

# An Empirical Analysis on the Relationship between the Korean Popular Cultural and Self-Identity of Korean Adoptees

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## Abstract

The purpose of this research is to analyze the relationship between the Korean cultural and self-identity. It has been focusing on the analyzation of the influence of Korean popular culture on the self-identification of overseas transnational Korean adoptees. The participants of this study consisted of 51 overseas transnational Korean adoptees. Snowball sampling was used to locate a sufficient number of participants. A survey was conducted with a questionnaire adapted from the works of Kim(2015) and Choi, Lee, and Han(1986). The results of this study indicate that Korean popular culture has a significant influence on the self-identification of transnational Korean adoptees. Moreover, the findings of this study suggest that Korean popular culture may be useful in the formation of self-identification of overseas transnational Korean adoptees. It is suggested that research about developing relevant policies could be initiated, and research expanded to increase the accessibility of Korean cultural content for transnational Korean adoptees living abroad. Further research is needed to determine whether Korean popular culture consumption has a significant impact on the self-identification of other groups in the Korean diaspora.

**Key Words:** Korean adoption, Korean popular culture, Self-identification, Korean Adoptees

## I . Introduction

Self-identity cannot be defined with one single statement. It is considered a natural characteristic, a social membership, and social statement as well. Self-identity is also introduced as a natural complex of one's past, present, and future(Oyserman, Elmore, & Smith, 2012).

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According to Oyserman(2009b), self-identity is orienting, while it provides a specific and distinguishable view on and attention to some issues. In other words, self-identity has a meaningful influence on one's decision making, data analyzing, and in how we make choices. In general, identities are thought to provide one with their self-concept in various ways, especially when it comes to thinking about oneself(Stets & Burke, 2003). Moreover, even though self-identity was part of the initial conceptualization of what it means to have one-self, it is also strongly involved in social norms, cultures, histories. Regarding this, in a traditional study on self-identity, James(1927) stated that identities are strongly related to self-images and self-feelings in person, but are also influenced by ecology, including society, culture, and history.

In keeping with this, it is not difficult to imagine how war, refugees, terror, colonization etc. have affected and continue to affect nationalism, social norms, and the self-identity of oneself. Compared to other nations, Koreans had long thought of themselves as homogeneous, only opening its doors to accepting the developed culture and technology of western countries later. Through our history, there were a considerable number of wars in the country, and in large part, toadyism spread across the territory for a long time. Most notably, the Japanese occupation(36 years) and the Korean War(3 years) had social and cultural ramifications that might have had an extensive negative influence on the self-identity of Koreans. One such ramification of considerable impact was the thousands of mixed-race children born in Korea during these periods.

During the Japanese colonial period, Korean-Japanese children were born, and during and after the Korean war approximately 60,000 American soldiers would stay after the armistice(Hübinette, 2004), which contributed to a marked increase in mixed-race children. It is estimated that a total of 12,280 mixed-race children were born between the years 1950-1965. As it has been widely acknowledged, Koreans thought of themselves as a homogeneous nation, and this thought was embedded in the culture for a long time. Therefore, the mixed-race children in Korea could not well develop their self-identity in such an environment. This situation led to sending a considerable amount of children abroad. In fact, one half of these children who were born between 1950-1965, were adopted by families in America and other Western countries(Hurh, 1972).

Before the Korean War, mixed-race relationships were rare, thus, the sudden increase in the number of mixed-race children prompted social consternation and distress. A combination of economic, political, and cultural circumstances in Korea, when people perceived themselves to be racially homogeneous, strongly discouraged mixed-race relationships, and this resulted in the development of a systematic adoption apparatus which peaked with 9,000 adoptions in the 1980's(Hübinette, 2004). During the decades that followed, both mixed race and full ethnic

Korean children flowed out of the country in a process that has sent roughly 200,000 children to the United States, Western Europe, and Australia. The apparatus was originally intended to be temporary, however, the system remains in existence today. In part, the system has been a national embarrassment, as it is thought to be indicative of a country not being able to take care of itself and deal with the effects of modernization.

However, the system has transferred the job of securing the welfare of certain citizens into the hands of the foreign adoptive parents; thus, relieving the government of any financial burden. It has also been referred to as civil diplomacy, as it also helps secure foreign aid and further international relations' channels(Jun, 2010). The consequences of this development have been that Korean born children have grown up in lands with cultures vastly different from Korean culture where they have been more likely to experience discomfort, disillusionment and even discrimination for being minorities. More specifically, they have been socialized in the cultures of their upbringing, yet often judged and treated like foreigners, as people of the majority race(Kim, 2017; Huh, 1997).

This is a very important point for better understanding the emotional situation and stress of adoptees. In most cases, Asians were considered through a lens of the yellow peril and the model minority stereotypes, and more specifically, South Koreans were portrayed as impoverished, instable, and overwhelmed with hostilities with North Korea(Kim, 2011). In other words, the transnational Korean adoptees could be treated with discrimination, because they were considered as the people from an uncivilized country, without consideration to their backgrounds of adoption. In many cases, studies on transnational Korean adoption focus on psychological problems and the social maladjustment of the adoptees related to adoption itself. However, unlike Korean culture, which is in not open to adoption of non-Koreans, Western countries are more open to adopt children of various ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, it could be said that adoption itself would not have much negative influence on transnational Korean adoptees' psychological status, but cultural adjustment and being portrayed as minorities would give more stress.

Since the Korean War, the most visible aspects of Korea's economic ascent is the relative success of its popular culture on the world stage. Korean cultural content production totaled 280 billion dollars(USD) in 2015(Korea Trade - Investment Promotion Agency, 2015). The spread of Korean popular culture is commonly referred to as the Korean Wave(Hallyu). This has led to a surge of general interest in Korea. Academicians have come to refer to this phenomenon as Corenism, which is defined as the positive acceptance of Korean culture. This has provided Korea an opportunity to challenge the dominant discourse in a variety of fields. In the 1990's, South Korea's Presidential Council on Nation Branding set out to increase awareness of Korean

culture around the world and spread a positive image of South Korea. The results of this initiative can be seen as a success, as South Korea's global image has grown and improved.

Korean popular culture may have an influence on the physical and psychological perceptions of beauty throughout the world. After all, 297,000 foreign visitors from over 188 nations have come to Korea specifically for cosmetic surgery(Ministry of Health and Welfare, 2015). Korea's rising status within the beauty industry has enabled it to promote its interpretations of beauty throughout the world, and this may have an impact on identity formation within the Korean diaspora. Mi Sun Lee(2002) conducted a quantitative survey and in-depth interviews on the state of the self-identity and factors that have influenced the self-identity among grown-up Korean adoptees in America and Europe. The results of the research show that there are a lot of Korean adoptees with confusion about their identity. Although the factors are related to the adoptive parents, the degree to which an adoptee feels comfortable talking about adoption plays an important role in the improvement of self-identity of Korean adoptees, it has been proven that cultural factors have a stronger influence on the self-identity of Korean adoptees. It could be said that the popularization of Korean culture and its relatively high availability via the internet, television, and other forms of media has provided greater exposure to the Korean diaspora worldwide, and specifically to transnational Korean adoptees, a population within the Korean diaspora that possesses greater barriers in accessing Korean culture, values, and perceptions. Therefore, this study aims to explain the influence of Korean popular culture on the self-identification of transnational Korean adoptees and contextualize the social and cultural responsibility of Korean popular culture producers. The research questions are as follows:

How is the relationship between Korean popular culture and the self-identification of transnational Korean adoptees in Western countries?

1. Does Korean popular music have an influence on the self-identification of transnational Korean adoptees?
2. Does Korean film have an influence on the self-identification of transnational Korean adoptees?
3. Do Korean television dramas have an influence on the self-identification of transnational Korean adoptees?
4. Does Korean cuisine have an influence on the self-identification of transnational Korean adoptees?

## II. Literature Review

The mass media of Western Europe and the United States have held a dominant position in the world over the last century plus (Rodin & Topić, 2012), perhaps commensurate with their dominant economic and political status. Caucasians, or whites, being the majority race in Western Europe and the United States, have long held the most privilege. While this still stands today, it does not mean that other ethnicities are necessarily being oppressed. For instance, in the United States, people of Asian heritage generally experience a relatively high satisfaction with life overall, personal finances, and the direction of the country (Pew Research, 2012). Conversely, Asians, and transnational Korean adoptees in particular, still face considerable challenges in the United States and Western Europe. Asians, as a small minority of the population of these countries have not been able to affect the dominant culture, specifically how their own culture and heritage have been portrayed.

In western media, South Korea is still portrayed as impoverished, instable, and overwhelmed with the hostilities with North Korea (Kim, 2011). Starting back in the 19th century, Asian immigration to countries in the West resulted in them being portrayed as an ominous and cunning threat. Ever since, Asian people have largely been portrayed within two stereotype paradigms, the yellow peril and model minority stereotypes (Ono & Pham 2009; Xie, 2007). The yellow peril paradigm portrays Asian people as a threat to Western society, and this has manifested in the de-sexualization of Asian men and the hyper-exoticization of Asian women. These types of stereotypes seep into the culture and the perceptions people have. Yet, it is not well known, and any amelioration of the situation is not given much attention. The de-sexualization of Asian men psychologically mitigates the perceived threat of Asia while hyper-eroticization objectifies Asian women and relegates them to a position of subservience. Under this ideology, Asian people are often depicted as perpetual foreigners that are unable to integrate into Western society. This stereotype is commonly utilized in Europe, where Asian people are often depicted as recent immigrants (Kamali, 2008). These stereotypes have a long history as well. The concept of yellow peril has its roots in medieval fears of Genghis Khan and Mongolian invasions of Europe, and combines racist terror of alien cultures, sexual anxieties, and the belief that the West will be overpowered and enveloped by the irresistible, dark, occult forces of the East (Marchetti, 1993). The latter paradigm highlights the success of Asia, broadly defined, and uses it as a standard to perpetuate ideologies of racial categorization against other minority groups. This works against Asian people, as well, since it reinforces the system of White dominance. The model minority stereotype works to distract people from racial inequality in society, which remains a prominent issue in the United States ever since the Civil Rights

Movement of the 1960's(Lee, 1996). The ubiquity of Western media around the world has served as a tool to propagate these ideologies of racial categorization.

There is a stark contrast in how Asians have been portrayed in the popular visual media between the West and the East. The gender roles of Asian men and women portrayed in Korean television dramas and cinema show a change(Kim, Kim, Jeon, Ahn, Kim, Shin & Lim, 2013). Men are portrayed as romantic, gentle, and involved in family affairs, while women are portrayed as modest and independent minded. Both of these depictions challenge traditional gender roles in Asia, and this has great appeal in a rapidly modernizing Asia. Moreover, these portrayals of men and women in Korean popular culture challenge Western depictions of Asian people. Men are not deprived of romantic drive as in Western media, and the independent, often strong-willed woman in Korean media directly contrasts with the docile and eroticized depictions in the West.

While popular Korean music(colloquially referred to as K-pop) has largely mimicked Western music trends, it has relied largely upon sex appeal to make it internationally marketable, in effect sexualizing the Asian body. While it may be argued that further sexual objectification of Asian women enhances Western eroticization, it positions Asian women as the primary actors in the process, challenging the submissive nature of Western depictions. Taken together, this process also challenges the perpetual foreigner, the yellow peril, and model minority stereotypes. The emulation of Western gender roles utilized in visual media and the adaptation of Western popular music styles provides metaphorical evidence that Asian people are not only able to adopt Western culture but are also capable of transfiguring it to fit their specific goals. Korean popular culture counteracts Western popular culture with its own values and characteristics. Ultimately, this enables Korean popular culture to impugn Western cultural hegemony and the Western ideology of racial categorization, which stands as the root cause of the perpetual foreigner, the yellow peril, and model minority stereotypes.

This has implications for transracial transnational Korean adoptees abroad. Studies suggest that transracial adoptees are no more likely to experience maladjustments or self-esteem issues in comparison to inracial adoptees or the general population(Lee, 2003; Feigelman, 2000). This suggests that adoption, in and of itself does not promote mental health issues, as may be initially assumed. Previous research suggests that higher levels of stress due to racism play a major role in the mental health of racial minorities(Wei, Heppney, Ku, & Liao, 2010; Liang et al., 2007; Noh et al., 1999; Noh & Kaspar, 2003; Yoo & Lee, 2005), and this provides an explanation for maladjustments that some of the overseas transnational Korean adoptees and other transracial adoptees suffer from. As members of predominantly White societies that have traditionally portrayed Asian people as inferior, the effects of institutionalized racism in the media may be more impactful for transnational Korean adoptees. This is compounded by the fact that most

transnational Korean adoptees are adopted into White families, who often lack the experiences required to help their minority children develop coping strategies for discrimination. Indeed, Bergquist, Campbell & Unrau's study(2003) questions the efficacy of White parents' ability to teach such strategies when a majority of such parents minimize and even deny the racial experience of their transracially adopted children.

From infancy to adulthood it is the parents who have the primary responsibility to nurture. Transnational adoptive parents must develop cultural competence, one major aspect of which is to provide a bridge to the child's birth culture using a variety of cultural socialization practices(Vonk, 2001). Huh(1997), through her study on adopted Korean children in American families, solidified the statements and findings of Vonk(2001). She studied adopted Korean children in American families, aged nine to fourteen, to find whether there was an influence from the parents' attitudes on the ethnic identity to the attitudes of the children. According to the study, families who actively educated their children about Korean culture were more likely to share their ethnic identity as Korean. Parents' attitudes help children to accept and respect their Korean background to form a unified identity as Korean while growing up in an American family.

This entails exposing the child to positive aspects of their birth country's culture. Additionally, parents are the primary role models for their children, and the racial difference between transnational Korean adoptees and their parents creates an additional challenge that may induce identity crisis. Feigelman's(2000) study confirms that discomfort about racial appearance among transracial adoptees may lead to an increase in issues during the identity formation process. Failure to develop a unique identity during adolescence, establish individual values, and self-confidence may lead to increased levels of anxiety in later stages of development(Koo, Cheong, & Chang, 2011).

Thus, transnational Korean adoptee's ability to develop a healthy sense of self-identity is hindered by the pressure to acculturate with a dominant culture which often depreciates Asian culture. Ethnic identity refers a person's sense of identifying with one's own ethnic group. This entails a sense of belonging and positive feelings about one's ethnic group(Phinney, 1992). It also entails knowledge and practice of the ethnic group's culture. Developing a healthy and positive ethnic identity should start at an early age. As children grow into young adults, the degree to which they have a healthy and positive ethnic identity becomes immeasurably important, as they are quickly learning about their place in the world.

Unfortunately, an adopted child inevitably struggles in discovering and developing a sense of ethnic identity. Additionally, one's ethnic identity remains an important factor in one's identity for the entirety of one's life(Grotevant, 1997). Moreover, a positive ethnic identity is believed to function as a protective factor, or a shield of confidence, for ethnic minorities when they

experience the psychological impacts of adaptation to a new culture or experience ethnic discrimination. Kim(2017) has studied on the issue of re-culturalization of Korean Italian adoptees. According to the research, transnational Korean adoptee's cultural identity could be established through experiencing and learning Korean culture. The role of the adoptive parents is crucial in the development of transnational Korean adoptees, as well as the degree to which the adoptees learn about Korean culture. In addition, to strengthen the identity of Korean adoptees, more support programs are necessary. For example, the researcher suggests an increase of Korean culture and language programs led by the Korean embassy, cultural education and exchange programs by Korean government, as well as development in teaching materials for adopted Korean children and adoptive parents.

### III. Data and Method

#### 1. Participants

51 adoptees from the USA, France, Denmark, Sweden, Netherlands, Belgium, and Australia participated in the study. Snowball sampling was used. Researchers were introduced to adoptees via other adoptees, and this is how the subjects were selected. 51 questionnaires were collected, and the demographic information of the sample is represented in the <Table 1>.

<Table 1> Demographic information for the participants

No.	Country	Gender		Age		Experience in Korean popular Culture	
		M(%)	F(%)	20s	30s	Yes	No
1	USA	4(7.8)	15(29.4)	16(31.4)	3(5.9)	12(23.5)	7(13.7)
2	France	4(7.8)	5(9.8)	6(11.8)	3(5.9)	7(13.7)	2(3.9)
3	Denmark	2(3.9)	3(5.9)	3(5.9)	2(3.9)	2(3.9)	3(5.9)
4	Sweden	1(2.0)	3(5.9)	2(3.9)	2(3.9)	3(5.9)	1(2.0)
5	Netherlands	3(5.9)	4(7.8)	6(11.8)	1(2.0)	5(9.8)	2(3.9)
6	Belgium	2(3.9)	0(0)	1(2.0)	1(2.0)	1(2.0)	1(2.0)
7	Australia	3(5.9)	2(3.9)	3(5.9)	2(3.9)	3(5.9)	2(3.9)
Total		51(100%)					



## 2. Research Tools

### 1) Experience with Korean Popular Culture

This study utilized Kim's(2015) questionnaire, originally designed for Chinese consumers, to assess a subject's experience with Korean cultural. The questionnaire consists of twelve questions in three categories: K-Pop, K-Film and K-Television dramas. For this research the questionnaire consists of four items. Four of the original sixteen questions were used. The answers were measured on a five-point Likert scale from 1 'never' to 5 'always'. The measure was translated from Korean to English by the authors.

### 2) Self-identification

Choi, Lee, and Han's(1986) identity measure was utilized to observe the identity of overseas transnational Korean adoptees. That questionnaire was modified by Cho(1996) and is used in this study. The seven sub-items include sense of distinctiveness, future plans, social nature, proprioception, autonomy, social adaptability, and self-value. 28 questions were used from the original measure. The answers were measured on a scale from 1 '*not at all*' like that to 5 '*very much*' like that. The measure was translated from Korean to English by the authors.

## 3. Procedure

### 1) Questionnaire

In May 2016, the sub-factors were selected. Based on the literature, the sub-factors(K-pop, K-film, K-television dramas and K-cuisine) for Korean popular culture were determined and a questionnaire was designed consisting of 16 questions. The sub-factors for identity(uniqueness, future plans, sociality, self-acceptance, autonomy, social adaptation, and sense of value) were determined and 28 questions from the original measure were used. Responses were recorded using a five-point Likert scale. The breakdown of the variables and questions about Korean popular culture and self-identification are as follows (see the Table 2).

〈Table 2〉 Number of variables and questions on the topic

Division	Variable	Question	No.
Korean popular culture	K-Pop	4	1,5,9,13
	K-Film	4	2,6,10,14
	K-Television dramas	4	3,7,11,15
	K-Cuisine	4	4,8,12,16
Total	16 items		
Self-identification	Distinctiveness	5	1,4,20,24,28
	Future plans	4	2,8,13,26
	Social nature	4	5,11,16,18
	Proprioception	4	10,17,23,27
	Autonomy	4	6,15,21,3
	Social adaptability	3	9,14,19
	Self-value	3	7,12,22
Total	28 items		

## 2) Validity Verification

In May 2016 after the questionnaire was distributed, two validity tests were conducted. From May 2nd until May 4th in 2016, the first post-content validity test was conducted by two adoptees living in South Korea and two psychology Ph.D candidates. In the first post-content validity verification process, the sub-factors were selected, the appropriateness of the questions was gauged, survey forms were configured, test methods were developed, and progress on the project was discussed. The first modifications and supplementations are represented below (see the Table 3).

A professor of international relations, a professor of social welfare, and two adoption agency workers conducted a second post-content validity test. The appropriateness of the questions, potential errors in the questionnaire, and level of conformity was reviewed. The modifications and supplementations were made according to the suggestions and are represented below in (see the Table 4).

## 3) Post Test

From May 11th to June 30th, 2016, a post-test using the snowball sampling method was conducted, and a total of 51 adoptees from the United States, France, Denmark, Sweden, Netherlands, Belgium and Australia participated. The researchers met the adoptees in order to explain the purpose and procedure of the study. The total time required for participation per participant was roughly 15 minutes. The results were collected by email.

**〈Table 3〉 First content validity test, modifications and supplementation**

No.	Suggestion	Modification/Supplementation
1	The adoptee's level of education is not relevant for the purposes of the study	Modification made according to the suggestion
2	Information regarding teenagers is not necessary	Modification made according to the suggestion
3	Alteration to order of the questions for the variables is required	Modification made according to the suggestion

**〈Table 4〉 Second content validity test, modifications and supplementation**

No.	Suggestion	Modification/Supplementation
1	Ethnic self-identification rather than self-identification comments are more suitable	Modification made according to the suggestion
2	Alteration to the questions from negative to positive wording	Modification made according to the suggestion
3	Interval measurement tools not consistent with the comments	Modification made according to the suggestion
4	Add Korean cuisine into the questionnaire	Modification made according to the suggestion
5	Asking for comment by the adoptees on the appropriateness of the information during survey	Modification made according to the suggestion

## 4. Analysis

The data was analyzed in SPSS 22.0. In order to examine the self-identification of transnational Korean adoptees based on their experiences with Korean popular culture, an independent sample t-test was performed. In addition, an F-test was carried out to investigate the self-identification of transnational Korean adoptees in accordance with the four sub-variables.

# IV. Results and Findings

## 1. Korean Popular Culture

This study observed the influence of Korean popular culture on the self-identification of transnational Korean adoptees. The adoptees were divided into two groups based on whether they consumed Korean culture or not. An independent sample t-test was performed to compare the mean of the two groups on their self-identification according to consumption of Korean popular culture(Represented in 〈Table 5〉).

〈Table 5〉 Self-identification according to consumption of Korean popular culture

Subordinate variables	Yes(N=33)		No(N=18)		<i>t</i>
	M(SD)		M(SD)		
Self-identification	3.92(.55)		3.03(.41)		5.95***

\*\*\* $p < .001$ 

Transnational Korean adoptees who have experienced Korean popular culture represent  $M=3.92(SD=.55)$ , and those without experience represent  $M=3.03(SD=.41)$ . There was a significant difference in the overall consumption of Korean popular culture between the two groups( $t=5.95$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

## 2. Korean Popular Music

This study observed the influence of Korean popular music on the self-identification of transnational Korean adoptees. The adoptees were divided into three groups based on their frequency of consumption. An F-test was performed to compare the mean of the three groups. Self-identification according to the frequency of Korean popular music by transnational Korean adoptees is represented in 〈Table 6〉.

〈Table 6〉 Self-identification according to the frequency of Korean popular music consumption

Subordinate variables	More than 2 or 3 times a week (N=17)		2 or 3 times per month (N=15)		Rarely or never (N=19)		<i>F</i>	<i>Scheffe</i>
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Self-identification	3.74	.68	3.80	.66	3.17	.49	7.23***	A,B)C
Distinctiveness	3.64	.97	4.12	.94	3.12	.77	4.29**	B)C
Future plans	3.38	1.33	3.38	1.21	2.71	1.00	2.83*	-
Social nature	3.65	1.09	3.87	1.19	3.36	1.17	2.55	
Proprioception	3.58	1.02	3.62	1.06	3.41	.89	.31	
Autonomy	3.70	1.07	3.82	1.10	3.34	.98	1.07	
Social adaptability	4.04	1.06	3.89	.87	3.21	.97	3.07*	
Self-value	4.17	.79	3.89	1.29	3.07	1.06	5.65**	A)C

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ 

Transnational Korean adoptees who listen to Korean popular music more than two or three times a week came out as  $M=3.74(SD=.68)$ , those who listened two or three times per month came

out as  $M=3.80(SD=.66)$ , and those who never listened to Korean popular music came out as  $M=3.17(SD=.49)$ . There was a significant difference in the overall consumption of Korean popular music among the three groups ( $F=7.23, p<.001$ ). Transnational Korean adoptees who listened to Korean popular music more than two or three times a week came out as  $M=3.64(SD=.97)$ , those who listened two or three times per month came out as  $M=4.12(SD=.94)$ , and those who never listened to Korean popular music came out as  $M=3.12(SD=.77)$ .

There was a significant difference in overall self-identification and in the self-identification sub-factor of distinctiveness ( $F=4.29, p<.01$ ). Both the sub-factors future plans ( $F=2.83, p<.05$ ) and social adaptability ( $F=3.07, p<.05$ ) showed a significant difference; however, the post-verification result was not statistically significant. Lastly, transnational Korean adoptees who listened to Korean popular music more than two or three times a week came out as  $M=4.17(SD=.79)$ , and those who never listened to Korean popular music came out as  $M=3.07(SD=1.06)$ . There was a significant difference between the overall self-identification and the self-identification sub-factor of self-value between the two groups ( $F=5.65, p<.01$ ).

### 3. Korean Film

This study observed the influence of Korean film on the self-identification of transnational Korean adoptees. The adoptees were divided into two groups based on their frequency of consumption. An independent sample t-test was performed to compare the mean of the two groups. The consumption of Korean film by transnational Korean adoptees is represented in the (Table 7).

There was not a significant difference in overall self-identification, but there was a significant difference between the self-identification sub-factors of distinctiveness and proprioception. First, transnational Korean adoptees who watched Korean film more than two or three times per month came out as  $M=3.83(SD=.92)$ , and those who never watched Korean film came out as  $M=3.30(SD=.87)$ . There was a significant difference in the overall consumption of Korean film between the two groups ( $t=2.04, p<.05$ ). Second, transnational Korean adoptees who watched Korean film more than two or three times per month came out as  $M=3.77(SD=.86)$ , and those who never watched Korean film came out as  $M=3.21(SD=.97)$ . There was a significant difference in the overall consumption of Korean film between the two groups ( $t=2.14, p<.05$ ).

〈Table 7〉 Self-identification according to frequency of Korean film consumption

Subordinate variables	More than 2 or 3 times per month (N=31)		Rarely or never (N=20)		<i>t</i>
	M	SD	M	SD	
Self-identification	3.68	.57	3.48	.78	1.01
Distinctiveness	3.83	.92	3.30	.87	2.04*
Future plans	3.29	1.24	3.10	1.19	.54
Social nature	3.80	1.10	3.60	1.25	.59
Proprioception	3.77	.86	3.21	.97	2.14*
Autonomy	3.53	1.09	3.83	1.05	-.95
Social adaptability	3.74	.95	3.65	1.05	.31
Self-value	3.82	1.12	3.65	1.27	.49

\* $p < .05$  - There were less than 15 people in daily/weekly group.

#### 4. Korean Television Dramas

This study observed the influence of Korean television dramas on the self-identification of transnational Korean adoptees. The adoptees were divided into three groups based on their frequency of consumption. An F-test was performed to compare the mean of the three groups, and the frequency consumption of Korean television dramas by transnational Korean adoptees is represented in 〈Table 8〉.

Transnational Korean adoptees who watched Korean television dramas more than two or three times per month came out as  $M=3.86(SD=.61)$ , and those who never watched Korean television dramas came out as  $M=3.17(SD=.55)$ . There was a significant difference in the overall consumption of Korean television dramas between two groups ( $F=5.00, p < .01$ ). Transnational Korean adoptees who watched Korean television dramas more than two or three times per month came out as  $M=3.93(SD=.91)$ , and those who never watched Korean television dramas came out as  $M=3.08(SD=.71)$ . There was a significant difference between the overall self-identification and the self-identification sub-factor of distinctiveness ( $F=3.67, p < .05$ ). The sub-factor social nature showed a significant difference, but the post verification result was not statistically significant ( $F=3.08, p < .05$ ). Lastly, transnational Korean adoptees who watched Korean television dramas more than two or three times per month came out as  $M=4.29(SD=.64)$ , and those who never watched Korean television dramas came out as  $M=3.02(SD=1.23)$ . There was a significant difference between the overall self-identification and the self-identification sub-factor of self-value ( $F=4.89, p < .01$ ).

**〈Table 8〉 Self-identification according to frequency of Korean television dramas consumption**

Subordinate variables	More than 1 or 2 times a week (N=16)		2 or 3 times per month (N=17)		Rarely or never (N=18)		F	Scheffe
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Self-identification	3.83	.60	3.86	.61	3.17	.55	5.00**	B>C
Distinctiveness	3.90	.98	3.93	.91	3.08	.71	3.67*	B>C
Future plans	3.19	1.31	3.41	1.27	2.97	1.09	.84	-
Social nature	4.08	.79	4.03	.99	3.10	1.32	3.08*	
Proprioception	3.76	.78	3.63	1.09	3.32	.87	.66	
Autonomy	3.91	1.22	3.75	.78	3.33	1.15	.85	
Social adaptability	3.90	.94	3.94	1.00	3.34	.94	1.42	
Self-value	4.06	1.07	4.29	.64	3.02	1.23	4.89**	B>C

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

## 5. Korean Cuisine

This study observed the influence of Korean cuisine on the self-identification of transnational Korean adoptees. The adoptees were divided into two groups based on their frequency of Korean cuisine consumption. An independent sample t-test was performed to compare the mean of the two groups. Self-identification according to the frequency of Korean cuisine consumption by transnational Korean adoptees is represented in 〈Table 9〉.

Transnational Korean adoptees who consumed Korean cuisine more than two or three times per month came out as  $M=3.76(SD=.61)$ , and those who rarely consumed Korean cuisine came out as  $M=3.36(SD=.67)$ . There was a significant difference in the overall consumption of Korean cuisine between the two groups ( $t=2.17, p<.05$ ). Transnational Korean adoptees who consumed Korean cuisine more than two or three times per month came out as  $M=3.87(SD=.82)$ , and those who rarely consumed Korean cuisine came out as  $M=3.05(SD=.91)$ . There was a significant difference in the overall consumption of Korean cuisine and the self-identification sub-factor of proprioception between the two groups ( $t=3.36, p<.01$ ). Lastly, transnational Korean adoptees who consumed Korean cuisine more than two or three times per month came out as  $M=4.02(SD=.91)$ , and those who rarely consumed Korean cuisine came out as  $M=3.34(SD=1.42)$ . There was a significant difference in the overall consumption of Korean cuisine and the self-identification sub-factor of self-value between the two groups ( $t=1.93, p<.05$ ).

〈Table 9〉 Self-identification according to the frequency of Korean cuisine consumption

Subordinate variables	More than 2 or 3 times per month (N=29)		Rarely or never (N=22)		<i>t</i>
	M	SD	M	SD	
Self-identification	3.76	.61	3.36	.67	2.17*
Distinctiveness	3.72	.92	3.46	.95	.99
Future plans	3.20	1.22	3.24	1.11	-.10
Social nature	3.85	1.01	3.53	1.34	.98
Proprioception	3.87	.82	3.05	.91	3.36**
Autonomy	3.85	1.00	3.33	1.12	1.76
Social adaptability	3.78	1.03	3.59	.92	.70
Self-value	4.02	.91	3.34	1.42	1.93*

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$  - There were less than 15 people in daily/weekly group.

## V. Conclusion and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to figure out the influence of Korean popular culture on the identity of transnational Korean adoptees. The results of the study are as follows. First, higher consumption of Korean popular culture was commensurate with higher levels of self-identification. This is consistent with the findings of Koh(2005), who studied the psychosocial adjustment of adoptees. Also, greater cultural exposure among transnational Korean adoptees showed a higher sense of collective identity, and this is consistent with the results of this study. Further research is needed to determine whether racial differences between transnational Korean adoptees and their adoptive parents results in different levels of Korean popular culture consumption.

Second, it is suggested that South Korean cultural content creators and policy makers increase the accessibility to Korean popular culture products. This is a relatively inexpensive way for international transnational Korean adoptees, as well as other members of the Korean diaspora, to experience Korean culture outside of Korea. It is necessary to establish a training program operated in tandem with cultural content creators in South Korea. This also suggests that Korean cultural content can help transnational Korean adoptees develop their self-identification. As such, cultural content creators in South Korea must be more conscientious of their social responsibility and duty.

Third, adopted children may have conflicts of self-identification as a result of their adoption, especially those adopted at a young age. The differences in appearance from their parents, families, and peers may result in cultural confusion or identity clash. This is consistent with



Yoo's(2015) study about the obstacles faced by international adoptees, such as prejudice and social obstacles, in both their birth and adopted countries. Many adoptees in Western countries are familiar with these circumstances. However, the results of this study indicate that connection to the culture of the birth country may help mitigate identity crisis. Put differently, it is becoming increasingly necessary to have specific legal and political support to influence the potential impact of Korean cultural content on societies. This also reflects Koh's(2005) findings. With this in mind, greater attention must be paid to the potential psychosocial effects of cultural content, and access must be expanded to maximize potential benefits. This validates Yoo's argument that the South Korean government must strengthen its research and development of cultural programs.

Lastly, greater research is needed to monitor the self-identification of transnational Korean adoptees, and the scope of this research should be expanded to consider greater amounts of psychological and sociological factors. Further research on the subject should take an inter-disciplinary approach in order to increase the applicability of the findings.

According to the result of this study, the suggestions for future research are as follows. First, the most important thing to expand cultural supports for Korean adoptees and Korean diaspora is to try to have political rationale through verifying the effectiveness of Korean culture. Further research is required to not only find cultural aspects of Korean culture but also enlarge and verify diplomatic and individual psychological aspects. Based on this research, policy development is needed for practical application. Second, political supports according to specific strategies by sub-categories genres are demanded in order for Korean culture to be applied effectively to Korean adoptees and the Korean diaspora. For example, Korean TV dramas and films need political support to improve and enhance online service and help use online service through the homepage of Korean embassies and cultural centers. For Korean popular music, in cooperation with the Korean embassies, cultural centers and associations of overseas Korean, overseas concerts of Korean music broadcasting, produce and broadcast the program can be practical efforts. In terms of Korean literature, political supports can include expanding the genre of literature that is translated with literature translation institute of Korea from children's fairy tale to poem, novel and essay. Events to introduce the Korean literature will also help overseas Korean have attention to Korean culture.

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구효진(具孝珍): 영국 런던대학교(London Univ.)에서 심리학 박사학위를 취득하고 현재 신한대학교 교양학부 및 대학원 통합교육학과 교수이자 대학원장으로 재직 중이다. 주요 관심분야는 교육콘텐츠 개발, 진단 및 평가, 유아교육, 특수교육(정서 및 행동장애), 발달심리이다. 최근 논문으로는 “규칙 및 패턴놀이가 발달지체유아의 순차처리 정도에 미치는 영향(2018)”, “한국과 중국 발달지체유아의 수감각 및 수개념 특성 비교(2018)”, “일반유아, 다문화가정유아, 발달지체유아의 수감각 및 수개념 특성 비교 연구(2017)” 외 다수의 논문이 있다(allohamora2010@shinhan.ac.kr).

주효진(朱孝振): 영남대학교에서 행정학 박사학위를 취득하고, 현재 가톨릭관동대학교 의과대학 의학과 의료인문학교실 교수이면서 보건의료융합연구소 책임연구원으로 재직 중이다. 주요 관심분야는 조직론, 문화정책, 정책분석 및 평가이다. 최근 논문으로는 “유보통합 및 초·중등사무 지방이양과 교육부 조직개편 방안에 관한 연구(2018)”, “중국 감염병 관리체계의 변화과정 분석 및 정책적 함의(2018)”, “개인-환경적합성이 이직의도에 미치는 영향에 관한 연구: 직무만족의 조절효과를 중심으로”외 다수의 논문이 있다(jhj@cku.ac.kr).

## 국문요약

### 한국 대중문화와 한국계 해외 입양인의 자아정체감 간의 관계성에 대한 실증분석

구효진

주효진

본 연구는 한국 대중문화와 자아정체감 간의 관계에 대해 분석하는 것을 목적으로 하였으며, 이에 따라 한국 대중문화가 한국계 해외입양인의 자아 정체감에 미치는 영향을 분석하였다. 본 연구의 대상자는 한국계 해외입양인 51명이었으며, 충분한 연구대상자 수를 확보하기 위해 눈두덩이 표집법이 사용되었다. 본 연구를 위해 Kim(2015)과 Choi, Lee, Han(1986)이 개발한 설문지를 수정 및 보완하여 사용하였으며, 수집된 데이터는 SPSS 22.0을 사용해 분석하였다. 한국 대중문화 경험에 따른 연구 대상자들의 자아 정체감을 분석한 결과, 한국 대중문화는 한국계 해외입양인의 자아 정체감에 유의미한 영향을 미치는 것으로 나타났다. 이와 같은 연구 결과를 통해 한국 대중문화가 한국계 해외입양인의 자아정체감 형성에 유용할 수 있음을 알 수 있었으며, 이를 기반으로 해외에 거주하는 한국계 입양인의 한국 문화콘텐츠 대한 접근성이 향상될 수 있도록 연구 확장 및 정책 추진의 필요성이 제안되었다. 또한 향후 한국 대중문화 소비 경험이 한국인 교포 내 다른 집단의 자아정체감에 미치는 유의미한 영향을 알기 위한 구체적인 연구의 필요성이 제시되었다.

주제어: 한국인 입양, 한국 대중문화, 자아정체감, 한국계 해외입양인