

SECTION A (Source-Based Case Study)

Answer all questions.

Being Part of a Globalised World

Study the Background Information and the sources carefully, and then answer all the questions.

You may use any of the sources to help you answer the question, in addition to the sources which you are told to use. In answering the questions, you should use the knowledge of the issue to help you interpret and evaluate the sources.

1 Study Source A.

What does this source tell you about the impact of the Hallyu Wave?
Explain your answer.

[5]

2 Study Sources B and C.

How similar are Sources B and C? Explain your answer using the details in the sources.

[6]

3 Study Source D.

How useful is Source D as evidence about the impact of Hallyu Wave on the attitude of women towards romance? Explain your answer.

[7]

4 Study Sources E and F.

Does Source F prove that the author in E is lying? Explain your answer.

[7]

5 Study All Sources.

'The Hallyu Wave impacts individuals the most in society.' Using the sources in this case study, explain how far you would agree with this statement.

[10]

How has globalisation impacted the world?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Read this carefully. It may help you to answer some of the questions.

The Hallyu Wave (Korean Wave) refers to the significant increase in global popularity of South Korean culture since the late 1990s. Beginning with Korean dramas, the phenomenon has evolved to encompass K-pop music, fashion and beauty products as well as cuisine. This cultural phenomenon has challenged the traditional dominance of Western popular culture, demonstrating the growing influence of Asian cultural products in the global marketplace.

Social media and streaming platforms have accelerated Hallyu's global reach. K-pop groups like BTS and BLACKPINK have broken international music records, while Korean content on Netflix, such as 'Squid Game', has achieved unprecedented viewership. The economic impact has been substantial.

Beyond entertainment, Hallyu has influenced gender perceptions and individual well-being. Whilst reports have cited that Korean dramas have struck a chord in the hearts of many audience, they had also caused some to develop mental health issues.

Study the following sources to assess the impact of the Hallyu Wave.

Source A: *A commentary published in 2017 by an assistant professor at the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information at the Nanyang Technological University.*

K-dramas point out the challenges of living with unreasonable mothers-in-law or dealing with scheming colleagues in male-dominated workplaces. The storyline points out the awkward contradictions and underlying tensions that women feel all too strongly about but may not discuss openly. With South Korea's momentum of liberalisation in the early 1990s, an entire generation has been energised, allowing for the release of previously bottled-up sentiments. K-dramas produced in the aftermath serve as a platform for expressing deeply held sentiments, particularly those experienced by women in South Korea and in Southeast Asia too.

Yet viewers, especially women, still lap it all up when female leads are swept off their feet, saved by heartthrobs in those occasional moments of vulnerability. The hero usually has an extraordinary background – whether a young corporate boss, a celebrity chief or even an immortal. And the female leads are shown to embrace such gestures by the male leads.

Source B: *An online article that reflected economic concerns in Korea should BTS* be enlisted in the army. The first BTS member was enlisted in December 2022.*

ASIA • ASIA ECONOMY

South Korea stands to lose billions from making K-pop superstars BTS do military service

Between 2014 and 2023, analysts projected BTS would have contributed \$29.1 trillion to the South Korean economy.

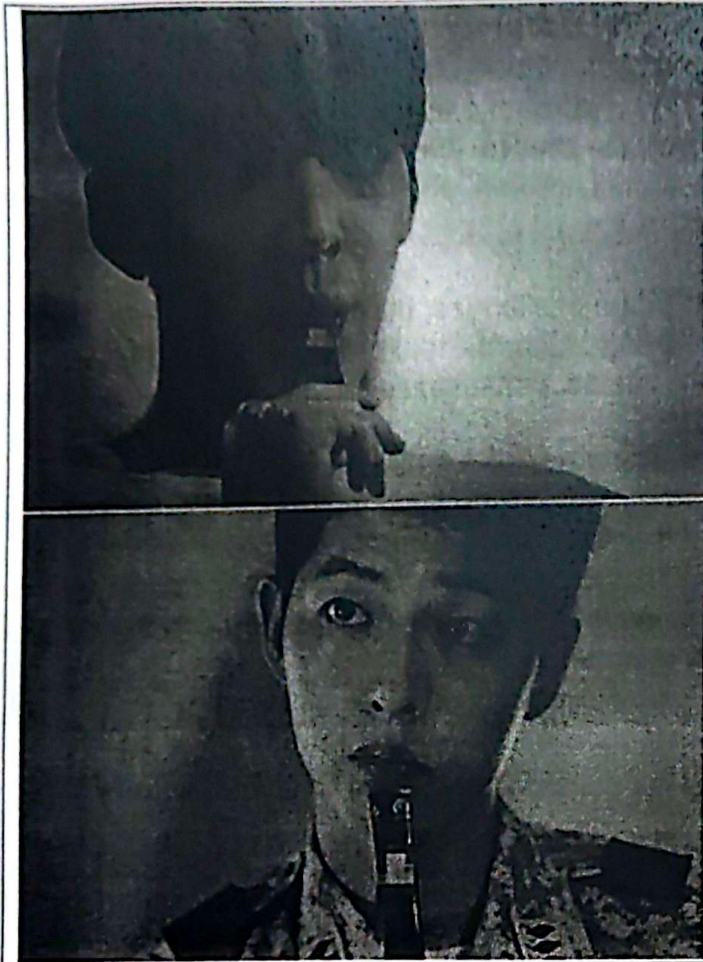
BY **CHLOE TAYLOR**

October 17, 2022 12:02 PM EDT



BTS: A South Korean boy band formed in 2013.

Source C: An article on the result of Hallyu stars, Kim Woo-Bin in "Uncontrollably Fond" (top) and Song Joong Ki in "Descendants of the Sun" (bottom) consuming red ginseng produced by the Korea Ginseng Corporation.



The popular Korean TV dramas have raised interests in red ginseng and its health-boosting effects among younger consumers. In some countries, red ginseng is normally regarded as medicine, something that the elderly and sickly take. But the actors' casual consumption of the red ginseng extract has helped changed that perception, which has bolstered our ginseng exports overseas.

Source D: Survey results on 49 Singaporean women's romantic beliefs after watching Korean dramas. These women were aged between 25 and 40.

Findings of the study were as follows:

- (1) The "perfect" and charismatic Korean actors tend to become their ideal men which raises the expectations they have when looking for their future partners.
- (2) A married woman compares her husband's looks and mannerism to that of the male actors in the Korean dramas she watches. The differences sometimes lead to feelings of rage and annoyance.
- (3) Rather than accepting traditional notions of female submissiveness, women influenced by K-drama narratives, critically assess whether personal sacrifices in relationships are warranted, choosing instead to embrace a more empowered approach to independence and self-worth.

Source E: *An excerpt published in 2024 by Jeanie Chang who is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Certified Clinical Trauma Professional. Jeanie is also the Founder and CEO of Noona's Noonchi, a global company that offers insights into K-Content from a mental health perspective.*

Korean dramas are built around the concepts: 'Jeong' (connection) and 'Han' (regret). While Jeong forms the emotional core of these stories, Han provides the foundation through characters' backstories of grief and bitterness. These dramas serve as more than entertainment – they're tools for self-care and emotional healing, helping viewers process grief, trauma, and mental health challenges like anxiety and depression.

The shows address various life-stage challenges, from young adult uncertainties to mid-life crises, all while tackling cultural identity struggles and promoting neurodiversity* awareness. They create a safe space for viewers to explore these issues through storytelling.

Most significantly, Korean dramas build emotional resilience by encouraging mindfulness, demonstrating leadership development, and normalising mental health discussions. By weaving these elements into compelling narratives, they create an environment where viewers can find comfort and understanding while processing their own emotional experiences.

Neurodiversity: The idea that people have different ways of thinking and learning.

Source F: *An independent research done by a scholar from the Department of Psychology in a university, in 2025. The study examined the relationship between addiction to watching Korean dramas and mental health problems in university students in Pakistan.*

The compulsive need to watch extended hours of Korean drama series has been linked with behavioral symptoms resembling addiction, including withdrawal symptoms, loss of control, and interference with daily functioning. This pattern of excessive viewing is often motivated by a desire to escape reality, reduce stress, and alleviate psychological discomfort.

Individuals addicted to watching Korean dramas exhibited higher levels of loneliness and frustration, which, in turn, contributed to mental health issues. Students struggling academically may be more inclined toward excessive media consumption as an avoidant coping mechanism, further exacerbating their mental health challenges. The use of streaming services has removed traditional viewing restrictions, allowing individuals to consume entire seasons of dramas at once, thereby increasing the likelihood of binge-watching.