

## A Bibliometric Analysis of South Korean TV Dramas from 2014 to 2023 in the WoS Database

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### Abstract

*South Korean TV dramas (K-dramas, hereafter) have deeply captivated a worldwide audience for a long time. However, there have been few bibliometric studies specifically addressing this topic. The aim of this study is to conduct a bibliometric analysis of research on K-dramas. A total of 137 English-language journal articles were collected. This research used analytical tools such as Biblioshiny with R packages and the VOS viewer. The findings show that, South Korea, the United States (USA), and China are the top countries in terms of research production in the field of K-dramas. The analysis of four keyword clusters estimates future trends. Firstly, K-dramas on the Netflix platform have the potential to become a research trend in the future. Moreover, it is necessary to analyse the relationship between South Korean culture and other cultures. The concept of cultural hybridity can be applied to elaborate the contemporary global spread of K-dramas. Furthermore, it is essential to allocate greater focus to the fandom and youth groups. Finally, it is crucial to pay attention to the portrayal of gender characteristics, specifically masculinity, in K-dramas. The article concludes by listing the research's limitations.*

**Keywords:** *Bibliometric Analysis, K-Dramas, Wos Database, R Packages, Vosviewer.*

### Introduction

South Korean television dramas (K-dramas, hereafter) have continued to attract the attention of international audiences for a long time. Since the late 20th century, K-dramas have been widely disseminated throughout the region known as the Asia-Pacific landscape. Nevertheless, thanks to the advancements in technology, K-dramas enjoy widespread popularity, not only in the pan-Asia region but also globally (Ju, 2023). In the present environment, K-drama is no longer something only devout fans follow via illegal streaming websites; it is now an integral part of most streaming platforms, as evident in the multiple genre categories dedicated to K-drama on Netflix, such as “K-drama for beginners” and “Most bingeable K-dramas (An, 2022; Ju, 2020). The success of Squid Game demonstrated the significant impact of K-dramas (Tassi, 2021) and this drama made its history as the most watched Netflix show in 2021. So, K-dramas have continued to grow in global popularity.

For the past time, K-dramas have played a key role in promoting national soft power and have always been associated with the Korean wave, or Korean popular culture. The Chinese press originally coined the Korean wave, also known as Hallyu, to describe the unexpected popularity and success of K-dramas at the end of 1990s (Kim & Chon, 2013). Nowadays, the Korean wave has involved the third or fourth generation, named Hallyu 3.0 or Hallyu 4.0 (Boman, 2022; Song, 2020). This has involved a wider range of Korean media products, such as Korean popular music, films, TV dramas, computer products, and online games, as well as fashion, beauty products, food, and lifestyle (Park et al., 2022). During the last decades, numerous scholars have conducted extensive research on K-dramas, or Korean waves, from different perspectives.

Currently, due to the aforementioned factors, the analysis of K-dramas is regularly included in the literature review of the Korean Wave or Korean popular culture. For instance, the study by Ganghariya and Kanozia (2020) aims to gain more comprehensive knowledge and provide a thorough analysis of the research related to Hallyu, while Suratova (2022) conducted literature evaluations specifically on the Korean wave. Their research did not specifically concentrate on K-dramas.

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Furthermore, despite an apparent growing interest in the topic, bibliographic studies related to K-dramas are still scarce. Bibliometric analysis has gained immense popularity in academic research in recent years (Donthu et al., 2021). Researchers can use this statistical instrument as a mathematical method to quantitatively analyse research publications on a specific topic (Tomaszewski, 2023). Researchers consider bibliometric analysis effective in providing datasets that enhance research quality (Nandiyanto et al., 2020). The bibliometric map displays a distribution that includes the types of publications, the topic areas studied, the researcher's countries of origin, the journal of publication, and the language used (Hamidah et al., 2020). Furthermore, it could access the quality of studies, analyse key areas of research, and predict the directions of future studies. There hasn't been any published bibliometric analysis of K-dramas to date.

This inadequacy provides motivations to conduct this study. This study aims to perform a bibliometric review of research on K-dramas from 2014 to 2023. The first objective is to identify the leading authors, institutions, and countries that have significantly contributed to the study of K-dramas. The second objective is to uncover the prevalent themes associated with K-dramas. Lastly, the research seeks to predict future trends in K-drama research.

This section introduces the background and the research objective of the study. The subsequent section is the literature review. The third section presents the research methods. The fourth portion provides the findings and discussion. The final section presents the conclusion and limitations.

## Literature Review

A distinct historical context shapes the development of K-dramas. The South Korean government strategically uses the television industry to boost cultural exports, contributing to the genre's significant global reach (Ju, 2017; Kim, 2013; Shim, 2006). In addition, researchers have also emphasised factors such as timing (Ju, 2017), government measures and industry policies (Shim, 2008), and cultural elements (Hanaki et al., 2007; Ju, 2017; Kanozia & Ganghariya, 2021). Due to the impact of K-dramas in the Asia, the Chinese press first coined the term "Korean Wave" or Hallyu in 1997 to describe the phenomenon of K-dramas (Jin, 2018; Chung, 2019).

However, with the advent of new media, transnational consumption of K-dramas has evolved significantly. While television was crucial in elevating K-dramas in the late 1990s, its role has diminished with the rise of new media formats (Ju, 2020; Kim et al., 2021). Advances in media technology, alternative platforms, and globalisation have facilitated the global spread of Korean content. The Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms such as Netflix and Amazon Prime Video in the United States have gained a lot of audience (Chandra, 2022; Sandi & Triastuti, 2020). This situation is similar in the Asian countries. These platforms have created new opportunities for K-dramas, marking the era of Hallyu 2.0, where digital and internet-based content drive the growth of Korean pop culture from 2006 to 2014 (Jin & Yoon, 2016). Today, viewers no longer must passively consume scheduled content, indicating a shift from linear to nonlinear access to television content (Lotz, 2021). This transformation alters the way people view and interact with K-dramas (Ju, 2019; Lobato, 2018). Currently, there are scholars who assert that the Korean Wave has entered the 4.0 era, as evidenced by its worldwide impact (Boman, 2022; Song, 2020) and K-dramas continue to hold a significant position.

Furthermore, previous research has investigated the impact of K-dramas on viewers. Studies suggest that audiences often engage in film tourism and the intention to purchase Korean products (Sun & Jun, 2022) due to their psychological and emotional connection with K-dramas (Bang et al., 2021; Ju, 2020; Lee, 2020; Su et al. 2011; Wu et al., 2021). Because emotional and behavioural involvement with TV drama celebrities significantly influenced perceived national image (Kim et al., 2019). Additionally, Halim and Kiatkawsin (2021) found that female Indonesian viewers experienced escapism and developed specific beauty standards through K-dramas. Other research highlights that viewers' investment in K-dramas typically leads to increased cultural understanding (Ju, 2020; Park et al., 2021; Schulze, 2013) and language learning (Chandra, 2022; Lee, 2018). This engagement provides a space for viewers to negotiate their identities based on their consumption of K-dramas. Furthermore, Lee (2018) discovered that Western viewers developed hybrid

identities through their K-drama engagement, while Ju (2019) observed that U.S. viewers experienced emotional involvement due to the romantic narratives presented in K-dramas.

Apart from that, scholars have utilised various theoretical frameworks to examine the global popularity of K-dramas. “Cultural proximity” has long been a primary explanation for their successful expansion, with K-dramas widely spreading across diverse Asian countries (Hanaki et al., 2007; Ju, 2017; Ju & Lee, 2015; Jung, 2009; Kanozia & Ganghariya, 2021). In addition, Lee (2018) suggests that the Korean Wave represents a hybrid cultural production, merging Western and traditional elements, a notion further supported by Shim (2006), who highlights how K-dramas balance Western influences with Asian values. Apart from that, the concept of “pop cosmopolitans” is used to describe Western K-drama fans who embrace global popular culture (Lee, 2018). Additionally, Jin (2023) and Zhu (2023) explore the global success of K-dramas through the lens of transnational proximity, demonstrating how cultural products like *Squid Game* can appeal globally despite linguistic and regional differences.

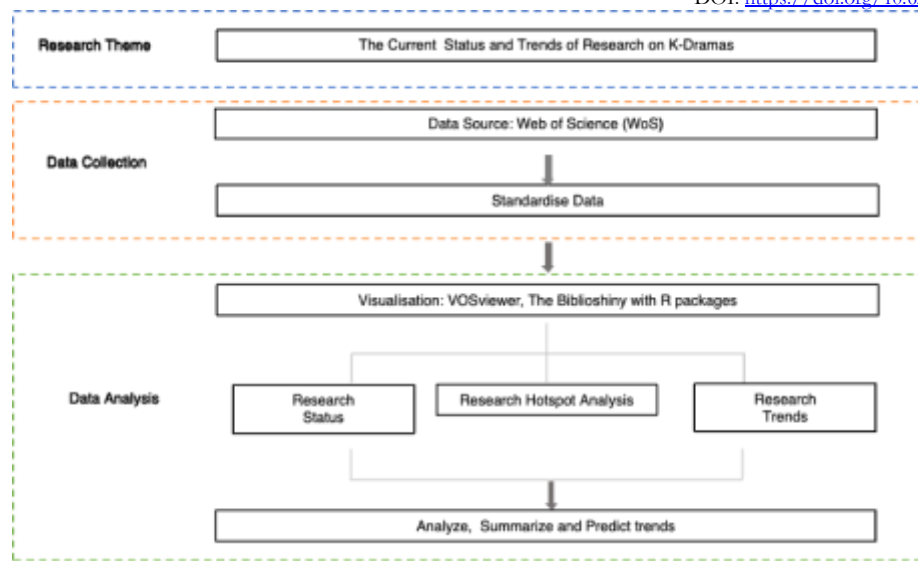
Overall, the literature study offers significant documentation on the historical evolution of K-dramas, the global influence of K-dramas on audiences, and relevant theories in the field of Korean drama research. Nevertheless, there is a dearth of papers that employ bibliometric analysis for reviewing literature and investigating research trends in K-dramas. This study intends to make up for this shortcoming.

## Methods

The bibliometric review methodology is important as it provides a categorised view of the documents published in the research area based on objective criteria for analysing and classifying publications. The Web of Science (WoS) is a globally acknowledged research platform overseen by Clarivate Analytics (Vlase & Lähdesmäki, 2023). This database comprises a vast collection of highly influential research papers and offers integrated analytical tools for generating representative metrics (Lim & Kumar, 2024). Therefore, this study utilised the WoS database to obtain reliable and up-to-date data.

Additionally, researchers could export the search results from WoS to software for further analysis. Software programs such as biblioshiny with R packages and VOSviewer can enhance the visibility of data (AI Husaeni et al., 2022). Based on R packages, an open-source statistical language, bibliometrix assists researchers in conducting automated science mapping (Aria et al., 2024). This package facilitates the ability to do extensive bibliometric studies, including analyses and visualisation of the data (Ishak et al.2023). In addition, Nees Jan Van Eck and Ludo Waltman developed VOSviewer, a freeware program, to visualise the collected data. The bibliometric indicators used by VOSviewer, including co-occurrence (Montemurro & Zanette, 2013), co-authorship (Glänzel & Schubert, 2004), and other analyses, can provide insights for future research. So, the current study uses the bibliometric package to analyse the data collected from the WoS core collection.

Figure 1 explains the methodology in this study. The research aims to explore the status of K-dramas and predict future trends in this field. Then the research collects the data from the Web of Science (WoS) database and standardises the data to make them more suitable for further analysis. The third step is to conduct data analysis and visualise the results using VOSviewer and the biblioshiny software with R packages. This study will analyse and present the research status, hotspots, and trends. Although researchers may have the risk of subjectively interpreting the VOSviewer output and explaining the results based on their own understanding, in this study, this study will interpret the research findings as objectively as possible.



**Figure 1.** Flowchart of Research Methodology

This research collected the data on July 27, 2024. Figure 2 shows the article selection process. The study employs the title-ABS-key strategy, with a particular emphasis on the publication title, abstract, and keywords as the search field. The terms “Korean television drama”, “Korean TV drama”, “K-drama”, “Korean drama”, “Korean TV serie”, “Korean serie”, or “Korean soap opera” yielded a total of 206 results. This study sets the search timeframe from January 1, 2014, to December 31, 2023. Restricting the document type to “article” and the source type to “journal” resulted in a total of 156 articles. Finally, this research set aside the 137 English-written documents for a bibliometric examination.



**Figure 2.** Article Selection Process

## Findings and Discussion

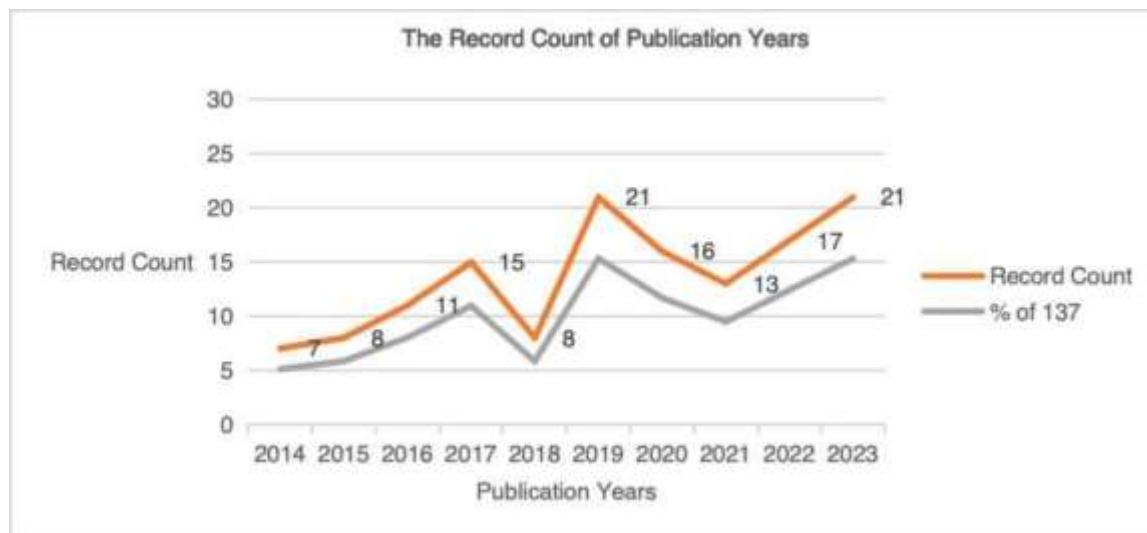
This study exported the retrieved data from the WoS database into standardised formats, including CSV and Microsoft Excel, for further analysis. Table 1 provides an overview of the data collected from the WoS core collection. The final publishing year ranges from 2014 to 2024. The collection’s 137 documents are distributed by 96 sources. The average number of citations per document is 7.927. Furthermore, 240

authors have contributed to these publications. Notably, there are 65 single-authored documents, and the proportion of international co-authorships is 18.25%.

In addition, analysing and graphically illustrating data is essential for scholars to have a more profound comprehension of research results (Franconeri et al., 2021), especially when it comes to K-dramas and mapping the prevalent trends in the global sphere. From a macroscopic perspective, it outlines the trends in research on K-dramas over the past decade, highlighting the countries and regions with the greatest interest, as well as the top 10 organisations and journals that have published the most papers on K-dramas. Ultimately, the authors who have achieved the highest level of productivity are presented.

### *Subsection Publications by Years*

This decade has seen the publication of 137 articles on K-dramas. According to Table 2, the maximum number of papers published in both 2019 and 2023 was 21. However, the year 2014 saw only seven articles published. Furthermore, as shown in Figure 3, the data indicates a fluctuating and growing trend over the last ten years. From 2014 to 2017, there was a significant increase in the number of published publications, which rose from 7 to 15 during the initial growth phase. Following that, the number underwent a significant decrease to 8 in 2018. The number of related articles underwent a dramatic increase to 21 during the second upward trend, which began in 2019 and gradually decreased to 13 in 2021. Between 2021 and 2023, the number of articles increased from 13 to 21 during the third growth period.



**Figure 3.** Number of Publications Over Years

### *Geographical Analysis of Publications*

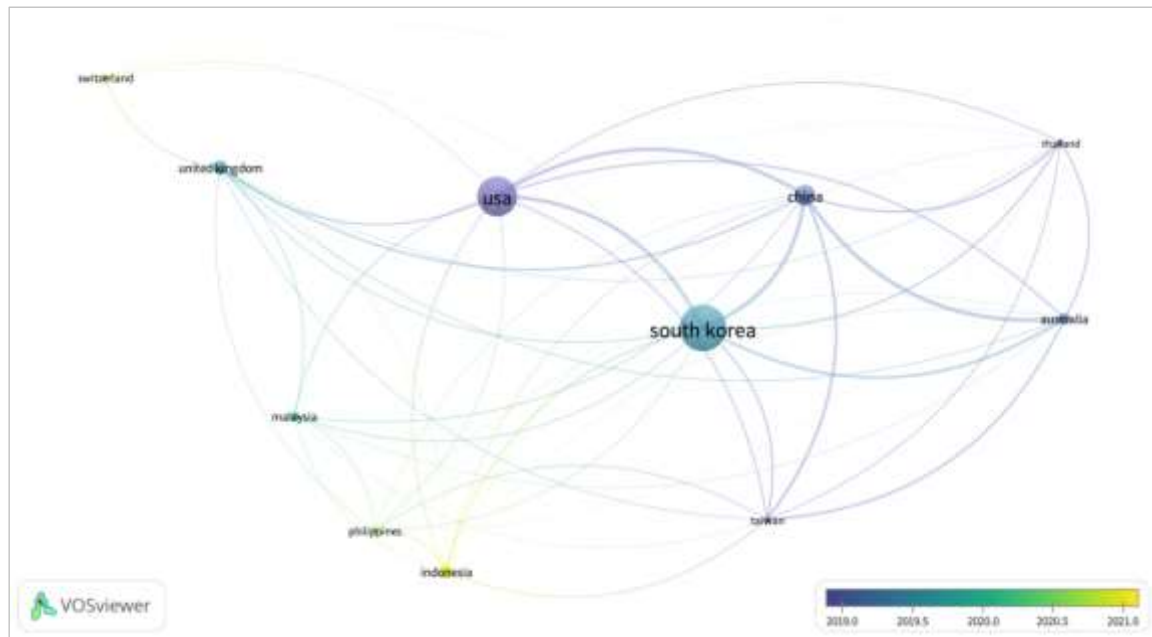
This study analyses the geographical distribution of publications and identify the leading countries in this section. It becomes evident that the research issue has a global scope. The fact that writers from 33 different nations contributed to the sample of 137 papers clearly demonstrates this. This indicates that there has been at least one publication in each of these countries.

Table 3 is a compilation of the top 10 nations that have contributed the most academic papers in the field of research. Collectively, these countries represent 80.7% of the total published articles. Based on the statistics, South Korea has the highest number of publications, with a total of 42 articles, followed by the United States of America (USA) with 35 pieces and China with 16 articles.

Likewise, when it comes to paper citations, the three countries share the same position in the list. In addition, total link strength (TLS) refers to the combined weight attributes that represent the overall strength of the connections between one item and other things (Guo et al. 2019; van Eck & Waltman 2023).

The table indicates that China, with a total connection strength of 10 ( $n = 2814$ ), has the highest value. South Korea ( $n = 2168$ ) and the USA ( $n = 1834$ ) follow this.

Furthermore, the overlay visualisation of the bibliometric coupling of publications related to different countries provides researchers with insight into the average publication year. One can deduce the research status in this area by analysing a particular country's average publication year. The colour bar illustrates the mapping of scores to colours (Bascur et al., 2023). As shown in Figure 4, the default colour range, as indicated by the colour bar in the lower right corner, progresses from blue to green to yellow. The proximity of the colour to yellow indicates the recency of the completed research in that place.



**Figure 4.** Overlay Visualisation of Country Research

According to Figure 4, the links and nodes with Indonesia, Switzerland, and the other two countries have turned yellow. Recent studies on K-dramas in these nations have shifted the chromaticity bar to yellow. In the meantime, Table 3's figures, particularly the average publication year for K-dramas across various countries, suggest that Malaysia ( $n = 2020$ ), the Philippines ( $n = 2020.50$ ), Switzerland ( $n = 2020.75$ ), and Indonesia ( $n = 2020.89$ ) have carried out more comprehensive research on K-dramas.

#### *Publications By Organizations and Journals*

Table 4 illustrates that four out of the top ten globally significant research institutions are in Asia, specifically Korea University, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Yonsei University, and Seoul National University. This illustrates that Asian institutions place a high value on the examination and analysis of K-dramas. In addition, three institutions rank among the top three in terms of the number of published papers: Korea University (7), Hong Kong Polytechnic University (6), and Yonsei University (6). These three institutes have made significant contributions to the literature about K-dramas.

**Table 4.** The Top 10 Institutions

Organization	Documents	Citations	TLS
Korea University	7	26	193
Hong Kong Polytechnic University	6	175	1172
Yonsei University	6	42	266

University Basel	3	37	10
University of Texas Austin	3	23	202
University Nottingham	3	17	170
University California San Francisco	3	12	386
Seoul National University	3	5	27
Edith Cowan University	2	94	459
Flinders University	2	76	508

Furthermore, in terms of article citations, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Edith Cowan University, and Flinders University are the top three, with 175, 94, and 76 citations, respectively. These three institutions also achieved top rankings in TLS, indicating that their studies on K-dramas have significant global significance.

Table 5 provides a comprehensive list of the journals that have demonstrated the highest level of productivity in the field of K-dramas. The International Journal of Communication ranked first, publishing nine articles on K-dramas. *Kritika Kultura* is the second-most significant journal, with six articles, and the Journal of Pragmatics is the third-most important, with four articles.

**Table 5.** The Record Count of the Top 10 Publication

Source	Documents	Citations	TLS
International Journal of Communication	9	30	105
<i>Kritika Kultura</i>	6	30	51
Journal of Pragmatics	4	48	12
Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research	3	107	345
Media Culture and Society	3	30	20
Sustainability	3	9	117
Asia-Pacific Journal-Japan Focus	3	6	15
International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education	3	0	22
Tourism Management	2	137	272
Current Issues in Tourism	2	86	234

Furthermore, in terms of paper citations, the Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, Tourism Management, and Current Issues in Tourism hold the top three positions, with citation values of 137, 106, and 86, respectively. As previously mentioned, we can use TLS to assess the journal's impact and establish connections with other journals. According to Table 4, the Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research has the highest TLS rating among the 10 journals, with a score of 345.

#### *Publications By Authors*

The section addresses the publications by authors. Table 6 identifies the most prolific authors. Kim Seongseop, from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, has authored six out of the total 137 papers. Following him is Park Ji Hoo, a professor at the Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology (GIST) in Korea. The remaining seven writers have each written three papers.

**Table 6.** The Record Count of the Top 10 Authors

Authors	Record Count	% of 137
Kim Seongseop	6	4.38

Park Ji Hoon	4	2.92
Gammon Thi	3	2.19
Kim Grace Myhyun	3	2.19
Lee Hyunji	3	2.19
Lee Min Joo	3	2.19
Lee Suna	3	2.19
Locher Miriam A.	3	2.19
Rosidi Imron	3	2.19

In addition, citations quantify the author's research productivity and the impact of their articles (Kuchanskyy et al., 2023). By setting the minimum number of documents per author to 2, a total of 29 authors meets this requirement. Table 7 presents a compilation of the top 10 authors, along with their respective citation counts and TLS. According to the table, Kim Seongseop has the highest number of citations, with a total of 105 citations across 3 articles. Kim Sangkyun and Kim Grace Myhyun achieved the second and third positions, with citation values of 94 and 69, respectively. However, according to Table 7, Park Van My Ta achieved the highest ranking in terms of TLS, with a value of 271. Kim Seongseop and Kim Sangkyun achieved the second and third positions, respectively, with scores of 254 and 219.

**Table 7.** The Top 10 Authors of Citations

Author	Documents	Citations	TLS
Kim Seongseop	3	105	254
Kim Grace Myhyun	3	69	12
Locher Miriam A.	3	37	192
Park Ji Hoon	3	15	191
Park Van My Ta	3	12	271
Gammon Thi	3	7	21
Rosidi Imron	3	1	43
Kim Sangkyun	2	94	219
Messerli Thomas C.	2	23	190
Tung Vincent Wing Sun	2	20	70

### *The Keywords Analysis*

Keyword analysis reveals trends in past publications and forecasts emerging areas that may gain significance, helping academics uncover unexplored themes. Co-occurrence refers to the frequency with which a term appears in conjunction with other terms (Li et al., 2016). The analysis of keyword co-occurrences in a study area can accurately depict active research areas, providing further validation for scientific investigations (Masoumi & Khajavi, 2023). Previous studies, which clustered the research focus based on the strength of the correlation between these keywords, have observed the trajectory of subject knowledge evolution (Narong & Hallinger, 2023; Wang et al., 2023). In this section, we look at the distribution of keywords to investigate the contents. This study assesses the simultaneous presence of all keywords, including author keywords and keywords plus. This part aims to evaluate the historical areas of intense research on K-dramas and predict future trends in K-drama research by analysing the co-occurrence of keywords.

The co-occurrence of keywords refers to the measurement of the most frequently used keywords in the documents provided by the authors of the publication. By carefully excluding irrelevant and redundant keywords and establishing a minimum keyword occurrence threshold of 4, out of the 704 keywords, only 33 satisfied the criteria. So, this research ultimately utilised a total of 33 keywords. Table 8 displays the top ten keywords. The keywords with the most frequency include Korean TV dramas, Korean wave, Korean popular culture, globalisation, South Korea, impact, culture, involvement, music, and cultural proximity. K-dramas significantly contribute to the globalisation of South Korean culture. K-dramas play a significant



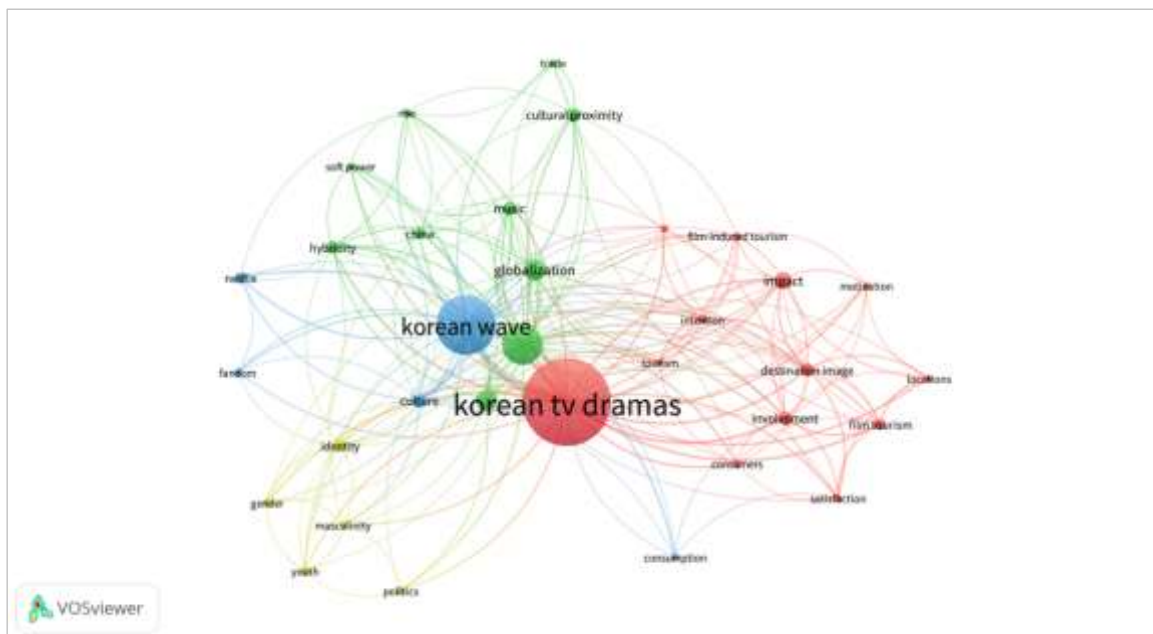
role in the Korean wave and are a prominent aspect of Korean popular culture. Furthermore, the authors employed the concept of cultural proximity to elucidate the dissemination of K-dramas.

**Table 8.** Top 10 Co-Occurrence of Keywords

Keyword	Occurrences	TLS
Korean TV dramas	74	152
Korean wave	46	106
Korean popular culture	29	90
globalization	13	47
South Korea	13	31
impact	10	27
culture	8	30
involvement	8	29
music	8	23
cultural proximity	8	20

### *The Keywords Clusters Analysis*

This study presented a total of 33 keywords and ultimately acquired a keyword clustering network diagram, as shown in Figure 5. Distinct colours in the diagram symbolise distinct groupings and nodes that share the same colour are part of a cluster. This research classified the results into four clusters: red represents Cluster 1, green represents Cluster 2, blue represents Cluster 3, and yellow represents Cluster 4. In addition, there is a positive correlation between the size of the circle and the frequency of keywords in the title and abstract. Hence, the frequency of occurrence dictates the dimensions of both letters and circles. The frequency of the keyword directly correlates with the size of the letters and circles. The output centres around the keyword “Korean TV dramas” and illustrates its frequent relationship with other keywords through several clusters.



**Figure 5.** Co-Occurrences of Keywords in Network Visualisation

Furthermore, the distance between two nodes indicates the degree of connection between them. A shorter length signifies a more intimate connection. A line linking two keywords indicates their co-occurrence. Figure 5 illustrates the inseparable connection between K-dramas and the Korean wave, highlighting the crucial role that K-dramas play in it. Through the analysis of various clusters, it is possible to infer research areas and fields. Cluster 1 comprises thirteen terms, namely: aim, film-induced tourism, impact, tourism, motivation, Korean TV dramas, destination image, soap opera, involvement, locations, film tourism, satisfaction, and consumers. The high frequency of the keywords in Cluster 1 suggests a strong correlation between K-dramas and tourism. The Korean series is associated with the motivation and destination image. Figure 5 indicates a long-standing focus on this field.

Cluster 2 consists of ten keywords: hybridity, South Korea, China, rise, music, soft power, Korean popular culture, globalisation, trade, and cultural proximity. Cluster 2 includes keywords related to the worldwide growth of K-dramas. These keywords show that people widely regard K-dramas as South Korea's soft power and as a vital part of Korean popular culture. People have used the principles of cultural proximity and hybridity to explain the global success of K-dramas. Cluster 3 has five keywords, including Netflix, culture, fandom, consumerism, and the Korean wave. We derived the terms in Cluster 3 from research on Netflix and fandom, suggesting a probable correlation with K-dramas. The scholars also delve into Korean culture's fandom and consumerism.

Cluster 4 consists of five keywords: youth, masculinity, gender, politics, and identity. The keywords refer to scholarly writing about adolescent populations. Furthermore, these literary works explore the themes of masculinity and gender characteristics in conjunction with K-dramas. In addition, the authors delve into themes related to politics and identity.

#### *The Keywords Trends Analysis*

The overlay visualization depicts the correlation between terms, as well as the time frame of research updates (AI Husaeni & Nandiyanto, 2022). Figure 6 showcases an overlay visualisation that stems from a bibliometric analysis of keyword occurrences in previous research. This visualization illustrates the research trend on K-dramas from 2014 to 2023. Table 9 provides a summary of the keywords related to the values of link, TLS, occurrences, and the average publication year. These keywords are significant in determining research trends and providing certifications. It is feasible to forecast future study trends for K-dramas based on the data presented in Figures 6 and Table 9. The overlay visualisation of Figure 6 reveals the emergence of keywords in recent years. Despite frequent mentions of K-dramas and the Korean wave, researchers have displayed a strong interest in the terms such as globalization, youth and so on. Among these keywords, the keyword "Netflix" has an average publication year of 2022.67 and appears six times. It is associated with seven other keywords. According to the colour bar, an increasing number of studies on K-dramas is associated with Netflix.

**Table 9.** The Average Publication Year of the Keywords

Keyword	Links	TLS	Occurrences	Avg.pub.year
Netflix	7	15	6	2022.67
Culture	20	30	8	2022.50
fandom	6	10	4	2022.50
youth	9	15	5	2022.20
masculinity	9	14	4	2022.00
intention	13	20	5	2021.00
hybridity	14	32	7	2021.00
gender	9	15	5	2021.00
film-induced tourism	12	17	4	2020.50
South Korea	14	31	13	2020.31
consumption	6	9	4	2020.25
impact	15	27	10	2020.20

tourism	12	14	4	2020.00
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Furthermore, the keyword “culture” has an average publication year of 2022.50 and appears eight times. It is accompanied by twenty other keywords. In addition, the keyword “fandom” has an average publication year of 2022.50 and appears four times. The keyword “fandom” shares links with nine other keywords. The keyword “youth” has an average publication year of 2022.20 and appears five times. The term “youth” shares links with nine other keywords. The average publication year for the term “masculinity” is 2022.00; it appears four times, and it links to nine other keywords.

## Conclusion

This article intends to do a scientometric analysis of worldwide research on K-dramas. The study conducted the analysis using 137 documents from the WOS database. This research conducted a bibliometric study using the Biblioshiny package in R Studio and VOSviewer software to visualise the most used keywords in our research findings. The evolution and further development of K-dramas have been explored through bibliometric analysis.

The results of this study suggest that there is a continuous increase in the number of research publications related to K-dramas. The data indicates a fluctuating and growing trend over the last ten years. The maximum number of papers published in both 2019 and 2023 was 21. In addition, despite the growing interest from academics and practitioners, the popularity of K-dramas is expected to persist due to its global appeal and widespread adoption of internet technology. South Korea, the United States (USA), and China are the top countries in terms of research production in the field of K-dramas.

In terms of productivity, Korea University, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, and Yonsei University are the top-performing universities in this research field. The three most influential publications in the field were the International Journal of Communication, *Kritika Kultura*, and the Journal of Pragmatics. Moreover, Kim Seongseop, a professor from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, has written six of the 137 papers. Meanwhile, Kim Seongseop’s three publications have the largest number of citations, while Kim Sangkyun and Kim Grace Myhyun rank second and third, respectively. Park Van My Ta attained the top place in terms of TLS, while Kim Seongseop and Kim Sangkyun secured the second and third positions, respectively.

### *Research Trends*

The analysis above allows us to estimate future trends as follows: Firstly, K-dramas on Netflix have become a significant and influential part of the platform’s content, contributing to the global popularity of Korean media (Ju, 2020), and enhancing the diversity of entertainment options available to viewers worldwide (Lee & Hong, 2023; Jang et al., 2024) There is a need for a thorough exploration of the content displayed on Netflix and its impact on the global audience.

Moreover, it is necessary to analyse the relationship between South Korean culture and other cultures. Cultural hybridity promotes and strengthens cultural diversity as a means of achieving cultural sustainability by receiving global culture while simultaneously maintaining local cultural codes (Kaisii, 2017). Therefore, the concept of cultural hybridity could be used to elucidate the contemporary global spread of K-dramas.

Furthermore, it is essential to allocate greater focus to the fandom and youth groups related to K-dramas. The fandom and youth groups related to K-dramas are vibrant and diverse, reflecting the global popularity and influence of Korean entertainment. The future research can investigate the viewing patterns of K-dramas among fan groups and youth groups, as well as the influence these dramas have on them.

Finally, Masculinity in K-dramas often reflects a blend of traditional and contemporary ideals, shaped by cultural norms and evolving societal expectations (Gammon, 2023). It is crucial to pay attention to the portrayal of gender characteristics, specifically masculinity, in K-dramas in the future study.

## Limitations

This study endeavour used quantitative methods to determine the academic literature's structure. For this study, only one database was used to compile the literature. It is possible that this database does not include all periodicals that deal with K-dramas' research. Maybe it is better to use databases such as Scopus, Google Scholars, CNKI, and so on, which may add credibility to the research. A multisource method comparing different databases might give a broad overview of the investigation in this field and a better comprehension of the main differences and implications.

In addition, bibliometric analysis relies on technical decisions such as choosing language and investigation fields, which may exclude relevant papers from the analysis. Future research should incorporate studies conducted in regional languages, such as Korean and Chinese, which may provide a more comprehensive understanding related to K-dramas.

Finally, future research may employ new bibliometric methods. some potential new bibliometric methods and approaches such as co-citation analysis, comparative and cross-disciplinary analysis could be applied in future research.

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