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The Effects of South Korean Pop Culture on the Country's Standards of Beauty and Success


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Oral Presentation O10.2

THE EFFECTS OF SOUTH KOREAN POP CULTURE ON THE COUNTRY'S STANDARDS OF BEAUTY AND SUCCESS

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As a reaction to a very biased Hollywood, South Korean entertainment industries decided to make a “Korean Hollywood” of their own, consisting of Korean pop music (K-Pop) and Korean dramas (K-Dramas), and called it Hallyu (한류), which translates to "the flow and spread of Korea", also referred to as “The Korean Wave” in English. As Hallyu increased in popularity, so did the material pressure for the idols and actors to look good for the camera, since appearance plays a large role in their popularity and success. Thus, many Korean celebrities became the “pioneers” in undergoing plastic surgery in South Korea. South Korean entertainment medias used these celebrities and their strong influence to set a new beauty standard and send the message that having good looks can play a large factor into how successful one can be. Since technology, entertainment, and advertising campaigns have become intertwined with everyday life, especially in urban areas, these messages quickly spread, resulting in an increase in plastic surgery among the everyday people. While South Korea is considered to be a materialistically high context culture, meaning image matters more than the description, it is also contradictorily a collective yet highly competitive society with the idea of belonging in a group yet standing out to be on top of others. Therefore, the culture has become a liaison between entertainment media and the plastic surgery phenomenon in South Korea as the media sets an idea in motion, the culture supports it, and the people accept it.

