2023 ASEAN-KOREA ACADEMIC ESSAY CONTEST

COMPILATION OF WINNING ESSAYS

ASEAN-KOREA CENTRE

2023
ASEAN-KOREA
ACADEMIC ESSAY CONTEST
THEME

Theme

Strengthening ASEAN-Korea Strategic Partnership in a Changing Global Landscape

Sub-Themes

1. Current Discourse and Perceptions on ASEAN-Korea Relations and Ways to Improve Perceptions

2. Synergies in Digital and Green Initiatives for Sustainable and Mutually Beneficial ASEAN-Korea Partnership
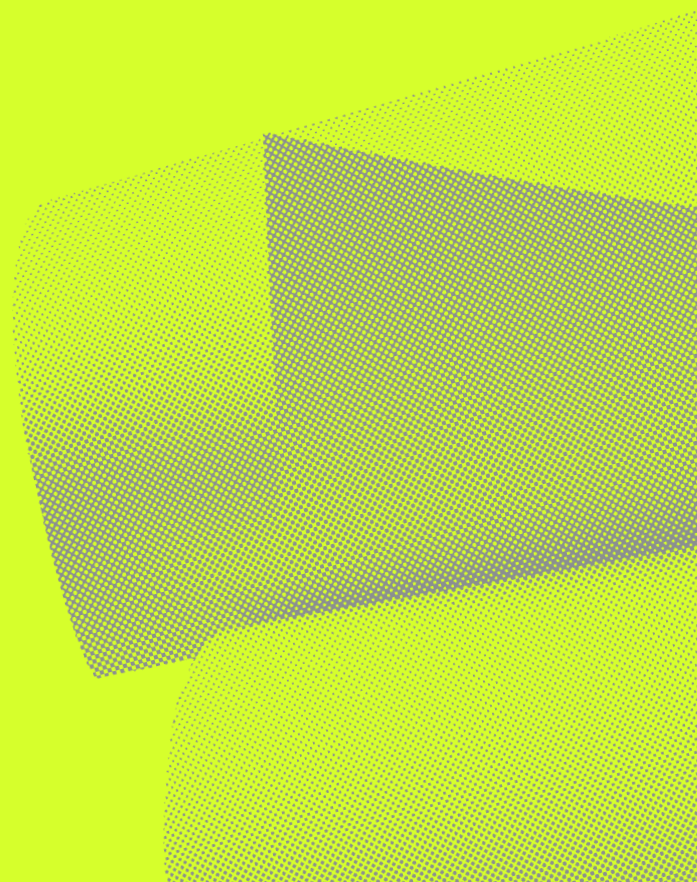
2023
ASEAN-KOREA
ACADEMIC ESSAY CONTEST
LIST OF WINNERS

Grand Prize (1)

Adilla Zalfaa Febriana & Talitha Fainaya Rahma
INDONESIA
Utilizing The Online Community through ASEAN-KNECT:
Intercultural Competence Development in ASEAN and Korean Youths

Excellence Prize (1)

Le Thi Trang
VIETNAM
Reshaping Korean Youth Perception toward ASEAN : The Role of Media

Merit Prize (1)

Wendi Wiliyanto & Widhi Hanantyo Suryadinata
INDONESIA
Green Energy Transition in ASEAN-ROK:
The Nexus of Circular Economy Principles and Digitisation on
Waste Management

Special Mention Award (5)

Ade Meirizal & Cindy Juliana
INDONESIA
Asia's Emerging Space Actor: ROK-ASEAN on Satellite for
Environmental Protection Cooperation and Sustainability

Rizky C. Anugrah
INDONESIA
Winning Hearts and Taste Buds:
Improving ASEAN-Korea Youth Perception Through Culinary Exchanges

Yisag Kim & Jong Hyuk Choi
REPUBLIC OF KOREA
Analysis of Korean Discourse and Perceptions on ASEAN using
LDA Topic Modeling: Analyzing Korean News Coverage and
Discussing How Korean Perceptions on ASEAN can be Enhanced

Isabelle Pia Sison
PHILIPPINES
From Script to Society: The Impact of Korean Media's ASEAN
Representation on Shaping Cross-Cultural Perceptions –
The Philippine Context

Thuc Anh Ta
VIETNAM
The Role of the Entertainment Industry in
Bridging the Perception Gap between Korean and ASEAN Youth

GRAND PRIZE

**Adilla Zalfaa Febriana &
Talitha Fainaya Rahma**

INDONESIA

*Utilizing The Online Community
through ASEAN-KNECT:
Intercultural Competence
Development in ASEAN and
Korean Youths*

Utilizing The Online Community through ASEAN-KNECT: Intercultural Competence Development in ASEAN and Korean Youths

Adilla Zalfaa Febriana & Talitha Fainaya Rahma
University of Indonesia

Abstract

The Republic of Korea (RoK or Korea) has experienced rapid industrialization and established global partnerships, including the ASEAN-RoK partnership. While this partnership has led to numerous benefits, such as trade and tourism, Korea's increasing diversity due to foreign migration poses challenges. Despite a growing number of foreigners residing in Korea, the country has not fully embraced multiculturalism. Discrimination against certain groups of immigrants persists, impacting the perception of ASEAN-RoK partnership among ASEAN countries and Korean youths. Therefore, this paper proposes an online community program to develop intercultural competence among ASEAN countries and Korean youths using the Intercultural Experiential Learning scheme. It offers a sociable and usable environment where youths can interact, learn, and develop their intercultural competence through an online community. This initiative aims to bridge the gap by complementing existing programs with an intercultural learning program that is sustainable, accessible, engages youths, and facilitates cultural learning to develop youths' intercultural competence. It emphasizes the importance of both traditional diplomacy and technologically-enhanced diplomacy efforts in developing intercultural competence among ASEAN countries and Korean youths. Finally, the paper recommends the development of standardized intercultural competence programs and the integration of intercultural learning into school curricula to further support youth development in this area.

Keywords
Intercultural Competence, Misperception, Prejudice, ASEAN, Republic of Korea, Intercultural Experiential Learning, Online Community

Background

The Republic of Korea (Korea hereafter) is one of the few Asian countries that experienced industrialization very rapidly (D'Costa, 2015). Having delivered exponential growth and development, Korea began building global partnerships with countries worldwide, including the ASEAN-RoK partnership initiated in 1986 through Dialogue Relations. The partnership has been going strong for decades, exhibiting remarkable benefits for both parties, such as trading, investment, and tourism (Rosland, 2020). Benefiting from this partnership, Korea's rapid development in the early 1990s marked the beginning of its popularity among global citizens, shown by the increasing number of foreign migrants who picked Korea as their destination to seek residence and employment. This phenomenon reached the point where it is said that the country had more foreigners come to Korea instead of Koreans leaving the country (D'Costa, 2015). The number of foreigners residing in Korea keeps increasing, shown by reports saying that more than half a million foreigners lived in Korea in 2006, reached one million in 2007, and then went to more than two million in 2019, representing 4.9% of the total Korea population (Kim, 2012; Yoon et al., 2008). Seeing the high number of foreigners residing in Korea, it is only natural that one would think Korea has become a multicultural and diverse country. However, this only stands true for the latter. Shin (2013) states that Korea might have become more diverse, but that does not make the country tolerant of diversity; it has yet to become a multicultural society at its heart.

A survey done by the Seoul Development Institute discovered that 25.9% of Southeast Asian immigrants living in Korea faced discrimination, particularly those with darker skin (Brown & Koo, 2015). Such behaviors serve as a poor example for Korean youths and have the potential to influence their perception of the ASEAN-RoK partnership, thus posing a risk to the future of this partnership. This negative impact is evident in a survey titled "Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youths", revealing that while ASEAN youths perceive Korea favorably, this favorability is not reciprocal (Yoon et al., 2021). Korean youths often associate ASEAN with developing countries, high temperatures, and poverty, with only 41.65% holding a favorable attitude towards ASEAN countries. On the contrary, 73.5% of ASEAN youths view Korea favorably and know much about the country and its culture. These results align with our qualitative research finding with a 22-year-old Korean youth who stated that most Korean youths do not view ASEAN countries favorably, highlighting a gap in perceptions between the two regions. Given their crucial role as the next generation in fostering ASEAN-RoK's partnerships, it is necessary for youths—those aged 15–35 years old— to develop their abilities to behave effectively in cross-cultural situations,

known as intercultural competence. This competency could help youths better understand different cultures and develop their efficacy to interact and behave regardless of cultural differences. This is where the ASEAN-RoK partnership comes into play and saves the day.

Through numerous educational programs—such as culture and arts-related interchange, exchange of mass culture, and holding youth exchange programs—ASEAN-RoK has put a great effort into fixing the misperception that still prevails today. However, Koreans' reluctance to accept foreigners is still considered high and has increased in the past four years, which indicates poor intercultural competence (Yoon, 2021; Hammer, 2012). This shows that simply immersing oneself in another country and its culture is not enough to develop youths' intercultural competence. One possible reason for this issue is the limitations of current cultural programs. For example, ASEAN-RoK youth initiatives have mostly lasted for only a few days to weeks, lacking preparation pre-program and continuity post-program. Additionally, strict institutional procedures have limited accessibility and participation (Anantasirikiat, 2016). Therefore, there is a need for a new initiative that complements existing programs; one that lasts long, transcends location and time boundaries, engages youths, and facilitates cultural learning to develop youths' intercultural competence.

This paper proposes a comprehensive online community program that makes networking and intercultural competence learning easy and possible for all youths. Through this community, youths with the same interest—learning about ASEAN countries and Korean culture and networking—will be facilitated with a learning program to enhance their intercultural competence while also making real connections with ASEAN and Korean youths anytime with ease. This online community can be utilized for ASEAN and Korean youths who will participate in exchange programs to prepare themselves to interact with international youths, youths who have participated and want to maintain connections, and youths who do not yet have the resources to go on an exchange program and still want to make connections with their global counterparts.

Framework

This paper presents a fresh perspective on developing mutual cultural understanding among ASEAN and Korean youths through an online community dedicated to fostering intercultural competence. Intercultural competence refers to the ability to shift and adapt one's mind and behavior across cultural differences and similarities (Hammer, 2012). Intercultural competence has become increasingly necessary in

every aspect of our lives, especially in ASEAN and RoK's diplomacy, where globalization is the fundamental pillar of the country's growth. Furthermore, intercultural competence is regarded as the main attribute that helps individuals successfully interact with different people in diversified environments (Sarwari & Wahab, 2017).

The concept of intercultural competence—interchangeable with cultural intelligence—has been developed in different perspectives, such as linear and non-linear perspectives. However, Bennett (2017) argues that it might be better described more nonlinearly because intercultural competence is best viewed as a process. One of them is Chen and Starosta (1999), who view intercultural competence as a multilayered construct consisting of three interrelated aspects: intercultural sensitivity, intercultural awareness, and intercultural adroitness (Zhang and Zhou, 2019). These three interrelated aspects are the key characteristics of a highly interculturally competent person, where individuals can perform appropriate and effective intercultural exchanges in a diversified environment (Ameli and Molaei, 2012). Subsequently, it will be easier for them to identify, address, and alter their dysfunctional thinking—for example, misperception—towards other cultures.

Within the above perspective, developing intercultural competence will be the main priority for ASEAN and RoK's youths. Yang (2017) argues that intercultural competence education best applies to Intercultural Experiential Learning (IEL) design from Kolb's experiential learning theory (1984). Intercultural experiential learning refers to the process of acquiring intercultural competence—the cognitive knowledge, communicative skills, and values and beliefs necessary for appropriate and effective interaction with members from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). It consists of the four stages of the intercultural experiential learning cycle, where individuals can gain concrete experience by interacting with members of other cultures, observe host culture members' behavior patterns and communicative styles, reflect on the observation to distill generalizations for behaving and communicating in intercultural settings, and actively experiment with the newly acquired knowledge, along with adapt their behavior and communication styles in new cultural situations.

In the educational context, for the purposes of our study, IEL provides a useful framework for analyzing and structuring to what extent intercultural competence can be fostered and developed. On the other side, we adopt the technology affordance perspective to explain the use of an online community to deliver an intercultural competence program for ASEAN and Korean youths. This perspective explains what individuals with a particular purpose can do with technology, specifically

online platforms or social media applications (Majchrzak & Markus, 2012). Online platforms afford a persistent, pervasive, and long-lasting way of communication as it makes information flow for an extended period of time and spreads worldwide beyond the limitations of geographical boundaries (Sleeman, 2016). Therefore, utilizing an online platform for intercultural competence development would be beneficial as it encourages interaction, collaboration, information and resource sharing, voluntary participation, and intercultural learning from youths (Greenhow & Lewin, 2015).

Discussion and Analysis

The importance of intercultural competence (IC) is inevitable in the globalized world, where communities are becoming culturally diverse, and individuals are expected to interact appropriately and effectively during intercultural exchanges. ASEAN and RoK have been putting abundant efforts into preparing youths—the digital generation—to gain more international exposure and help youths practice their intercultural competence in the real world. Intercultural competence will be beneficial for youths in ASEAN-RoK, not only to connect and make a wide network but also to learn a wider perspective in the globalized world. Holmes and Neill (2012) also highlighted that interculturally competent individuals tend to have a deep self-understanding regarding their culture and nationality; they will learn about other cultures and promote their own culture. Barrett et al. (2014) emphasize that youths with intercultural competence will also have the potential to act as "mediators" or "successors" among culturally different people by interpreting and explaining different worldviews. In this matter, interculturally competent youths from ASEAN countries and Korea can potentially be agents of change to help address and improve the misperception between two counterparts. To encourage youth to be the agents of change to foster the collaboration between ASEAN-RoK better, we offer a community-based solution that improves intercultural competence using an intercultural experiential learning scheme by Kolb (1984).

Intercultural Experiential Learning (IEL)

To develop intercultural competence, an intercultural experiential learning scheme that is developed from Kolb's learning theory (1984) will be used. IEL scheme emphasizes that experience forms the foundation of learning in two fundamental processes, "grasping the experience" and "transforming the experience into knowledge" (Zhang & Zhou, 2019). Within this scheme, cultural learning will be viewed as a holistic process

through the integrated functioning of the organism, involving thinking, feeling, perceiving, and behaving. Li et al. (2013) empirically verified the relationship between experiential learning and cultural intelligence, supporting that experiential learning fits well with the complexity of intercultural competence intervention design across cultures.

According to Yang (2017), intercultural experiential learning denotes any experiences that allow individuals to gain intercultural understanding and skills involving direct and indirect cultural experiences. Examples of indirect cultural experiences are intercultural simulation games (Wiggins, 2012) and observation of other people's behavior in intercultural settings (Hoover & Giambatista, 2009). While transforming knowledge from indirect cultural experiences or vicarious intercultural experiential learning to real skills, facilitators must provide youths with complete and accurate information regarding the situations so that youths will have an intact depiction of the real multicultural environment, thus gaining the best experiences regarding intercultural competence.

By using intercultural experiential learning, youths will participate in the four learning stages of the experiential learning cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Yang, 2017). In the first stage, youths will have a concrete experience in a multicultural environment by joining an online community involving youths from ASEAN and Korea. Furthermore, youths will experience simulation activities in multicultural settings, such as case studies, focus group discussions, and roleplay. These activities are meant to evoke insights regarding youths' current intercultural competence level. Therefore, facilitators will be able to identify gaps in the youths' intercultural competence and help them reflect on these experiences in the next stage.

In the second stage, youths will do a reflective observation where they will be given carefully designed questions by facilitators to reflect on the activity they did in the previous stage. Through guided reflection, facilitators will help them recognize areas where they may need to improve in terms of their intercultural competence. Youths are expected to gain a thoughtful understanding of how to face similar multicultural situations in real life.

In the abstract conceptualization stage, facilitators will give lectures about intercultural competence by linking their concrete experiences with related concepts. Youths are expected to be able to use logic, abstract concepts, and quantitative analysis to draw theoretical generalizations to real-life situations.

In the last stage, youths will actively experiment, where they

implement their knowledge gained from the previous three stages in real-life situations. This stage is meant for youths to experience trials and errors while practicing their recently gained knowledge about being interculturally competent. Youths need to be able to take risks, responsibilities, and actions to influence people and situations, along with setting their goals to gain more comprehensive knowledge. Learning through a learning cycle is flexible, allowing youths to go back and forth among the stages to search for accurate explanations of the experiences encountered and effective approaches to understand the rationale and choose the best solutions.

Similar programs aimed at developing intercultural competence have been implemented in various countries. For instance, Jackson (2011) highlighted the existence of a 5-week program in some universities in England that focuses on intercultural experiential learning. This program aims to facilitate cultural exchange and enhance intercultural competence, both in online and offline formats. Students participating in this program are required to complete fieldwork courses, which include projects, assignments, and interview tasks. These components equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for effective interaction with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Additionally, Zwerg-Villegas and Martínez-Díaz (2016) reported the presence of a Global Virtual Teams (GVT)-based intercultural experiential learning course offered by a university in Cambodia. This course spans a duration of two months and is designed to provide students with a constructivist and student-centered learning experience, incorporating technologically-enhanced communication tools. Students enrolled in this program engage in activities such as role-playing, simulations, interviews, and problem-based learning. These activities enable students to identify and analyze effective solutions to challenges encountered in multicultural settings. Consequently, participants in this program reported a significant reduction in perceived cultural-related difficulties when interacting with individuals from other countries. Hence, this paper introduces an intercultural experiential learning program centered around an online community, aimed at fostering intercultural competence among young individuals from ASEAN countries and the Republic of Korea (RoK). Further information regarding the program is available in the Appendix B.

IEL in the Online Community

To create an optimal learning environment, Hammer (2012) stated that youths whose intercultural learning and development are facilitated online (through various online educational programs) made considerably higher gains from the learning. Therefore, this paper

suggests that an online community that is accessible regardless of time and location is needed to provide youths with a lasting platform to learn and develop their intercultural competence, connect with their global counterparts, and experience cultures different from their own. There are two ways in which youths' intercultural competence can be improved in the online community. Firstly, as explained in the previous section, this program will provide youths with a comprehensive intercultural competence development program that will be delivered through an online platform such as social media (e.g., Discord, Slack). An online community format is chosen as it aligns with one of the program's objectives: to provide an accessible space for intercultural learning, allowing youths to maximize their learning opportunity with the resources they have. Moreover, this learning format grants youth both autonomy and guidance (Flowers et al., 2019). The program allows them to establish their own learning goal and adjust their time and place for learning (Bdair, 2021). Facilitators will also provide guidance to the youths' learning throughout the program and support them in reflecting on their acquired knowledge, ensuring the proper development of their intercultural competence (Flowers et al., 2019).

Secondly, developing youths' intercultural competence through an online community instead of online courses allows youths to engage in regular communication with members of other cultures (Lewis & O'Dowd, 2016) rather than passively consuming instructional videos. It encourages interaction, collaboration, information and resource sharing, voluntary participation, and intercultural learning from youths (Greenhow & Lewin, 2015). Community members can learn together and implement what they have learned by doing their tasks or simply interacting with those from different cultures. By interacting and making bonds with community members, ASEAN and Korean youths can gain a better understanding of each other's cultures, how people from other countries live, what matters to them, how their languages work, and many more. (Komoldi et al., 2007). Increasing understanding and familiarity with other cultures, along with guided learning and reflection by facilitators, will then reduce youths' prejudice and stereotypes against ASEAN and Korean citizens.

As an example, there has been an online intercultural learning project, named Integrating Telecollaborative Networks into Foreign Language Higher Education (INTENT), that is applied in Europe's higher educational institutions with the aim of providing students an accessible and interactive intercultural learning experience (Lewis & O'Dowd, 2016). Participants in this project attested that upon its completion, they are confident in the potential of an online-based intercultural exchange to provide an authentic intercultural learning experience for youths.

Engaging in direct interactions with international peers helps them broaden their network and improve their intercultural communication skills simultaneously. Another example is an online community named ASEAN Youth Organization (AYO ASEAN) which is run by youths from and for ASEAN countries youths. The community provides programs that are relevant to multicultural settings, such as AYO Academy to unleash the potential of youths in ASEAN by providing online courses.

IEL in the Online Community

To build a successful online community, the sociability and usability of the community play a crucial role (Preece, 2001). Sociability refers to the meaningfulness of the interaction between community members by making sure that all members are engaged, actively participate in community activities, and behave well (Kim et al., 2008), while usability refers to how effectively and efficiently community members can interact with each other on the platform used to run the community (Komoldi et al., 2007). Based on these essential attributes of an online community, several technical aspects should be provided within the community, such as the community engagement strategies, the platform used to run the community, and how the community will run in the long term.

Firstly, the engagement of members within an online community plays a pivotal role not only in establishing the community itself but also in maintaining the community over the long term. One way to sustain the community is to provide a supportive learning and networking environment for members, which serves as the main purpose of this community. According to Dolan et al. (2017), an online community that provides an inclusive, welcoming, and structured yet flexible learning environment can increase members' engagement with their learning experience, leading them to become more engaged in the community's activities. In addition, shared learning spaces that are available in an online community can help youths effectively assess the quality of their peers' contributions, thus making them motivated to exchange more intricate information (Kirste & Holtbrügge, 2019). For instance, in this community, the platform will provide youths with specific channels for text-based communication and voice/video calls. These features enable them to engage with their global counterparts casually and also put their knowledge into practice by directly interacting with people from different cultures. They can undergo their intercultural competence development program through a designated learning channel and then use other channels to converse with fellow youths from ASEAN and Korea. This approach helps young individuals become more comfortable with everyday communication among their international peers.

Aside from providing a suitable learning environment, it is also important to encourage voluntary and continuous contributions from members (Dong et al., 2020) to ensure the community's continuity. To serve its main purpose as a space for ASEAN and Korean youths to enhance their intercultural competence, the community has to encourage members to actively participate and contribute to the learning process so that progress can be tracked and new insights can be produced. This way, members will not only learn from the facilitators but also among themselves by holding active discussions on the platform. To keep members motivated, an incentive system should be implemented. One way to do this is to reward members who give consistent contributions by giving them some merit badge. Receiving a merit badge to commemorate an achievement will improve one's status standing in the community, thus encouraging active participation. It is seen as a goal that community members aspire to continually enhance (Goes et al., 2016). For example, members who consistently submit their individual assignments ahead of time will be given a reward and a shout-out on the community's announcement board channel. However, it is also important to note that rewards should be given in accordance with the previously established and announced incentive system.

The sociability of the community is also heavily influenced by the usability of the platform used to run the community (Komoldi et al., 2007). Using a platform that is easy to use, navigate, maintain, and can afford a comfortable learning experience is also necessary to maintain members' engagement in the community (Sun et al., 2014). The platform should be able to facilitate all learning activities to enhance youths' intercultural competence, such as having a video call feature to do synchronous discussions with facilitators and even converse with members; a text-based communication feature to allow facilitators and members to engage in conversations and for moderators to announce rules and announcement; and other advanced features to build a user-friendly online community. Moderators can also provide members with a comprehensive tutorial to navigate the platform.

Finally, the sustainability of the community determines the ultimate outcome of the community itself and all its learning processes. To ensure the sustainability of the intercultural development program beyond its one-month curriculum, the community will provide multiple enrollment opportunities in batches. ASEAN and Korean youths can enroll in the program during batch openings and become community members. They can use the platform to interact with fellow members and practice their learning from the program. Upon program completion, they can stay as community members, continuing to use the platform to practice skills

and expand global networks by keeping close bonds with community members. Members who have completed their learning program can also apply to become co-facilitators or moderators of the community through a rigorous selection process to ensure their competence.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Even though ASEAN and Korea have made significant progress in enhancing their mutual relations in recent decades, considerable effort remains required to address the cultural misperceptions and detrimental biases among Southeast Asians in RoK. Such commitment is crucial if both parties aim to deepen their socio-cultural relations. This requirement aligns with the growing influence of youth in both regions and the emergence of online platforms, which opens doors for more inclusive and accessible diplomatic initiatives. Consequently, there is a pressing urgency to leverage the unique capabilities of emerging technology to enhance intercultural competence among youths. Substantial support from governmental and non-governmental entities is imperative to achieve this vision. It is worth emphasizing that digital tools should complement traditional aspects of diplomatic efforts to remain relevant within the target audience and the broader socio-political context (Barston, 2019). With this in mind, this paper recommends two primary policies to enhance diplomatic relations between ASEAN and RoK.

Aside from developing the intercultural competence of ASEAN and Korean youths at the community level, it is essential to establish methods for developing youths' intercultural competence at the institutional level facilitated by the ASEAN-Korea Centre, offering youths a more comprehensive and holistic program using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). Youths should have access to a standardized method to develop their intercultural competence thoroughly. One way to do this is by providing youths with a cultural program that properly assesses their current intercultural competence using the IDI, reviews and evaluates their abilities based on the results, and gives them a well-structured Intercultural Development Plan (IDP). Through such a program, youths and the AKC can gain insight into youths' intercultural competence levels, which can then be utilized to formulate personalized IDPs, equipping youths for meaningful engagement in real multicultural scenarios and thus fostering ASEAN-RoK partnership. For instance, a nursing university in the United States has successfully implemented an intercultural competence program for its faculty members and students with the purpose of evaluating their intercultural competence using the personalized IDP (Kruse et al., 2014). The outcomes of this program can

serve as a self-reflection tool and a means to trigger awareness regarding one's cultural development, attitudes, and values. At the institutional level, the outcome can serve as a framework for assessing institutional policies related to cultural programs, procedures, and curricula design, ultimately striving to produce interculturally competent individuals who can contribute effectively to the broader community.

Another method for fostering intercultural competence among youths is integrating intercultural learning into schools' curricula. As societal diversity continues to grow and become increasingly relevant, the significance of having intercultural learning embedded into schools' curricula becomes more apparent (Layne & Teng, 2022). The development of certain aspects of intercultural competence, such as intercultural sensitivity, can begin as early as elementary school. There has been a mandatory curriculum called the ICC curriculum (Intercultural Competence and Communication) since 2012 in the United States which is designed to teach students how to excel in international and multicultural environments, with a strong emphasis on cultivating knowledge, emotional awareness, and practical skills related to intercultural competence (Punteney, 2016). Likewise, various other countries are also making concerted efforts to help students acquire intercultural competence, as seen in one of the ASEAN countries leading in multiculturalism, Singapore. Singapore has adopted various educational activities, including role-playing, case studies, interviews, discussions, and more, as part of its approach to vicarious learning in intercultural competence (Layne & Teng, 2022). Therefore, ASEAN countries and RoK must consider intercultural competence a mandatory course in formal schools so students will have a better understanding of intercultural competence in their college life.

References

Ameli, S. R., & Molaei, H. (2012). Religious affiliation and intercultural sensitivity: Interculturality between Shia & Sunni Muslims in Iran. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 36(1), 31–40. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2010.11.007

Anantasirikiat, S. (2016). Making friends with ASEAN countries through korea foundation's educational programs. In *Korea's Public Diplomacy.* Hangang Network.

Barrett, M. D., Huber, J., & Reynolds, C. (2014). *Developing Intercultural Competence through Education*. Council of Europe Publishing.

Barston, R. P. (2019). *Modern diplomacy.* Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Bdair, I. (2021). Nursing students' and faculty members' perspectives about online learning during COVID-19 pandemic: a qualitative study. *Teaching and Learning in Nursing*, 16(3). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.teln.2021.02.008

Bennett, M. (2017). Development model of intercultural sensitivity. In *International encyclopedia of intercultural communication*. Wiley.

Brown, N. A., & Koo, J. W. (2015). Negotiating a Multicultural Identity in Monocultural South Korea: Stigma and the Pressure to Racially "Pass." *Sungkyun Journal of East Asian Studies*, 15(1), 45–68. https://doi.org/10.21866/esjeas.2015.15.1.003

Chen, G.-M., & Starosta, W. (1999). A review of the concept of intercultural awareness. *Communication Studies Faculty Publications*. https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/com_facpubs/37/

D'Costa, A. P. (2015). After-development Dynamics: South Korea's Contemporary Engagement with Asia. In *Google Books*. Oxford University Press. https://books.google.co.id/books?hl=en&lr=&id=ihPsCQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA185&dq=foreigners+and+korea&ots=tHEzE1GalI&sig=PY-c3lDkKAtLL4QSn8HY1lROpLM&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=foreigners%20and%20korea&f=false

Dolan, J., Kain, K., Reilly, J., & Bansal, G. (2017). How Do You Build Community and Foster Engagement in Online Courses? *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 2017(151), 45–60. https://doi.org/10.1002/tl.20248

Dong, L., Huang, L., Hou, J. (Jove), & Liu, Y. (2020). Continuous content contribution in virtual community: The role of status-standing on motivational mechanisms. *Decision Support Systems*, 132, 113283. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dss.2020.113283

Flowers, S., Kelsen, B., & Cvitkovic, B. (2019). Learner autonomy versus guided reflection: How different methodologies affect intercultural development in online intercultural exchange. *ReCALL*, 31(3), 221–237. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0958344019000016

Goes, P. B., Guo, C., & Lin, M. (2016). Do Incentive Hierarchies Induce User Effort? Evidence from an Online Knowledge Exchange. *Information Systems Research*, 27(3), 497–516. https://doi.org/10.1287/isre.2016.0635

Greenhow, C., & Lewin, C. (2015). Social media and education: reconceptualizing the boundaries of formal and informal learning. Learning, *Media and Technology*, 41(1), 6–30. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2015.1064954

Hammer, M. R. (2012). Additional cross-cultural validity testing of the Intercultural Development Inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35(4), 474–487. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2011.02.014

Holmes, P., & O'Neill, G. (2012). Developing and evaluating intercultural competence: Ethnographies of intercultural encounters. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 36(5), 707–718. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2012.04.010

Hoover, J. D., & Giambatista, R. C. (2009). Why Have we Neglected Vicarious Experiential Learning? *Developments in Business Simulation and Experiential Learning: Proceedings of the Annual ABSEL Conference*, 36. https://absel-ojs-ttu.tdl.org/absel/article/view/336

Jackson, J. (2011). Cultivating cosmopolitan, intercultural citizenship through critical reflection and international, experiential learning. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 11(2), 80–96. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2011.556737

Kim, A. E. (2012). Global Migration and South Korea: Foreign workers, Foreign Brides and the Making of a Multicultural Society. *In Migration: Policies, Practices, Activism*. Routledge.

Kim, H., Yong Park, J., & Jin, B. (2008). Dimensions of online community attributes. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 36(10), 812–830. https://doi.org/10.1108/09590550810901008

Kirste, L., & Holtbrügge, D. (2019). Experiential Learning in the Digital Context: An Experimental Study of Online Cultural Intelligence Training. *Journal of Teaching in International Business*, 30(2), 147–174. https://doi.org/10.1080/08975930.2019.1663775

Komlodi, A., Hou, W., Preece, J., Druin, A., Golub, E., Alburo, J., Liao, S., Elkiss, A., & Resnik, P. (2007). Evaluating a cross-cultural children's online book community: Lessons learned for sociability, usability, and cultural exchange. *Interacting with Computers*, 19(4), 494–511. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intcom.2007.03.001

Kruse, J. A., Didion, J., & Perzynski, K. (2014). Utilizing the Intercultural Development Inventory® to develop intercultural competence. *SpringerPlus*, 3(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/2193-1801-3-334

Layne, H., & Teng, S. S. (2022). Developing Intercultural Mindedness through an Experiential Learning Activity—A Case Study from Singapore. *Education Sciences*, 12(3), 212. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12030212

Lewis, T., & O'Dowd, R. (2016). Online Intercultural Exchange: policy, pedagogy, practice. In R. O'Dowd & T. Lewis (Eds.), *oro.open.ac.uk*. Routledge. http://oro.open.ac.uk/47040/

Li, M., Mobley, W. H., & Kelly, A. (2013). When Do Global Leaders Learn Best to Develop Cultural Intelligence? An Investigation of the Moderating Role of Experiential Learning Style. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 12(1), 32–50. https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2011.0014

Majchrzak, A., & Markus, M. L. (2012). *Technology Affordances and Constraints in Management Information Systems (MIS)*. Papers.ssrn.com. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2192196

Preece, J. (2001). Sociability and usability in online communities: Determining and measuring success. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 20(5), 347–356. https://doi.org/10.1080/01449290110084683

Punteney, K. (2016). Deliberations on the development of an intercultural competence curriculum. *Intercultural Education*, 27(2), 137–150. https://doi.org/10.1080/14675986.2016.1145457

Rosland, N. N. A. (2020). "New Regionalism": ASEAN – RoK partnership in socio-cultural and education exchanges. *AEI INSIGHTS*, 6(1), 55–68. https://ejournal.um.edu.my/index.php/AEIINSIGHTS/article/view/31642

Sarwari, A. Q., & Abdul Wahab, M. N. (2017). Study of the relationship between intercultural sensitivity and intercultural communication competence among international postgraduate students: A case study at University Malaysia Pahang. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 3(1). https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2017.1310479

Sleeman, J., Lang, C., & Lemon, N. (2016). Social Media Challenges and Affordances for International Students. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 20(5), 391–415. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315316662975

Spitzberg, B. H., & Changnon, G. (2009). Conceptualizing Intercultural Competence. In *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence* (pp. 2–52). SAGE Publications.

Sun, N., Rau, P. P.-L., & Ma, L. (2014). Understanding lurkers in online communities: A literature review. Computers in Human Behavior, 38, 110–117. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2014.05.022 Wiggins, B. E. (2011). Toward a Model for Intercultural Communication in Simulations. *Simulation & Gaming*, 43(4), 550–572. https://doi.org/10.1177/1046878111414486

Yang, M. (2017). Intercultural Experiential Learning. In *The International Encyclopedia of Intercultural Communication* (pp. 1–11). Wiley-Blackwell. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118783665.ieicc0185

Yoon, I.-J., Song, Y.-H., & Bae, Y.-J. (2008). *South Koreans' Attitudes toward Foreigners, Minorities and Multiculturalism 1*. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/51179964.pdf

Yoon, J.-P., Lee, H., Kim, Y., & Ko, W. (2021). *2021 Survey on Mutual Perception of ASEAN and Korean Youths*. ASEAN-Korea Centre.

Yoon, L. (2022). *South Korea: social exclusion of foreigners 2021*. Statista. https://www.statista.com/statistics/972919/south-korea-social-exclusion-of-foreigners/

Zhang, X., & Zhou, M. (2019). Interventions to promote learners' intercultural competence: A meta-analysis. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 71, 31–47. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2019.04.006

Zwerg-Villegas, A. M., & Martínez-Díaz, J. H. (2016). Experiential Learning with Global Virtual Teams: Developing Intercultural and Virtual Competencies. *Magis. Revista Internacional de Investigación En Educación*, 9(18), 129. https://doi.org/10.11144/javeriana.m9-18.elgv

Appendix A

Operational Framework on Youth-Led Intercultural Experiential Learning (IEL) Program

Online Community
Intercultural Experiential Learning

Concrete Experience	
	Simulation activities in multicultural settings; case studies, focus group discussions, and roleplay.
	Purpose: evoke insights regarding youths' current intercultural competence level

Reflective Observation	
	Facilitators will: • give carefully designed questions for youths to reflect on the activity they did in the previous stage. • help youths recognize their lacking area Purpose: youths gain a thoughtful
	Purpose: understanding of how to face similar multicultural situations in real life

Abstract Conceptualization	
	Facilitators will give lectures about intercultural competence by linking their concrete experiences with related concepts
	Purpose: Youths will be able to use logic, abstract concepts, and quantitative analysis to draw theoretical generalizations to real- life situations

Active Experimentation	
	Youths implement their newly gained knowledge in real-life cultural situations. Youths will experience trials and errors and keep evaluating their competence.
	Purpose: Youths can practice their knowledge in real-life cultural situations and use the experience to keep evaluating and improving their competence.

Appendix B

Topic	Activities
Week 1: Cultural Introduction	Games
Week 2: Misperception between ASEAN and Korea youths	Demonstration
Week 3: Etiquette in ASEAN countries/Korea	Case study
Week 4: Communication Style	Role Play

**Week 1.
Cultural
Introduction:
Games**

No	IEL Stage	Activities	Details	Expected Outcome
1	Concrete Experience	Orientation	General overview tabout the program, rules to follow during the program, and assignments to do during the first week.	The program can run smoothly according to the procedures.
		Introduction	Participants play introduction games (e.g., 2 truths 1 lie) related to their culture. · Selected participant will give 2 truths and 1 lie statements about their culture · Other participants with different cultural backgrounds will guess which statement is the lie · Participants' answers will be used as materials for reflection To comprehend participants' insights, participants will be assigned to complete a maximum 500 words self-reflection essay.	Participants can gain insight about other cultures through direct experiences.
2	Reflective Observation	Online Discussion	Online discussion about the cultural games with volunteers and facilitators to see how their current knowledge about cultures are like. Facilitators will ask participants: · *If they guess correctly*: How did they know the answer? What kind of media/platforms do they use to gain information about culture? · *If they guess incorrectly*: Why did they not know the answer? How do they plan to learn more about the culture in question?	Participants can reflect on their direct experience while being guided by facilitators. Facilitators will make sure participants gain the targeted insight.
3	Abstract Conceptuali-zation	Presentation	Facilitators will present a powerpoint about an introduction to each participant's culture in ASEAN and RoK.	Participants can gain information and knowledge about the cultures that have been introduced.

Grand Prize

No	IEL Stage	Activitiest	Details	Expected Outcome
4	Active Experimentation	Assignment	For the first week, participants are required to map out a learning strategy using a detailed **weekly plan** to apply the knowledge they gain during the program. Participants will be given a space to implement what they have learned from their direct experience on the Concrete Experience stage and the knowledge they have gained in the Reflection Observation and Abstract Conceptualization stages. Participants can utilize our online platform that we have provided to connect with others and implement what they have learned from the previous stages.	Participants can participate in our online community's activities with a goal in mind so growth can be tracked. Participants can also connect with other community members by implementing what they have learned in real-life context with ease.

Week 2. Demonstration

No	IEL Stage	Activities	Details	Expected Outcome
1	Concrete Experience	Demonstration by watching Movies	Participants watch movies from one of the countries of ASEAN-RoK to learn about ASEAN and Korea's perceptions of each other. **Examples**: "Forever in Bali" (Indonesia) which tells a story of a worn out idol who stays in Bali to destress and gets to live in Bali alongside locals, and "Ajooma" (Singapore) which tells a story of a middle-aged singaporean woman who wishes to realize her dreams to live in South Korea, etc.	Participants can enjoy learning about cultural differences in ASEAN countries and Korea, and how the way citizens of these countries view each other can impact their relationship quality.
2	Reflective Observation	Online Discussion	Volunteers and facilitators will lead online discussions about the movies, helping participants better understand how ASEAN and Korea perceive each other. Participants will write a self-reflection essay of up to 500 words to deepen their understanding of the movies based on the prior discussion.	Participants can reflect on the movies they have watched while being guided by facilitators. Facilitators will make sure participants gain the targeted insight.

No	IEL Stage	Activities	Details	Expected Outcome
3	Abstract Conceptualization	Presentation	Facilitators will discuss ASEAN and Korea's perceptions of each other, general information about what misperception is, how these perceptions impact their partnership, and how to improve any problematic perceptions.	Participants can gain information and knowledge about perception and misperception, how perceptions of countries' citizens impact global partnerships, and ways to improve problematic perceptions.
4	Active Experimentation	Assignment	Participants will be asked to discuss amongst themselves about misperception about each other's countries and suggest why such misperceptions exist and persist. Participants will practice this knowledge by engaging in conversations with community members while actively working to shed any prejudiced perceptions against other countries	Participants can directly implement their knowledge about the truths and hoaxes about other countries by engaging in conversations with other participants while purposefully removing any prejudiced perceptions against certain countries.

**Week 3.
Case Study**

No	IEL Stage	Activities	Details	Expected Outcome
1	Concrete Experience	Introduction	Participants will be given real-world cases that are related to intercultural competence three days prior to the weekly meeting. There will be detailed instructions for the focus group discussion. Case study related to misperception, trust, and prejudice of other cultures: https://www.jstor.org/stable/3528663	Participants can gain comprehensive information about real world cases regarding misperception and prejudice. In addition, participants will have a discussion with their friends regarding the topics, so it will help them better understand the proper perspective-taking in a multicultural environment.

| No	IEL Stage	Activities	Details	Expected Outcome
2	Reflective Observation	Focus Group Discussion	In this activity, participants will be divided into groups of 4-5 people. Each group will be supervised by a trained volunteer facilitator. In addition, facilitators will have a practical guideline that includes the guideline of the activity, facilitator's role, and list of questions. List of questions (example): https://cultureplusconsulting.com/2017/03/27/questions-to-ask-a-diversity-and-inclusion-focus-group/	Participants can have some experiences regarding on how to conduct discussions with friends from other cultures, along with understanding on how to communicate effectively with others from other cultures.
3	Abstract Conceptualization	Presentation	Facilitators will explore and elaborate the results of the discussion, along with analyzing the results according to every aspect and stages of intercultural competence and intercultural development continuum.	Participants can learn the proper expressions and way of communications in conducting discussions in a multicultural environment.
4	Active Experimentation	Assignment	**Individual assignments** · Participants are required to map out a learning strategy using a detailed weekly plan to apply the knowledge they gain during the program. · Participants are assigned to make a 500 words self-reflection essay based on their experience in the focus group discussion **Group assignments** Each group will be required to make a problem-based video learning related to racism and discrimination, analyze it with an intercultural competence framework, and offer solutions related to the problem. Video learning should be published in their personal social media.	Participants can reflect on their behavior during the focus group discussion, along with identify the most effective and appropriate ways of intercultural communication in multicultural environments.

Grand Prize

Week 4. Role Play

No	IEL Stage	Activities	Details	Expected Outcome
1	Concrete Experience	Introduction	Participants will be assigned to a group of 4–5 people to perform a role play session. Each participant will have a specific role and unique character that could depict how a culturally competent person will behave and think in a specific condition. In this activity, the facilitator will take some notes regarding the participants' progress in learning intercultural competency.	Participants will learn about perspective-taking in a multicultural environment, as it will help them better understand the proper way to interact successfully with others from other cultures.
2	Reflective Observation	Online Discussion	Afterwards, there will be an online discussion to gain and elaborate some evidence that is relevant to intercultural competence. This evidence needs to be addressed and analyzed in some relevant frameworks, such as intercultural development continuum.	Participants can gain a more comprehensive understanding on how people behave or think in a specific way, so they will learn and maintain an assertive and gentle communication with others from other cultures.
3	Abstract Conceptualization	Presentation	Facilitators will present some materials regarding the brief knowledge of intercultural competence, along with analyzing the progress of each participants' in learning intercultural competency.	Participants will gain a more comprehensive knowledge about intercultural competence, such as their interrelated aspects. In this activity, participants will have some oppor-tunities to share their learning during the program.
4	Active Experi-mentation	Assignment	**Individual assignments** As this is the last structured activity of the program, participants are required to map out a learning strategy using a detailed weekly, monthly, and yearly plan to apply the knowledge they gain during the program. **Group assignments** Each group will be required to make a content (Video or Infographic) related to intercultural competence and their experiences learning intercultural competence during the 4-week IEL agenda.	Participants can better understand that intercultural competence is something that needed to be train for a longer period, so they need to plan and actualize their goals based on their yearly plan.

Appendix B   ## Online Platform Mock-Up
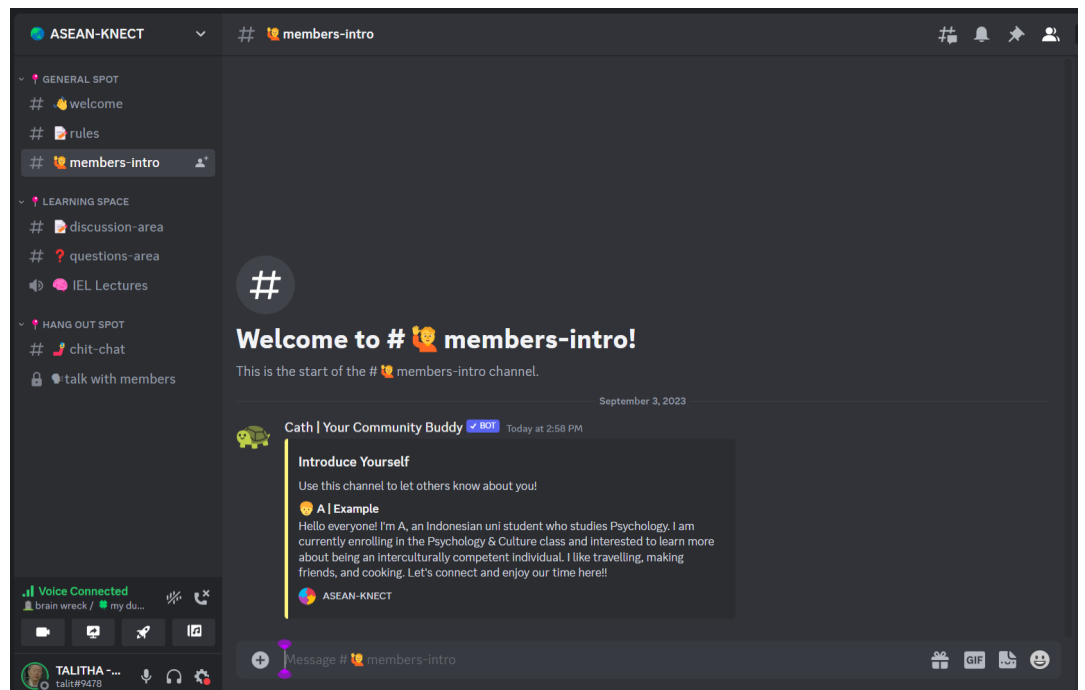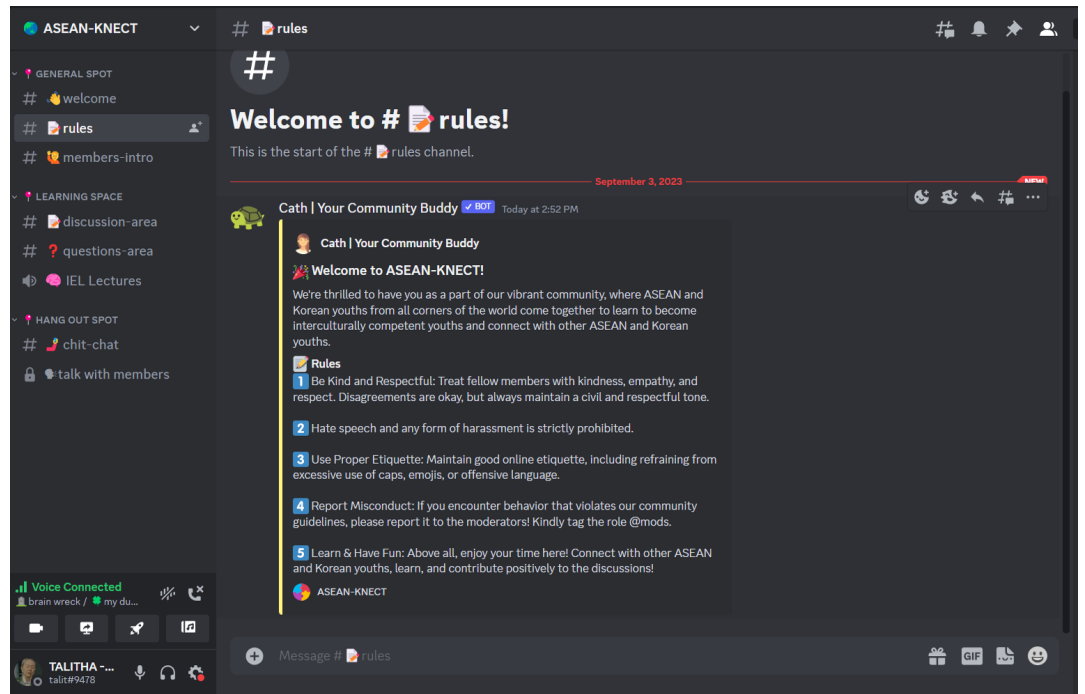
EXCELLENCE PRIZE

Le Thi Trang
VIETNAM

Reshaping Korean Youth Perception toward ASEAN : The Role of Media

Reshaping Korean Youth Perception toward ASEAN[1]: The Role of Media

Le Thi Trang
Korea University

Abstract

This essay investigates the role of media in shaping Korean youth's perceptions of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its people. Despite positive views held by ASEAN youth towards South Korea, Korean youth often exhibit negative perceptions of ASEAN. We hypothesize media portrayal plays a pivotal role in this perceptual divide. Our study involves a survey of perceptions among Korean and ASEAN youth, followed by statistical analyses including t-tests and regression models to explore correlations between media exposure and sentiments towards ASEAN. While limitations exist, such as sample size constraints, our findings emphasize media's potential to shape perceptions. The essay underscores the importance of balanced media portrayals to foster mutual understanding between ASEAN and Korean youths. Ultimately, it advocates for collaborative efforts among media creators, academia, and policymakers to promote accurate and empathetic storytelling that nurtures a sustainable ASEAN-Korea partnership.

Introduction

The relations between ASEAN and Korea have developed rapidly for the past decade. Economically, ASEAN and Korea are invaluable trading partners to one another. In 2021, the two-way trade is reported almost close to $200 billion. Korea is ASEAN's fifth largest trading partner and seventh largest source of FDI (The ASEAN Secretariat, 2020). Meanwhile, ASEAN is the second largest investment destination of Korea and play a significant role in the country's economy. The two parties have been actively undertaken and are continuing to expand the partnerships to

---

1   In this essay, I identify ASEAN with Southeast Asia.

various areas such as security, innovation, green energy.

However, despite remarkable achievements in term of economic cooperation, people-to-people exchange remains relatively low, while being one of the key poles of the ASEAN-Korean partnership. Especially, the level of mutual awareness among ASEAN and Korean youths are noticeably asymmetric. According to ASEAN-Korea Centre's 2021 Survey, ASEAN youths' impressions on Korea are described by positive words such as "pretty", "beautiful", "handsome", "polite", "friendly", "modern", "developed". This can be explained by the spread of the "Korean Wave" or *Hallyu* that has captivated hearts across Southeast Asian nations, where most characters in K-drama and K-pop products appear with good-looking appearances. Meanwhile, Korean youth's perceptions towards ASEAN appears to be characterized by stereotypes and misconceptions, where terms such as "poor", "dark-skinned", "lazy", "underdeveloped" and "hot" underscore a stark contrast (ASEAN – Korea Centre, 2021). As youths are the future leaders of the ASEAN-Korea partnership, enhancing mutual trust and understanding between ASEAN and Korean youths are crucial for a sustainable partnership. This has prompted me to explore the intricate nexus between media exposure and the perceptions held by Korean youth about ASEAN.

It is within this context that my research embarks on an exploration into the role of media in shaping Korean's youth perceptions of ASEAN. I argue that the pronounced misconceptions of Korean youth towards ASEAN can be attributed, at least in part, to the portrayal of ASEAN countries within the Korean media landscape. An exploration of how Korean media depicts ASEAN countries becomes vital to unraveling this phenomenon. This study seeks to uncover the intricate ways in which media narratives influence and mold the perspectives of Korean youth regarding ASEAN. By examining Korean media through which information about ASEAN is disseminated, this study aims to shed light on the extent to which media narratives contribute to shape positive or negative viewpoint of Korean youth towards ASEAN nations. Moreover, this study identifies the factors that mediate the connection between media exposure and perceptions, including the role of personal interactions and cultural exchange.

The findings suggest that there is a selecting behavior in Korean coverage of ASEAN as the media tends to report more negative information related to this region. In addition, I find evidences suggest that exposure to media indeed influence on Korean' youth perceptions of ASEAN. However, the valence of news related to ASEAN does not necessary affect how Korean youth perceive ASEAN people. Those findings may offer insights into reshaping media narratives,

bolstering people-to-people understanding and nurturing sustainable partnerships for a more interconnected and harmonious future between ASEAN and Korea.

This paper proceeds in four stages. I first discuss the literature on the effect of media coverage on public perceptions of foreign nations. Then, I present my hypotheses and describe the methodology of this paper. Next, I analyze the effects of various treatment conditions on Korean youth's perceptions of ASEAN. I conclude with a discussion of the findings and limitations of this paper, as well as offer some implications to correct Korean youth's misconceptions of ASEAN.

Literature Review

Existing literature has found that media coverage has an effect on public perceptions of foreign nations. As the world is too complicated and not many people have direct experience with foreign affairs, their images of foreign actors and international events are heavily and unavoidably depended on media. Scholars have agreed that news media can influence public's perceptions of foreign countries through three main routes, namely framing, agenda-setting and priming.

Firstly, media could influence public's attitudes toward foreign countries through framing, a pathway of "selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation" (Entman, 1993). Generally speaking, framing guides people the way they should understand and evaluate the world. For instance, a news story frames a country as the hub for illegal drug might lead people to negatively perceive that country as a drug trafficker.

Secondly, media coverage could affect public opinion through agenda-setting, the pathway in which mass media makes a certain issue saliently in public eyes and influences the way people perceive that issue. By emphasizing specific issues over others, the media can shape individual's perceptions of relative importance and salience of these issues (Moy et al, 2016). Agenda-setting consists of two levels: first-level agenda-setting, the process of manipulating public salience of issues through the amount of coverage; and second-level agenda-setting, the process of transmitting the issues' attribute salience to shape public's opinion about the issue. An issue can be depicted repeatedly in positive, negative or neutral tones. Through this mechanism, media coverage shapes public opinion on various issues. For example, Maheim and Albritton (1984) indicate that the signing contracts between various

governments (Republic of Korea, the Philippines, Mexico, etc) with American public relation firms to influence the flow of information about those countries to the United State do improve the images of these countries among US citizens compared to the images during noncontract period.

The third way in which news media influences people attitudes towards an object is through priming paradigm. In the first step of priming, preexisting associated knowledge is activated after readers receive information delivered by media coverage. This activated information forms a potential to bias the way readers process incoming information. Over time, frequency of priming of a certain issue creates bias judgements of that issue (Dixon & Maddox, 2005; Sheafer &Weimann, 2005; Moy et al, 2016). In other words, media priming affects the criteria that people use to judge an issue. For example, repeated exposure to media portrayals of Blacks as the perpetrators of crime may contribute to the formation and maintenance of prejudices and stereotypes about Blacks and therefore, create a negative judgment of Blacks.

Through an analysis of the relationship between the US news coverage of foreign nations and the US citizens' perceptions of other nations, Wanta et al (2004) address that the increased negative media coverage of a nation formed greater negative attitudes towards the country. On investigating the impact of media salience, public opinion and policy agendas on the perceptions of foreign countries in the United States, Zhang and Meadow III (2012) suggest that media valence (positive and negative information) of the countries is positively related to the attitudes toward the countries in public opinion. By analyzing the correlation of the frequency of negative coverage of a foreign country and public's attitude toward the country, the authors found that the more negative news coverage a foreign country received, the more negatively the public would perceive the nation. Muller (2013) argues that as news media contain information that potentially shape the image of foreign nations, foreign nations are often depicted in a more negative way while the own nation is portrayed more positively. Broadly, McComb et al (1997) tests the impact of agenda-setting on Spanish voters' images of political candidates during the 1995 regional and municipal elections in Spain. In this election, the news media select attributes of candidates to construct their images and depict them with different tones. The authors found that news media does influence how voters picture the parliamentary and mayoral candidates. The tone of voters' descriptions of candidate corresponds with the information they receive about the candidate through news coverage.

Hypotheses

To investigate the impact of news media on Korean youth's perception of ASEAN, this study tests whether positive and negative news about ASEAN can influence Korean youth's attitude towards this region and its people. According to the ASEAN – Korea Centre 2021 Survey on Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youths, Korean youth access information related to ASEAN mostly through TV/Radio, including traditional media outlets. However, while ASEAN youths' perceptions of Korea are positive, ASEAN and ASEAN people are depicted by negative words such as "hot temperature", "poor", "darker skinned", "small". Accordingly, I suggest the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1.
There is a selective reporting behavior when Korean media reports information about ASEAN.

Hypothesis 2.
Korean youth tends to have good impression of Southeast Asia after reading positive news about ASEAN and have bad impression of SEA after reading negative news about this region.

Hypothesis 3.
Korean youth tends to have good impression of Southeast Asian people after reading positive news about ASEAN and have bad impression of Southeast Asian people after reading negative news about this region.

Methodology

To investigate hypothesis 1, I conducted an analysis using KBS News, the most favorite media outlet in South Korea, searching for the Korean-language keyword "동남아" (Southeast Asia). A sample frame selected from June 1, 2022 to June 1, 2023, a month before I conducted survey among Korean youth, yielded 863 news stories related to ASEAN. I first coded each news story based on its valence (positive, negative and neutral). A news article is coded positive if the content involves positive information such as economic growth, cooperation between ASEAN and Korea, increasing role of ASEAN to Korea and international politics. It is coded negative if it involves contents such as drug, diseases, bad environment, illegal actions. An article is considered neutral if the story demonstrates a balance of positive and negative information. I then checked the frequency of negative news stories (salience) to find whether there is selective reporting behavior against ASEAN or not.

To test hypothesis 2 and 3, I conducted a survey among 80 Korean

youths in Seoul, Korea. In this survey, I asked various questions related to participants' experience related to ASEAN. Participants were randomly assigned to two experimental conditions. The treatments were the summaries of three actual newspaper articles about ASEAN economy, similar in length but are manipulated in some words to change the tone and become positive or negative information. In treatment "Positive", participants were asked to read positive information about ASEAN. In treatment "Negative", they were asked to read three negative information about ASEAN. Then, participants were asked to rate their feelings toward ASEAN and ASEAN people respectively on a thermometer scale, ranging from 0 (very negative) to 10 (very positive).

ASEAN through the lens of Korean media

In this section, I discuss the main findings based on my analysis of the online version of KBS News, the most favorable media outlet in South Korea. According to the survey on 3,000 adults across South Korea from October to December 2021 about the most favorite news channel among South Korean in the 2013-2021 period conducted by Gallup, an American analytics and advisory company, KBS is the most beloved news channel by South Korean youth, accounted for 25% of respondents in their 20s. Also, KBS is one of the most long-standing broadcasters in South Korea with 18 regional stations and 12 overseas branches, there are eight subsidiary companies, which would certainly have significant impact on building people perception through news coverage. Therefore, using news reports from KBS News would generate the news selecting behavior in Korean media over Southeast Asia without introducing significant bias in the findings.

Figure 1.
Most favorite news channel by South Korean youth in 4th Quarter 2021

Sources
Gallup (2021), graphed by author

33
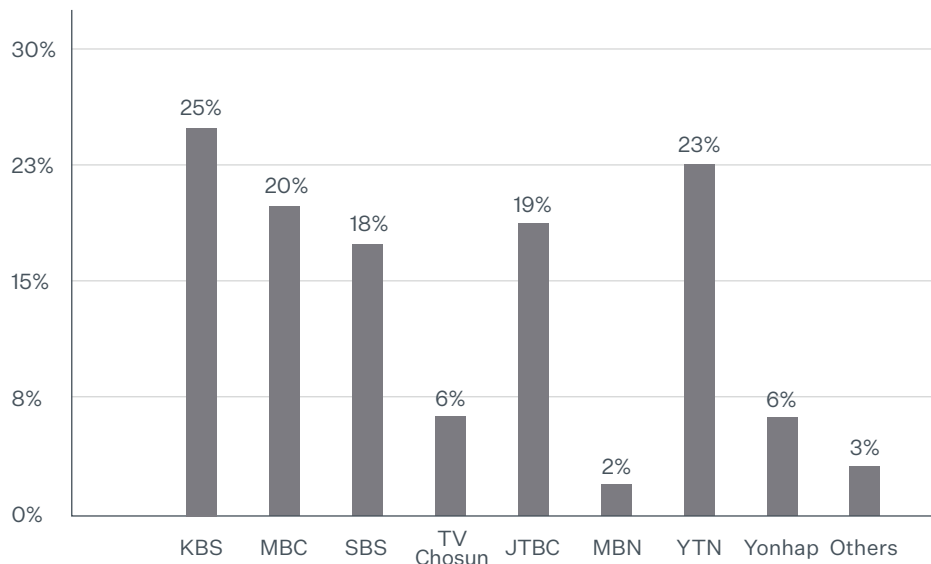
My examination of KBS News coverage reveals that Southeast Asia was mentioned in 863 stories. Each article was coded by the primary (articles that have titles or contents targeting to Southeast Asia) and secondary topic (where Southeast Asia or ASEAN is mentioned briefly or the contents did not directly target Southeast Asia). Of 863 articles with content related to Southeast Asia, I coded 401 stories directly report about Southeast Asia as primary topic and 462 stories which indirectly mention about Southeast Asia as secondary topic. I removed articles with secondary topic about Southeast Asia in this study as the information in those articles are not focus on the region. The results of the most frequent topics are presented in the table below.

I then categorized 401 articles with primary topic related to Southeast Asia by their valence. I found that 196 articles (48.8%) contained negative information, while 168 articles contained positive information (41.8%) and 37 neutral articles, accounted for 9.4% of total articles about Southeast Asia.

Table 1.
The valence of Southeast Asia–related articles in media

Valence	Number	Percentage
Positive	168	41.8%
Neutral	37	9.4%
Negative	196	48.8%
Total	**401**	**100%**

Table 2.
The salience of negative news articles by topics

Topic	Frequency of topic	Percentage
Illegal actions	79	40.3%
Diseases	43	21.9%
Drug traficking	39	19.8%
Weather - Environment	18	9.1%
Socio-economic issues	17	8.9%
Total	**196**	**100%**

Among negative articles about Southeast Asia, the most popular topic is related to illegal actions such as illegal workers in Korea, scam rings based in Southeast Asia, shelter for wanted criminals, with 79 articles (40.3%) of total negative information. Diseases and drug trafficking are the second most frequent reported topics, each accounted for 21.9% and 19.8% of total negative information related to Southeast Asia. Noteworthily, while more negative information about Southeast Asia was reported, media did

not mention about the region's efforts to reduce those negative situations. For example, 43 of negative stories framed Southeast Asian as the source of diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease in animals and dengue fever in people in Korea, but none of those stories mention Southeast Asia countries efforts to control the spread of disease.

As illustrated in Table 1, the number of negative articles related to Southeast Asia as primary topic is 7% more than those of positive information. This provides support for the hypothesis 1, Korean media has the tendency to report more negative information about Southeast Asia. The result is consistent with existing literature that has demonstrated the correlation between the salience and valence of negative news and public opinion. The result may also provide explanation for the 2021 ASEAN – Korea Centre's Survey on Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youths, where the result showed that Korean youths mainly accessed to information about ASEAN through media and that they have negative perceptions of ASEAN.

The influence of media on Korean youth's perception of ASEAN

To assess the effects of treatment groups on Korean youth's perception of ASEAN, I compare respondents' feeling towards ASEAN and ASEAN people in each treatment group. I interpret decreased mean feeling as Korean youth's feeling towards ASEAN. Figure 2 illustrates the difference in mean feeling towards ASEAN between respondents who read positive news about ASEAN and those who read negative news about ASEAN. Overall, media's valence has certain impact on Korean youth's feeling towards ASEAN. Average feeling towards ASEAN of people who read good news related to ASEAN is 6.75 on a ten-point scale. Meanwhile, mean feeling drops by 0.6 points to 6.15 when people read negative news about ASEAN.
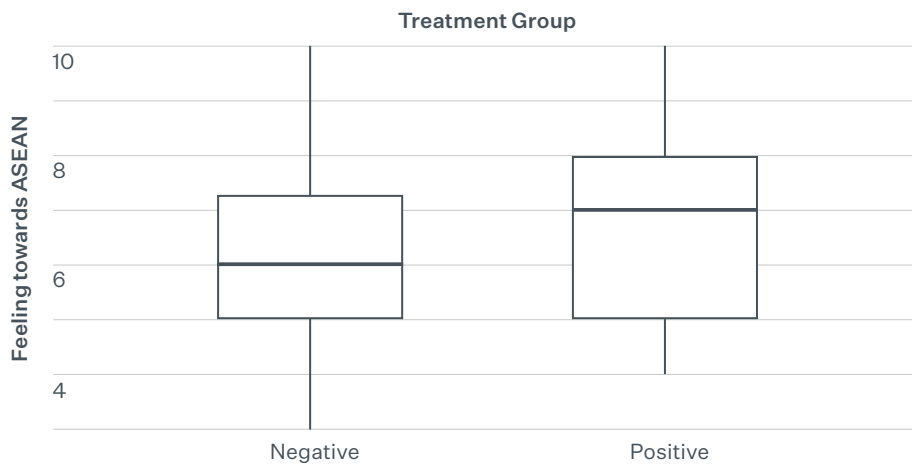
Figure 2.
Korean youths'
feeling towards
ASEAN by
treatments

Treatment Group

35
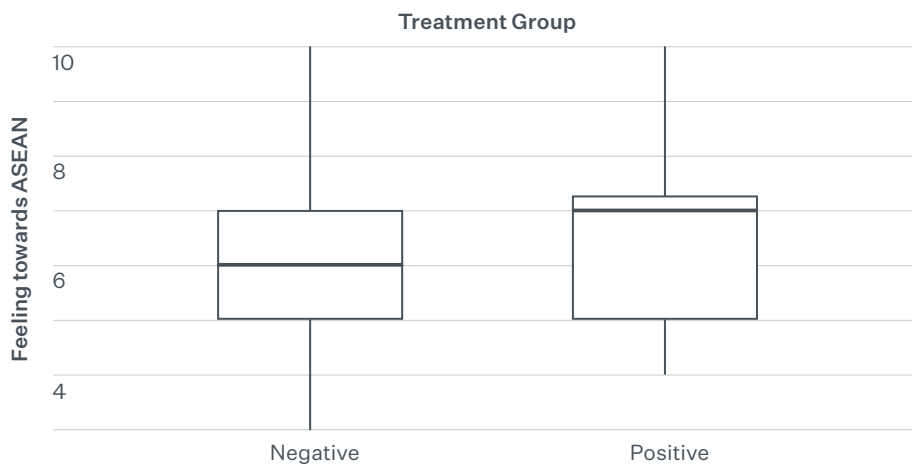
The results of the statistical analysis suggest that there is a significant difference in the feeling towards ASEAN between the treatment groups. The Welch Two Sample t-test was conducted to compare the mean feeling towards ASEAN between the group that read positive news (treatment Positive) and the group that read negative news (treatment Negative). The p-value associated with the t-test is 0.08, which falls just above the conventional threshold of 0.05 for statistical significance. While not meeting the traditional significance level, it is important to consider the substantial effect size observed. The Cohen's d value, which quantifies the standardized difference in means between the groups, is 0.38. This value is notably large, indicating a strong practical significance of the difference between the groups.

Given the large effect size and the marginally significant p-value, there is evidence to suggest that the treatment of reading positive news about ASEAN may lead to a more positive feeling towards ASEAN when compared to reading negative news. While the p-value does not meet the strict significance criterion, the effect size and the consistency with the research hypothesis provide support for the idea that positive news exposure may indeed influence the feelings of Korean youth towards ASEAN. These findings suggest that the exposure to positive news about ASEAN is associated with a notable increase in positive feelings towards the region among Korean youth, even though the traditional statistical significance threshold was not fully reached.

Figure 3.
Korean youths' feeling towards ASEAN People by treatments

Hypothesis 3 posits that Korean youth tend to have a more positive impression of Southeast Asia people after reading positive news about ASEAN and a less positive impression after reading negative news. Similarly, as shown in Figure 3, respondents exposed to positive news

have more positive perception of ASEAN people, with an average score of 6.95 points on a ten-point scale. Contrarily, respondents' sentiments towards ASEAN people decrease to 6.4 point when people read negative news about ASEAN.

However, the results of the Welch Two Sample t-test provide insights into the relationship between news exposure and feelings towards Southeast Asia people among Korean youth. The t-test yielded a t-statistic of -1.4662 with a corresponding p-value of 0.14. The p-value represents the probability of observing a difference in means between the "Negative" and "Positive" treatment groups as extreme as the one observed, assuming that there is no true difference between the groups. The p-value of 0.14 is greater than the conventional significance level of 0.05.

Based on the p-value and the calculated 95 percent confidence interval for the difference in means, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the observed difference in feelings towards Southeast Asia people between the two treatment groups is statistically significant. In other words, the p-value suggests that the difference in means could plausibly have occurred by random chance alone.

Therefore, in the context of this study, I could not find enough statistical evidence to support the hypothesis that exposure to positive news about ASEAN leads to a significantly more positive impression of Southeast Asia people among Korean youth compared to exposure to negative news. It's important to note that while the results are not statistically significant, further research with a larger sample size or different methods may provide more conclusive insights into the relationship between news exposure and impressions of Southeast Asia people.

To more systematically examine these findings, I employ ordinary least squares models to test their statistical significance. To test hypothesis 2 and 3, I regress Korean youth's feeling towards ASEAN and ASEAN people (measured on a ten-point scale) on experimental conditions (coded as binary variable). In addition to variables intended to capture respondents' impression of ASEAN and ASEAN people, I also include four variables, namely:

• **Visit:** Visiting ASEAN nations can be a factor influencing Korean youth's impression of ASEAN as they have chance to directly interact with ASEAN people and culture. This variable is coded as binary variable, where respondents who have visited ASEAN are coded 1 and those who have not are coded 0. My argument is that, having visited ASEAN would increase Korean youth's feeling towards ASEAN and ASEAN people

• **Duration:** Duration of stay in Southeast Asia countries may also have an impact on how Korean youth perceive this region and its people because they have more time to understand the region. This variable ranges from 0 to 4, where respondents who have not visited ASEAN are coded 0, those who had stayed there less than a week are coded 1, from one to four weeks are coded 2, from one to three months are coded 3 and more than three months are coded 4. In this study, I argue that the more respondents stay in ASEAN, the more positive is their impression of this region and its people.

• **Acquaintance:** Having ASEAN acquaintance is another possible factor that affect Korean youth's feeling towards ASEAN as they can directly interact and deeply understand ASEAN people. I argue that having ASEAN acquaintance may positively affect Korean youth's feeling towards ASEAN and ASEAN people.

• **ASEAN:** As the word "ASEAN" is often included in positive news, such as economic cooperation with Korea, diplomatic affairs, having familiar with/or having heard about ASEAN may positively influence Korean youth's perceptions of ASEAN and its people. It is coded 0 if respondents have not heard about the word "ASEAN" and coded 1 if respondents have heard about this word.

The results of Model 1 of the regression analysis provide insights into the relationship between news exposure and participants' feelings towards Southeast Asia, while accounting for the above-mentioned control variables. The coefficient for the treatment Positive variable remains statistically significant (p-value < 0.05), indicating that participants who were exposed to positive news about ASEAN tend to have, on average, 0.634 points higher feelings towards ASEAN compared to those who were exposed to negative news. This finding supports the first part of Hypothesis 1, suggesting that positive news exposure is associated with a more favorable impression of Southeast Asia. The coefficient for the Acquaintance variable is also statistically significant (p-value < 0.05), suggesting that participants who have Southeast Asian acquaintance or friends tend to have, on average, 0.951 points higher feelings towards ASEAN after news exposure, controlling for other variables. This result implies that participants with a greater level of familiarity or prior interaction with Southeast Asian are more likely to hold positive feelings towards the region. Additionally, the coefficient for the ASEAN variable remains statistically significant (p-value < 0.001), indicating that participants who have heard about the word "ASEAN" before tend

to report, on average, 1.164 points higher feelings towards ASEAN after news exposure. This result reinforces the idea that prior familiarity with ASEAN positively influences participants' post-news exposure feelings towards Southeast Asia. However, contrary to my expectation, the coefficients for the control variables Visit and Duration are not statistically significant (p-values > 0.05), suggesting that having visited or stayed in ASEAN countries do not have a significant independent effect on participants' feelings towards ASEAN after controlling for other variables. This requires further research to explain why directly visiting Southeast Asia does not have significant effect on Korean youth's impression of ASEAN.

Figure 4.
Regression Results for Feeling towards ASEAN and ASEAN People

	Dependent variable:	
	Feeling towards ASEAN Model 1 (1)	Feeling towards ASEAN People Model 2 (2)
treatmentPositive	0.634** (0.315)	0.509 (0.325)
Visit	-0.074 (0.452)	0.057 (0.467)
Duration	0.045 (0.212)	0.155 (0.218)
Acquaintance	0.951** (0.363)	1.327*** (0.375)
ASEAN	1.164*** (0.328)	1.064*** (0.339)
Constant	5.097*** (0.342)	5.143*** (0.353)
Observations	80	80
R^2	0.297	0.357
Adjusted R^2	0.249	0.313
Residual Std. Error (df = 74)	1.357	1.400
F Statistic (df = 5; 74)	6.247***	8.210***

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Model 2 explores the relationship between news exposure and participants' feelings towards people from Southeast Asia, while considering the effects of other variables, such as Visit, Duration, Acquaintance, and ASEAN. The coefficient for the treatment Positive variable is not statistically significant (p-value = 0.12), indicating that

participants exposed to positive news about ASEAN do not appear to have significantly different feelings towards people from Southeast Asia compared to those exposed to negative news. This finding suggests that the valence of news exposure does not seem to have a significant independent effect on participants' impressions of people from the region. On the other hand, the coefficient for the Acquaintance variable is statistically significant (p<0.01), suggesting that participants who have Southeast Asian acquaintances tend to report, on average, 1.3 points higher feelings towards people from the region. This result implies that participants who have had more interactions or familiarity with individuals from Southeast Asia are more likely to hold positive feelings towards them. Similarly, the coefficient for the ASEAN variable is also statistically significant (p-value = 0.002), indicating that participants who have heard about the word "ASEAN" before tend to report, on average, 1.06 points higher feelings towards people from Southeast Asia. This finding supports the notion that prior familiarity with ASEAN is associated with more positive impressions of its people. Meanwhile, consistent with the coefficients for Visit and Duration are not statistically significant (p-values > 0.05), this suggests that these variables do not have a significant independent effect on participants' feelings towards people from Southeast Asia after controlling for other factors.

Conclusion

In this study, I set out to investigate the impact of news exposure on the impressions and perceptions that Korean youth hold towards Southeast Asia, both as a region and its people. This paper was guided by three main hypotheses, which aimed to investigate whether there is a selecting behavior against Southeast Asia on Korean media or not and to uncover the potential effects of reading positive and negative news articles about ASEAN.

The first hypothesis posited that there is a selective reporting behavior when Korean media reports information about ASEAN, in which negative news about ASEAN nations are more frequently appeared on Korean media. The finding from an analysis of KBS News suggests that, negative media coverage about ASEAN are more often seen on Korean media.

The second hypothesis posited that Korean youth would exhibit differing impressions of Southeast Asia after exposure to positive and negative news about ASEAN. The findings from both the t-test and regression analysis revealed that there was a notable difference in feelings towards the region based on news exposure. Participants who read

positive news articles exhibited a more favorable impression of Southeast Asia compared to those who read negative news. This difference was statistically significant, providing empirical support for the notion that news content plays a role in shaping attitudes and perceptions towards regions.

Building on my exploration, the third hypothesis aimed to delve deeper into the impressions that Korean youth have of Southeast Asia people, based on their exposure to positive and negative news about ASEAN. The regression analysis indicated that while news exposure itself emerges as a predictor of participants' feelings towards Southeast Asia people, other factors also played a crucial role. Specifically, personal interactions and prior knowledge of Southeast Asia were strong determinants of impressions. Participants who reported higher levels of acquaintance with Southeast Asia people and prior awareness of the term "ASEAN" expressed more positive feelings towards individuals from the region.

The findings collectively underline the role of media in shaping Korean youth's perceptions of ASEAN and its people. The significant associations observed between media exposure, acquaintance, and the feelings harbored towards ASEAN underscore the intricate web of information dissemination that intertwines with individual beliefs. These findings emphasize the importance of a proactive and conscious effort by media practitioners to portray ASEAN countries in a more nuanced and unbiased light.

However, this research is not without its limitations. The constraints of sample size and potential confounding variables prompt me to approach my conclusions with caution. The rich tapestry of cross-cultural interactions and individual experiences might intertwine with media narratives, contributing to the multidimensional nature of perceptions. Addressing these limitations through larger and more diverse datasets will further enhance the credibility and robustness of my findings.

Consider the broader implications of my research, it is evident that the media's role transcends mere information dissemination. It emerges as a powerful tool for shaping attitudes, nurturing empathy, and fostering intercultural bonds. This study lays the foundation for a renewed dialogue between media, academia, and policy makers, urging a recalibration of media narratives to reflect the diverse and multifaceted realities of ASEAN countries. The journey towards balanced perceptions necessitates a collaborative effort, wherein media practitioners wield their storytelling prowess to illuminate the rich tapestry of cultures that constitutes ASEAN.

Future research could consider examining the long-term effects of news exposure and personal interactions, as well as investigating other potential variables that may contribute to perceptions of regions and their people. By continuing to deepen our understanding of these dynamics, this study can contribute to reshape Korean youth's perception of ASEAN and

foster greater intercultural understanding and harmony between the two regions for a sustainable ASEAN-Korea relations.

References

ASEAN-Korea Centre. (2021). Survey on Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youths. Retrieved from https://www.aseankorea.org/eng/Resources/ASEAN_Talks.asp

Zhang, C., & Meadows, C. (2012). International Coverage, Foreign Policy, and National Image: Exploring the complexities of media coverage, public opinion, and presidential agenda. *International Journal of Communication*, 6, 75-95.

Gallup. 2021. 한국인이 즐겨보는 뉴스 채널 2013 – 2021. Retrieved from https://www.gallup.co.kr/dir/GallupReport/GallupReport(20211228)_뉴스채널.pdf

Manheim, J. B., & Albritton, R. B. (1983). Changing national images: International public relations and media agenda setting. *American Political Science Review*, 78(3), 641–657

McCombs, M., Llamas, J. P., López-Escobar, E., & Rey, F. E. (1997). Candidate images in Spanish elections: Second-Level Agenda-Setting effects. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 74(4), 703–717.

Moy, P., Tewksbury, D., & Rinke M. E. (2016). Agenda-setting, Priming, and Framing. *The International Encyclopedia of Communication*, 3(3), 297-317.

Brewer, P. R., Graf, J & Willnat. L. (2003). Priming or Framing: Media Influence on Attitudes toward Foreign Countries. *Gazette*, 65(6), 493-508.

Müller, P. (2013). National identity building through patterns of an international third-person perception in news coverage. *International Communication Gazette*, 75(8), 732–749.

Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Towards Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51-58

Sheafer, T., & Weimann, G. (2005). Agenda building, agenda setting, priming, individual voting intentions, and the aggregate results: An analysis of four Israeli elections. *Journal of Communication*, 55(2), 347–365.

The ASEAN Secretariat. 2020. ASEAN – Korea Economic Relations. Retrieved from https://asean.org/our-communities/economic-community/integration-with-global-economy/asean-korea-free-trade/

Dixon, T. L., & Maddox, K. B. (2005). Skin tone, crime news, and social reality judgments: priming the stereotype of the dark and dangerous black criminal1. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 35(8), 1555–1570.

Wanta, W., Golan, G. J., & Lee, C. (2004). Agenda setting and international news: Media influence on public perceptions of foreign nations. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 81(2), 364–377.

MERIT PRIZE

**Wendi Wiliyanto &
Widhi Hanantyo Suryadinata**
INDONESIA

*Green Energy Transition in
ASEAN-ROK:
The Nexus of Circular Economy
Principles and Digitisation on
Waste Management*

Green Energy Transition in ASEAN-ROK: The Nexus of Circular Economy Principles and Digitisation on Waste Management

Wendi Wiliyanto & Widhi Hanantyo Suryadinata
Universitas Gadjah Mada

Abstract

As the volume of waste increases within ASEAN-ROK, the potential for environmental degradation also rises. This poses a threat to the natural surroundings of both regions, given that both parties are grappling with the significant challenge of the climate crisis. Hence, the focus of this essay is to conduct an in-depth and extensive examination of the application of the circular economy concept to address the continuous waste generation in ASEAN-ROK. By shifting from the linear economy model to the circular economy model, this essay contends that adopting such an approach could effectively tackle the structural waste issue faced by ASEAN-ROK. Additionally, integrating Artificial Intelligence into waste management holds promise, offering the potential to enhance efficiency and establish sustainable solutions to waste-related concerns. Consequently, combining the principles of the circular economy with advancements in waste management through digitisation emerges as a viable strategy to tackle the waste predicament in ASEAN-ROK. This approach makes it plausible for ASEAN-ROK to convert waste into renewable energy, thereby positively contributing to addressing the challenges associated with the climate crisis. This essay presents a series of practical policy recommendations that both parties can adopt to achieve intelligent and sustainable waste management by incorporating Artificial Intelligence. Furthermore, the essay underscores the pressing need for collaborative efforts among stakeholders to implement efficient and intelligent sustainable waste management practices successfully.

Keywords
Economy Circular, Digitalisation, Artificial Intelligence, Waste Management, Green Energy Transition, Penta-Helix Model

Background

Waste has become a global concern and has become a time bomb without careful handling. In Asia Pacific alone, there is an increase of 802 million tonnes (2016) to 1.1 billion tonnes in 2030. South East Asia will donate 300 million tonnes ++ by 2030, or roughly 27% of waste in the Asia Pacific with the dynamic and significance of global trade, waste issues are becoming a severe problem (ASEAN, 2020). This waste originates from various levels, including households, food deliveries, and large-scale industrial settings. This situation prompts a specific query: How can we address this issue? Emerging economic countries prevail in ASEAN, yet structural waste management challenges persist.

According to Hertati et al. (2023), Penta-Helix changes waste management as activities to change human character with the relationship between the actors different than other approach initiatives. The Penta-Helix Model is a synergy of five stakeholders: academia, business, government, media, and the community. We realised that innovation in these specific issues needs to become accountable and transparent for all stakeholders due to its impact scale and how the mechanism will be conducted. The implementation of specific mechanisms is also becoming a priority for a few stakeholders, media, government, and community. If something goes off-track, these stakeholders can intervene with particular methods to correct the step and put it back on track. Community control from the impacted society will be valuable in monitoring its processes.

ROK Government capability to access at the lowest level. For example, in Seoul, there is a dilemma about the trash from the residents' more than 9,400 tons (Gibson, 2021). This crisis has led to the improvement of waste management in South Korea using equipment from upstream to downstream, starting with the technology-enabled upstream equipment. South Korea consistently ranks among the world's top recyclers. It can be done through collaboration with firms that focus on waste management (CGTN, 2022). The ROK Government Collaborates with two firms to create a sorting waste system to reduce the carbon footprint and maximise waste value to be recycled more efficiently through the Circular Economy concept and Digitisation of Waste Management. ASEAN already had a similar approach to the ASEAN Regional Action Plan for Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN member states.

Research Question

How can the principles of circular economy and digitisation of waste management serve as a tool to achieve green energy in ASEAN and ROK?

Framework Analysis

This essay will conduct a qualitative study using derived data from academic journals, policy papers, and related publications. A Qualitative study is used to get an in-depth understanding and clarify the arguments. Through two-level games as a theoretical framework, this essay aims to discover the ASEAN-ROK region's equilibrium of international interests with domestic objectives. Moreover, this essay will employ the Penta-Helix Model concept to examine the involvement and empowerment of digitalisation in waste management by various actors at different levels.

Two-Level Games Theory

Two-level game theory will be used to justify the urgency of collaborative efforts toward sustainable development in the ASEAN-ROK region. Putnam (1988), in his work entitled *Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games,* believed that domestic and international matters are entanglements. The interdependent connection between domestic and international spheres can be discerned by considering how domestic factors shape foreign policy and international relations. This influence extends beyond executive officials and institutional frameworks, encompassing public opinion, interest groups, and social classes (Putnam, 1998), thereby impacting the dynamics of these interactions. On a national scale, domestic groups strive to advance their interests by exerting pressure on the government to implement favourable policies. At the same time, politicians aim to gain power by forming alliances with these groups (Putnam, 1988).

Moreover, on the international front, national governments work towards maximising their capacity to address domestic pressures while minimising any negative impacts caused by global events, which reflects the concept of win-set in the two-level games in the realm of International Relations (Putnam, 1988). That being said, a win-set is attained when national governments adeptly navigate the domestic and international arenas to promote their interests. This involves skillfully managing domestic pressures, securing favourable policies, and mitigating any detrimental consequences from global events (Putnam, 1988). Contextualising the urgency of digitisation of waste management in ASEAN-ROK, applying the two-level games theory could serve as a logical justification for the imperative collaboration between the two parties.

Domestically, both parties are dealing with the same waste problems. Several districts in the ROK, particularly Soul, require more sustainable waste management assistance. Soul generates over 9,400 tons of household waste daily, the majority of which is compostable food waste, recyclables, or waste destroyed in incinerators. However, 9% of the total (about 846 tons) is buried (Gibson, 2021), potentially contaminating the soil and groundwater. Likewise, waste volume in Southeast Asia is increasing year after year. Waste in ASEAN reached 150 million tons in 2016, with forecasts doubling by 2030 (Tang & Hong, 2020). However, ASEAN countries' waste management is prevalent in open dumping and open burning waste methods, which could be more environmentally friendly.

Even though organic waste composting and anaerobic digestion are common in the ASEAN landscape, these practices are oriented in the informal sector (Jain, 2017). Therefore, the significance of green waste management is limited depending on the public's awareness. Due to a shared challenge, the ASEAN-ROK region is compelled to collaborate in addressing a domestic issue through an international agreement. Rather than tackling the waste management problem individually, the ASEAN-ROK cooperation aims to work together, reducing the overall cost and pursuing a mutual objective of establishing a sustainable environment. Notably, this collaboration not only addresses the domestic concerns of both parties but also fosters a positive global perception of their commitment to green energy. By transforming waste into renewable energy, this partnership has the potential to initiate a new era of global climate change governance, promoting worldwide digitalisation of waste management. Therefore, the need for cooperation between both parties could create utilities since domestic and international relationships are linked, and to accommodate the national interest, international cooperation may be a dominant strategy to minimise cost. At this point, by mapping the common interests of both parties, the two-level game theory could be implemented well (Pahre & Papayoanou, 1997).

Penta-Helix Model Theory

The Penta-Helix Model does not originate as a standalone theory; instead, it emerges through the evolution and advancement of existing theories. The theory of the Penta-Helix Model originally came from the Triple-Helix Model, which believed in a relationship of Academicians, Business, and Government (ABC) as integrated actors to drive innovation economically and scientifically (Sudiana et al., 2020). The genesis of the Triple-Helix Model can be attributed to the realisation that governments frequently intervene to steer adjustment processes and facilitate the establishment

of knowledge infrastructure.

Nevertheless, policymakers have become increasingly introspective regarding the limited efficacy of such interventions (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1997). Consequently, fostering collaboration among Academia, Business, and Government has become imperative in formulating a dominant strategy policy. Moreover, the critique of the Triple-Helix Model must acknowledge the significance of contextual environments. This omission highlights a need for more theoretical considerations and empirical evidence regarding the applicability of the Triple-Helix Model in non-Western contexts, as noted by Cai (2014). Therefore, the emergence of the Penta-Helix Model complements and enhances the development of the Triple-Helix Model. The Penta-Helix is a conceptual framework involving academicians, government, industry, non-governmental institutions, civil society, social entrepreneurs or media that are believed able to enhance the economy to pursue innovation and entrepreneurship through collaboration and synergy (Fyodorov et al., 2012; Halibas et al., 2017; Muhyi et al., 2017; Tonkovic et al., 2015, in Sudiana et al., 2020).

The underlying principle of this model is that the interaction among actors from multiple sectors will foster the generation of new knowledge and innovation. The Penta-Helix Model emphasises the involvement of five primary actors, namely Academia, Business, Government, Civil Society (Community), and Media (Sudiana et al., 2020). To situate digitalisation on waste management, the Penta-Helix Model could be utilised to ensure that the initiative to create a sustainable environment by implementing the circular economy on the digitalisation of waste management involves multi-sector actors. Academicians, graduates, lecturers, and researchers are crucial in developing human resources. Businesses are expected to contribute to a knowledge-based economy.

Furthermore, the government holds authority in law and public policy, particularly regarding indicators of the government dimension, such as "political and legal capital." This involves issuing permits, implementing policies, and offering incentives and grants supporting startup innovation growth. Additionally, the government's provision of basic infrastructure, such as electricity, water, and access roads, is essential in promoting development. Civil society also plays a significant role in supporting startup innovation. By creating a forum for interaction and fostering creative skills, the community contributes to enhancing the innovativeness of startups. On the other hand, the media are responsible for disseminating relevant information to various stakeholders. Journalists play a crucial role in informing and covering stories important to stakeholders, and publicity efforts should focus on educating the

public (Awaluddin et al., 2016, in Sudiana et al., 2020). Moreover, the media serves as a channel for feedback and interaction among relevant stakeholders (Effendi et al., 2016, in Sudiana et al., 2020). By harnessing the collective efforts of these various actors, a comprehensive achievement of the goal of digitising waste management systems in ASEAN-ROK can be realised.

Argument

This essay argues that ASEAN-ROK cooperation on digitising waste management will be mutually beneficial, creating a more sustainable treatment mechanism. Both parties can benefit comprehensively by embracing the circular economy principles and integrating technology into waste management systems. Furthermore, this collaborative effort would significantly contribute to addressing the climate crisis, which has disruptive impacts across various dimensions in the ASEAN-ROK. Several opportunities could be implemented, including promoting cooperation and knowledge exchange among ASEAN member states. The sharing of exemplary approaches and effective digital waste management strategies can expedite advancements throughout the region. Moreover, ASEAN-ROK must allocate resources to training and capacity development programs, equipping local authorities and waste management professionals with the necessary expertise to effectively utilise digital technologies.

Incorporating Putnam's (1988) concept of two-level games, the authors believe that cooperation and collaboration between both parties in digitising waste management by internalising circular economy principles will accommodate domestic interests through bilateral cooperation in the international landscape. This essay envisions the digitisation of waste management by optimising Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology for material recognition or automation to make waste management more efficient and productive. The authors believe the mismanagement of waste will harm the multifaceted sector, including human health, the environment, and economic development. Therefore, extracting the value of the circular economy in waste management is essential due to its potential to change waste into energy.

Empirical Findings

The Materiality of Circular Economy and Waste Management Digitalisation

In Industry 4.0, digitalisation is increasingly vital for achieving environmental sustainability. Shifting from traditional waste management to digital solutions enhances efficiency and cost-effectiveness (Besson & Rowe, 2012). This transformation creates opportunities for eco-friendly product/service design, reducing resource consumption and costs while improving waste management. Integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) integration in waste management harnesses big data for sustainable control and optimisation (Li et al., 2018).

As a counter-movement of the linear economy principle, the circular economy principle is a new way to create a sustainable environment while economically maintaining the value of products. It works by prolonging product lifespan through better design and servicing and shifting the waste from the end of the supply chain to the beginning. In a circular economy, products prioritise durability, reuse, and recyclability, with materials sourced from existing ones (UNIDO, n.d.). Unlike the "take-make-dispose" linear model, the circular economy promotes recycling waste into renewable energy, fostering sustainability.

Figure 1.1
The Concept of Circular Economy
(UNIDO, n.d.)

Reduce Environmental Footprint

Generate Increased Income

Green products non-toxic, long-life, recyclable

Cleaner production using fewer resources

Circular Economy

Recycle waste, reuse resources

Better service to extend lifespan

Minimize Waste

Collect at end-of-life, remanufacture
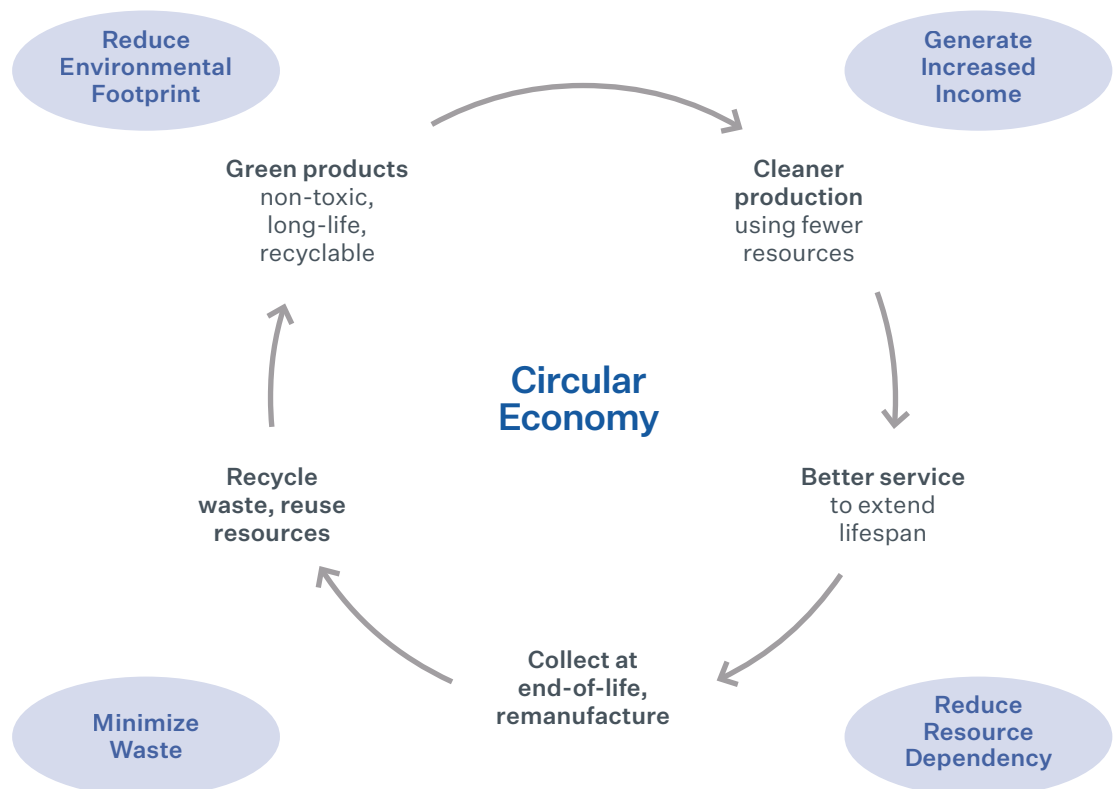
Reduce Resource Dependency

Figure 1.1 illustrates the functioning of the circular economy, where waste is viewed as a valuable resource that can be optimised and transformed into a product rather than being interpreted solely in its literal sense. In other words, the waste will be recycled to produce sustainable and environmentally friendly products. As a result, the circular economy's cycle can extend the lifespan of these products, providing a sustainable framework for converting waste into valuable resources. By embracing the circular economy principle, the pattern of production and consumption becomes integrated, reducing waste. This emphasis on sustainability ensures that resources are continually cycled and reused, leading to a more environmentally friendly and efficient system.

The substantial increase in population in ASEAN and ROK is paralleled by the potential rise in waste generation for both regions. As of 2021, the estimated population of ASEAN had reached 666.19 million inhabitants (O'neill, 2023), while in 2022, the population of ROK was estimated to be 51,628,117 (World Bank, 2022). Both parties are also significant contributors to the generation of substantial waste. Regarding ASEAN, plastic waste has become a critical issue, with Trajono (2022) reporting a significant contribution of 31 million units of plastic waste. In the case of ROK, as of 2021, commercial and industrial waste constituted approximately 43% of the total waste generated, closely followed by construction and demolition waste at 42.5%. Statista Research Department (2023) further stated that ROK generated about 197 million tons of waste in 2021.

Both parties face a shared challenge, highlighting the urgency of adopting the circular economy principle for sustainable waste management. Nevertheless, this essay contends that traditional adoption alone will not effectively address the waste issue. Instead, there is a critical need to integrate circular economy principles with digitalisation for significantly improved waste management efficiency. Leveraging digital technologies like AI, ML, and IoT presents opportunities for innovative waste recycling and environmental conservation solutions. AI, in particular, promises economic growth and productivity by enabling sustainable waste recycling within the circular economy framework (Ratna et al., 2021). Thus, establishing a smart waste management system rooted in circular economy principles is essential for addressing environmental concerns and boosting productivity in the ASEAN-ROK region.

The Tangible Sides of Integrating Circular Economy and Waste Management

The perpetual waste problem persists in the ASEAN-ROK region despite its negative impact, mainly because of the small attention given to technological transformation in waste management. According to Seyed et al. (2023), the significance of AI-based systems in tackling waste is noteworthy. These systems can monitor and quantify the volume and distribution of waste, predict its potential impact on ecosystems and human health, and optimise the allocation of resources and interventions. Therefore, implementing AI will greatly aid multiple stakeholders in effectively monitoring and issuing both parties' warnings about waste flow.

Furthermore, through AI's comprehensive data mapping of waste distribution, policymakers can strategically and precisely address the waste problem, leading to more targeted and effective public policies. Since this essay has already justified the importance of adopting the circular economy and digitalisation in waste management, multiple practical aspects can demonstrate the implementation of waste management digitalisation.

First, the ASEAN-ROK authorities should implement AI technology within the region's garbage container. Integrating AI into waste disposal sites is crucial, pressing to guarantee the effectiveness and efficiency of waste management in the ASEAN-ROK. Developing a waste container sensor capable of accurately detecting its fullness level can lead to substantial efficiency and effectiveness improvements in waste management throughout the ASEAN-ROK region.

Unlike traditional waste management systems that follow fixed schedules, which may result in premature waste collection or overflowing waste containers left unattended, the implementation of waste sensors enables real-time data gathering on container fill levels. This data-driven approach allows waste management authorities and companies to optimise waste collection routes. Ensuring that waste is only collected when containers are approaching total capacity reduces unnecessary trips and fuel consumption significantly. Consequently, this leads to cost savings but also helps minimise the environmental impact of inefficient waste collection practices.

Second, coordinated efforts involving many sectors can facilitate the realisation of digitalised waste management in the ASEAN-ROK region, specifically focusing on building an automated waste bin divider. This specialist waste bin divider has a sensor that efficiently sorts all waste types, including organic and non-organic. Due to the large volume of garbage created in the region, deploying this automatic waste bin

divider significantly benefits waste management in both ASEAN and ROK. The system becomes more simplified by automating the trash sorting process, resulting in increased efficiency, decreased contamination, and better resource allocation. Furthermore, an automated waste bin divider will increase the ease of implementing the economy circular principle. In other words, dividing waste into organic and non-organic waste could directly transform the waste into something that has value. After the organic waste is already collected, the waste could be processed by highlighting the recycling principle. Undoubtedly, organic waste possesses significant potential to drive the green energy transition. Hassanein et al. (2021) affirm that technologies utilising the metabolism of anaerobic microbes can convert organic waste into methane-rich biogas, thus generating renewable energy.

To ensure quality control during the conversion of organic waste into renewable energy, it is essential to incorporate a soft sensor into the process. Soft sensors have found extensive use in estimating quality measurements typically determined through infrequent sampling and offline analysis, like the product composition of a distillation column (Lin et al., 2007). By integrating a soft sensor, the renewable energy production process can be more efficient and accurate in monitoring and managing output quality. Given both parties' massive waste production, including organic waste, harnessing organic waste for renewable energy becomes crucial. According to Jain (2017) in Arumdani et al. (2021), Southeast Asian countries contribute 1.14 kg/capita/day of municipal solid waste (MSW). Additionally, ROK produces over 20,000 tons of food waste daily, with inadequate tracking of waste composition and composting efforts (Jong-Han et al., 2023). Hence, developing an automated waste bin divider to facilitate the increased transformation of organic waste into renewable energy is paramount, considering both parties' high potential for organic waste generation.

Third, while the organic waste is being transformed into renewable energy, the non-organic waste will undergo mechanical and chemical recycling. Mechanical recycling involves reclaiming plastic waste through mechanical procedures like sorting, washing, drying, grinding, re-granulating, and compounding. This method retains the material's chemical structure, enabling repeated reuse and recycling of polymer-based substances, thus establishing a self-sustaining cycle (TWI Global, n.d.). Furthermore, mechanical recycling could be integrated with AI to ensure effectiveness and efficiency. In real-time, AI-powered sensors and cameras can identify and sort different materials, such as plastics, metals, and paper. Cameras and sensors can detect defects, impurities, or contaminants in recyclable materials, improving material purity.

Meanwhile, chemical recycling represents a proactive endeavour to break down fundamental chemical compositions into smaller molecules, which could comprise monomers or elemental chemicals. This approach is particularly relevant for non-organic waste materials, like plastics (Royal Society of Chemistry, n.d.). This essay believes that AI could enhance the complex process of chemical recycling. AI can predict and optimise chemical reactions necessary for breaking down waste materials. Moreover, AI can analyse waste feedstock to determine its composition and suitability for chemical recycling. This helps in selecting suitable waste streams for specific recycling methods.

Figure 1.2
The Digitalisation of
Waste Management Cycle
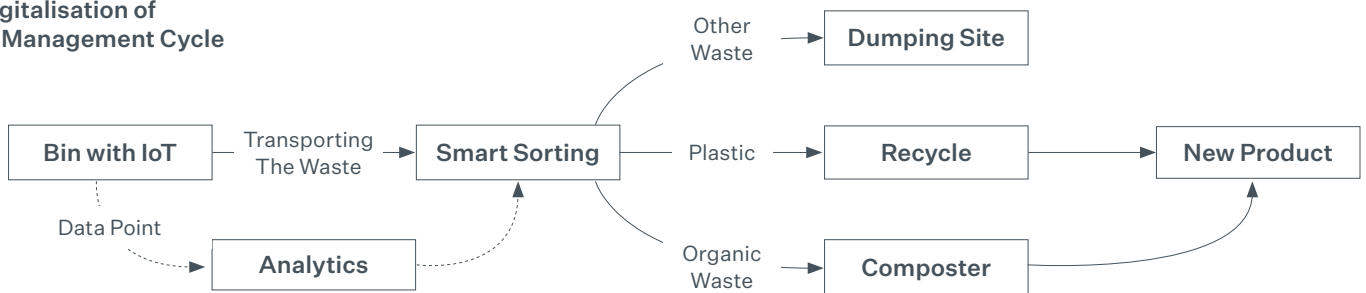
ASEAN-ROK can effectively confront their waste challenge by merging digital technology with the circular economy principles. This concept is illustrated in Figure 1.2, emphasising a comprehensive approach to waste management. Moreover, by digitising waste management within the circular economy framework, both parties possess considerable potential to foster an environmentally friendly setting. This involves prioritising renewable energy development as a pathway towards a green energy transition. Simultaneously, this waste management system could instigate the concept of zero waste by ensuring sustainable treatment for all waste types. Integrating digital technologies into the waste system could also enhance efficiency, reducing costs and boosting productivity.

Penta-Helix Model: Key Parameter for Success

This essay asserts the significance of collaboration and coordination among various stakeholders to realise the digitalisation of waste management as the transfer of knowledge and technology is pivotal in this endeavour. Therefore, in the spirit of the manifestation of a green environment and adapting to the advancement of technology, this essay tries to map the inter-relations actor's roles through the lens of the Penta-Helix Model, which includes academia, business, government, civil society (community), and media.

Academia
Academia holds a pivotal role in achieving transformative change. This essay posits that academia's responsibility extends beyond study—it involves actively shaping the world. Addressing the structural waste mismanagement in ASEAN-ROK necessitates academia's involvement. This entails facilitating knowledge transfer and dissemination concerning sustainable and eco-friendly waste management.

Moreover, a systemic societal transformation must shift towards a greener energy transition. Change must encompass all societal levels and sectors (Tiippana-Usvasalo et al., 2023). In other words, academia takes an essential role in transforming the conventional paradigm of waste management, which focuses on burning methods that raise further problems. As highlighted by Wachpanich & Coca (2022), The ROK and ASEAN try to transform waste into energy through incineration. Nevertheless, the process of incineration gives rise to an additional environmental concern. About 26 - 40% of the waste transforms into bottom ash, contributing to the air pollutant. Additionally, incineration produces novel toxic compounds like dioxins and furans, which have the potential to seep into the soil and groundwater, accumulating within food chains (Gaia, 2019). Therefore, the role of academia is essential to disseminate knowledge, transforming the conventional idea of waste management towards more sustainability.

Business
Business activities encompass more than just extraction and processing; they also include distribution. These actors play a crucial role in waste management. Waste production spans from large-scale operations to MSMEs, contributing to waste challenges. Additionally, businesses drive employment and GDP growth; for instance, in Indonesia, the MSME sector alone accounts for 97% of employment and 60% of GDP (Setkab, 2022). Even within MSMEs, there has been a noteworthy contribution

to GDP and employment. In a simplified manner, business involves three fundamental shareholders: investors, employees, and consumers. When aligned with each stakeholder's needs, interests, and objectives, exercising control over shareholders becomes pertinent and efficacious.

Figure 1.3
Business common need and its relation to sustainable goals
(Forbes, 2023)
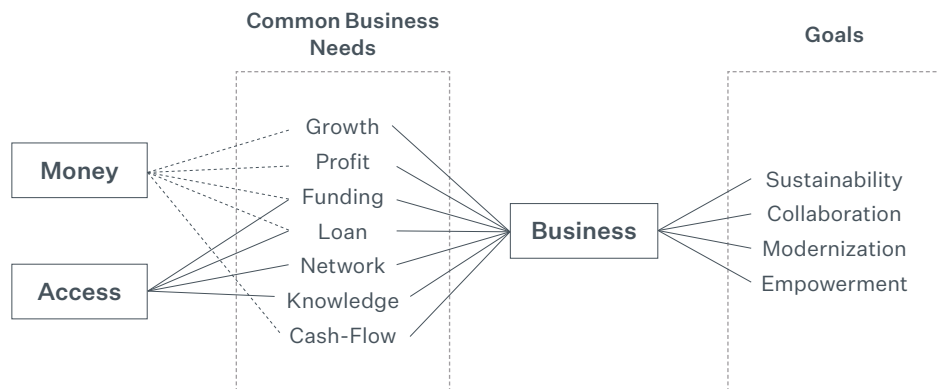
The exhibit above shows that money and access to resources are the two business fundamentals. By controlling these two aspects, Business actors can improve how the business is conducted. Investors, customers, and employees as stakeholders play an essential role in bridging the business needs and goals. It is because these stakeholders are involved and impacted by the decision-making process. The global regime, the UN, creates SDGs that translate into Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) as instruments to control business parameters (PWC, 2022).

    With so-called "Good Intention" has influenced the Asia-Pacific region to embed ESG improvement into business resilience, climate initiatives, and visions for transformation. The scoring ESG system presents a significant opportunity for waste management issues typically marginalised and neglected. In cases where companies need to adhere to ESG principles and exhibit either low ESG scores or none at all, these entities stand to lose two fundamental business aspects: money and access. According to PWC (n.d.), Investors tend to consider the ESG scoring system one of the instruments to decide on investing. Environmental Dimension in ESG becoming the criteria for scoring. Waste management of the business operations contributed to ESG scoring. If the businesses had terrible or poor waste management, the ESG score would be low.

    The business actor often views investors as the primary resource for capital and access. Financing good ESG score companies also affects the access to loans and funding by banks. Numerous banks extend more substantial credit lines to companies boasting high ESG scores

instead of low scores. Business leaders integrate this ESG score with a risk management framework, enabling the maintenance of resources and capital (Gorley, 2022). In other words, ESG is must recognised as a regular business risk and tends to be included in company standard risk reduction practices.

Government

The government in the Penta-Helix acted as a bridge, the main pillar, and had strong bargaining power. Government is responsible for creating and enforcing policies, regulations, and legislation. This is because the government has multiple instruments to utilise, such as institutions, regulations, policies, agencies, and budgets. The government had the potential to become a single playmaker to diminish this issue. For example, the government can allocate budgets and create regulations about waste management. If something happens with policy-making and if there is a violation of the regulation or policy, the government has the agency to intervene and strengthen the law by enforcing it. Due to its capability, the government must be transparent and accountable so the other Penta-Helix actors come to play. A few variables that need to be assessed in government are the policies and regulations implementation. It must aim to promote sustainability and digitised waste management practices. A waste management framework could be made through the government, setting waste management and monitoring standards.

However, the government has limitations regarding funds, public opinion, and implementation. The government needs to collaborate with others to provide significant and impactful solutions. Therefore, with this completed instrument to control, supervise, and intervene, the Government must actively engage with other Penta-Helix actors to solve practical problems or conflicts of interest from each actor.

Civil Society

Functioning as an impartial entity, civil society oversees the monitoring process. In other words, civil society is responsible for assessing and praising the contributions of various Penta-Helix actors, notably businesses and government. In case discrepancies arise within the actors responsible for waste management system implementation, civil society holds the prerogative to voice their concerns and advocate for government action.

By leveraging social media, civil society gains a robust platform for initiating movements that can extend transnationally. Through this approach, civil society entities in ASEAN and ROK can establish connections, form movements, and exert pressure on government and

business sectors to ensure waste management systems' effective and sustainable implementation. This is essential for effectively executing the digitalisation of waste management. However, this role could be achieved if civil society understands and knows about sustainable and smart waste management. Therefore, the role of other actors of Penta-Helix, in which academia plays a crucial role. It indicates that the Penta-Helix Model is coherently intertwined with a reciprocal relationship among the actors.

Media
Media's role in waste management is crucial in promoting public awareness, education, and behavioural change. Media is a powerful tool to disseminate information, raise public consciousness and influence attitudes and actions towards waste management. The Environmental impact of improper waste management and the circular economy ideas can be distributed through various channels with a range of audiences emphasising the need for responsible waste management. Media also could educate the public about waste management and influence public behaviour and attitudes towards waste management. Media can motivate individuals to change their attitudes through persuasive storytelling and impactful visuals. Media campaigns can highlight the benefits of proper waste management (Koser, 2017).

However, there are several factors that media effectiveness depends on, credibility and reliability of information, level of engagement, and interaction (Jiang & Peng, 2021). Credibility and reliability are essential for the media to provide accurate & and factual information— this information can be based on scientific evidence, expert opinion, and reliable sources. Media and public engagement encourage active participation and collaboration among stakeholders. This will benefit the media's capability to organise interactive campaigns. Creating a sense of ownership and commitment among the public can increase participation in waste reduction efforts and behavioural change (Cole, 2016). External factors also affect the effectiveness of media use, such as cultural norms, socio-economic factors, and supportive policies and infrastructure for waste management. Therefore a different approach to media is needed due to these circumstances.

Disparity Challenges & Opportunities for Digitalisation to Solve

There are a few challenges with ASEAN-ROK Waste Management Digitisation, for instance, disparity in Infrastructure and Financial Ability. The issue of infrastructure inequality can be viewed as a structural problem. This is due to the existence of a developmental gap in infrastructure construction. For instance, a disparity is observed between Singapore and Indonesia regarding infrastructure development. Singapore has embraced the smart city concept, which caters to diverse needs, including efficient waste management. On the contrary, Indonesia lags due to its dependence on traditional waste management methods that rely heavily on manual labour and involve a lengthy decision-making process.

The varying financial capacities of individual ASEAN countries give rise to the need for distinct approaches. In developing nations, waste management is often perceived as a philanthropic or voluntary endeavour rather than a business industry. This dynamic affects the capital inflow into waste management and hinders the potential for optimal waste processing. Consequently, this situation has implications for the divergent quality of waste treatment across each country. It implies that the utilisation of technology within ASEAN countries is also subject to varying interpretations. In nations categorised as developing, technology is often perceived as a barrier due to its disruptive influence on the established patterns of interaction and labour within these countries. Conversely, technology is regarded as a solution in countries classified as advanced in terms of energy.

Integration of Artificial Intelligence into waste management systems along with the Internet of Things and Penta-Helix actors can compress the operational cost of waste management. According to PWC (2018), AI-based systems can do predictive maintenance on waste management and also improve uptime by 9%, reduce costs by 12%, Reduce safety, health, environmental, and quality risk by 14%, and extend the lifetime of ageing assets or depreciation and amortisation value by 20%. AI can also contribute to the decision support system by applying integrated digital platforms to enhance the transparency and accountability of waste management to Penta-Helix actors and improve the quality of policy and fasting the policy-making process.

Conclusion

Integrating digital technology into waste management, guided by the principles of the circular economy, holds paramount importance. This imperative arises not only from the need to keep pace with the technological advancements of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 but also due to the pressing waste management challenges faced by the ASEAN and ROK regions. Recognising that the shift towards a more sustainable and digitally driven waste management approach is a complex and gradual process, this essay acknowledges the necessity of a prolonged effort. To facilitate this ongoing endeavour, adopting a digitalised waste management system rooted in circular economy principles necessitates the active participation of diverse stakeholders spanning multiple sectors. This collaborative engagement can be effectively structured using the Penta-Helix Model, which represents a comprehensive approach involving government, academia, business, civil society, and media.

By employing this model, the objective is to empower and fundamentally reshape the existing unsustainable and environmentally detrimental waste management paradigm. Given the magnitude of this undertaking, the essay contends that a shared objective exists between the ASEAN and ROK regions to cooperate and jointly work towards implementing this green paradigm. Furthermore, such collaborative efforts between the two parties contribute significantly to the broader goal of transitioning to green energy sources for the benefit of future generations. This is predicated on the notion that the digitalisation of waste management, guided by circular economy principles, will serve as a transformative catalyst, converting waste into energy through sustainable means.

Bibliography

Arumdani, S. I, Puspita, S.A., & Budiharjo, A. M. (2021). MSW handling of top 5 leading waste-producing countries in Southeast Asia. *IOP Conf. Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 896. doi:10.1088/1755-1315/896/1/012003.

ASEAN Connectivity. (2020). T*rashing it out: Waste management in Asia*. ASEAN Connectivity. https://connectivity.asean.org/resource/trashing-it-out-waste-management-in-asia/.

Besson, P., & Rowe, F. (2012). Strategizing information systems-enabled organizational transformation: A transdisciplinary review and new directions. *Journal of Strategic Information Systems*, 21, 103-124. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jsis.2012.05.001.

Cabinet Secretary, X. (2022). *Gov't to maintain msmes' role as economic backbone*. Cabinet Secretary of Republic Indonesia. https://setkab.go.id/en/govt-to-maintain-msmes-role-as-economic-backbone/

Cai, Y. Implementing the Triple Helix model in a non-Western context: an institutional logics perspective. *Triple Helix*, 1(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40604-014-0001-2.

Etzkowitz, H., & Leydesdorff, L. (1997). Universities and the Global Knowledge Economy: A Triple Helix of University-Industry-Government Relations. London: Pinter.

GAIA. (2019). Waste Incineration: Pollution and Health Impacts. Accessed on 16 August 2023, https://www.no-burn.org/wp-content/uploads/Pollution-Health_final-Nov-14-2019.pdf.

Gibson, J. (2021, May 27). Seoul's Trash Crisis. *The Diplomat*. Accessed on May 10, 2023, from https://thediplomat.com/2021/05/seouls-trash-crisis/.

Gorley, A. (2022). *What is ESG and why it's important for risk management*. sustainalytics.com. https://www.sustainalytics.com/esg-research/resource/corporate-esg-blog/what-is-esg-why-important-risk-management.

Hassanein, A., Naresh Kumar, A., & Lansing, S. (2021). Impact of electro-conductive nanoparticles additives on anaerobic digestion performance - A review. *Bioresource Technology*, 342. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biortech.2021.126023.

Hertati, D., Nurhadi, & Tukiman, S. (2023). Penta Helix Collaboration Model in Handling Problems of Waste Management. *NST 7st International Seminar of Research Month 2022*. https://doi.org/10.11594/nstp.2023.3359

Houston, M. (2023, July 24). Unpacking profit drivers: The key to unlocking business growth. *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/melissahouston/2023/07/23/unpacking-profit-drivers-the-key-to-unlocking-business-growth/?sh=78bc9c026924.

Jain, A. (2017). Waste Management in ASEAN Countries. United Nations Environment Programme.

Jensen, H. (2016, May 31). Communications: Social Media and the Waste Management Sector: Eight strategies to use social media more effectively. *Waste Advantage Magazine*. https://wasteadvantagemag.com/communications-social-media-and-the-waste-management-sector-eight-strategies-to-use-social-media-more-effectively/.

Jiang, P., Fan, Y. V., & Klemeš, J. J. (2021). Data Analytics of social media publicity to enhance household waste management. Resources, *Conservation and Recycling*, 164, 105146. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2020.105146

Jong-Hoon, J., Gwang-Hyun, P., & Yoon-Seo, C. (2022, January 23). With no hard rules, food waste continues to grow. *Korea JoongAng Daily*. Accessed on 15 August 2023, https://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/2022/01/23/national/socialAffairs/food-waste-environment/20220123184458330.html.

Kim, H. J. (2022). *Robot recycling: South Korea uses artificial intelligence reduce waste*. CGTN. https://news.cgtn.com/news/2022-07-29/VHJhbnNjcmlwdDY3NDYw/index.html.

Koser, R. (2017). *Role of Mass Media in Public Awareness About Household Waste Management: A Case Study in Lahore (Pakistan)* (thesis). Department of International Environment and Development Studies Noragric, As.

Li, N., Han, R.., & Lu, X. (2018). Bibliometric analysis of research trends on solid waste reuse and recycling during 1992–2016. *Resour. Conserv. Recycl*. 130, 109–117. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2017.11.008.

Lin, B., Recke, B., Knudsen, J. K., & Jørgensen, S. B. (2007). A systematic approach for soft sensor development. *Computers & Chemical Engineering*, 31(5-6), 419-425. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compchemeng.2006.05.030.

Pahre, R., & Papayoanou, P. A. (1997). Using Game Theory to Link Domestic and International Politics. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 41(1), 4–11. http://www.jstor.org/stable/174484.

Putnam, D. R. (1998). Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games. *International Organization*, 42(3), 427-460. https://www.jstor.org/stable/2706785.

Ranta, V., Aarikka-Stenroos, L., & Väisänen, J. (2021). Digital technologies catalyzing business model innovation for circular economy—Multiple case study. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, 164. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2020.105155.

Royal Society of Chemistry. (n.d.). Chemical Recycling. Accessed on 14 August 2023, https://www.rsc.org/globalassets/22-new-perspectives/sustainability/progressive-plastics/explainers/rsc-explainer-6---chemical-recycling.pdf.

Seyyedi, S. R., Kowsari, E., Ramakrishna, S., Gheibi, M., & Chinnappan, A. (2023). Marine plastics, circular economy, and artificial intelligence: A comprehensive review of challenges, solutions, and policies. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 345. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvman.2023.118591.

Statista Research Department. (2023, June 8). Waste generation distribution South Korea 2021, by type of waste. Accessed on 13 August 2023, https://www.statista.com/statistics/1016733/south-korea-waste-generation-distribution-by-type-of-waste/#:~:text=In%202021%2C%20approximately%2043%20percent,in%20South%20Korea%20that%20year.

Sudiana, K., Sule, T. E., Soemaryani, I., Yunizar, Y. (2020). The Development and Validation of the Penta Helix Construct. *Verslas: Teorija ir praktika / Business: Theory and Practice*, 21(1), 136-145. https://doi.org/10.3846/btp.2020.11231.

Tiippana-Usvasalo, M., Pajunen, N., & Maria, H. (2023). The role of education in promoting circular economy. *International Journal of Sustainable Engineering*, 16(1), 92-103. doi: 10.1080/19397038.2023.2210592.

O'Neill, A. (2023, May 4). Total population of the ASEAN countries from 2018 to 2028. Statista.com. Accessed on 10 August 2023, https://www.statista.com/statistics/796222/total-population-of-the-asean-countries/#:~:text=Total%20population%20of%20the%20ASEAN%20countries%20from%202018%20to%202028&text=In%202021%2C%20the%20total%20population,an%20estimated%20666.19%20million%20inhabitants.

PWC. (2018). *Predictive maintenance - beyond the hype: PDM 4.0 delivers results*. Price Waterhouse Coopers. https://www.pwc.be/en/documents/20180926-pdm40-beyond-the-hype-report.pdf.

PWC. (n.d.). *Companies failing to act on ESG issues risk losing investors, finds new PWC survey*. Price Waterhouse Coopers. https://www.pwc.com/lt/en/about/press-room/pwc-global-investor-esg-survey.html.

PWC. (2022). *Asia Pacific's time*. Price Waterhouse Coopers. https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/about/pwc-asia-pacific/asia-pacifics-time.html.

Tan, S., & Hong, J. L. (2020, July 1). Trashing it out: Waste management in Asia. *ASEAN Secretariat*. Retrieved May 10, 2023, from https://connectivity.asean.org/resource/trashing-it-out-waste-management-in-asia/.

The World Bank. (2022). Population Total - Korea. Accessed on 11 August 2023, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=KR.

TWI Global. (n.d.). What is Mechanical Recycle? Accessed on 14 August 2023, https://www.twi-global.com/technical-knowledge/faqs/what-is-mechanical-recycling#:~:text=Mechanical%20recycling%20is%20the%20process,%2C%20re%2Dgranulating%20and%20compounding.

UNIDO. (n.d.). Circular Economy. Accessed on 1 August 2023, https://www.unido.org/sites/default/files/2017-07/Circular_Economy_UNIDO_0.pdf.

United Nations. (n.d.). Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Accessed on 13 August 2023, https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/climate-change/.

Wachpanich, N., & Coca, N. (2022, December 8). As waste-to-energy incinerators spread in Southeast Asia, so do concerns. *Mongabay: News and Inspiration from Nature's Frontline*. Accessed on 16 August 2023, https://news.mongabay.com/2022/12/as-waste-to-energy-incinerators-spread-in-southeast-asia-so-do-concerns/.

SPECIAL MENTION AWARD

Ade Meirizal & Cindy Juliana
INDONESIA

Asia's Emerging Space Actor: ROK-ASEAN on Satellite for Environmental Protection Cooperation and Sustainability

Asia's Emerging Space Actor: ROK-ASEAN on Satellite for Environmental Protection Cooperation and Sustainability

Ade Meirizal & Cindy Juliana
Universitas Gadjah Mada

Abstract

The limitation to observing exact conditions on Earth makes satellite technology vital. Both ROK and ASEAN are facing many challenges in terms of environmental protection. Constraints in the budget, technology gap, interest, and political will are why satellite technology could not be used effectively. Analyzing regime theory, we can see the possibility of reforming space cooperation among countries. The interest-based approach has detailed explanations for establishing a new regional regime. This approach can capture interest, motivation, urgency, and outcomes, even shape the state's member behavior. Analyzing from a problem-structural angle, environmental conditions in the region should be prevented by utilizing satellites for ecological protection. It automatically relates to sustainability on Earth and societal aspects. Moreover, experiences among countries to develop space capability would be essential assets to continuing and institutionalizing space regimes in Asia.

Keywords
ROK, ASEAN, Outer Space, Environment, Sustainability

Background

Environmental protection issues are urged to discuss on the biggest umbrella called ASEAN-ROK Declaration on Comprehensive Cooperation Partnership. To strengthen comprehensive economic cooperation and support ASEAN's effort for regional integration, satellite for environmental protection and sustainability is one of the essential technologies to develop shortly. Urgencies of these issues can be seen in three different aspects. At first, the characteristics of the landscape in Southeast Asia are unique, surrounded by the complexity of geography. ASEAN state members are highly vulnerable to natural disasters, climate change, and environmental issues (Young, 2022). Human activities on Earth produce deforestation, desertification, soil degradation, decrease the ozone layer, and stimulate global warming. Limitations to understanding the data and exact situation regarding the environment on Earth can be tackled by utilizing outer space as the main domain in the future. Satellites for environmental protection make it easier for human beings to monitor ecosystems and biodiversity (unoosa.org, 2023). Second, the emptiness of the space institution in ASEAN would be essential opportunities for space cooperation. Although ASEAN has SCOSA (Space Technology Development and Utilization), and this framework is part of the ASEAN Committee on Science and Technology (COST) (Verspieren & Coral, p. 11, 2021), the sustainable organization of outer space in ASEAN is still in question. At first, SCOSA was not an independent entity. Second, this sub-committee was created under the Committee on Science, Technology, and Innovation (COSTI). Third, the characteristic of a "sub-committee" has a deficiency, limitation in indecisiveness that brings stakeholders to a disconcerting decision, high cost, domination by few, and lack of secrecy. In other words, stakeholders responsible for maintaining the decision had yet to be taken. Lastly, the absence of a space regime in ROK-ASEAN affects progress in space cooperation to achieve mutual goals in future. The environmental challenges in ASEAN, such as water management, deforestation, land degradation, air pollution, and climate change (Anbumozhi & Intal, 2015), are a scoop of satellite for environmental protection technology. These satellites offer many advantages, like data and observation, combined with various disciplines such as photogrammetry, cartography, geodetics, geographic information, and environmental status.

Collaboration between ROK-ASEAN in space technology can boost probability in terms of utilization of space technology. ROK capabilities and interest, combined with ASEAN experiences in space, can help humankind from environmental catastrophe. Using regime theory, we can shape an action and outcome produced from this cooperation. Moreover, the interest-based approach in regime studies is capable of ruling state

members to achieve an equal result from their interests, which means protecting the environment and creating sustainability on Earth. That is why the authors questioning: why ROK-ASEAN should establish a regime on satellites for environmental protection and sustainability?. This paper will be conducted by qualitative research. A literature review is vital to gathering credible information from current research, articles, journals, books, and relevant resources. This paper will analyze how to establish a space regime in Asia by two biggest actors, which are ROK and ASEAN to utilize space for environmental protection and sustainability. The beginning of this paper will explain the background of the issue related to satellites for ecological preservation and link to sustainability. The second part of this essay will discuss satellite technology to protect the environment and how it benefits humans on Earth. This part will cover a few benefits of satellite technology in terms of environmental protection. The third part of this paper will mention the theoretical approach and why ROK should collaborate with ASEAN countries to build an outer space regime in environmental protection. Lastly, this paper will conclude with various recommendations and limitations regarding outer space cooperation between ROK and ASEAN in the region.

Satellite For Environmental Protection and Sustainability

Satellites give us the possibility to capture various status on Earth, from weather forecasting, data on ocean, land features, even climate change monitoring. In weather forecasting, satellites are capable of observing temperature, wind speed and direction, aerosols, water vapor, cloud cover, precipitation, storm, cyclones, wildfires/bushfire, and ash from volcanic eruptions. In ocean monitoring, satellites can give us information regarding sea surface temperature, sea level, ocean current and wind. It is also possible to monitor accidents like oil spills, even periodic oscillations that create storms. In land features, satellites can be used to check land temperature, winds, vegetation, bodies of water, human settlements, soil moisture, depth of snow and ice in some regions on Earth (Medina, 2010).

This technology is not a new issue, the EU utilized satellite technology to protect the environment by providing data. For example in Bavarian forest in Germany and Sumava National Park in Czech Republic, satellites provide information about vegetation change and environmental conditions. This technology allows monitoring of tree regeneration, dominant plant species, and habitat around the forest. Effectiveness of satellites can be seen from its work. Satellites have a wide range of sensors to inform valuable perspectives on Earth. By that, it can help us understand the exact condition and inspire us to make

a best practice to protect the environment, management, knowledge-based conservation, and ecosystem restoration process (unep.org, accessed on August 15, 2023). In a different method, Canada uses this satellite to track wildfire burn areas, observe changing environment conditions, and support to protect ecosystems (Government of Canada, 2022). In other ways, satellites for environmental protection can determine the extent of the area affected, provide data to see atmospheric chemical composition, fishing movement, soil moisture, and global water resources to prevent drought. In Japan, satellite named *The Advanced Land Observing Satellite Daichi* (ALOS) is used to forest protection and prevent illegal logging in the Amazon. The next satellite called ALOS-2 will continue the projects to monitor tropical forests around the globe to gather Earth data in land degradation, soil erosion, floods, and over cultivation (Japan.go.jp, 2017).

The link between space and sustainability arises when societal needs are supported by the utilization of the space system (Martinez, 2015). Then space sustainability appeared as a concept to describe space technology that was used to all humanity with peaceful purposes and societal benefits, and ensure the benefits of outer space will continue to be accessible to the near future. This concept mentioned that all nations can use outer space resources freely as long as they are responsible for peace. Sustainability in space was discussed over the last decade and characterized by a bottom-up policy making process. Combined between state and non-state actors, initiatives of space sustainability designed are voluntary and non legally binding. From 2008 to 2010, there are three multilateral initiatives were published namely; *Draft International Code of Conduct on Outer Space Activities, UNGA Group of Governmental Experts* (GGE) *on possible transparency and confidence-building measures* (TCBMs) *for space, and the establishment of a Working Group on the Long-Term Sustainability* (LTS) *of Outer Space Activities by the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space* (UN COPUOS) (Secure World Foundation, 2018). Satellites for environmental protection is one of the programs to implement the concept of space sustainability. This satellite has the capacity to monitor and provide data from Earth that humans cannot observe and report the data remotely. It works 24 hours in a week to capture atmospheric phenomena, ocean conditions, and land features (Medina, 2010). State members in UNCOPUOS published a new agenda paper titled *Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities*. This paper contained various best-practice guidelines to use outer space and a multilayer work plan can be adapted by members (Martinez, 2015). Various countries already utilize outer space technologies to protect the environment, and it is

crucial in supporting environmental protection and contributes to MDGs achievement (Martinez, 2015, p. 264).

Theoretical Approach

We should understand that regimes in global politics are crucial. Through a regime, we can rule the conflict, accommodate interests, and construct norms and rules with a rational choice mindset (Keohane, 1982). At least there are three characteristics in the regime's studies: power-based, knowledge-based, and interest-based (Hasenclever, Mayer & Rittberger, 1996). This paper will use a suitable approach to examine the potential cooperation between ROK and ASEAN clearly, which is an interest-based approach. In this approach, power differentials are not examined deeply. Rather than that, *interest-based approaches* focus on common interests among actors in a regime (Hasenclever et al, 1996). The interest-based approach can give us the exact reason why ROK and ASEAN should start building a space regime to capture future challenges.

Interest-based Approach in Regime Theory

In the interest-based approach realm, three purest perspectives are close to the neoliberal regime theory. First, contractualism works under definite situational preconditions, such as a particular issue that should take action together (Keohane, 1982). Second, *situation-structuralism*. In terms of scope, this approach is more widely used than before and can facilitate cooperation to avoid *Pareto-inefficient* outcomes. Third, *problem-structuralism*. Naturally, this perspective is less inherent to the interest-based school due to the reasoning in the notions. Problem-structuralists assume that not all issues in regime creation stand on neoliberal theory. In certain conditions, states concern with relative gains, and it's not the pattern of neoliberal notion as the core perspective of the interest-based approach. Thus, problem-structuralism is claimed as a bridge between two views, namely interest-based and power-based theories of regimes (Hasenclever et al, 1996). The next question is which approaches are suitable to capture ROK-ASEAN cooperation to tackle environmental issues using satellite technology. The authors argue the problem-structuralism approach was applicable to analyze space cooperation between states.

    Problem-structuralism approach lies on specific issue areas and applies self-help strategies. This approach claimed regime formation from the international system's characteristics and the preferences of issue areas' (Zurn, Wolf, and Efinger, 1990 on Hasenclever et al, 1996).

For example, the crisis to protect the stratospheric ozone layer started in the mid-1990s and created a regime for climate change based on the problem that states are facing. Concerning discussing ROK-ASEAN on satellite for environmental protection, the problem-structural approach offers deep analysis to capture the situation. In this approach, many scholars examined *issue-area properties* in regime study and linked to the definition of regimes (Krasner, 1983) would give us an image of cooperation between states, like their goals, ambition, motive, and interest. Keohane and Nye (1977) defined *issue-area properties* consisting of one or more inseparably connected objects of contention and order actors to behave directed to the issue. However, the issue area has boundaries in the perception of participation actors. Due to that, actors can change without any correspondence in order to respond to problems, and political processes appear at a high level to shape perception (Hasenclever et al., 1996). In this condition, a regime emphasizes regulated conflict management (Rittberger, 1993). As Rittberger mentioned, conflict contains three different aspects: conflict about values, disagreements about means, and conflict about interests. *Issue-area properties* and typologies of conflict would bring us to the *model of regime formation popularly called institutional bargaining* (Young, 1989).

The institutional bargaining role is to treat states as selfish actors dealing with the *possibility* of achieving joint gains through cooperation and the *difficulty* of settling on some norms and rules. In other words, institutional bargaining is "bargaining with the objective to create an institution" (Hasenclever et al, 1996). To analyze the bargaining position between ROK-ASEAN satellites for environmental protection, we should observe the challenge of each country and the actual conditions regarding the environmental issues. In the discussion section, we will understand the *issue area properties* that ROK-ASEAN should shape to use outer space technology. Moreover, the environmental challenge would tell us about the structure of the problem and create a common interest in establishing cooperation based on collective outcomes purposes.

Discussion

ROK-ASEAN Environmental Challenges

To observe *issue area properties* and analyze the problem-structure of environmental protection and sustainability, both ROK-ASEAN should build a sense of urgency to protect the environment through satellite technologies. Both states should reduce the three different conflicts mentioned above. It could start by shaping common problems among

countries, which are environmental issues, and how to establish sustainability cooperation to utilize satellite technology shortly. Natural disasters and environmental crises were the main issues in ROK and ASEAN. According to *the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters* (CRED), disaster victims in developing countries alleged 69.9% of the world's total damages from natural disasters. The high risks of natural disasters in ROK and ASEAN are influenced by characteristics of geology, meteorology, and buffer areas (e.g., open space, environmental degradation, soil erosion, and water retaining) (Jeong & Soon, 2018). From 1912 to 2008, the temperature in ROK increased by 1.7 degrees Celsius and could rise soon. In the rainfall issue, the intensity was increased by 19 percent. ROK faces various natural hazards, typhoons, floods, droughts, landslides, snowstorms, tsunamis, and earthquakes. Those are harmful for buildings, shipments, farmland, and public and individual facilities ([wmo.int](wmo.int), 2011). For example, the area that suffered from natural disasters, Gangwon province, lost over USD 12,000 per capita over ten years (Jeong & Soon, 2018). The environmental problem in ROK is another issue to respond to. According to NASA, in 2017, ROK was one of the most polluted countries in the world. It came from industrial activity and affected health, especially for children in the metropolitan cities, including Seoul. NASA tried to observe the quality of air in ROK by flying a plane at different altitudes, and the result was pollution in ROK produced intra-country and carried by neighboring countries like China (Hu, 2017).

Due to the number of members in ASEAN, environmental issues are various. The most challenging were terrestrial environmental issues such as land degradation, over-farming, and deforestation. Atmospheric pollution like haze and forest fires produce smoke, industrial manufactures, and fossil fuel. In water resources, the problems are coastal and maritime contamination, clean water crises, energy resources, and forest fires (Apriwan, 2016). Some natural disasters are connected. For example, powerful typhoons create flooding and landslides, eruptions cause earthquakes and air contamination, and sometimes earthquakes create tsunamis. In Cambodia, floods are dominantly followed by droughts. Indonesia has forest fires, earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, volcanoes, droughts, and landslides. In Lao PDR, cyclonic storms and floods are more dominant and cause droughts. Malaysia also faces floods, forest fires, tsunamis, and cyclonic storms. Myanmar experienced cyclonic storms followed by tsunamis, floods, and forest fires. In the Philippines, typhoons become major natural disasters each year, and they cause floods, earthquakes, volcanoes, droughts, and landslides are another challenge in the Philippines. Thailand is facing

floods, tsunamis, cyclonic storms, and droughts. Cyclonic storms, floods, and droughts dominate in Vietnam. Brunei and Singapore are facing similar disasters to their neighbors (UNISDR, 2010).

ASEAN suffers around USD 4.4 billion annually due to natural disasters and hit 50 percent of global fatalities (aseandrr.org, accessed on August 27, 2023). Through ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management, policymakers urge the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) with people-centered, people-oriented, financially sustainable, and network approaches to non-state actors. It covers three mutually inclusive strategic approaches: institutionalization and communication, finance and resource mobilization, and partnership and innovation. The critical aspect is that AADMER should be linked to the integration process under the ASEAN Economic Community to integrate a highly and adequately cohesive economy in 2025 (ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management, 2013). However, in ASEAN Vision 2025 on disaster management, the notion of using satellites to protect the environment as an innovation has yet to be mentioned. This report needs to discuss integrating satellite data providing and prevention among state members. Political orientation to utilize space technology is not a priority. Authors argue policymakers in ASEAN are still in a dilemma with financial sustainability, the technology gap, and the high cost of maintaining satellites for environmental protection. The question is: Is maintaining a satellite more expensive than causing worse loss each year, around USD 4.4 billion due to disaster and the environment being threatened?

ROK Space Activities

Although dependent on foreign technology, ROK started to develop independent capabilities as a satellite producer, space service provider, and launch site (Wade, 2007). ROK applied strategic cooperation in the space realm with many spacefaring nations such as the US, India, Japan, Russia, France, and China. According to space politics analyst Wade Huntley, more extensive space programs tend to see the other important powers as rivals, if not adversaries, but smaller countries like ROK should emphasize developing relationships (Wade, 2007). There are three factors why ROK focuses on space development; (i) Economic development aims and the industrial sector. (ii) Missile and nuclear threats from neighboring countries. Space technology is used for security purposes. (iii) National pride and desire to be recognized as a spacefaring nation and to build an image as an independent and modern country (Moltz, 2011). Historically, ROK launched the Aerospace

Industry Development and Promotion Act after legislation approval. Later in the Roh-Tae Woo administration, ROK built the Korea Aerospace Research Institute (KARI) in 1989 as a significant entity at the national level. One year later, ROK implemented an import-substitution strategy with Europe and US companies to build satellite construction and related technologies for civilian purposes.

In 1992 ROK's first satellite, called Kitsat-1, or in Korean named Uribyol-1, was launched in collaboration with Britain's University of Surrey using a French launch site (Moltz, 2011). The economic crisis in 1998 made ROK struggle to continue its ambition. However, in August 1998, North Korea's Taepodong-1 missile test and satellite launch surprised ROK's national security systems during an effort to revitalize economic conditions. ROK was waiting for critical information from the U.S. regarding flight data. It made ROK dependent on the U.S. for its national security, and it raised awareness that ROK is not the only space-oriented actor in the region. Through centralized KARI, ROK shows its capability in space development by using domestic technology especially in satellite manufacturing and test facilities. Satrec Initiative –as former KAIST engineers– built a satellite bus for Malaysia's RazakSAT and DubaiSAT-1 (Moltz, 2011, p. 148). In 2021, after ratification of the Artemis Accord initiated by the United States of America (U.S.), ROK built lunar robotics independently and planned to launch in 2032. Furthermore, ROK allocates 95.4 billion won ($73.1 million) in the space sector, including space defense, research, and development programs (Soo, 2023).

In discussing satellites for environmental protection, ROK joined European EADS Astrium Corporation to develop COMS-1 (in Korean, Cheollian). This satellite is to collect oceanographic and meteorological data and enhance communication networks and be the seventh national weather satellite in the world. KARI cooperation is based on the type of technology involved (Moltz, 2011, p. 148). Collaborating with NASA and the European Space Agency (ESA), KARI joined a global air monitoring project to observe air quality around Asia Pacific (CCAC Secretariat, 2020). This experience is useful for adapting to ROK-ASEAN cooperation in satellite for environmental protection. However, KARI worked on a project-project basis that made time-consuming, complex applications and political consent issues. KARI also faces limited reliable institutional support for staff and infrastructure. Berndt Feuerbacher, an expert from Germany, said ROK should manage the connection between lightweight IT and space technology if it wants to develop rapidly (Moltz, 2011, p. 148).

ASEAN Space Activities

Talking about space actors in ASEAN, those show interest in developing their capabilities in space. Indonesia started its space interest in 1975 by purchasing a communication satellite from the US called Palapa-1A. In 1977, Boeing built another satellite called Palapa-A2 and Palapa-B1 through strategic cooperation. Together with Thailand and the Philippines, Indonesia provided cellular phone service in 1997 (Burleson, 2005). Indonesia collaborated with the US for Earth resources data in agricultural development, forestry monitoring, and other purposes. The characteristics of land, maritime activities, vessels, and aircraft pushed Indonesia to utilize outer space in practical ways. That is why Indonesia cooperated with many actors, such as the US, Japan, China, Russia, and India (Burleson, 2005, p. 148) and Indonesia has opportunities to be spacefaring through intensive cooperation between NASA-LAPAN.

In 1970, Malaysia was made a satellite for forestry resources. Still, authorities built the Malaysian Center for Remote Sensing in 1988, focusing on agriculture, forestry, geology, hydrology, environmental, coastal zones, marine biology, topography, and socio-economic applications (Burleson, 2005, p.193). Malaysia has joined various cooperation with the US and Russia to build satellites together. The image of Malaysia as a space-oriented nation started with Dr. Mazlan Othman, who served in the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOSA) and became the first female chief of scientists in the UN.

The Philippines government established an Astronomical Observatory in Quezon City to centralize space activities. In 1970, authorities used satellite technology to prepare for natural disasters and weather forecasts. A few obstacles, such as limited resources, trained personnel, and political interest, make space development in the Philippines run slowly. Budget authority and specific administration appear as a challenge at the domestic level. Later in 1987, the government of the Philippines formed the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA) to collaborate with the US and France. This program was conducted to manage water, coastal, and agricultural resources (Moltz, 2011, p. 177). The prominent national entity established around 2008 was the Philippine Aeronautics and Space Administration (PASA). Relations with other spacefaring outside the US made the Philippines' space development progressively developed. Japan and China are vital partners in terms of satellite development. In international politics, the Philippines is one of the signatories to space treaties, including the Moon Treaty.

Among major ASEAN countries interested in space, Singapore is a relative latecomer. Singapore is interested in the educational system,

research, and significant financial resources. It produces expertise in space engineering and the military. The first satellite, built in 1998, collaborated with British-French Matra Marconi Space Corporation (Chow, 2010). Singapore also works with India and Japan in space development. Cooperation between Singapore and Japan is to develop the capability and capacity to design, build, test, and operate satellite buses for multi-mission (Bretschneider, 2003). Although Singapore is a latecomer, it put critical financial and technological support into advancing its capacity in space development. Economy and national security would be motivation from the Singapore government. Authorities continually send civilians and military to the US for engineering training and space systems. The output is to develop the space industry and infrastructure with an economic motive (Moltz, 2011, p. 180).

Vietnamese space activity began in 1980 after Cosmonaut Pham Tuan joined a Soviet rocket to enter the Salyut 6 space station. Economics and budget make progress in space development slowly isolated. Later in 1995, after various strategies to develop the economy, Vietnam bought a communication satellite for the telecommunication industry. Vietnam has a variety of cooperation with Japan, the US, the UE, Malaysia, Belgium, France, and the ROK. Vietnam became interested in environmental protection, disaster monitoring, and national resource data collecting through *the Vietnam National Resources, Environment, and Disaster Monitoring Small Satellite-1,* popularly called VNREDSAT-1. This project cooperates with the French and Belgian ODA funds. In 2006, Vietnam built the Space Technology Institute (STI), which is growing significantly. From 2010 to 2020, STI produced small satellites, earth stations, and launch sites, making Vietnam independently manage its space activity (Xinhua News Agency, 2007). The Vietnam space program stressed GPS technology for coastal monitoring, weather, and rescue operations (Doan, 2009). Japan provided USD 400 million in ODA funds to build the Hoa Lac National Space Center in 2017, which became necessary momentum for Vietnam's space activities.

Like Vietnam, Thailand faces the same challenge regarding environ-mental issues, natural resources, national security, and agriculture. Thailand cooperated with various spacefaring countries such as the US, Russia, China, and Japan. The cooperation is multiple, like data providing, launch site, and training. Thailand still used and purchased foreign technology to run its space activities. In 2004, Thailand built its satellite. In history, Thailand engaged in various activities in outer space with the US and France through a higher entity called the Geo-Informatics Space Technology Development Agency (GISTDA). In 1982, the Kingdom of Thailand developed the Thailand Ground Receiving Station, which

Landsat and SPOT can access. *Thailand Earth Observation Satellite (Theos)* became the first remote sensing satellite to observe land use, coastal management, agriculture monitoring, and cartography ([wmo.int](wmo.int), accessed on August 20, 2023). It is used to give direct information regarding earth observation. So far, Thailand has strong relations with Japan and China to boost its space program domestically.

In ASEAN, SCOSA plays a vital role at the regional level. Various programs, including capacity building, collaboration, and promoting transfer technology, were created. Priorities were decided, like emphasizing nano and microsatellites, geoinformatics, disaster risk reduction, agriculture, environment monitoring, and even space exploration (asean.org, accessed on August 28, 2023). However, SCOSA and ARTSA (*ASEAN Research and Training Centre for Space Technology and Applications*) are blurry during the process. At first, as the leading actor in the Asia-Pacific economy and security, ASEAN still needs more space activities and facilities. SCOSA, as a sub-committee in ASEAN space activities, is not an independent entity. It limits indecisiveness during the decision process. Furthermore, ASEAN state members can represent their countries in SCOSA, but funding and participation are optional. The financial burden of running SCOSA has become a significant issue in ASEAN. Also, ASEAN members are more interested in cooperating with foreign partners than intra-ASEAN (Meirizal & Putri, 2022). In fact, Both ROK and ASEAN were using space technology to support their interests and were already using satellites for environment and climate observation. Experiences using this satellite can be used as a *bargain* for each country, as explained by the *problem-structural approach*. By objective consideration, such as risks from climate challenges and environmental issues, technology gaps and budget, facilities and human resources, interest and political will, both ROK-ASEAN has *difficulty* in space development aspects. Because of that, those actors should organize a space regime to protect the environment efficiently by using satellite technology that develops together. ASEAN still needs to be more compared to other regional organizations like the EU or Japan. It means collaboration should taken, and ROK is an appropriate partner due to its relations with many Southeast Asia nations so far.

Conclusion & Recommendation

After the explanation above, there are four key factors why the space regime should be created between ROK-ASEAN. First is the uncertainty of Asia's space activity, whether peaceful competition or military purposes (Molzt, 2005, p. 190). The regime is highly needed to shape the state's behavior and avoid military-oriented space development in the region. Each actor would make confidence-building measures and collective outcomes to prevent space weaponization. *Issue-area properties* can direct actors to follow the norms and regulations to use space for cooperation and peaceful goals. Second, Space power rivalry shows military interest in Asia. For example, India and China established Anti-Satellite Arm Technology (ASAT) and Fractional Orbital Bombardment Systems (FOBs) for military purposes. ROK and ASEAN should prevent actors from falling into space militarization and space weaponization. Third, Budget limitation in terms of establishing space sustainability. Based on neoliberal institutionalism, *interest-based approaches* in regime theory make states loosely arrange budgets to realize collective outcomes and gain. Although this approach is a "bridge" between interest and power, authors claim ROK and ASEAN have comprehensive strategic partnerships in many fields with low power stress. Its means there is no power force among states, and cooperation is built with mutual benefit and a reciprocal foundation. Fourth, the emptiness of space institutionalism in ASEAN can respond by establishing a space regime in the future. As ordered from ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management; institutionalization, innovation, and budgeting are key elements to elevate ASEAN's capability in disaster management.

The structure of problems that both ROK and ASEAN faces (which are environmental protection and natural disasters) can shape state behavior, interests, and goals and later can create the characteristics of a space regime. The cooperation can start with annual meetings with stakeholders to share issues related to ecological challenges and disasters. Then, both ROK and ASEAN should build mutual understanding and conception regarding satellite technology to provide data, mitigation, SOP, and base practice for disaster prevention. It relates to Young's regime model called institutional contracts created by negotiation, which deals with various norms and rules. As a result, this process will create regime formation through international legal systems which rules actors to achieve common interests.

Limitation

Outer space technologies are expensive, so political will on each state's should be observed deeply. As we can see, some ASEAN members are not interested in space development. Moreover, the gap among countries in budgeting and issue priorities makes regime creation seem hard to make. Each state member is interested in building specific space technologies. Based on India's experiences in space development, the ROK and ASEAN may face dilemmas in building space technology for military purposes rather than competitive fairness for peaceful uses.

Motivation, interest, and force factors among actors should be observed using different IR approaches. As we know, global politics mainly stands on rational choice and national interest rather than normative aspects. The concept of self-help always appears in global political studies. Additionally, profit-oriented data satellite information should be ruled by a prominent legal system. As a cooperation, both ROK and ASEAN need funding, and the commercialization of satellites for environmental protection would be a potential conflict later. Furthermore, maintenance and innovation in space technology demand a high rate of human resources, the newest technology, and a budget. That is why Policymakers should focus on the "three conflicts" mentioned above, namely, conflicts about values, disagreements about means, and disputes about interests to establish a space regime in Asia.

References

Anbumozhi, V.,& Intal, P. S. (2015). *Can Thinking Green and Sustainability Be an Economic Opportunity for ASEAN?*. Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), 66.

Apriwan, A. (2012). *The Securitization of Environmental Issues in Southeast Asia*. Andalas Journal of International Studies, 1(1), 20-35.

ASEAN DRR-CCA. (n.d.). *ASEAN DRR Disaster Risk Reduction by Integrating Climate Change Projection*. Retrieved August 27, 2023, from https://aseandrr.org/about/asean-drr-cca.

ASEAN. (2013). *ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management. Journal of Chemical Information and Modeling*, 53(9), 1689–1699.

ASEAN. (n.d.). *Major Sectoral Bodies*. Retrieved August 29, 2023, from https://asean.org/our-communities/economic-community/asean-science-technology-and-innovation/major-sectoral-bodies/.

Burleson, D. (2005). *Space Programs Outside the United States: All Exploration and Research Efforts*, Country by Country. McFarland.

Canadian Space Agency (2022). *Monitoring and protecting our ecosystems from space*. Retrieved August 22, 2023, from https://www.asc-csa.gc.ca/eng/satellites/everyday-lives/monitoring-and-protecting-our-ecosystems-from-space.asp.

Climate and Clean Air Coalition. (2020). *South Korea launches first satellite in a global constellation to monitor air quality.* Retrieved August 27, 2023, from https://www.ccacoalition.org/news/south-korea-launches-first-satellite-global-constellation-monitor-air-quality.

Dolcemascolo, G., Kim, Y., & Mu, L. (2011). *Reducing Disaster Risk in Cities — the Republic of Korea's Experience.* World Meteorological Organization |. Retrieved August 24, 2023, from https://public.wmo.int/en/bulletin/reducing-disaster-risk-cities-%E2%80%94-republic-korea%E2%80%99s-experience.

Fırat, O. (2019). *Integration Theories of European Union.* Turkey-EU Relations Midterm Paper. November 11, 2019. Marmara University, Institute of European Studies, Department of Political Communication in Europe.

Hasenclever, A., Mayer, P., & Rittberger, V. (1996). *Interests, power, knowledge: The study of international regimes.* Mershon International Studies Review, 40(9 SUPPL. 2), 177–228. https://doi.org/10.2307/222775.

Jeong, S., & Yoon, D. K. (2018). *Examining vulnerability factors to natural disasters with a spatial autoregressive model: The case of south Korea.* Sustainability (Switzerland), 10(5), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.3390/su10051651.

Keohane, R. (1982). *The Demand for International Regimes.* The MIT Press Linked references are available on JSTOR for this article : You may need to log in to JSTOR to access the linked references. The demand for international regimes. International Organization, 36(2), 325–355.

Korean Broadcasting Service (KBS). *Successful Launch of the Cheollian Multi purpose Satellite and Korea's Dream of Becoming an Aerospace Powerhouse.* Retrieved August 20, 2023, from http:// world.kbs.co.kr/english/news/news_commentary_detail.htm?No=18694.

Krasner, S. D. (2018). *Structural Causes and Regime Consequences : Regimes as Intervening Variables.* 36(2), 185–205. The MIT Press Stable URL : http://www.jstor.org/stable/2706520.

Hu, E. (2017). *Armed With NASA Data, South Korea Confronts Its Choking Smog.* NPR. Retrieved August 25, 2023, from https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2017/10/10/552264719/armed-with-nasa-data-south-korea-confronts-its-choking-smog.

Medina, M. (2010). *How Things Work: Environmental Satellites. Our World.* Retrieved August 5, 2023, from https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/how-things-work-environmental-satellites.

Meirizal, A., & Putri, D. J. (2022). *The Challenge of ASEAN Institutionalism in Outer Space – ASEAN Studies Center Universitas Gadjah Mada.* ASEAN Studies Center Universitas Gadjah Mada. Retrieved August 29, 2023, from https://asc.fisipol.ugm.ac.id/2022/10/05/the-challenge-of-asean-institutionalism-in-outer-space/.

Moltz, J. C. (2011). *Asia's Space Race: National Motivations, Regional Rivalries, and International Risks.* Columbia University Press.

Moravcsik, A. (1995). *Liberal Intergovernementalism and the Integration- A Rejoiner.* In JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies (Vol. 33, Issue 4, pp. 611–628).

NTU., & DSO. (2010). *First made-in-S'pore satellite.* SgForums.com. Retrieved August 20, 2023, from https://sgforums.com/forums/1164/topics/394943/.

Secure World Foundation. (2018). *Space sustainability. A practical guide.*

Soo, P. S. (2023). *South Korea sets record space budget to bolster industry, develop new rocket.* SpaceNews. https://spacenews.com/south-korea-sets-record-space-budget-to-bolster-industry-develop-new-rocket/.

The Government of Japan. (2017). *Satellite Radar Technology Helps Protect Forests.* Retrieved August 23, 2023, from https://www.japan.go.jp/tomodachi/2017/spring-summer2017/satellite_radar_technology.html.

Timo Bretschneider. (2003). *Singapore's Satellite Mission X-Sat*. Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, paper presented at Fourth IAA Symposium on Small Satellites for Earth Observation, Berlin, Germany.

UNISDR & World Bank. (2010). Synthesis Report on Ten ASEAN Countries Disaster Risks Assessment. December, 149. https://www.unisdr.org/files/18872_asean.pdf.

UN Environment Programme. (n.d.). *Satellites help fight environmental degradation throughout Europe.* . Retrieved August 15, 2023, from https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/satellites-help-fight-environmental-degradation-throughout-europe.

UNOOSA. (n.d.). *Benefits of space: Environment*. Retrieved May 26, 2023, from https://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/benefits-of-space/environment.html.

UNOOSA. (n.d). *Benefits of space: Environment*. Retrieved May 26, 2023, from https://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/benefits-of-space/environment.html.

Wade L. Huntley. (2007). *Smaller State Perspectives on the Future of Space Governance*. Astropolitics 5, no. 3: 253. 4.

WMO OSCAR. (n.d.). *Satellite: THEOS-1*. Retrieved August 20, 2023, from https://space.oscar.wmo.int/satellites/view/theos_1.

Writers, S. (2007). *Vietnam Establishes Space Technology Institute*. Space Daily. Retrieved August 20, 2023, from https://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Vietnam_Establishes_Space_Technology_Institute_999.html.

Young, K. S. (2022). *Creating Sustainable & Smarter Cities In Southeast Asia: A Roadmap For Us-Rok Cooperation. East West Center.*

Verspieren, Quentin, & Coral, G. (2022). *Introduction: Why Space Matters in ASEAN. Springer.*

SPECIAL
MENTION
AWARD

Rizky C. Anugrah
INDONESIA

Winning Hearts and Taste Buds: Improving ASEAN-Korea Youth Perception Through Culinary Exchanges

Winning Hearts and Taste Buds:
Improving ASEAN-Korea Youth Perception through Culinary Exchanges

Rizky C. Anugrah
Universitas Gadjah Mada

Abstract

This paper explores the challenge of addressing information asymmetry among ASEAN and Korean youth. The 2022 Survey on Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youths has unveiled significant issues related to perception. Firstly, there is a prevalent stigma and a lack of comprehensive information among ASEAN and Korean youth about each other. Secondly, there are misconceptions and insufficient support for ASEAN-Korea cooperation. The study also sheds light on the potential of enhancing perception by directly involving youth in experiencing life in the other region. Employing qualitative methods and a content analysis approach, this paper investigates the profound role of food in Southeast Asia and Korea and its utility as a tool for gastrodiplomacy. This innovative diplomatic approach is identified as having the potential to dismantle the stigmas held by ASEAN and Korean youth. Drawing from available data on food, travel, and youth in ASEAN and Korea, this paper proposes Culinary Exchange as an effective and practical solution for improving ASEAN-Korea youth perception.

Keywords
ASEAN-Korea, Youth, Gastrodiplomacy, Perception, Culinary Exchange

Introduction

In the present, The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Republic of Korea (ROK, hereinafter Korea) are in a long-standing cooperative partnership that spans over two decades. ASEAN and Korea have forged a robust plurilateral agreement and cooperation since 1989 (Rosland, 2020).[1] Despite the considerable geographical distance and diverse landscapes that separate them, these two regions share numerous common values and goals. Both ASEAN and Korea are unwavering in their dedication to promoting peace, stability, and prosperity within their region and on a global scale. This partnership between ASEAN and Korea epitomizes the concept of "New Regionalism", a phenomenon that emerged in the post-Cold War era. New Regionalism often involves smaller nations joining forces with larger ones, initially driven by economic collaboration. However, this form of regional cooperation invariably extends its influence to other facets of international relations, engaging non-state actors, particularly the people of these regions (Rosland, 2020).[2] This form of relationship is deeply characterized by its non-conformity, especially as the world moves from the "Old Regionalism" where the focus of regional cooperation was mostly Eurocentric and placed heavy focus on trade and security.

Before delving into ASEAN, Korea, and their unique culinary landscapes, it's essential to gain a clear understanding of what ASEAN is – or perhaps, more precisely, what it isn't. The roots of ASEAN trace back to an earlier initiative known as the Association of Southeast Asia (ASA). This association evolved into ASEAN through a meeting of foreign ministers from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. This momentous gathering culminated in the signing of the ASEAN Declaration. Following the establishment of this Declaration, ASEAN set out to pursue its organizational goals and objectives, with some examples such as accelerating economic growth, promoting social progress, and fostering cultural development within the region. In this capacity, ASEAN operates as a regional institution entrusted with fulfilling the duties and responsibilities assigned to it by its member states. However, while this formal definition holds true, it is somewhat limited in the context of this paper, which extensively explores gastrodiplomacy and culinary exchanges between ASEAN and Korea.

The reason for the limitation of seeing ASEAN solely as a formal

---

1 Rosland, N. N. A. (2020). 'New Regionalism': ASEAN–RoK partnership in socio-cultural and education exchanges. *AEI INSIGHTS*, 6(1), 55-68.

2 *Ibid.*

institution is that it is somewhat restrictive. The Association's capacity to play a significant international role does not primarily derive from its institutional structure, but rather it stems from a web of key relationships (Jones, 2010).[3] When referring to ASEAN in its relation with Korea, this paper does not focus its use on the formalistic definition of ASEAN as an institution or an organization. Instead, it adopts a relational definition which recognises and values the significance of both Southeast Asian State and non-State actors in shaping the identity of ASEAN.

ASEAN is rich in culinary, reflecting its diverse wealth of traditions and natural resources. With a diverse array of tropical culinary ingredients to choose from, the people of ASEAN have meticulously crafted culturally significant dishes and beverages that have been preserved over centuries. The daily food enjoyed by locals is not just sustenance; it's a repository of values, steeped in meaning and symbolism (Fischler 1998).[4] Similarly, authentic Korean cuisine possesses numerous unique characteristics that sets it apart from other regional culinary traditions. Korean cuisine is firmly rooted in timeless traditions, embracing practices such as fermentation, the use of seasonal ingredients, and the customary serving of banchan, an array of side dishes accompanying most meals.

The symbolism as well as the uniqueness associated with certain food is what enables it to be a tool for "soft power." This term was coined by Joseph Nye in 1990 to explain the distinction between the approaches that the United States took during the twentieth century to influence other countries, aside from the use of militaristic forces (Ang, Isar & Mar, 2018). As discourses surrounding international relations shift from a US-centered perspective, the modern terminology of soft power is used to explain the capacity to mold the political agenda in a manner that shapes the preference of others.[5] Food and its surrounding tradition is an example of an attractive cultural tool that can be used as a soft power in diplomacy. However, "cultural attractiveness" in itself is not soft power. It requires active enablement from actors to achieve well-defined policy and strategies.[6] In the context of ASEAN and Korea, the exceptional qualities of dishes like Nasi Goreng and Kimchi, along with the profound philosophies they embody, may not reach their full potential unless these

---

3   Jones, L. (2010). Still in the "Drivers' seat", but for how long? ASEAN's capacity for leadership in east-asian international relations. *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, 29(3), 95-113.

4   Fischler, C. (1988). Food, self and identity. *Social science information, 2*7(2), 275-292.

5 / 6   Ang, I., Isar, Y. R., & Mar, P. (2018). Cultural diplomacy: beyond the national interest?.
In *Cultural Diplomacy: Beyond the National Interest?* (pp. 11-27). Routledge.

regions proactively devise plans and strategies for sharing these culinary treasures and their associated values with the rest of the world, as well as with each other.

Using food as a diplomatic approach has the potential to solve the issue surrounding ASEAN and Korean youth perception. As of 2022, the Survey on Mutual Perceptions on ASEAN and Korean Youths published by the ASEAN-Korea Centre (AKC) illuminates a worrying trend.[7] Prevailing stigmas and the propagation of inaccurate information about each other's regions serve as substantial obstacles, limiting the complete realization of the ASEAN-Korea relationship, particularly on the people-to-people level. On the other hand, at the same time, there is a growing interest between ASEAN and Korean youth, particularly in the realms of culinary exploration and travel. This interest signifies a potential bridge for dismantling these barriers and fostering deeper mutual understanding.

People-to-people connection between ASEAN and Korea holds the key to the success of this friendship. In an era characterized by rapid technological advancements and the constant emergence of new communication tools, there is no more effective method of public diplomacy than the people-to-people approach (Payne, 2022).[8] This strategy involves individuals sharing their experiences through dialogues with the aim of discovering commonalities and fostering tolerance in the face of their differences. The existing disconnection among the youth from ASEAN and Korea, as evidenced by the prevalent stereotypes and misconceptions, highlights the necessity for proactive people-to-people efforts. To ensure an inclusive, mutually beneficial, and sustainable connection between these regions, stakeholders must immediately put forth and implement actionable solutions aimed at bridging the gap in mutual awareness among the youth. By optimizing the abundant resources and cultural wealth of each region, a viable solution can be achieved. Therefore, this paper aims to explore the potential advantages of an ASEAN-Korea Youth Culinary Exchange, an innovative concept that leverages the culinary richness of each region that is aimed at fostering understanding and cooperation – with the eventual objective of improving youth perceptions.

7   Kang Ji-Hyun, Siti Maisarah Haji Majid, Kim Su-Jung, Lee Jiyoon, "Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youth". ASEAN-Korea Centre, 2022

8   Payne, J. G. (2009). Reflections on public diplomacy: People-to-people communication. *American Behavioral Scientist, 53*(4), 579-606.

Methodology

To support the arguments, this paper will employ a qualitative approach using secondary data collected from reputable sources, such as articles, books, and journals. As literature surrounding the keywords "ASEAN-Korea", "Youth", "Gastrodiplomacy", and "Exchange" are already prevalent, desk research is conducted without the direct involvement in the collection of primary data. This approach is useful to identify gaps in discourses related to the keyword, conduct comparative analyses of findings, and support previous research. Given the data primarily consist of text-based information, content analysis will serve as the primary data analysis tool. Content analysis can be defined as an analytical method for deriving repeatable and reliable findings from text in order to investigate the issue. This analytical method offers fresh perspectives and information, deepens comprehension of a specific phenomena, and offers details about useful actions (Krippendorff, 2018).[9] Utilizing the analyzed data, the author will employ a "bottom-up" approach, which involves constructing comprehensive conclusions rooted in specific observations and data sets. This approach is useful in the pursuit of practical and actionable solutions to address the challenges related to ASEAN-Korea perceptions, given its inherently open-ended nature.

Discussion

A. Food for Thought: What's Between ASEAN and Korean Youth?

Youth can mean a variety of things. In Korea, the Framework Act on Youth defines "youth" as individuals aged between 19 and 34 years. On the other hand, ASEAN's definition of youth encompasses a broader age group, spanning from 15 to 35 years old. Major international organizations, including the United Nations and the World Bank, provide slightly different definitions, characterizing youth as individuals between the ages of 12 and 29. With the changing landscape of social and economic life in Asia, youth is becoming even harder to capture as a population (Roger, 2007).[10] Despite these distinctions in defining "youth," there exists a common understanding that youth constitute a demographic in need of targeted developmental programs to facilitate their transition into adulthood.[11] This acknowledgment highlights the importance of addressing the unique needs and potential of young people across

---

9   Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology.* Sage publications.

10   Roger, C. (2008). Youth participation in society. *Asia Europe Journal, 5*, 469-477.

11   McEvoy-Levy, S. (2013). Youth. In *Routledge handbook of peacebuilding* (pp. 296-307). Routledge.

diverse contexts and regions, especially considering the important role that youth play in our society today.

Youth has been associated with an assortment of numerous different terms, such as "agent of change", "iron stock", "community builders", and many others. Such attributions are not without reason; they are rooted in the remarkable qualities and potential that young people possess. When provided with the opportunity to engage in empowerment initiatives, youth tend to embrace a profound sense of responsibility and ownership in the development efforts (Brennan, Barnett and Baugh, 2007).[12] Their inclusion often acts as a catalyst for further developments, amplifying the impact of developmental programs as they spearhead positive transformations. Over the past decade, more and more young people are being placed at the forefront of driving positive social changes. While older generations offer their support for youth involvement in development endeavors, it is the youth who are increasingly assuming leadership roles in shaping decisions regarding issue selection and devising strategies for effecting community-level transformations (Share and Stacks, 2007).[13]

ASEAN and Korea are blessed with a significant population of youth. According to The 2022 ASEAN Youth Development Index, Southeast Asia is now home to more than 224 million youth, with a large 53% of this is assumed by the Millenials.[14] This generation is known for its technological literacy, progressive values, and global outlook, which positions them as key actors in shaping the future of ASEAN. As for Korea, the 2021 Statistics on the Youth reveals a population of 8 million youth.[15] While it's true that the proportion of youth in relation to the overall population is expected to decrease in the coming years, this demographic shift is accompanied by several encouraging trends in Korean youth's social behaviors. For example, there is a significant increase in youth social participation and awareness. 87.3% of elementary, middle, and high school students in Korea believe that participation in society is necessary.[16] This growing emphasis on youth engagement and social

---

12   Brennan, M. A., Barnett, R. V., & Baugh, E. (2007). Youth involvement in community development:
      Implications and possibilities for extension. *Journal of Extension*, 45(4), 203-213.

13   Share, R. A., & Stacks, J. S. (2007). Youth-adult partnership in community organizing:
      A case study of the My Voice Counts! Campaign. *Journal of Community Practice*, 14(4), 113-127.

14   ASEAN. (2022). ASEAN Youth Development Index 2022. Retrieved from:
      https://asean.org/book/asean-youth-development-index-2022/

15 / 16   Statistics Korea. (2021). Statistics on the Youth. Retrieved from: https://kostat.go.kr/menu.es?mid=a20113030000

responsibility is a promising development, signifying the evolving role of Korean youth in shaping their communities and society as a whole.

Regardless of the progress that has been made by ASEAN and Korean youth, a pressing issue continues to cast a shadow over the full realization of the ASEAN-Korea relationship's potential. This issue revolves around information asymmetry, a problem where ASEAN and Korean youth lack a comprehensive understanding of each other, leading to various adverse consequences. Firstly, information asymmetry results in the prevalence of stigma between ASEAN and Korean youth. The 2022 Survey on Mutual Perception of ASEAN and Korean Youth sheds light on the persistence of negative associations between these two groups. For instance, some ASEAN youth still harbor unfavorable perceptions about Korea, including concerns related to "excessive fan behaviors," "celebrities' struggles with depression," and the prevalence of "plastic surgery."[17] Korean youth exhibit similar attitudes by holding negative stereotypes about ASEAN, associating the region with terms like "crime city" and "dirty." These negative stereotypes persist, even in the presence of more positive descriptions of each other's regions. It can not be denied that these negative stereotypes often act as barriers, influencing individuals' decisions regarding engagement in activities within or for each other's region. Secondly, information asymmetry may result in the lack of understanding and trust among youth regarding ASEAN-Korea cooperation. A Malaysian youth believes that "if Korea crashes, the impact would not be big." while another expressed that "Korea would want to partner with major countries over ASEAN for bigger and better opportunities."[18] Although there is recognition among ASEAN and Korean youth of the need for more accessible information regarding ASEAN-Korea cooperation, this particular example highlights a prevailing preference for ASEAN to seek collaborations with countries other than Korea. This preference highlights a lack of confidence and familiarity with the potential benefits that ASEAN-Korea partnerships can bring.

Youth can be best characterized as a dynamic and adaptable group of individuals. While it's true that negative perceptions may persist among ASEAN-Korea youth, it's crucial to emphasize that change is entirely achievable. Initiatives directed at educating and informing young people about the profound significance of ASEAN and Korea in their lives can be a strong catalyst for transforming these perceptions. By investing in a comprehensive development program aimed at dismantling the

17 / 18   Kang Ji-Hyun, Siti Maisarah Haji Majid, Kim Su-Jung, Lee Jiyoon, "Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youth".
ASEAN-Korea Centre, 2022.

ASEAN-Korea stigma between the youth, the groundwork for sustainable and enduring partnerships can be developed. At this level, the question to be explored is: *what resources can be used to support this?*

B. Cooking Up Understanding With Food

Since the beginning of mankind, the act of sharing food has been an integral part of our social fabric. Food holds such a profound place in fostering social cohesion that the word "company" itself is rooted from the latin cum and pane, which literally means "the person you share your bread with" (Spence, 2016).[19] Compared to other activities, the act of eating food is likelier to promote agreeable behaviors. Moreover, when individuals dine together, there is a noticeable reduction in displays of dominance and subordination, creating a more equitable and harmonious experience for all involved. Research by Spence (2016) further confirms this, showing that pairs of strangers that were given the same type of food to relish together end up cooperating more.[20] Inversely, food can be served as a tool to dismantle stigmas and negative stereotypes. Food has also been used as a means for conflict prevention (Reynolds, 2012).[21] Food plays such a crucial role in preventing conflicts that Friedman (1999) contends that "...no two countries that both have a McDonald's have ever fought a war since they each got their McDonald's."[22] Therefore, conversations around the dining table have the potential to be utilized as a powerful medium for people to learn about each other's differences and shortcomings. This profound connection between food and social life permeates time and space. In every society around the world, whether it's a family dinner or a ceremonial feast, the act of sharing food still serves as a powerful catalyst for strengthening relationships and building trust.

ASEAN and Korean traditions have long shared a common understanding on the important role that food plays in strengthening social bonds. Both regions uphold various traditions and local practices that continue to promote social interaction through food. For instance, community feasting is a prevalent practice throughout Southeast Asian countries. Similarly, Korea embraces its own culinary tradition with the

---

19   Spence, C. (2016). Gastrodiplomacy: Assessing the role of food in decision-making. *Flavour*, 5(1), 1-16.

20   Rockower, P. S. (2012). Recipes for gastrodiplomacy. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 8, 235-246.

21   Reynolds, *Op. cit*.

22   Friedman, T. L. (1999). "A Manifesto for the Fast World.(Magazine Desk)." The New York Times Magazine: NA

barbecue culture. Well before the food reaches the dinner table, the act of food preparation itself serves as a platform for socializing. In many Southeast Asian communities, deeply connected to rice cultivation, people participate in communal activities such as rice planting and harvesting. In Korea, the tradition of *kimjang* serves as a social conduit, bringing families, friends, and neighbors together to reinforce their sense of community and mutual support.

Scholars and practitioners within the field of international relations have acknowledged the significance of food on global affairs. Before delving further into the utilization of food in international relations, it's important to establish a clear distinction among key terms frequently used by scholars within this discourse. While "food diplomacy", "culinary diplomacy" and "gastrodiplomacy" all involve the use of food to enhance international relations between countries and their peoples, they each carry distinct connotations. Food Diplomacy is more appropriately used in cases where countries provide food aid in response to natural disasters or humanitarian crises experienced by other nations. Culinary diplomacy pertains to a nation's efforts to establish culinary establishments abroad. In the context of the ASEAN-Korea discussion within this paper, the term "gastrodiplomacy" best encapsulates the intricate interplay between food, social cohesion, and diplomacy. Gastrodiplomacy, as Paul (2012) put it, "combines cultural diplomacy, culinary diplomacy, and nation branding to make foreign culture tangible to the taste and touch."[23] Therefore, gastrodiplomacy encompasses a broader array of factors and dimensions within the ASEAN-Korea relationship, acknowledging and valuing the profound significance of food in both regions.

In the past, both ASEAN and Korea have harnessed the soft power of gastrodiplomacy to promote their national values and identities. For instance, Thailand initiated the "Global Thai" program in 2002, with the aim of boosting the number of Thai restaurants all over the world. Malaysia has also branded itself as the "Halal hub" for Muslims through its "Malaysia Kitchen Programme," emphasizing on its *halal* culinary

19   Spence, C. (2016). Gastrodiplomacy: Assessing the role of food in decision-making. *Flavour*, 5(1), 1-16.

20   Rockower, P. S. (2012). Recipes for gastrodiplomacy. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 8, 235-246.

21   Reynolds, *Op. cit.*

22   Friedman, T. L. (1999). "A Manifesto for the Fast World.(Magazine Desk)." The New York Times Magazine: NA

23   Rockower, P. (2012) Setting the table for diplomacy. Huffington Post, 21 September, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ paul-rockower/setting-the-table-for-dip_b_1904521.html, accessed 3 September 2023

expertise. In 2021, Indonesia launched the "Indonesia Spice Up the World" program, geared towards facilitating the global entry of local spices and processed foods. Singapore has also extended its influence by making Kaya Toast available through its embassies worldwide. In a more recent development in 2020, Cambodia officially rolled out gastrodiplomacy programs, seeking to introduce the world to its flavors, including coconut-pineapple curry or Smalar K'tis, among other culinary delights. Korea, too, has embraced this strategy through its "Global *Hansik*" program, a successful endeavor that has earned Korea a place among the world's "Eight Great Gastrodiplomacy Nations."[24]

However, none of these initiatives have been specifically directed at fostering a deeper connection between ASEAN and Korea, particularly with the goal of bridging the gap in perception. By examining the successful track record of these nations in positively branding themselves through culinary diplomacy, it becomes apparent that they possess the capacity and resources to establish similar programs aimed at strengthening their relations in the future. Unfortunately, as pointed out by Trihartono and Santono (2020), gastrodiplomacy is not yet the priority, even though it proves to be a potent tool for building international trust, especially for nations that may lack hard power.[25] To illustrate, Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has explicitly mentioned that its Strategic Plan does not currently encompass an Indonesian gastrodiplomacy strategy.

This approach adopted by policymakers is unfortunately missing a significant opportunity, especially given the overwhelming evidence at the people-to-people level, where food stands as one of the most compelling characteristics of a nation's identity. As revealed in the 2022 Survey on Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youths, "Food" is the type of information most looked after by ASEAN and Korean youth, indicating a pre-existing interest between the two regions. The same survey also illuminates a noteworthy trend: there has been a substantial rise in the availability of ASEAN restaurants in South Korea, as well as a heightened interest among ASEAN young people in Korean cuisines.[26] This prompts a crucial question: *despite the substantial enthusiasm of ASEAN and Korean youth for each other's cuisines, why do negative stereotypes persist?*

Reynolds (2012) provides insight into this question through an exploration of food symbolism. It suggests that when using food as

24   UCSP Diplomacy. (2015). Eight Great Gastrodiplomacy Nations.

25 / 26   Kang Ji-Hyun, *Op. cit.*

a tool to enhance national branding and improve international relations, it is crucial to take into account and promote the symbolism and values associated with a particular cuisine, beyond just the food itself.[27] When food is exported as a diplomatic instrument, the challenge is keeping the cultural and ideological meaning that is ingrained in it. Soft food-power must maintain its cultural significance and symbolism in order to be effective; it must not permit these elements to deteriorate or change when other actors engage with it. Food's symbolism is inherently social and public. It is a grassroot process, instead of a top-down mechanism. Therefore, the next section of this paper will present a comprehensive argument for why a Culinary Exchange program is more than just culinary endeavors, as it encompasses not only food, but also the people—the humanity—behind it.

C. A Recipe for Culinary Exchange

Aside from "Food," the type of information that is most frequently looked for by ASEAN and Korean youth is "Travel" which indicates a pre-existing interest between them in traveling to each other's regions. This mutual interest in travel is reflected in the data provided by the ASEAN-Korea Centre's website.[28] In 2022, an increase was observed in the number of people traveling from ASEAN to Korea, totaling 2,224 individuals. This marks an increase from the pre-pandemic year of 2019 when only 1,054 individuals visited Korea from the ASEAN region. Conversely, in 2022, there were 906 Korean travelers heading to ASEAN countries. However, it's worth noting that this figure represents a decrease compared to the total number of Korean visitors in 2019, which amounted to 2,700 individuals.

There are a number of factors that might contribute to the insignificant increase or even decrease in the number of travelers, despite the demonstrated curiosity and fascination. Firstly, there is simply a lack of information regarding travels to and from these regions. For reasons of studying abroad in Korea, one ASEAN youth residing in Korea expressed that "to apply for a course in Korea, you need a lot of information that is not available online." Similarly, Korean youth believes that lower perceptions among Korean youth regarding ASEAN stems from "a lack of understanding and information about the ASEAN region." Secondly, there are issues associated with traveling to each other's region that hinders them from doing the travel. A Cambodian youth expressed

27   Reynolds, C. (2012). The soft power of food: A diplomacy of hamburgers and sushi?.
        Food Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal, 1(2), 47-60.

28   ASEAN-Korea Centre, "Key Statistics on ASEAN-Korea," ASEAN-Korea Centre, accessed September 03, 2023,
        https://www.aseankorea.org/eng/Resources/figures.asp.

that "when it comes to Korea, it is difficult to communicate in English." while a Korean youth noted that "in terms of safety, ASEAN countries would not be a great option for travel." Thirdly, structural factors, such as flight costs and living expenses, can further influence travel decisions, as evidenced by a Vietnamese youth highlighting the similarity in tuition fees between Korea and Singapore, suggesting that Singapore might be a more financially viable option for study.[29]

For these reasons, the author proposes the funding and implementation of a dynamic and immersive Culinary Exchange program tailored for youth. This initiative aims to overcome the barriers that have hindered the travel experiences of both ASEAN and Korean youth to each other's regions, with the ultimate objective of fostering cross-cultural understanding and breaking down existing stereotypes through food. This innovative program combines the elements of gastrodiplomacy and tourism, delivering a multifaceted approach to cultural exchange. The Culinary Exchange program operates by carefully selecting a diverse group of young participants from both Korea and ASEAN countries.

Unlike any previous culinary fairs, this program goes beyond the act of merely savoring food; it immerses participants in the entire culinary journey, from the cultivation and harvesting of ingredients to the art of cooking and, finally, the presentation of dishes. This program intentionally welcomes participants from various backgrounds and professions, extending the opportunity beyond aspiring chefs or culinary students. This inclusivity is vital as it promotes a comprehensive understanding of each nation's cultural identity. The exchange experiences take place in renowned culinary and cultural hubs across ASEAN and Korea. As an example, ASEAN youth may journey to the Jeolla-do region of Korea, famed for its tradition of serving an extensive array of *banchan,* often exceeding 30 varieties, as part of the *hanjeongsik* tradition. During their stay, ASEAN youth will not only learn about the culinary intricacies but also witness firsthand the warmth, inclusiveness, and welcoming nature of Korean people in the preparation and enjoyment of *hanjeongsik.*[30]

The program offers flexibility in terms of duration, with exchanges spanning from one week to several months. This extended time frame enables participants to explore a wide range of culinary practices and traditions, as well as to travel to different regions to uncover how geographical diversity influences local cuisine. Upon returning to their home regions, participants are encouraged to organize events such as fairs and seminars, or simply apply their newfound recipes and cultural insights to their daily lives. The enduring nature of food as a universal language ensures that conversations stemming from this exchange

29   Kang Ji-Hyun, *Op. cit.*

30   *Hanjeongsik* from Naver open dictionary, food columnist Lee JinRang (이진랑), 2005-07-17

experience will continue to flourish, enriching dinner table discussions and cultural understanding for a lifetime.

There are several advantages of a Culinary Exchange program. Firstly, it significantly optimizes budget allocation. Travel expenses often account for a substantial portion of a trip's cost, with approximately 40% allocated to food (Boyne, Williams, and Hall, 2002).[31] Therefore, when funding such a development program, governments do not need to allocate substantial additional funds, as the cost of living is inherently integrated with the program's activities. Secondly, the versatility and accessibility of a Culinary Exchange program are exceptional. With an abundance of culinary traditions to choose from and an array of knowledgeable actors and experts ready to facilitate the program's implementation, the possibilities are virtually limitless. Thirdly, Culinary Exchange results in tangible outcomes. Participants acquire new recipes and culinary skills, which are demonstrable and easily assessed. This tangible nature of the program's results enables clear evaluation and measurement of its impact. Furthermore, the findings from The 2022 Survey on Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youths highlight the substantial impact of direct experiences with local individuals from ASEAN or Korea on perception change.[32] While such changes in perception may not always be positive, a Culinary Exchange program holds the potential to catalyze more pronounced shifts in positive perception, particularly through the utilization of food, especially since food has been scientifically and historically validated as a medium that promotes positive values.

However, the implementation of such a program does not come without possible challenges. Firstly, there are concerns surrounding the health and safety of participants. There might be cases where dietary restrictions and allergies have to be adequately accommodated to avoid unwanted health consequences during the culinary trips. Secondly, as this program is relatively novel and has not been systematically implemented before, it's essential to anticipate and address potential logistical and technical challenges that may emerge unexpectedly. Meticulous planning and the dedication of a skilled team are paramount in mitigating the risk of crises, requiring a comprehensive assessment of all conceivable program outcomes.

---

31   Boyne, S., Williams, F., & Hall, D. (2003). On the trail of regional success: Tourism, food production and the Isle of Arran Taste Trail. In *Tourism and gastronomy* (pp. 105-128). Routledge.

32   Kang Ji-Hyun, *Op. cit.*

Bibliography

ASEAN-Korea Centre, "Key Statistics on ASEAN-Korea," ASEAN-Korea Centre, accessed September 03, 2023, https://www.aseankorea.org/eng/Resources/figures.asp.

ASEAN. (2022). ASEAN Youth Development Index 2022. Retrieved from: https://asean.org/book/asean-youth-development-index-2022/

Ang, I., Isar, Y. R., & Mar, P. (2018). Cultural diplomacy: beyond the national interest?. In *Cultural Diplomacy: Beyond the National Interest?* (pp. 11-27). Routledge.

Boyne, S., Williams, F., & Hall, D. (2003). On the trail of regional success: Tourism, food production and the Isle of Arran Taste Trail. In *Tourism and gastronomy* (pp. 105-128). Routledge.

Brennan, M. A., Barnett, R. V., & Baugh, E. (2007). Youth involvement in community development: Implications and possibilities for extension. *Journal of Extension, 45*(4), 203-213.

Fischler, C. (1988). Food, self and identity. *Social science information, 27*(2), 275-292.

Friedman, T. L. (1999). "A Manifesto for the Fast World.(Magazine Desk)." The New York Times Magazine: NA

Hanjeongsik from Naver open dictionary, food columnist Lee JinRang (이진랑), 2005-07-17 Jones, L. (2010). Still in the "Drivers' seat", but for how long? ASEAN's capacity for leadership in east-asian international relations. *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs, 29*(3), 95-113.

Kang Ji-Hyun, Siti Maisarah Haji Majid, Kim Su-Jung, Lee Jiyoon, "Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youth". ASEAN-Korea Centre, 2022

Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. Sage publications.

McEvoy-Levy, S. (2013). Youth. In *Routledge handbook of peacebuilding* (pp. 296-307). Routledge.

Payne, J. G. (2009). Reflections on public diplomacy: People-to-people communication. American Behavioral Scientist, 53(4), 579-606.

Reynolds, C. (2012). The soft power of food: A diplomacy of hamburgers and sushi?. *Food Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 1(2), 47-60.

Rockower, P. S. (2012). Recipes for gastrodiplomacy. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy, 8*, 235-246.

Rockower, P. (2012) Setting the table for diplomacy. Huffington Post, 21 September, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/paul-rockower/setting-the-table-for-dip_b_1904521.html, accessed 3 September 2023

Roger, C. (2008). Youth participation in society. *Asia Europe Journal*, 5, 469-477.

Rosland, N. N. A. (2020). 'New Regionalism': ASEAN–RoK partnership in socio-cultural and education exchanges. *AEI INSIGHTS, 6*(1), 55-68.

Share, R. A., & Stacks, J. S. (2007). Youth-adult partnership in community organizing: A case study of the My Voice Counts! Campaign. *Journal of Community Practice, 14*(4), 113-127.

Spence, C. (2016). Gastrodiplomacy: Assessing the role of food in decision-making. *Flavour*, 5(1), 1-16.

Statistics Korea. (2021). Statistics on the Youth. Retrieved from: https://kostat.go.kr/menu.es?mid=a20113030000

UCSP Diplomacy. (2015). Eight Great Gastrodiplomacy Nations.

SPECIAL MENTION AWARD

Yisag Kim & Jong Hyuk Choi
REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Analysis of Korean Discourse and Perceptions on ASEAN using LDA Topic Modeling: Analyzing Korean News Coverage and Discussing How Korean Perceptions on ASEAN can be Enhanced

Analysis of Korean Discourse and Perceptions on ASEAN using LDA Topic Modeling: Analyzing Korean News Coverage and Discussing How Korean Perceptions on ASEAN can be Enhanced

Yisag Kim & Jong Hyuk Choi
Sogang University

Abstract

This study combines the analysis of Korean news coverage during the different presidential terms in the Republic of Korea, focusing on the relations between Korea and ASEAN nations. It examines the perceptions of South Koreans towards ASEAN during the administrations of Presidents Park Geun-hye, Moon Jae-in, and Yoon Suk-yeol. This study uses the LDA topic modeling method to analyze 33,665 news articles. The analysis reveals that economic cooperation emerges as the central theme across all three administrations, with topics related to cultural exchange, tourism, and crime also garnering significant attention. The study also proposes policies aimed at enhancing South Koreans' perceptions towards ASEAN. It underscores the importance of promoting a broader understanding of ASEAN beyond economic cooperation, emphasizing increased people to people exchange programs to foster cultural appreciation, and raising awareness of ASEAN's efforts to reduce crime. These policy recommendations aim to build a more positive and comprehensive relationship between ASEAN and Korea. The limitations of this research include the selection of media sources and the translation of keywords. Future studies should consider expanding the dataset to include a wider range of media sources, including those from foreign media. This research not only contributes to a more thorough understanding of the relationship between ASEAN and the Republic of Korea, but also provides practical policy suggestions to strengthen this important diplomatic partnership by enhancing public awareness and perception.

Introduction

ASEAN has undoubtedly become an inseparable neighbor for Korea. However, although diplomatic relations between the two have strengthened throughout the years, Korean perceptions towards ASEAN still have a long way to go. For example, even after the initiation of the New Southern Policy in 2017, the vast majority of Koreans still tend to perceive Southeast Asia as an "economically dilapidated and culturally different place." Most Korean universities still show no interest in academic exchange regarding ASEAN (Park, 2021, p. 5). Furthermore, some experts have criticized the New Southern Policy for its "mercantilist" approach, claiming that such a method could leave a negative impression that Koreans are simply using ASEAN for its own economic growth (Park, 2021, p. 4). In fact, former Singaporean diplomat Bilahari Kausikan shared a negative assessment regarding the New Southern Policy, commenting that Korea's approach to ASEAN "…is driven more by commercial and trade perspectives rather than strategic considerations." (Chung, 2019) Lack of understanding and negative stereotypes about ASEAN could lead to doubts towards Korean diplomatic policies (Park, 2021, p. 6). Negative perceptions could ultimately lead to negative foreign relations.

While the Republic of Korea's relations with Southeast Asian countries date back to the Cold War Era, the Kim Dae-jung Administration (1998-2003) was the first Korean government to have acknowledged the importance of ASEAN. Although Korean diplomacy was traditionally focused on the Korean Peninsula, Northeast Asia, and the Four Powers (USA, Russia, China, Japan), President Kim sought to broaden the diplomatic horizon, by participating in various regional cooperative systems of Southeast Asia. President Kim even suggested the establishment of the East Asia Vision Group and the East Asia Study Group, forming the institutional framework for multilateral cooperation with ASEAN. However, this framework would weaken during the following three consecutive administrations of Korea. Unlike Kim, the presidents of these governments preferred to follow the traditional diplomatic method (Kang, 2018, p. 72). For example, the Eurasia Initiative of the Park Geun-hye Administration (2013-2017) was aimed at creating a "unitary continent" among Korea and its Eurasian neighbors (Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, 2016). This policy, however, was mostly limited to the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia. Relations with ASEAN turned into a relatively minor issue (Kang, 2018, p. 72).

It would not be until the beginning of the Moon Jae-in Administration (2017-2022) that ASEAN-Korean relations would once again become a major diplomatic issue for Korea. During the Korea-

Indonesia Business Forum on November 9th, 2017, President Moon formally announced the New Southern Policy, in which the ultimate goal would be to create a regional community including Korea, India, and ASEAN, based on the "3P", meaning "People, Prosperity and Peace." The New Southern Policy prioritized long-lasting peace and shared prosperity within the region, and was later upgraded into the New Southern Policy Plus in November 2020, in which Korea and ASEAN would primarily focus on medical cooperation to overcome the COVID-19 outbreak (Park, 2021, p. 3). When the Moon Administration ended in May 2022, the newly inaugurated Korean president Yoon Suk-yeol announced the new "Indo-Pacific Strategy", in which ASEAN would be a key partner (Choi, Lee, & Shin, 2022, p. 2).

Previous Studies

In the years 2021 and 2022, the ASEAN-Korea Centre has conducted surveys on mutual perceptions of ASEAN and Korean youths (ASEAN-Korea Centre, 2023). The Academy of Korean Studies has conducted research about Southeast Asian perceptions on Korea, by studying the perception on Korea as presented in social studies textbooks used in five Southeast Asian countries (Ahn, 2022). Cooperation, comparisons, and perceptions between individual ASEAN countries and Korea have also been studied multiple times. Many experts have studied Korea's partnership between Vietnam (Kwak, et al., 2021) and Indonesia (Choi I. , Lee, Kim, & Choi, 2022), and suggested methods on how to improve the cooperative relationship. Studies comparing and analyzing the biomedical industry (Lee, 2004) and chemistry curriculum of Singapore and Korea have also been conducted (Hong, Kim, & Hong, 2021). Perceptions on Thailand among Koreans who live in Thailand (Kim, 2014), the effects of K-pop products on how the Thai society perceive Korea (Kim & Kim, 2009), Vietnamese perceptions on Korea and its people (Nguyen, 2020), Cambodian perceptions on K-pop and Korean drama (Lee, 2020), and a study on the school life adjustment of Korean students attending international schools in Malaysia (Park, 2011). Finally, a study conducted research on the engagement of the Korean government and media in Korean-related crimes in the Philippines and its effect on the Korean community (Kim, 2018). Several previous studies have analyzed discourse or perceptions on Southeast Asia using topic modeling methods. One example is "An Analysis of Southeast Asian Discourse in Korean Media Using Text-Mining Method", a study which analyzed newspaper articles about Southeast Asia, produced by Korean newspapers between 1990 and

2018. It utilized text mining technique to analyze Southeast Asian discourse produced by Korean media (Kim, 2019). Another study conducted by the Diponegoro University in 2017, has used the Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) method for sentiment analysis regarding tourism review in Indonesia (Putri & Kusumaningrum, 2017). Meanwhile, the NUIC of Thailand conducted research on 2022 regarding the evolution of COVID-19 tweets about Southeast Asian countries using topic modeling and sentiment analysis (Mathayomchan, Taecharungroj, & Wattanacharoensil, 2022).

Research Question and Purpose

How can Korean news coverage on ASEAN be analyzed by the LDA topic modeling method to analyze Korean discourse and perceptions on ASEAN? Based on the analysis, what policies should be suggested to enhance Korean perceptions on ASEAN?

The ultimate goal of this study is to contribute to the strengthening of ASEAN-Korea relations, by suggesting policies that would allow Korean perceptions towards ASEAN to be enhanced. These policies will be devised based on the analysis of Korean news coverage regarding ASEAN. News coverage is important since it can have a significant impact on how Koreans imagine or perceive ASEAN (Kim, 2019). While domestic media reports are supposed to be objective and neutral in its delivery of news, in practice, it often manipulates public opinion through language, symbols, and attitudes (Kang, 2022). The enormous influence of news media on public opinion affects not only the public's perception of other countries, but also direct policy decisions. This study will analyze the Korean news coverage on ASEAN according to the term of each president. This is because each leader had their own unique policies of dealing with ASEAN. Therefore, the analysis will be divided into three sections: The Park Geun-hye Administration, the Moon Jae-in Administration, and the Yoon Suk-yeol Administration.

Currently, there is no recent research that has used LDA topic modeling to analyze news coverage from the Moon Jae-in and Yoon Suk-yeol Administrations. This study will not only focus on analyzing Korean discourse and perceptions on ASEAN, but will also suggest policies which could enhance Korean perceptions on ASEAN, based on the analysis results. To accomplish this, Korean news coverage on ASEAN will be analyzed through a topic modeling method known as the Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA).

Methodology

The data used in this study is collected through the Internet by searching "Bigkinds (www.bigkinds.or.kr)", which offers big data analysis information about news. This study took account of the political ideology of domestic media outlets and additionally selected economic magazines, not just comprehensive magazines. "The Donga Ilbo", "JoongAng Ilbo", "Hankyoreh Newspaper", "Kyunghyang Shinmun", "Korea Economic Daily", and "Seoul Economic Daily" were selected as sources. Hankyoreh and Kyunghyang Shinmun are categorized as liberal media, while Dong-A Ilbo and JoongAng Ilbo are categorized as conservative media (Choi, 2010). The collection period is from February 25th, 2013, the inauguration date of President Park Geun-hye, to August 1st, 2023, while President Seok-yeol Yoon is in office. The analysis is largely divided into three sections: Park Geun-hye, Moon Jae-in, and Yoon Suk-yeol, based on the Korean president's term of office. The search keywords are "Southeast Asia(동남아)" and "ASEAN". "Southeast Asia(동남아)" is based on previous study (Kim, 2019) and "ASEAN" was added for more appropriate data.

The total collection period is from February 25th, 2013, to August 1st, 2023, during the inauguration of President Park Geun-hye and the term of President Yoon Seok-yul. The total number of articles collected was 34,831, and duplicates were removed. By media organization, there were 5,805 articles from JoongAng Ilbo, 3,312 from Kyunghyang Shinmun, 4,001 from Donga Ilbo, 2,254 from Hankyoreh, 8,830 from The Korea Economic Daily, and 10,629 from Seoul Economic Daily.

During the analysis process, the following words were removed: "department manager (실장)", "division director (본부장)", "manager (과장)", "general manager (부장)", "managing director (상무)", "executive director (이사)", "mourning for one's father (부친상)", "mourning for one's mother (모친상)", "passing away (별세)", "funeral cortege (발인)", "morning (오전)" and "afternoon (오후)". The reason for this is to remove articles that are not directly relevant to Southeast Asia-related activities and policies, such as personnel transfers. Also, in Hangul, 동남아(Southeast Asia) is used as a shortened version of 동남아시아 (Southeast Asia), so the replacement word for 동남아 was set as 동남아시아. Also, ASEAN is pronounced as "아세안" in Korean when read, so the replacement word for 아세안 was set to ASEAN. In the case of President Park Geun-hye, who was impeached on March 10th, 2017, the period of Hwang Kyo-ahn as acting president was included in the analysis.

A total of 33,665 articles were selected for analyzing after the data cleaning process. A total of 13,027, articles were analyzed for the Park Administration from February 25th, 2013, to May 9, 2017. 16,189 articles for the Moon Administration from May 10th, 2017, to May 9, 2022,

and 4,449 articles for the Yoon Administration from May 10th, 2022, to August 1st, 2023, were analyzed. The number of articles per year by government term is shown in Figures 1, 2, and 3. The amount of data for each presidential term was generally lower in the beginning and end, because the first and final years of the terms did not complete a full year.

Figure 1.
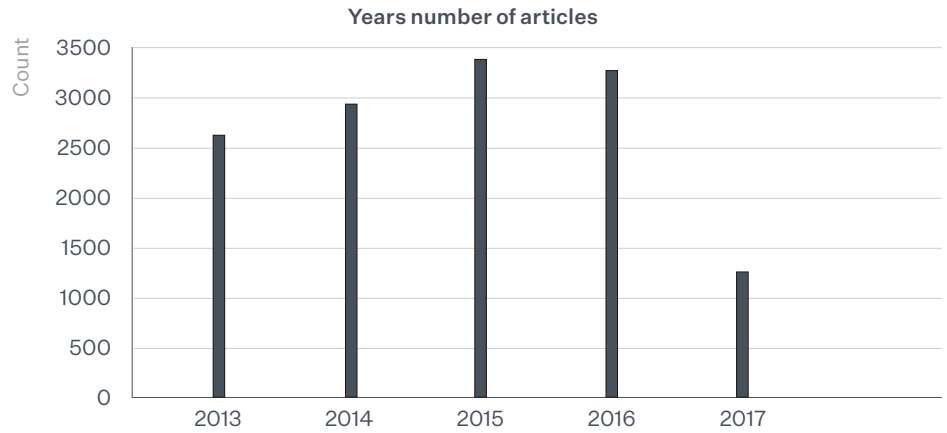**The Number of Articles per year during President Park Geun-hye's Term**

Figure 2.
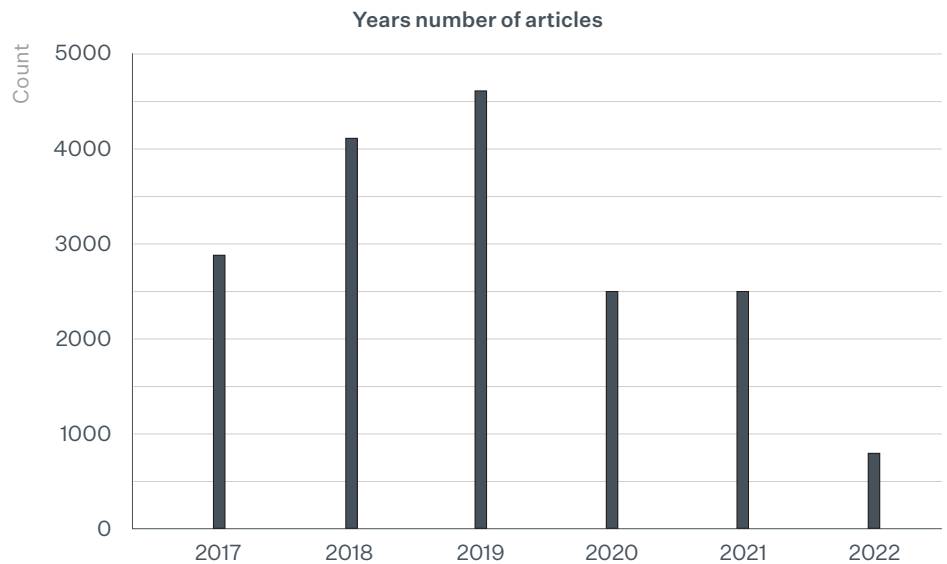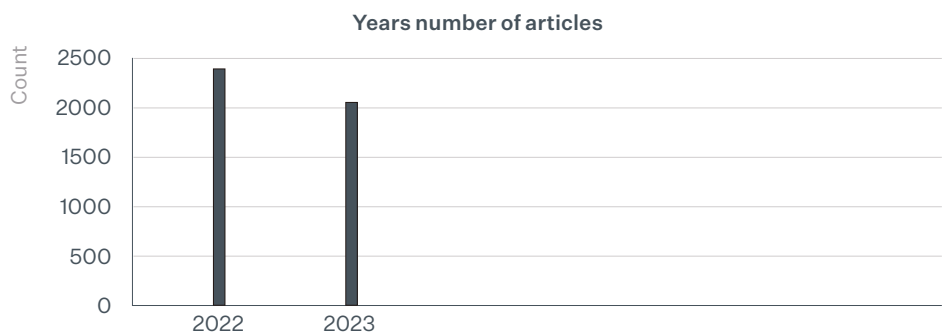**The Number of Articles per year during President Moon Jae-in's Term**

Figure 3.
The Number of Articles per year during President Yoon Suk-yeol's Term

This study adopts topic modeling in Python as an analysis method. Through morphological analysis, stopwords, the words recognized as nouns but not actually used as nouns or those which have no actual meaning will be distinguished in advance. Topic modeling refers to a probability-based model that helps find meaningful topics, analyze words extracted from a set of text in documents. In topic modeling, all documents are expressed as vectors of words, and it uses a combination of vectors to express potential topics that documents involve. Topic modeling also enables large volumes of document analysis by deriving topics from unstructured document sets. Therefore, it is used for content analysis, trend search, type classification, and identification of changes in policy issue. Research using this method is increasing in social sciences and humanities (Choi, 2019).

This study uses the LDA (Latent Dirichlet Allocation) model (Blei, Ng, & Jordan, 2003), which is a commonly used among topic modeling analyses method. This method extracts a topic, by combining the probability that a specific topic would exist in a document and the probability that a word would exist in the specific topic. The model is suitable for deriving various topics with many document sets, and the results are easier to interpret than other topic modeling techniques (Lu, Y., Mei, 2011). The number of topics can be determined by the coherence and perplexity. The researcher uses the number of topics which has a relatively high coherence and low perplexity.

Analysis Results

Park Geun-hye Administration Era
Figure 4 shows the analysis results for the Korean news coverage regarding ASEAN during the Park Geun-hye Administration (2013-2017). Figure 5 below indicates that nine topics have been found, with each having 20 keywords. The following are the nine topics: "People to People Exchange", "Global Exchange", "Foreign Expansion of Korean Corporations", "Korean Diplomacy", "Economic Exchange", "Mobile Industry", "Tourism", "Construction Business" and "North Korea Policy". President Park did not have a specific set of policies for ASEAN. As the topics indicate, President Park's policies for ASEAN were heavily focused on economic activities and were somewhat connected to policies regarding North Korea.

Figure 4.
Intertopic Distance Map of Korean News Coverage and Top-30 Most Salient Terms regarding ASEAN during the Park Geun-hye Administration
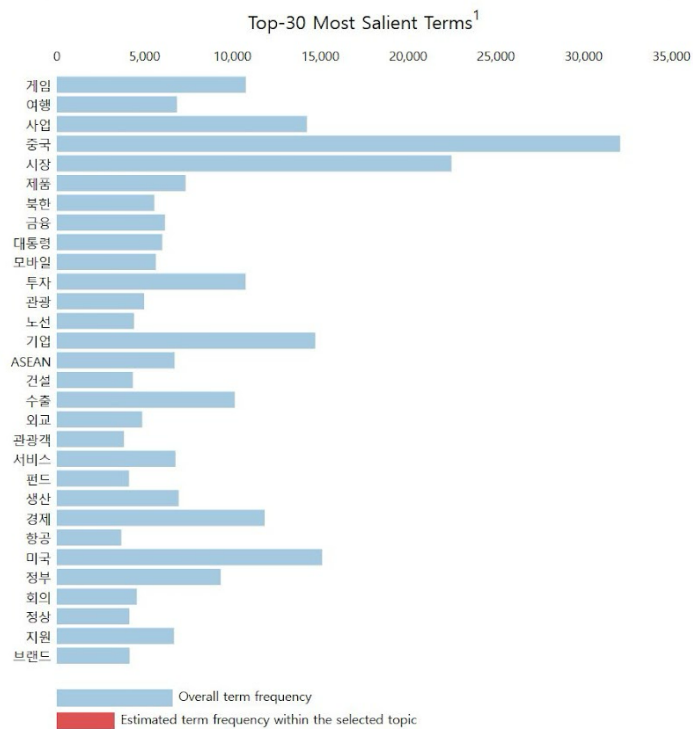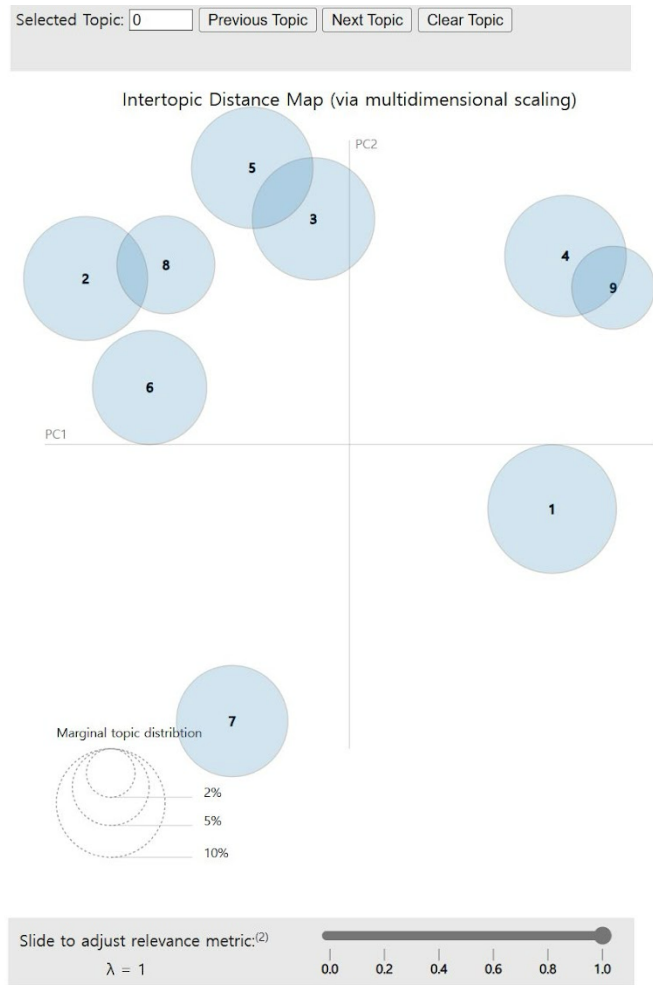
Figure 5.
Topics and Keywords and found in Korean News Coverage regarding ASEAN during the Park Geun-hye Administration

Topic 1.

People to People Exchange	
South Korea	0.019282
People	0.011225
Japan	0.008651
World	0.007526
Thought	0.006883
War	0.005435
Society	0.004936
United States	0.00457
Nation	0.004936
Professor	0.004385
Women	0.004348
History	0.00421
Culture	0.003875
Extent	0.003676
Start	0.003667
China	0.003407
Country	0.003373
Confidence	0.00325
Athlete	0.003011
Southeast Asia	0.002996

Topic 2.

Global Exchange	
South Korea	0.022008
Corporation	0.018808
Support	0.012348
Industry	0.010161
Economy	0.008817
Overseas	0.0082
Export	0.008093
Market	0.007862
Education	0.007104
Government	0.00691
Vietnam	0.00682
Business	0.006723
World	0.006637
Culture	0.006442
Cooperation	0.006262
Region	0.006215
International	0.006185
Medical	0.00607
Southeast Asia	0.005927
Foray	0.005332

Topic 3.

Foreign Expansion of Korean Corporations	
Market	0.022208
Product	0.017566
China	0.015424
Production	0.012811
Enterprise	0.010774
Export	0.01045
Foray	0.009837
Overseas	0.009802
Brand	0.009681
Southeast Asia	0.009369
Local	0.00879
Factory	0.008505
Lotte	0.008438
Corporation	0.008146
Sale	0.007779
Revenue	0.007751
Samsung	0.007492
Vietnam	0.006861
Business	0.006673
Electronics	0.006171

Topic 4.

Korean Diplomacy	
China	0.040111
United States	0.018555
President	0.014948
ASEAN	0.013819
Japan	0.013208
Economy	0.012458
Diplomacy	0.012263
Meeting	0.010726
Nation	0.010553
Summit	0.010328
Cooperation	0.009006
Asia	0.007746
Prime Minister	0.007504
Government	0.007498
Minister	0.007421
Southeast Asia	0.006957
Region	0.006895
South Korea	0.006654
North Korea	0.006574
Visit	0.006233

Topic 5.

Economic Exchange	
Investment	0.019491
Finance	0.01546
Market	0.014255
Dollar	0.012774
Fund	0.011216
Growth	0.010807
China	0.010496
Overseas	0.009229
Increase	0.008802
Bank	0.008688
Economy	0.008528
Export	0.007931
South Korea	0.007793
Performance	0.007746
Southeast Asia	0.007562
Share	0.007541
Sales	0.007323
United States	0.007166
Stocks	0.006911
Japan	0.006894

Topic 6.

Mobile Industry	
Game	0.033482
Mobile	0.015563
Service	0.015055
Market	0.014994
Represent	0.01351
China	0.009141
Global	0.009106
Southeast Asia	0.007896
Overseas	0.006998
South Korea	0.006967
Foray	0.006413
Success	0.006039
Business	0.005319
World	0.005233
Hankyung	0.005159
Release	0.005158
Proceed	0.005007
LINE	0.004965
Local	0.004951
Online	0.004933

Topic 7.

Tourism	
Travel	0.022222
Tourism	0.014668
Route	0.013986
Tourist	0.012428
Flight	0.011481
Product	0.010113
Hotel	0.009661
Southeast Asia	0.008209
Incheon	0.007985
Tour	0.007051
Use	0.007039
China	0.00695
Japan	0.006327
Jeju	0.005754
Reservation	0.005563
Airport	0.005442
Airline	0.005404
Resort	0.005274
Busan	0.005252
Airline ticket	0.005069

Topic 8.

Construction Business	
Business	0.027913
Construction	0.015567
Orders	0.00925
Energy	0.008802
Construction work	0.008096
Region	0.007571
Scale	0.006398
Plan	0.005938
Overseas	0.005846
Develop	0.005637
Production	0.005168
Facility	0.005159
Project	0.005145
World	0.005139
Industry	0.00498
Company	0.004961
Hyundai	0.004867
Market	0.004646
Environment	0.00464
Management	0.004346

Topic 9.

North Korea Policy	
North Korea	0.016422
Government	0.010934
Laos	0.007689
Research	0.007333
North Korean defector	0.006688
Safety	0.005928
Southeast Asia	0.00561
Human resources	0.005607
Public corporation	0.005579
Management	0.005497
Information	0.005281
South Korea	0.00501
Gaeseong	0.004768
Represent	0.004557
Accident	0.004534
Police	0.004244
Headquarters	0.004125
Investigation	0.004104
Cambodia	0.004066
Participator	0.004064

The first topic is "People to People Exchange". Exchange among ordinary people from Korea and ASEAN was an important matter during President Park's term. During the Korea-ASEAN Special Summit held in Busan in December 2014, President Park expressed her hopes of increasing cultural development and people to people exchange between the citizens of Korea and ASEAN (KTV, 2014).

The second topic is "Global Exchange". This topic refers to the many cases of exchange between Korea and the global community, including ASEAN, during the Park Administration. In October 2014, President Park participated in the 17th ASEAN+3 Summit and the East Asia Summit held in Naypyidaw, Burma. The participants shared their opinions on cooperative development, future relations and emphasized "substantive cooperation" between the countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014).

The third topic, "Foreign Expansion of South Korean Corporations", refers to Korean corporations that expanded their businesses into ASEAN during the Park Administration. A good example is the Hyosung Group, which proposed an investment plan worth 1.4 trillion won in November 2016, to build chemical factories and LPG tanks in Vietnam (Lee, 2016).

The fourth topic is "Korean Diplomacy". Although Korean foreign policies during the President Park's government were mainly focused on the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia (Kang, 2018, p. 72), it does not mean that relations with ASEAN were unimportant. This can be seen in the Korea-ASEAN special meeting held in Busan in December 2014, in which ASEAN formally announced it would support Korea in its policies regarding unification, North Korea, establishing peace in Northeast Asia and the Eurasia Initiative (Yoon, 2015).

The fifth topic is "Economic Exchange". During Park's presidency, economic exchange was a significant matter of discussion between Korea and ASEAN. This is proven by the Korean-ASEAN Special Summit, which was held in Busan in December 2014. President Park suggested to enhance the Free Trade Agreement with ASEAN for "mutual prosperity within the economic field" (KTV, 2014).

The sixth topic is "Mobile Industry". With the increasing number of smartphone users in ASEAN and the mobile market grown to a scale of 1.2 trillion won by 2014, ASEAN was considered as a potential market for the mobile industry, especially the mobile game industries of Korea (Heo, 2015).

The seventh topic is "Tourism". This topic demonstrates the popularity of ASEAN as a tourist attraction among Korean travelers during the Park Administration. For example, in 2015, Thailand was

the third most popular destination for Koreans, with the Philippines and Singapore each ranking fifth and sixth (Lee, 2015). The "Tourism" topic is also related to the THAAD conflict between Korea and China which occurred during Park's presidency. In retaliation for deploying the THAAD, China prohibited all group tours from visiting Korea. Although this was a devastating blow to the Korean travel industry, the absence of Chinese tourists was filled by tourists from ASEAN nations (Choi, Ko, & Chung, 2017).

The eighth topic, "Construction Business", highlights the Korean construction businesses in ASEAN. In fact, many buildings and landmarks had been built by Korean companies. For example, in 2014, Lotte Engineering and Construction completed its work on the 65 story Lotte Center Hanoi. Meanwhile, Hyundai Engineering signed a contract for constructing multiple power plants in Indonesia and the Philippines (Park, 2014).

The ninth topic is "North Korea Policy". Although the topic may seem completely irrelevant with ASEAN, ASEAN nations have a significant role in Korean policies regarding North Korea. This is because for many North Korean defectors, Southeast Asia has been an important escape route out of the country. However, this route faced a difficult situation on May 28th, 2013, when Laos deported nine North Korean adolescents who were attempting to escape. Such an incident demonstrates that ASEAN could be involved in South Korean policies regarding North Korea (Park, 2013).

Moon Jae-in Administration Era

Figure 6 shows the analysis results for the Korean news coverage regarding ASEAN during the Moon Jae-in Administration (2017-2022). As the Figure 7 below indicates, 12 topics have been found. Each topic has 20 keywords. The following are the 12 topics: "Investment", "Foreign Trade", "Korean Diplomacy", "Korean-ASEAN Relations", "Economic Trade", "Cultural Exchange", "Tourism", "Samsung Expansion", "Expansion of Korean Corporations", "Korean-ASEAN Medical Cooperation", "Crime" and "Lotte Expansion". Unlike the previous government, the Moon Administration had a specific set of policies aimed for ASEAN, known as the New Southern Policy. As the topics indicate, President Moon's policies for ASEAN were also heavily economic activity related.

Figure 6.
Intertopic Distance Map of Korean News Coverage and Top-30 Most Salient Terms regarding ASEAN during the Moon Jae-in Administration
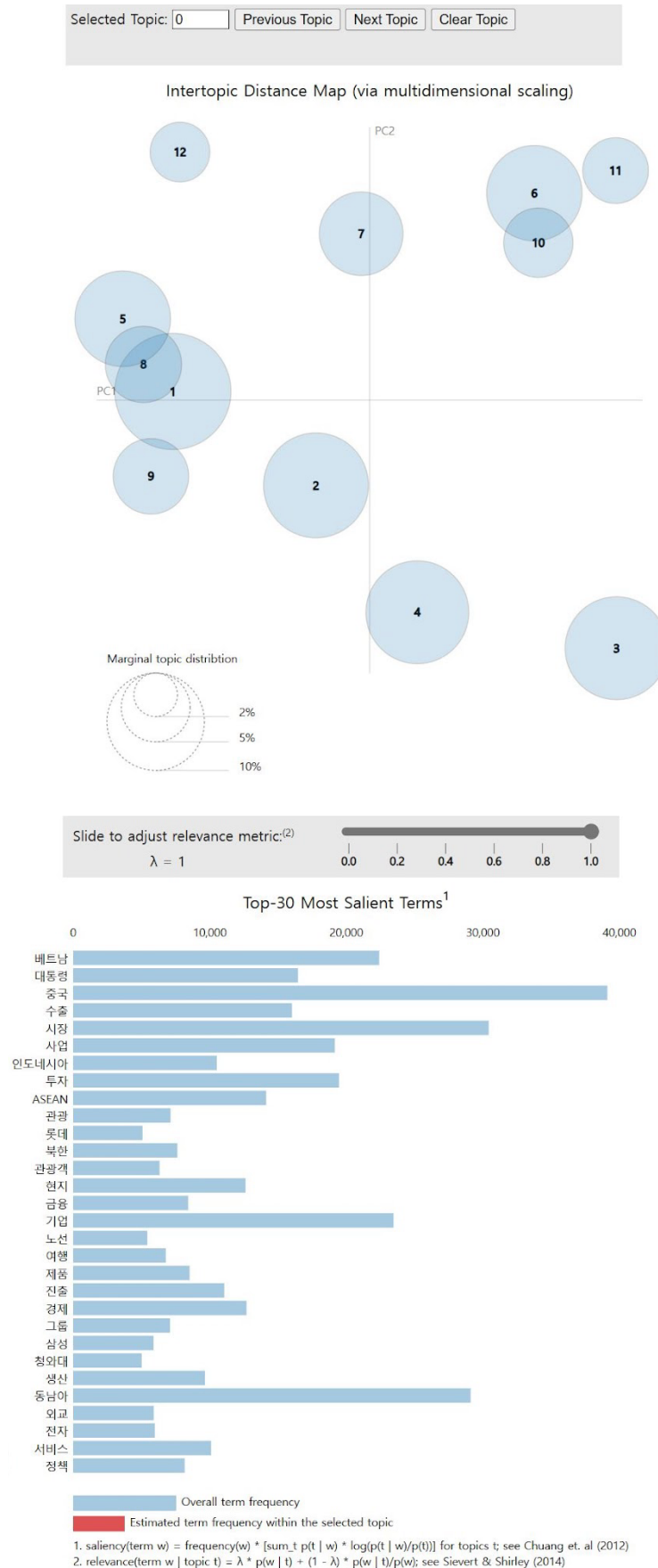
Figure 7.
Topics and Keywords and found in Korean News Coverage regarding ASEAN during the Moon Jae-in Administration

Topic 1.

Investment	
Investment	0.027697
Market	0.015166
Service	0.014887
Corporation	0.014683
Business	0.012534
Global	0.008771
Overseas	0.008762
Growth	0.008483
Share	0.007947
Represent	0.007735
Southeast Asia	0.007162
Company	0.007142
Game	0.007015
Platform	0.00669
Take over	0.006628
Finance	0.006496
Start-up	0.006495
Sales	0.006326
Enterprise	0.005918
Mobile	0.005309

Topic 2.

Foreign Trade	
China	0.046741
Export	0.020691
United States	0.015157
Production	0.014895
South Korea	0.013857
Dollar	0.01317
Increase	0.012518
Market	0.011742
Corporation	0.010837
Factory	0.008318
Japan	0.008282
Import	0.007467
Enterprise	0.006914
Preparation	0.006614
Trade	0.006379
Economy	0.006372
World	0.006372
Record	0.00587
Southeast Asia	0.005845
Prospect	0.005801

Topic 3.

Korean Diplomacy	
President	0.037572
North Korea	0.018027
China	0.015092
Government	0.013411
United States	0.012535
Diplomacy	0.011962
Blue House	0.011934
Summit	0.011069
South Korea	0.010296
Japan	0.009551
Minister	0.009118
Meeting	0.009037
ASEAN	0.008486
Moon Jae-in	0.007949
Visit	0.007578
Trump	0.007578
Conference	0.005902
Philippines	0.005696
Envoy	0.005384
Attend	0.005171

Topic 4.

Korea-ASEAN Relations	
ASEAN	0.021965
Economy	0.017992
South	0.016664
Cooperation	0.01395
Policy	0.013708
Nation	0.012257
Government	0.01115
China	0.009967
Region	0.008741
Global	0.007437
Industry	0.007391
World	0.007088
Support	0.006948
Strategy	0.006661
Society	0.006438
Exchange	0.005924
Culture	0.005467
Field	0.005443
Development	0.005366
United States	0.005315

Topic 5.

Economic Trade	
Market	0.026841
Export	0.018889
Corporation	0.018216
Product	0.018005
Overseas	0.015645
|Southeast Asia	0.012647
Brand	0.011034
Foray	0.01011
Represent	0.010067
Beauty	0.008567
Sell	0.008515
Cosmetics	0.008278
Support	0.00745
South Korea	0.007308
China	0.0072
Industry	0.006984
Enterprise	0.006472
Global	0.006158
Product	0.006105
Local	0.00594

Topic 6.

Cultural Exchange	
South Korea	0.012861
Culture	0.011422
People	0.011318
World	0.008873
Content	0.008413
Game	0.007599
Japan	0.007062
Represent	0.006271
Thought	0.006249
Seoul	0.005642
Start	0.00562
Film	0.005381
Making	0.004798
Popularity	0.004317
Extent	0.004293
Broadcast	0.004289
Drama	0.004121
Korean wave	0.00412
Concert	0.004091
Southeast Asia	0.003646

Topic 7.

Tourism	
Tour	0.024382
Tourism	0.022072
Travel	0.020099
Route	0.019402
Flight	0.01331
Southeast Asia	0.011996
Jeju	0.011867
China	0.01135
Japan	0.010596
Incheon	0.008833
Hotel	0.007816
Airline	0.007593
Airline ticket	0.006555
Product	0.006492
Duty-free shop	0.006475
Increase	0.00645
Airport	0.006377
Term	0.006352
Sail	0.006286
Use	0.06073

Topic 8.

Samsung Expansion	
Business	0.031658
Samsung	0.01752
Electronics	0.014749
Human resources	0.01101
Construction	0.009918
CEO	0.009616
Business management	0,008402
Adverb	0.00792
Control	0.007354
Construction work	0.007101
Overseas	0.00709
Promotion	0.006301
Industry	0.006111
Scale	0.006007
Executive	0.00598
Centre	0.005756
Region	0.005492
Global	0.005346
Orders	0.005319
Plan	0.005117

Topic 9.

Expansion of Korean Corporations	
Vietnam	0.077452
Indonesia	0.035977
Southeast Asia	0.026919
Local	0.026752
Market	0.02382
Finance	0.018366
Group	0.017963
Foray	0.016007
Chairman	0.015061
Bank	0.0113
South Korea	0.010906
Cambodia	0.009385
Car	0.008523
Singapore	0.008352
Hyundai Car	0.008134
Direct	0.007549
Malaysia	0.007447
Coporate body	0.007188
Thailand	0.007012
Hanoi	0.006501

Topic 10.

Korea-ASEAN Medical Corporation	
Medical	0.015436
Patient	0.012005
Occur	0.011847
Bio	0.011657
Corona	0.011634
Hospital	0.009854
Treatment	0.009822
Vaccine	0.009591
Medicine	0.008969
Safety	0.008904
Region	0.008787
Medication	0.007699
Prevention	0.007312
Management	0.007083
Diagnosis	0.0064
Infection	0.006027
Southeast Asia	0.005508
Virus	0.00517
Nation	0.005123
Permit	0.005079

Topic 11.

Crime	
Police	0.010462
Women	0.009988
Southeast	0.006756
Research	0.006741
Investigation	0.006615
Terror	0.006585
Narcotics	0.006483
March	0.006413
South Korea	0.006398
Overseas	0.005912
Electronics	0.005829
Allegation	0.005688
Information	0.00533
Illegal	0.005105
Case	0.005003
Smart phone	0.004738
Truth	0.004732
Satellite	0.004623
People	0.004331
Foreigner	0.003875

Topic 12.

Lotte Expansion	
Lotte	0.035517
Store	0.014933
E-mart	0.012225
Coffee	0.010735
Vietnam	0.008933
Operate	0.008255
Business	0.008179
Food	0.007746
Southeast Asia	0.007542
Region	0.007317
Malaysia	0.006975
Mart	0.006743
Chemical	0.006606
Chemical industry	0.006237
Local	0.006013
Production	0.005976
Food industry	0.005743
Overseas	0.005462
Facility	0.005438
Village	0.005424

The first topic is "Investment". The Moon Administration was an era in which South Korean investments to ASEAN exceeded investments to China. By 2018, Korean companies had established 1,921 new corporate bodies and had invested 6.13 billion dollars in ASEAN. The investments were targeted towards industries such as manufacturing, finance, insurance, wholesale, and retail business. Among the ASEAN members, Vietnam was Korea's largest investee, having 51.5% of investments, followed by Singapore with 25.6% and Indonesia having 8.1% (Kim, 2019).

The second and fifth topics, "Foreign Trade" and "Economic Trade", highlight the Moon Administration's efforts to strengthen and increase trade and economic cooperation between Korea and ASEAN. During his presidency, President Moon aimed to reduce Korea's economic dependence on the Four Powers (US, China, Russia, Japan). For this task, ASEAN was viewed as the solution. The Moon Administration announced it would open an era of "ASEAN First" and increase Korea's trade with ASEAN to 200 billion dollars by 2020, to eventually replace China with ASEAN as the top trading partner (Kim, 2019).

The third and fourth topics, "Korean Diplomacy" and "Korean-ASEAN Relations", are topics which reflect the New South Policy, the Moon Administration's diplomatic strategy for ASEAN. President Moon announced that the goal of this policy was to "upgrade Korea's relations with ASEAN to a similar level to that of the neighboring Four Powers," and that his government would "strongly initiate the New Southern Policy to develop Korean-ASEAN relations to a groundbreaking level." (Seoul Newspaper, 2017)

The sixth topic is "Cultural Exchange". Mutual cultural exchange between Korea and ASEAN was an important matter during the Moon Administration. This is evident through the opening of the ASEAN Culture House on September 1st, 2017, in Busan. It was founded to hold exhibitions for understanding ASEAN society and culture, show concerts and films that would help people from both cultures to understand each other (Heo, 2017).

The seventh topic, "Tourism", is a topic that shows how the tourism industry developed and operated between Korea and ASEAN during the Moon Administration. Just like during the previous government, ASEAN was a popular tourist destination for Korean tourists. In fact, in 2019, the number of Korean travelers to ASEAN had increased 20% compared to 2018. One reason for this is because of the trade and political disputes which Korea and Japan had during the Moon Administration. Due to the worsened relations between the two nations, many Koreans refused to travel to Japan and instead chose ASEAN countries such as Malaysia, Vietnam, and the Philippines (Park, 2019).

The eighth, ninth and twelfth topics, "Samsung Expansion", "Expansion of Korean Corporations" and "Lotte Expansion", refer to the expansion of Korean corporations to ASEAN countries. For example, as of October 2020, 80% of the necessary parts for Samsung Electronics were being manufactured in Vietnamese factories (Nguyen, 2020). Meanwhile, as business in China became more difficult for Lotte due to the THAAD dispute, Lotte closed its malls in China and started expanding to Vietnam and Indonesia (Choi, 2018).

The tenth topic, "Korean-ASEAN Medical Cooperation", highlights the medical cooperation between Korea and ASEAN during the COVID-19 pandemic. In November 2020, President Moon announced an upgraded version of the existing New Southern Policy, the New Southern Policy Plus, in hopes of allowing Korea and ASEAN to handle the pandemic in a cooperative manner. As a result, the two sides shared know-how and medical equipment for quarantine (Kim, 2020).

The eleventh topic is "Crime". This topic discusses the crime cases that occurred against Korean travelers in ASEAN nations. One example is the murder of Yong-wok Ju, a Korean travel columnist who was shot to death while visiting the Philippines in 2019. Similar cases also occurred in the Philippines during the previous year, when multiple Korean citizens were killed or wounded by gunfire (Lee, 2019).

Yoon Suk-yeol Administration Era
Figure 8 shows the analysis results for the Korean news coverage regarding ASEAN during the Yoon Suk-yeol Administration. As Figure 9 below shows, eight topics have been found. The following are the eight topics: "Investment", "Indo-Pacific Strategy", "Post-COVID Tourism", "Korean Global Businesses", "Alternative to China", "Crime", "Korean Trade" and "Energy Cooperation". It is indicated through the topics that Korean policies for ASEAN are still heavily related to economic activities, just like the previous administrations.

Figure 8.
Intertopic Distance Map of Korean News Coverage and Top-30 Most Salient Terms regarding ASEAN during the Yoon Suk-yeol Administration
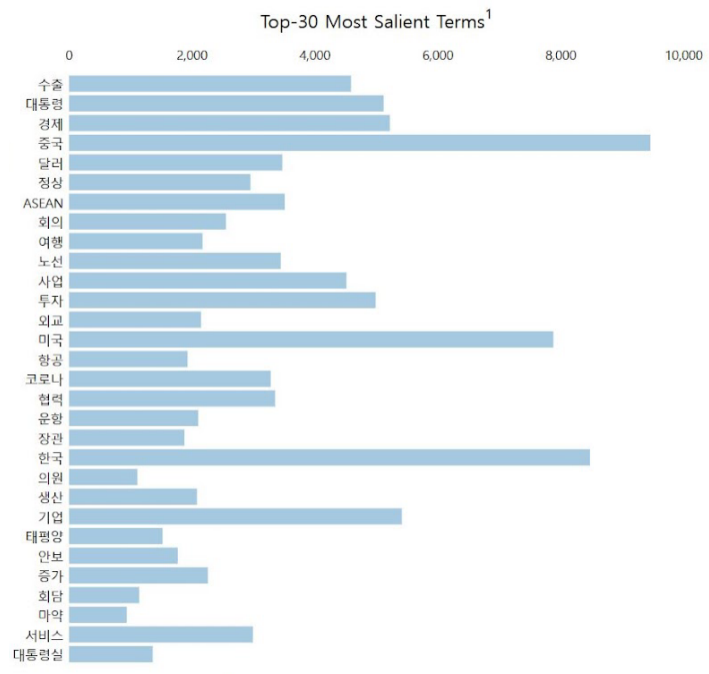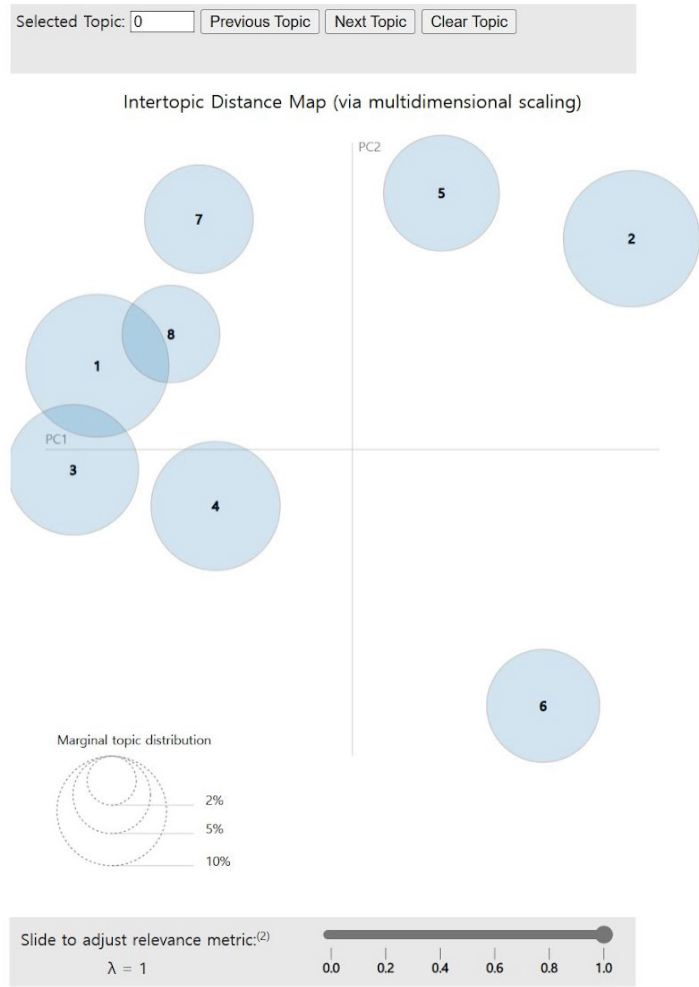
Figure 9.

Topics and Keywords and found in Korean News Coverage regarding ASEAN during the Yoon Suk-yeol Administration

Topic 1.

Investment	
Investment	0.019659
Business	0.017403
Corporations	0.014974
Market	0.013177
Vietnam	0.012059
Global	0.011268
Southeast Asia	0.010466
Foray	0.009596
Overseas	0.009158
Local	0.009089
Plan	0.008879
Service	0.008493
Route	0.008435
Group	0.007517
Represent	0.007312
Finance	0.006715
Expand	0.006061
Incheon	0.005905
Sail	0.005617
Take over	0.00545

Topic 2.

Indo-Pacific Strategy	
President	0.024789
China	0.021588
United States	0.021201
ASEAN	0.016752
Summit	0.016405
Meeting	0.014556
Economy	0.012092
Diplomacy	0.011176
Cooperation	0.010759
Japan	0.009955
Minister	0.009469
South Korea	0.008918
India	0.0084
Nation	0.007943
Security	0.0079
Pacific Ocean	0.007831
North Korea	0.00731
Government	0.007027
Participate	0.006873
Strategy	0.006866

Topic 3.

Post-COVID Tourism	
Corona	0.014485
Travel	0.013621
Route	0.011819
Flight	0.010738
Sales	0.009247
Japan	0.007908
Tourism	0.007465
Game	0.007431
Asia	0.00725
Sail	0.006983
Demand	0.006796
Product	0.00658
Tourist	0.006484
Recover	0.006103
Jeju	0.005968
Preparation	0.005921
Increase	0.005599
shop	0.005546
Entry	0.005532
Market	0.005529

Topic 4.

Korean Global Businesses	
Market	0.007838
South Korea	0.007276
Service	0.006524
Represent	0.005782
Southeast Asia	0.005156
People	0.004776
Education	0.004636
Medical	0.004562
Corporation	0.004297
Asia	0.004287
World	0.004145
Vietnam	0.004137
Global	0.003974
Start	0.003946
Business	0.003926
Industry	0.003885
Culture	0.003783
Platform	0.003522
Content	0.003434
Foreigner	0.003372

Topic 5.

Alternative to China	
China	0.022851
Economy	0.021277
South Korea	0.020999
United States	0.013877
Nation	0.012618
Japan	0.011299
World	0.009359
Industry	0.009281
Government	0.008345
Cooperation	0.007747
Semiconductor	0.0076
Strategy	0.006253
Corporation	0.006222
Supply network	0.006095
Global	0.005939
Policy	0.005794
Electric Car	0.00576
Trade	0.00542
Region	0.005404
Market	0.004987

Topic 6.

Crime	
Senator	0.009155
Narcotics	0.008023
Press	0.007275
National	0.007262
Cover	0.007158
Presidential Office	0.006746
President	0.006432
Private plane	0.006108
Investigation	0.005632
Boarding	0.005091
Southeast Asia	0.005054
Democratic Party	0.004996
Game	0.004332
Seoul	0.004105
Criticize	0.00403
Thought	0.004026
Controversy	0.003944
People	0.003812
Research	0.003608
Overseas	0.003525

Topic 7.

Korean Trade	
Export	0.039723
Dollar	0.023162
China	0.012717
South Korea	0.012499
Southeast Asia	0.009431
Market	0.009287
Increase	0.009193
Food items	0.008417
Import	0.008357
Vietnam	0.007645
Corporation	0.006744
United States	0.006559
Deficit	0.006033
Support	0.00589
Preparation	0.005335
Overseas	0.005288
World	0.005048
Trade	0.004891
Record	0.004859
Hong Kong	0.004636

Topic 8.

Energy Cooperation	
Production	0.011112
Market	0.007058
Southeast Asia	0.007036
Energy	0.006558
Environment	0.005845
Factory	0.005498
China	0.005347
United States	0.00522
Product	0.005219
World	0.005035
Business	0.004837
Enterprise	0.004313
Use	0.004231
Disposal	0.00423
Region	0.004148
Solar panel	0.003923
Electronics	0.003671
Samsung	0.003566
Corporation	0.003502
Gas	0.003481

The first topic, "Investment", highlights Korean investment to ASEAN. With close to 9,000 Korean companies expanded into Vietnam and over 80 billion dollars invested, Korea became the number one investor to the ASEAN member by September 2022 (KBS News, 2022). Also, on June 23rd, 2023, President Yoon participated in the Korea-Vietnam Business Forum, where 111 MOUs regarding investments were signed (Kim, 2023). The second topic, "Indo-Pacific Strategy", refers to the Yoon Administration's new diplomatic policy, in which ASEAN would be an important partner of Korea. This strategy was announced after President Yoon officially became the Korean president in May 10th, 2022 (Choi, Lee, & Shin, 2022, p. 2).

The third topic is "Post COVID Tourism". In early 2022, ASEAN nations made the decision to exempt vaccinated people from quarantine. By July, countries like Indonesia and Malaysia have seen a recovery in tourism of around 35% compared to the pre-COVID era. (Cho, Ju, & Lee, 2022). According to study conducted by the Hanatour travel agency company in January 2023, 15,000 Koreans had made reservations to travel overseas, with 54% of tourists planning to travel to Southeast Asia. The most popular destinations were Vietnam, Thailand, and the Philippines (Dongailbo, 2023).

The fourth topic is "Korean Global Businesses". Ever since the inauguration of President Yoon, many global businesses and companies based in Korea have invested and expanded to ASEAN nations. ASEAN was seen as a potentially significant market to those businesses. During the Korea-Vietnam Partnership Exposition on June 22nd, 2023, the LG Group emphasized its goal to sell its newest product, the LG OMNIPOD, at the Vietnamese market. Meanwhile, Samyang Foods advertised its food products at the K-Food Festival held in the Vietnam National Convention Center (Kim, 2023).

The fifth topic is "Alternative to China". This topic highlights that many global companies, including those based in Korea, are considering ASEAN as an alternative to China. This is due to high costs, severe government regulations and the recent conflict between the US and China. Korean companies such as Lotte, E-mart and LG Electronics have closed most of their businesses in China and are planning to expand to ASEAN (Lee Y. , 2023).

The sixth topic is "Crime". This topic reflects the reported crime cases which have occurred in ASEAN countries. For example, in June 2023 in the Philippines, a former police officer was sentenced to life in prison for kidnapping and murdering a Korean entrepreneur (Seo, 2023). There have also been cases in which drug dealers attempted to smuggle meth and ecstasy into Busan from Thailand (HanInPost, 2023). This topic also refers to the popular culture which portrayed criminals operating in ASEAN countries. Examples include the Korean film "The Roundup", set mostly in Vietnam and released in 2022, and the drama "Big Bet", set in the Philippines and released in December of the same year.

The seventh topic is "Korean Trade". It highlights that ASEAN is an important trade partner of Korea. In fact, after meeting with the Vietnamese president on June 23rd, 2023, President Yoon agreed to increase trade amounts to 150 billion dollars by 2030 (Kim, 2023).

The eighth topic, "Energy Cooperation", refers to the energy cooperation between Korea and ASEAN. Among the 111 MOUs signed during the Korea-Vietnam Business Forum, 29 were energy related. LNG, nuclear power

plants and renewable energy sources were some examples of the signed MOUs. As a result, a stable and future-oriented cooperative framework regarding energy between the two was established (Choi, 2023).

Conclusion

Based on the analysis results and the topics of each Korean government, it is evident that Korea has shared a close diplomatic relationship with ASEAN during the governments of all three presidents. The perceptions among the general Korean public, however, are mixed. Whilst both sides have cooperated in various areas, the topics that appeared the most frequently were those related to economic activities, such as investments, trade, and expansion of Korean companies into ASEAN. Other frequently appearing topics include those related to tourism ("Tourism", "Post-COVID Tourism") and crime. This portrays that Koreans generally perceive ASEAN in the following three ways. First, an important economic partner whom Koreans can work together to make substantial profits. Second, a popular tourist attraction. And third, a dangerous crime-ridden region.

   The first policy that could enhance Korean perceptions about ASEAN, is to raise awareness about Korea-ASEAN cooperation in areas other than economic cooperation. While economic cooperation with ASEAN is necessary, one should not have the impression that it is the only type of cooperation that is happening between Korea and ASEAN. In fact, one of the negative assessments the New Southern Policy received was its "mercantilist" approach towards ASEAN, since it could leave a negative impression that Koreans are simply using ASEAN for its own economic growth (Park, 2021, p. 4). Koreans need to understand that ASEAN is more than just a market for Koreans to sell their products and make money. The solution for this is by promoting Korea-ASEAN cooperation in other areas. Areas such as culture, education, medical and defense are good examples. The news regarding these cases of cooperation can be spread by the active use of social media, mainstream media, public diplomacy, embassies, and research institutes.

   The second policy is to increase people to people exchange programs that would allow Korean people to gain a deeper understanding about ASEAN and its cultures. Since tours and trips are usually focused on viewing popular sights and experiencing very limited aspects of a country's culture, they do not allow people to fully understand the country. They also lead people to have a rather one-sided viewpoint about the country, especially when they only visit a few places. While many Koreans consider ASEAN as a tourist attraction

where they can have fun, it is important for them to understand that ASEAN is more than just a place for tourism. A decent people to people exchange program should allow a large number of Koreans to visit multiple ASEAN nations, where they can stay long enough to visit a wide range of places, experience the diverse cultures, and witness the various aspects of the region which are difficult to be found through simple tours or trips. Increasing such programs would allow more Korean people to have a more accurate and positive understanding about ASEAN.

The third policy is to raise awareness about ASEAN's efforts to reduce crime. While it is true that multiple crime cases in ASEAN countries have been reported and informed to the Korean public, it is important to note that crime is not the only aspect of ASEAN. In fact, efforts are being made to reduce crime and danger. For example, in May 2023, the Philippine National Police announced that crime cases in 2023 in the Philippines have reduced 11.36% compared to last year. This was accomplished despite a shortage of manpower and the legal ownership of firearms among civilians (Lee, 2023). Raising awareness about ASEAN efforts to reduce crime will lead to Koreans having a better and more positive perception about ASEAN. This can be done by promoting specific examples of tackling criminal activities and statistical data showing how much crime has reduced in ASEAN. The promotion can be done through the active use of mainstream and social media. Encouraging the production of popular culture conveying such content would also be helpful.

This study is significant because it was able to figure out how Koreans perceive ASEAN by analyzing Korean media coverage, using the LDA topic modeling method. Also, based on the analysis, it was able to suggest policies that could enhance Korean perceptions regarding ASEAN. Mutual understanding and positive perceptions build a strong foundation for a more mutually beneficial, sustainable, and friendly relationship between ASEAN and Korea. The policies suggested by this study can contribute to doing so.

Despite the significance, this study has limitations. Only a limited number of Korean media were chosen for the analysis and the keywords have been translated from Korean to English. Whilst these limitations could make the data inaccurate, they can be improved in future studies by using a wider range of media for data analysis, including foreign ones. Finally, relatively low number of news articles for the Yoon Administration is another limitation. However, this is because Yoon Administration is only in its second year as of August 2023. This can be solved by conducting more research in the future, after President Yoon's term ends.

References

Kang, M.-g. (2018). 신남방정책 구상의 경제·외교적 의의. (pp. 64-75). Korea Development Bank.

Choi, I.-a., Lee, J.-h., & Shin, M.-g. (2022). 2022년 아세안 관련 정상회의 주요 내용과 시사점. (pp. 1-16). KIEP.

Park, J. (2021). 신남방정책(플러스)의 지속적 발전을 위한 제언. (pp. 1-7). Jeju Peace Institute.

Chung, M.-S. (2019, 11 20). Hankookilbo Website. Retrieved from 신남방정책, 중상주의 접근은 한계… 특정국 편애도 경계해야: https://www.hankookilbo.com/News/Read/201911191501789649

Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport. (2016, 11 30). 유라시아 이니셔티브란? Retrieved from Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport Web site: https://www.molit.go.kr/USR/policyTarget/dtl.jsp?idx=740

Kim, D.-c. (2023, 6 25). 베트남에서 세일즈외교 펼친 윤석열, 한국기업 베트남 진출 탄력 기대. Retrieved from Business Post Web site: https://www.businesspost.co.kr/BP?command=article_view&num=319083

Cho, B.-s., Ju, Y.-h., & Lee, S.-k. (2022, 11 2). 팬데믹으로 위축되었던 글로벌 해외여행 재개. Retrieved from Bank of Korea Web site: https://www.bok.or.kr/portal/bbs/B0000347/view.do?nttId=10073613&menuNo=201106&pageIndex=1

Dongailbo. (2023, 1 16). "올해 설 연휴 해외서 보낼까" 日·동남아 여행 수요 급증. Retrieved from Dongailbo Web site: https://www.donga.com/news/Economy/article/all/20230116/117458233/1
Choi, I.-s. (2023, 6 25). 한-베트남, 에너지 사업협력 '역대 최다' MOU. Retrieved from Energy Newspaper Web site: https://www.energy-news.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=88449

KBS News. (2022, 12 12). [한-베 30주년]① 베트남 투자 1위 나라, 한국…대구·경북도 진출 확대. Retrieved from KBS News Web site: https://news.kbs.co.kr/news/view.do?ncd=5620398

Seo, H.-w. (2023, 6 7). '한인 납치살해' 필리핀 경찰, 6년만에 단죄…"지시한 상관은 무죄" 작은 글자 큰 글자 프린터. Retrieved from etnews Web site: https://www.etnews.com/20230607000115

HanInPost. (2023, 4 14). 팬티 속 필로폰이 수두룩…동남아 국제선 늘자 김해공항 마약 단속 비상. Retrieved from HanInPost Web site: https://haninpost.com/archives/70502

Lee, Y. (2023, 2 9). [기획] 중국 대신 동남아로… 脫중국 '가속페달'. Retrieved from Maeil Web site: https://www.m-i.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=986368

Lee, J.-h. (2016, 11 11). Seoul Economic Daily Web site. Retrieved from 효성, 베트남에 1조4,000억 투자…화학공장·LPG탱크 짓는다 출처 : https://www.sedaily.com/NewsView/1L3XGUTN1R: https://www.sedaily.com/NewsView/1L3XGUTN1R

Yoon, B.-s. (2015, 2 24). 제139차 한경 밀레니엄 포럼 외교장관 연설문(2015.2.24). Republic of Korea: Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2014, 11 14). [ASEAN+3&EAS 정상회의] 박근혜 대통령, 미얀마 네피도 출발! Retrieved from https://www.mofa.go.kr/www/brd/m_4076/view.do?seq=352706&srchFr=&amp%3BsrchTo=&amp%3BsrchWord=&amp%3BsrchTp=&amp%3Bmulti_itm_seq=0&amp%3Bitm_seq_1=0&amp%3Bitm_seq_2=0&amp%3Bcompany_cd=&amp%3Bcompany_nm=&page=163

KTV. (2014, 12 12). "한-ASEAN FTA, 추가 자유화 협상 희망". Retrieved from Policy Briefing Web site: https://www.korea.kr/briefing/policyBriefingView.do?newsId=148788459

Heo, S.-r. (2015, 3 26). 동남아 모바일 시장, 한국 유료화 모델 안 통한다. Retrieved from GameMeca News Web site: https://www.gamemeca.com/view.php?gid=835872

Lee, M.-K. (2015, 12 2). 문화 - 2015년 해외여행 트랜드. Retrieved from Postech Newspaper Web site: https://times.postech.ac.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=8801

Choi, B.-i., Ko, J.-y., & Chung, J.-e. (2017, 3 22). 유커 떠나도…한국 '솟아날 길'은 있다. Retrieved from The Korea Economic Daily Web site: https://www.hankyung.com/society/article/2017032201621

Park, J.-h. (2014, 10 6). [건설 한류 2.0] 동남아 랜드마크, 한국 건설사가 만들고 있다. Retrieved from Chosun Web site: https://realty.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2014/10/05/2014100581002.html

Park, S.-m. (2013, 6 7). 동남아 탈북루트, 위기 왔다. Retrieved from Sisafocus Web site: https://www.sisafocus.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=70711

Kim, S.-w. (2019, 3 29). [fn선임기자의 경제노트] '신남방정책' 핵심 對아세안 투자 탄력 받는다. Retrieved from Financial News Web site: https://www.fnnews.com/news/201903290854567801

Kim, S.-w. (2019, 11 22). [MT리포트]아세안 퍼스트 신남방정책 2.0…美·中 의존 교역구조 바꾼다. Retrieved from Money Today Web site: https://news.mt.co.kr/mtview.php?no=2019112121031155053

Seoul Newspaper. (2017, 11 9). 문 대통령 "신남방정책 강력 추진"…사람·평화·상생번영 공동체가 핵심. Retrieved from Seoul Newspaper Web site: https://www.seoul.co.kr/news/newsView.php?id=20171109500159

Heo, K.-o. (2017, 8 29). 부산 해운대에 국내최대규모 아세안문화원 문 연다. Retrieved from Asia Today Web site: https://www.asiatoday.co.kr/view.php?key=20170829010013692

Park, S.-j. (2019, 9 5). 日언론 "일본 외면 한국인 여행객, 동남아로 발길 돌려". Retrieved from Yonhap News Web site: https://www.yna.co.kr/view/AKR20190905082800073

Nguyen, T.-H.-H. (2020, 10 26). [굿모닝 베트남] 삼성과 베트남 동반 진출 협력업체들 '매출 대박'. Retrieved from Global Economic Web site: https://www.g-enews.com/article/Global-Biz/2020/10/202010260748398461428b74b45e_1

Choi, Y.-s. (2018, 7 29). 롯데, 中서 백화점까지 정리…동남아·몽골에 집중. Retrieved from ITChosun Web site: https://it.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2018/07/29/2018072901571.html

Lee, M. (2019, 6 21). 여행 칼럼니스트 주영욱 필리핀서 피살…총격 사망 많은 곳 여행시 주의사항. Retrieved from The Korea Economic Daily Web site: https://www.hankyung.com/society/article/201906219499H

Kim, B.-c. (2020, 11 12). 文, 아세안 정상외교 첫 스타트…신남방정책 플러스 청사진 제시. Retrieved from Aju Business Daily Web site: https://www.ajunews.com/view/20201112231547137

Kim, H.-s. (2019). An Analysis of Southeast Asian Discourse in Korean Media Using Text-Mining Method. (pp. 123-174). Busan: Busan University of Foreign Studies.

Putri, I. R., & Kusumaningrum, R. (2017). Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) for Sentiment Analysis Toward Tourism Review in Indonesia. (pp. 1-6). Semarang: Department of Informatics, Faculty of Science and Mathematics, Diponegoro University, Semarang.

Mathayomchan, B., Taecharungroj, V., & Wattanacharoensil, W. (2022). Evolution of COVID 19 tweets about Southeast Asian Countries: topic modelling and sentiment analyses. (pp. 317-334). Salaya: Mahidol University International College.

Lee, C.-h. (2023, 5 5). 필리핀 범죄 발생률 현저히 줄어 들었다. Retrieved from News Korea Web site: https://www.newskorea.ne.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=7461

ASEAN-Korea Centre. (2023). 2022 Survey on Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youths. (pp. 4-180). Seoul: ASEAN-Korea Centre.

Meeyoung Kang.(2022).Disgust of Disability and Media : Focusing on News Big Date Related with Disability in the Post-Corona Era.The Korean Journal of Humanities and the Social Sciences,46(4),153-172.

Hyun-Ju Choi.(2010).A Study on the Diversity of Korean Newspapers : Analyzing the Tendencies of Covering Three Major Issues.Korean Journal of Journalism & Communication Studies,54(3),399-426.

Cho, Seong Gwo.(2017).ODA Articles Analysis Using Topic Modeling: Based on Newspapers from 1993 to 201. master's thesis. Sungkyunkwan University.

Lu, Y., Mei, Q., and Zhai, C. (2011). Investigating task performance of probabilistic topic models : an empirical study of PLSA and LDA, Information Retrieval, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 178-203.

Blei, D.M., Ng, A.Y., and Jordan, M.I.(2003) Latent dirichlet allocation, Journal of Machine Learning Research, pp. 993-1022.

Jaewoong Choi, Jang Jae Hyuk, Daehwan Kim, and Janghyeok Yoon 4. (2019). Identifying Interdisciplinary Trends of Humanities, Sociology, Science and Technology Research in Korea Using Topic Modeling and Network Analysis. Journal of the Society of Korea Industrial and Systems Engineering, 42(1), 74-86.

Ahn, J.-y. (2022). 동남아시아 5개국 사회과 관련 교과서에 나타난 한국 인식. (pp. 67-90). Cheongju: The Korean Association for the Social Studies Education.

Kwak, S.-i., Baek, Y.-h., Lee, H.-w., Lê, P. Q., V , L. M., & Nguy n , H. T. (2021). 한국-베트남 경제·사회 협력 30년: 지속가능한 미래 협력 방안 연구. (pp. 3-215). Sejong: KIEP.

Choi, I., Lee, J.-h., Kim, S., & Choi, K. (2022). 한-인도네시아 포괄적 미래 협력 방안 연구. (pp. 3-261). Sejong: KIEP.

Lee, Y.-j. (2004). 싱가포르와 한국의 생명과학 산업발전의 비교 연구. (pp. 125-145). Seoul: Association of Humanities and Social Studies in Korea.

Hong, J.-h., Kim, H.-j., & Hong, H.-k. (2021). 한국과 싱가포르의 과학 교육과정 비교 분석: 화학 영역을 중심 으로. (pp. 370-381). Seoul: Korean Chemical Society.

Kim, H.-k. (2014). 재태한인의 특성과 태국에 대한 인식. (pp. 207-252). Busan: Busan University of Foreign Studies.

Kim, S.-s., & Kim, M. (2009). 태국사회에서 한류 대중문화 상품이 한국의 국가이미지 인식과 한국 방문의향에 미치는 영향. (pp. 101-125). Goesan-gun: Korea Academic Society of Tourism Management.

Nguyen, H. T. (2020). 한국과 한국인에 대한 베트남인의 인식. (pp. 1-5). Jeju: Jeju Peace Institute.

Lee, J.-s. (2020). 캄보디아의 한류와 한국드라마에 대한 인식에 관한 연구 -스바이리엥 주의 고등학생과 대학생 을 중심으로-. (pp. 135-155). Seoul: Korea Association of Social Education.

Park, H.-m. (2011). 말레이시아 KL지역 국제학교에 재학 중인 한국 학생들의 학교생활 인식 분석. (pp. 205-222). Incheon: The Society of Korean Practical Arts Education Research.

Kim, D.-h. (2018). "위험한 필리핀"과 "문제 있는 한인": 필리핀 한인 피상사건을 둘러싼 한국정부와 언론의 개입, 그리고 한인사회의 구별 짓기. (pp. 7-42). Gwangju: Chonnam National University.

SPECIAL MENTION AWARD

Isabelle Pia Sison
PHILIPPINES

*From Script to Society:
The Impact of Korean Media's
ASEAN Representation on
Shaping Cross-Cultural
Perceptions –
The Philippine Context*

From Script to Society: The Impact of Korean Media's ASEAN Representation on Shaping Cross-Cultural Perceptions – The Philippine Context

Isabelle Pia Sison
Korea University

Abstract

In an age of globalization and digital interconnectedness, the influence of media on shaping perceptions and attitudes towards different cultures cannot be overstated. This study explores how Korean media's portrayal of the Philippines affects the attitudes of Korean and Filipino young adults toward each other. This study aims to promote a more accurate portrayal of the Philippines in Korean media, fostering a stronger Philippine-Korea partnership. Additionally, it addresses a gap in cultural studies by examining how individuals perceive their own culture when depicted inaccurately in foreign media.

The research findings underscore the importance of balanced media portrayals. Korean youth expressed a preference for depictions that avoid extremes, asserting that information should be neither overly favorable nor excessively negative. Korean youth contend that exposure to well-rounded depictions of the Philippines within Korean media, which encompass both positive and negative aspects, can generate a more favorable perception of the Philippines among Korean society. Conversely, Filipino youth expressed a longing for their culture to be portrayed more comprehensively in Korean media. Filipino young adults believe that while Korean media emphasizes the Philippines as a tourist destination, it often overlooks the richness of Filipino culture and the goodness of its people.

Introduction

As ASEAN and Korea strive to deepen their strategic partnership, it is imperative to address the current discourse and perceptions surrounding their relationship. The 'Survey on Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youths' carried out by the ASEAN-Korea Centre (2022) highlights a notable disparity in how youths from ASEAN and Korea view each other. Negative stereotypes and misperceptions that may exist on both sides pose a considerable challenge to improving ASEAN-Korea relations. While information and experience are commonly recognized as the key influencers of mutual perceptions, it is important to note that negative images of Korean youth towards ASEAN are also largely shaped by media portrayals of crime and fear from the region. Since Korean youth have limited exposure to ASEAN-related content, the concept of *representation* becomes even more significant. Further, it becomes crucial to provide a diverse, accurate, and broad range of perspectives on ASEAN, even within the confines of their limited exposure, in order to broaden their perceptions of the region.

Filipino representation in international media is a source of immense pride for Filipinos, as it highlights their national identity on a global stage. Whenever a Filipino athlete, beauty queen, genius, or artist achieves success, it invokes a sense of "*Pinoy* pride" and reinforces the sentiment of being proud to be Filipino (Lasco, 2021). The growing popularity and admiration of *Hallyu*, or the Korean Wave, among Filipinos (Malabanan et al., 2022) is no exception. Even when Filipino actors have small roles in Korean films or dramas, their appearances generate considerable excitement within the Philippine media. In an article published by the University of the Philippines Arirang (2023), it was mentioned that as Filipinos' interest in Korean content continues to grow, the issue of *authentic representation* becomes a pertinent concern. These apprehensions are often triggered by social media posts featuring Filipino characters using profanity when making cameo appearances in Korean dramas or films. Authentic representation holds significant importance as it allows for a genuine reflection of diverse cultures and promotes mutual understanding. When Filipino characters are portrayed inaccurately or through stereotypes in Korean media, it can contribute to misconceptions and a distorted global image of Filipinos. Similarly, the way the Philippine media portrays South Koreans can also impact the perception of their culture among Filipinos. Therefore, it is crucial for both Korean and Philippine media to strive for accurate and respectful representation that can foster a more balanced cultural exchange, enhance understanding, and facilitate a deeper appreciation of each other's identities and experiences.

Therefore, this essay, under the sub-topic "Current Discourse and Perceptions on ASEAN-Korea Relations and Ways to Improve Perceptions," aims to explore the influential force of media representation on Korean perceptions and attitudes towards the Philippines and Southeast Asia by answering the research question:
How does the representation of the Philippines in Korean media influence the perceptions and attitudes of Korean young adults towards the Philippines and Filipino young adults towards Korea?

There is evidence indicating that people develop diverse opinions about media due to individual differences in their media consumption experiences (Oh et al., 2011). The term *'media'* encompasses a broad spectrum, covering traditional outlets like print media (newspapers and magazines) and visual media (television shows — from entertainment to news, and films), as well as the emerging landscape of new media, including social media and internet-based sources (McLeod et al., 2017). To narrow the focus of this research, it examines traditional media, specifically in the realms of entertainment, with a primary emphasis on visual media such as films and TV shows. While there are references to social media, the research investigations predominantly rely on resources and materials within the traditional media sphere to assess the evolving collective perception of Korean individuals, spanning from the early days of the internet to the present.

By examining the impact of media representation on Korean perceptions and attitudes towards the Philippines, the study can provide insights into ways to improve the accuracy and diversity of Philippine representation in Korean media. This will also promote a more inclusive and sustainable Philippine-Korea strategic partnership, which is vital in the current global landscape. From a theoretical perspective, the study will contribute to the field of media and cultural studies by analyzing how media representation shapes cross-cultural perceptions and stereotypes. Furthermore, this academic essay aims to address the research gap in the studies of this topic by examining how individuals perceive representations of their own culture in foreign media and how inaccuracies or imbalances in these portrayals can influence their perceptions of the country responsible for producing such media content.

This academic essay aims to advance our understanding of the role of media in shaping cultural perceptions, helping to identify the mechanisms through which stereotypes and biases are formed or challenged. By identifying the extent to which accurate and diverse representations in

Korean media can positively influence perceptions, policymakers can work towards promoting more balanced and nuanced portrayals of the Philippines. This can lead to increased cultural exchange and mutual respect between ASEAN and Korea.

The Attitude of Korean Society toward 'Others'

Scholars have argued that the end of homogeneity can be seen in Korea due to the rise of transnational migration (Lim, 2010). As per data from the Ministry of Justice, Korea documented a total of 1,688,855 long-term foreign residents alongside 557,057 short-term foreign residents in the year 2022. While the presence of foreign residents relative to the total population might have experienced a decline in 2021 due to the impact of COVID-19, the year 2022 marked a gradual resurgence in this ratio, indicating a positive trend of recovery. The anticipated growth is poised to expand even more in the coming years as Korea actively pursues its goal of attracting 300,000 foreign students by 2027, as outlined in the "Study Korea 300K Project" of the Korean government (Jun, 2023). However, with all these objectives set by Korea, it is important to discuss if Korean society is ready to accept these foreign individuals into their communities. Ironically, while foreign residents aid the national economy and the problem of population decline in Korea, immigrants are still viewed as "cultural outsiders" who are inferior which disrupts the homogeneity of Korean society (Yi, 2023; Kim-Bossard, 2018; Ko, 2021).

In the early 2000s, Korea began witnessing the emergence of a genuinely multicultural and multiracial society, primarily due to its increasing immigrant population (Ko, 2023). However, the ongoing discussion about societal acceptance persists, fueled by the unfortunate reality of continued discrimination and violence directed at foreign migrants in the country. Koreans face the challenge of overcoming stigma towards foreigners, particularly from lower-income countries, and changing their deficit-oriented perspective towards "others" (Kim-Bossard, 2018). Kim-Bossard's study examined the TV segment 'Asia! Asia!' from the variety show titled !Exclamation Mark, which promoted tolerance and compassion while introducing 17 migrant workers and their families from South and Southeast Asian countries, including the Philippines. According to Kim-Bossard, 'Asia! Asia!' perpetuated stereotypes about South and Southeast Asia and reinforced 'Korean Orientalism' by portraying these regions as universally less developed compared to the

highly modernized image of Korea.

Philippines, a Country from *'Dong-nam-ah'*

The term *'dong-nam-ah'* is employed by Koreans to describe Southeast Asia. While it can be translated accurately, it also conveys the idea of representing the 'other' side of Asia, often portrayed as 'distinct'. Television frequently portrays images of slums, perpetuating stereotypes of underdevelopment and backwardness in South and Southeast Asian countries when discussing the people from this region (Ko, 2023).

The correlation between stereotypes and exposure is evident, as stereotypes are often defined as perceptions concerning the characteristics, attributes, and behaviors of individuals in particular groups, occasionally coinciding with observable traits in the perceiver's immediate surroundings (Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996). The exposure of Koreans to the Philippines often relies on travel or interactions with Filipinos. People-to-people exchange, as noted by Ambassador H.E. Maria Theresa B. Dizon-De Vega, is vital for bilateral relations. She cites that the late 1990s to early 2000s saw a surge of Koreans in the Philippines for business and language education — emphasizing limited exposure for non-visitors. Despite having more Koreans in the Philippines than vice versa, the Filipino community in Korea, comprising marriage migrants, Employment Permit System (EPS) workers, students, and professionals, continues to grow (M.T. Dizon-De Vega, personal communication, July 31, 2023).

In 2022, the Ministry of Justice registered 57,452 Filipinos residing in Korea, ranking the Philippines as the sixth-largest group among foreign residents by nationality. Notably, this count excludes Filipino marriage migrants, who, as per Kim (2010), may not necessarily feel a strong sense of belonging in Korean society despite gaining Korean citizenship. This raises the question of the extent to which Korean individuals can interact with this relatively small community. A considerable portion of Koreans, on the other hand, might be acquainted with the concept of International Marriage Agencies, particularly in instances where they are actively promoted in rural areas, offering brief marriage introduction trips for Korean men to Southeast Asia and certain central Asian nations (Ko, 2023); this aspect also potentially influences the general perception

of Koreans towards the Philippines.

Philippine Representation in Korean Media

The rise of new mass media platforms and delivery methods has amplified media's impact on daily life (McLeod et al., 2017). Koreans who have not personally visited the Philippines or had direct exposure to Filipino people or culture rely heavily on local media as their primary source for initial exposure and information about the country. In a 2020 social media experiment conducted by YouTuber 'Wave Lee,' Korean participants were asked about their initial thoughts upon hearing the word 'Philippines.' The responses varied, with some mentioning notable figures from Philippine politics and sports, such as Rodrigo Duterte, Benigno Aquino, as well as Manny Pacquiao. Others recalled interactions with Filipinos, either personally or through acquaintances. However, the participants generally exhibited a 'surface-level' understanding of Filipino culture, as reflected in their associations with terms like 'beach,' 'tropical destination,' 'banana,' and 'mango' (Koreaboo, 2020).

These images may have been shaped by the media content available in local broadcasts. For instance, KBS's travel show 'Battle Trip' has prominently showcased the Philippines' tourism attractions and the unique Filipino cuisine, featuring guests like Sandara Park, who was appointed the Korea-Philippines Friendship Ambassador in 2017 (KBS World TV, 2022). Likewise, the long-running Korean variety show 'Running Man' featured Filipino boxer Manny Pacquiao and depicted his generosity when the Korean cast visited his Philippine residence. On the other hand, TV series such as "My ID is Gangnam Beauty" and "Undercover" refer to the Philippines as the destination to study English language, with lines such as "she went to the Philippines to study English" and "If you help me increase my fortune, I can be able to let my children study English in the Philippines and play golf simultaneously." These images, however, are overshadowed by the stereotypical portrayals of Filipinos committing crimes of illegal entry as seen on the show "Where Stars Land" and Filipino casino operators' involvement in illegal gambling as seen on the show "Squid Game". Moreover, the Philippines has been portrayed as a potential haven for Korean criminals seeking refuge, notably in the popular series "Big Bet."

In this era of technological revolution, where the public often

turns to the media for immediate and up-to-date information about their surroundings, the influence of media on public opinion and perceptions can be profound. Media holds the power to easily shape and direct public opinion in the direction it desires (Sadaf, 2011). However, the selective content presented in the media plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions on specific issues, as noted by Turner and West (2007). *Selective exposure,* they explain, is a cognitive process that individuals employ to seek information that aligns with their existing beliefs and actions, effectively reducing cognitive dissonance. Furthermore, Severin (2001) underscores the diversity in people's reactions to the same message, emphasizing the role of the decoding process, which determines how individuals consume specific information. Perceivers are said to memorize abstracted versions of a group's defining characteristics, and they evaluate each individual group member by comparing them to the prototype in terms of similarity (Cantor & Mischel, 1979). Given these dynamics, it is crucial to examine how Korean youth, with their limited exposure to Philippine culture through media, interpret and integrate this information into their perceptions.

Sadaf (2011) also argues that media plays multiple roles, including education, entertainment, and information dissemination, while its gatekeeping function ensures a balance between what information is shared and what is not. Korean news reports related to the Philippines in public affairs predominantly focus on criminal incidents involving either Filipino nationals harming Koreans in the Philippines or occasionally reporting illegal activities involving Korean nationals in the Philippines. Pettinico (1994) underscores the significance of this issue, citing 'crime' as a top public concern and the growing inclination toward punitive measures. It is evident that these distressing associations have, to some extent, seeped into the public consciousness, implying a connection between race and crime, a phenomenon supported by ample evidence on racial attitudes (Hurwitz & Peffley, 1997). Arguably, Korea continues to exhibit low trust in the media, as indicated by the 2023 'Trust Barometer' by the Global Public Relations Firm Edelman (Survey: South Koreans Exhibit the Lowest Trust in Business and Media Among 28 Countries, 2023). Assessing the credibility of media content is challenging, and scrutinizing the integrity and intentions of media professionals further complicates the task, making it difficult to assess the impartiality of media interpretations of reality (Tsfati & Cohen, 2012; Kohring & Matthes, 2007).

While news media are expected to provide in-depth coverage beyond

press releases and headline summaries, achieving the right balance in various types of media remains a subject of ongoing discussion. Highlighting the importance of experiencing a diverse range of information, rather than solely negative content, is crucial for analyzing the influential role of media in shaping perceptions and mitigating media bias. With several platforms expanding content horizons, *citizen-generated* content often explores aspects overlooked by mainstream media, making new and social media sources not only for mainstream and citizen-created news but also for hybrid information bridging both realms (Ardèvol-Abreu & De Zúñiga, 2016). Notably, there is a surge of Korean content creators on platforms like YouTube showcasing "citizen-generated" and unique perspectives on Filipino culture, contributing to a wider information diversity.

H1   *Exposure to **only positive portrayal of the Philippines** in Korean media fosters a <u>more favorable</u> perception of the Philippines among young Korean youth.*

H2   *Exposure to **well-rounded depictions of the Philippines**, encompassing both positive and negative elements, in Korean media fosters a <u>more favorable</u> perception of the Philippines among young Korean youth.*

In 2010, a controversial issue arose from the alleged mockery of the Filipino English accent by the Korean actress Lee Da Hae in a TV appearance in KBS (Almo, 2011). Although the actress garnered love from the Philippine audience for her successful series like 'My Girl,' the alleged insult directed at Filipinos' English-speaking abilities left many viewers from the Philippines deeply shocked and disappointed. Furthermore, despite the passage of many years, the Filipino English accent appears to still face similar perceptions among Koreans, especially as depicted by Korean media. For instance, in the 2023 thriller movie 'The Childe,' which includes scenes shot in the Philippines and features a main character of Filipino and Korean ethnicity referred to as a *'Kopino,'* there was an insinuation that if one does not use American or British English in Korea – this 'other' English accent will be viewed as a disadvantage. This particular plot point can have a profound effect on the audience, especially given the line "they strongly dislike Kopino," which conveys a negative perception of Filipinos, suggesting that they may not be viewed positively or even welcomed by Koreans. These observations contribute to the following hypotheses:

H3   *The present depiction of the Philippines in Korean media, as perceived by Filipino youth, <u>does not have a significant influence</u> on their opinions and attitudes towards Korea and Philippine-Korea cooperation.*

H4   *The present depiction of the Philippines in Korean media, as perceived by Filipino youth, <u>has a significant influence</u> on their opinions and attitudes towards Korea and Philippine-Korea cooperation.*

Research Design

This study conducted 'video-based focus group discussions' in Korea and the Philippines. In Korea, three groups of Korean youth (ages 19 to 34) viewed different types of video clips portraying the Philippines in Korean media: *control group, positive group, or mixed group for positive and negative depictions;* and discussed their changing opinions and perceptions through a post-media viewing discussion. The participants shared their exposure to Philippine and Southeast Asian representation in local media and the factors influencing their perceptions. A follow-up video on Philippine-Korea relations was shown to gauge their perception of the bilateral relationship.

Similarly, in the Philippines, Filipino youth (ages 19 to 34) discussed their perceptions of Korea and how they perceive the representation of the Philippines in Korean media. They viewed the same video clips and provided feedback on the accuracy of the portrayal. Their opinions on the Philippine-Korea strategic partnership

Media Treatment Design

In order to assess how the portrayal of the Philippines in Korean media influences the perceptions of the country among the Korean youth, this study conducted video-based focus group discussions using two experimental conditions: *the positive group and the mixed positive-negative group*.

This experiment was designed under the assumption that positive images tend to foster positive perceptions. The objective was to investigate whether presenting a more balanced depiction of the Philippines, featuring a mix of positive and negative images, might be a more effective approach for representing the country and, in turn, enhancing the potential for cooperation between the Philippines and Korea.

Table 1 provides a summary of the video clips and dialogues utilized for the <u>positive</u> group:

Table 1.
Positive Images of the Philippines in Korean Media

TV Show 'Battle Trip' Images of the tourist destination, Cebu, and Filipino cuisine with visiting actors In Gyo-jin and So E-hyun	**TV Show 'Running Man'** Images of Filipino world renowned boxer Manny Pacquiao and his hospitality in accommodating the Running Man cast in their visit to Manila
TV Drama 'My ID Is Gangnam Beauty' "My daughter studied all by herself and graduated top of her grade. Right after the college entrance exam, she went to the Philippines to study"	**TV Drama 'Undercover'** "If you help me increase my fortune, I can be able to let my children study English in the Philippines and play golf simultaneously."

Table 2 includes the additional video clips utilized for the <u>mixed positive-negative</u> group:

Table 2.
Negative Images of the Philippines in Korean Media

TV Drama 'Where Stars Land' "He used a forged passport. That's a crime. That's illegal."	**TV Drama 'Squid Game'** "So how much did you lose at the casino in the Philippines?... Those casino operators from the Philippines came all the way here."
Movie 'The Golden Holiday' " Why am I running away? This is the Philippines!... I have no reason to run."	**TV Drama 'Big Bet'** "How much for a night?" "3,000 for one time, 5,000 for the whole night"

Research Findings

Reception of Philippine Portrayals in Korean Media by Korean Youth

A total of 12 Korean participants, falling within the 'youth' age bracket of 19 to 34 years old, were organized into three distinct focus discussion groups. These three focus groups were delineated by their exposure to varying media treatments. Specifically, one group served as a control group, another group exclusively viewed positive representations of the Philippines in Korean media, while the third group watched a compilation of media clips featuring both positive and negative depictions.

In the preliminary participant survey carried out prior to the focus group discussions, registrants were specifically queried about their travel history with regard to the Philippines. This inquiry served the deliberate purpose of ensuring that the focus group participants exclusively comprised Korean youths who had never visited the Philippines. The

rationale behind this selection criterion was to restrict discussions to their perceptions of the Philippines solely based on information disseminated within Korean society.

As revealed through the discussions, participants from all three groups of Korean youth commonly conveyed that their understanding of the Philippines is primarily shaped by the portrayals presented in Korean media. Nonetheless, a small number of participants acknowledged having encountered Filipino students at their universities, although these interactions did not evolve into close relationships. Conversely, the majority of participants reported having had no prior engagement with individuals of Filipino nationality, despite the growing Filipino community in Korea.

		Focus Group Discussion Excerpts
Control Group	Korean 'G'	I do not have much idea of the Philippines but I do know it is located in Southeast Asia. Recently, Korean news media have reported that Korea will be accepting nannies from Southeast Asia to solve societal problems in Korea and I heard that, potentially, a significant number of these nannies will be coming from the Philippines.
Positive Media Treatment	Korean 'Y'	I already know that the Philippines is an English speaking country and many Koreans travel to the Philippines to learn to speak English. I believe that although these images are not necessarily bad, they also do not have the 'wow' factor that makes me expand my perception.
Mixed Media Treatment	Korean 'M'	There are some Korean dramas that I have watched that show Korean criminals going to the Philippines when authorities are trying to capture them. I also saw that the Philippines have good beaches like Boracay and Cebu that some of my friends have visited. This makes me consider it a great travel destination but it is still needed to be careful. One regrettable aspect about these portrayals is that my friends have often described Filipino people as incredibly friendly and hospitable, always wearing smiles. However, these positive traits are rarely reflected in Korean media.

When queried about the state of Philippine-Korea relations, they collectively expressed unawareness regarding the Philippines' significant contribution to the Korean War. Despite this lack of comprehensive knowledge about this crucial historical connection between the two nations, they conveyed **'deep gratitude'** for the Philippines' role in Korean society. The Korean participants also expressed a strong desire to learn more about the Philippines.

The Korean youth emphasized the importance of presenting a balanced portrayal of any subject matter, asserting that information **"should not be overly favorable or negative."** They believe that this balanced approach promotes open-mindedness and enhances prospects for cooperation. This underscores the notion that exposure to well-rounded depictions of the Philippines, incorporating both positive and negative aspects, within Korean media can lead to a more favorable perception of the Philippines among young Korean adults (H2).

**Effects of Philippine Depiction in
K-Media on Filipino Attitude towards Korea**

A cohort of eight Filipino participants, aged between 19 and 34, was selected from a pool of interested registrants who signed up online. These participants boasted a diverse array of professional backgrounds, encompassing roles as public school teachers, media practitioners, researchers, and corporate employees. Their shared characteristic was their inclination for frequent consumption of Korean media content, granting them a profound insight into how Korean media has portrayed diverse subjects related to the Philippines.

The Filipino youth generally perceive Philippines-Korea bilateral relations as favorable, primarily evidenced by collaborative programs initiated by the Philippine government and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). The Filipino participants characterized the Philippine-Korea relations as **'interconnected,'** with clear evidence of close ties. Moreover, their personal interactions with Korean students residing in the Philippines have been consistently pleasant. Nonetheless, it is unanimous among all participants that **this positive perspective has its limitations.** Some have argued that this connection is 'superficial' and 'lacks depth.'

Focus Group Discussion Excerpts	
Filipino 'A'	When my Korean friends, who studied in the Philippines, return to Korea, they often hear people describe the Philippines as a place for the poor and cheap.
Filipino 'P'	Visitors from Korea often hold the impression that Filipinos are warm and proficient in English, which contributes to the perception of us being a hospitable nation. Nonetheless, there are occasionally misconceptions derived from TV series, like the idea that the Philippines is a refuge for individuals facing financial difficulties in Korea.
Filipino 'E'	When Korean media mentions the Philippines, they portray the country in both positive and negative ways. Negatively, it is shown as a 'crime den,' often with images of a nation with criminals and high rate of criminality. Positively, a country of beautiful beaches and natural sceneries.
Filipino 'J'	I have watched numerous films where the Philippines is mentioned, and certain phrases consistently stand out: 'money laundering,' 'escaping,' 'visa-free,' and 'blue-collar jobs.' The media serves as a potent instrument for projecting Korea in a positive light, but it should ideally be a mutually beneficial, two-way process. Presently, there is a greater presence of Korean content in the Philippines compared to Philippine content in Korea.
Filipino 'R'	The depictions are somehow inaccurate because these representations are limited to being 'just a backstory' and therefore, it mostly reflects how the Filipino culture is usually discussed in a 'hearsay' manner.

In the collective opinion of these Filipino youth, the participants asserted that Korea presents the Philippines as a destination for "good tourism, attractive travel sites, and a great place to visit," but does not necessarily highlight the "goodness of its people". They argue that Filipino culture has numerous positive aspects, such as strong family bonds and a commendable work ethic, which Koreans can relate to. However, the Korean film industry chooses to focus on the negative aspects, which can have a more significant impact on storytelling, rather than showcasing the positive side. They firmly advocated, "We are more than that."

Furthermore, it was also said to be 'regrettable' that the 'war relations,' which represent one of the warmest connections the Philippines has, are absent in these portrayals. This aspect is seen as potentially 'moving' for Koreans to learn about the 'self-sacrifice' that has forged a profound bond between Filipinos and Koreans, going beyond merely depicting the Philippines as a 'tourism market.'

In the realm of Korean media portrayal of the Philippines, some images also spotlight human trafficking, which can create a misleading perception of the country, or even the Filipino women, as being 'cheap'. However, according to the Filipino participants, Filipino representation

in Korean media is **not as negative as one might expect**. This observation suggests that the current manner in how the Philippines is depicted in Korean media, as perceived by Filipino young adults, does not significantly sway their opinions and attitudes towards Korea and Philippine-Korea cooperation (H3). They note that smaller-screen formats, such as TV dramas, frequently portray the Philippines as a 'small nation' known for its proficiency in English, where one can enjoy a comfortable life without high living expenses. In contrast, films tend to delve into more controversial aspects of Philippine society. While it cannot be argued that these portrayals are entirely 'inaccurate,' they are often deemed as not 'comprehensive' enough.

Conclusion

The in-depth examination of the reception of Philippine portrayals in Korean media by Korean youth and the effects of these depictions on Filipino attitudes towards Korea reveals a nuanced landscape of cross-cultural perceptions and media influence.

In the case of Korean youth, regardless of the exposure to different media treatments, participants commonly acknowledged that Korean media played a pivotal role in shaping their perceptions. This suggests the profound influence media holds in shaping cross-cultural perspectives among Korean youth. A striking finding was the emphasis placed by Korean youth on the importance of balanced portrayals. They advocated for information that avoids extremes, stressing that a balanced approach fosters open-mindedness and enhances prospects for cooperation.

On the other side of the spectrum, the Filipino people have always had a sense of 'Kababayan' (countryman) pride, where opportunities for exposure to fellow Filipinos are celebrated. Even though these depictions often highlight the negative aspects of society and are sensationalized, they generally do not have a detrimental impact on how Filipinos view Korean society.

Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that this does not mean there is no potential for these negative portrayals to strain Philippine-Korea relations in the future. In 2020, numerous Filipino tweets expressed sentiments like, "I am much more willing to put down my light stick and proudly wave our Philippine flag," in response to an unforeseen issue between the two nations. The "light stick" symbolizes the support and affection of *Hallyu* fans for various Korean personalities, and this

viral phrase signaled the resurgence of nationalist sentiments among the Filipino people.

There is a clear need for future discussions to strike the 'right balance' in these representations and for the Philippines to shape its own narrative. Establishing creative hubs, such as a Department of Culture, Sports, and Tourism within the Philippine government, that can lead and foster future collaborations with foreign media to improve Filipino representation should be a top priority. It is also important to recognize the evolving preferences and interests of viewers, particularly the desire of the new generation of Filipinos to shift how they want to be portrayed. This differs from the traditional perspective of the older generation, which often aligns with the approach the government envisions. Adapting to these changing times and audience expectations is crucial for effective storytelling and representation of Filipino culture.

Conveying Filipino narratives within the dynamic world of Korean cinema and television often incorporates elements of fiction. Media literacy must be learned and cultivated in order to critically assess and receive each message, regardless of its tone—be it positive or negative—in the ever-expanding mass media landscape of the world.

References

Almo, N. (2011). Korean actress Lee Da Hae apologizes to Filipinos for allegedly mocking our English accent. *PEP.ph*. https://www.pep.ph/lifestyle/23728/korean-actress-lee-da-hae-apologizes-to-filipinos-for-allegedly-mocking-our-english-accent

Ardèvol-Abreu, A., & De Zúñiga, H. G. (2016). Effects of editorial media bias perception and media trust on the use of traditional, citizen, and social media news. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 94(3), 703–724. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077699016654684

ASEAN-Korea Centre. (2022). *2022 Survey on Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youths.* https://www.aseankorea.org/eng/Resources/publication.asp

Bélanger, D., Lee, H. K., & Wang, H. (2010). Ethnic diversity and statistics in East Asia: 'foreign brides' surveys in Taiwan and South Korea. *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 33(6), 1108–1130. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870903427507

Cantor, N., & Mischel, W. (1979). Prototypes in person perception. In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (pp. 3–52). https://doi.org/10.1016/s0065-2601(08)60258-0

Chan, A. (2007). Guiding Public Opinion through Social Agenda-Setting: China's media policy since the 1990s. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 16(53), 547–559. https://doi.org/10.1080/10670560701562267

Choi, S. (Director). (2018). *My ID is Gangnam Beauty.*

Entman, R. (1992). *Blacks in the News: Television, modern racism and cultural change.* https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:144769531

Esses, V. M., Haddock, G., & Zanna, M. P. (1993). Values, Stereotypes, and Emotions as Determinants of Intergroup Attitudes**Editor's Note: This chapter was selected as the 1992 winner of the Otto Klineberg Intercultural and International Relations Award, given by the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. In making its selection, the award committee cited the chapter for offering a "substantial advance in our understanding of basic psychological processes underlying racism, stereotyping, and prejudice". In *Elsevier eBooks* (pp. 137–166). https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-08-088579-7.50011-9

Hilton, J. L., & Von Hippel, F. (1996). STEREOTYPES. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 47(1), 237–271. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.47.1.237

Hurwitz, J., & Peffley, M. (1997). Public Perceptions of Race and Crime: The role of Racial Stereotypes. *American Journal of Political Science,* 41(2), 375. https://doi.org/10.2307/2111769

Jun, J. (2023). Korea aims to attract 300,000 foreign students by 2027. *Koreatimes.* https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2023/08/113_357173.html

Kang, Y. (Director). (2022). *Big Bet.* Walt Disney Company Korea.

KBS World TV. (2022, February 12). *Battle Trip #9 KBS WORLD TV legend program requested by fans | KBS WORLD TV* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rk0L4JSZ2FQ

Kim, M. (2010). Gender and international marriage migration. *Sociology Compass*, 4(9), 718–731. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9020.2010.00314.x

Kim-Bossard, M. (2018, season-03). *Challenging homogeneity in contemporary Korean: immigrant women, immigrant laborers, and multicultural families - Association for Asian Studies.* Association for Asian Studies. https://www.asianstudies.org/publications/eaa/archives/challenging-homogeneity-in-contemporary-korea-immigrant-women-immigrant-laborers-and-multicultural-families/

Ko, J. (2020, September 13). *Racist remarks on Filipinos stir anger on social media -* The Korea Herald. *The Korea Herald.* https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20200913000036

Ko, J. (2021, September 22). *[Us and Them] I'm Korean, You're Not, and There's a Fine Line You.* Stanford Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. https://fsi.stanford.edu/news/us-and-them-i%E2%80%99m-korean-you%E2%80%99re-not-and-there%E2%80%99s-fine-line-you-can%E2%80%99t-cross

Ko, J. (2023). Politics of Asian Orientalism: Representation of Asian migrant others in Korean TV shows. *Dongseo Bi'gyo Munhag Jeo'neol,* 64, 85–115. https://doi.org/10.29324/jewcl.2023.6.64.85

Kohring, M., & Matthes, J. (2007). Trust in news media. *Communication Research*, 34(2), 231–252. https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650206298071

Koreaboo. (2020, July 15). *Here's What Koreans Think Of When They Hear The Word "Philippines" - Koreaboo.* https://www.koreaboo.com/stories/first-koreans-think-hear-word-philippines/

Korean Culture and Information Service (KOCIS). (n.d.). *Hallyu (Korean Wave) : Korea.net : The official website of the Republic of Korea.* Copyright(C) 1999-2016 KOCIS. All Rights Reserved. https://www.korea.net/AboutKorea/Culture-and-the-Arts/Hallyu

Lasco, G. (2021, July 9). Rethinking *'Pinoy pride' | Inquirer Opinio*n. INQUIRER.net. https://opinion.inquirer.net/141882/rethinking-pinoy-pride

Lee, M. (2006). Invisibility and temporary residence status of Filipino workers in South Korea. *Journal for Cultural Research*, 10(2), 159–172. https://doi.org/10.1080/14797580600625387

Lim, T. (2010). Rethinking Belongingness in Korea: Transnational Migration, "Migrant Marriages" and the Politics of Multiculturalism. Pacific Affairs, 83(1), 51–71. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25698396

Malabanan, J. C. E., Vega, A. D., Gono, L. T., & Pantoja, E. (2022). Translating Hallyu Phenomenon and its Underlying Impact in the Purchasing Intentions of Filipinos. *Journal of Business and Management Studies*, 4(1), 157–166. https://doi.org/10.32996/jbms.2022.4.1.19

McLeod, D. M., Wise, D. A., & Perryman, M. (2017). Thinking about the media: A review of theory and research on media perceptions, media effects perceptions, and their consequences. *Review of Communication Research*, 5, 35–83. https://doi.org/10.12840/issn.2255-4165.2017.05.01.013

Netflix, & Hwang, D. (2021). *Squid Game.*

Oh, H. J., Park, J., & Wanta, W. (2011). Exploring factors in the hostile media perception: partisanship, electoral engagement, and media use patterns. Journalism & Mass *Communication Quarterly*, 88(1), 40–54. https://doi.org/10.1177/107769901108800103

Park, H. (Director). (2023, June 21). *The Childe.* Next Entertainment World.

Park, M. Y. (2016). Resisting linguistic and ethnic marginalization: voices of Southeast Asian marriage-migrant women in Korea. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 17(2), 118–134. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2016.1165240

Pettinico, G. (n.d.). Crime and Punishment: America Changes its Mind. *The Public Perspective: A Roper Center Review of Public Opinion and Polling*, 5, 28–32.

Running Man (episode 651). (2023, April 23). SBS. https://programs.sbs.co.kr/enter/runningman/main

Sadaf, A. (2011). Public perception of media role. *ResearchGate*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259090925_Public_Perception_of_Media_Role

Severin, W. J., & Tankard, J. W. (2001). *Communication theories: Origins, Methods, and Uses in the Mass Media*. Addison-Wesley Longman.

Shin, W. (Director). (2018). *Where Stars Land*. SBS.

Siapno, J. (2011). Representations of Southeast Asians in Korean cinema and other media. *ResearchGate*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/345948677_Representations_of_Southeast_Asians_in_Korean_cinema_and_other_media

South Korea: Kopino family wins paternity suit for first time. (2014, June 26). The Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/item/global-legal-monitor/2014-06-26/south-korea-kopino-family-wins-paternity-suit-for-first-time/

Survey: S. Koreans Have Lowest Trust in Business, Media among 28 Countries. (2023). KBS World. https://world.kbs.co.kr/service/news_view.htm?lang=e&Seq_Code=175206

The discursive construction of discrimination: the representation of ethnic diversity in the Korean public service broadcasting news - LSE Theses Online. (n.d.). http://etheses.lse.ac.uk/id/eprint/344

Tsfati, Y., & Cohen, J. (2012). Perceptions of media and media effects: *The International Encyclopedia of Media Studies.* https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444361506.wbiems995

Undercover. (2021). JTBC.

Updarirang. (2023, May 13). *Main Character Moments? Screaming Pinoy pride amid the Korean wave.* UP Arirang. https://updarirang.wordpress.com/2023/05/11/main-character-moments-screaming-pinoy-pride-amid-the-hallyu-wave/?fbclid=IwAR2tr_bPtthuj-Tg1kUJQquLhB9xZAh3jPt2az_UQbpSuolL2kKOZnif828

West, R. L., & Turner, L. H. (2007). *Introducing communication Theory: Analysis and Application.* McGraw-Hill Companies.

[WHY] Could foreign nannies boost Korea's ultra-low birthrate? (2023, June 17). https://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/2023/06/17/why/WHY-foreign-nannies-babysitters/20230617070008685.html

Yi, W. (2023). Foreigners offset Korea's steep population decline. *Koreatimes.* https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/biz/2023/08/602_355991.html

지예은. (2017, June 14). Sandara Park named ambassador for Korea-Philippines' relations - The Korea Herald. *The Korea Herald.* https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20170614000959

체류외국인. (n.d.). 경기도 과천시 관문로 위치. 전자민원, 준법 운동, 여성포럼, 인권 광장. https://www.moj.go.kr/moj/2412/subview.do

SPECIAL
MENTION
AWARD

Thuc Anh Ta
VIETNAM

*The Role of the Entertainment
Industry in Bridging the
Perception Gap between
Korean and ASEAN Youth*

The Role of the Entertainment Industry in Bridging the Perception Gap between Korean and ASEAN Youth

Thuc Anh Ta
Graduate School of International Studies (GSIS),
Seoul National University

Abstract

In accordance with the results of the 2021 Survey on Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youth, this study is designed to investigate the role of the entertainment industry in narrowing down the perception gap between Korean and ASEAN youth. This study incorporates the theoretical framework of 'soft power', and further distinguishes between the two concepts 'cultural diplomacy' and 'cultural relations' when discussing about the deployment of cultural resources in soft-power strategy. After collecting data on the exchanges in media and entertainment content between Korea and ASEAN, this study manages to find a significant trade imbalance between the two parties. The impact of this imbalance is then analyzed based on two key ideas: (1) a strong deployment of 'cultural diplomacy' by Korea in ASEAN, and (2) the disproportional 'cultural relations' between Korea and ASEAN. A few case studies are also included to the analysis to show that the entertainment industry has not been able to facilitate the moderation of perception gap between Korean and ASEAN youth. Some policy recommendations are made to help extend the future capacity of the entertainment industry in dealing with this issue.

Introduction

Purpose of the Study

After more than 30 years of establishing diplomatic relationship, Korea and ASEAN have become important partners. Nevertheless, past studies have suggested that there is an existing gap in bilateral exchange between the two parties at the people-to-people level. According to the 2021 Survey on Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youth released by the ASEAN – Korean Centre (AKC), ASEAN youth has showcased a positively varied view on Korea, reflecting upon Korea's popular culture and technology advancement. Conversely, Korean youth has had mixed perceptions on ASEAN, recognizing these countries as merely popular tourist destinations but poor countries (ASEAN Korea Centre [AKC], 2022). Chung (2023) identified the misportrayal of ASEAN in Korean media as the main cause for the perception gap between Korean and ASEAN youth, but highlighted that the entertainment sector can play an important role in narrowing down this gap. Those findings lead this study to further investigate the role of the entertainment industry in bridging the perception gap between Korean and ASEAN youth.

Significance of the Study

Korean culture has become a crucial asset that helps increase its influence in the global affairs. According to the US News Best Countries rankings in 2022, Korea ranked 7th in the Cultural Influence sub-category, which determines the popularity of a country arts, fashion and entertainment. When taken account for the degree cultural significance in terms of entertainment, specifically, Korea ranked 13rd (Table 1). These rankings have showcased the success of Korea in exporting its media and entertainment contents, widely known as Hallyu or the Korean Wave, to the world. While it is important to recognize the achievements of Korea in promoting its arts and culture, it is also necessary to examine the significance of Korea's cultural diplomacy in reinforcing its influence on other countries.

In contrast, since ASEAN includes countries with different ethnics and cultures, the achievements of each country's media and entertainment contents vary greatly (Table 1). Out of the 10 ASEAN countries, Thailand ranked 10th for the degree of cultural significance in terms of entertainment, which was even higher than the ranking of South Korea. In fact, Mr. Chul-gun Cheong, CEO of the Korea Joongang Daily, referred to the rise of Thai contents on Netflix to express his positive view on the role of over-the-top (OTT) media platforms in exporting Korean and ASEAN film, drama and broadcast contents to its counterpart and therefore gradually balancing the perception gaps

among young people (Chung, 2023). Nevertheless, it would be difficult to determine the achievements or potentials of ASEAN cultural exports based on the success of one single country. In this regard, it is necessary that more in-depth studies on the bilateral exchanges of media and entertainment contents between each member country of ASEAN and Korea be examined. Hence, this study would provide some meaningful insights on the socio-cultural relations between Korea and ASEAN, and would also be helpful to policymakers in reviewing their people-to-people diplomacies.

Table 1.
2022 Rankings of Korea and ASEAN countries in terms of Cultural Influence
Source: US News (2022)

Country Name	Ranking in Cultural Influence	Ranking in Cultural Significance in terms of Entertainment
Cambodia	64	61
Brunei	-	-
Indonesia	45	29
Korea	7	13
Laos	-	-
Malaysia	40	33
Myanmar	74	71
Philippines	44	30
Singapore	18	19
Thailand	24	10
Vietnam	54	54

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

The entertainment industry includes a variety of categories, ranging from film, radio, television to music, print and game. In general, entertainment content is a form of popular or mass culture. This is because not only would it provide people with creative and leisure experiences, but it also can produce prevailing practices, beliefs, and norms in a specific society at a certain time. The role of culture in constructing people-to-people as well as state-to-state interactions has often been explained and interpreted through the theory of soft power. The term "soft power" was first coined by Joseph Nye in the early 1990s; and refers to a country's ability to attract the interests of others and then exert its influence on their behaviors (Nye, 2004).

Soft power contrasts with hard power, which concentrates on

using military interference, diplomatic threats and economic barriers to make other countries act in one's interests (Gilboa, 2008). As resources utilized for hard and soft power strategies substantially differ from each other, their outcomes are also peculiar. While soft power leads to cooperation, hard power results in coercion (Gilboa, 2008; Nye, 2008). Despite these differences, the concepts of hard and soft power are closely related to each other, with them being two furthest ends of a continuum that depicts the instruments that would help a country exploit its resources and achieve its desired outcomes. These instruments would include coercion, inducement, agenda-setting, and attraction (Smith-Windsor, 2000). According to Nye (2008), the earliest forms of generating soft power through cultural resources could be found in the World War I, in which the French government attempted to restore its status through the promotion of its language and literature after being defeated by the Prussian.

Along with culture, political values and foreign policies are the other two fundamental resources that help raise a country's attractiveness (Nye, 2004, 2008). These resources would then be brought into use through public diplomacy, a prominent instrument that helps a government communicate and appeal itself to the public of foreign countries. When overviewing the history of public diplomacy, Nye (2008) pointed out that the United States (US) only began to exercise public diplomacy in the late 1910s, which made it rather a latecomer in the field comparing to European countries. Nevertheless, the concept of soft power and its application to the real-world policy-making process became widely recognized as the US seized and maintained its great power status in international affairs. During the Cold War period, soft power was believed play an important role in the ideological competition between the US and the Soviet Union (Gilboa, 2008; Nye, 2008).

However, several scholars have questioned the conceptual validity and functional effectiveness of the conventional soft power theory. Fan (2008) found Nye's categorization of the three sources of soft power rather unclear; because a country's foreign policies cannot be separated from its exercise of hard power, and a country's political values are incorporated within its socio-cultural ideologies. Furthermore, Smith-Windsor (2000) found that the theoretical distinction between hard and soft power was rather confusing when being applied to cases other than the US; and even created intellectual disorder among Canadian scholars and policymakers. Fan (2008) shared a similar idea, when discussing about the relativity among the tools of hard and soft power. In particular, while economic power is relatively 'softer' than military power, economic power is relatively 'harder' than cultural influence. In other words, since

there is no translucent between hard power and soft power, one would find it difficult to measure and assess the effectiveness of soft power. Fan (2008) also highlighted the fact that the degree of attractiveness, which would help determine a country's scope of soft power, greatly depends upon the public perception of the other countries. One example is when the US gradually lost its appeal towards European countries after the end of the Cold War; because their common enemy, the Soviet Union, no longer existed.

These critics led to attempts to improve the practice of soft power in contemporary global politics through different ways. The concept of "smart power" was newly established by Nye in 2003 to address the misunderstanding that soft power can be effective on its own term in foreign policy (Nye, 2009). According to Armitage and Nye (2007), smart power strategy requires combining the resources of hard and soft power in an effective manner. The importance of smart power strategy was specifically highlighted in the context that the Bush administration's exploitation of hard power in national security and foreign policies has done great harm to the US' status in world politics (Nye, 2009; Wilson, 2008). As a result, advocates of smart power strategy believe that the US needs to invest in other non-military assets that can complement its military strength and maintain its position in global scene (Wilson, 2008). In fact, Armitage and Nye (2007) identified five key areas of soft power in the US' smart power strategy: alliances, partnerships and institutions; global development; public diplomacy; economic integration; technology and innovation.

Deployment of Cultural Resources in Soft Power Strategy

When studying and evaluating the use of cultural resources in soft power strategy, previous academic works have distinguished between 'cultural diplomacy' and 'cultural relations'. Cultural diplomacy is often considered a subset of public diplomacy; and it primarily deals with high culture, or cultural elements that represent a nation's interests (McPherson et al., 2017). It does not necessarily refer to bilateral exchanges of culture at the state level, but rather a country's unilateral promotion of its cultural assets to the rest of the world (Cummings, 2003). As a result, cultural diplomacy is often involved with state-funded cultural and arts programs or activities, which can be observed at organizations such as the British Council or Italian Cultural Institute nowadays (Cull, 2008). However, just like public diplomacy, there has been a substantial shift of attitude towards cultural diplomacy after the end of the Cold War. Many countries, including the US, have become less inclined to invest in cultural and art

programs; because they require great finance, time and human resources, but it is rather difficult to measure their effectiveness. (Grincheva, 2010; McPherson et al., 2017). Furthermore, cultural diplomacy activities need to quickly adapt themselves to digital transformation and technology advancement, which have brought about incredible changes in the way people communicate with each other (McPherson et al., 2017).

In contrast, cultural relations emphasize on people-to-people transnational interactions and intercultural exchanges for the sake of mutual understanding and benefits (McPherson et al., 2017). Accordingly, one of the key principles that helps distinguish between cultural relations and cultural diplomacy and ensures the credibility of cultural relations is the absence of governmental agencies with any political intentions (McPherson et al., 2017; Rivera, 2015). Other characteristics that can differentiate cultural relations with cultural diplomacy include long-term commitment in two-way conversations and interactions, as well as building relationships based on mutuality, trust and honesty (River, 2015). Nevertheless, nowadays, it has become rather difficult to define the line of distinction between cultural diplomacy and cultural relations. When reviewing the policies of nine different governments, Wyszomirski et al. (2003) found that these two terms have often been used interchangeably (McPherson et al., 2017). Furthermore, the case of the British Council, a state-funded organization who has been claiming to be carry out activities in the field of 'cultural relations', specifically showcased how the realms of cultural diplomacy and cultural relations has been overlapping extensively (Rivera, 2015).

Main Arguments

Research Question
As previously discussed, this study is designed to examine the role of the entertainment industry in narrowing down the perception gap between Korean and ASEAN youth. Therefore, the question of this study is as follows:

> *What is the role of the entertainment industry in bridging the perception gap between Korean and ASEAN youth?*

Research Hypothesis

As previously mentioned, Mr. Chul-gun Cheong, CEO of the Korea Joongang Daily, believed that over-the-top (OTT) media platforms, such as Netflix, would help enhance the exchanges of Korean and ASEAN entertainment contents and gradually bridge the gap in perceptions among young adults. (Chung, 2023). However, there are cases in which Hallyu products have received negative reactions from ASEAN young audience.

In fact, when studying about the Korean Wave, Lee (2009) pointed out that even though Korea is often recognized as a successful case of soft power strategy, the anti-Korean wave sentiment have emerged in some countries, such as Japan, China and Taiwan, due to the belief that that there was reciprocal imbalance in cultural exchanges between Korea and the recipient countries. This means that the use of media and entertainment in cross-country cultural exchanges can bring about counter-effects, especially when there is a noticeable gap among countries. Hence, the main argument of this study is as follows:

Exchanges between Korea and ASEAN in the entertainment industry have not facilitated the process of bridging the perception gap between Korean and ASEAN youth

Research Design

Research Methodology

The role of culture in understanding international relations has often been studied with soft power theory. Hence, soft power theory would be the main analytic framework of this study. This study also employs the two terms 'cultural diplomacy' and 'cultural relations' to analyze the research topic in term of using cultural factors in empowering a country's soft power.

Measurement and Data

This study would combine qualitative and quantitative data analysis to investigate two key aspects. First, a comprehensive review on cultural exchanges between Korean and ASEAN would be provided. In particular, import and export data of media and entertainment contents between Korea and ASEAN would be collected from the Korean Statistical Information Service (KOSIS). Analysis of these statistics would then lead to further qualitative studies to understand the key characteristics of the exchanges between Korea and ASEAN

in the entertainment industry, and their impact on Korean and ASEAN youth in perceiving each other. Case studies would be incorporated to examine the diverging patterns of socio-cultural interactions between Korea and ASEAN countries.

Findings and Analyses

Overview of Exchanges in Media and Entertainment between Korea and ASEAN

Socio-cultural exchange has been an important pillar in the relationship between Korea and ASEAN countries. With the spread of the Korean Wave since the late 1990s, Southeast Asian countries have grown to become a major recipient of Korean media and entertainment contents. Media and entertainment contents include 10 categories: publishing, comic, music, film, game, animation, broadcast, character, to knowledge information and content solution. KOSIS has listed the top 5 regions for both import and export of Korean content industry as follow: Europe, Greater China (including mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan), North America and Southeast Asia. In 2021, Southeast Asia accounts for 13.3% of the total values of Korea's exported contents, ranking fourth in the top 5 recipient regions (Figure 1). In the same period, however, Southeast Asia only accounts for 6.2% of the total value and ranks last in the top 5 exporters (Figure 2).

Figure 1.
Export value of Korean media and entertainment industry by regions in 2021
(unit: %)

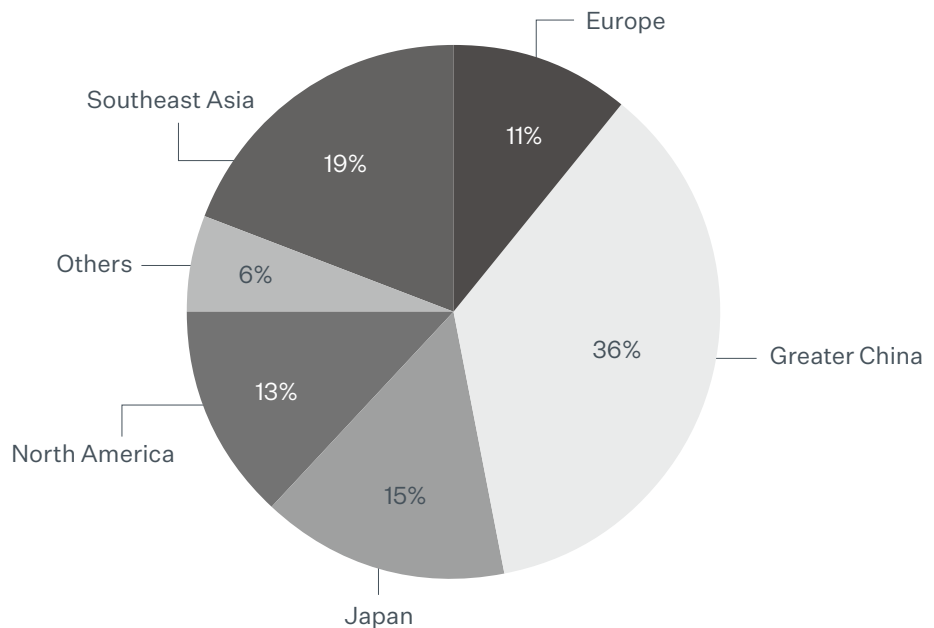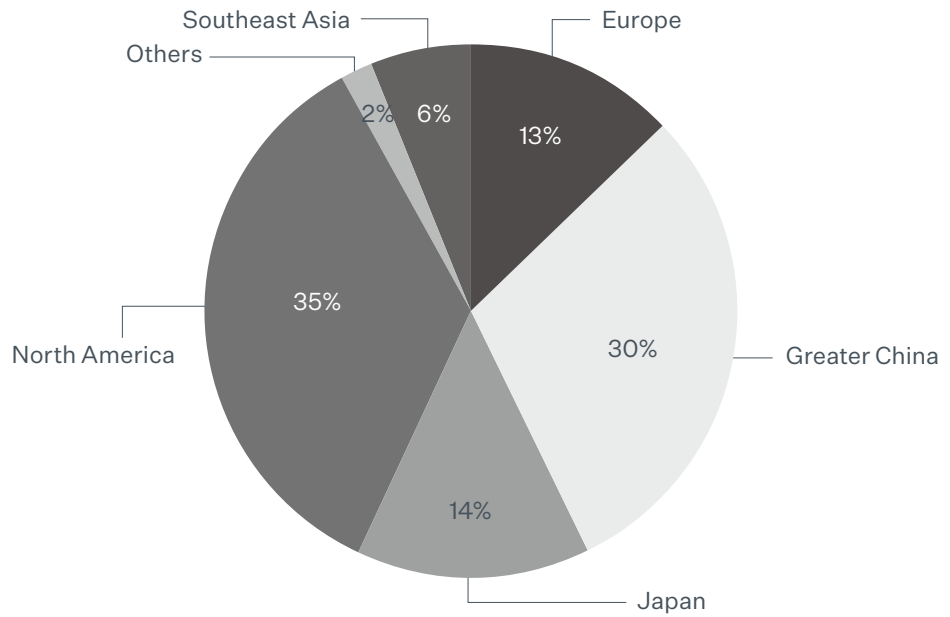Data Source: Korean Statistical Information Service (KOSIS)

Figure 2.
Import value of Korean media and entertainment industry by regions in 2021
(unit: %)

Data Source: Korean Statistical Information Service (KOSIS)

In term of value, the export volume of Korean contents to other countries greatly exceed the import volume of foreign contents to Korea. According to statistics provided by KOSIS, in 2021, the total export volume of Korean contents reached 11,813,577 thousand USD; while the import volume of foreign contents to Korea was 861,899 thousand USD. This indicates the success of Korean cultural economy at the global level. However, in the perspective of other countries, their exchanges in media and entertainment contents with Korea are all noticeably uneven. For Southeast Asia specifically, it has recorded a trade imbalance of 2,147,044 thousand USD with Korea in the content industry in 2021 (Figure 3). This is the highest trade imbalance among the top 5 regions of import and export in Korean content industry.

Figure 3.
Total import and export value of Korean contents with Southeast Asian from 2017 to 2021
(unit: thousand USD)*

Data Source: Korean Statistical Information Service (KOSIS)
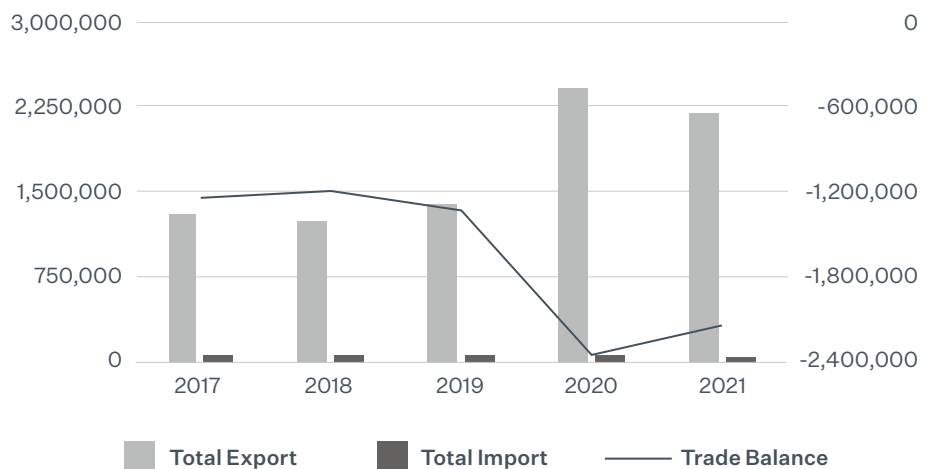
*The trade balance value is calculated based on Southeast Asia's perspective (by subtracting the total export volume from the total import volume provided by KOSIS)

In term of categories, game has the highest export volume from Korea to Southeast Asia (1,477,546 thousand USD), while film has the lowest volume (5,017 thousand USD) in 2021. Conversely, publishing has the highest import volume from Southeast Asia to Korea (30,257 thousand USD), while film has the lowest volume (0 thousand USD) in 2021 (Figure 4). According to statistics of KOSIS, there has been no film imported from Southeast Asia to Korea in the period of 2017-2021.

Figure 4.
Import and export value of Korean contents with Southeast Asian by categories in 2021
(unit: thousand USD)

Data Source: Korean Statistical Information Service (KOSIS)
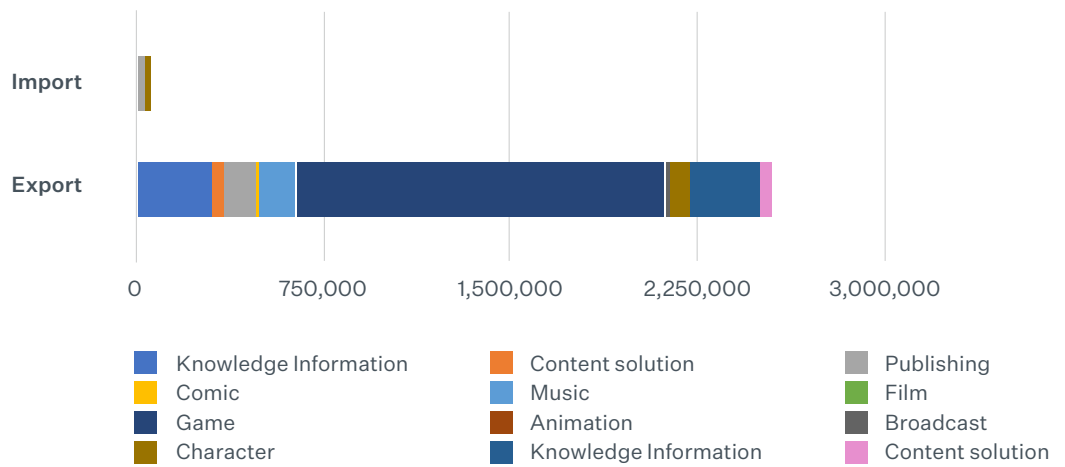
These findings have indicated that Korea and ASEAN are important trading partners in socio-cultural terms with each other, but there is a noticeable trade imbalance. While Korean media and entertainment contents are widely available among ASEAN countries, the presence of ASEAN media and entertainment contents in Korea is rather moderate. In this regard, it can be viewed that Korea managed to establish a strong "cultural diplomacy" in ASEAN, or a unilateral promotion of the former's cultural heritages. On the other hand, the "cultural relations" between Korea and ASEAN, which aim to promote mutual understanding and benefits among the involving parties, is rather disproportional.

**The Impact of the Strong Deployment of
"Cultural Diplomacy" by Korea in ASEAN**
When looking at the import and export statistics of media and entertainment contents between Korea and Southeast Asia, the popularity of Korean contents in Southeast Asia has showcased Korea's success in enforcing its "cultural diplomacy." Nevertheless, this success can also bring about some counterproductive effects. As previously discussed, according to Fan (2008), the effectiveness

of a country's soft-power strategy highly depends on the public perceptions of the recipient countries. Hence, as a key pillar of Korean cultural diplomacy, Hallyu or the Korean Wave has to quickly grasp changes in values and views of ASEAN people, especially the youth.

However, according to Ainslie et al. (2017), as Hallyu becomes increasingly popular in Southeast Asia, it has gradually lost its relevance to several consumers who used to find Hallyu appealing due to its uniqueness. When conducting interviews with over 70 consumers in the age range of 17-50 from Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand, the authors specifically recognized age as an important factor in the consumption pattern of Hallyu products, as many respondents expressed their loss of interests in Korean media and entertainment contents as they grew older. These three Southeast Asian countries also have evolving cultural industries that can grasp the fast-changing consumption trends intrigued by the growing middle classes. This means that the attractiveness of Hallyu products is rather unsustainable, as they are lack dynamic and creative characteristics and therefore can easily be replaced by domestic contents (Ainslie et at., 2017)

In fact, one potential competitor of Hallyu products in ASEAN would be Thai media and entertainment contents, which have been growing at a considerably fast pace in recent years and even outranked Korea in the rankings of cultural significance in the entertainment sector in the 2022 rankings of the US News. Thai contents' innovative visions and ability to embrace different cultural values are believed to be some of the key characteristics that help them gain global recognitions (Thai digital content, 2022). Considering this with the fact that ASEAN has been actively promoting regional integration, the entertainment industry of Thailand is likely to have a strong foothold among ASEAN countries and be able to compete with that of Korea in terms of global recognition and influence. An example of Thai contents' global success is the mystery thriller series "Girl from Nowhere", whose second season managed to rank first on Netflix in Thailand, Vietnam and Philippines, and also in the top 10 on Netflix in Brazil (Thai digital content, 2022).

Furthermore, Ainslie et al. (2017) pointed out the high potentials of backlash on Hallyu in Southeast Asia when being overly embedded Korea's soft-power strategy. It has been globally recognized that the Korean government has been aggressively utilizing Hallyu products to express its political and economic interests. According to Ainslie et al. (2017), as the country becomes more aggressive in promoting itself as perfect or superior to others through media and entertainment

contents, its cultural diplomacy can be negatively viewed among Southeast Asian people as a practice of "cultural imperialism". The authors also highlighted that the pessimistic attitudes among the respondents would become even greater when they realized a significant gap between the fantasy created by Hallyu contents and the reality when getting into contact with Korea through tourism, transnational marriage and other diasporic activities.

In fact, this alarming issue regarding the gap between fantasizing about Korea through Hallyu contents and actually living in Korea was also mentioned in the 2021 Survey on Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youth. The survey results showed that in 2021, social difficulties, such as prejudices and discriminations, have become a bigger issue for ASEAN youth living in Korea than in 2017 (AKC, 2022). In other words, a greater number of ASEAN youth have recognized the significant gap between the reality and the image of Korea being an open and nondiscriminatory society in Hallyu products. As social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram and Tiktok, are widely used among ASEAN youth, the ones living in Korea can easily convey this fact through these platforms and therefore strengthen the anti-Hallyu sentiments in ASEAN. In this regard, this particular topic is popular among not only Southeast Asian youth, but also other young people of color when creating contents regarding their experiences studying, working and living in Korea.

The Impact of the Disproportionate "Cultural Relations" between Korea and ASEAN

Along with the strong "cultural diplomacy" established by Korea in ASEAN, the "cultural relations" between the two parties are rather disproportionate. The data from KOSIS suggests that exchanges between Korean and ASEAN in entertainment are noticeably imbalanced. Chung (2023) mentioned that the rise of OTT platforms can enhance the imports of contents from ASEAN and therefore bridge the perception gap between Korea and ASEAN youth. Nevertheless, considering the dominance of domestic contents, it is necessary to initially improve the portrayal of ASEAN in Korean contents. The 2021 Survey on Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youth has already highlighted that many Korean youth still perceives ASEAN as a region comprising underdeveloped countries, due to the misportrayal of Southeast Asian people in Korean mainstream media. This can be linked back to Ainslie et al. (2017)'s statement that Korea has been intentionally promoting itself as superior to its neighbor countries.

While this misportrayal has a negative impact on Korean youth' perception of ASEAN, it can also lead to potential backlashes among ASEAN youth towards Hallyu contents.

One example of this issue is the negative reactions of Indonesian K-pop fans towards a K-drama called "The Racket Boys" aired in 2021. The drama series intentionally described the Indonesian badminton team as not only ill-mannered but also willing to do everything to win the Korean team it the international competition (Indonesians Angered, 2021). This led many Indonesians to express their anger through their comments in the official Instagram accounts of its broadcast station, SBS (@sbsdrama.official and @sbsnow_insta); which included accusations of racism, and requests for SBS to stop showing contents or opinions that may hurt the image of Indonesia. Consequently, SBS released an official apology in the comment section of one of the posts on "The Racket Boys" on one of its Instagram accounts, @sbsnow_insta (Indonesians Angered, 2021).

While the case of Indonesia only drew the public's attention, the two following cases in Vietnam are more serious as the negative responses came from both the government and the public. First, "The Roundup", the sequel to the 2017 film "The Outlaws" starring Ma Dong Seok, was banned in the Vietnamese market in 2022. Despite its domestic success, the film was not allowed to release in Vietnam; as the Vietnamese Film Department, an organization affiliated with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Vietnam, found the film to include an excessive number of violent scenes. Aside from this official reason, the Korea Herald also mentioned an industry insider's opinion, stating that the ban may result from the film's portrayal of Ho Chi Minh city as a lawless city (Lee, 2022). In fact, according to the Dao (2022), Vietnamese citizens expressed their approval over the government's decision regarding this film across different online platforms on K-contents or film reviews, and heavily criticized the film for spreading a groundlessly negative image of Ho Chi Minh city.

Second, in the same year, the Vietnamese government requested Netflix to remove a K-drama called "Little Women" from the Vietnamese platform. The Authority of Broadcasting and Electronic Information (ABEI) claimed that the series violated Vietnam's Law on the Press and Law on Cinema due to its incorrection depiction of the Vietnam War (Vu, 2022). Furthermore, according to Linh To et al. (2022), after the official statement was made by the government, the misinterpretations included in this series received great backlashes from the Vietnamese audience. Ainslie et al. (2017) highlighted the difference between the anti-Hallyu sentiment in Southeast Asia with

that in Japan and China, claiming that the later resulted from historical issues while the former mostly did not. However, the case of "Little Women" being banned in Vietnam has showcased that anti-Hallyu sentiments arising from historical issues can also take place in ASEAN. Overall, the fact that two outstanding Hallyu contents were banned or removed in the same year in Vietnam implies that there has been a great shift in the public perception of Hallyu contents in Vietnam, especially among the youth. Vietnamese youth seem to have become more aware of historical and political issues, and more selective on their consumption choice of foreign media and entertainment contents.

Conclusion

Key Findings

With the aim to examine the role of the entertainment industry in bridging the perception gap between Korean and ASEAN youth, this study first identifies the concept of "soft power" as its core theoretical framework; and further addresses the deployment of cultural resources in soft-power strategy, by distinguishing between the two terms: "cultural diplomacy" and "cultural relations". This study then considers both quantitative statistics and qualitative studies to answer its research question. In particular, the import and export data of the exchanges of media and entertainment contents between Korea and key trade partners shows a remarkable trade imbalance between Korea and Southeast Asian countries. This leads to further studies on the impact of two key issues: (1) a strong deployment of "cultural diplomacy" by Korea in ASEAN, and (2) the disproportionate "cultural relations" between Korean and ASEAN.

By incorporating different case studies along with previous literature, this study concludes that the entertainment industry has not been able to narrow down the gap of perception between Korean and ASEAN youth by itself. Even though Hallyu products are still widely accepted in ASEAN, their static nature and their high association with the Korean government's soft-power strategy can lead to backlashes that would diminish their attractiveness in the long-term. In contrast to the belief that the increasing availability of Thai contents on OTT platforms, such as Netflix; this study believes that the rise of Thai media and entertainment contents can pose a risk to the popularity of Korean contents in ASEAN. The gap between the fantasies created by Hallyu products and the real experiences of Korean culture and society also needs to be addressed to avoid escalating anti-Hallyu sentiment in ASEAN countries.

Instead of expecting more imports of contents from ASEAN to Korea, this study finds that it is more necessary to improve the issue of misportraying ASEAN culture and society in Korean mainstream media. This problem is critical because it would lead to not only further misunderstandings on ASEAN among Korean youth, but also adverse responses from ASEAN youth regarding the spread of Hallyu contents. Cases of backlash from Indonesian and Vietnamese audience to recent Korean films and dramas have shown the severity of this issue. Hence, the potentials of this industry in dealing with perception gap between Korean and ASEAN youth highly depend on improving not only the intensity of the exchanges in media and entertainment contents between Korea and ASEAN, but also the quality of the domestic contents in describing the culture and society of the foreign country of interest.

Policy Recommendations

Since popular culture has been deeply embedded into Korea's soft-power strategy, the Korean government should utilize this tool carefully to prevent counter effects that may widen the perception gap between Korean and ASEAN youth. The governments can cooperate with each other through organizations, such as the AKC, and create a forum that would combine promoting media and entertainment contents of ASEAN countries in Korea and introducing other aspects in their diverse culture and society. It would also be necessary that entertainment industry experts and insiders in Korea and ASEAN countries attend these events to widen their horizon on their counterparts' cultural heritages. The industry insiders can also discuss about future cooperation activities that can help enrich the number of exchanges between Korea and ASEAN in the entertainment industry, but also enhance the quality of the contents included.

Moreover, an exclusive exchange program between Korea and ASEAN youth in the theme of media and entertainment can be organized. First, they can share about some noticeable socio-cultural phenomena in their home countries and highlight some domestic media and entertainment contents that were able to convey these happenings. Second, they can be asked to share their opinions or perceptions on the counterpart countries and present some representative contents from those counties that manage to attract their attentions. Third, the gap between reality and creative contents should be addressed to identify the core issues in the misunderstandings in the perceptions of Korean and ASEAN youth. Fourth and finally, cross-border field trips can be incorporated, and Korea and ASEAN youth participants may be

asked to create their own digital contents that convey their experiences of the socio-cultural reality of their counterpart countries. Their self-made contents can also become valuable resources for the future exchanges in the entertainment industry between Korea and ASEAN. Through a variety of topics and activities, young people in Korea and ASEAN can gain more knowledge on each other and narrow down the gap of perception.

References

Ainslie, M. J., Lipura, S. D. & Lim, J. B.Y. (2017). Understanding the hallyu backlash in Southeast Asia: A case study of consumers in Thailand, Malaysia and Philippines."- *Kritika Kultura* 2017(28), 63-91.

Armitage, R. L. & Nye, J. S. (2007). *CSIS Commission on Smart Power: A Smarter, More Secure America*. Center for Strategic and International Studies. https://carnegieendowment.org/files/csissmartpowerreport.pdf

ASEAN Korea Centre (AKC). (2022). *2021 Survey on Mutual Perceptions of ASEAN and Korean Youth*. https://www.aseankorea.org/aseanZone/downloadFile2.asp?boa_filenum=5331

Cummings, M. C. (2003). *Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government: A Survey.* Center for Arts and Culture. https://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/MCCpaper.pdf

Cull, N. J. (2008). Public Diplomacy: Taxonomies and Histories. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616(1), 31-54

Chung, E. (2023, May 1). Hope in bridging the perception gap between young adults of Asean and Korea. *Korea Joongang Daily.* https://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/2023/05/01/national/diplomacy/korea-asean-kpop/20230501191936523.html

Dao, T. (2022, July 8). Dân mạng Việt ủng hộ cấm chiếu 'The Roundup' có Ma Dong Seok [Netizens support the ban of 'The Roundup' starring Ma Dong Seok]. *Thanh Nien News.* https://thanhnien.vn/dan-mang-viet-ung-ho-cam-chieu-the-roundup-co-ma-dong-seok-1851476039.htm

Fan, Y. (2008). Soft power: Power of attraction or confusion?. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* 4(2), 147-158.

Gilboa, E. (2008). Searching for a Theory of Public Diplomacy. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616(1), 55-77.

Grincheva, N. (2010). U.S. arts and cultural diplomacy: post-Cold War decline and the twenty first century debate. *The Journal of Arts Management,* Law & Society 40(3), 169-183. Indonesians Angered Over 'Unfair' Portrayal in K-drama 'Racket Boys'. (2021, June 17). Coconuts Jakarta. https://coconuts.co/jakarta/lifestyle/indonesians-angered-over-unfair-portrayal-in-k-drama-racket-boys/

Linh To, Thien Dieu & Mai Thuy. (2022, October 5). Vietnam asks Netflix to block South Korean TV drama 'Little Women' over history distortions. Tuoi Tre News. https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/ttnewsstyle/20221005/vietnam-asks-netflix-to-block-south-korean-tv-drama-little-women-over-history-distortions/69411.html

Lee, S. (2022, July 7). 'The Roundup' banned in Vietnam. *The Korea Herald*. https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20220707000814

Lee, G. (2009). A Soft Power Approach to the "Korean Wave". *The Review of Korean Studies* 12(2), 123-137.

McPherson, G., McGillivray, D., Mamattah, S., Cox, T. & Normann, K. (2017). *Arts, Cultural Relations and Soft Power: Developing an Evidence Base.* British Council. https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/arts_cultural_relations_final_report_for_british_council.pdf

Nye, J, S. (2004). *Soft power: the means to success in world politics.* (1st ed.). Public Affairs.

Nye, J. S. (2008). Public Diplomacy and Soft Power. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616(1), 94-109.

Nye, J. S. (2009). *Get Smart: Combining Hard and Soft Power.* Foreign Affairs 88(4), 160-163.

Rivera, T. (2015). *Distinguishing Cultural Relations From Cultural Diplomacy: The British Council's Relationship With Her Majesty's Government.* The USC Center on Public Diplomacy (CPD). https://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/sites/uscpublicdiplomacy.org/files/useruploads/u33041/Distinguishing%20Cultural%20Relations%20From%20Cultural%20Diplomacy%20-%20Full%20Version%20%281%29.pdf

Smith-Windsor, B. A. Hard Power, Soft Power Reconsidered. *Canadian Military Journal* 1(3), 51-56.

Thai digital content gaining increasing recognition around the world. (2022, August 9). *The Nation.* https://www.nationthailand.com/life/entertainment/40018697

US News. (2022). *Cultural Influence* [Part of 2022 Best Countries]. https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/rankings/influence

US News. (2022). *These Countries Are the Most Culturally Significant in Terms of Entertainment* [Part of Cultural Influence, 2022 Best Countries]. https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/rankings/culturally-significant-entertainment

Vu, M. (2022, October 6). Vietnam demands removal of "Little Women" from Netflix. *Hanoi Times.* https://hanoitimes.vn/vietnam-demands-removal-of-little-women-from-netflix-321972.html#:~:text=Some%20details%20in%20the%20film,some%20content%20distorting%20Vietnamese%20history.

Wilson, E. J. (2008). Hard Power, Soft Power, Smart Power. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616(1), 110-124.

Wyszomirski, M. J., Burgess, C. & Pella, C. (2003). *International Cultural Relations: A Multi-Country Comparison.* Center for Arts and Culture, Arts Policy and Administration Program, The Ohio State University. https://intranet.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/MJWpaper_0.pdf

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT