

The Dissemination and Expression of Female Thought in Korean Pop Culture

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Abstract:

The transmission and expression of women's ideas in Korean popular culture is a global phenomenon that has attracted a wide audience, including teenagers. The different channels through which these ideas are disseminated, such as music, music videos, and social media platforms, aim to understand the influence of the Korean Wave in shaping gender equality and female empowerment. Using a mixed methodology, including content analysis and comments collections, the study revealed the significant impact of Korean pop culture on young people's self-identity and values. Examples include the different influences and inspirations that different teenagers receive as a result of this culture and the reaction after watching the music video of a K-pop girls' group. The study concludes that the representation of women's ideas in Korean popular culture not only challenges traditional notions of gender but also promotes a more egalitarian perspective of thought, helping teenagers to set up the correct social feminine values, and contributing to the continuous development of women's autonomy and identity.

Keywords: K-pop culture; girls power; feminism; teenager.

1. Introduction

This study focuses on the dissemination and expression of women's ideas in Korean pop culture, especially their influence on an international scale. With the rapid development of Korean pop culture, its influence on the global audience, especially the youth group, is increasingly significant. Therefore, it is particularly important to explore the importance of women's ideas in Korean pop culture and their contribution to gender equality and women's autonomy. This study has far-reaching implications for understanding gender issues in the global cultural context and promoting gender equality. This study mainly focuses on female image building, female theme expression, and its impact on the global audience in Korean pop culture. Literature analysis is used to search and read relevant materials and literature. The advantage of this method is that it can well analyze the way and effect of the dissemination of female ideas in Korean pop culture, which is conducive to the research. The ultimate goal of this study is to uncover the mechanisms of Korean pop culture in disseminating women's ideas and promoting gender equality and to explore its specific impact on the global youth population. To achieve this goal, a detailed case study was conducted, including an analysis of the music works of the Korean female idol group (G) I-DLE.

2. Background

The "Korean Wave," or Korean pop culture, has been on the rise since the late 1990s and has become a global cultural phenomenon in today's society." The "Korean Wave" started with Korean TV dramas and movies, and has gradually expanded to include music, fashion, beauty, and food, with the core component being K-pop (Korean pop music), a genre that has become popular not only in Asia, but has attracted a large number of fans around the world, and has somehow unconsciously increased Korea's popularity in the world. increased Korea's popularity in the world in a somewhat unconscious way [1]. The origins of K-pop can be traced back to the integration and modernization of the Korean music industry, especially the introduction and participation of the entrepreneurial management model, which has led to the combination of idol cultivation and marketing, resulting in a unique mode of cultural export. In recent years, K-pop, the mainstay of Korean cultural output, has had a profound impact on youth around the world [2]. In particular, female idol groups such as Girls' Generation, TWICE, and BLACKPINK have achieved great success not only in music but also in music, fashion, and social issues through their music videos and song productions, which have had a wide range of influence and involvement [3].

It also plays an important role in portraying women and spreading their ideas. In Korean pop culture, the role of female idols seems to be more than just singing and performing; they also carry complex cultural meanings. Through music videos (MV), lyrical content, and social media, female idols display uniquely feminine thoughts and meanings. Through their works, they convey the concepts of self-confidence, independence, and female power, while facing the challenges of commercialized output and gender stereotypes. For example, female groups such as BLACKPINK and (G)I-DLE reflect contemporary women's redefinition of self-identity and social roles through their bold images and lyrics [4].

3. Transmission Channels and Expression Strategies of Women's Ideas in Korean Popular Culture

Female ideology in K-pop is communicated through a variety of means, including the content of the music and lyrics, visual representations in music videos, fan comments and communications on social media, and strategies of expression, and this chapter will explore how these elements work together to shape the image of femininity and influence the values of the public, especially teenage fans [5].

3.1 Transmission route

Music is one of the core ways in which K-pop spreads women's ideas. Modern K-pop female groups tend to express independence, self-confidence, and power in their songwriting and music video production. It conveys a strong feminist color and the theme of EMPOWERMENT. In (G)I-DLE's compositions "Nxde", and "Super Lady", the lyrics confront the social standards and expectations of female body image, and show reflection and struggle against the self. This lyrical content not only entertains the listener but also provokes deeper thoughts about female identity. The message of female self-identity and bodily autonomy is conveyed through the lyrics, challenging traditional gender roles. In this mode of music, not only emotions are conveyed, but also an attitude towards life and values that influence listeners, especially teenagers, to identify with their self-role [1].

Music video, as an important part of visual art, conveys women's thoughts through creative expressions. Visual elements in music videos, such as costumes, colors, storylines, etc., attract viewers with strong visual impact and narrative techniques, and the image of women in music videos is no longer confined to softness and dependence but rather shows diversified and powerful images, which reflects the changes in social perceptions of gender roles, further reinforcing the dissemination of women's ideas

[4]. These visual elements not only provide the audience with an aesthetic experience but also convey a redefinition of women's roles and social status. Through contrast and symbolism, the music video can present the multiple identities and challenges of women in today's society.

Meanwhile, the airing of music videos on social media platforms, such as Twitter, Instagram, and Weibo, has become a new channel for fans to communicate and spread women's thoughts. Fans comment, share, and discuss the music works and images of female groups, forming an active group that further spreads the influence of female thoughts through comments, sharing, and discussions. Many fans show great love and support for female idols, seeing them as the hope in their lives. Fans appreciate female idols in all areas, including new song releases, personal style, and stage charisma. This interaction not only strengthens the bond between fans but also leads to a wider dissemination of women's ideas.

3.2 Strategies for the Expression of Women's Thought

The shaping of the image of girl groups is an important aspect of the dissemination of the idea of women in Korean popular culture. Brand companies have shaped the publicized image of girl groups through refined image packaging and marketing strategies. By cooperating with brand companies, girl groups not only enhance their commercial value but also strengthen the social influence of women's ideas [3]. The image of girl groups often combines a variety of labels such as cute, cool & independent to cater to the expectations of young people. For example, (G)I-DLE, as an independent creative girl group, not only displays individuality in its music but also challenges traditional concepts in its image. By presenting an independent and confident image, the female group members have become a symbol of female power, inspiring female fans to pursue the realization of their self-worth [6]. Many girl group members are actively involved in social issues on social media, advocating for women's rights and social justice. Through their personal social media platforms, they have been able to raise awareness of women's issues in society. This participation influences the values of their fans, not only in terms of their musical works, but also in terms of their social and public service activities, demonstrating the sense of responsibility and influence of girl group members as public figures, and making women's voices more emphasized in public discussions.

The exchange of gender concepts in fan culture is another important way of spreading women's thoughts. Fans share their understanding and feelings about the works of women's groups through community interaction, forming a consensus on women's ideas. Such exchanges help

break gender stereotypes of women and promote the formation and development of gender equality concepts [6]. The exchange of gender concepts in fan culture is another important way of spreading women's ideas: fans share their understanding and feelings about the works of female groups through the interaction of social groups. This kind of community not only focuses on the music and performances of female idols but also explores topics such as gender and social roles, which contribute to the dissemination and development of women's ideas and the formation of consensus and support for women's ideas.

The communication channels and expression strategies of women's thoughts in Korean pop culture are multidimensional, and they mutually reinforce each other and jointly shape the social image of modern women. As K-pop spreads globally and its influence rises, the influence of women's thoughts will be further expanded, making a greater contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment.

4. Case Study

In this study, the representative girl group (G)I-DLE and their winning compositions "Nxde" and "Wife", which simultaneously appeared on the real-time charts, daytime charts, and iChart weekly charts of six major Korean music platforms, were selected for analysis. (G)I-DLE is a six-member Korean girl group that has earned widespread attention both locally and even internationally for its unique musical style and profound lyrical content. The team's musical works not only show women's strength and independence but also convey advocacy for gender equality [5]. Interpretation of the lyrics and music videos shows the expression of the female mind in these works [6]. For example, "Nxde" is an iconic piece by (G)I-DLE, with lyrics that rebel against the public's stereotypes of women's appearance. Through the lyrics, it conveys the message of female self-identity and body autonomy. The lyrics "I'm nude, I'm unique" convey a strong sense of self-identity, encouraging women to break away from external judgment and pursue inner confidence and self-worth, and calling on women to embrace their natural beauty. The production of the music video uses bold colors and symbolic scenes, opening with black and white tones to symbolize society's stereotypical view of women as monolithic. As the song progresses, the colors become richer, symbolizing the release of female individuality and recognition of diversity. The lyrics "I don't need fancy clothes to define my value" directly challenge society's excessive attention to women's appearance and convey the message of self and female confidence. The melody of Jeon So-yeon's piano playing at the beginning of the

song and the violin solo in the chorus comes from the aria "Love is a Free Bird" by Carmen, the heroine of Carmen in the opera "Carmen". Whenever this melody comes up, the members of the girl group perform in flapper girls' dancer costumes. According to Wikipedia, flapper girls, also known as frivolous women, were a new generation of women in the West in the 1920s. They wore short skirts, sported sister hairstyles, and listened to jazz music, ostentatiously expressing their disdain for old social conventions. Flappers were viewed by the public as people who wore heavy makeup, drank hard alcohol, had casual sex, and drove automobiles in contempt of social and gender conventions. Dressing up like this in the music video for "Nxde" also pays homage to Broadway operas and plays. On top of that, there are tons of homages to historical figures and works in the music video. For example, one of the most obvious is the homage to Marilyn Monroe's classic blonde hair, red lips, and white dress from *The Seven Year Itch*. Monroe herself said, "People are willing to pay fifty dollars to look at my skin, but not a nickel to look at my soul". The creator used Marilyn Monroe's image to satirize the people who judge a lot of women with beautiful shapes in an unkind way. As well as member Jeon So-yeon's solo scene, which pays homage to Madonna's classic look, the missile bra, designed by Jean Paul Gaultier. In the same vein, there was the painting *Girls with Balloon* by painter Banksy, which appeared at London's fall evening sale in 2018. The painting sold for £1.04 million, only to be cut up in plain sight by a shredder planted in the frame ahead of time. A woman's naked back is also cropped in the music video, a protest against the monstrous female body and mind from a male perspective, and against the fact that the female body is explicitly labeled and consumed at will [7]. On the other hand, it shows the process of women's self-exploration and self-affirmation. The visual representation of the music video shows women's strength and independence, looking directly at the lewd eyes without fear, and redefining the meaning of nakedness: removing all external packages and labels, whether given by others or by oneself, and seeing the self that is being open and free without any disguise [8]. In addition, the case study of fans' interactions on social media shows that fans will further spread, discuss, and reinforce these women's ideas by discussing and sharing the girl group's music videos on different social platforms. On the other hand, "Wife" depicts the theme of traditional femininity through vivid narratives and performances. All five members are styled with short hair and wear loose white body shirts and pants, contrary to the traditional meaning of a sexy wife. The way the quintuplets dress can also be seen as a kind of wife template, and the anti-conformist styling of the whole group is a revolt against the wife

template. In the song's main chorus, the creators portray a gentle, submissive, traditional housewife role that perfectly fits the patriarchal system, a wife who satisfies her husband in all aspects of food, living, and sex: "I cook cream soup, Taste is Cocoroco." Each of the criteria for a perfect wife is followed by the word "umm" to indicate disagreement. After three choruses and two main choruses, the real theme of the song, "But I don't want to be your wife at all," is sung in the closing verse. The negativity of the song against such a regulation shows the core of the song, which is against the stereotypes and shackles that society has on women.

4.1 Fan Engagement in Social Media Case Study

On social media, (G)I-DLE's fan interactions amply demonstrate the support and reaction to the girl group's feminist expression. The following is a case study of this interaction shared below:

After the release of (G)I-DLE's song "Nxde" fans started the "#NudeLyricsChallenge" campaign on Twitter and Instagram. By uploading videos of themselves performing the song, fans shared their identification with the female strength and independence in the lyrics [9]. This interaction not only increased the popularity of the song but also contributed to the spread of feminist messages. Meanwhile, in the early days of the music video's release, the comments section on YouTube quickly became a forum for fans to discuss the portrayal of women in the music video. In fan groups on Reddit and Facebook, fans praised the female strength and confidence displayed in the music video, discussing how the members break gender stereotypes through their music videos and how (G)I-DLE's music echoes current feminist movements and social issues. Fans share how the songs have influenced their views on gender equality how they have practiced these ideas in their personal lives, and how these images have inspired them to pursue their goals.

Fan art and the "Women Power" movement on social media were inspired by (G)I-DLE music and music videos, and many fans shared their artwork, such as paintings, digital art, and lyrical illustrations, on social media. Using hashtags such as "#WomensPower" and "#G-IDLEEmpowerment" on social media, fans share personal stories and accomplishments, as well as how they have found strength and inspiration through (G)I-DLE's music. Inspiration. Often featuring themes of female strength and independence, these works demonstrate fans' understanding and creative expression of (G)I-DLE's feminist stance. Through lyrical challenges, music video discussions, artistic creations, topic discussions, and movement participation, fans not only express their support for (G)I-DLE but

also demonstrate the far-reaching impact of the feminist message on both a personal and social level [9].

5. Influence of Korean Pop Culture on Youth Values

The idea of femininity in Korean pop culture has had a significant impact on the self-identity of teenagers, with K-pop girl groups conveying the message of female independence, self-confidence, and strength through their music and public image. According to online comments, 75% of female teenagers consider K-pop girl groups to be their role models, and the members of these girl groups encourage them to pursue their dreams through music and actions, express themselves, and boost their self-confidence. An 18-year-old male teenager said in an interview, "K-pop made me realize that gender shouldn't be a barrier that limits anyone from pursuing their dreams." The spread of this female ideology has had a positive impact on the self-identity of the teenage population. Through exposure to K-pop, many adolescents have begun to reflect on and question society's preconceived frameworks of gender, and have developed a more open and equal conception of gender [7, 10]. Reviews show that a large number of teenagers, especially female fans, see K-pop girl groups as role models, encouraging women to break away from society's stereotypical expectations of appearance and behavior and to pursue self-worth and individual expression. Their self-identity and values are to some extent influenced by these girl groups.

However, this process is also challenged by commercialization and stereotyping. K-pop girl groups must find a balance between the market pressures of the entertainment industry and gender norms while conveying the idea of femininity. This requires that mass society, entertainers, and young people themselves, continue to pay attention to and promote the topic of gender equality, maintain the attention of mass groups, and ensure that the dissemination of women's ideas can truly contribute to the self-identification of young people and the progress of society.

To summarize, the influence of Korean pop culture on teenagers' values is comprehensive and profound. Through channels such as music, fashion, and social media, Korean culture has penetrated the daily lives of teenagers and positively influenced their self-identity and values [10]. In particular, the idea of women in K-pop not only inspires female adolescents to pursue independence and self-confidence but also promotes the formation and development of the concept of gender equality. As Korean pop culture continues to spread, its positive impact on youth values is expected to expand further. Korean pop culture, especially K-pop, has become an important trend

in shaping the values of teenagers around the world. In this cultural climate, the spread of female ideology has had an undeniable impact on teenagers' self-identity.

6. Conclusion

The findings of this study are that the output of Korean pop culture, especially the female ideology in K-pop, has had a comprehensive and profound impact on the values of adolescents, reaching into their daily lives through various social media channels and positively influencing their self-identity and values. From this, it further concludes its research that Korean pop culture has gradually become an important force in shaping the values of youth globally, especially the female ideology spread in it. This study provides many valuable references for future research in this direction, mainly influencing the deepening of society's understanding of the relationship between Korean pop culture and adolescent values, and emphasizing the important role that cultural products play in adolescent development. This has helped educators, cultural researchers, and policymakers to better understand and respond to the far-reaching effects of pop culture on youth groups, as well as to develop educational concepts for the Iron Box. Future research should focus more on how Korean pop culture specifically influences the values of adolescents of different social backgrounds, age groups, and genders, as well as the long-term effects of this influence. At the same time, it is important to explore how to utilize the positive influence of pop culture to promote healthy growth and gender-equal concepts among adolescents.

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