The effect of attachment to Hallyu on Chinese tourists to revisit and to recommend Korea based on transfer theory

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Abstract

Hallyu is a segment of culture that reflects Korean culture and unique Korean features. The cultural richness and distinctiveness of Hallyu have attracted visitors from China and generated feelings of connectedness to Korean culture. This study employed transfer theory to examine how Chinese visitors’ feelings of attachment to Hallyu influence their intention to revisit Korea. The findings indicate that the attachment to Hallyu impacts directly and indirectly on visitors’ intention to revisit and to recommend. The indirect impact happens with two mediating variables, the attachment to the Korean people and to the country. The findings indicate that visitors’ attachment to Hallyu transfers to their attachment to the Korean people and to the country, which leads to Chinese visitors’ visiting Korea and recommending visitation to others. In other words, attachment to the Korean people and to Korea play mediating roles. The findings of this study suggest that tourism marketing departments may need to provide more tourist attractions related to Korean people and to Korea to create a better destination image through Hallyu to increase the number of Chinese visitors to Korea.

Key words: Hallyu, Attachment, Transfer theory, Mediating effect

I. Introduction

In the late 1990s, enthusiasm for Korean culture swept through China, fostering numerous Koreaphiles. *Hallyu*, or Korean wave, is a term referring to Korean popular culture, such as TV dramas, that first appeared in the Beijing Youth Daily in 1999. The development of Hallyu went through three stages. With the ever-growing quantity of areas and contents, the wave not only spread to Asian countries such as China, Japan, and Thailand, but was also swept to America and Europe. Hallyu involves fashion, costumes, cosmetic surgery, and cuisine, creating soft power as well as export earnings (Kim & Kim, 2014; Park, 2012). Given its profound economic impact, great attention has been paid to Hallyu. Lee, Jin, and Lee (2015) assessed the economic value of the wave using the contingent valuation method. The wave was categorized as both mass culture and unique culture, accounting for an economic value of KRW 302.4 billion in mass culture and KRW 1,939.6 billion in unique culture. Hallyu not only brings economic benefits but also strengthens the brand power and image of Korea (Jung, Back, & Lee, 2011).

The number of visitors from China to Korea has been increasing continuously (Sang & Choi, 2010). In 2014, more than 6 million Chinese tourists visited Korea, accounting for 43% of the country’s foreign visitors and making China the top source of visitors over Japan (15%) (Tourism Information System, 2015). Hallyu White Paper (2013) shows that the average foreign visitor spent USD 1,529.50 (about KRW 1,620,000) in 2013, while the average Chinese visitor spent 2,153.70 USD (about KRW 2,290,000), amounting to 140% of average foreign visitor’s consumption. The primary factor that triggered the rising number of Chinese visitors was Hallyu. Choi’s (2007) investigation of Chinese tourists indicates that 43.8% of them listed Hallyu as their main reason for visiting. The wave has both a direct and an indirect effect on Chinese tourists on their visit. Therefore, the combination of Hallyu and sightseeing as multiple modes of tourism should continue to bolster the tourism industry’s long-lasting...
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The purpose of this study is to examine whether Chinese tourists’ attachment to Hallyu is able to transfer to their attachment to Korean people and the country of Korea. This study also examines whether such attachment to Korean people and Korea is able to influence Chinese visitors’ revisit intention and recommendation to others: that is to say if Chinese tourists’ attachment to Hallyu will affect directly and indirectly to their willingness to revisit Korea and recommending Korea to other people. This study significantly contributes to develop a theoretical framework of better explain Hallyu using transfer model. The findings of this study contribute to marketing strategy to attract Chinese tourists to visit Korea.

II. Literature review

1. Hallyu

Hallyu, or Korean wave, refers to the spread and acceptance of Korean popular culture (e.g., TV dramas, movies, music, online games, etc.) in Japan, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and other Asian countries (Han & Lee, 2008). Korean popular culture first gained in popularity in China in the late 1990s. Meanwhile, Korean culture began to be transmitted to and accepted by many Asian countries. Nowadays, the Korean wave also includes cultural features such as cuisine, fashion, language, and cosmetic surgery (Kim & Kim, 2014; Lee et al., 2015). Hallyu has had a profound impact on Korea’s socio-culture and economy, hence it has received massive attention in the research field (Kim, Lee, & Chon, 2010).

Many scholars from Korea and abroad have conducted extensive research on Hallyu. Yu and Ko (2012) examined medical tourists from China, Japan, and Korea in Jeju Island. The findings indicated that compared to Japanese and Korean tourists, Chinese tourists are more influenced by Hallyu and thus more sensitive to aesthetic and healthcare services. Kim, Agrusa, Lee, and Chon (2007) study highlighted the influence of Korean TV dramas on Japanese visitors. Kim et al. (2010) classified types of Hallyu tourists based on their preferences for “Korean wave” products. They find Korea culture can be transmitted by Hallyu product. Hallyu is not merely a name branded with national features; it also involves the cognition of importance in the communication of Korean culture. Choi’s (2007) study showed that group visitors’ choice of Korea as the tourist destination is the consequence of Hallyu effect. Another study investigated the Korean wave’s impact on the image formation of tourist destinations from the angle of the place attachment of Hallyu fans (Lee, Busser, & Yang, 2015).

As mentioned before, Hallyu has contributed to the social culture and economy of Korea. Analysis from a sociocultural perspective notes that it is an activator that helps Korean culture transmit at a fast pace, which strengthens the national image of Korea (Kim et al., 2010). In terms of economic effect, Hallyu is believed to stimulate the export of Korean culture-related products. The export of cultural products directly related to Hallyu has been continuously increasing since 2005 and amounted to KRW 197 billion in 2012 (Future study headquarters, 2014). As revealed in Research on the Economic Effect of Hallyu (2014), a report by the financial delegation group of the Korean cultural industry, the production induced by Hallyu in the tourism industry amounted to KRW 21,068 billion in 2014, an increase of 13.5% over the previous year. The profound effect of Hallyu shows the significance of related studies. This paper examines how Hallyu influences the tourism industry from the angle of attachment transference and how the attachment to Hallyu has direct and indirect impacts on the tourism industry.

2. Attachment and transfer theory

Attachment theory was first proposed by British psychoanalyst Bowlby (1969) as the foundation of interpreting multiple emotional relationships. Attachment transfer refers to the attachment to parents, which is later transferred to surrounding counterparts (e.g., co-workers, romantic partners). Usually, the attachment developed in infancy tends to have influence in adulthood. Many papers have documented this (Fraley & Davis, 1997; Freeman &
Brown, 2001; Wong & Lai, 2013). Even though parents are the major source of children’s attachment, the attachment to parents tends to be transferred to other people, such as loved ones, in adulthood. Although attachment transfer theory was developed to explain this phenomenon (Bowlby, 1969), studies on attachment transfer have not been prevalent (Freeman & Brown, 2001; Friedmeier & Granqvist, 2006; Hazan & Zeifman, 1994). Montakan, Rian, and Mark (2015) proposed that the attachment to tourist destination would develop tourists’ environment friendly attitude and resulting in pro-environmental behavior. By sampling from the tourists in a forest park in the U.S., Kyle, Mowen, and Tarrant (2004) found that attachment to the tourist destination significantly influenced their attitude towards environmental issues in the park. Kyle et al. (2004) further pointed that such positive attitude would compel tourists take actions to protect the ecosystem of the park. Walker and Ryan (2008) found that in Myanmar, residents who were more closely connected to countryside sceneries were more intended to support and participate in activities to protect the sceneries. The attachment to something could not only transfer to certain persons, but also a certain place, and further inducing one specific behavior. The impact of such transfer will grow stronger as time goes by, but the pace of such increase will slow down gradually (Xu, Xie, Han, Liu, & Wang, 2015).

The object of attachment varies in accordance with changes in time and experience. The condition of attachment development occurs in the transfer from parents to counterparts and environment. Wong and Lai (2015) confirmed celebrity attachment is positively related to tourists’ behavior intention and emphasized the mediating effect of place attachment. In terms of popularity and public attention, Hallyu can be taken as a form of distinctive culture, which will have an impact on personal behavior. Similarly, Park (2011) found Japanese fashions that had been influenced by Korean singers. The findings showed that a strong attachment to Hallyu and Korean singers would be transferred to the singers’ outfits and, thus, influence an individual’s style of dress. The above studies supported the existence of Hallyu’s impact and the attachment to Hallyu would influence individual’s intention of behavior.

Because of its uniqueness as a form of culture, Hallyu has attracted many people who, consequently, become attached to it. There are a lot of formats constituting Hallyu, including TV series, movies, food, fashion, plastic surgery, and so on. Because these elements are produced and developed in Korea and communicated and broadcasted by Koreans, the main contributors of Hallyu are Korea and Koreans. People’s attachment to Hallyu will thus be transferred to attachment to the country of Korea and Koreans. It is helpful to observe the spreading processes of Hallyu and understand the essence of Hallyu. Attachment is an emotional connection of an individual to an object. Such emotional connection can be transferred to other people or things that are related to the object. This emotion is persistent and transferable.

3. Hypothetical relationships

Relationship between attachment to Hallyu, attachment to Korean people, and attachment to Korea

The theory of attachment transfer explains how the attachment that has been shaped by the sense of being taking care of, trust, and intimate touch in one’s infant stage will impact positively his/her emotional attachments in adulthood (Fraley & Davis, 1997). Specifically, the theory of attachment transfer is used to explain the formation of emotional attachment and its transfer to other objects. By taking a longitudinal study, Friedmeier and Granqvist (2006) illustrated that attachment to parents was transferred to attachment to friends or loved ones. This research explained that the theory of attachment transfer can be applied in understanding the fact that an individual’s emotional attachment to one object might be transferred to other objects that are closely related to the original one. Based on this theory, the attachment to Hallyu, which can be regarded as a non-Korean’s overall understanding of Korean culture, will be transferred to other objects that are associated with Korea, such as Korean people and the country of Korea as a tourist destination. Wong and Lai (2015) believed that the increasing attachment to Korean entertainers was a prominent reason for the increase in the number of international travelers to Korea. They have also
conducted research on how attachment to place mediated between the attachment to Hallyu and behavioral intention.

In tourism, the attachment to Hallyu, with the mediating effect of attachment to place influences tourists’ intention to visit Korea (Wong & Lai, 2015). Lee et al. (2015) argued that both superstars and the attachment to Hallyu have the same effect in constructing the image of a tourist destination through media. These studies have demonstrated that the attachment to Hallyu can be transferred to the attachment to the place of Korea. Similarly, the attachment to Hallyu can be transferred to Korean celebrities or other Korean people who have similar characteristics to those Korean celebrities.

At the same time, many studies have demonstrated that the attachment to a place can influence one’s decision-making process. For instance, Choi (2007) indicated that the greater the influence of Hallyu on tourists, the more likely that they would revisit Korea. Jung et al. (2011) argued that the more positive attitude an individual holds towards Hallyu, the more possible that he/she would revisit or recommend Korea. Based on the theory of planned behavior, Jung and Lee (2010) conducted research on Chinese visitors to Korea and their study revealed that Hallyu influenced their revisit to Korea. Attachment is an emotional knot between people and objects. The more attached an individual is to an object, the more probable it is that he/she will try to relate themselves to the object through expressing, sustaining, or enhancing such emotional attachment. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed on Hallyu attachment as follows:

- **H1**: Attachment to Hallyu positively influences attachment to Korean people.
- **H2**: Attachment to Hallyu positively influences attachment to the country of Korea.
- **H3**: Attachment to Hallyu positively influences the intention to revisit.
- **H4**: Attachment to Hallyu positively influences the intention to recommend.

Relationship among attachment to Korean people, attachment to Korea, and intention to revisit and to recommend

The attachment to place demonstrates an individual’s emotional connection to a specific place. It symbolizes a positive emotional connection between a person and the environment or the space that this person is in. In terms of space, he/she would keep a short distance to the attached place. Emotionally, he/she would keep a sustainable close relationship with the place (Altman & Low, 1992; Scannell & Gifford, 2010; Yang, 2011; Zhu & Liu, 2011). Attachment to place has been widely used in tourism studies to examine how visitors’ emotional attachment is produced and the afterwards influences decision making. Although the development of tourists’ emotional attachment and the related impacts are different for different places, it has been agreed that the stronger a visitor’s emotional attachment to a tourist site is, the more possible that said visitor will revisit or recommend it (Han, 2013; Lee et al. 2015). Jia and Lin (2016) studied visitors to Xiamen, a popular tourist destination in China, and argued that the attachment to a place would influence visitors’ intentions to revisit and to recommend. Most studies have indicated that the more satisfied one is with a tour, the less likely that one would complain about that tour. Visitors’ loyalty, which has been shaped through this process, can be regarded as their attachment to the tourist destination. Ultimately, it will increase the possibility to revisit (Kim & Kim, 2004). Thus, the following hypotheses are posited as follows:

- **H5**: Attachment to Korean people positively influences the intention to revisit.
- **H6**: Attachment to Korean people positively influences the intention to recommend.
- **H7**: Attachment to Korea positively influences the intention to revisit.
- **H8**: Attachment to Korea positively influences the intention to recommend.

Mediating effect of attachment to Korean people and Korea

In practice, there are mainly two approaches for Chinese tourists developing their understanding of Korean people and establishing their connection with Korea. The first approach is Chinese tourists’ physical visit to Korea and
direct contact with Korean people. The sense of satisfaction that has been developed through attending concerts or meet-and-greets with show business stars can encourage fans of Korean stars to revisit Korea and recommend others to visit this country (Han, 2013; Lee, Busser, & Yang, 2015). The second approach is indirect contact, which means Chinese tourists get to know Korean people in China through Korean movies, TV series, news, food, and fashion, so that an understanding and attraction to Korean people is developed. Choi (2007) discovered that Chinese people are favorable to the politeness toward and respect shown to seniors displayed through Korean mass media. Their understanding that Korean people are friendly could make them want to visit Korea. The emotional attachment, both being directly and indirectly developed, can enhance visitors’ intention to revisit and to recommend Korea. Thus, the following hypotheses are posited as follows:

H_5: Attachment to Korean people has a mediating effect between attachment to Hallyu and intention to revisit.
H_10: Attachment to Korean people has a mediating effect between attachment to Hallyu and intention to recommend.
H_11: Attachment to Korea has a mediating effect between attachment to Hallyu and intention to revisit.
H_12: Attachment to Korea has a mediating effect between attachment to Hallyu and intention to recommend.

Based on the hypotheses we proposed, the research model as shown in Figure 1.

### III. Methodology

1. Measurement

All constructs were measured with multiple items in this study because a set of measures is more reliable and valid than any single measure (Churchill, 1979). Multiple indicators to measure theoretical constructs can also enhance validity, covering various facets of the construct (Kline, 2005). An extensive literature review on attachment and transfer theory was conducted to elicit a preliminary list of measurement items for this study. Specifically, attachment was measured with three items that were adapted from previous studies (Freeman & Brown, 2001; Montakan et al., 2015; Williams & Roggenbuck, 1989). Intention to revisit and to recommend to others was assessed with six items adapted from Lee et al. (2015) and Kim et al. (2010).

For content validity three experts from the Tourism Industry Association and two Ph.D. candidates studying tourism management were asked to review the measurement items to determine whether they were appropriate for
The effect of attachment to Hallyu on Chinese tourists to revisit and to recommend Korea based on transfer theory assessment in the Hallyu context. Furthermore, a pre-test was conducted with 20 Chinese tourists who had experienced Hallyu and another six graduate students in tourism management. Some ambiguous items were modified for clarity. These items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree.

2. Data collection

An on-site survey was conducted for Chinese tourists from May 1 to May 15, 2016, in the departure hall of Incheon International Airport. This study employed quota sampling method based on age and gender distribution of Chinese visitors to South Korea in 2015. The field researchers approached Chinese visitors who had finished their trip in Korea and were returning to China. After having been informed of the purpose of the research and having agreed to participate in the survey, the self-administered questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. To ensure age distribution among respondents, the aged group was also included in the respondents. The field researchers read the items of the questionnaire to the aged group and recorded their answers. For respondents who were confused with the key terms of attachment to Hallyu, attachment to Korean people, and attachment to Korea, the field researchers thoroughly explained the meaning of those terms before respondents began to answer the questionnaire. Among the 420 questionnaires distributed, 390 questionnaires were collected, representing a response rate of 92.9%. After eliminating 12 incomplete questionnaires, a total of 378 were used for the analysis.

3. Data analysis

The popular approaches to measure the mediating effect are causal steps, products of coefficients, and difference in coefficients (Hoffman, Lockwood, MacKinnon, Sheets, & West, 2002). Causal steps are the questionnaire data, which were analyzed using SPSS 19.0. First, the demographics of respondents were analyzed through descriptive statistics. Second, the relations among all variables were analyzed through regression in parametric tests. The analysis of intervening variables followed the method proposed by Wen et al. (2012). Finally, hypothetical universe was used to test the research model.

Although in existing literature the method of causal steps is most frequently applied, it is not ideal to examine weak mediating effects in that it easily results in type II errors (MacKinnon et al., 2002). MacKinnon et al. (2002) conducted a comparative study by using products of coefficients; the results indicated that using new critical values to test is better than other tests. Nevertheless, before

![Diagram of testing mediator effects](source: Wen et al. (2012))
statistics software adopted this new critical value usage, the probability type I errors was relatively high for this method. Wen, Chang, Hau, and Liu (2011) proposed a process to test mediating effects. This process includes causal steps and a Sobel test. While it does not successfully control the probability of type I and II mistakes within a small rate, it is capable of testing the partial and full mediating effects. The test procedure is shown in Figure 2.

Step 1: Regression effects of independent variables to dependent variables (test coefficient $c$). Step 2: Test coefficients $a$ and $b$. If $a$ and $b$ are both significant, then test coefficient $c'$. Otherwise, a Sobel test should be done. Step 3: Test coefficient $c$. Significant coefficient $c'$ indicates the mediating effect is partial; otherwise, it should be full mediating effect. Step 4: If the Sobel test results are significant, it should be concluded that there is the existence of a partial mediating effect. If the results are insignificant, there is no mediating effect. The following equations were created based on the test results of the intervening variables and the model. Figure 2 indicates the process of how mediator effects were tested.

\[
Y=cX+e_1 \quad \text{(Equation 1)}
\]
\[
M=aX+e_2 \quad \text{(Equation 2)}
\]
\[
Y=c'M+bM+e_3 \quad \text{(Equation 3)}
\]

IV. Results

1. Demographic statistics of respondents

Among the respondents, there were more females (61.4%) than males (38.6%). People with university degrees (47.6%) accounted for almost half of the total, followed by those with three-year college degrees (29.1%). The demographics indicate that most of the respondents have comparatively high levels of education. Age distributions were as follows: 20-29 (31.2%), 30-39 (25.1%), 40-49 (22%), and 50-59 (15.3%). Since the sample covers people of a wide age range, it can be argued that it is representative. As for monthly income per family, the scale of RMB 5000 - 10000 ranks at the top (28.3%), followed by RMB 10000 - 15000 (22.5%).

2. Exploratory factor analysis

Exploratory factor analysis and reliability analysis were conducted. As shown in Table 2, the exploratory factor analysis generated three dimensions of attachment to Hallyu, attachment to Korea and attachment to Korea people. These were the results from exploratory factor analysis of Chinese tourists’ attachment to Hallyu. The data was appropriate to be conducted with factor analysis: KMO=.876($\geq$.5) and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity: $x^2=1731.976(p<.001)$. Communalities (.600~.803, $\geq$.4), factor loading (.647~.861, $\geq$.4), eigenvalue (4.897, 1.262, 1.021, $\geq$1), and Cronbach’s alpha (.878, .817, .799, $\geq$.7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>N (%)</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>N (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>Education level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>146 (38.6)</td>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>54 (14.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>232 (61.4)</td>
<td>Three-year college</td>
<td>110 (31.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>University</td>
<td>180 (47.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly family income level$^a$</td>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate school</td>
<td>34 (9.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than RMB 5000</td>
<td>40 (10.6)</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMB 0.5-1 thousand</td>
<td>107 (28.3)</td>
<td>Below 20</td>
<td>6 (1.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMB 1-1.5 thousand</td>
<td>85 (22.5)</td>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>118 (31.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMB 1.5-2 thousand</td>
<td>39 (10.3)</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>95 (25.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMB 2-2.5 thousand</td>
<td>19 (5.0)</td>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>83 (22.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMB 2.5-3 thousand</td>
<td>14 (3.7)</td>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>58 (15.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over RMB 3 thousand</td>
<td>74 (19.6)</td>
<td>Older than 61</td>
<td>18 (4.8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $^a$RMB ¥1 is equivalent to KRW 1,650
were demonstrated to be above the standard value. Total variance explained (70.29%) was acceptable.

The results of Chinese tourists’ intention of revisit indicated that the data was appropriate to be conducted with factor analysis, KMO=.668 (≥.5) and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity: $x^2=731.447 (p<.001)$ which also indicated appropriateness of factor analysis. Communality (.822–.872, ≥.4), factor loading (.906–.934, ≥.4), eigenvalue (2.516, ≥1.0), and Cronbach’s alpha (.904, ≥.7) were demonstrated to be above the standard value. Total variance explained (83.85%) was strong. The results of Chinese tourists’ intention to recommend indicated that the data was appropriate to be conducted with factor analysis, KMO=.715 (≥.5) and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity: $x^2=754.131 (p<.001)$. Communality (.744–.877, ≥.4), factor loading (.862–.937, ≥.4), eigenvalue (2.487, ≥1), and Cronbach’s alpha (.896, ≥.7) were demonstrated to be above the standard value. Total variance explained (82.90%) was also strong.

3. Results of regression analysis

Regression analysis was conducted to test the causal relationships between attachment to Hallyu, attachment to Korea and Korean people, and Chinese visitors’ intentions to revisit and to recommend. Table 3 presents the results of regression analyses. The regression model was significant at $p<.001$ ($F=289.772$) with Adjusted $R^2=.434$. The effect of attachment to Hallyu was significant to the attachment to Korean people ($\beta_{Attachment \ to \ Hallyu \rightarrow Attachment \ to \ Korean \ people}=.660, t=17.023, p<.001$), supporting H1. The attachment to Hallyu and the attachment to Korea was significant ($p<.001$, Adjusted $R^2=.434$). To test H2, the regression model was significant at $p<.001$ ($F=151.210$) with Adjusted $R^2=.285$. The effect of attachment to Hallyu was significant to the attachment to Korea ($\beta_{Attachment \ to \ Hallyu \rightarrow \ Attachment \ to \ Korea}=.536, t=12.297, p<.001$), supporting H2. To test H3, the regression model was significant at $p<.001$ ($F=151.210$), Adjusted $R^2=.285$. The effect of attachment to Hallyu was significant to the Chinese visitors’ intention to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>$\lambda$</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>EV</th>
<th>VE</th>
<th>$\alpha$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hallyu attachment</td>
<td>I like Hallyu.</td>
<td>.861</td>
<td>.755</td>
<td>4.897</td>
<td>25.446</td>
<td>.878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment to Korea</td>
<td>I am affectionate to Hallyu.</td>
<td>.716</td>
<td>.725</td>
<td>4.897</td>
<td>25.446</td>
<td>.878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment to Korea</td>
<td>I am obsessed with Hallyu.</td>
<td>.690</td>
<td>.688</td>
<td>4.897</td>
<td>25.446</td>
<td>.878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment to Korean people</td>
<td>I like Korea.</td>
<td>.796</td>
<td>.721</td>
<td>4.897</td>
<td>25.446</td>
<td>.878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment to Korean people</td>
<td>I believe Korea is friendlier than any other country.</td>
<td>.722</td>
<td>.679</td>
<td>4.897</td>
<td>25.446</td>
<td>.878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment to Korean people</td>
<td>I think Korea is an ideal tourist destination.</td>
<td>.825</td>
<td>.717</td>
<td>4.897</td>
<td>25.446</td>
<td>.878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment to Korean people</td>
<td>I am affectionate to Korea.</td>
<td>.647</td>
<td>.603</td>
<td>4.897</td>
<td>25.446</td>
<td>.878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment to Korean people</td>
<td>I like to be with Koreans.</td>
<td>.804</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>4.897</td>
<td>25.446</td>
<td>.878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment to Korean people</td>
<td>I feel close to Koreans.</td>
<td>.829</td>
<td>.803</td>
<td>4.897</td>
<td>25.446</td>
<td>.878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment to Korean people</td>
<td>Korean people influence my way of thinking and behavior.</td>
<td>.666</td>
<td>.600</td>
<td>4.897</td>
<td>25.446</td>
<td>.878</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KMO: .876, Bartlett’s test of sphericity: $x^2=1731.976 (p<.001)$, Total variance explained: 70.29%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>$\lambda$</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>EV</th>
<th>VE</th>
<th>$\alpha$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intent to revisit</td>
<td>I will revisit Korea.</td>
<td>.921</td>
<td>.812</td>
<td>3.266</td>
<td>83.854</td>
<td>.925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intent to revisit</td>
<td>I plan to revisit Korea.</td>
<td>.903</td>
<td>.848</td>
<td>3.266</td>
<td>83.854</td>
<td>.925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intent to revisit</td>
<td>If possible, I will revisit Korea.</td>
<td>.901</td>
<td>.815</td>
<td>3.266</td>
<td>83.854</td>
<td>.925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intent to revisit</td>
<td>I intend to revisit Korea in the near future.</td>
<td>.889</td>
<td>.791</td>
<td>3.266</td>
<td>83.854</td>
<td>.925</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KMO: .853, Bartlett’s test of sphericity: $x^2=1156.287 (p<.001)$, Total variance explained: 81.64%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>$\lambda$</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>EV</th>
<th>VE</th>
<th>$\alpha$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intent to recommend</td>
<td>I will tell something positive about Korea to others.</td>
<td>.937</td>
<td>.744</td>
<td>2.487</td>
<td>82.896</td>
<td>.896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intent to recommend</td>
<td>I would like to recommend that my friends and relatives visit Korea.</td>
<td>.930</td>
<td>.877</td>
<td>2.487</td>
<td>82.896</td>
<td>.896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intent to recommend</td>
<td>When my opinions are asked, I will recommend they visit Korea.</td>
<td>.862</td>
<td>.866</td>
<td>2.487</td>
<td>82.896</td>
<td>.896</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KMO: .715, Bartlett’s test of sphericity: $x^2=754.131 (p<.001)$, Total variance explained: 82.90%

Notes: $\lambda$: Factor loading, C: Communality, EV: Eigenvalue, VE: Variance explained, $\alpha$: Cronbach’s alpha
revisit Korea (β Attachment to Hallyu → Attachment to Korea = .536, t=12.297, p<.001), supporting H3. To test H4, the regression model was significant at p<.001 (F=127.116), Adjusted R²=.251. The effect of attachment to Hallyu was significant to Chinese tourists’ intention to recommend Korea (β Attachment to Hallyu → Intention of recommendation =.536, t=12.297, p<.001), supporting H4.

To test H5, the regression model was significant at p<.001 (F=88.228), Adjusted R²=.434. The effect of attachment to Korean people was significant to Chinese tourists’ intention to revisit Korea (β Attachment to Korean people → Intention of revisit =.436, t=9.393, p<.001), supporting H5. To test H6, the regression model was significant at p<.001 (F=175.235), Adjusted R²=.316. The effect of attachment to Korean people was significant to Chinese tourists’ intention to recommend Korea (β Attachment to Korean people → Intention of recommendation =.442, t=9.555, p<.001), supporting H6. To test H7, the regression model was significant at p<.001 (F=291.306), Adjusted R²=.193. The effect of attachment to Korean people was significant to Chinese tourists’ intention to revisit Korea (β Attachment to Korea → Intention of revisit =.442, t=9.555, p<.001), supporting H7. To test H8, the regression model was significant at p<.001 (F=151.702), Adjusted R²=.286. The effect of attachment to Korea was significant to Chinese tourists’ intention to recommend Korea (β Attachment to Korea → Intention of recommendation =.536, t=12.317, p<.001), supporting H8.

The findings indicate that a strong attachment to Hallyu could cause Chinese tourists’ attachment to Korea and Korean people. Also, the stronger the attachment to Hallyu, the stronger the intention of Chinese tourists to revisit and to recommend Korea. The stronger the attachment to Korea and Korean people, the more possible that Chinese tourists will revisit and recommend Korea to other people. These cause-and-effect relationships demonstrate that Chinese tourists’ attachment to Hallyu is essential for the Korean tourism industry to attract Chinese tourists to Korea.

4. Mediating effects analysis

To explore the mediating effects, the four-step processes were followed (Wen et al., 2012): Step 1, testing coefficient c; Step 2, testing coefficient a and b; Step 3, testing coefficient c'; and Step 4, Sobel test. The mediating effect was concluded as a result of the above four-phase analysis. Based on the formula proposed by Wen et al. (2012), the mediating effect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized coefficient</th>
<th>Standardized coefficient</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AH</td>
<td>AKP</td>
<td>.619</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AH</td>
<td>AK</td>
<td>.459</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>.536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AH</td>
<td>IRV</td>
<td>.377</td>
<td>.049</td>
<td>.367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AH</td>
<td>IRE</td>
<td>.444</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AKP</td>
<td>IRV</td>
<td>.478</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AKP</td>
<td>IRE</td>
<td>.531</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AK</td>
<td>IRV</td>
<td>.530</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AK</td>
<td>IRE</td>
<td>.553</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.536</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: AH: Attachment to Hallyu, AKP: Attachment to Korean people, AK: Attachment to Korea, IRV: Intention to revisit, IRE: Intention to recommend
The effect of attachment to Hallyu on Chinese tourists to revisit and to recommend Korea based on transfer theory

The Standardized coefficient of the effect of independent variables on mediating variables was set up as a with the standard deviation as Sa. The standard coefficient of the effect of mediating variables on dependent variables was b with the standard deviation as Sb. Then Equation 3 was used to calculate the Z-score. If the Z-score is over 1.96 (p<.05), the mediating effect is proved to exist. As shown in Table 4 Sobel tests show that all the mediating effects were significant at p<.001. The results also indicate that Chinese tourists’ attachment to Korea and Korean people mediate between attachment to Hallyu and intentions to revisit and to recommend.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path</th>
<th>4 step regression equations</th>
<th>Mediating effect</th>
<th>Sobel test statistic (Z)</th>
<th>Standardized indirect effect (ab)</th>
<th>Portion of mediating effect (ab/c)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AH-AKP-IRV</td>
<td>.367*** .660*** .344*** .140*</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>4.944***</td>
<td>.227</td>
<td>61.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AH-AKP-IRE</td>
<td>.503*** .660*** .411*** .231***</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>7.258***</td>
<td>.271</td>
<td>53.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AH-AK-IRV</td>
<td>.367*** .536*** .344*** .182**</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>4.971***</td>
<td>.184</td>
<td>50.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AH-AK-IRE</td>
<td>.503*** .536*** .374*** .302***</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>6.543***</td>
<td>.200</td>
<td>39.85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes 1: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, AH: Attachment to Hallyu, AKP: Attachment to Korean people, AK: Attachment to Korea, IRV: Intention to revisit, IRE: Intention to recommend

Notes 2: ¹Regressing dependent variable on independent variable; ²Regressing editor on independent variable; and ³Regressing dependent variable on both independent and mediator variables

The effect of attachment to Hallyu on Chinese tourists to revisit and to recommend Korea based on transfer theory
influence his/her relationship with other people in their adulthood. The concept of this theory is that individual’s attachment to a certain object will be transferred to another related object. Hallyu is a comprehensive concept with diversified contents and implications. However, in its essence, Hallyu is actually an outreached broadcasting and communication of Korean culture through Korean people to other cultures. Based on transfer theory, this study proposed the hypothesis that Chinese tourists’ attachment to Hallyu would be extended to their attachment to Korea-related place and Korean people. The findings of this study confirmed that the attachment to Hallyu was transferred to Korea and Korean people. Meanwhile, this study also examined the mediating effect of the attachment to Korean people and Korea between Chinese tourists’ attachment to Hallyu and their revisit intention. The findings indicated significant mediating effect. Echoing with previous studies, this study also proved that Chinese tourists’ attachment to Hallyu directly influenced their behavior. To sum, Chinese tourists’ attachment to Hallyu not only directly influenced their revisit intention and recommendation, but also indirectly impacted their attachment to Korean people and Korea. As a result, this study explored and interpreted the actual process of how Hallyu influenced tourists’ behavior.

Based on the research finding that Chinese tourists’ attachment to Hallyu impacts directly and indirectly their intention of revisiting, Hallyu can play an important role in attracting Chinese tourists to Korea. China is the main source country for the inbound tourism to Korea. To keep and increase the number of Chinese tourists to visit Korea, Hallyu plays a key role. One research finding showed that the attachment to Hallyu can be transferred to the attachment to Korean, which means that personal characteristics and life style of Korean people, as well as Korean culture and specialties are all tourist attractions. As long as the attractions are extended, there will be possibilities of increasing Chinese tourists to Korea. In this sense, Korean government should put more emphasis on tourism attractions related to Korean people, such as the experience of Korean people’s daily life, tutorials on Korean etiquettes, experience on Korean fashion, and etc. These are all products tailored to the vast Chinese market. When the attachment transference is fully realized in the market, the number of Chinese tourists in Korea is able to rise.

The transferred attachment from Hallyu to Korea is helpful in constructing the image of Korea as a tourist destination. The tourism image is individual tourist’s understanding to a tourism destination. In the case of Korea, the tourism image of Korea is not the real reflection of the country, but the subjective cognition of each individual under the influence of Hallyu. Therefore, when individual constructs their understanding of Korea as a tourist destination through Hallyu, and transfer the attachment to Hallyu to the attachment to Korea, individual’s visit to Korea will be increased. It is important for the Korea government to design and develop the proper tourism image that is attractive to Chinese people. Broadcasting and enhancing such image in China, will increase Chinese visitors to Korea. It is also necessary to point out that the image should be close to the reality of Korean society when it is reached to Chinese people. Any exaggeration or twisting on characters of Korea and Korean people will lead to decreased satisfaction of tourists when Chinese tourists actually visit Korea and find the gap between their understanding of Korea and Korean people before arrival and their real experience after the actual visit. Any declined satisfaction from tourists will harm the image of tourist destination and consequently decline their intention of revisit. This study supports transfer theory and practice on how Korea government should design its tourism products.

For all the significance of this research, there are also some limitations. First, there are no sufficient theories to support the choice of transference of attachment. Hallyu has a lot of implications on its contents and implication. In this research, the separation of the subject (the attachment to Hallyu) and object (the attachment to Korea and Korean people) is oversimplified. In the future research, scholars may need to find stronger theoretical support for transferred attachment, such as the attachment to Korean culture, Korean natural resources, and Korean life style. After the establishment of THAAD, it is especially necessary to investigate if there are any changes in Chinese tourists’
attachment to Korea, their understandings of the image of Korea as a tourist destination, and how such changes may influence the tourism industry in Korea. Any follow-up research will be desirable to explore these impacts. Furthermore, longitudinal research is also suggested in examining the transfer of attachment to Hallyu to international tourists’ behaviors.

References


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