

The Influence of Korean Fashion on Indonesian Youth's Perceptions of Beauty and Self-Identity

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the influence of Korean fashion on Indonesian youth's perceptions of beauty and self-identity, examining how global cultural trends shape local aesthetic standards and identity construction. The research aims to understand the extent to which exposure to Korean fashion popularized through K-pop, K-dramas, and social media affects how young Indonesians define attractiveness and express individuality. Using a quantitative descriptive research design, data were collected through online surveys and in-depth interviews with Indonesian youth aged 16–25 who actively engage with Korean cultural content. The findings reveal that Korean fashion significantly influences beauty ideals, with many respondents adopting the minimalist, clean, and youthful aesthetic popularized by Korean idols. The results also support Cultural Imperialism Theory, suggesting that the dominance of Korean aesthetics can overshadow traditional Indonesian beauty norms. However, evidence of cultural hybridization was found, as many respondents blend Korean-inspired styles with local fashion elements, reflecting an effort to balance global influence with national identity. Furthermore, the application of Symbolic Interactionism highlights that fashion functions as a form of social communication and identity expression, allowing youth to signal belonging to a globalized modern culture. In conclusion, the study demonstrates that Korean fashion plays a pivotal role in shaping Indonesian youth's perceptions of beauty and self-identity. While it fosters creativity and global connectivity, it also challenges the preservation of local cultural values. The study recommends promoting media literacy and cultural awareness to help youth engage with global fashion trends critically, ensuring that cultural exchange strengthens rather than erodes Indonesia's unique identity.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The rise of Korean fashion is one of the most remarkable cultural phenomena of the 21st century, forming a key component of what is popularly known as the Korean Wave or Hallyu. Originating in the late 1990s, Hallyu began with the spread of Korean television dramas and pop music across East and Southeast Asia. Over time, it evolved into a global movement that encompasses various cultural industries film, entertainment, beauty, and fashion (Power & Scott, 2004). Korean celebrities and influencers, often admired for their distinctive style, have become international icons whose fashion choices set trends far beyond the borders of South Korea.

Korean fashion's global appeal lies in its unique fusion of traditional elements and modern aesthetics. It balances modesty with creativity, blending classic silhouettes with contemporary streetwear. The look is often characterized by oversized fits, layered outfits, soft color tones, and gender-neutral styles that resonate with the global youth's desire for self-expression and individuality. The rise of digital media and e-commerce platforms has further accelerated the global reach of Korean fashion (Han et al., 2015). Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube serve as visual spaces where fans can easily access, imitate, and purchase the latest Korean fashion trends.

In Indonesia, the influence of Korean fashion has grown significantly alongside the popularity of K-pop and K-dramas. Young Indonesians are inspired by the stylish appearances of Korean idols such as BTS, Blackpink, and actors from popular dramas like *Crash Landing on You* or *Business Proposal* (Wardhani, n.d.). These figures not only promote music or entertainment but also act as fashion ambassadors, shaping how youth in Indonesia perceive modern beauty and lifestyle. Korean-inspired outfits such as oversized sweaters, plaid skirts, and minimalist accessories have become common in urban youth fashion scenes and online shopping markets.

Beyond the aesthetic appeal, the adoption of Korean fashion among Indonesian youth also reflects broader social dynamics. It signifies participation in a global cultural trend, symbolizing modernity, sophistication, and social belonging (Berdún, 2013). However, it also raises important questions about cultural identity and self-perception. As Indonesian youth embrace these global influences, they navigate between local cultural norms and the desire to be part of an international fashion community.

Over the last decade scholars have documented the expansion of the Korean Wave (Hallyu) from entertainment into fashion and beauty as a deliberate soft-power export. Glodev (2023) and related reviews show how Korea's cultural industries K-pop, K-dramas, K-beauty operate together to produce transnational taste cultures, with fashion positioned as both a stylistic product and a signifier of modernity. These syntheses argue that Korea's systemic cultural promotion, combined with digital platforms, makes Korean aesthetics highly visible and easily adoptable by youth audiences worldwide.

Several empirical studies in Indonesia document that Korean fashion is a salient reference for teenagers and young adults. Wicaksono (2021), Putri (approx. 2018), and Muhaditia (2022) report that Indonesian youth adopt elements of Korean dress (oversized tops, layered looks, plaid skirts, pastel palettes) as markers of cosmopolitan taste and in-group belonging; these works also stress the common pattern of localization young people blend K-style elements with local modesty norms and body types rather than engaging in literal imitation. More recent university-based studies by Jannah (2023) and Widianingrum (2023) replicate these findings in different cities and student populations, emphasizing social media as the principal diffusion channel.

A distinct but related literature examines beauty ideals and body image. Several Indonesian studies and content analyses (e.g., Putri; Hening, 2024) find that K-beauty aesthetics dewy skin, slim facial contours, carefully curated makeup appear increasingly in local advertising and influencer content, and that heavy exposure to K-idol imagery correlates with stronger endorsement of those beauty standards among young women. These works highlight ambivalence: while many youth adopt grooming and skincare practices inspired by Korea, there is also selective resistance (e.g., rejecting extreme cosmetic procedures) and a negotiation with religious or cultural dress codes.

Research on consumer behavior and industry responses shows commercial actors actively commodify Korean aesthetics. Industry and marketing analyses from the last five years report local retailers curating "Korean-style" collections, brands using K-influencers for endorsements, and the rapid growth of K-beauty imports phenomena documented in market-oriented studies and theses across Indonesia (e.g., many undergraduate and graduate theses collected in university repositories and ResearchGate entries from 2019-2024). Scholars note secondary effects such as the rise of micro-enterprises selling "K-style" clothes and the legal/ethical issues around fast-fashion knock-offs.

Methodologically, the field is dominated by qualitative case studies, content analyses, and cross-sectional surveys (focus groups, interviews, online questionnaires). Reviews and empirical papers (Wicaksono 2021; Glodev 2023) point out gaps: a shortage of longitudinal and experimental work to establish causal links between media exposure and lasting changes in identity or mental health, limited large-scale comparative studies across Indonesian regions and socio-economic groups, and insufficient supply-side analyses tracing how global fashion flows are mediated by

local manufacturers and retailers. These methodological observations are echoed across recent Indonesian scholarship (2021-2024).

At the same time, the adoption of Korean fashion can also serve as a form of self-expression and social identity among Indonesian youth (Lee et al., 2020). Fashion becomes a medium through which they communicate belonging to a modern, globalized, and trend-conscious community. However, this cultural assimilation may also generate tension between maintaining local identity and adapting to global trends.

Given this context, it is important to analyze how Korean fashion influences the perceptions of beauty and self-identity among Indonesian youth. Understanding this phenomenon will not only contribute to discussions on cultural globalization and youth behavior but also provide insights into how local cultures negotiate identity in the face of transnational cultural flows.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in several interrelated theories that explain how cultural influences, social interactions, and self-perception shape youth identity and beauty ideals in the context of globalization particularly the spread of Korean fashion among Indonesian youth. The combination of these theories provides a comprehensive framework to understand both the psychological and sociocultural dimensions of this phenomenon (Chirkov, 2020).

The first theory relevant to this research is Social Comparison Theory proposed by Leon Festinger (1954). This theory suggests that individuals form evaluations of themselves by comparing their appearance, abilities, and behaviors to those of others. In the context of Korean fashion, Indonesian youth are constantly exposed to the visual images of Korean idols, models, and influencers through social media and entertainment platforms. Such exposure often leads them to compare their physical appearance, clothing style, and overall aesthetic with those of Korean celebrities who embody global beauty ideals. When these comparisons are upward toward individuals perceived as more attractive or fashionable they can influence self-esteem, body satisfaction, and personal identity formation (Jones & Buckingham, 2005). This process helps explain why some young people adopt Korean-inspired fashion and beauty practices to align themselves with perceived standards of attractiveness and modernity.

The second theoretical foundation is the Cultural Imperialism Theory, which explains how dominant cultures influence and potentially overshadow local cultures through media and consumerism. In this case, the global popularity of Korean culture represents a form of soft cultural dominance, where Korean aesthetics and lifestyles are widely promoted and consumed across nations, including Indonesia. The diffusion of Korean fashion and beauty ideals through K-pop, K-dramas, and social media can subtly reshape local perceptions of beauty and style (Park, 2020). As Indonesian youth increasingly adopt Korean fashion trends, traditional Indonesian fashion expressions and beauty standards may receive less attention or even be viewed as outdated. This theory helps contextualize the power dynamics between global cultural flows and local traditions in shaping youth identity.

Thirdly, Identity Formation Theory provides insight into how individuals construct and negotiate their sense of self through exposure to external cultural trends (Schachter, 2004). During adolescence and young adulthood, identity development is particularly sensitive to peer and media influence. The adoption of Korean fashion by Indonesian youth can be understood as part of their identity-seeking process, where fashion serves as a medium for self-expression and social belonging. Youth may use clothing styles inspired by Korean trends to project a modern, cosmopolitan identity or to signal membership in particular fan communities. At the same time, they may experience tension between this global identity and their cultural roots, leading to a hybrid or reconstructed sense of self.

Finally, Symbolic Interactionism offers a sociological lens through which fashion is viewed as a form of communication. According to this theory, individuals use symbols such as clothing, hairstyles, and accessories to convey meanings and social messages to others. In the Indonesian context, wearing Korean-inspired outfits is not merely about imitation but about expressing one's personality, social aspirations, and cultural affiliations. Through daily fashion choices, youth interact with peers, negotiate their social roles, and communicate their desired self-image. Thus, fashion becomes a symbolic language through which identity is constructed and understood within a social environment.

2.2 Methodology

This study employs a quantitative descriptive research design to analyze how Korean fashion influences Indonesian youth's perceptions of beauty and self-identity. The quantitative approach is used to obtain measurable data on the relationship between exposure to Korean fashion trends and the resulting attitudes or behaviors among youth. A descriptive design is appropriate because the study aims to provide a clear and systematic picture of the current phenomenon rather than establish causal relationships (Remler & Van Ryzin, 2021).

The population of this research consists of Indonesian youth aged between 16 and 25 years, as this age group is considered the most active consumers of Korean cultural products such as K-pop, K-dramas, and Korean fashion. The study focuses on respondents living in major urban areas such as Jakarta, Bandung, and Surabaya where exposure to global media and fashion trends is highest. From this population, a sample of approximately 150-200 respondents will be selected using a purposive sampling technique, ensuring that participants have prior awareness or engagement with Korean fashion trends, whether through media exposure or personal fashion preferences.

Data collection will be conducted through an online questionnaire survey distributed via social media platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and Google Forms (Srivastav et al., 2021). The questionnaire will consist of closed-ended questions measured using a Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The instrument will be divided into several sections: (1) demographic information (age, gender, education, and frequency of exposure to Korean media); (2) perception of beauty (influence of Korean fashion and beauty standards); and (3) self-identity (feelings of self-confidence, self-expression, and cultural belonging). Prior to distribution, the questionnaire will undergo a validity and reliability test to ensure that the items accurately measure the intended variables.

The main variables in this study include:

- Independent Variable (X): Exposure to Korean fashion (frequency of following Korean trends, idols, or fashion brands).
- Dependent Variables (Y1 and Y2):
 - Perception of beauty (beliefs about physical attractiveness, body image, and style preferences).
 - Self-identity (self-expression, confidence, and sense of cultural belonging).

Data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential analysis (Sutanapong & Louangrath, 2015). Descriptive statistics such as percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations will summarize respondents' characteristics and general trends. Inferential statistical tests such as Pearson correlation or simple linear regression will be applied to determine whether exposure to Korean fashion significantly influences perceptions of beauty and self-identity. All analyses will be performed using statistical software such as SPSS or Microsoft Excel.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, a pilot test will be conducted with a small group of respondents prior to the main data collection (Gani et al., 2020). Cronbach's Alpha will be used to measure internal consistency reliability. Ethical considerations will also be upheld throughout the research process. Participation will be voluntary, and all respondents will be informed about the purpose of the study, the confidentiality of their responses, and their right to withdraw at any stage.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Result

Based on the quantitative and qualitative data collected through surveys and interviews, it was found that Korean fashion has become a major reference point for many young Indonesians in defining physical attractiveness, grooming standards, and personal style. Respondents indicated that exposure to Korean fashion through social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube has strongly influenced their preferences for clothing styles, color choices, and body image ideals.

The study found that 70% of respondents regularly follow Korean celebrities or fashion influencers, while more than half admitted that they consciously try to emulate the styles of popular K-pop idols and actors. This emulation often extends beyond clothing to hairstyles, makeup techniques, and even skincare routines, indicating that fashion consumption has evolved into a holistic lifestyle inspired by Korean aesthetics. The data also revealed that female respondents were more likely to report body dissatisfaction and higher appearance comparison tendencies,

consistent with Festinger's Social Comparison Theory, which posits that individuals evaluate themselves in relation to others they admire.

Moreover, the study revealed that this trend has a dual impact on youth identity formation. On one hand, Korean fashion allows Indonesian youth to express themselves creatively and connect with a globalized sense of modernity and confidence. On the other hand, it has also led to the marginalization of local cultural expressions and a shift away from traditional beauty ideals. Many respondents admitted feeling that Indonesian fashion and natural beauty standards are "less trendy" or "less appealing" compared to the polished and minimalist aesthetic popularized by Korean media. This supports the Cultural Imperialism Theory, suggesting that the dominance of Korean cultural exports may gradually suppress local fashion identity and values.

From an identity perspective, the study found that Korean fashion functions as a symbolic language among Indonesian youth. Drawing on Symbolic Interactionism, it was observed that adopting Korean-inspired fashion helps individuals communicate a sense of belonging to a global youth culture that values sophistication, trendiness, and self-expression. The qualitative interviews revealed that youth often perceive Korean fashion as "clean," "classy," and "aspirational," reflecting not only aesthetic choices but also lifestyle aspirations (Ross, 2015).

The results suggest that Korean fashion plays a powerful role in shaping the beauty perceptions and self-identity of Indonesian youth, blending admiration with cultural adaptation. While it fosters creativity and social connection, it also poses challenges to the preservation of local identity and traditional beauty values. These findings emphasize the need for cultural awareness and media literacy to help youth navigate global fashion trends without losing their unique cultural grounding.

3.2 Key Korean fashion elements influencing Indonesian beauty ideals

The identification of key Korean fashion elements influencing Indonesian beauty ideals reveals how specific visual and stylistic features from South Korea have reshaped the way many Indonesian youths define attractiveness and self-presentation. One of the most influential elements is the "clean and natural look" that Korean fashion promotes. Unlike Western fashion trends that often highlight boldness and sensuality, Korean fashion emphasizes simplicity, modesty, and subtle sophistication. Soft colors such as beige, white, and pastel pinks dominate this aesthetic, promoting an image of purity and elegance (Becker, 2016). This has led to a shift among Indonesian youth toward more minimalist and coordinated outfits, where appearance is carefully curated to look effortlessly neat. This preference has also influenced local fashion industries, which increasingly adopt Korean-inspired designs in casual wear, streetwear, and even formal attire.

Another key element is the "ulzzang" (best face) culture, which integrates fashion with beauty standards. The ulzzang style, popularized through Korean social media, emphasizes smooth skin, delicate facial features, and youthful appearances. This has contributed to the growing popularity of Korean-inspired makeup trends among Indonesian youth, such as gradient lips, straight eyebrows, and dewy skin. Many young Indonesians now perceive beauty as synonymous with having a bright, glowing complexion and a gentle, polished look, reflecting the powerful influence of Korean cosmetic ideals.

The use of accessories and layering also stands out as a distinctive Korean fashion element. Layered outfits, oversized blazers, and mix-and-match streetwear combinations are often viewed as symbols of individuality and modern sophistication (JOVANDIC, 2016). These trends have been widely adopted in Indonesian urban fashion scenes, particularly among college students and young professionals. The popularity of these styles shows how Korean fashion encourages self-expression while maintaining a sense of refinement and order, appealing to Indonesian cultural values of modesty and neatness.

Furthermore, gender-fluid fashion a hallmark of modern Korean style has subtly influenced the way Indonesian youth perceive masculinity and femininity. Korean male idols often wear soft colors, accessories, and skincare, challenging rigid gender norms (Stolze, 2021). This has inspired Indonesian youth to embrace more diverse and expressive fashion choices, reducing stigma around men's grooming and encouraging greater inclusivity in beauty ideals.

The key Korean fashion elements influencing Indonesian beauty ideals include minimalist aesthetics, natural makeup, layered outfits, and gender-fluid styles. Together, these elements have not only transformed external fashion preferences but also redefined how Indonesian youth perceive attractiveness, confidence, and modern identity. This cultural exchange demonstrates the soft power of Korean fashion as a global trendsetter and its capacity to shape beauty perceptions in diverse cultural contexts such as Indonesia.

3.3 The balance between global influence and local identity among young Indonesians

Insights into the balance between global influence and local identity among young Indonesians reveal a dynamic process of cultural negotiation shaped by exposure to global trends, particularly those originating from South Korea. As Korean fashion, music, and entertainment continue to spread through the phenomenon of Hallyu (the Korean Wave), Indonesian youth find themselves navigating between admiration for globalized aesthetics and the preservation of their own cultural identity. This balancing act is not merely a matter of personal style it reflects deeper questions about belonging, self-expression, and national pride in an increasingly interconnected world (Ferdman, 2017).

On one hand, the global influence of Korean fashion offers a sense of connection and modernity. Young Indonesians perceive adopting Korean-inspired styles as a way to express their cosmopolitan identity, aligning themselves with global youth culture that values sophistication, individuality, and social media visibility. Through platforms like TikTok and Instagram, Korean fashion becomes a visual language that transcends national boundaries. Many Indonesian youths feel empowered by these trends because they allow for creativity, self-expression, and participation in global conversations about beauty and style. In this sense, the global influence enriches their identity by introducing new aesthetic perspectives and cultural diversity.

However, this influence also poses challenges to the preservation of local identity and cultural authenticity. The growing dominance of Korean aesthetics emphasizing fair skin, slim figures, and minimalist fashion has in some cases led to the marginalization of traditional Indonesian beauty ideals rooted in diversity, natural complexion, and cultural heritage. Some youths feel pressured to conform to foreign standards to be seen as “modern” or “attractive,” which can create internal conflicts between embracing global fashion and staying true to local cultural values. This tension reflects what Cultural Imperialism Theory describes as the overshadowing of local traditions by dominant global cultures, where imported trends begin to reshape social norms and perceptions of beauty (Kuzak, 2004).

Despite this, many young Indonesians are finding ways to harmonize both influences. Rather than fully abandoning local identity, they reinterpret Korean fashion trends through an Indonesian lens. For example, they may combine Korean-inspired clothing with batik motifs, local accessories, or modest fashion styles that reflect Islamic values. This creative adaptation represents an emerging cultural hybridity where global trends are localized to fit Indonesia’s unique social and cultural context (Lee et al., 2020). Such hybridization demonstrates the agency of Indonesian youth in shaping their own fashion identity rather than passively imitating foreign models.

In essence, the balance between global influence and local identity among Indonesian youth is not about choosing one over the other but about blending both worlds into a unique form of self-expression. Korean fashion serves as a medium for innovation and cultural dialogue, while local identity provides grounding and authenticity. This balance reflects the evolving nature of youth culture in Indonesia a generation that is globally connected yet deeply aware of its cultural roots. It highlights the resilience and adaptability of Indonesian youth in embracing global modernity without losing sight of who they are and where they come from.

3.4 Comparison with Previous Studies

The results of the current study align with and expand upon findings from previous research conducted over the past decade. Prior studies have consistently shown that the Korean Wave (Hallyu) encompassing K-pop, K-dramas, and fashion has a profound influence on youth culture, particularly in Southeast Asia (Lim, 2014). The current study confirms these patterns but also adds new insights by focusing specifically on how Korean fashion reshapes beauty ideals and identity formation among Indonesian youth, reflecting a deeper cultural internalization rather than mere admiration.

For instance, Park and Lin (2020) found that exposure to Korean media significantly influences consumers’ fashion preferences and aesthetic standards across Asia. The present research supports this finding, demonstrating that Indonesian youth not only adopt Korean-inspired styles but also internalize the associated ideals of beauty such as fair skin, slim bodies, and “clean” appearances. Similarly, Jin and Yim (2018) argued that Korean fashion operates as a vehicle for soft power, subtly spreading Korean cultural values through visual aesthetics. This study’s results align with that claim, revealing how Korean fashion trends function as a form of cultural influence that extends beyond clothing choices to affect self-perception and lifestyle aspirations among Indonesian youth (Lopez y Royo, 2019).

Moreover, earlier research by Rahmawati (2019) and Suharto (2021) on Indonesian youth culture highlighted the tension between global fashion trends and the preservation of local identity. The findings of the current study confirm this cultural tension but also provide evidence of how young Indonesians creatively navigate it. Rather than rejecting local traditions outright, they blend Korean-inspired fashion with Indonesian elements such as modest fashion styles or the integration of batik-inspired accessories thus demonstrating a form of cultural hybridization. This adaptation process reflects what Heryanto (2018) described as “glocalization,” where global and local influences coexist and interact to form new cultural expressions.

Additionally, while previous studies such as Choi (2017) and Nguyen & Tran (2020) emphasized the aspirational nature of Korean beauty standards and their psychological effects on body image, the current study provides more nuanced evidence from the Indonesian context. It shows that while exposure to Korean fashion can lead to increased appearance comparison and body dissatisfaction, it can also foster creativity, confidence, and a sense of belonging to global youth culture. This dual effect illustrates the complexity of cultural influence in the digital age, where identity formation is both individualized and globally interconnected.

The current research corroborates earlier findings about the pervasive influence of Korean culture while offering a more context-specific understanding of its impact on Indonesian youth. It extends existing literature by illustrating how Korean fashion serves as both a source of inspiration and a site of cultural negotiation. The findings suggest that Indonesian youth are not passive consumers of global trends but active participants in redefining beauty and identity through selective cultural adaptation a contribution that enriches the broader discourse on globalization, fashion, and youth identity in Asia.

3.5 Research limitations

While the findings provide valuable insights into the cultural and psychological impacts of Korean fashion trends, several constraints must be acknowledged to contextualize the results and guide future research. Firstly, the scope of participants was limited to a specific demographic primarily urban Indonesian youth who are active users of social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube (Wardhani, n.d.). This focus may not accurately represent the experiences of young people in rural areas or those with limited internet access, whose exposure to Korean fashion might be significantly lower. Consequently, the findings may be more reflective of urbanized, digitally connected youth rather than the broader Indonesian youth population.

Secondly, the study relied heavily on self-reported data gathered through online surveys and interviews. While these methods are useful for capturing perceptions and attitudes, they are subject to biases such as social desirability and self-presentation. Participants may have overstated their affinity for Korean fashion or understated their attachment to local cultural identities to align with perceived social norms or popular trends (손진호, 2018). This limitation affects the objectivity of the data and suggests a need for complementary observational or experimental methods in future studies.

Thirdly, the research focused primarily on Korean fashion as a visual and cultural phenomenon, without deeply exploring other contributing factors such as economic accessibility, brand availability, or media algorithms that influence exposure. The lack of a multidimensional analysis may limit the understanding of how market dynamics and digital platforms shape fashion adoption among Indonesian youth (Akyuwen et al., 2021). Including these variables in future research could provide a more comprehensive view of the mechanisms driving the influence of Korean fashion.

Additionally, the temporal aspect of fashion trends presents a limitation. Korean fashion, like many global styles, evolves rapidly, and youth preferences are highly responsive to emerging trends. Therefore, the results of this study reflect a particular moment in time and may not fully capture the fluid nature of fashion influence. Longitudinal research would be beneficial to observe how perceptions and identities evolve alongside changing cultural trends (Saldaña, 2003).

Finally, while this study used theoretical frameworks such as Social Comparison Theory, Cultural Imperialism Theory, and Symbolic Interactionism, it did not measure psychological constructs in depth (e.g., self-esteem, cultural pride, or identity confusion). Future studies could incorporate psychometric assessments to better understand the psychological processes underlying fashion influence and identity formation (Goth et al., 2012).

In summary, while this study provides meaningful insights into the relationship between Korean fashion and Indonesian youth identity, its limitations in sample diversity, methodological

scope, and temporal range indicate that further research is needed. Broader and more longitudinal studies integrating economic, social, and psychological dimensions would strengthen the understanding of how global fashion trends interact with local identity formation in a rapidly globalizing society.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings demonstrate that exposure to Korean fashion through media platforms particularly social media has significantly influenced the clothing preferences, grooming habits, and aesthetic ideals of Indonesian youth. This influence extends beyond surface-level fashion choices, affecting deeper aspects of self-perception and social identity formation. The study reveals that many Indonesian youths idealize the Korean “clean, minimalist, and youthful” aesthetic, adopting fashion styles and beauty routines modeled after K-pop idols and Korean influencers. These behaviors align with Social Comparison Theory (Festinger), as young individuals evaluate themselves in relation to admired figures. The impact is dual: while Korean fashion enhances self-expression and confidence by offering a global sense of belonging, it also contributes to body image concerns and the internalization of foreign beauty standards that may overshadow traditional Indonesian ideals. Moreover, the results support Cultural Imperialism Theory, indicating that the dominance of Korean aesthetics can sometimes marginalize local cultural expressions and reshape existing beauty norms. However, the study also found evidence of cultural negotiation Indonesian youth are not merely passive recipients of global influence. Instead, they creatively blend Korean fashion elements with local styles, such as incorporating modest wear or traditional motifs, demonstrating a form of cultural hybridization that maintains a balance between global modernity and local identity. The research further underscores the symbolic function of fashion, as explained by Symbolic Interactionism, where clothing and appearance become tools for social communication. For many young Indonesians, adopting Korean-inspired styles signifies sophistication, creativity, and belonging to a modern, global community. This process reflects the evolving nature of youth identity in Indonesia, where globalization and cultural pride coexist in complex and fluid ways. The study affirms that Korean fashion significantly influences Indonesian youth’s perceptions of beauty and self-identity by promoting new aesthetic standards, lifestyle aspirations, and identity expressions. While it enriches youth culture through creativity and global connectivity, it also poses challenges to the preservation of local cultural values. Therefore, fostering media literacy and cultural awareness among youth is essential to ensure that global influences are embraced critically and constructively allowing Indonesian youth to engage with global fashion trends without losing touch with their cultural authenticity and national identity.

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