

# Influence of Korean Culture on Buying Behaviour among youths in Mizoram

L. S. Sharma<sup>1</sup>, C. Hnamte<sup>2</sup> and D. S. Chaubey<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Management, Mizoram University, Aizawl, INDIA

<sup>2</sup>Department of Management, Mizoram University, Aizawl, INDIA

<sup>3</sup>Uttaranchal Institute of Management, Uttaranchal University, Dehradun, INDIA

<sup>1</sup>Corresponding Author: [lsksharma@mzu.edu.in](mailto:lsksharma@mzu.edu.in)

## ABSTRACT

Examining the entrance behaviour to look for similarities in buying behaviour in the international market has been an interesting field area for marketing research. This paper examines the influence of Korean culture in northeast India and the entrance of the market through social similarity, lifestyle similarity, cultural similarity and product acceptance, cuisine similarity and product purchase. The study analyses the data collected from youngsters of Mizoram state in northeast India and moderation and mediation analysis was carried out. The moderation analysis was based on gender and mediation analysis with the variables of Korean cultural proximity, cultural adaption and purchase of Korean products. The study finds that the inclusion of cultural influence mediates the relationship between the factors of cultural proximity and Korean product purchase.

**Keywords--** Korean Culture, Cultural Proximity, Cultural Adaption, Lifestyle Similarity, Cuisine Similarity

A person's culture has a significant influence on their brain processes and behaviours. Because it has such a profound impact on how individuals understand the world around them, their place in it, and how they make decisions, it tends to play a role in determining how and why we acquire things and services. It is seen that cultural factors have played an important role in consumer decision making as evidenced by cultural prohibitions like consumption of meat, alcohol, clothing styles etc. Homemakers' decision on household goods also reflects the influence of culture on quantities and choice of products purchased for consumption. The origins of Korean content and culture's appeal in India extend well beyond "Gangnam Style" or the Korean wave (Hallyu) of cultural export observed in North-Eastern states in 2014. In India, three active factors have fueled the Hallyu: K Dramas, KPop, and KBeauty. The Korean Cultural Centre India (KCCI) hosted India's first K-pop festival in 2012, attracting 37 contestants and 300 guests to Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). After fans demanded it on Twitter, VH1 debuted "K-popp'd," India's first Korean music segment. In 2014, Puthuyugam, a prominent Tamil channel, began airing Korean dramas dubbed in Tamil. The Zindagi channel on Zee has dubbed the Korean drama "Descendants of the Sun" in Hindi. The Korean wave has been effective in increasing business activities relating to its product in several countries. USD 8.2 billion worth of trade was generated through exports from South Korea alone in 2017 (Xu and Hahm 2018). The highest export was from the broadcasting sector (57.1 percent) followed by music and video games (21.2 percent).

In late 2000, there was a ban enforced by the insurgents on Indian entertainment-related content like Hindi movies, music and TV channels in the state of Manipur (Northeast India). During those times, youngsters found alternative entertainment by discovering Korean culture through CDs, DVDs and channels like Arirang TV. The DVDs were available for purchase at a cost of INR 50-200, making them affordable to the majority of middle-class households, and via the consumption of these Korean dramas and music, Hallyu expanded to other Northeast states such as Mizoram, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, and Nagaland. Even when the prohibition was repealed, the passion for

Hallyu did not fade, but rather grew even stronger. Manipur is currently recognised as India's "Mini Korea."

Mizoram also known as the "Land of Mizo's" is a state located in the north-east part of India with Aizawl as its capital city and the residents are tribals protected under the category of Scheduled Tribes by the government of India. The Hallyu wave hit Mizoram in 2004 with the Korean drama series "Full House" which aired on a local channel and immediately had the youngsters hooked to it. The majority of the high school girls started sporting the side ponytail look because the actress in the film had a side ponytail. From then on the Hallyu craze started expanding throughout Mizoram with Mizo cable company, Zonet broadcasting more K-dramas with English subtitles and the viewers started increasing in size to the point where there was a huge demand for the K-dramas to be dubbed in Mizo so that the locals could understand. Mizoram has historically been open to exposure to many foreign trends and cultures, and as a consequence, Mizo youths now appreciate Korean trends and culture as depicted in K-dramas, music, and movies.

Despite some substantial contrasts between Korean and Mizo cultures, there is a strong desire to propagate Korean culture through the media in Mizoram, owing to the considerable volume of Korean media consumption. Almost every home in Mizoram embraces Korean culture, regardless of their economic position, level of education, occupation, religion, or ethnic origin. Some young people are obsessed with Korean culture, which includes everything from music, food, lifestyle, make-up, hairstyles, movies/dramas, tourism, and apparel to language. Samyang Spicy Noodles, as well as other Korean noodles, can be purchased in practically every shop in Aizawl. In the past few years, resellers of Korean beauty products have started emerging in Mizoram with most of the resellers making use of social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram to sell the products. In Aizawl, there are around 35+ resellers with almost every reseller having over 500 followers on social media. They offer over 30 different Korean skincare brands for their customers to choose from with different products like sunscreen, face cream, face wash, serum, face masks, lip tint, water gloss, toner, cleansing balm, eye cream, skin refiner, gel cream, night cream, cleanser, essence, vitamin-E drop etc. Apart from this, to develop cultural relations between India and Korea, Mizoram hosted the North East Round of the K-Pop Contest India in 2015. The stores in border towns like Zokhawthar stock a large variety of goods from the far east. *Khaw Chakchuak* is a term used to describe a variety of eastern foods. Fairness is a passion in the state, according to Pari, a local trader, and Korean fairness products dominate the market (Chakraborty, 2020).

According to Geert Hofstede, "Culture is a collective programming of the mind" and Stocking (1963) says that culture "includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and

habits acquired by a person as a member of the society". It has an impact on both individual as well as social practices of an economy and has no limited boundaries in today's era of globalisation. Consumption decisions are influenced by cultural elements such as social prestige and social respect. Cultural factors such as risk avoidance orientation influence consumer impulsive buying behaviour. The greater restrictions on Hindi in the Northeast, as well as a lack of cultural outreach, resulted in a boom of numerous Southeast Asian cultures in the area, demonstrating the region's interconnected tie with Southeast Asia to the east. Nonetheless, Mizoram's condition from 1996 to 2005 and beyond indicates linguistic and cultural impact from both India and other countries. During the pandemic, the consumption of Korean entertainment through online platforms increased to 320 percent over the previous year and the import of Korean noodles increased to 162 percent in comparison to the previous year in India. As a result, we can conclude that Korean culture acquired widespread acceptability in India. The paper mainly attempts to validate the notion and practice of Korean culture among the youth of Mizoram.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### *Social Similarity*

Social similarity and connectedness refer to the belongingness and relationship with someone or the state of having a close or familiar relationship. Social connectedness is the ability to interact with others which distinguishes e-commerce consumers from social commerce users (Hajli 2015). There is a scarcity of empirical research exploring its influence on social commerce acceptability and buying behaviour. This study looks at the function of social connectedness in predicting customer intentions to use social commerce in the purchase process. Youngsters in Mizoram are showing an increasing interest in Korean culture, particularly 'Hollywood' movies, as they move away from Bollywood and even Hollywood films. Mizoram youth is an open society to different cultural practises, especially the youngsters, who are probably the main Korean media consumers as they are fond of Korean movies and dramas. The youngsters of the North East are more exposed to modernised Korean culture than to traditional Korean culture. Increased use of Korean media leads to cultural adaption (Secarã and Sasu 2013, Park and Ghauri 2015, Kaisii 2017). Park and Ghauri (2015) researched how different cultures influence corporate managers' ethical views in India, the United States, and Korea. The findings revealed that national culture has a considerable impact on company management. Kaisii (2017) described the quantitative method of semi-structured interviews along with participant observation on how globalisation is leading to the rise of mixed cultures as well as cultural

universalization. The key finding of this study was cultural invasion happened in the form of the Korean wave as youths are attracted to it. It also found that economically developing countries do not have a deep insight into Hallyu and its effects. Ganghariya and Kanozia (2020) in their paper "Proliferation of Hallyu Wave and Korean Popular Culture Across the World: A Systematic Literature Review from 2000-2019" described the systematic literature review method used for this paper. A study conducted by Seo et. al., (2020) in their paper entitled "Cultural globalization and young Korean women's acculturative labour: K-beauty as hegemonic hybridity" described the data collection taken through young Korean girls in the form of the in-depth interview as well as focused group discussion. The study's major findings suggest that K-Beauty is divided into three categories: artificial naturalness, hyper-sexualized cuteness, and the harmonious kaleidoscope.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Social similarity have a positive influence on Korean product acceptance by the youth of Mizoram state

#### ***Lifestyle Similarity***

Lifestyle is the interests, opinions, behaviour, and behavioural orientations of an individual, group, or culture. The lifestyle similarity among the consumers of the two nations attracts each other to consumer products of each other country. Viewing the lifestyle of Korean models in the favourite Korean series (Yellow Boots 2012) influences the youth of Mizoram to adopt the Korean lifestyle. Young people enjoy Korean films because of the similarity in the lifestyle and stories portrayed in Indian movies. Today, entering Aizawl is the same as stepping into any other South Korean city. Youngsters with bucket hats and spring skirts appear to have stepped out of the pages of the current Korean fashion magazines. They talk about Korean TV series and movies, as well as K-pop artists like Bangtan Boys (BTS) and iKon. Mizo youth now realise that people with white complexion, light hair, and light eyes reflect pan-Asian characteristics. Young followers of Korean culture, on the other hand, may differ on some matters concerning Korean dramas and K-pop, but it does not diminish the love of their own country. These plays and series, according to them, motivate people to listen to artists sing about mental health and overcoming depression, which is still a delicate theme in their own country. Seeing different cultures makes us appreciate Mizo culture's values of togetherness and selflessness even more.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Lifestyle similarity motivates Mizoram youth to purchase Korean products

#### ***Cultural Similarity and Product Acceptance***

In a consumer society, cultural meaning passes from the culturally formed environment to consumer products, and finally to the individual consumer. Consumers from various cultures have various opinions on how global items are received (McCracken 1986, Levitt 1983, Zou and Cavusgil 2002). According to one viewpoint, customers passively consume the dominant

culture of their era, resulting in the formation of a global consumer with united tastes. On the other hand, other cultural studies forecast how diverse local cultures would embrace global products from economically and culturally sophisticated countries in more nuanced ways. Another hypothesis is that the increased economic prosperity of countries with varied cultures would result in a cultural mosaic, in which similarities and differences will play a minor role (Hoskins and Mirus 1988, Katsikeas, Samiee and Theodosiou 2006).

Given the varied perspectives on how to strategy global products, it is critical to comprehend how country-specific cultural traits impact cultural product success. Understanding such linkages may also help marketers avoid costly mistakes and make global product creation easier. This study aims to resolve these macro-level problems by looking at whether culture plays a role in product acceptability. The cultural discount theory, which is widely used in media and cultural economics, states that a substantial cultural gap between the producing and consuming countries reduces worldwide product sales. We postulate that cultural influences might have a more complicated role since other aspects are also important. Local customers' curiosity about unique, exotic, and unfamiliar foreign cultures embedded in imported items might improve product sales when the inter-country cultural divide grows (Thompson and Chmura, 2015).

Cultural compatibility (also known as cultural congruence or cultural familiarity) has been demonstrated to increase category knowledge and learning (Newman and Nollen 1996). According to the cultural compatibility construct, local consumers will be more interested in a global product if they recognise familiar cultural elements (e.g., local celebrities, local places, local music), and such elements can even generate significant online word-of-mouth about the product, which will eventually increase product sales in the local market (Newman and Nollen 1996, Katsikeas, Saeed and Theodosiou 2006). The cultural construct has been used in the international business literature to study how minor cultural differences influence international economic activity. However, it lacks an understanding of how local customers react to the cultural material inherent in global products (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov 2010, Craig, Greene and Douglas 2005, Tihanyi, Griffith and Russell 2005). Hence, we advance the existing findings in this domain by considering the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Cultural similarity has a positive influence on the adaptation of Korean products among youth consumers of Mizoram.

#### ***Cuisine Similarity and Product Purchase***

For years, Korean cuisine and television series have been popular in numerous Indian states, particularly in the northeast. Several militant groups in Nagaland and Manipur outlawed Hindi and Bollywood films in the early 2000s, therefore Korean soap operas became a

popular alternative. This left the locals with no alternative but to seek entertainment elsewhere, and Korean television serial operas became a popular choice due to the availability of illegal CDs and DVDs (India Today 2017).

Spicy noodles, Kimchi and Gimbap are some of the popular foods familiar to the youngsters of Mizoram. Most of the departmental stores sell spicy noodles, Gim and Kimchi in packages. The flavour of Korea is a restaurant established in Aizawl well frequented by youngsters and serves only Korean cuisines. The certain food similarity among both nations like Deep Fried Mandu (Yaki Mandu) and Gujjiya; Gamja-jeon and Chana Dal Tikki; Kimchi and Achaar; Yakgwa and Imarti; Kimchi Fried Rice and Home Cooked Leftover Rice are some of the Korean cuisines that are most popular in India. These arguments lead to the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>4</sub>:** Cuisine similarity among youths of Mizoram and Korean consumers has a positive influence on the purchase of Korean products.

#### ***Korean Cultural proximity, Cultural Adaption and Purchase of Korean Products (Mediation Analysis) & Gender on Product Adaption (Moderation Analysis)***

Men and women have different roles in society, according to role theory, and women are stronger at perceptual and cognitive components, making them more sensitive to cultural distance (Hu and Cheung 2021). Phablet and Haker (2004) investigated acculturative change in Turk immigrant homes in the Netherlands using a large-scale random sample. Young females were significantly less conservative than young boys in terms of gender role ideals. Women married later in life, had fewer children, and had their first child at a later age than men. Culture has a strong effect on consumers' perceptions and purchasing intentions toward a brand (Zhou et al. 2015, Choi et al. 2020). In contrast, the cultures of a global brand's origin and host countries The argument led to the following hypothesis

**H<sub>5</sub>:** Korean cultural proximity has a positive influence on the purchase of Korean products among youth customers of Mizoram.

**H<sub>6</sub>:** Korean cultural proximity has a positive influence on cultural acceptance

**H<sub>7</sub>:** Korean cultural acceptance has a positive influence on the purchase of Korean products among customers of Mizoram state.

**H<sub>8</sub>:** Cultural adaption mediates the relationship between Korean cultural proximity and the purchase of Korean products among youth customers of Mizoram state.

### **III. RESEARCH GAP**

We can see from the studies above that researchers conducted varied research activities at both the worldwide and national levels, employing a variety of data collection methodologies. These kinds of literature frequently concentrate on Korean culture's

cross-cultural marketing as well as globalisation. Consumers, particularly teens, have grown more realistic about the Korean skincare market, particularly with the advent of diverse goods encouraged by their K-Drama or K-Pop leaning, leading to a rise in sales, according to the research. Literature studies show that there have been marginal influences through entertainment, consumable products and cuisines which have arisen due to the ban of Hindi entertainment during the 2000s by insurgents have stimulated acculturation processes. This has facilitated the spread of Korean media among Mizo youth specifically South Korean culture. Therefore, the research gap that has been identified is the study of Korean cultural influence, to find out if there is a gender difference in the influence of Korean culture on product acceptance. The main research issue is how and why Mizoram's young people are absorbing Korean culture. What role does media (television and other electronic forms) have in the adoption of Korean culture, and how does Korean culture influence Mizoram young purchasing patterns?

### **IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To determine the influence of Korean culture on buying behaviour in the youth of Mizoram state (India).
- To understand the role played by media, K-Drama/movies and K-Pop in influencing Korean culture.
- To assess whether gender moderates the relationship between cultural proximity and purchase behaviour

### **V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The current study is based on both primary and secondary data. Secondary data helps compare the original information created with the one that is readily available for the present study, secondary data was collected from various published sources like books, research papers, journals, newspapers and internet resources. Primary sources are the main producers that give basic evidence about a subject under examination. They are created by persons who have actual knowledge of what happened or situations being chronicled. It is a direct approach and contains the much-needed information required. The primary data collected for this project include a questionnaire with a specific focus on the influence of Korean culture in Mizoram. A questionnaire was based on Reimeingam (2015), Kanozia and Ganghariya (2021) and Hernández and Lee (2021), focussing on the aspects of Korean culture and products' acceptance. The target respondents of the study are youngsters under the influence of Korean media and Korean products of various kinds in Aizawl, Mizoram. Constructs were identified and further measurement variables were developed to measure the influence of Korean culture and product purchase



patterns. Both close-ended and open-ended questionnaires were used for the proposed study. The statement was measured on a Likert scale ranging from one to five. 1 denotes strongly disagree and five denotes strongly agree. After developing a questionnaire, its content validity was assessed by distributing it to professors and industry personnel. The questionnaire was initially piloted on 30 respondents, and the construct's reliability was tested using SPSS 22 software and found to be 0.902, which was regarded adequate ( $>0.7$ ). Based on the input received, the questionnaire was modified and given to consumers through social network sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp and Research Gate. Initially, the questionnaire was sent to approximately four hundred respondents and further, it was requested to forward it to their known ones. Thus, convenient and snowball sampling techniques were used to collect the data. A total of four hundred response was received. After editing 387 response was found fit and taken for the study. The collected data was carefully organised, tabulated, and analysed using SPSS 22, data

analysis tools include descriptive statistics using SPSS 22 and structural equation modelling using Smart-PLS 3.0. Table 1 indicates the demographic characteristics of respondents.

## VI. RESULTS

The information presented in table 1 indicates the demographic characteristics of respondents. The demographic information presented in the table indicates that out of 441 respondents, 59 (15.2%) respondents were found in the age group of below 20 years. 240 (63.6%) respondents are in the age group of 20-25 years. 52 (13.4%) of respondents were found in the age group of 25-30 years and the remaining 30 (7.8%) respondents were over 30 years of age. 300 (77.5%) of respondents are female, and the remaining 87 (22.5%) respondents are male category respondents. The sample is a combination of well-qualified respondents, as more than two-thirds of 283 (73.1%) of the sampled respondents are educated up to graduate and postgraduate levels.

**Table 1:** Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

	<i>Categories</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
		387	100
Age	Below 20 Years	59	15.2
	20-25 Years	246	63.6
	25-30 Years	52	13.4
	More than 30 years	30	7.8
Gender	Female	300	77.5
	Male	87	22.5
Education Level	High School	79	20.4
	Intermediate	25	6.5
	Graduation	171	44.2
	Post Graduation	112	28.9

(Source: Primary Data)

The research investigates the process of socialisation as people are exposed to a new dynamic culture, Korean culture, which appears to be more appealing than the indigenous culture. The function of information and communication technologies, such as the media, CDs/DVDs, the internet, mobile phones, and other kinds of mass media exposure, in the process among Mizoram's young people, is investigated. These people are gradually adopting South Korean culture, which is a fusion of traditional and modern Korean customs. Table 2 indicates the important drivers of

creating interest in Korean culture by the respondents. It is observed that of 387 respondents, 49(12.74%) indicated family as the main driver of creating interest in Korean culture among respondents. Another 143(33.9%) indicated friends as the main drivers, 88(22.2) indicated watching movies on YouTube as the main driver, and 79(20.4%) indicated Social Media (Facebook, Instagram etc.) as the main drivers in creating interest in Korean culture. The remaining 45(10.9%) indicated another source as the driver of creating interest in Korean culture.

**Table 2:** Drivers of Creating Interest in Korean Culture

	Frequency	Percent
Family	49	12.7
Friends	131	33.9
YouTube	86	22.2
Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, etc)	79	20.4
Others	42	10.9
Total	387	100.0

(Source: Primary Data)

The Korean wave, according to some experts, such as Yang (2012) has emerged as a result of globalization, modernity, and cultural closeness. Modernity refers to the rise in popularity of the Korean wave, which is hybrid and comprises mostly forms from western popular culture and typically traditional content. The information presented in table 3 indicates the youth's comfortability with Korean culture. It is observed that out of 387 respondents, 107(27.6%)

respondents indicated that they are very comfortable with Korean culture. 32(8.3%) respondents indicated that they are comfortable to some extent with Korean culture. 111(28.7%) respondents indicated that they are comfortable with Korean culture to a considerable extent. On the other side, 91(23.5%) respondents indicated that they are comfortable with Korean culture to a little extent and 46(11.9%) are not comfortable at all with Korean culture.

**Table 3: Comfortability with Korean Culture**

Percent	Frequency	Percent
Very comfortable	107	27.6
Comfortable to some extent	32	8.3
Comfortable to a considerable extent	111	28.7
Comfortable to a little extent	91	23.5
Not comfortable at all	46	11.9
Total	387	100.0

(Source: Primary Data)

Data summarized in table 4 indicates the descriptive statistics (mean and SD) of various cultural factors influencing Mizoram customer purchase behaviour. Information presented in table 4 reveals that among various factors of cultural proximity; lifestyle similarity has scored the highest mean of 4.0459 with SD=.68121; the reliability and other statistical outcome

assuring model fitness ( $\alpha=0.743$ ,  $CR=0.836$   $AVE=0.561$ ) were found within the limit. This was followed by cultural similarity with mean 3.7398 and  $SD=.6476$ ,  $\alpha=0.840$ ,  $CR=0.860$ ,  $AVE=0.516$ ; social similarity with mean =3.6828,  $SD=.6459$ ,  $\alpha=0.703$ ,  $CR=0.817$   $AVE=0.530$ ; and cuisine similarity with mean = 3.6546,  $SD=.72161$   $\alpha=0.785$ ,  $CR=0.854$ ,  $AVE=0.540$ .

**Table 4: Perceived Korean Culture Proximity (Descriptive statistics)**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Cultural Similarity (<math>\alpha=0.840</math>, <math>CR=0.860</math>, <math>AVE=0.516</math>)</b>	3.7398	.64876
Indian and Korean cultures complement each other.	3.7700	.65288
Respect for elders is mirrored in family culture and moral ideals.	3.7752	.79088
Parent-child relationships in India and Korea are similar. In my leisure time, I frequently watch and appreciate Korean dramas.	3.4858	1.25780
I utilise social networking sites to keep up with the current Korean trends.	3.6512	.99729
Male and female household status in India and Korea are comparable.	3.6150	.96524
Indian and Korean cultures complement each other.	3.8269	.83852
Indian and Korean cultures complement each other.	4.0543	.87844
<b>Social Similarity (<math>\alpha=0.703</math>, <math>CR=0.817</math> <math>AVE=0.530</math>)</b>	3.6828	.64959
Mizoram's beauty ideals are heavily impacted by Korean culture.	3.9199	.83405
In my personal time, I frequently watch and appreciate Korean dramas.	3.7054	1.12256
Korean fashion, in my opinion, is highly distinct and appealing.	4.0362	.81357
I would like to experiment with Korean fashion.	3.6744	.66942
<b>Lifestyle Similarity (<math>\alpha=0.743</math>, <math>CR=0.836</math> <math>AVE=0.561</math>)</b>	4.0459	.68121
Korean-related brands have my confidence more than Indian brands.	3.8140	.95033
Korean artists heavily impact my dress choices.	4.1034	.91881
I prefer Korean or Indian cosmetics.	4.1370	.87531
I buy whitening/brightening skincare items from Korea.	4.1292	.88678
<b>Cuisine Similarity (<math>\alpha=0.785</math>, <math>CR=0.854</math>, <math>AVE=0.540</math>)</b>	3.6546	.72161
There are several culinary similarities between Mizoram and Korea.	3.7726	.92461
Korean cuisine is my favourite sort of food because I believe it has a distinct flavour.	3.9767	.92852
Korean cuisine makes me think about Korean culture.	3.4470	1.05504
I mimicked the eating habits of a character in a Korean drama.	3.8915	.91255
Korean music strikes me as distinct and enjoyable.	3.7028	1.09026
There are several culinary similarities between Mizoram and Korea.	3.1370	1.30537

(Source: Primary Data)

Korean cultures have grown in popularity, and as a result, they have had a significant impact on other cultures, notably in North East India. The most noteworthy influences have been the expanding popularity of Korean soap operas, which are still popular in Mizoram. The growing popularity of Korean culture indirectly indicates the impact of Korean culture on daily life and lifestyles, both of which have been substantially adopted from Korean culture and have inspired Mizo people. The descriptive statistics presented in table 4

indicate that statements like “I pay more attention towards Korean cultural events displayed through media” scored the highest mean of 3.8811 with SD=.65288, followed by a statement like “I become more inclusive and adaptive” with mean =3.8579 and SD=.72908. A statement like “I listen to more K-pop songs than other genres” has scored the lowest mean of 3.6899 with SD=.75630. The overall reliability ( $\alpha$ ) of this construct was found to be 0.867.

**Table 5:** Influence of Korean Culture (Descriptive statistics)

	Reliability( $\alpha$ )	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Influence of Korean Culture (Cronbach alpha(<math>\alpha</math>)=0.868 CR=0.900 AVE=0.602</b>	0.867	3.7799	.57762
I listen to more K-pop songs than other genres		3.6899	.75630
I eat more Korean food now		3.8320	.75165
I dress more like my Korean bias now		3.7080	.82387
I want to take up Korean language classes		3.7054	.75567
I become more inclusive and adaptive		3.8579	.72908
I pay more attention towards Korean cultural events displayed in the media		3.8811	.65288

(Source: Primary Data)

Today, entering Aizawl is similar to entering any other South Korean metropolis. Teenagers with bucket hats and spring skirts look to have stepped right out of the pages of the latest Korean trend magazines. An attempt was made to know the changing trend in Korean product adaption among Mizoram where youth consumers were given the option of several product categories and asked to rate their changing preference of

adapting Korean products. Descriptive statistics (mean and SD) were calculated and presented in table 6 indicating that clothing scored the highest mean of 3.9742 with SD=.79464 followed by listening to music with a mean of 3.9380 with SD=.8764. Skincare, books, foods and electronics were also in the same range of mean (3.8579 to 3.6408). The overall reliability of Korean Product Adaption was found to be 0.740.

**Table 6:** Changing Trend in Korean Product Adaption among Mizoram Customers (Descriptive statistics)

	Reliability( $\alpha$ )	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Korean Product Adaption (<math>\alpha</math>=0.740, CR=0.818, AVE=0.431)</b>	0.783	3.8385	.56727
Skincare		3.8579	.87448
Food		3.7752	1.04738
Music		3.9380	.87645
Electronics		3.6408	.69617
Clothing		3.9742	.79464
Books		3.8450	.87673

(Source: Primary Data)

## VII. MEASUREMENT MODEL EVALUATION

Before evaluating the hypotheses, a measuring model was created and tested. The model fit in the PLS-SEM measurement model was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, convergent validity tests, and AVE (Hair et al. 2017). Cronbach's dependability ratings for all variables were significantly greater than the minimum acceptable criterion of 0.60.

(table 4, table 5 and table 6). AVEs ranging from 0.431 (product purchase trend) to 0.561 (lifestyle similarity) confirmed the model's convergent validity, suggesting that elements in each category were properly correlated with one another. The factor loading must be statistically significant and greater than 0.5, preferably greater than 0.7. (Hair et. al. 2017). According to Table 4, all variables in each construct had loading factors larger than 0.5. To have discriminant validity, the AVE of each component must be greater than the squared inter-construct correlations (i.e., items in one factor should be

least linked with items in other factors). Each factor's AVE must be bigger than the inter-construct correlations squared. The model's discriminant validity is confirmed

by the fact that the square root of all AVEs was bigger than their corresponding squared inter-construct correlations.

Table 7. Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

	Cuisine Similarity	Cultural Adaption	Cultural Similarity	Korean Culture	Lifestyle Similarity	Product Purchase Trend	Social Similarity
Cuisine Similarity	0.735						
Cultural Adaption	0.753	0.776					
Cultural Similarity	0.720	0.847	0.718				
Korean Culture	0.886	0.885	0.925	0.619			
Lifestyle Similarity	0.605	0.647	0.485	0.692	0.749		
Product Purchase Trend	0.708	0.797	0.800	0.870	0.636	0.657	
Social Similarity	0.698	0.748	0.820	0.887	0.489	0.831	0.728

(Source: Calculated from Primary Data)

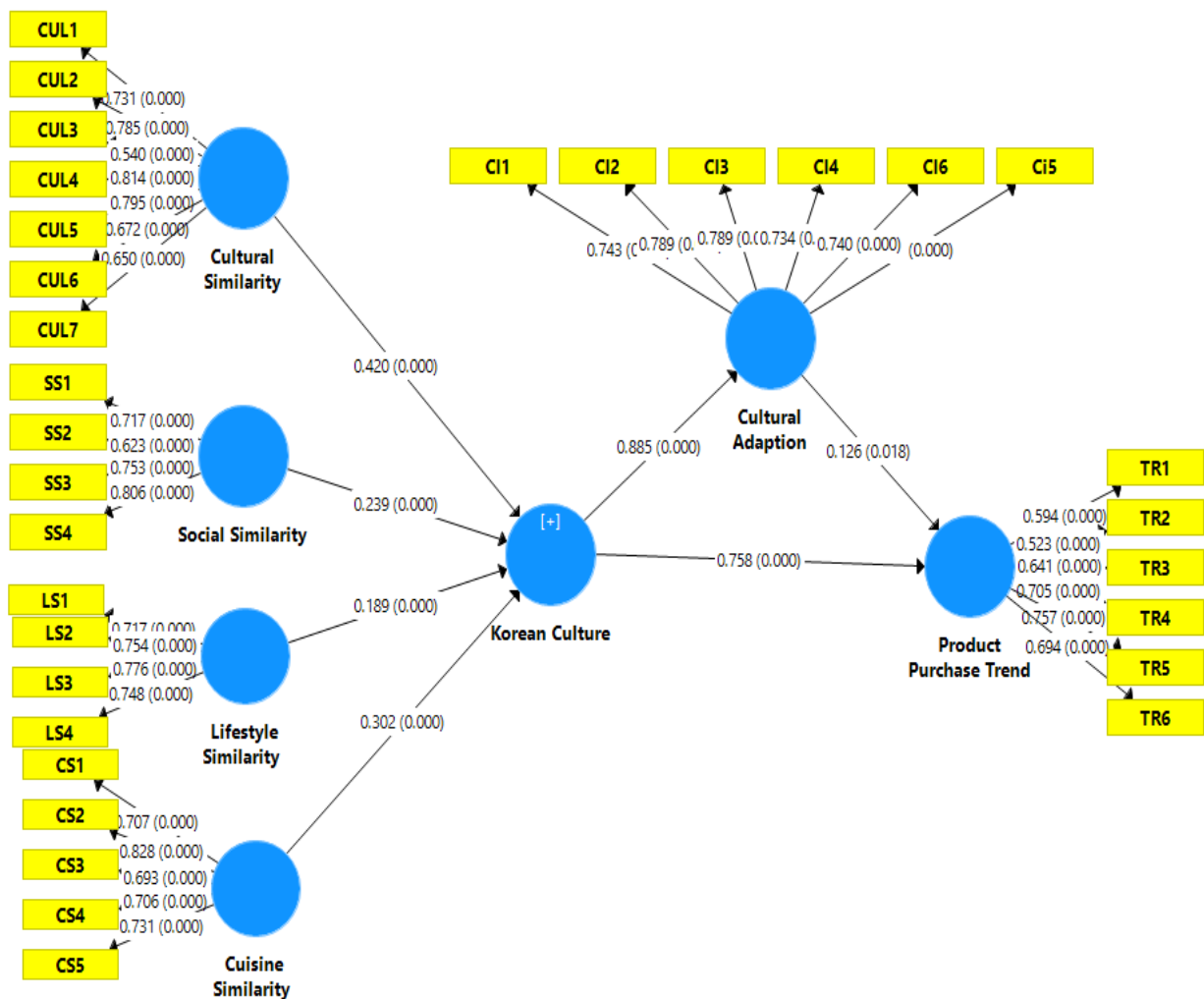


Figure 1: Final measurements and structural model



## VIII. STRUCTURAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESES TESTING

VIF, R2, and standardised path coefficients were used to test the fitness of a structural model (Hair et al., 2019). VIFs should be less than 5.0, according to Hair et al. (2019), to rule out the potential of multicollinearity among components. R2 must be within acceptable bounds, and standardised path coefficients ( $\beta$ ) must be statistically significant (Hair et al., 2019). All VIFs fell within the permissible range of 5.0, with the lowest VIF being 1.000 and the highest VIF being 4.599. (Table 8). It demonstrated that there was no problem with multicollinearity. R2 estimations for cultural impact were 0.885 and 0.758, suggesting that the other structural model parameters accounted for 88.5 percent of the variation in Korean culture influence. and product purchase was 0.758, indicating that the remaining structural model factors accounted for 88.5 per cent of the variation in Korean culture influence and 75.8 percent of the variation in product purchase trend significant at the level of  $\alpha = 0.01$ . These criteria, taken together, confirmed the structural model's goodness of fit to the data.

Table 8 shows the route coefficients and p-values for all hypotheses given. H1 anticipated that there

were direct correlations between the various elements of Korean cultural closeness and Mizoram youth purchases of Korean items. The standardised path coefficient from social networking factors to purchase behaviour was insignificant ( $\beta = 0.758$ ,  $t$ -value=13.069,  $p = .000$ ). In other words, Korean cultural proximity has a significant influence on product purchase behaviour among the youth of Mizoram state. The results support research hypothesis 1. The second hypothesis ( $H_2$ ) postulated that different factors of Korean culture have a positive effect on cultural influence among the youth of Mizoram state. Test statistics indicate that Korean cultural proximity positively stimulates cultural influence ( $\beta = 0.885$ ,  $t$ -value = 74.145,  $p = .000$ ), indicating that Korean cultural proximity has a positive influence on cultural adaption among youth in Mizoram. Thus test statistics support the second research hypothesis. The third hypothesis ( $H_3$ ) proposed that Korean cultural adaption has a positive influence on the purchase of Korean products. This was confirmed by standardised path coefficients of cultural adaption on Korean product purchase behaviour ( $\beta = 0.126$ ,  $t = 2.069$ ,  $p = 0.020$ ). This indicates that the higher the cultural adaption, the greater the product purchase among consumers. Figure 1 presents the final measurements and structural model.

**Table 8:** Path Coefficients: Mean, STDEV, T-Values, P-Values

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values	VIF	Result
Cuisine Similarity -> Korean Culture	0.302	0.302	0.010	29.724	<b>0.000</b>	2.651	Accepted
Cultural Adaption -> Product Purchase Trend	0.126	0.126	0.061	2.069	<b>0.020</b>	4.599	Accepted
Cultural Similarity -> Korean Culture	0.420	0.421	0.014	30.120	<b>0.000</b>	3.513	Accepted
Korean Culture -> Cultural Adaption	0.885	0.885	0.012	74.145	<b>0.000</b>	1.000	Accepted
Korean Culture -> Product Purchase Trend	0.758	0.759	0.058	13.069	<b>0.000</b>	4.599	Accepted
Lifestyle Similarity -> Korean Culture	0.189	0.188	0.012	15.469	<b>0.000</b>	1.600	Accepted
Social Similarity -> Korean Culture	0.239	0.238	0.009	26.767	<b>0.000</b>	3.317	Accepted

(Source: Calculated from Primary Data)

## IX. MEDIATION ANALYSIS

Through the use of a mediator variable, mediation analysis decomposes the overall exposure-outcome relationship into a direct and indirect effect. As a result, mediation assessment is a critical statistical technique for understanding the processes behind exposure-outcome relationships. A change in the exogenous construct creates a change in the mediating

factor, which leads to changes in the endogenous construct in the PLS path model. In the present study, researchers analyse Korean cultural influence as a mediator in the relationship between cultural proximity and Korean product adaption among the youth of Mizoram state. In our case, mediation analysis was performed in two steps. In the first step, the direct impact of cultural proximity on Korean product purchases was calculated. It was found that ( $\beta = 0.758$ ,  $t = 13.069$ ,

$p=0.000$ ) is significant. In the second step, the indirect effect of a mediating variable (Korean cultural adaption) on the relationship between cultural proximity and Korean product purchase trend was calculated. It was discovered that cultural proximity has a significant impact on Korean cultural adaption ( $\beta=.885$ ,  $t = 74.145$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). Korean cultural influence was also found to have a significant impact on Korean product purchases among consumers of Mizoram youths ( $\beta=.126$ ,  $t = 2.069$ ,  $p = 0.020$ ). The indirect effect ( $p=0.000$ ,  $0.885*0.126=0.1115$ ). Then, to evaluate the hypothesis of the mediating effect, we used Preacher and Hayes's (2008)'s testing procedures. According to them, the mediating effect requires a strong indirect impact and a confidence interval that does not contain zero. The particular indirect impacts were calculated using SMART PLS bootstrapping. Only particular indirect impacts of customer integration are substantial, as shown in Table 6, and the confidence intervals do not contain zero. The specific direct effect of customer price sensitiveness (Korean Culture  $\rightarrow$  Cultural Adaption  $\rightarrow$  Product Purchase Trend)  $t=2.066$   $p=0.020$  is significant at  $p < 0.05$ . It is found that the inclusion of cultural adaption reduces the variance from 0.869 to 0.758 from the direct effect of cultural proximity factors on Korean product purchase to an indirect effect via Korean cultural influence. Thus, cultural influence mediates the relationship between factors of cultural proximity and Korean product purchase, and thus hypothesis 4 is supported.

## X. DISCUSSION

The present research work, the research examines the relationship between Korean cultural proximity, cultural influence and Korean product purchase behaviour of youths of Mizoram state. The outcome derived from this research indicates that the influence of Korean culture plays a crucial role in the process of Korean product adaption among youths in Mizoram. The cultural influence as a mediator in this study also facilitates explaining how companies could use cultural elements in promoting Korean products in the Indian context. In this study, all the components of cultural proximity (Cultural Similarity, Social Similarity, Lifestyle Similarity and Cuisine Similarity) were found to have a significant effect on shaping consumer behaviour in favour of Korean products in an Indian context. The finding indicates that consumers in Mizoram can be influenced by promoting cultural and social events in the northeastern states especially Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram. Unlike the approach of traditional ways of marketing, social media marketing and building social networking and providing consumers with an interactive platform will help management in positioning Korean products to target customers. It is assumed that these interactions may influence the consumers' purchase behaviour. Prior empirical studies

conducted in past (Kanozia and Ganghariya 2021, Ravina 2009, Lyan and Levkowitz 2015, Choi et. al. 2020, Messaris 2016, Dhawan 2017) support the findings of this study.

## XI. CONCLUSIONS

Customer sentiments are at the heart of marketing resulting in success or failure. The success of new products is measured by their long-term viability. Marketers are using social networking media to attract new buyers and keep existing customers which is very critical in marketing operations. It also helps in managing customer sentiments and helping him to make an informed decisions. According to the most recent statistics, social media impacts people's purchasing behaviour. The research aims to look at the influence of social networking media on managing consumer price sensitivity and purchase behaviour of new products. The dissemination of Korean popular culture started in the late 1990s. Though these Korean media products become well-known throughout the world as a result of the rise of social media, Hallyu's entrance in India was not as successful as in East and Southeast Asia. Korean craze for all things Korean is due to the existing cultural proximity between Korea and Northeast India. Kuotsu (2013) stresses that the favourable acceptance of K-Dramas and K-movies was due to the indigenization of Korean content using local languages.

### *Concluding Remarks*

Mizoram's youth are adopting Korean culture, which is a blend of Western and Korean traditions. It is influenced by Korean media, particularly films and dramas. Peer groups build the network for adoption, although they aren't particularly significant. Mizoram's native culture differs from Korean culture in various ways. Increased use of Korean media increases the desire to embrace Korean culture. The process of acculturation to Korean culture indicates that Korean culture is viewed as more appealing than indigenous culture. The concept and prevalence of Korean cultural adoption among individuals, particularly youths, have been validated. In terms of media access and exposure, liberalisation and globalisation have made significant contributions. The youth of Mizoram are, indeed, receptive to fresh cultural breezes. As a result, individuals tend to accept new or modern cultures in terms of clothing, eating habits, socialising, or language while preserving elements of their original culture.

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### Notes on Contributor

Dr L. S. Sharma is a Professor of Management in the Department of Management, at Mizoram University, India where he teaches Consumer Behaviour and Management Information Systems to postgraduate students. His interests and publications are related to consumer behaviour, service marketing, information technology and world trade.

Ms Christine Hnamte is a researcher at the Department of Management, Mizoram University, India. Her research interest is mainly in consumer research and the interaction of culture and consumption.

Dr D. S. Chaubey is a Professor of Management at Uttaranchal University, Dehradun, India. His research interests are in the areas of consumer behaviour and human resource management. He has to his credit 165 research papers published in National and International journals.

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