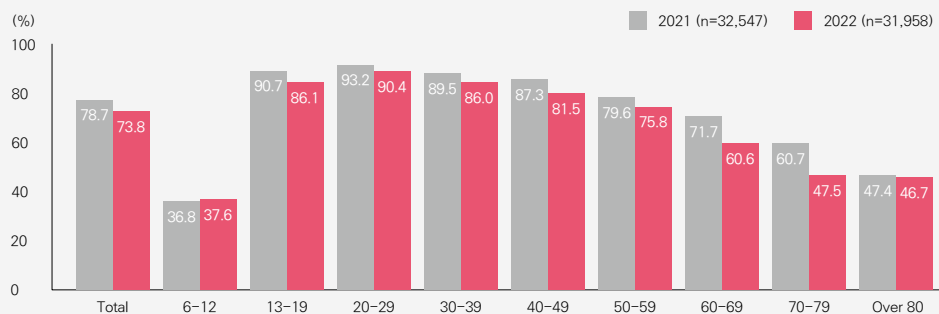




Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2023). "2023 Global Hallyu Trends".

This changing trend in terms of access to Korean cultural content paradoxically implies that it is not user-friendly for the elderly or underprivileged groups who primarily use offline channels. Moreover, the most popular Korean cultural content, food, has restrictions in terms of access and consumption through online/mobile channels due to its nature. According to the 2022 statistics from the Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, those outside the age bracket of 13 to 69 have a significant decrease in social media usage. Taking into consideration that Japan is an aging society, increasing offline access channels for Korean cultural content will be able to satisfy the cultural consumption demand of a more diverse population and diversify access channels.

Social Media Usage by Age Group in Japan



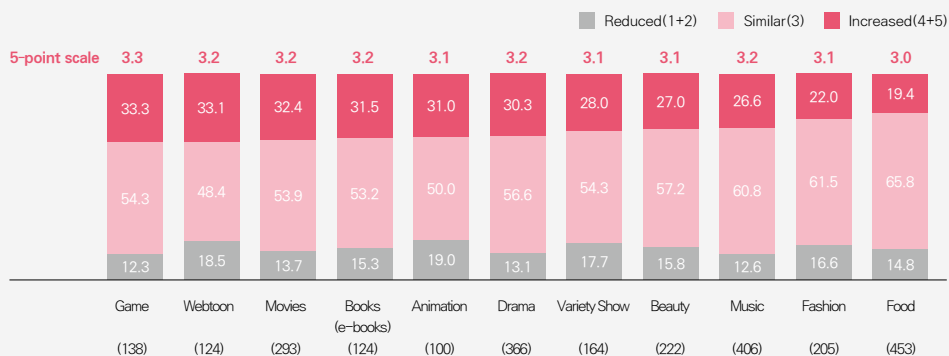
Source: Japan Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (2022). "Telecom usage trend".

4. K-online Content

As mentioned above, the majority of Hallyu cultural content was accessed online or through mobile phones after the end of the pandemic. The top consumption categories of Korean cultural contents in Japan in 2021, compared to before the pandemic, were game(33.3%), webtoon(33.1%), movie(32.4%), e-book(31.5%), and animation(31.0%). In other words, K-online content consumption in Japan increased by more than 30% after the pandemic. In 2022, the rankings changed to webtoon(41.7%), game(32.9%), animation(28.5%), and publications(24.1%). The steep increase in webtoon consumption and rapid decrease in publications consumption are especially noteworthy.

Change in the volume of consumption of Korean cultural content compared to before the COVID-19 outbreak (2021)

Base: Those who experienced Korean cultural content, n=(), Unit: %

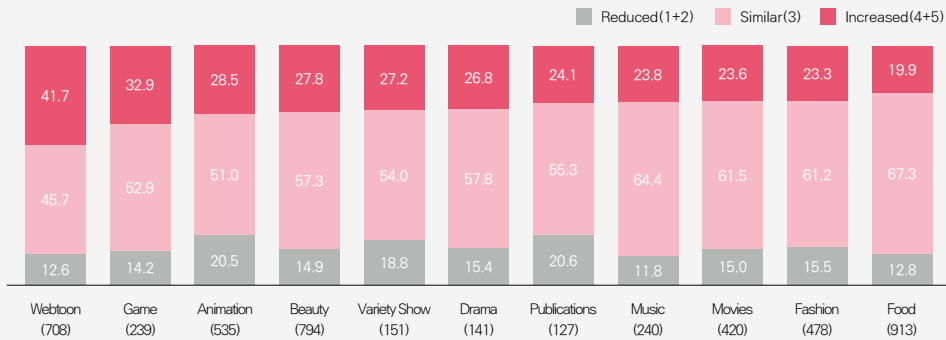


Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2022). "2022 Global Hallyu Trends".

Change in consumption of Korean cultural content compared to before the COVID-19 outbreak (2022)

Base: Those who experienced Korean cultural content, n=(), Unit: %

Q. How did your volume of consumption of Korean cultural content change compared to before the outbreak of COVID-19? (1. Reduced greatly, 2. Reduced, 3. Similar, 4. Increased, 5. Increased greatly)



Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2023). "2023 Global Hallyu Trends".

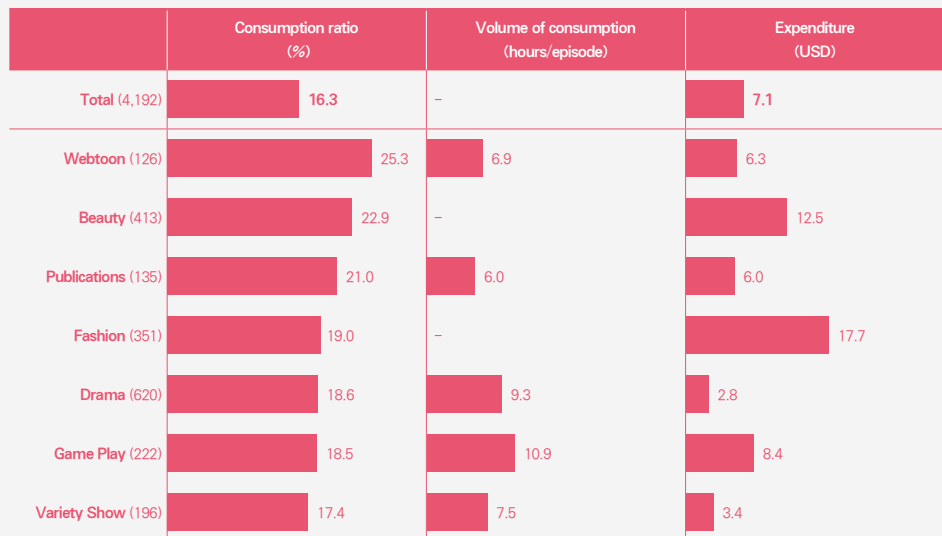
As can be seen in the 2022 data below, the consumption of K-online content such as webtoon(25.3%), publications(21.0%), and game(18.5%) remains high, and the corresponding expenditure can be considered average for cultural content expenditure, with 6.3, 6.0, 8.4 dollars, respectively.

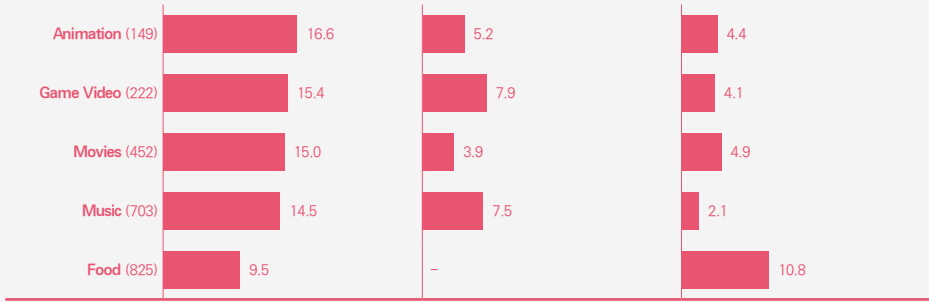
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Volume of Consumption of Korean Cultural Content (2022)

Base: Those who experienced Korean cultural content, n=(), Unit: %

Q. How much Korean cultural content do you typically watch, how often, and how much do you spend on average?(view/average expenditure- movies within the last 3 months, monthly average for all other content)





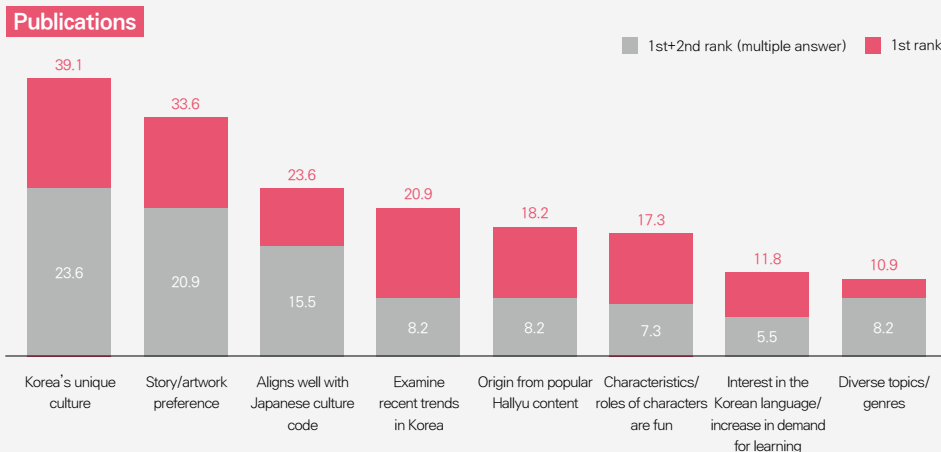
Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2023). "2023 Global Hallyu Trends".

K-Online content is likely to be actively purchased and consumed in Japan in the future, and efforts should be made to expand it. In particular, the following suggestions can be made for Korean publications, which are currently experiencing a relative decline in popularity compared to pre-pandemic times. According to a survey conducted in 2021, the top three factors contributing to the popularity of Korean publications were the uniqueness of Korean culture(39.1%), preference for story and artwork(33.6%), and the alignment of culture codes with Korean culture(23.6%). On the other hand, the main factors causing dislike were inadequate translations(23.6% → 23.7%) and overemphasizing Korean culture(23.6% → 25.2%), which have seen a slight change in trend from 2021 to 2022. This can be interpreted that there is an ongoing resistance to publications with too much emphasis on Korean culture.

Factors contributing to the popularity of Korean Cultural Content (2021)

Base: Those who experienced Korean cultural content, n=110, unit:%

Q. What do you think are the factors that contribute to the popularity of Korean publications in Japan?

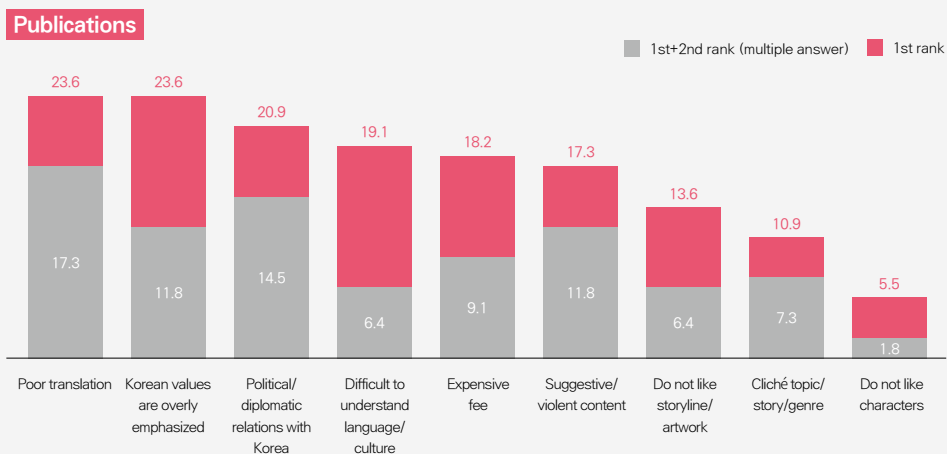


Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2022). "2022 Global Hallyu Trends".

Factors hindering the popularity of Korean Cultural Content (2021)

Base: Those who experienced Korean cultural content, n=110, unit:%

Q. What do you think are the factors that hinder the popularity of Korean publications in Japan?



Source: Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (2022). "2022 Global Hallyu Trends".

The rankings of the “Korean Literature” category on the online platform of Kinokuniya, a nationwide bookstore chain in Japan, in March 2023 show that the top-selling book that sold over 150,000 copies in Japan was *Every Moment Was You* by Tae-wan Ha(2020), followed by *The Fault* by Byeong-mo Gu(2022), *Bad Luck* by Ae-ran Kim (2022), *Two Women Living Together* by Ha-na Kim and Seon-woo Hwang(2021), and *New Perspectives on Modern Korean Poetry* (edited by Ibaraki Noriko, 2022). With an exception of the fifth publication, all the others were written by relatively young Korean writers, born in 1996, 1976, 1980, and 1977, respectively. While the rankings on a famous Japanese bookstore's online platform may not entirely represent the popularity and uniqueness of Korean publications, the fact that modern works of young Korean writers are relatively popular in Japan cannot be denied.

Another interesting fact is that the first, second, and fourth-ranked books were all published by a Korean publishing company “Wisdom House,” which also focuses on creating and providing online content such as webtoons and web novels. Therefore, it seems that Korean literature is gaining popularity in Japan due to the active promotion of publications by young writers and the well-planned marketing of a professional publisher specializing in online content production and services. Although it may not be appropriate to regard K-online publications as the main driving force of Hallyu in Japan, given the global expansion of online platforms, K-publications can gain

attention in the Japanese market through systematic planning and promotion by young writers and publishers. However, it is necessary to manage and analyze the dissemination of hateful publications about Korea, which have been continuously published in Japan (Kim Hyojin, 2021), to ensure a more comprehensive understanding and promotion of K-publications.

5. In Conclusion: Diversity of and Challenges in Korean Cultural Content

Comparison and analysis of data from the year 2021, during the pandemic, and 2022, when the pandemic became endemic, shows that Hallyu in Japan saw the following changes. First, there has been a stronger trend of accessing and consuming Korean cultural content such as dramas, variety shows, and movies, including K-content, through online and mobile channels since the end of the pandemic. As the pandemic became endemic and offline access, usage, and consumption was made possible again, all Korean content is still predominantly enjoyed online or through mobile devices. Second, due to this trend of online consumption, the popularity of K-online content, including webtoons, is on the rise. While these changes have positive aspects, they also have limitations in meeting the demand for diverse cultural consumers, taking into consideration the fact that Japan is an aging society. Third, there has been a growing interest in unique and distinctive K-online content that reflects Korean culture. This emphasizes the need for Korean cultural content to focus not only on targeting the global market with universal sentiments and standards but also on effective planning and processing of content to showcase Korea's uniqueness. Therefore, to promote the progressive growth of Hallyu in Japan, Korean content with distinctive Korean characteristics should be developed through various channels. Korean cultural content should naturally showcase Korean characteristics and styles. However, efforts in the planning stage to expand universal sentiments that can be accepted by overseas consumers, including Japan, are still necessary. For example, young Korean authors' literary works, which were previously difficult to approach for Japanese people due to a language barrier, have recently gained attention in the Japanese publishing market as they

convey the contemporary taste of the times. This is made possible through the dedication of various professionals such as planners and translators who have a deep understanding of both cultures and a passion for mutual exchange. The popularity of drama, movies, and celebrities has continued to promote and raise the status of Korean cultural content. Additionally, K-lifestyle including food, beauty, fashion, and even K-online content such as publications that allow for communication and interaction within closed spaces are expected to contribute to elevating Korea's national status in the future. Korean cultural content not only boosts Korea's economy and status but also enriches and diversifies the lives of Japanese people, emphasizing the need for mutual understanding and cooperation in the development and pioneering of diverse Korean cultural content. 🇰🇷

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