FILM-INDUCED EFFECTS AND INTENTION TO VISIT: THE INTERVENING ROLE OF COUNTRY IMAGE OF SOUTH KOREA

Jae Ann M. DELA CRUZ

Graduate School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Holy Angel University, Philippines
ORCID: 0000-0001-5280-3348

Jean Paolo G. LACAP [1]

Graduate School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Holy Angel University, Philippines
ORCID: 0000-0002-4152-9061

ABSTRACT

In the realm of film tourism, film-induced effects have been identified to be integral factors in the formation of intentions of a viewer to visit a destination. Grounded on the stimulus-organism-response (SOR) model, the present study aims to examine how Korean film-induced effects (visual, vocal, and celebrity) influence viewers' intention to visit South Korea. Furthermore, it investigates the intervening role of country image on the relationship between film-induced effects and intention to visit South Korea. The respondents were Filipino viewers of Korean movies and dramas, and they were selected using the river sampling technique. Using variance-based (partial least squares) path modelling, the results revealed that film-induced effects significantly and positively influence viewers' intention to visit South Korea, and visual effect largely contributes to the formation of these intentions. Country image was also found to significantly influence intention to visit, and act as a mediator on the link between film-induced visual effect and intention to visit South Korea. The present study addresses the gap in literature as it showed the indirect role of country image on the relationship between film-induced visual effect and intention to visit South Korea.

INTRODUCTION

The increasing admiration of different people towards Asian popular culture has been noted to have favorable effect on tourism destinations (Ng & Chan, 2020). The prominence of television (TV) is an integral factor why

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[1] Address correspondence to Jean Paolo G. Lacap, Graduate School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Holy Angel University, Angeles City, Philippines. E-mail: jpglacap@gmail.com

a lot of destinations have attracted and gained tourists in the past years. Dramas on TV and movies have significantly influenced the level of travel motivation among viewers (Wen et al., 2018). Shooting locations of several TV dramas and movies have been noted to affect the decision-making process of viewers when looking for destinations (Josiam et al., 2015). Hence, films, in general, are found to be an effective way to promote and market destinations (Rajaguru, 2014).

In Asia, South Korea has been successful in merging popular culture and tourism. The fame of Korean popular (K-pop) music and Korean dramas (K-dramas) has resulted to curiosity of people towards the attractions in South Korea (Ho, 2020). The rise of fandoms among K-pop music icons and celebrities is an evidence of the favorable reputation of Korean popular culture in the world (Lee et al., 2008). The influence of Korean popular culture, also known as Korean Wave or the *Hallyu* phenomenon, has been positively affecting the economy of South Korea. Furthermore, the Korean Wave is diffusing in different industries of the country, benefiting various sectors including the tourism sector (Bae et al., 2017).

The admiration of many on Korean popular culture is now felt around the world, especially among countries in Asia. Different people, in particular, Asians are consuming South Korean popular cultural products – movies, dramas, and popular music (Lee & Bai, 2016). The increasing consumption of these popular cultural products has resulted to greater interest and desire to visit South Korea (Lee et al., 2018). Several studies have established how *Hallyu* reinforced Korean dramas and movies the decisions of film viewers (Han & Lee, 2008; Jeon, 2013; Kim et al., 2007;). They further noted that the shooting locations of these Korean films are considered an ultimate consideration for viewers to visit South Korea. Hence, film-induced tourism has been favorably affecting the image of South Korea as a destination.

The invasion of Korean popular culture is also evident in the Philippines. Many Filipinos are now considered avid fans of K-pop groups and entertainers, and actors and actresses of K-dramas (Arayata, 2018). The presence of K-dramas (also known as *Koreanovelas*) in the Philippine mainstream media as early as 2003 (Igno & Cenidoza, 2016) up to the present is a clear manifestation of the admiration of Filipinos to popular culture of South Korea. Moreover, the number of K-pop groups, bands, and celebrities who have visited the Philippines and staged concerts (Mogol, 2019) is an indicator of the *Hallyu* effect among Filipinos. And the Korean

Wave phenomenon is evident when in 2020 Filipinos were noted to be the utmost fans of K-pop based on the number of Twitter posts. The Philippines is 5th among the countries with unique voices regarding K-pop and 4th among the nations with the largest volume of tweets (Madarang, 2020).

Film-induced tourism is getting more attention not only from researchers but also from tourism practitioners. It is basically about viewers exploring locations and tourism destinations that appeared in a film (drama or movie) (Beeton, 2016). Because of its marketing potential, film-induced tourism has been examined in the context of tourist motivation (Heitmann, 2010). Film-induced effects have been found to be significantly related to tourism motivation (Rajaguru, 2014). Precedent studies on Korean film-induced tourism focus on how K-dramas affect the motivation and intention to travel of potential foreign tourists. For instance, Chan (2007) qualitatively measured motivation of Singaporean viewers to visit South Korea because of K-dramas. Moreover, Ng and Chan (2020) quantitatively gauged how Hong Kong viewers are influenced by K-dramas in terms of their intention to visit film destinations. Rittichainuwat and Rattanaphinanchai (2015), on the other hand, applied mixed method design to elucidate travel motivation of viewers to visit shooting locations of K-dramas. Despite these studies on Korean film tourism, there is a dearth of scholarly works on the indirect effect of the country image of South Korea on the relationship between film-induced effects and intention to visit. Chaulagain et al. (2019) contended that, in the field of tourism, country image is considered underexplored. Thus, the present study addresses this gap by exploring how visual (focusing how South Korea is portrayed in Korean films), vocal (referring on Korean language and popular music), and celebrity (pertaining to Korean actors or actresses in Korean films) effects influence visit intention of Filipino K-pop viewers, and the mediating role of the country image of South Korea. This study further examines how the relationship of film-induced effects and visit intention may indirectly be influenced by the country image of South Korea using the stimulus-organism-response (SOR) model.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The present study is drawn from the SOR model. The SOR model is a theoretical framework which explains that the relation of stimulation and behavior of humans is mediated by organismic factor (Buxbaum, 2016). In short, the emotional state of an individual (organism) mediates the relationship between the environment (stimulus) and the human actions

(response) (Lee et al., 2011). The model has been used to understand the intricacy of human behaviors.

In the present study, the stimuli are represented by the three film-induced effects – visual, vocal, and celebrity. These stimuli may trigger a response, which is represented by intention to visit South Korea. And the relationship of the stimuli and the response is mediated by an organism, which is signified by image of South Korea.

Film-Induced Tourism

Film-induced tourism refers to on-location tourism that is due to the success of a movie or drama (Beeton, 2016). Because of consumption of media products (films), viewers form unique experiences which may result to visiting a destination depicted in those movies or dramas (Beeton, 2016; Macionis, 2005). There are several factors that may trigger motivation from viewers to visit a destination because of their exposure to a film. These factors include film elements such as escape, fantasy, vicarious experiences, or romance. The images from a film may affect the decision of an individual to visit locations of a movie or drama (Macionis & Sparks, 2009). It has been noted that film tourists exhibit higher willingness to visit a destination that is shown in a film or drama (Bąkiewicz et al., 2017). Riley et al. (1998) contended that visual media such as films are used to attract and induce individuals to travel. Tooke and Baker (1996) also argued that films attract potential visitors, and film locations are valuable tools to increase the propensity of people to visit a destination. Hence, films may extend favorable impacts to shooting locations (Kim & Kim, 2018) because they arouse viewers' interests, which may influence their decisions to visit a tourism destination (Chen, 2018).

Many of the recent studies on film and film-related tourism are in the setting of K-dramas. The popularity of K-dramas has attracted a lot of viewers from different parts of the world (Elaskary, 2018) and this is because of the Korean Wave. Excellent soundtracks and outstanding production values contribute to the success of K-dramas worldwide. Compared to Western shows, K-dramas are relatively shorter, and because of their phenomenal accomplishment, video-streaming applications are carrying Korean films (Donohoo, 2021).

Korean dramas are also popular among Filipino viewers and fans. The level of sophistication and creativity of Korean entertainment firms, massive marketing initiatives, and loyal fan bases are the primary reasons

for the fame of Korean films in the Philippines (ABS-CBN News, 2020). In addition, because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic where mobility is limited, more and more Filipinos showed interest to K-dramas that are available online or through video-streaming applications (Nonato, 2020).

Film-Induced Effects and Intention to Visit South Korea

In the field of tourism, intention to visit a destination is considered a behavioral intention (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2010). It is the propensity of an individual to visit a destination in a particular period of time (Ahn et al., 2013), and a cognitive process where travel motivation transforms into a behavior (Jang et al., 2009). Perceptions and attitudes of tourists towards an attraction or destination are factors that can affect targeted behavior (Sparks & Pan, 2009). In the realm of film-induced tourism, visual, vocal, and celebrity effects from films induce viewers' intention to visit a destination (Rajaguru, 2014).

Film-Induced Visual Effect

Images are considered important factors when it comes to tourism destinations because they shape perceptions of individuals (Vila et al., 2021). Visual images in films are considered by marketers to be valuable tools to promote tourism attractions and destinations (Belch & Belch, 2018). Promotion through films combines visual and emotional appeals to attract potential tourists and provide them with a prior taste of the attraction or destination (O'Connor & Bolan, 2008). And because visual images in films are influential factors to promote an attraction or destination, more and more destination marketers are taking advantage of the power of films to attract local and foreign tourists (Kim & Richardson, 2003).

When watching a particular film, viewers may find meanings that are associated with the visual images depicted in a drama or movie (Croy & Walker, 2003). When a tourism destination is portrayed in a film, viewers may find meanings from the shown destination and may induce their intention to visit the location (Hudson, 2011; Kim et al., 2009). This phenomenon is known as film-induced visual effect (Rajaguru, 2014). In the present study, film-induced visual effect is defined as the visual images in a film that stimulate the interest and curiosity of a viewer towards a tourism destination. Hence, visual images in a film pull viewers (Riley & Van Doren, 1992), thus, create awareness and interest towards the shooting location or destination depicted in a drama or movie (Kim, 2012).

Film-Induced Vocal Effect

Aside from visual images, language, sound, and music are also integral components that stimulate curiosity and interest among travelers and tourists (Rajaguru, 2014). This situation is called film-induced vocal effect (Rajaguru, 2014). Film-induced vocal effect refers to the language, sound, and music in a film that trigger viewers' curiosity and interest towards a tourism destination. Sound and music are claimed to influence the perception of an individual (Sunaga, 2018). It has been also noted that music is a significant factor in the decision-making process of a person in choosing a destination (Oh et al., 2015). Music, in particular, is an influential tool in unifying global demography (Ryu et al., 2020). If treated as a brand, music tends to create emotional bonds (Decrop & Derbaix, 2014; Saboo et al., 2016). This has been the case of K-pop music and its impact in the world market where non-Koreans tend to have an appreciation of this music that is not even written in their own or native language (Capistrano, 2019).

K-pop idols and their music have been utilized by different brands around the world. Furthermore, music videos of these K-pop idols are also incorporating the power of advertisement. For instance, the popular K-pop group BTS has been taking the world of advertising through their music and music videos (Lyons, 2020). In the Philippines, a world-renowned fast-food chain recently launched Korean burgers in their menu and creatively incorporated the Korean language in their TV commercial (Rappler.com, 2021) to attract Filipino K-pop fans and Korean food lovers. Additionally, destination and tourism marketers have been using music and language (vocal effects) in various promotional and marketing campaigns. With the popularity of Korean popular culture, K-pop music idols and the Korean language itself are now widely utilized as means to promote attractions and destinations and to arouse the interest of domestic and foreign tourists to visit these locations (Morrison et al., 2011; Rajaguru, 2014). The power of language, sound, and music has the capacity to attract consumers; hence, vocal effect is considered an important tool in tourism and destination marketing (Rajaguru, 2014).

Film-Induced Celebrity Effect

Celebrities are considered as icons of culture and ambassadors in societies driven by mass media (Lee et al., 2008). As brands, they are useful in attracting viewers to visit shooting locations (Yen & Teng, 2015). This phenomenon is termed as film-induced celebrity effect (Rajaguru, 2014). In the present study, film-induced celebrity effect is operationally defined as

the effect where the actors and actresses (or celebrities) in a film activate the interest and curiosity of a viewer towards a tourism destination. Film celebrities have the capacity to touch the emotions of the viewers. The bond formed between the celebrities and the viewers creates memorable and personal meanings which may trigger the propensity to visit the destination where the film was shot (Reader, 2007). Moreover, film tourists often show admiration to celebrities which may lead them to visit shooting location (Lee et al., 2008).

Korean celebrities are believed to be one of the driving forces for influx of foreign tourists in South Korea (Lee et al., 2008). The Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) reported that approximately 1.11 million foreign tourists visited South Korea in 2019. The huge number of tourist arrival in South Korea is attributed to the Korean Wave, the popularity of Korean popular culture and K-pop celebrities and idols (Yonhap, 2020). In the study of Bae et al. (2017), Korean Wave was found to be statistically related to tourism demand and has been noted to be a prime indicator of attracting tourists from United States of America (USA), Hong Kong, Japan, and China to South Korea. The Philippine Department of Tourism is also seeking the popular K-pop group BTS and South Korean actor Hyun Bin to visit the Philippines to augment its tourism sector (GMA News Online, 2021).

Film-induced effects (visual, vocal and celebrity) are influential in shaping the formation of visit intention among viewers (Rajaguru, 2014). The fame of the *Hallyu* phenomenon led to the admiration of people from various parts of the globe to Korean popular culture (Trolan, 2017). Films (movies and dramas) are now used as mediums to attract the interest and curiosity of viewers to visit South Korea (Kim, 2012; Kim et al., 2012). Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H1a. *Film-induced visual effect significantly influences intention to visit South Korea.*

H1b. *Film-induced vocal effect significantly influences intention to visit South Korea.*

H1c. *Film-induced celebrity effect significantly influences intention to visit South Korea.*

Country Image of South Korea

The image of a country is affected by people's perceptions. Over time, these perceptions are affected by different factors. The impressions of individuals may initiate behaviors (Chaulagain et al., 2019) such as intention to visit a country. Country image is defined as the overall people's impressions and beliefs about locations or places (Kotler & Gertner, 2002). It refers to how

individuals perceive, associate, or stereotype a particular place (Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009). It is considered as a mental map that forms perceptions towards a country (Nadeau et al., 2008), and related to country-of-origin image and product image (Lee & Lockshin, 2012).

Country image is often confused with destination image; this is due to similarities in certain features (Hahm & Tasci, 2019). Destination image is a construct that is defined as the perceptions of a possible tourist towards a place for vacation purposes (Hahm et al., 2018; Martinez & Alvarez, 2010) while country image focuses on overall perceptions, impressions, and beliefs of an individual towards a place (Kotler & Gertner, 2002). In this study, country image refers to the image of South Korea as a nation – looking into perceptions of individuals towards South Korea in terms of its overall reputation, level of advancement, economic stability, and social impression.

Films often portray the destinations and attractions of a country and depict aspects of a country – social, economic, and technological characteristics. Mossberg and Kleppe (2005) argued that the image of a country infuses products, people, and events regarding culture, politics, and global business. The power of mass media through films has generated boost in the image of a country. This is the case in New Zealand when the country was used as a location of the movie Lord of the Rings (Croy, 2004; Jones & Smith, 2005). Tasci (2009) even argued that visual information has the power to improve the image of a country's destination. In the case of South Korea, the *Hallyu* phenomenon has shaped the perceptions and impressions of people of various nationalities towards the country (Sung, 2010). Hence, it is hypothesized that:

H2a. *Film-induced visual effect significantly influences the country image of South Korea.*

H2b. *Film-induced vocal effect significantly influences the country image of South Korea.*

H2c. *Film-induced celebrity effect significantly influences the country image of South Korea.*

Country Image and Intention to Visit South Korea

Images are crucial in the formation of decision of an individual towards a product, service, or destination (Zhang et al., 2018). Country image is influenced by beliefs, familiarity, and reception of a tourist or potential tourist towards a destination (Elliot et al., 2011). The image of a country, including the level of development, influences the tendency of an individual to visit it (Alvarez & Campo, 2014). Tasci (2009) pointed out that

because of visual information of a particular country and of a destination augments the intention to visit of an individual. Zhang et al. (2015) found that country image including character and competence of a country and its people translates into intention to visit. Moreover, it was found that the image of a country in terms of natural and cultural attraction and service facility influences visit intention. Chung and Chen (2018) and Chaulagain et al. (2019) contended that favorable country image leads to better image of the destination, which further leads to visit intention. Hence, it is hypothesized that:

H3. *Country image significantly influences intention to visit South Korea.*

Mediating Role of Country Image

Film-induced visual, vocal, and celebrity effects have been identified to be influential on the image of a country (Croy, 2004; Jones & Smith, 2005; Sung, 2010). Kim and Richardson (2003) claimed that people with exposure to an image of a country or a place in a film tend to exhibit positive attitudes towards that place. Yoo et al. (2014) contended the K-dramas have been favorably shaping the image of South Korea as a country. They further noted that the cultural and ethnic factors of K-dramas are influential in the formation of positive image for South Korea.

Furthermore, country image affects intention to visit. The favorable attitude towards K-dramas is identified to be a factor that affects intention of viewers to visit South Korea (Yoo et al., 2014). The *Hallyu* phenomenon and the love of viewers towards K-dramas brought tremendous positive impact on the image of South Korea (Kim et al., 2012). The demand for Korean popular culture led South Korean government to export cultural products (such as Korean films). The global expansion of Korean cultural products contributed to the enhanced image of South Korea as a nation (Lee, 2011). From these extant related studies, Korean films are influential in the enhancement of the image of South Korea, which, in turn, leads to intention to visit among viewers. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H4a. *Country image mediates the relationship between film-induced visual effect and intention to visit South Korea.*

H4b. *Country image mediates the relationship between film-induced vocal effect and intention to visit South Korea.*

H4c. *Country image mediates the relationship between film-induced celebrity effect and intention to visit South Korea.*

From the established hypothesized relationships, the conceptual framework was formulated (see Figure 1). The conceptual framework shows how SOR model was integrated in the present study. It is postulated that film-induced effects (visual, vocal, and celebrity) significantly influence intention to visit South Korea (H1a, H1b, and H1c), and country image (H2a, H2b, and H2c). Moreover, it was hypothesized that country image significantly influences intention to visit South Korea (H3). And the last part of the research framework shows how country image indirectly influences the connection between film-induced effects and intention to visit South Korea (H4a, H4b, and H4c).
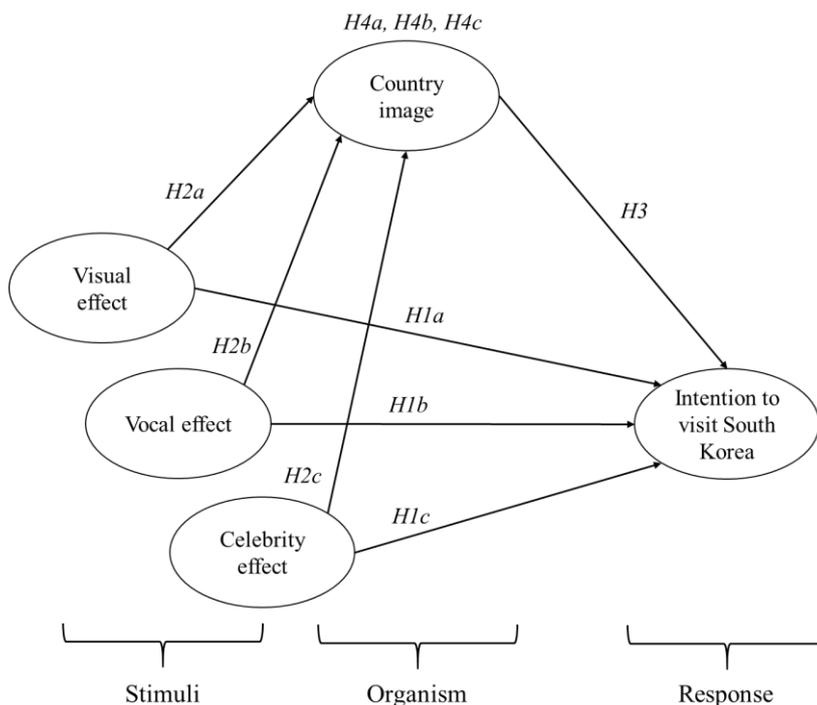

Figure 1. *Conceptual Framework of the Study*

METHODOLOGY

The current undertaking applied predictive-causal research design to gauge the direct and indirect (mediating) effects in the structural model. For the direct effects, the measurement includes the significant influence of film-induced effects on intention to visit and country image of South Korea; and of country image of South Korea on intention to visit. Contrary, the indirect effect was gauged based on the intervening role of country image on the relationship between film-induced effects and intention to visit South Korea. Predictive-causal research design is applicable in measuring these types of hypothesized relationships (Sarstedt et al., 2017).

Participants of the Study

The respondents of the present study covered Filipino viewers of Korean films. As for the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the following were required:

- A respondent must be of legal age (at least 18 years old) since the present study measures intention to visit South Korea. Therefore, the capacity to pay is considered for the age requirement.

- A respondent must have watched at least one K-drama or Korean movie in the last 12 months.

Purposive sampling technique using river sampling was utilized as a sampling approach. A purposive sampling approach is done when the participants are identified on the basis of population's characteristics and the study's purpose (Etikan et al., 2016). And because of restrictions in mobility, river sampling, a type of online sampling strategy was employed where participants are identified through invitation via an online survey link placed on online platforms such as social media and emails (Lehdonvirta et al., 2021).

The sample size was determined through a priori power analysis (Hair et al., 2019; Memon et al., 2020; Ringle et al., 2020; Uttley, 2019) using G*Power. Power analysis computes the minimum size of the sample by evaluating the research model with the biggest number of predictors (Hair et al., 2014). Using a medium effect size of 0.15, alpha level of 0.05, power level of 0.80, and four (4) predictors, the calculated minimum sample size of the G*Power is 85. The present study was able to obtain 380 valid responses, more than what is the computed sample size.

Because of current situation where mobility is restricted, online data gathering was employed (via Google Form) and was disseminated via social media platforms (mostly through Facebook). Other participants were recruited by sending the survey link to their social media messenger (or equivalent) and through emails. An informed consent was included in the online form. Each participant was asked to signify their voluntary participation in the survey. The collection of data started on September 2, 2021 and ended on September 30, 2021.

The online survey included items where participants needed to express their agreement to participate in the study as respondents. To assure that only valid responses were tabulated and analyzed, only those who ticked that they have watched at least one Korean drama/series/movie

in the last 12 months and are of legal age were considered. Approximately seven to ten minutes was required to finish the questionnaire. Out of 415 received responses, only 380 were valid, drawing a response rate of 91.57%

Table 1 presents the characteristics of the respondents. Out of 380 sample, 82.4% were female. In terms of age, 55.8% were in the age group of 18 to 20 years old, while 37.9% were in 21 to 25 cohort. Only 24 out of 380 indicated their age as more than 25. With regard to type of employment, 79.2% were senior high school and college students, while 13.9% were employed. Out of 380, only 10 mentioned they were self-employed, and six answered others.

Half of the participants or 52.4% have watched more than nine (9) Korean films in the last 12 months, while 23.9% viewed one (1) to three (3) Korean films. Those who watched four (4) to six (6) Korean dramas/movies were 13.9% of the respondents, whereas those who answered seven (7) to nine (9) were at 9.7%. And in terms of frequently used platform in watching Korean films, 60.8% paid streaming applications. On the other hand, 12.6% watched through video-sharing platform, 10.8% via social media sites, 9.2% through local TV channels, and 6.6% using online sites/blogs.

Table 1. *Participants of the Study*

Demographics	*n*	*%*
Sex		
Male	67	17.6
Female	313	82.4
Age		
18-20	212	55.8
21-25	144	37.9
>25	24	6.3
Employment type		
Employed	53	13.9
Self-employed	10	2.6
SHS/College Students	301	79.2
Unemployed	10	2.6
Others	6	1.6
Number of Korean films (dramas/movies) watched		
1-3	91	23.9
4-6	53	13.9
7-9	37	9.7
>9	199	52.4
Frequently platform used in watching Korean films		
Video-sharing platform (e.g., YouTube, Dailymotion)	48	12.6
Paid Streaming Apps (e.g., Netflix, Viu)	231	60.8
Online sites / blogs	25	6.6
Social media sites (e.g., Facebook pages, groups)	41	10.8
Local TV Channels	35	9.2

Research Instrument

The self-administered survey instrument was composed of demographic characteristics – sex, age, employment type, number of Korean films watched, frequently used media platform – and a question whether they have been to South Korea or not.

The second part entails the latent constructs of the study – film-induced effects (visual, vocal, and celebrity), country image, and intention to visit South Korea. The items of each construct were adopted from different studies (see Table 2) and were measured using 5-point Likert scale where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree.

Table 2. *Constructs, Items, and Sources*

Constructs and Items	Sources
Visual Effect	Kim (2012) and
VE1. I like the beautiful suburban of Korea placed in Korean movies and dramas.	Rajaguru (2014)
VE2. I like the bright city of Korea placed in Korean movies and dramas.	
VE3. I feel that Korea is more attractive place to visit.	
VE4. I am excited to colorful Korean night life places in movies and dramas.	
Vocal Effect	Kim (2012) and
VC1. I admire the rhythm in Korean language.	Rajaguru (2014)
VC2. I am impressed with the Korean pop music.	
VC3. I always want to hear Korean music.	
Celebrity Effect	Kim (2012), Lee
CE1. Korean stars attract me.	et al. (2008),
CE2. I perceive Korean stars as Korean's nation image representative.	Rajaguru (2014)
CE3. I feel that Korean movies are more interesting because of Korean actors.	
CE4. I am impressed with the Korean actors and actresses performing cultural activities in movies or dramas.	
Intention to Visit South Korea	Rajaguru (2014)
IV1. After watching Korean movies or dramas, I searched for more information about Korea.	
IV2. Since watching Korean movies or dramas, I have thought of visiting Korea.	
Country Image of South Korea	Phillips et al.
CI1. South Korea is an industrialized country.	(2013)
CI2. South Korea is a technologically developed country.	
CI3. South Korea is economically stable country.	
CI4. South Korea is a socially developed country.	
CI5. South Korea is a well-known country.	
CI6. South Korea is a country with a good reputation.	

Statistical Test

To analyze the data gathered, path modelling via partial least squares (PLS) was employed to gauge the structural model's parameters. This type of statistical approach is appropriate since the present study involves development of a model, and the research design is predictive-causal. As a

variance-based approach, PLS path modelling starts with the assessment of the outer model where internal consistency (reliability) and validity (convergent and discriminant) tests are performed. Moreover, the evaluation of the inner model involves measurement of the relationships between latent constructs (Hair et al., 2016; Samani, 2016).

To measure the indirect effects in the model, how country image mediates the relationship between film-induced effects and intention to visit South Korea is examined. The measurement of the outer and inner model, and the mediation analysis were done through WarpPLS 7.0 (Kock, 2020).

RESULTS

Measurement Model Assessment

The evaluation of the outer model (measurement model) includes testing the validity and reliability of the latent constructs (Hair et al., 2019). The reliability of the reflective constructs is measured using composite reliability (CR). To say that a reflective construct exhibits internal consistency, the value of CR must be equal to or higher than 0.70 (Dillon & Goldstein, 1984; Peterson & Yeolib, 2013). Based on the results in Table 3, visual effect (CR = 0.922), vocal effect (CR = 0.908), celebrity effect (CR = 0.909), intention to visit South Korea (CR = 0.859), and country image (CR = 0.934) reflect CA greater than 0.70; hence, all latent variables passed the reliability test.

Table 3. *Factor Loadings, Average Variance Extracted, and Reliability Measures*

Construct / Item	Factor Loading
Visual effect: *AVE = 0.747; CR = 0.922*	
VE1	0.810
VE2	0.895
VE3	0.832
VE4	0.916
Vocal effect: *AVE = 0.768; CR = 0.908*	
VC1	0.790
VC2	0.918
VC3	0.915
Celebrity effect: *AVE = 0.715; CR = 0.909*	
CE1	0.847
CE2	0.861
CE3	0.834
CE4	0.838
Intention to visit South Korea: *AVE = 0.753; CR = 0.859*	
IV1	0.868
IV2	0.868

Country image: *AVE = 0.701; CR = 0.934*	
CI1	0.835
CI2	0.850
CI3	0.873
CI4	0.861
CI5	0.810
CI6	0.791

CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted. All loadings are significant (p < 0.001).

In terms of validity, both convergent and discriminant validity were established. Convergent validity includes the assessment of the factor loadings and average variance extracted (AVE) of the latent constructs. The value of each factor loading must be equal to or greater than 0.50 and must be significant ($p < .05$). Moreover, the AVE must be at least 0.50 to conclude that a construct shows convergent validity (Amora, 2021; Hair et al., 2009; Kock, 2014; Kock & Lynn, 2012). As seen in Table 3, the factor loadings of each latent constructs and their corresponding AVE values are within the acceptable coefficients. Therefore, all reflective constructs have convergent validity.

Furthermore, discriminant validity was measured using Fornell-Larcker criterion. Using this criterion, the correlations table (see Table 4) among latent reflective constructs with the square roots of AVEs (diagonal values) must be examined. To attain discriminant validity, the diagonal values (coefficients in bold) in the correlation table must be higher than any of the off-diagonal coefficients (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Kock, 2015). Based on the results in Table 4, all variables met the discriminant validity requirement.

Table 4. *Discriminant Validity Using Fornell-Larcker Criterion*

	VE	VC	CE	IV	CI
VE	**0.864**				
VC	0.511	**0.876**			
CE	0.691	0.682	**0.845**		
IV	0.660	0.642	0.735	**0.868**	
CI	0.767	0.484	0.629	0.609	**0.837**

VE = visual effect; VC = vocal effect; CE = celebrity effect; IV = intention to visit South Korea; CI = country image.

Table 5. *Discriminant Validity Using HTMT Ratios*

	VE	VC	CE	IV	CI
VE					
VC	0.604				
CE	0.792	0.802			
IV	0.857	0.859	0.864		
CI	0.854	0.559	0.708	0.776	

VE = visual effect; VC = vocal effect; CE = celebrity effect; IV = intention to visit South Korea; CI = country image.

Another discriminant validity test was performed, but this time, using heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT). Voorhees et al. (2016) suggested a threshold of 0.90 for HTMT ratios. Based on the findings in Table 5, all latent constructs passed the requirement for discriminant validity.

Structural Model Evaluation

The second stage of the path modelling via PLS is the evaluation of the structural model (Hair et al., 2019). In this stage, path coefficients, their corresponding p-values, and effect sizes are evaluated. The findings regarding path coefficients, p-values, standard error, and effect sizes are reflected in Figure 2 and Table 6.
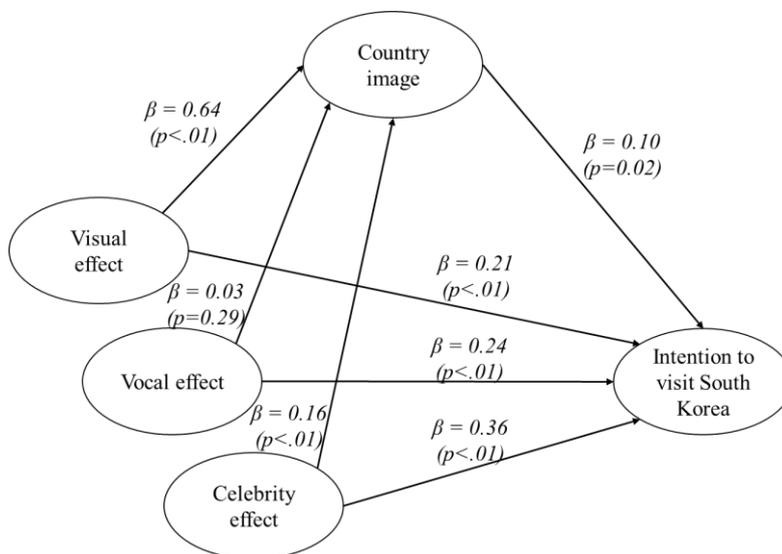

Figure 2. *The Structural Model with Beta Coefficients*

The bootstrapping results showed that film-induced effects – visual effect ($\beta = 0.213$, $p < 0.001$), vocal effect ($\beta = 0.236$; $p < 0.001$), and celebrity effect ($\beta = 0.362$, $p < 0.001$) – significantly and positively influence intention to visit South Korea. The magnitude of the effect (or influence) between exogenous and endogenous variables was also measured using Cohen's (1988) effect sizes. The findings showed that visual effect ($f^2 = 0.144$), vocal effect ($f^2 = 0.154$), and celebrity effect ($f^2 = 0.268$) exhibited medium effect sizes (Cohen, 1988). Therefore, H1a, H1b, and H1c are supported.

Moreover, the findings showed that among the film-induced factors, visual effect ($\beta = 0.643$, $p < 0.001$) and celebrity effect ($\beta = 0.159$, $p < 0.001$) affect country image of South Korea significantly and positively. The results indicate that visual effect largely influences country image of South Korea ($f^2 = 0.499$), while celebrity effect exhibits small effect size ($f^2 = 0.104$).

Contrary, vocal effect was found to be insignificantly related to country image of South Korea ($\beta = 0.028$, $p = .292$). Thus, H2a and H2c are supported, while H2b is not supported.

Hypothesis testing also revealed that country image significantly and positively influences intention to visit South Korea ($\beta = 0.100$, $p < 0.024$) with small effect size ($f^2 = 0.061$). Hence, H3 is supported.

The present study also employed mediation analysis to measure the indirect effects of the identified mediators. The results showed that country image mediates the relationship between visual effect and intention to visit South Korea ($\beta = 0.064$, $p = 0.037$) with a weak effect size ($f^2 = 0.044$). On the other hand, country image was found to have no indirect effect on the relationship between vocal effect and intention to visit South Korea ($\beta = 0.003$, $p = 0.469$) and between celebrity effect and intention to visit South Korea ($\beta = 0.016$, $p = 0.331$). Therefore, H4a is supported while H4b and H4c are not supported.

Table 6. *Direct and Mediating Effects*

Hypothesis	β	p	SE	f²
Direct effects				
H1a. VE → IV	0.213	<0.001	0.050	0.144
H1b. VC → IV	0.236	<0.001	0.050	0.154
H1c. CE → IV	0.362	<0.001	0.049	0.268
H2a. VE → CI	0.643	<0.001	0.047	0.499
H2b. VC → CI	0.028	0.292	0.051	0.014
H2c. CE → CI	0.159	<0.001	0.050	0.104
H3. CI → IV	0.100	0.024	0.051	0.061
Mediating effects				
H4a. VE → CI → IV	0.064	0.037	0.036	0.044
H4b. VC → CI → IV	0.003	0.469	0.036	0.002
H4c. CE → CI → IV	0.016	0.331	0.036	0.012

VE = visual effect; VC = vocal effect; CE = celebrity effect; IV = intention to visit South Korea; CI = country image; β = coefficient of the path; p = p-value; SE = standard error; f² = effect size.

Table 7 presents the additional assessments for the structural measurement of the present study. The common method bias test was performed to identify whether vertical and lateral collinearities exist among latent constructs. Using full collinearity VIF approach, Kock (2015) suggested that the full collinearity VIF coefficient must be at most 3.3. Based on the results, all latent constructs magnified full collinearity VIF of less than 3.3; hence, vertical and lateral collinearities do not exist among variables.

Additionally, coefficients of determination (or R^2) were also measured to describe the endogenous constructs variance. According to

Chin (1998), the R^2 coefficients of endogenous constructs are evaluated as: 0.19 = weak; 0.33 = moderate; and 0.67 = substantial. Based on the findings, the R^2 values of 0.627 and 0.616 reflect moderate variance.

And lastly, predictive relevance using Stone-Geisser (Q^2) test was conducted. The Q^2 test is an assessment tool to measure the capability of the structural model to predict (Geisser, 1974; Stone, 1974). To conclude that the latent constructs show predictive relevance, the value of Q^2 must be greater than zero (Chin, 2010). Using a blindfolding procedure, the findings showed that the structural model exhibits predictive relevance.

Table 7. *Full Collinearity VIF, R^2, and Q^2*

Construct	Full collinearity VIF	R^2	Q^2
Visual effect	3.055		
Vocal effect	2.034		
Celebrity effect	3.071		
Intention to visit South Korea	2.636	0.627	0.629
Country image	2.585	0.616	0.616

DISCUSSION

The present study investigates how film-induced effects (visual, vocal, and celebrity) affect intention to visit South Korea. Furthermore, it investigates the indirect role of country image of South Korea on the relationship between film-induced effects and intention to visit.

The results showed that all film-induced effects (visual, vocal, and celebrity) were found to significantly and positively influence intention to visit South Korea. The findings indicate that film-induced effects play a huge role in the formation of the intention of K-drama viewers to visit South Korea. The influence of visual, vocal, and celebrity effects suggests that visual images shown in K-dramas, the language, sound, and music in Korean films, and the presence of Korean celebrities and idols activate the interest and curiosity of viewers, thus augmenting their intent to visit South Korea.

Prior studies also noted that film imagery attracts viewers to visit a destination (Riley & Van Doren, 1992); thus, watching a K-drama induces intention to visit film locations (Hudson, 2011; Kim et al., 2009; Rajaguru, 2014). Furthermore, language and music used in a film arouse interests among viewers (Sunaga, 2018), which then pulls them to visit a destination (Oh et al., 2015). The presence of Korean celebrities and idols in K-dramas is also a vital pull factor to visit South Korea because of the bond and

emotions that are formed between the actors/actresses and the viewers (Lee et al., 2008; Reader, 2007).

Moreover, visual and celebrity effects were found to have significant influence on country image of South Korea. The results revealed that visual effect considerably influences the image of South Korea as reflected by large effect size. These findings suggest that the images depicted in K-dramas, such suburban areas, bright city of South Korea, the colorful night life, and the other attractions, substantially add to the country image of South Korea. These results are in consonance with the studies of Croy (2004), Jones and Smith (2005), and Sung (2010). Moreover, celebrity effect, despite magnifying small effect size, also adds in the formation of image and impression of viewers towards South Korea as a country. The popularity of Korean culture has tremendously shaped the perceptions and impressions of non-Koreans towards South Korea (Sung, 2010).

On the other hand, the results showed that vocal effect does not influence country image of South Korea. In short, the language and music used in K-dramas do not add in the formation of image of South Korea as a country. This finding can be attributed that non-Korean viewers oftentimes rely on English subtitles and dubbing of K-dramas, similar to the case of Filipino viewers. The growth of K-dramas in leading streaming platforms gives rise also to demand for dubbing and subtitles among non-Korean viewers. Dubbing and subtitles are expected to add in the viewing experience (Halprin, 2018), but in the present study, these film-induced vocal effects do not influence the country image of South Korea.

The results also revealed that country image significantly affects intention to visit South Korea. The significant and positive influence of country image on intention to visit South Korea signifies that the perceptions of viewers towards South Korea as a nation is a pull factor in the formation of intention to visit South Korea. Even though the effect size is small, the finding suggests that the country image of South Korea adds to the establishment of Korean film viewers' intent to visit the country. Alvarez and Campo (2014) and Zhang et al. (2015) emphasized that developments in a country, its character as a nation, and the people lead to intention of an individual to visit a country.

Among the three (3) hypotheses on mediation, only the country image showed significant influence on the relationship between film-induced visual effect and intention to visit South Korea. This result indicates that visual effect significantly affects country image, which then affects intention to visit South Korea. The intervening role of country image

suggests that the image of South Korea as a nation links the relationship between visual effect and intention to visit. This link is supported by precedent studies which revealed that K-dramas are contributing a lot in shaping the image of South Korea as a country (Bae et al., 2017; Chan, 2007; Chen, 2018; Donohoo, 2021). Furthermore, country image is an integral component that augments the propensity of viewers to visit South Korea (Yoo et al., 2014). The rising demand for Korean popular products such as Korean films plays an enormous role in the enrichment of the image of South Korea as a country (Lee, 2011).

Conclusions and Implications of the Study

The present study confirms that film-induced effects (visual, vocal, and celebrity) predict intention to visit South Korea. The *Hallyu* phenomenon led to better accessibility of Korean pop cultural products such as Korean films among fans and viewers. The findings imply that Korean films effectively combine pop cultural elements such as visual images (e.g., beautiful suburban and bright city of Korea, its colorful night life, and tourist attractions), language, music, and people or Korean "idols." All these film-induced effects form part in the propensity of viewers to visit South Korea. Hence, films are effective tools not only in promoting pop cultural products but also in inducing individuals to visit a country or destination.

Furthermore, film-induced visual effect largely contributes to the image of a country. Country image is generally affected by the perceptions of people, and when these impressions are favorable, they activate positive behaviors (Chaulagain et al., 2019) such as intention to visit a particular nation. Film products have a powerful capacity in the formation of perceptions towards the image of a country. The visual images in dramas or movies greatly help in this perception formation. Moreover, film actors and actresses are also integral components that shape the image of a country. Hence, when visual images and celebrity effect are combined and utilized effectively in a film, they aid in the creation of positive perceptions and beliefs towards the image of a country.

Country image has a role in the establishment of intention to visit, and has an intervening role on the link between film-induced visual effect and intention to visit. The intervening effect of country image on the relationship between visual effect and intention to visit clearly illustrates how an image of a country adds value in inducing viewers to visit a specific country or destination. Thus, when film-induced visual effect is activated,

it creates favorable image for a country, which, in turn, leads to amplified intention to visit a nation or a destination.

The current research contributes both at the practical and theoretical levels. The utilization of SOR model in the present study proves that the theoretical underpinning can elucidate how film-induced effects can affect country image and intention to visit. Film-induced effects (visual, vocal, and celebrity effects) as stimuli better explain the formation of intention to visit South Korea (response). And country image (organism) is the mediating factor on the relationship between visual effect and intention to visit.

Furthermore, at the practical level, the study demonstrates that when films are properly utilized in attracting tourists or visitors, film products such as movies and dramas can really add value in this case. The use of cultural pop products through films can help in the development of intention to visit a country or a destination among viewers. This is evident with the results of the present study and the success of K-dramas around the world. The combination of effective elements (visual, vocal, and celebrity) and a favorable country image results to greater intention to visit among viewers. Hence, if a country aims to promote its destination, it needs to produce quality films that combine cultural pop elements and film-induced factors to attract tourists and visitors. It is also important to shape the image of the country in a way that it will yield favorable impressions from different people in different nations.

Like any research, the present study has also limitations. First, the respondents were viewers from Pampanga, Philippines. Other viewers from other parts of the Philippines were not included. Second, the study focused on film-induced effects (visual, vocal, and celebrity) in the context of K-dramas. It did not include other films originated in and produced by other countries. Third, it covers only film-induced effects as exogenous variables and country image as mediating variable. And fourth, the dominance of female respondents and college students as participants is also a limitation. To address these, future researchers may conduct a similar study by covering a wider scope, such as K-drama viewers in different parts of the Philippines. Moreover, other researchers may consider doing similar study but in other film context such as Thai, Taiwanese, or Japanese films since dramas and movies from Thailand, Taiwan, and Japan are getting attention now among Asian viewers. And finally, other researchers may opt to include other intervening variables such as destination image, and cultural proximity to expound the intention to visit model.

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