

From Ecosystem to Export: South Korea's Cultural Policy and Implications for Indonesia (A Comparative Study of Cultural Policies in South Korea and Indonesia)

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ABSTRACT

The Korean Wave (Hallyu) gave rise to perception as a result of the cultural policies carried out by the South Korean government. Therefore, this comparative research aims to explore which cultural policies have been implemented by the South Korean government to be compared with those in Indonesia. As a lesson, this study seeks to answer questions about cultural policy factors, as well as the similarities and differences in cultural policies adopted by the two countries. As a comparative study, the approach used is not very complex; it simply juxtaposes cultural policies according to the chronological sequence of government administrations in both countries. The results are quite astonishing—Indonesia is lagging behind in developing its cultural planning; South Korea has been advancing since the 1970s, while Indonesia has just completed its Master Plan for the Advancement of Culture (2024) for the period 2025–2045. Another important finding is that Hallyu's success, achieved without deliberate strategic planning, is supported by the formation of a cultural ecosystem that has been consistently maintained since 1973. From Korea's cultural policy perspective, at least the government's support for cultural exports remains very high. The five main factors of cultural policy that are key to the emergence of the global Hallyu trend include the increasing competitiveness of Korean popular culture, the democratization and liberalization of culture, which facilitates widespread public access. Cultural liberalization has also led to the emergence of cultural entrepreneurs capable of competing globally within the framework of cultural industrialization.

KEYWORDS Korean wave (Hallyu), cultural policy, comparative studies, South Korea, Indonesia.



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INTRODUCTION

South Korea's success in economic and technological progress — including IT — and popular culture is the result of achievements in cultural development (Yanti et al., 2025). South Korea's economic progress is supported by the development of cultural and creative economy businesses and is at the forefront of innovation culture (Santos & Marques, 2021). Korea has successfully built its national identity through global companies such as Samsung, Hyundai, SK, KIA, KEP (Electric Power), LG, POSCO Holding, and KB Financial Group (Dannita & Deniar, 2021). Companies included in the Fortune 500 Global, such as Samsung, Hyundai, and LG, immediately evoke Korea in the minds of citizens worldwide (Bozgeyik, 2025). These global brands and companies provide pride to the Korean people, making Korean identity internationally inherent (Putri, 2022; Novienthia, 2022; Abidin, 2023).

The success of the Korean business world is booming, as evidenced by progress in the economic sector. South Korea is the 4th largest economic power in Asia, behind China, Japan, and India, and ranks among the world's top 12 (Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, 2024; Statisticstimes, 2024). By 2024, South Korea's gross domestic product (GDP) will reach 1.9 trillion US dollars (Indian Exim Bank, 2025). The Republic of Korea has achieved tremendous success in recent decades, rapidly increasing economic growth while significantly reducing poverty (World Bank, 2023). Korea's real GDP grew by an average of 5.7 % per year for 43 years, from 1980 to 2023 (World Bank, 2023). In technology, South Korea is a center for digital technology and the global information and communication technology industry (InvestKorea, 2023). IT electronics companies are world market leaders from Asia (APAC Business Standard, 2023). Korean IT companies, especially Samsung, lead innovation with a very human cultural base (Al-Shamsi, 2022). Korean automotive company Hyundai is one of the electric vehicle pioneers along with Tesla and excels at applying IT in electric cars (InvestKorea, 2024). Thanks to the excellence of creative culture in innovation, Korea has successfully dominated the global electronic IT market, displacing Japan, which was the original world leader (OECD, 2023).

In popular culture, Korea is famous for *K-Pop* and *Drakor*, which have successfully exported its culture throughout Asia. It is even mentioned that Korea is a rare example of a metaformation: a transformation from a poor country into a developed nation with the best IT-based electronics government in the world. Regarding cultural and creative economy businesses, according to UNCTAD (2024), Korea's copyright industry had an added value of USD 160 billion (2020) with 2.4 million workers. Many factors contribute to South Korea's success, especially the cultural foundation, with massive changes in public administration and bureaucracy being key drivers. Numerous studies show Korea's progress cannot be separated from successful reforms in public administration and bureaucracy (Choi & Kwon, 2017).

Comparing Indonesia, Korea's advantage in the copyright industry offers lessons in cultural promotion policies. Indonesia, which claims to be a creative economy, has only half of Korea's copyright industry's value at USD 82 billion in GDP (2021) and 24 million workers in the creative industry (2024). Indonesia's creative businesses remain very unproductive economically, with productivity measured as value-added per worker. Indonesia's creative economy productivity is only USD 3,416.67 per capita, far below Korea's USD 75,000 per capita, although no equivalent measurement component data is available for both countries.

South Korea's economic, technological, and popular cultural progress is a positive impact of strengthening culture with national identity character. According to Roll M (2021), there are at least three momentum policies driving Korea's progress: first, allowing Koreans freedom to travel abroad—especially to America and Europe—for education and careers before returning to Korea in the late 1990s. These western-educated Koreans brought fresh perspectives on business, art, cinema, and music, fostering innovative expression.

The second momentum occurred during the 1997–1998 monetary crisis when Korea restructured *Chaebol* as key economic supporters. Like Indonesia, Korea was part of the IMF (International Monetary Fund) economic revival scheme, borrowing USD 97 billion but only using \$19.5 billion and repaying it by 2001, three years early. Despite overcoming the crisis, Korea faced severe image problems, deterring foreign direct investment and tourism due to skepticism. To address this, President Kim Dae-Jung launched the *Korea: On Course – and*

Open for Business Movement targeting global investors. The crisis forced *chaebol* to divest many business units to focus on core competencies, opening opportunities for smaller players and new entrepreneurs. Recognizing dependence on *chaebol*, President Kim pushed information technology and popular culture as Korea's future drivers. Technology would create new industries alongside traditional manufacturing, and popular culture could become a billion-dollar export and improve Korea's global image. Samsung, a leading *chaebol*, used the crisis as a springboard for internationalization, exemplifying how Korean companies capitalized on global interest.

The third momentum, known as the *Korean wave* or *Hallyu*, is unprecedented in Korean cultural history. Many outsiders mistakenly see it as solely the product of government policy, but it was actually a "success without a plan" (Kim Jungsoo, 2016). This accidental success began with liberalizing the film industry by abolishing censorship, granting new freedom for younger generations to express bolder ideas through cinema and music. Emphasizing leading companies as Korean national identity, Samsung and LG have built global brand images highlighting quality, *human* design, and global marketing. The Korean government invested heavily in developing high-tech internet infrastructure, believing connectivity benefits all citizens. Additionally, one-third of venture capital in Korea is spent on entertainment, cultivating superior human resources since the 1990s. Since 1999, *Hallyu* has grown consistently, shaped by these factors and well-managed by key stakeholders.

The global acceptance of Korean brands has improved perceptions of South Korea, gradually associating the country with Samsung and Hyundai instead of the Korean War. This newfound interest has been a major driver of *Hallyu*. Korean brands have emphasized superior quality, cutting-edge design, and contemporary product feel, influencing business sectors worldwide. Increased R&D investment has improved product quality. Korean entertainment products—movies, music, dramas—are now comparable to Hollywood productions in value and quality. This focus on quality attracted new customers and sustained the popularity of *Hallyu*.

Geographically, South Korea differs greatly from Indonesia, but it was chosen as a model for good practices in cultural policy aligned with government reform and political changes. Each government regime has its own cultural policy model. Cultural policy is part of national development policy. Regarding political changes, Korea and Indonesia share similar milestones since independence from Japanese occupation: South Korea became independent on August 15, 1945, and Indonesia proclaimed independence on August 17, 1945. According to the country profiles, Korea and Indonesia are very different but have similar momentum in government changes, including cultural development policies.

Cultural policy follows government changes. Indonesia's periods are Japanese Occupation, Old Order (1945–1966), New Order (1966–1998), and Reform Order (1998–present), similar to South Korea's bureaucratic regime phases. According to Rho and Lee (2010), South Korea's bureaucracy history divides into: 1) Before the formation of the Republic of Korea (before 1948), 2) Development Period (1948–1961), 3) Industrial revolution bureaucracy implementation (1961–1987), and 4) "debureaucratization" (democratization of policies, 1987–present). An important lesson for cultural policy compares the *debureaucratization* period—also in the cultural sector—until the *Hallyu* momentum in South

Korea. Meanwhile, Indonesia experienced this period during the New Order golden age and continuing in the Reform Order.

Comparative studies highlight the importance of this research for Indonesia to learn from South Korea's success in building a cultural ecosystem supporting *Hallyu*. Although *Hallyu* was accidental, Korea prepared its cultural ecosystem, which was then "used" as capital for globalizing Korean culture (Kim Jungsoo, 2016). To describe the formation of this ecosystem via policies across South Korean governments and compare with Indonesia's efforts, this study employs a comparative framework. It aims to identify key factors in South Korea's cultural policy that contributed to *Hallyu*'s emergence and analyze similarities and differences in cultural promotion and outcomes. This analysis seeks to provide insights and lessons for Indonesia to formulate more effective cultural policies. Ultimately, findings are expected to contribute to developing Indonesia's cultural ecosystem, enhancing global competitiveness and supporting sustainable cultural and economic growth.

METHOD

Using a comparative study approach within a qualitative research paradigm, this study employed a systematic literature review or meta-analysis. As mentioned earlier, cultural policy is part of national development policy. Therefore, the comparison scope followed the chronology of government changes, since shifts in government naturally lead to changes in national development policies, including cultural policies. In South Korea and Indonesia, the comparative scope covered cultural policies from the 1970s onward, linking government change moments between the two countries. This method juxtaposed cultural policies according to the corresponding government periods in both countries.

A literature search revealed many similar studies, but none directly compared the periods of South Korean and Indonesian governments with their cultural policies. Thus, there is almost no research offering an exact comparison of cultural policies between South Korea and Indonesia. Previous research focused on micro-level topics, such as the intellectual property legal system's response to AI technology's possible violations (Kim H, Syafrinaldi, 2024). Another study compared efforts to strengthen the Indonesian film ecosystem with South Korea's, noting South Korea's full support for its globally successful film industry versus Indonesia's insufficient institutional support and lack of regulations for production houses and protection of local OTT platforms (Elista A, et al., 2023).

In contrast, Gea DY and Nugroho AY (2022) conducted a comparative study involving Indonesia, South Korea, and Japan. They focused on the music industry's adaptability in these countries amid the green economy era, using the Korean wave and Japanese wave as lessons for Indonesia.

Other micro-level studies compared cultural policies between Korea, Indonesia, and Japan. Wang Yunning (2023) analyzed the distinct origins of the Japanese and Korean waves, linking these cultural phenomena to their countries' cultural policies. Japonisme arose from fragmented policies centered on traditional painting evolving into anime, while Korea's *Hallyu*-supporting policy embraced a broad cultural ecosystem—including clothing and food. Wang concluded that Korean cultural policy provides valuable lessons, as *Hallyu* is tied closely to economic and political factors beyond culture. Similarly, Svärd Therese (2023) compared Japan's and South Korea's cultural diplomacy strategies addressing regional threats from North

Korea. These found South Korea more successful due to its culturally authentic and comprehensive policy approach.

A macro-level comparative study on South Korea's cultural policies was conducted by Shen Lei (2022), comparing South Korea with China. Focusing on cultural trade policy, the research highlighted South Korea's strong state support for the cultural industry through policy and financing, while China's cultural trade policy remained fragmented.

The closest research to this study was by Kim Taeyoung (2021), who explored South Korea's cultural policies chronologically by government reign but did not compare them with other countries, especially Indonesia. This aligns with findings by Elista (2023) and Shen Lei (2022) regarding strong state involvement in the Korean cultural industry, alongside private capital and global market forces.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the formulation of the question mentioned above and the availability of credible data, the focus of the discussion of cultural policy in South Korea and the policy of cultural promotion in Indonesia begins with the planting of the foundation of cultural development within the scope of national development which began in the 1970s. The following is a table of South Korean and Indonesian governments.

Table 1. Rule of South Korea and Indonesia

South Korea		Period	Indonesia			Information
Park Chung-hee		(1962 – 1979)*	Suharto			*) UNESCO archives cultural policy from the 1970s
Chun Doo-hwan		(1980 – 1988)				
Roh Tae-woo		(1988 – 1993)				
Kim Young-sam		(1993 – 1998)				
Kim Dae-jung		(1998 – 2003)	BJ Habibie, Abdurahman Wahid, Megawati			
Roh Moo-hyun		(2003 – 2008)	Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono			(2004 – 2014)
Lee Myung-bak		(2008 – 2013)				
Park Geun-hye		(2013 – 2017)	Joko Widodo			(2014 – 2024)
Moon Jae-in		(2017 – 2022)				
Yoon Seok-yeol		(2022 – 2025)	Joko Widodo Prabowo Subianto			(2024 – 2029)

Source: From various sources processed, 2025

1. Foundations of South Korean Cultural Policy (1973 – 1979)

Chronologically based on the period of government, according to UNESCO literature records (1979), cultural policy between South Korea and Indonesia can be compared from the beginning of laying the foundation of policy, namely the reign of Park Chung-hee (1973 – 1979) which parallels the period of Suharto's government in Indonesia starting in 1972. UNESCO believes that after the transition of democratic government, in the cultural sector, South Korea faces challenges in balancing modernization with the preservation of traditional culture. Thus, Park Chung-hee's government sought to create policies that encouraged freedom of expression

in the arts, without neglecting national cultural values. However, Park Chung-hee's government has had difficulty finding policies that are able to balance artistic freedom with the push to create a distinctive national culture rooted in its traditional culture and able to adapt to the wave of modernity. Park Chung-hee has started with a formal formulation of cultural policies to build a national cultural identity amid modernization and globalization. The formality of South Korea's cultural policy initially occurred in 1962 – 1970 with the introduction of a five-year plan for the promotion of culture and the arts.

Cultural identity is important to South Korea with a long history of 4,000 years of cultural distinctiveness. Then, facing the uncertainty of cultural identity due to the historical pressures of colonialism, the influence of Western culture after World War II, and economic modernization. The South Korean government, which had previously focused on economic growth, began to recognize the importance of culture in national development. In 1973, the first five-year plan for the promotion of culture and the arts was announced, with the main objectives: a) preserving and developing traditional culture; b) increase community participation in arts and culture; and c) strengthening international cultural exchanges. Policy practices related to the preservation and development of traditional culture carried out include 1) reviving traditional performing arts such as Korean folk music and dance, 2) preserving intangible and tangible cultural heritage, including historical relics such as the Kyongju site, and 3) re-researching and publishing Korean historical documents. As for increasing public participation, the government 1) builds cultural centers in various regions to increase public access to art and culture, 2) increases art festivals, exhibitions, and other cultural activities, and 3) improves art education in schools and encourages the creativity of the younger generation. For the promotion and cooperation of culture at the international level, Korea conducts policy practices, among others; 1) strengthen cultural exchanges with other countries to improve understanding of Korean culture in the world; 2) organizing international art programs and cultural exhibitions abroad, and 3) encouraging creative industries and the export of cultural products such as Korean film, music, and literature. In addition, an important policy carried out by the Korean government is to develop infrastructure and cultural funding schemes. The government established the Council for the Promotion of Culture and Arts and the Foundation for the Promotion of Korean Culture and Arts. Funding sources come from entertainment taxes, museum entrance tickets, and public and private donations. The development of cultural infrastructure includes the construction of museums, theaters, and modern art centers to balance traditional and contemporary culture (UNESCO 1979).

At the same time when South Korea was still at the crossroads of its cultural identity, Indonesia, which has historically been the meeting point of various cultural influences from the east and west, religious and philosophical influences such as Taoism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity have formed a unique cultural identity. The uniqueness of cultural heritage has been realized by Indonesia by confirming it in the constitution as the basis as well as its national cultural policy. With the motto *Bhineka Tunggal Ika, Pancasila* and the 1945 Constitution, Indonesia's cultural heritage has been protected by the state and has become the foundation of national cultural policy. Cultural policy is expressly stated in the sentence that the state advances Indonesia's national culture amid world civilization by guaranteeing the freedom of the community in maintaining and developing its cultural values (1945 Constitution Article 32). However, like South Korea, Indonesia also faces the threat of modernization and

globalization. Local culture is gradually threatened to be displaced by popular culture and modern lifestyles due to the flow of urbanization and incessant industrialization in the context of five-year development. It is further exacerbated by the lack of public awareness, especially among the younger generation, about the need to appreciate and preserve their cultural wealth. Economic development is a priority factor in the lack of financial support for cultural businesses and the development of cultural infrastructure.

Based on UNESCO literature data (1973), Indonesia's cultural micro-policy has integrated the preservation of traditional culture, customs, regional languages and its diverse oral traditions to continue to develop. The recognition of Indonesian as the national language and the language of unity in the 1928 Youth Pledge and officially regulated in the 1945 Constitution Article 36 does not destroy the regional languages inherent in tribes in Indonesia. Even with the establishment of a national language institution (*Pusat Bahasa*), the preservation of regional languages was increasingly guaranteed and became a source of Indonesian language wealth through the establishment of a terminology commission and spelling revision (1972). The research policy by maximizing the role of museum education and cultural preservation efforts has been carried out following the tradition of Dutch scientists who are very interested in cultural heritage in Indonesia. Indonesia has implemented policies to preserve cultural heritage (such as Borobudur and Prambanan), innovative development of performing arts (puppets, dances, and traditional dramas), fine arts (establishment of fine arts academies and exhibitions), music and dance in conservatories, use of media, and cultural programs (art festivals and cultural goodwill). Institutional cultural policy establishes the Directorate General of Culture which oversees the fields of art, art education, archaeology, history, museums, languages, and literature. In addition, the management of museums and cultural sites is carried out by government agencies and receives legal protection (UNESCO, 1973)

2. Park Chung Hee's Government: The First Five-Year Master Plan

Cultural policy to strengthen Korean cultural identity occurred during the 18 years of Park Chung Hee's reign (1961–1979). Park Chung Hee's government, which prioritized economic growth, launched cultural policies in a more proactive manner by establishing laws, institutions, organizations, and public funds related to the cultural sector. In 1973, the Park administration published the Five-Year Master Plan I of Cultural Development to be implemented during the period 1974–1979, as the first comprehensive long-term plan for cultural policy. The main goal of this policy is to generate excellence and access being the main priority of this plan is to build a new cultural identity by highlighting Korean cultural traditions. Inevitably, during the period 1974–1978, 70% of the total public expenditure on the cultural sector was distributed into folk arts and traditional culture. Many people admit that this policy has contributed to strengthening cultural identity. This policy is different from cultural homogenization, although logically the issue of cultural homogenization can occur and become a pressure for Park Chung Hee's cultural policy, as a negative impact of a policy. The output of this policy was felt by the public with the birth of popular culture that was still rooted in Korean identity with a global-oriented distribution. The direct impact can be seen on the competitiveness of traditional Korean culture in the cultural industry in the global community.

Chun Doo Hwan (1980 – 1988): The Role of the State Becomes More Dominant

The strong state support for Korean cultural policy continued in the period of Chun Doo Hwan (1980 – 1988). Even in this Chun Doo Hwan era, the role of the state became very large

and dominant for Korean culture, especially in the field of art. In terms of budget, Chun Doo Hwan's period grew bigger, which signified an increasingly dominant role of the state. As with the Park administration, the formation of a national cultural identity came under great emphasis during Korea's five-year construction in the Chun Doo Hwan era. In contrast to Park's reign, during the Chun reign, culture as a subsidized public good was no longer limited to cultural heritage and traditional arts, but rather extended to contemporary art and everyday life or Korean lifestyle. During his leadership, Chun published two comprehensive plans of cultural policy, namely the New Plan for Cultural Development (1981) and the Cultural Planning in the VI Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development (1986). According to the archives of the Ministry of Culture and Information of South Korea (1986), the main goals of Korean cultural policy are to build cultural identity, promote artistic excellence, improve cultural welfare, promote regional culture, and expand cultural exchanges with other countries.

3. Neoliberalization of South Korean Culture – Pre Hallyu

1) Tae-Woo's Spirit (1988–1993): Culture as Industry

In 1987, the government pledged to reform Korea's constitution and political system, including the direct presidential election system. Former army general Roh Tae-woo was elected president introducing several measures that liberalized the cultural business market, such as a cultural trade dispute with the US. Spirit abolished the exclusive rights of domestic film companies to import and release foreign films (1988), which allowed direct distribution of imported films. This liberalization did not directly grow new players in the cultural industry, as not many chaebols showed interest in opening cultural ventures, there were only a few major players in the era of the Spirit reigning. Since the first five years of cultural development and development planning in the Park Chung-Hee era, Korea has made culture a public good. In the tenure of the Spirit that has liberalized culture, the interest of the big players in cultural endeavors is very low. Thus, in accordance with Pareto's theory, the state takes over the provision of culture for the public. Not only that, but the state is also rearranging the cultural ecosystem after the democratization movement. Although the goal of liberalization is to invite as many cultural business players as possible, state intervention is inevitable, because market players and cultural actors do not have enough ability to fill the void of cultural businesses due to inefficiency. In addition, the transition period for the implementation of regional autonomy government, whose socialization was introduced in 1991 and fully implemented in 1995, so that most of Roh's plans related to the liberalization of cultural businesses were considered unsuccessful. Roh's approach by liberalizing cultural efforts signals the victory of the democratization of cultural expression. The democratization of cultural expression in the reign of the Spirit was marked by the establishment of the 1990 Ten-Year Master Plan for Korean Cultural Development which carried the slogan "culture for all". The main objectives of the master plan are in detail the following: (1) to establish cultural identity, (2) to promote artistic excellence, (3) to enhance cultural welfare, (4) to promote regional culture, (5) to facilitate international cultural exchange, (6) to develop cultural media, and finally, to achieve ethnic reunification (Ministry of Culture, 1990). In particular, the promotion of regional culture, international exchanges, and Korea's reunification cultural policy are emphasized as a continuation of the previous government's policies.

The realization of major steps in the policy of cultural liberalization by the Spirit includes the lifting and relaxation of censorship on cultural products such as the publisher

registration system and the main press law that restricts freedom of expression. In 1990, the Roh government separated cultural affairs into a separate ministry, the Ministry of Culture (MOC). Since then, the government has initiated a series of cultural policies aimed at reducing state interference in the cultural realm as in the previous government. Democratization in the field of culture is also carried out, by giving greater freedom to the public to access their culture. This is detailed in the master plan; Ten Years of Cultural Development in 1990. To provide greater accessibility to culture, the government is providing more art education in schools and expanding infrastructure for artists working in rural and urban areas, including increasing subsidies for traditional cultural heritage. Roh used the 1988 Olympics to promote his culture to the world's citizens by claiming to position South Korea as the cultural center of Asia (Kim, 2021)

Kim Taeyoung (2021) assesses that during the presidency, the spirit of economic liberalization of Korea has intensified, including the cultural industry. Democratization and liberalization, coupled with the still strong private sector in the Korean economy, made the state position more backward and at the same time the advanced private sector took part as a catalyst for the further development of the development of cultural industrialization. However, not a few chaebol circles consider that Roh is overstepping with the plan to reform ownership in tycoon companies to strengthen the dominance of the state economy in private ownership, especially in large corporations that have dominated the country's economy. Roh responded to the public who assessed the high level of corruption in the business world and the dominance of chaebol in the country's economy resulting in the government being unable to coordinate private potential for national economic interests, such as the provision of culture as a public good. Instead, the chaebols criticized the Spirit's economic team for being inefficient and incompetent in collaborating its policies with the private sector.

Kim Young-sam (1993 – 1998): Cultural Industrialization Roh's successor to the government is Kim Young-sam, a long-serving democracy activist and a candidate for the ruling party. Kim Young-sam's government is making efforts to form an ecosystem that can produce cultural industry players in a detailed policy plan to seriously industrialize cultural businesses. Kim Young-sam's government adopted a more systematic and comprehensive approach to cultural industrialization along with a series of measures to deregulate the economy in line with the discourse of neoliberal globalization, without sacrificing civil liberties and democracy. His government managed the economy based on free market principles such as competition and deregulation by emphasizing individual freedom, by introducing policies to open markets and reduce the role of government. Nevertheless, his government also continued to adopt interventionist policies in developing the cultural industry, including establishing a Bureau of Cultural Industry under the Ministry of Culture and Sports and establishing legal frameworks such as the Motion Picture Promotion Act (1995) and the revision of the Law on the Promotion of Culture and the Arts to recognize the cultural industry as part of a strategic economic sector. Kim's government has also encouraged the influx of private investment, particularly from Chaebols such as CJ, Hyundai, and Samsung, into the film and media sectors, introducing business logic into the cultural industry. Hyundai, for example, has a partnership with France's Canal Plus in film distribution, while CJ invests heavily in DreamWorks, and Samsung produces Shiri's film as part of the promotion of national values through popular media. The government also classifies the audiovisual industry as part of the manufacturing sector, allowing

content producers to get tax facilities and access to loans like other heavy industries. With a combination of deregulation, fiscal incentives, and promotion of cultural exports, Kim Young-sam not only liberalized the cultural market but also introduced a framework that allowed cultural industrialization to take place within the national economic structure. These measures significantly shifted the paradigm of cultural policy from a propaganda tool to a strategic economic sector, as well as an important foundation for the emergence of the Korean Wave (Hallyu) in the following decade (Kim, 2021).

4. South Korean Cultural Policy in the Hallyu Era

1) Kim Dae-jung (1998 – 2003) : Korean Image Industry, Vision 21

In the aftermath of the financial crisis that hit Asia (including Indonesia) and South Korea in late 1997, Kim Dae-jung's government focused on economic recovery through a series of neoliberal reforms in the style of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). President-elect Kim Dae-jung realizes the potential of the cultural industry as a new economic sector that can boost Korea's international competitiveness. In the context of globalization and a deep economic crisis, Kim acknowledged that the cultural sector, including media and entertainment, has significant added value, not only in increasing national income but also in strengthening Korea's international image through the Korean Wave (Hallyu). The Kim administration formulated a policy focus on cultural industrialization that combines a neoliberalism approach and a country-building policy. In his speeches, Kim Dae-jung stated that "the cultural industry, especially audiovisual media, has great added value, not only generating profits but will be a tool to promote Korea's image to the world." Therefore, national cultural policies are directed to support the expansion of the cultural sector in the domestic and international markets, including the formation of strategic policies to increase the production and distribution of cultural products abroad. In 1999, Kim Dae-jung's government established the Korea Film Commission (KOFIC), a public body that aims to support the Korean film industry. In addition, in 2000, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT) announced the "Culture Vision of Industry 21", which is the first policy framework comprehensively designed to develop the cultural industry, which includes film, music and other new media, as integral of knowledge-based economic development, and promoted with a strategy, more systematic and sustainable.

One of the important policies in the Kim Dae-jung era was the establishment of the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA) in 2001. The strategic role of this agency is to support the development, promotion, and distribution of Korean cultural products at home and abroad. The government also allocates a large budget to develop the cultural industry, ranging from the production of films, music, games, to other cultural goods such as fashion and souvenirs. Kim Dae-jung's approach to the cultural industry also includes an emphasis on digitalization and information technology, which are considered key to improving global competitiveness. By introducing policies to support the convergence between culture and technology, the Korean government is developing infrastructure that supports the digital cultural sector, such as the development of multimedia content and digital distribution platforms. One example is the investment in the gaming industry and cultural technology that has contributed to the expansion of Hallyu, which has now penetrated international markets, particularly in East Asia. Although Kim Dae-jung's government has tended to give more freedom to the private sector in developing the cultural industry, the state still plays a central role in policymaking and provides incentives and support to steer the cultural sector towards

the international market. The government seeks to remove the obstacles that hinder the global expansion of Korean cultural products, as well as introduce programs to train the workforce in this sector, promote copyright, and introduce policies that accelerate access to global markets.

Overall, the cultural industry policy under Kim Dae-jung's government succeeded in directing the opportunity for the Korean or Hallyu wave. With his policy, the export of Korean culture to the international world is a necessity, thanks to the full support of cultural industrialization. The country has succeeded in transforming the cultural sector into an important pillar of the national economy and introducing Korea as a global cultural powerhouse. These efforts include both direct intervention in funding and supporting the cultural sector, as well as the development of infrastructure that allows Korean cultural products to compete in the international market.

2) Roh Moo-hyun (2003–2008): Softpower Expansion of Hallyu

During Roh Moo-hyun's leadership, cultural policy underwent an important transformation, integrating the principles of democratization, creative economic development, and softpower-based cultural diplomacy. Roh's government continued the policy direction of its predecessor, Kim Dae-jung, by emphasizing the importance of equal access to cultural production and consumption as part of citizens' rights. The cultural strategy of this period is no longer solely positioned as a complement to economic development, but as a national strategic sector that contributes directly to South Korea's economic growth and international projections. To this end, the government invests significant resources in the development of digital infrastructure and communication technology, which is the backbone of the dissemination of cultural content such as television dramas, pop music, and movies to global markets within the framework of Hallyu (Korean Wave). The Spirit Policy is also characterized by the strengthening of cultural institutions and the provision of financial and institutional support to creative industry players, including the strengthening of institutions such as the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA) and support for content research and innovation. In addition, collaboration between the public and private sectors is facilitated to strengthen the competitiveness of Korean cultural products in the international market. In the realm of diplomacy, Roh's government has leveraged the expansion of popular culture as an effective soft power instrument, incorporating culture into foreign policy as part of efforts to expand influence and shape South Korea's positive image on the global stage. Culture serves not only as an expression of national identity, but as a strategic asset in South Korea's contemporary architecture of economic development and diplomacy.

3) Lee Myung-bak (2008 – 2013): Puncak Hallyu, Intervensi Negara

Unlike the previous government which tended to let the cultural industry develop according to market dynamics, Lee Myung-bak chose to intervene more deeply in the Korean cultural industry. As a businessman, Lee brings a "market-friendly" orientation but still prioritizes the state's active role in designing cultural policies for national political and economic goals. Several strategic policies include uniting the Korea Content Commission in the Content Industry Promotion Basic Plan, to mainstream the cultural industry as a high-value-added sector. The Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA) is an institution that directly handles various sectors of popular culture such as animation, games, music, and broadcasting. The government also allocated large investments to create highly competitive "Killer Content" in the global market, as well as support cultural diplomacy through Korean Wave-based national

branding (Hallyu). Lee amended the regulations by liberalizing the media industry, by allowing cross-ownership. Lee positioned culture not only as a creative sector, but also as a strategic tool for the country's image, the expansion of public diplomacy, and the strengthening of Korea's soft power at the global level. It was during Lee's leadership that many people considered Hallyu to have achieved glory based on world trends with the emergence of the song "Gangnam Style" by Psy at the end of 2012. The song gained global popularity and sparked a wider interest in Korean pop culture, including K-pop, K-dramas, and the Korean lifestyle (Roll, 2016).

4) Park Geun-hye (2013 – 2017): Creative Korea

Park Geun-hye continued the institutionalization phase of South Korea's cultural policy by placing culture explicitly within the framework of the "creative economy" as one of the main pillars of national development. Through the vision of "Creative Korea," Park seeks to strengthen connectivity between culture, technology, and innovation as a new foundation for economic growth. One of the manifestations of this policy is the establishment of Creative Economy Innovation Centers in various provinces, to support culture- and technology-based entrepreneurship, as well as encourage collaborative synergy between the government, large companies, and local creative industry players. This approach marks a shift from simply promoting cultural exports towards the development of a sustainable domestic creative ecosystem based on innovation. Park also intensified the use of cultural diplomacy as a soft power instrument through the global expansion of Hallyu, by expanding the network of Korean Cultural Centers abroad and supporting international cultural exchanges. Korean popular culture — such as K-pop, drama, and culinary — has become a strategic medium of public diplomacy. This strengthens South Korea's image as a culturally and technologically advanced country, while increasing its influence in the global community. However, Park Geun-hye is inseparable from serious controversies that have an impact on the cultural sector. The political scandal at the end of his administration, with the intervention of cultural institutions and the imposition of blacklists of critical artists, has tarnished Korea's commitment to the principles of democracy and freedom of expression. This condition has raised criticism of the centralization of power and strong state intervention in the cultural sector, thus creating tensions between the economic-political agenda and democratic principles in the management of cultural policies.

5) Moon Jae-in (2017 – 2022) : Culture as a Basic Right

Moon Jae-in's leadership emphasized a paradigm shift in South Korea's cultural policy, from just an economic instrument or diplomacy to the meaning of culture as a basic right and a democratic space that must be maintained in a participatory and inclusive manner. In this era, it became an important phase in the evolution of Korean cultural policy, with an explicit approach to placing culture within the framework of human rights and participatory democracy. This departs from the criticism of the practice of exclusivity and centralization of power in cultural policies in the previous period. Therefore, Moon reconstructed national cultural governance with the principles of openness, diversity, and social justice. One of the strategic policies implemented is the establishment of a Cultural Diversity Committee, which aims to protect cultural plurality and ensure the participation of marginalized groups, including local cultural communities, minorities, and independent cultural actors, in the policy formulation and implementation process. Cultural rights are affirmed as an integral part of citizens' civil and political rights, through policies that expand public access to cultural facilities and activities,

support local cultural community initiatives, and protect intangible cultural heritage. Moon also strengthened the policy of preserving traditional culture as a strategic step to build an inclusive national identity amid the flow of globalization and penetration of popular culture. This approach places citizens not only as consumers, but also as active subjects in the production of cultural meaning. In the context of cultural globalization and Hallyu, Moon continues to support the expansion of the Korean cultural industry into the global market, but with caution against the possibility of a proliferation of commercial dominance that could threaten the diversity and autonomy of domestic culture. The Korean government considers it necessary to maintain sustainability and balance between the promotion of Korean popular culture (such as K-pop and dramas) with the protection of local cultural values and the development of alternative content. Moon also strengthened cultural diplomacy as part of a softpower strategy, but with an orientation more rooted in the values of peace, dialogue, and solidarity between nations.

6) Yoon Seok-yeol (2022 – 2025)

Yoon Suk-yeol's cultural policy in South Korea, as outlined in the "Cultural Korea 2035" plan, focuses on improving Korean culture on the global stage and adapting to the era of artificial intelligence (AI). Key initiatives include the transformation of the Korean Cultural Center into a complex space, the establishment of Korea Centers in new regions such as Mexico and Vietnam, and the creation of an integrative platform for information about Korea. Furthermore, the plan promotes reading and literature to foster critical thinking and imagination, and aims to expand policy actions that reflect social realities. Broadly speaking, there is no guarantee that Korea's cultural policies will bring similar success in other countries, namely the occurrence of cultural waves with global scope. According to Kim Joosan (2016), no one including the government deliberately planned the Korean wave (Hallyu), or referred to as "unplanned success" and was unwanted. However, there are at least five main factors that make Hallyu possible, namely the existence of cultural policies that can shape the competitiveness of the Korean cultural industry, changes in the political economy in East Asian countries, the emergence of entrepreneurs in the performing business, fragmented government support, and global digital networks. Each of these factors independently contributes in its own way to the success of Hallyu. The fact that Hallyu is not the product of deliberate planning has several important implications for cultural policy and the cultural industry as a learning process, namely, First, freedom of expression, competition, and hybridity are important prerequisites for cultural progress. Second, the world of culture and art is full of uncertainty that makes mechanistic command-and-control policies unworkable. Third, a fundamental shift in policy perspective that transforms from full "control" of government to greater privatization and involvement of the private role, neoliberalization in control. Finally, cultural policy needs to be understood as a risky investment that is prone to failure but at the same time can yield unexpected successes. This Hallyu success story demands sustainable policies that will ensure success is sustainable. So, to compare with the cultural policies of Korea and Indonesia, what is seen is the policy factor that has an impact on Hallyu. To make it easier, here is a comparison of the cultural policies of South Korea and Indonesia.

Table 2. Cultural Policy of South Korea and Indonesia

Reign Period	South Korea	Reign Period	Indonesia
Park Chung-hee (1961–1979)	- The formation of culture as development nationalism. - Homogenization of identity, modernization through culture. - The state dominates the cultural realm; Strict sensors are enforced. - Complementary culture of western industrialization and economic development.	Sukarno (1945–1967)	- Culture as a means of revolution and the formation of national identity. - Emphasizing anti-colonial values, nationalism, and regional cultural integration. - Support for artists and cultural institutions through the establishment of the National Cultural Institute.
Chun Doo-hwan (1980–1988)	- Continued strict cultural control after Gwangju riots. - Media censorship - restriction of space for cultural expression. - There began to be investment in cultural infrastructure after the 1988 Seoul Olympics as a symbol of modernization.	New Order (Suharto, 1967–1998)	- Culture for political stability and development morality. - Focus on the preservation of traditional culture (the framework of "Bhineka Tunggal Ika"). - Modern culture is tightly controlled; BP7 for P4 leveling. - There is no economic industrialization of culture.
Roh Tae-woo (1988–1993)	- Democratic transition: censorship relaxed, separated from government propaganda, state remains dominant. - There is a Ministry of Culture (1990); 10-Year Plan for Cultural Development.	The End of the New Order	- Culture is still within the framework of control and preservation; There has been no paradigm shift to cultural economy. - Access to international cultural products is very limited.
Kim Young-sam (1993–1998)	- Market liberalization, deregulation of the cultural sector, entry of Chaebol in the film and media industry. - Culture is starting to be positioned as an economic sector. - Founding of <i>Motion Picture Promotion Act</i>.	Reform 1998	- The collapse of the New Order opened up the space for freedom of expression. - Cultural initiatives from civil society and regions have begun to emerge, but there is no national policy framework.
Kim Dae-jung (1998–2003)	- Cultural Industrialization (Hallyu), Establishment of KOFIC and KOCCA. - <i>Culture Industry Vision 21</i> launched. - The state is still present, but in a neoliberal approach.	BJ Habibie, Abdurrahman Wahid, Megawati (1999 – 2004)	- Democratization opens up a free cultural space. - Cultural decentralization is more regional. - There is no overarching cultural policy, initiatives are sectoral and sporadic.
Roh Moo-hyun (2003–2008)	- Emphasis on cultural diversity and democratization, market-friendliness and <i>arm's-length principle</i>. - Introduction of the FoF funding system and promotion of autonomous institutions.	Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004 – 2014)	- There is no national cultural law. - Culture has not been seen as a national economic potential. - The country's focus is still on infrastructure development and education.
Lee Myung-bak (2008–2013)	- Culture-based national branding strategy. - Countries actively fund and promote pop culture (K-pop, drama, film). - Culture as a <i>soft power</i> tool and the main export. - A highly interventionist approach.		- Initial preparation of the Cultural Promotion Bill. - The government is beginning to realize the importance of culture, but there has been no implementation of cultural economic policies.
Park Geun-hye (2013–2017)	- Consolidation of national <i>soft power</i> strategy. - Culture capitalized for diplomacy and tourism. - Establishment of <i>Presidential Committee for Cultural Enrichment</i>.	Joko Widodo (2014 – 2024)	- The Enactment of Law No. 5 of 2017 concerning the Advancement of Culture. - Cultural policies began to be national and structured. - Focus on the protection, development, utilization, and fostering of culture.

Reign Period	South Korea	Reign Period	Indonesia
	- Great support for the entertainment industry.		
Moon Jae-in (2017–2022)	- Inclusive culture and cultural justice. - Promotion of digital content (Webtoon, K-Game). - Strengthening global cultural diplomacy beyond Asia.		- Gradual implementation of the Law on the Promotion of Culture.- Establishment of the Indonesiana Fund, Facilitation of the Cultural Sector (FBK). - Cultural promotion is starting to be associated with the creative economy and tourism. - Community involvement and cultural actors are strengthened. - Cultural integration into the national creative economy program (through Bekraf, then the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy). - The main challenges: inter-agency coordination and improvement of cultural infrastructure. - Funding and institutional strengthening still need.
Yoon Suk-yeol (2022 –2025)	- Emphasis on cultural economic sustainability. - Culture as a national strategic force and a leading export. - Support on content innovation and Hallyu expansion beyond Asia.	Prabowo Subianto (2024 – Present)	- Separating cultural affairs as a separate ministry, from the Ministry of Education and Culture to the Ministry of Culture separate from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (Kemendikdasmen), and the Ministry of Education and Science.

From various sources processed, 2025

Similarities and Differences in Cultural Policy

Table 3. Differences in Cultural Policies of South Korea and Indonesia,

No.	Aspects	South Korea	Indonesia
1.	Arts and Culture Education	Arts and culture are included in the curriculum from an early age. Modern art centers and academies are scattered across different regions.	It began to be included after independence. Focus on the preservation of traditions; Uneven infrastructure.
2.	Cultural Diplomacy	Very aggressive through K-Pop, movies, dramas, and international cultural festivals. The cultural softpower strategy is very clear.	Participate in international cultural exchange programs. Cultural promotion strategies are still limited and uncoordinated.
3.	Creative Industry and Cultural Economy	Pushing Hallyu (Korean Wave); culture as the main export. The K-Drama, K-Pop, and K-Fashion industries are growing rapidly globally.	Focus on traditional arts and local crafts. The creative industry is still developing and has not yet become the dominant export sector.
4.	Cultural Institutions	There are professional and focused Korean Culture and Arts Promotion Councils and Foundations.	It is managed by the Directorate General of Culture of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Bureaucratic structure and limitations of inter-agency coordination.
5.	Funding	It is funded from the state budget, entertainment tax, private sponsorship, and the fund system of funds. A large and sustainable budget.	It depends on the state budget and international assistance (e.g. UNESCO). Limited and fluctuating budgets.
6.	Infrastructure Development	Build a modern theater, museum, cultural center with international standards.	Cultural infrastructure is still evolving; museums and art centers are not even.

Table 4. Similarities in South Korean and Indonesian Cultural Policies

No.	Aspects	South Korea	Indonesia
1.	National Identity as a Foundation	Safeguarding cultural heritage from foreign influences. Strengthening national identity through culture.	The principle of Bhineka Tunggal Ika as the foundation of unifying local culture. Culture is used as a tool to unite the nation.
2.	Preservation of Traditional Culture	Supporting gugak, folk dances, and handicrafts. Documentation and re-education of traditional cultures.	Preserving puppets, gamelan, batik, and regional dances. Cultural heritage through education and community.
3.	Infrastructure and Cultural Institutions	Cultural centers, art academies, and state-run professional foundations.	Regional cultural centers, art academies, and cultural research institutes began to develop.
4.	Public Participation	Modern and contemporary art festivals are encouraged as part of the creative economy. Active arts community.	Traditional and contemporary art festivals are supported by the government. Art community-based activities increase.
5.	International Cultural Diplomacy	The Korean Wave has become a tool for global cultural diplomacy. Culture as a leading export.	Involved in UNESCO, world cultural festivals, batik and gamelan exports as cultural diplomacy.
6.	Protection of Cultural Heritage	The protection of historical sites and intangible heritage is very strict. Examples: tea ceremony, kyongju, taekkyeon.	Preservation of Borobudur and Prambanan Temples; collaboration with UNESCO. Protection from illegal trade.

Source: MCST and KCC (2012; 2020)

According to Kim J (2016), policy analysts outside Korea tend to see Hallyu as a product of government policy efforts, which is a false perception. However, that doesn't mean the government doesn't interfere in the Hallyu business at all, but the small support it provides to allow the domestic cultural industry to penetrate overseas, some of which is even too trivial to be called "policies," has never been the result of a well-coordinated effort on the part of the Korean government. Hallyu is nothing but a success that happens by chance at the right time. There are at least five key elements that are important factors in cultural policy, although the five are not a intertwined intertwining of functions. All five independently contributed in their own way to Hallyu's success.

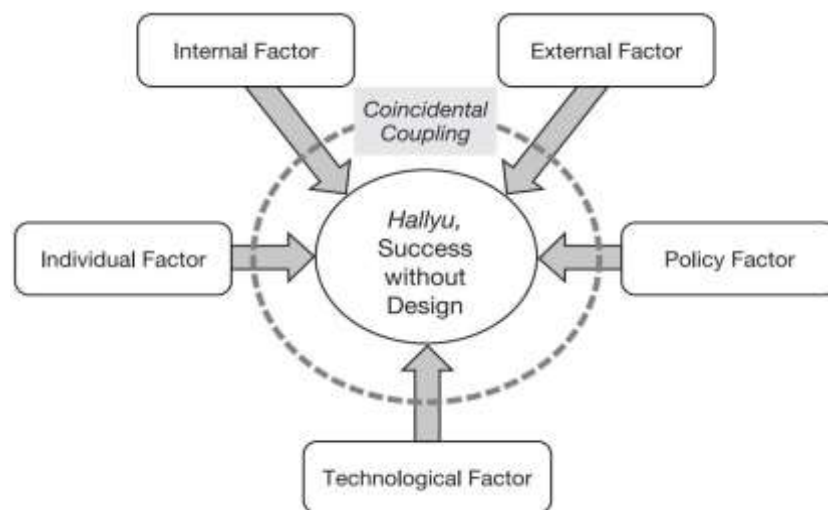


Figure 1. Hallyu, Success Without Design

Source: Kim J (2016)

- a. Internal Factors: Korean Popular Cultural Competitiveness – The most fundamental element that allowed the emergence of Hallyu was the greater competitiveness of Korean popular culture, especially starting in the 1990s. Here the word "competitiveness" refers to cultural content that could capture the minds and capture the hearts of cultural consumers. Hallyu wouldn't have been possible if Korean popular culture wasn't appealing. K-pop in

particular plays an important role, thanks to the tremendous growth of the Korean pop music industry (Korea Cultural Policy Institute, 2001). Building the competitiveness of Korean popular culture in the domestic market is a major driver of Hallyu.

- b. External Factors: Political and Economic Changes in East Asia – Rapid economic development, political democratization, and liberalization in the region have naturally increased consumer demand for popular culture, especially among the younger generation. However, the local cultural industry was unable to provide content that satisfied young people, creating a "cultural void" that served as another driver in the formation of Hallyu.
- c. Individual Factor: Entrepreneurs in the Show Business - No matter how competitive Korean popular culture is, and no matter how thirsty East Asian consumers are for culture, Hallyu would never have been realized without the efforts of its hard-working actors to export Korean pop culture to overseas markets.
- d. Policy Factors: Government Support for Cultural Exports – The government offers assistance from time to time in developing exportable Korean pop culture. In 1995, the Korean government established a cultural industry bureau within the Ministry of Culture. In 1996, the ministry began helping the Korean recording industry to exploit overseas markets.
- e. Technology Factors: Expansion of Global Digital Networks – The development of information technology and the expansion of global digital networks contribute to the spread of Korean popular culture around the world, especially K-pop.

CONCLUSION

The success of the Korean wave (*Hallyu*) is often viewed as a fortunate coincidence, yet the government's strong role in cultural policy was crucial. Key factors included high government support for cultural exports, fostering competitiveness in Korean popular culture, and promoting cultural democratization and liberalization, which broadened public access and encouraged cultural entrepreneurs to thrive globally. The state fully backed the development of a global digital network infrastructure and decisively strengthened institutions by creating new ones and providing financial support to build a vibrant cultural ecosystem. Notably, South Korea's consistent implementation of long-term Cultural Development Plans, regardless of government changes, played a critical role in sustaining this success. Future research could explore how Indonesia might adapt such long-term, consistent cultural policy frameworks to enhance its own cultural ecosystem and global cultural competitiveness.

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