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Perspectives of Thai youths towards Thai artists in the Korean music industry

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บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้ศึกษาภาพลักษณ์ของศิลปินไทยที่มีผลงานในอุตสาหกรรมบันเทิงเกาหลีผ่านมุมมองของผู้ชื่นชอบศิลปินกลุ่มดังกล่าว งานวิจัยนี้ยังเปรียบเทียบทัศนคติของผู้ชื่นชอบศิลปินกลุ่มนี้เพื่อศึกษาความแตกต่างในความชื่นชอบต่อศิลปินไทยที่ได้รับอิทธิพลจากอุตสาหกรรมบันเทิงเกาหลีอีกด้วย จากการศึกษาวิจัยพบว่า ผู้ที่ชื่นชอบศิลปินไทยในอุตสาหกรรมเกาหลีนั้นมีความรู้สึกร่วมในความเป็นไทยและแสดงความภาคภูมิใจในประเด็นดังกล่าว เจื่อนไขดังกล่าวแสดงให้เห็นถึงความภาคภูมิใจในลักษณะของความเป็นไทย และแสดงให้เห็นถึงอิทธิพลสำคัญของกระแสวัฒนธรรมเกาหลีที่มีอิทธิพลต่ออุตสาหกรรมบันเทิงไทยในเวลาเดียวกัน งานวิจัยนี้จัดทำผ่านกระบวนการวิเคราะห์เอกสารควบคู่กับการสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกกับตัวแทนวัยรุ่นไทยที่มีความสนใจในวัฒนธรรมเกาหลีจำนวน 5 คน

คำสำคัญ : ศิลปินไทยในอุตสาหกรรมบันเทิงเกาหลี, วัฒนธรรมเกาหลี, วัฒนธรรมข้ามชาติ, วัยรุ่นไทย, ทัศนคติ

Abstract

This paper examines the images of Thai artists in the Korean music industry to identify cultural impacts towards this argument which will be covered by Thai youths' perspectives. This paper also compares the youths' views on the recent Thai music industry with the K-pop music industry where Thai entertainers work to find out whether the enhancement of K-pop in the Thai music industry has impacts on the Thai youth's perspectives. This paper argues that Thai youths expressed a mutual feeling among themselves as a shared feeling of being Thai and positive points of view. This indents on how Thai youths perceived them as they felt proud of and had become a national pride. The paper also illustrates Thai youths' perspectives on K-pop-inspired Thai entertainers in Thai Music Industry to make a better understanding of the transnational cultural effect of Korean popular culture. Data presented in this paper comes from textual analysis as well as in-depth interviews with 5 Thai youths.

Keywords : Thai artists in Korean music industry, Korean popular culture, Transnational culture, Thai youths, Perspectives

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Question and Objectives

Since the end of the 1990s, Hallyu or Korean Wave has become a term to describe the popular culture of Korea. The Hallyu has not only transmitted Korean cultural products but also publicized Korean society throughout the world (C. N. Kim, 2012). Along with the notable increase in the number of foreign members in Korean idol groups, recruited from the U.S., China, Japan, and Taiwan (E. Kim, 2017), Thai entertainers have also become the non-Korean members of many K-pop artist groups. Their participation made significant impacts on Thai society including Thai artists in the Korean music industry. They have gained attention and interest from Thai people who later become the consumers of Korean cultural products. The South Korean president Moon Jae-in in the occasion of an official meeting with the Thai prime minister also emphasized on the contributions of Thai entertainers to the K-pop's growing popularity:

"... not only Thailand becomes the center of Hallyu cultures among Asia, but Nichkhun, Lisa, BamBam also play the important roles as the Top star of K-pop industry as well ..." (Kukminbangsong, 2019)

The contributions of Thai K-Pop artists are also outstanding along with the drastically growing popularity of K-pop among Thai people. Since 1997, many Korean popular products had been imported to Thailand. The popularity of K-pop products initiated by Thai music-product importers like RS Promotion and GMM Grammy Company. Korean dramas and movies have also become popular in Thai society (Siriyuvasak & Shin, 2007). Under the influence of transnational culture, many Thai artists challenge themselves to work in the Korean music industry. The trend of Korean

popular culture also becomes getting more famous in Thai society.

On the other hand, Thai music industry also recently Thai debuted bands or groups that are inspired by or in collaboration with the Korean music agency. They are challenging standard models of current Thai music industry. The newly emerging K-pop-inspired Thai music has become an alternative choice for Thai consumers. They indulge themselves in such music. It is an interesting question about how the fans of Korean popular cultures see this phenomenon in different ways. Against this background, this research asks a question: what are the perspectives of Thai youths towards Thai artists in Korean music industry? Comprising one of K-pop's transnational elements, artists in Korean music industry mainly appeal to the Youths fascinated in Korean popular culture (Preedachaschavaan, Sakdivorapong, & Satitwityanan, 2013). This study seeks to explore the examples of K-pop influences on Thai artists in Korean music industry and to understand Thai youth's views on influences. It seeks to understand what images do Thai youth have about Thai artists in Korean music industry. It will identify the K-pop's cultural impacts as perceived by Thai youths and examine whether the enhancement of K-pop in the Thai music industry has impact on the Thai youth's perspective.

1.2 Literature Review

1.2.1 Literature on K-pop and Thai society

The literature on K-pop discusses diverse aspects including history and many aspects of it. Therefore, my literature reviews mainly focused on three aspects. Firstly, it is the meaning and the growth of Korean cultural industry. There have been many discussions on what is the meaning of K-pop and how it becomes a success in today. Hallyu, or Korean Wave in English, was first coined in China by Beijing journalists in the middle of the 1990s which marked the beginning of Hallyu (D. K. Kim & Kim, 2012). This meaning used to describe the unprecedented sweeping popularity of Korean pop culture to other countries, especially in Asia.

Hallyu became more prosperous in many aspects from Korean drama, Korean movies to Korean pop music. Hallyu also spans the range to other aspects in the future as well. Regarding geographic regions of popularity, Hallyu had been limited to East and Southeast Asia until the early 2000s, but it has expanded to other regions such as the Middle East, Europe, North and South America, and Africa. (Hong, Park, Park, & OH, 2019) Similarly, Shim (2008) points out that by early 2006, Korean cultural productions, including television drama (Winter Sonata, Dae Jang Geum), film, pop music, etc., have become widely consumed by audiences in Asia.

K-pop can be seen as a power in term of international affairs as well. Howard and Lekakul (2018) suggest that K-pop has become a type of propaganda that can occupy people's heart and make them think in more positive ways about Korea. Similarly, Kim (2012) states that by producing Korean dramas, music videos, and other media that are compatible with the tastes of other Asian countries, Korea has succeeded to a certain degree in mending the social and emotional

bond between countries, as well as strengthening political and diplomatic relationships. During the phenomenon of Korean popular culture as a transnational culture, its growth becomes bigger and wider from the craze in many countries all around the world. For example, not only Korean television field, but Korean popular music also reaches the level of becoming popular. For instance, Korean popular music has emerged as a trend among numerous young Asians in China, Japan, Taiwan, Hongkong and other Southeast Asian countries over 2000 to 2010 because of its strong beats mixed with unique rhythms (D. K. Kim & Kim, 2012). Likewise, Ryoo (2009) states that Korean popular songs are often seen as a fuller affinity for the region's character, and can express more soulfulness than western music which can be assumed that Korean popular culture gains its popularity via many productions that can internationally flourish and earn greater prosperity.

The second part is Korean popular culture as the social implication of Korean popular culture. As an interactive medium, Korean popular culture becomes the impact beyond Korea and flourish among other countries. Consumers' perspectives reflected by the routine life that associated with K-pop is one of the examples in this argument. Howard and Lelakul (2018) conducted an interview to investigate on their assumption on how Korean popular culture impacted to K-pop awareness and interest. They found that K-pop encourages their interviewees to buy and consume Korean clothes, make-up, and food which emphasizes the image of K-pop being a core part of the image of Korea for Thai Youth.

The third part is Korean popular culture and Thai artists in the Korean music industry. Thai artists in Korean music industry gain more attention since the debuting of Nichkhun from 2PM in 2008. JYP Entertainment debuted his group 2PM with seven members from completely different backgrounds and nationalities which including Nichkhun as an American-born Thai-Chinese member (Bergen, 2011). Nichkhun has made new images as a representative of Thailand which can be marked as a starting point of Thai artists' perceptions as an international level. Following Nichkhun's success, more Thai artists are got debuted and currently active doing activities as one of the members among many groups in order to gain more fans not only from Thai people, but all around the world. Table 1 shows presently active Thai artists in the Korean music industry.

<Table 1. Presently Active Thai Artists in Korean Music Industry>

Entertainment	Group	Artist Name	Debut Year
YG	BLACKPINK	Lisa1	2016
JYP	2PM	Nichkhun2	2008
JYP	GOT7	BamBam3	2014
SM	NCT, WayV and SuperM	Ten4	2016
CUBE	(G)I-DLE	Minnie5	2018
CUBE	CLC	Sorn6	2015

According to the table, Thai artists actively doing their activities are labeled under different entertainments. Likewise, K-pop began with the aspects of becoming the trend that developed into a transnational cultural phenomenon. Not only many talented artists but other subjects and discourses also play an important role to make Korean popular culture wider in public perspectives. Thai people are one of the examples of how the proliferation of K-pop is which leads to be questioned in this research.

1.2.2 Thai youths' consuming patterns of K-pop

Literature connected K-pop with the youths which can mainly discuss as the main target group of this transnational culture towards it. Korean popular culture has gained many attentions among Thai youths. It eventually changed Thai youths' style to be more Korean like from clothes, products, hair styles to food preferences which are all K-pop's impacts towards this. (Preedachaschavaan et al., 2013) Therefore, understanding youths' consuming patterns provides more evidences based on the connection between K-pop and youth culture. Miles (2011) states that youth culture is a concept that refers to the collective cultural practices of young people who may use elements of consumption as a means of establishing an identity. Youth culture can be understood through media (Gregson, 2007) in which it complies with K-pop in order to illustrate how cultural products across national borders through the virtual border-crossing activities of youth groups (Jung, 2014).

Another part is Thai youth's consumption patterns of Korean popular culture. Preedachaschavaan, Sakdivorapong, and Satitwityanan (2013) argue that to understand Thai youth consuming patterns has to consider on four elements: the symbolic patterns of youths, behavioral patterns, language patterns and life conducting patterns. All elements mean to be a basic elements to understand youths in the cultural perspective. Similarity, Siriyuvasak and Shin (2007) state that a combination of an economic rationale along with the emotional infatuation with the K-pop stars is found out when conducting a study on Thai youth consuming patterns. This also reflects K-pop consuming patterns among Thai youths that is needed to have more investigation in order to describe the important of youths having an impact on K-pop trend and preference among them.

All in all, youth culture plays an important role as a main pattern describing how youths react themselves to environments including K-pop as a transnational culture having an impact on them. However, previous researches of K-pop's fans in Thailand have no studies focused on the perspectives on Thai artists in Korean music industry. Hence, understanding the association between K-pop and youth culture would produce a reasonable conclusion finding the images of Thai artists in Korean music industry in order to identify cultural impacts towards mentioned argument.

2. Research Method

2.1 Method

According to the research question, this study will be focused on the perspectives of Thai

youths which most often from the standpoint of the participants and cannot be able to measure by statistics or numbers. Therefore, this research adopts a qualitative method to handle on exploring the examples of K-pop influences to Thai artists in Korean music industry combined with the qualitative interviews on their perspectives towards mentioned argument.

Because I chose the interview method in this research, I outlined and edited the interview questions via the pilot interview session in order to make it to be clearer and on point. The interview questions finally divided into two parts: (1) current activity related to K-pop daily life and (2) current Thai artists in Korean music industry related to daily life. I also adapted this interview method to be in the form of the semi-structured interview which the interviewer also has the freedom to probe the interviewee to elaborate on the original response or to follow a line of inquiry introduced by the interviewee (Mathers, Fox, & Hunn, 2002). Therefore, doing the interview in this research can be benefited in collecting the data from selected interviewees in order to analyze in the mentioned argument. Moreover, doing semi-structured interview makes me understand a condition, experience, or event from a personal perspective through the interview.

Since this study adopted qualitative method, it does not aim to describe a general trend of Thai youth's perspectives. Instead, it focused on analyzing the 'meaning' of a cultural phenomenon in relation with Thai youth and K-pop. My selection of 5 cases focused on the Thai high-school students who are actively engaged in cultural activities related with K-pop. They were selected from various occupations and living areas to make the study becomes diverse. Thus, this study depicts the perspectives of the five Thai K-pop fan and seek to understand the social implications that underlie their thoughts. This will contribute to understanding of general patterns when the scope of study is extended to a national level.

2.2 Data

The semi-structured interview was taken under 5 participants from Thai K-pop youth fans. The interviewees were selected based on their activities based on K-pop and the pre-talking session to evaluate whether they are familiar to K-pop or not. The interviewees were aged between 18 and 25, and most were students. All participants joined a 10 to 15-minute-long interview session with prepared question. The interview was conducted in Thai to get deep information from them. The content of the interview is transcribed in Thai, then translated into English with the authorized rights from interviewees to check or identify the transcribed version of their interview information. Table 2 shows the demographic details of the interviewees being discussed in other parts of this research.

<Table 2. Demographic details of the interviewees>

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Occupation	Living Area
Ong	25	Male	Student	Bangkok
Best	22	Male	Student	Bangkok
Chokedee	24	Male	Private School Teacher	Lampang
Toon	25	Female	Student	Changmai
Maii	24	Female	Account Executive	Bangkok

Since this research requires personal identity to compare interviewees' opinions and arguments, the identity of interviewees will be publicized in the form of a pseudonym. This interview also conducted under the rights of the interviewees which becomes one of my concerns towards the ethnic of research conduction. Therefore, all of the interviewees agreed to giving the rights to publicize their information in the academic purpose and permitted their rights by reading the participant information sheet and giving sign on the consent form as well.

3. Thai youths' activities related to K-pop daily life

This section discusses some background in the perspectives of Thai youths towards K-pop which has an impact on their daily life literacy and news perceiving. The first question asks about their backgrounds about K-pop and how do they recall K-pop in their mind. During the high school period is the most mentioned time among interviewees to start getting to know what K-pop is. Since the trend of K-pop started with the first-generation idols (C. N. Kim, 2012) during the late 1990s such as H.O.T, Sechs Kies, S.E.S, Fin.K.L, etc., most of them started to recall the artist that quite famous in the past ten years which can be called the second-generation idols (C. N. Kim, 2012) after the Mid-2000s including SM Entertainment's TVXQ and Super Junior, etc. This also relates to the period of Korean pop music mentioned in Siriyuvasak and Shin's work (2007) that K-pop grew popular due to the introduction of music from 2003 to 2004.

"... I started getting to know K-pop from the artist called 'TVXQ'. I think both of their members ('Jung Yun-ho' and 'Kim Jae Joong') are very handsome and that made me feel crazy about them even I did not understand what they sang at all. ..." (Toon October 22, 2019)

Some of the respondents also recalled K-pop in other aspects such as the Korean dramas and the Korean TV series. In similarity to this statement, Ainslie (2016) also argues that Korean dramas and TV series are one of the most widely accessible elements of Hallyu and a very diverse audience is consuming this media nowadays.

3.1 SNS: new media of K-pop for Thai youths

When becomes daily life literacy and news perceiving, all of the interviewees are using various channels to access through the news and update from it. From Facebook, Twitter, Instagram to YouTube, all of these channels are the media channels that Thai youths can access. This can be presumed in the similarity to Jung's work (2014, p. \) that social media is now one of the most significant pop culture distribution channels, including the fan networks. Even one of the respondents mentioned that she used Twitter until stop using it because of addiction.

“... I basically use three channels: Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook. ... For Facebook and YouTube, when you subscribed to the pages or the channels of K-pop, then all that news will come up on my news feed. ...” (Chokedee October 22, 2019)

This is an important pattern of how Thai youths consuming K-pop as a transnational culture to Thai society. Its impact makes them starting to know what K-pop is. It can be seen clearly from the channels that Thai youths are using via K-pop are various and configured to many media forms including social networking sites and video- sharing sites (Jung, 2014). Through this perception of Thai youths consuming pattern emphasizes on how social interaction has an impact on them.

4. Thai youths' perspectives towards Thai artists in the Korean Music Industry

This section seeks to investigate on Thai youths' perspectives towards these people. As one of the tools to localize Asian markets, Thai people also become one of many foreigners who have chances to be debuted in the Korean music industry. Therefore, Thai youths as consumers of K-pop have many perspectives towards them. Firstly, all of the interviewees mentioned Nichkhun as the first Thai person who they recalled. Nichkhun in their perspectives is an artist who debuted with 2PM and did many events until it makes him widely known. Some of the interviewees also expressed that they felt proud of him as a very first person who became successful in South Korea's music market. In similarity to this argument, Kim (2017) also argues that Nichkhun attracted interest due to his background as a citizen of a developing country and became the turning point for Thai people to form a distinctive image that is separate from the uniform image of 'Southeast Asians' held by Koreans.

“... I think that everyone will think of the same person with me that is Nichkhun. ... I even feel so proud of him when he got accepted and debuted as a group, released many songs until he received many awards. ...” (Ong October 17, 2019)

“... I think that at that time, it is quite like a fever or Nichkhun's fever. When I knew that he is quite like a first person who got debuted in Korea, I paid attention to him more than before like a

hype in current trend at that time or especially when he (Nichkhun) had any events in Thailand. ...” (Best October 19, 2019)

Mentioning Nichkhun as the first Thai artist in Korean music industry portrays the image towards him as not only becoming a representative of Thai culture but also being the starting point of K-pop craze in Thailand. This can be seen clearly as an example of how K-pop makes an impact on Thai youths’ perspectives in the name of being a mutual feeling among Thai youths.

After that, the interviewees also discussed about the later debuted Thai artists in Korean music industry as the later generation of Thai people in South Korea’s market. Most of them agreed in the same way that they felt proud of them as becoming famous in Korean music industry is not an easy deal.

“... I think that Lisa is very famous among not only Thai people but also all around the world because of the number of followers on her Instagram is very high. I really feel proud of her. ...” (Toon October 22, 2019)

5. Thai youths’ perspectives on K-pop inspired Thai artists in Thai Music Industry

This section seeks to investigate on Thai youths’ perspectives towards these people. As K-pop becomes a world-class production system (C. N. Kim, 2012), Thai music industry also got inspired and collaborated with Korean music agency. This leads to the recently debuted bands or groups in Thai music industry such as TRINITY from 4Nologue Entertainment (2019) . Therefore, Thai youths as consumers of K-pop have many perspectives towards them.

Firstly, some of the interviewees mentioned that they barely have ideas towards them because of various reasons. Even one of my interviewees mentioned that she had no idea on any Thai idol groups. They have heard who they are but really did not follow or update any news of them. They also mentioned TRINITY as a group that they quite familiar with because this group contains members that also play their roles as actors in one of the famous entertainment agencies in Thailand.

“... For me, I know TRINITY because of their online and offline promotions towards their debut events. ...For one more thing that I want to add is TRINITY contains members who are much more famous than another group because TRINITY members also do the acting as well. ...” (Chokedee October 22, 2019)

After that, the interviewees also discussed about their perspectives on this trend of music in Thailand whether it is the K-pop’s impact or not. All of them totally agreed with this phenomenon as a transnational culture from Korea. I argue that this phenomenon is associated with Ryoo’s work as a cultural hybridization to Thai culture. Thai music industry is adapted itself as a local culture

agent and actor negotiated with global forms which leads to the constructions of their own cultural spaces (Ryoo, 2009).

“... I think that it is the K-pop impact because much of Thai people are K-pop fans as well ... So, Thai popular culture has to change or adapt itself in nowadays. ... ‘TRINITY’ or other current Thai groups are quite like a new trend to test whether it will be good at Thai pop music industry or not. ...” (Best October 19, 2019)

Some of the interviewees also mentioned about how similar from Korean popular culture to be adapted into Thai cultural context. Not only the style of production but the management including artists and promotions are mentioned as what they can see when observing to TRINITY.

“... I think that it is a direct impact from K-pop because it has an impact on these Thai group music styles, music videos, costumes or artist management. ... The music promotion also has a trace from K-pop such as media promotion. ... In sum, all of these factors are made by K-pop impact on Thai music industry. ...” (Chokedee October 22, 2019)

The opinions towards Thai artists in receiving and adapting Korean popular culture on their own production portraits an understanding Thai youths’ perspective on how they consumed media. The pattern of how they perceive K-pop effects themselves in the way of being exposed to Thai music industry. Even the new trend of Thai music industry also becomes an inferior culture when compared to K-pop perceiving audiences as a mainstream preference. This shows the subordinating cultural consuming patterns among them which can indicate the cultural changes Thai society is facing.

Lastly, the interviewees discussed about the possibility of becoming famous or widely known by comparing Thai people who are working in Korean music industry and Thai people who working with Korean-like patterns and styles of production in Thai music industry. None of them disagreed and they felt that Thai people who are working in Korean music industry will be more famous in a certain point.

“... I think it is going to be Thai people who are working in Korean music industry for sure because of many obvious reasons. ...” (Maii October 21, 2019)

The reasons based on their comments towards this argument are miscellaneous. One of the most common reasons is the different craze between Korean popular culture and Thai popular culture. K-pop is treated as a transnational culture; hence this will support the artists’ popularity in the international level. In contrast, Thai culture is not mainly focused on music industry and

sending cultural products that much wider to outside when compare to Korea's situation. Therefore, it can be predicted that Thai artists working in Thai music industry will not become that famous when compared to the mentioned level.

"... K-pop is a transnational culture with its impact is all around the world. For example, Lisa is Thai but she is famous all around the world but the artists in Thai are having their own markets only for Thai people. So, Thai people who are working in Korean music industry are more famous and successful ..." (Maii October 21, 2019)

The bond of sympathy between artists and fans also mentioned in this argument. This means the construction between fans and artists become a special and close relationship due to the shared feeling under the same nationality. This statement indicates the implications of Thai nationalism (Ainslie, 2016) that have an impact on the perception of Thai youths towards how Thai artists working in Korean music industry can be widely known.

"... Moreover, when we see the group that contains Thai members, we will feel more familiar because of Thai nationality which I think many people are also related to this point as well. ... We would see many quotes like Thai people are second to none so that we are so proud of them ..." (Maii October 21, 2019)

All in all, the investigation on Thai youths' perspectives towards two groups of people shows the different aspects of artists in different systems that they belonged to. Even they are Thai but different contexts and environments have impacts on what do people think about and predict the possibility of becoming famous or widely known. K-pop impact has been illustrated not only on the Thai artists working in Korean music industry, but it also becomes an inspiration for Thai music industry recently as well.

6. Conclusion

In sum, the images of Thai artists in Korean music industry are illustrated a mutual feeling among themselves as a shared feeling of being Thai in Korean music industry. Because they become one of many foreigners who have chances to be debuted in Korean music industry, understanding Thai youths' perspectives towards them will make the understanding of K-pop's aspect clearer. Moreover, Thai youths shared their positive points of view in becoming successful artists, it has to depend on many aspects including major entertainment agencies' active strategies and management. Following with Howard and Lekakul (2018) and Kim (M. S. Kim, 2012)'s statement, this research can approve that the way of how K-pop can penetrate to fans' heart by producing talented idols to the public eyes. This emphasizes on how the 'soft power' theory of Korea can

create a certain impact to overseas, including Thailand as one of many countries receiving this transnational culture's impact.

I argue that understanding Thai youths' perspectives towards them can elicit the Korean Wave phenomenon in the international level. As Korean wave is spreading throughout the world, becoming an idol in Korean music industry is not an easy deal to foreigners. Following Kim's statement (2017), Thai idols in Korean music industry strive to create a good image of the Thai people in Koreans. As a result, they were able to induce the Korean public to hold an admiration and appreciation for them, as well as foster greater interest in visiting and knowing more about Thailand. Therefore, this study points out that Thai K-pop fans are sharing the feeling of being Thai with the perceived artists. This leads to understand the patterns of how fans perceived their favorite idols and built up the image of being a model in their perspectives.

Second, besides the idols and the craze of becoming idols, another aspect of K-pop is being understood as a cultural hybridization to other cultures. Therefore, Thai culture becomes more diverse in many aspects including the music industry. This study found that Thai youths treated the K-pop-inspired entertainers in Thai music industry as a second priority. They barely consumed their products and some even knew who the entertainers are. They even predicted that when compared two groups of Thai people in order to find out who will be more famous, all of them chose the one who being active in Korean music industry. I argue that understanding Thai youths' perspectives on K-pop-inspired Thai artists in Thai Music Industry depicts the distinction between the "original" and the "received" culture as above mentioned. This study illustrates that even there is the enhancement of K-pop in Thai music industry, but it does not impact on the reputation of being inspired based on Thai youths' views. This study also shows the consuming patterns of Thai youths to describe why Thai music industry is not that much achieved in Thailand's situation. This can be benefit to the future development on Thai music industry to investigate more on how they can survive and strike in the music industry. However, it would be overreaching to argue that Thai music industry will not be successful under these circumstances. The investigation on Thai youths' perspectives towards two groups of people shows the different aspects of artists in different system that they belonged to. So that it is the essential thing to Thai music industry to adapt and change itself more to survive under the changing environments as well. Under different context and environment also have impacts on what do people react to the media. These changes are meaningful for regional cultural exchanges (Shim, 2008) as the dialogue of Thai music industry has to face with.

This study has a few limitations that should be considered by subsequent studies. First, this paper looks through the interview on the Thai youths' perspectives which is subjective to differentiate. Since the interview cannot be represented the overall Thai youths' perception and the data only provide preliminary information for a large-scale study, other methods such as questionnaires should be practiced for more data in the study in the future. Therefore, it will be useful for further study on other subjects such as the perspectives on adult or working people about K-pop in Thailand's situation. This will broaden the perception on Thai artists in Korean music industry to other groups of audience whether they consider these idols in any particular way or not. which will be deeper into this area.

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