CELEBRITY AND AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS ON SATISFACTION, AND REPEAT WATCH INTENTION ON KOREAN TV DRAMA

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ABSTRACT

The prevailing trend of Korean Pop culture, Hallyu, has spread rapidly to Asian countries such as Malaysia, Japan, China, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and Taiwan. The influenced of such culture has further reached to other countries such as the Middle East, Europe and America. As the result, the Korean dramas, fashions, and music becoming a hot trend and culture in Asian nations. The study examines the relationship between celebrity and audience characteristics on TV drama satisfaction and repeats watch intention. A total of 596 young Malaysian consumers participated in this study. Attractiveness, credibility, commitment, and connectedness were found to effect the satisfaction of watching Korean drama. In addition, consumer satisfaction toward Korean TV drama does influence their repeat watch intention. However, an involvement of audience was not found to affect TV drama satisfaction. Recommendation and suggestion for future research were also discussed to improve audience satisfaction and ultimately increased the repeat watch intention towards Korean TV drama.

Keywords: Korean star characteristics; audience characteristic; TV drama satisfaction; repeat watch intention.

1. INTRODUCTION

Korean Wave or ‘Hallyu’ is known as the fashion appearance of Korean Popular Culture (KPC). The termed was first coined in late 1990s by the Chinese commentators as a descriptive label for the emerging popularity of South Korean TV series, musical arts, films. KPC starts with the Korean pop music, television dramas, shows, fashion, trends and movies which set by Korean celebrities. Over the decade, Korean Wave has become a popular phenomenon in an Asian market. For instance, the popularity of such trend has been recognized in prominent countries such as Southeast Asia, and also Taiwan, China, Japan, and Hong Kong (Hong and Kim, 2013).

Several products can be associated with the Korean wave such as the dramas, music, games, foods, fashions, and movies (Li, 2005). For Korean drama, the growth of Korean Wave in Malaysia relatively late compared with China, Japan, and Singapore. The earliest Korean Wave entries into Malaysia were first discovered via TV dramas and movies in 2000 (Lansbury, Kwon, and Suh, 2006). This new cultural trend has contributed to the positive image of Korean culture and society which resulted in trying Korean food, purchasing Korean products and travel to Korea (Cho, 2010). As a result, Korean economics improved through product export and an there was an increase of foreign tourists to Korea (Lee, 2015).
Study by Hogart (2013) discovered that there are various determinants that may influence the intention of the audience to watch Korean dramas such as contemporary images and beauty of the actress, combination of modernity and tradition, romanticism, sentimental and skilful storytelling. Furthermore, attractiveness, credibility, and connectedness, audience’s involvement and commitment, cultural interest and the lyrical, beautiful scene background and music could added to the intention of the audience (Lee, 2015) which contribute to the increase of Korean wave popularity around the world. For example in China, Korean wave had gained a wide popularity when the Korean singer had successfully conducted their concert in Beijing, China (Ha, 2010). In line with this, a celebrity worship which is also known as a behavioural phenomenon has dominated some of the audiences lives (McCutcheon, Lange and Hom, 2002).

The Korean Culture and Information Service (2011) stated that internet and digitalization has contributed in the acceptance in the Korea Wave or Hallyu culture throughout the world. Korean pop music gets people attention from the videos sharing on an online video-sharing site called YouTube (Korean Culture and Information Service, 2011). The social media such as YouTube, Facebook or Twitter were used as effective marketing tools to promote Korean cultural contents to global audiences. The Korean Culture and Information Service (2011) stated that the “Korean pop culture is the product of adoption, the result of communication among several cultures.”

The purpose of the research is to examine whether the Korean star characteristics and audience characteristics affect their satisfaction and repeat watch intention. The study examines the relationship between Korea stars’ attractiveness, credibility, connectedness, audience’s involvement, commitment, cultural interest, lyrical, beautiful scene background and music on TV drama satisfaction and repeat watch intention of Korean TV drama among young Malaysian consumers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

There have been extensive efforts to study on Korean wave impacts to the world market (e.g., Lee, 2015; Chung, 2011; Ha, 2010; Hogarth, 2013). Lee (2015) stated that Korean drama and revisit attention of Korean drama audience can be influenced by the Korean star characteristics and audience characteristics. In other words, Korean celebrity does affect the choice of the public to watch a particular drama. The most popular Korean drama stars like Bae Yong-Joon and Lee Young-ae are the star that represented the drama frenzy are well known among the region of Asia Pacific on the drama globe (Chung, 2011). In this study, the influences of Korean star characteristics, audience characteristics, cultural interest, and lyrical, beautiful scene background and music on TV drama satisfaction will be discussed.

2.1 Korean celebrities’ characteristics

Korean celebrities characteristics can be identified by three perspectives, which are attractive, credibility and connectedness of the Korean celebrities (Lee, 2015). From these three components, it stated that the Korean celebrities is affecting the audience for having an intention on the drama.
2.1.1 Attractiveness

Korean wave led by the beauty of the Korean star which attracted audiences to watch Korean drama (Hogarth, 2013). According to Bardia et al., (2011) the attractiveness of endorser or actors will influence individual first judgment. The consumer would see the celebrities as more attractive when their feel has many similarities with the celebrities (Mohd Suki, 2014). The previous study by McColl and Truong, (2013) has found that attractiveness is the primary factor that affecting people to choose a particular product and services, especially the attractiveness of those who represent the respective company. The researcher highlights the higher of attractiveness will leverage company sales (McColl and Truong, 2013). Also, the attractiveness is the primary factor that had been used for celebrity endorsement. For instance, the drama actor were chosen based on their attractiveness where it can influence satisfaction and also as the promotional tools to the audience (Prasad, 2013; Cho and Agrusa, 2011). Hence, the attractiveness of the Korean star or celebrity can influence the audiences to watch the drama. Thus, it was hypothesized that:

\[ H1: \text{Attractiveness of Korean celebrities is positively affecting TV drama satisfaction.} \]

2.1.2 Credibility

Korean star as a celebrity in promoting the drama will become the strategy of “celebrity endorsement” of the drama (Prasad, 2013). The celebrity endorsement is an important strategy to create the credibility of the endorser which attract the audience to watch a new drama. It enables to increases the intention and satisfaction of the audience on the drama. Previous research by Lee (2015) has found the positive significant relationship between the credibility of the pop star with the drama satisfaction. Also, the research has been proven the credibility is one of the factors that the audiences used to measure their satisfaction level on the particular drama. Hence, the credibility of the Korean star can affect the satisfaction and intention level of the audiences on the Korean drama. Thus, it was hypothesized that:

\[ H2: \text{Credibility of Korean celebrities is positively affected TV drama satisfaction.} \]

2.1.3 Connectedness

The connectedness of the drama will also affect the satisfaction of the drama. According to Lee (2015), the theory of social identity uses to explain this phenomenon. According to Hogarth (2013), most of the Korean dramas are ‘Asian’ oriented, in order to connect with their major fans where it comes from East Asian countries. Furthermore, Lee (2015) stated on the nature of Korean drama storyline where it is more interrelated to the Asian culture such as sibling love and oriental culture. The emotional and visual influences of the Korean star on the drama also create the connectedness among the drama and audiences. The actor's behaviors and emotion, such as romantics or violent are the images that reflect the lifestyle of the audiences in their real life (Kim, Agrusa, Lee & Chon, 2007). This is the way how the Korean star's played their role in connecting with the audiences through the drama medium. Therefore, it was hypothesized that:

\[ H3: \text{Connectedness of Korean celebrities is positively affected TV drama satisfaction.} \]
2.2 Audience characteristics

Due to the popularity of the trend, it is prominent that Malaysian nowadays are greatly influenced by Korean wave in many ways. This is due to the reason that audiences use the media in a lot of different ways and according to their need (Briandana & Ibrahim, 2015—jkob.cseap.edu.my/index.php/journal/full/4-3.pdf). The audience component can be viewed from in two different aspects, which is involvement and commitment of the audiences.

2.2.1 Involvement

Zaickowsky (1984) define involvement as a motivational construct which develops by person value and needs. In Malaysia, the Korean wave is famous due to the involvement of Malaysian audiences in Korean dramas. For instance, Winter Sonata and A Jewel in the Palace were Korean films, and TV dramas that created an early Korean wave in Malaysia (Cho, 2010). These two Korean dramas are the most popular drama and also a pioneer of the drama frenzy over the country in Asia Pacific. According to Zaickowsky (1994), involvement in audiences on particular product or service refers to the perceived value of the product and service that related to an individual inherent need, values, and interests. Previously, Choubtarash, Mahdieh and Marnani (2013) explain the involvement of audience is due to the motivation factor of he or she applies in their decision making. The researcher also had given the result on that high customer involvement in Korean dramas might cause attachment to the brand that as a result forming experience satisfaction. Therefore, it was hypothesized that:

\[ H4: \text{Involvement of audience is positively affected TV drama satisfaction.} \]

2.2.2 Commitment

According to Hoffman, Agnew, Lehmliller and Duncan (2009), people will feel satisfied with the performance of particular association and resulting in an increased in firm commitments. In other words, the audiences had invested their support in the relationship with commitment, and finally, the audiences will have high satisfaction on it.

Previously, several research discovered the relationship between commitment and satisfaction. Ligas (2008) has found a strong correlation between satisfactions of audiences with the engagement of them in a particular product or services, such as TV drama. In addition, Spake and Bishop (2009) insisted that customer's positive attitude and intention to remain can be affected by the commitment. Lee (2015) has proved that audience satisfaction about the drama has a positive relationship with the commitment of audience. Hence, the involvement of the audiences is essential and have a positive effect on the satisfaction towards Korean drama. Therefore, it was hypothesized that:

\[ H5: \text{Commitment of audience is positively affected TV drama satisfaction.} \]

2.3 TV Drama satisfaction

Day (1977) defined satisfaction as “a post-consumption evaluation of a product or service regarding positive or negative attitudes towards the product or service.” (Delete). Satisfaction is crucial as it has been proven that can me a key strategic indicator of a
company’s success and long-term competitiveness (Law, Hui & Zhao, 2004; Luo and Homburg, 2007- rujuk new reference ). Customer satisfaction will represent through the mouth of words in the market, and the watchdog organizations such as Consumers Union consistent had the track report of satisfaction over time (Oliver, 2014).

Previous research conducted by Churchill and Surprenant (1982), consumer satisfaction is the result of consumer’s expectation and the prior experience towards the firm’s product or service. Consumer satisfaction can be identified in three components. First, the customer satisfaction is a response of emotional and cognitive. Second, customer satisfaction also response related to some particular focus such as the product or service, consumption experience, and expectation. Third, the satisfaction responses only occur on given time which after choice and based on the accumulated experience (Giese and Cote, 2000). In fact, the consumer satisfaction is the result of the active response of varying intensity and is the consumer key responsible for the experience-based attitude change (Giese and Cote, 2000; Westbrook and Oliver, 1991). Regarding Anisimova (2013), consumer satisfaction affects the product and service performance, consumer expectation, the prior experience, and expectation.

2.4 Repeat watch intention

According to Huang (2012), the intention is the emotion that always concerns to the future. The previous research had argued that intention influenced by time distortion, telepresence, enjoyment, and concentration (Lee and Chen, 2010; Novak and Duhachek, 2003; Koufaris, 2002). Based on Ajzen (2005), a consumer will form the intention and encouraged to engage in the particular behavior. The intention is a behavioral disposition, and then the action will be performed at the appropriate time and opportunity under consideration. The Theory of Planned Behavior explained that intention could be predicted by the attitude towards certain behaviors, the possessed subjective norms, and perceived behavior control (Ajzen, 1991). The stable relationship between intention and behavior had been proved by Sheeran (2002), and the overall correlation was 0.53.

Based on Ajzen (2005), the intention was affected by internal and external factors. Internal factors include the information, skills, or abilities and emotions or compulsions. External factors were the opportunity to execute the intended action and dependence on others people to complete the behavior or goals. Besides, there are some researchers had confirmed that the felt involvement has a positive relationship with the intention (Wang, Wang, and Farn, 2009; Manganari, Siomkos, Rigopoulou, and Vrechopoulos, 2011; Eroglu, Machleit, and Davis, 2003). The felt involvement motivated the consumers' comprehension and attention processes and secondary effect consumer intention (Celsi & Olson, 1988). Consumers' intention has high relationship and positive significant influence on attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Huda, Rini, Mardoni, and Putra, 2012). In this research, it is assumed that the more audience satisfied in watching Korean TV drama, the intention to watch that drama for the second time is also increased. Thus;

\[ H6: \text{TV drama satisfaction is positively affected repeat watch intention.} \]
3. METHODOLOGY

This study evaluates the Korean wave effect on satisfaction and repeat watch intention towards Korean TV drama. TV dramas usually attract the audience, due to the reasons that it gives the feeling similarity of life to the audiences (Bandura, 1977; Chang, 2015). The Korean stars also may influence the satisfaction, because they can affect the psychological behavior and some social attitudes towards audiences (Chang, 2015).

Sample selection

This research focused on Malaysian audience towards Korean TV drama. A quantitative approach using self administrated questionnaire was employed to collect the data. A convenience sample of 600 questionnaires were distributed directly to undergraduate student respondents located in Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS). UMS was chosen as a sample in order to approach young consumers and these students came from all over Malaysia. Respondents were asked whether they have any experienced watching Korean drama. The questionnaire consists of demographics profile of audiences, the characteristics of Korean star towards drama satisfaction, the characteristics of the audience towards drama satisfaction, and drama satisfaction towards repeat watch intention. The Likert scale format was used to evaluate the question in the form of five point scale level.

The data shows that 219 or 36.7 percent of respondents are male. Female respondents are more than male respondents. There is 377 or 63.3 percent of respondents are female. Also, about 554 or 92.9 percent are aged between 20 to 25 years old. Regarding races, 180 respondents or 30.2 percent are Malay, 170 respondents or 28.5 are Chinese, 51
respondents or 8.6 percent are Indian, and 195 respondents or 32.7 are others race. For respondent’s religion, about 275 respondents or 46.1 percent are Islam. In addition, 156 respondents, or 26.2 percent are Christian, 47 respondents or 7.9 percent are Hindu and the remaining 99 respondents, or 16.6 percent are Buddha. Lastly, 19 respondents or 3.2 percent are others religion. Others religion included Atheist, Bahai, Free-thinker, none religion, and Tao.

4. RESULTS

Data analysis technique used in this research is structural equation model (SEM) with PLS approach using the SmartPLS software version 3.0 M3 Beta (Ringle et al., 2005). Reinartz, Haenlein, and Henseler (2009) mentioned that “PLS is the preferable approach when researchers focus on prediction and theory development, our simulations show that PLS requires only about half as many observations to reach a given level of statistical power as does ML-based CBSEM” (p. 334). Gefen et al. (2011) stated that across the social sciences, convention specifies 80 percent as the minimum acceptable power. To test the power in our analysis, we used Gpower to calculate the minimum sample size needed, and the test suggested a minimum sample size of 97 cases for the analysis. Our sample size of n=596 is more than that required to achieve a power of 0.8.

To assess the measurement and structural model, specifically SmartPLS Version 3.0 and bootstrap resampling (596 resamples) were used. Furthermore, all other necessary criteria suggested by Hair et al. (2014) were tested, i.e., convergent validity, discriminant validity, and measurement invariance.

Test of measurement model

Convergent validity is assessed through items loading, the composite reliability of each scale, and average variance extracted for each construct. The standardized values of loadings are recommended to be greater than 0.707 by Hair et al., 2014, and AVE values should be greater than 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The result shows that the reliabilities, items, and composite of both data sets are well above the recommended level of 0.70. Furthermore, the AVEs were also well above the 0.5 recommended value. It shows that the scales that were used for predicting cyberloafing behavior possess convergent validity (Table 1).

Discriminant validity is assessed through the method through which the pairwise correlation among factors was extracted. This method of comparison of correlation with variance extracted is introduced by Fornell and Larcker, 1981. The confirmation of the discriminant validity happens when diagonal values are significantly higher than that of the off diagonal elements in the corresponding rows and columns. The diagonal values are the square root of the AVE values for each other. The values are shown in Table 2. Results show that all the constructs possess discriminant validity.

The structural model shows the causal relationships between the constructs in the model, and it includes the estimation of the path coefficients and the $R^2$ value. The $R^2$ value also verifies the prediction power of the model (Hair et al., 2014). The hypothesis test results are summarized in Table 3.
The results for H1 ($\beta = 0.135$, $p < 0.01$), H2 ($\beta = 0.407$, $p < 0.01$), H3 ($\beta = 0.079$, $p < 0.05$), and H4 ($\beta = 0.115$, $p < 0.01$) indicate that attractiveness, credibility, commitment, and connectedness were found influences Korean TV drama satisfaction. In contrast, H5 ($\beta = 0.002$, $p > 0.01$) indicate that involvement was not found to influence TV drama satisfaction. Besides, H6 ($\beta = 0.658$, $p < 0.01$) which indicate that Korean TV drama satisfaction was found to influence repeat watch intention of the consumer.

<p>| Table 1: PLS factor loadings, CR and AVE |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Loading</th>
<th>Cronbach Alpha</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>VIF</th>
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<td>0.699</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>A4</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CR5</td>
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Notes: AVE, average variance extracted, CR, composite reliability, VIF, variance inflation factor.
Table 2: Discriminant validity

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<th>ATT</th>
<th>COM</th>
<th>CON</th>
<th>CRE</th>
<th>INV</th>
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<td>0.671</td>
<td>0.714</td>
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Table 3: Hypothesis test result

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<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Result</th>
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<td>0.04</td>
<td>3.356***</td>
<td>Supported</td>
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<td>H2</td>
<td>Credibility -&gt; Satisfaction</td>
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<td>0.042</td>
<td>2.729***</td>
<td>Supported</td>
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<td>H3</td>
<td>Connectedness -&gt; Satisfaction</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>2.166**</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
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<td>H4</td>
<td>Involvement -&gt; Satisfaction</td>
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<td>0.048</td>
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<td>H5</td>
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<td>0.052</td>
<td>7.876***</td>
<td>Supported</td>
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<td>H6</td>
<td>Satisfaction -&gt; Repeat watch</td>
<td>0.658</td>
<td>0.029</td>
<td>22.334***</td>
<td>Supported</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Notes: ***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *p<0.10

5. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research is to determine the effect of Korean TV drama satisfaction on repeat watch intention among young Malaysian consumers. The independent variables in this study inclusive of Korean star characteristics, audience characteristics. The involvement of audience was rejected in this study. The attractiveness, credibility and connectedness of Korean star and the commitment of audience were accepted in this study.

This study showed the result of the attractiveness of Korean star is significant to the satisfaction towards the drama supported hypothesis 1 in this research. According to McColl and Truong (2013), the attractiveness of a person can help in increasing company’s overall performance as a result contributes in increasing the company profit. The reason of using attractiveness is because using attractiveness of celebrities as endorsers it can enhance using for products, services and social causes (Baker and Churchill 1977; Caballero, Lumpkin, and Madden 1989; Caballero and Sol-omon 1984; DeSarbo and Harshman 1985; Patzer 1983).

Hypothesis 2 is to test the relationship between credibility and satisfaction about the drama. This study showed that credibility is positively significant to the satisfaction towards the drama. The study result showed hypothesis 4 was accepted, which the credibility of Korean celebrities is positively affecting satisfaction about the drama. According to Lee (2015), drama satisfaction had a positive relationship with the reliability and credibility of the pop celebrities. The skillful construed storylines and the Korean celebrities acting skill created the reliability and credibility to the audience and directly determine high satisfaction and revisited intention along the watching process (Chung, 2011).
The result indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between connectedness and satisfaction Korean TV drama. Thus, hypothesis 3 was supported. This is similar to Lee (2015) which suggested connectedness of the drama with the audience. Korean drama mostly is “Asian-ness,” and the drama storyline is related to the Asian culture (Hogarth, 2013; Lee, 2015).

The relationship between audience involvement and Korean drama satisfaction is found to be not significant in this study. This means the participation of the audience does not affect the satisfaction towards Korean drama. Thus, reject Hypotheses 5 in this study. This study is consistent with the findings of Lee (2015) which show no significant relationship between involvement of the audience and Korean drama satisfaction. However, Levy and Windahl (1985), believed that involvement is the interaction of audience with mass media or a medium with its message. Specifically, young Malaysian consumers are not interacting with the Korean TV drama. The reason is due to the respondent are the university students who are highly educated. They will only think the reality in the daily life. The university students know there is no rational reason for the story in Korean drama to happen in real life. Also, they understood the dramatic story is an attractive point to attract the attention of the audience. Hence, the involvement could not grow satisfaction among young Malaysian consumers after they watched the Korean TV drama.

The relationship between audience’s commitment and Korean drama satisfaction is found to be significant. The result shows that there is a positive correlation between the audience's commitment and Korean TV drama satisfaction. When the audiences committed to the Korean drama, it will positively influence the satisfaction of that drama. In this research, the finding is supported to the Hypothesis 5. This result is consistent with Curtis, Abratt, Dionand and Rhoades (2011) which found that the commitment has a positive relationship with the satisfaction. Besides that, the previous study from Brown and Sheppard (1997) also stated that there is a significant relationship between audiences’ commitment and satisfaction of Korean drama that can influence audiences' behavior and intention to remain in watching the drama.

Finally, this research also examines the effect of TV drama satisfaction on repeat watch intention (H6). The result shows that TV drama satisfaction positively influences repeat watch intention among young Malaysian consumers. The result strongly showed that repeat watch intention could influence the relationship between TV drama satisfaction and loyalty of audience to Korean TV drama.

6. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

There is still a lot to be done and improve in this research study. With the acknowledged the limitation of data processing, we realize that there are still some constraints in this research study. The main limitations are expressed as the following items. The first limitation is the lack of male respondents in this study. According to the Country meters for Malaysia population, the male population is 50.7% which is more than the female population 49.3% in Malaysia. Because of the lack of the male students at Universiti Malaysia Sabah, the number of female respondents is greater than male respondents.

Besides that, most of the male respondents did not give full corporation and contribution in answering the questionnaires, and they are more likely to watch animation and their language drama (language drama ni apa g) rather than Korean movies. As the
recommendation, the numbers of targeting male respondents have to increase and should try to pursue the male respondents to give a hand in the study.

The third limitation is the number of the question in the questionnaire. In this study, 11 sections required answered by the respondents. The respondents have an obligation to answer 52 questions in the 11 sections which are hard and time costly. The respondents tend to be exhausted when answering questionnaire with many questions and unable to give full attentions. This will give the not actual data based on their views on the research. The number of items should be reduced and the questions asked should be straightforward and easy to understand. The fourth limitation is the cultural differences among the students. In this study, there were a mixture of races inclusive of Malay, Chinese and other races respondents had the experiences and liked to watch the Korean drama. However, there is no Hindu respondents found in this study. Therefore, watching Korean drama is not in their priority list.

7. CONCLUSION

This research investigates the effect of celebrity characteristics and audience characteristics on TV drama satisfaction among young Malaysian consumers. This research also examines the influence of TV drama satisfaction on the intention of repeat watch by young Malaysian consumer. This research found that attractiveness, credibility, commitment, and connectedness influences Korean TV drama satisfaction. Furthermore, Korean TV drama satisfaction was found to influence repeat watch intention in the consumer. However, an involvement of audience was not found to affect TV drama satisfaction. This research contributes to shed new insight in the entertainment marketing in particular TV drama. It was well noted that Korean wave has given their impact to the world entertainment through their drama and TV shows. This is one of the strategies implemented by Korean authorities to promote Korean culture and strengthen their tourism industry.

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