



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Statistical Analysis of the Influence of K-Pop Music on the Attitude and Preferences of Undergraduate Students

Ting Tin Tin^{1*}, Kee Wen Yi², Heng Ze Xiang³, Kong Chau Yong⁴, Teng Jie Hong⁵, Wan Nor Al-Ashekin Wan Husin⁶, Ali Aitizaz⁷, Lee Kuok Tiung^{8*}, Ayodeji Olalekan Salau^{9a,9b}, Umar Farooq Khattak¹⁰, Yasin Ahmed Siddiqui¹¹

^{1,6,9}Faculty of Data Science and Information Technology, INTI International University, Nilai 71800, Malaysia

²⁻⁵Faculty of Computing and Information Technology, Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

⁷School of technology, Asia Pacific University, Malaysia

⁸Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, 88400 Kota Kinabalu, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia

^{9a}Department of Electrical/Electronics and Computer Engineering, Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

^{9b}Saveetha School of Engineering, Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

¹⁰School of IT, UNITAR International University, Malaysia

¹¹School of Business, Asia Pacific University, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

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K-pop, or Korean pop music, is a genre that began in South Korea and has since grown in popularity around the world. It is distinguished by catchy songs, choreographed dance routines, and visually stunning performances. Many people, especially the younger generation, may already have been familiar with this specific genre due to the massive popularity it has gained over the years. However, although it is widely spread throughout the globe, there is still an issue faced by K-pop. The major problem facing K-pop influence is language barriers and lack of distribution channels. Therefore, our objective of this statistical research is to explore how exposure to K-pop music affects attitudes and preferences. Google forms filled with questionnaires are distributed to collect data for this research. A total of 170 TARUMT students responded to our forms. IBM SPSS Statistic 23 and IBM SPSS Amos 26 were the tools used to perform the data analysis. This statistical research contributes to a broader understanding of how global cultural phenomena such as K-pop music intersect with local contexts and individual experiences, highlighting the multifaceted nature of cultural influence in contemporary society.

*Corresponding Author

tintin.ting@newinti.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

This statistical research aims to explore how exposure to K-pop music affects TARUMT students' attitudes and preferences. This study attempts to determine how K-pop music influences various aspects of students' lives, including cultural preferences, entertainment choices, fashion trends, language acquisition, and social interactions, given its immense popularity, especially among younger groups. With TARUMT students as its target population, the study attempts to shed light on how exposure to K-pop music affects students' opinions and preferences in various domains.

The younger generation's perceptions of K-pop culture are greatly influenced by social media, particularly in times such as pandemic lockdowns (Manan et al., 2022; Fadhila, Z., 2021). This study focuses on the effects of exposure to K-pop music on the cultural preferences, entertainment choices, language acquisition, and social interactions of TARUMT students. The main sources of this exposure are social media and fan activities (Alemu et al., 2024). To understand the influence of K-pop music on students' attitudes and preferences, the research uses a statistical analytic approach. This approach adds significant value to the fields of cultural studies and the consumption of youth media.

This problem statement covers a gap in the literature by focusing on TARUMT student in particular, a group that is probably greatly influenced by popular culture like K-pop. Knowing how K-pop music affects cultural preferences, entertainment choices, and social interactions can be useful information for media companies, educational institutions, and advertisers aiming to reach this market. Furthermore, investigating the possible benefits of exposure to K-pop music for language acquisition, specifically, Korean proficiency, brings a distinct perspective to the research and may help clarify the significance of music in the language learning process for young adults.

1.1 Problem Statement

The major problem facing K-pop influence is language barriers and lack of distribution channels. Except for South and North Korea, other countries outside these two countries do not really have many people who speak the Korean language. That is why most people find it difficult to understand the music lyrics. The other issue is the lack of distribution channels. Although K-pop is pretty widespread these days, there are still limits to the type of content countries put out. Take Malaysia as an example; a lot of Malaysians know K-pop and are obsessed with it, but most channels here will put out content related to our main three races instead of foreign content like K-pop.

1.5 Research Contribution

This study presents a comprehensive statistical analysis of the influence of K-pop music on attitudes and preferences of TARUMT students. By conducting a research on a representative sample of students from the university TARUMT, our objective was to discover the impact of K-pop music on their attitudes, genre preferences, artist choices, and cultural inclinations. Our findings reveal nuanced insights into the diverse spectrum of attitudes toward K-pop music among TARUMT students, ranging from enthusiastic fandom to the audio and visual sources of the overall K-pop industry. Additionally, the study illustrates the specific genres, artists, and cultural elements of K-pop that resonate the most with the TARUMT students, shedding light on the underlying factors that shape their preferences. These results contribute to a broader understanding of how global cultural phenomena such as K-pop music intersect with local contexts and individual experiences, highlighting the multifaceted nature of cultural influence in contemporary society.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Korean pop, sometimes known as K-pop, has become a global phenomenon in entertainment and culture. K-pop culture has been widely accepted by young people, to the point where it is now considered their cultural identity. This has happened around the world and especially among TARUMT students. Understanding which sources is the main reason why TARUMT students into K-pop is essential for both scholars and practitioners in the field of cultural studies and marketing. This review of the literature aims to examine the impact of K-pop audio and visual sources on the attitudes and preferences of students at TARUMT (Tunku Abdul Rahman University Management College), while also exploring the moderating roles of self-efficacy, peer influence, and media influence.

Audio and visual sources:

Several studies have highlighted that music has been shown to improve study efficiency and there are various genres to choose from. However, music might hinder performance on complex activities while improving performance in simpler ones (Gonzalez & Aiello, 2019). For example, K-Pop could spread throughout the world because many people liked the persistence of their idols when they were trainees years before debut, the songs that were created were very inspiring and motivating, the singers could provide positive energy or provide examples of good behavior where this can have a good impact on fans, the music is pleasant to hear, good vocals and stunning, interesting and different performances and choreography (Lestari & Daulay, 2023).

H1: K-pop audio sources positively affect the attitude of TARUMT students towards K-pop music.

H2: K-pop audio sources positively affect TARUMT students' preferences toward K-pop music.

Several studies support the idea that visual sources play a crucial role in shaping attitudes and preferences toward K-pop music. For example, previous research suggests that the widespread appeal of K-pop can be attributed to a combination of factors, including the talent of the singers, their actions and facial expressions (Lestari & Daulay, 2023). Furthermore, the visual aspects of K-pop, such as music videos, choreography, and fashion, are integral to its allure and popularity.

H3: The visual sources positively affect the attitude of TARUMT students toward K-pop music

H4: Visual sources positively affect the preferences of TARUMT students towards K-pop music

Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy defines a person's beliefs in their ability to learn successfully, achieve a goal, meet challenges or perform a task. (Dung Cabaldon, 2020). The positive impact felt by respondents who like K-Pop, among others, is wanting to learn a new language such as English or Korean, saving diligently, feeling happy, feeling that their idol supports whatever they do, opening their own business, knowing and learning about new cultures, seeing the struggle and persistence of their idols to achieve their dreams so they can encourage themselves, get moral lessons through songs or Korean dramas, expand friendships both inside and outside Indonesia, reduce stress, manage savings, become more confident, become khan entertainment when there is a lot of work, and can learn to respect time (Lestari & Daulay, 2023; Demilie Melese et al., 2024).

H5: Self-efficacy moderates the connection between audio sources and the preferences of TARUMT students toward K-pop.

H6: Self-efficacy negatively moderates the connection between visual sources and the preferences of TARUMT students toward K-pop.

H7: Self-efficacy positively moderates the connection between the attitudes and preferences of TARUMT students towards K-pop

Peer Influence

According to a previous study, Friends significantly influence the life of a young person because they are the closest and spend most of their time with them (Shahrudin et al., 2018). Particularly relevant to our discussion is the influence of friends on the acceptance and adoption of K-pop culture. It is often observed that individuals may be more inclined to embrace K-pop if their peers are actively engaged with the genre, suggesting a significant role for peer influence in cultural consumption.

Media influence

Social media has an impact on K-pop culture among young people, and students relied heavily on it throughout the pandemic. Students could only go to certain places to gain guidance and information due to the period of movement control order period (Manan et al., 2022). During this time, social media exposure can occur quickly. It cannot be argued that social media is an ideal venue for promoting K-pop culture. Social media has evolved into a platform for K-pop culture followers, particularly fans of K-pop groups, to connect with others who share their interests. These fanbase accounts will provide the needed information (Fadhila, Z. 2021).

One way fans show their love for their idols is to watch the content alias works from the idol, which they can get on a variety of channels such as YouTube, Spotify, and others. In fact, when their idols are nominated for awards or recognition, their fans are willing to watch for hours or vote many times to get the idol to win. Even if that means sacrificing a lot of the time they have (Lestari & Daulay, 2023).

Attitude and preferences

Based on a previous study, Hallajow (2018), there is a connection between attitude and identity building. Attitude is related to cultural identification, since a person's attitudes influence whether they can embrace a new culture as their own. However, Chaniago et al. (2018) stated that Hijaber metal (Women who wear hijab and like metal music) wear metal music fashion, but they retain their identity and attitudes Muslim women. This suggests that the influence of cultural identification

is determined by the individual's mindset. Acceptance of cultural identity is simple if a person's attitude, which includes emotions, beliefs, and behaviours (Cherry, 2021), is weak.

Apart from the positive impact, the interviewees also felt the negative impact of liking K-Pop such as often losing track of time, being more extravagant, playing social media too long, being lazy to do something because you are too late watching your idol's content, forgetting other priorities, being consumptive, overimagining, focusing more on foreign culture than your own culture, addiction buying merchandise, delaying worship, and being impulsive. (Lestari & Daulay, 2023).

Some of them are aware that purchasing quotas for streaming idol content and purchasing items is wasteful, but they explain that this is merely for entertainment and entertainment when they are tired of their current routine, implying that they live hedonistically. The interviewees who said their behaviour was consumptive thought that because when they bought merchandise, they spent a lot of money, felt obligated to buy every time their idol took out merchandise, purchased something that was not a need but a wish, and became more curious about things they had never seen before owned and created a sense of frantic buying. (Lestari & Daulay, 2023). Other than that, some even go to the extent of doing things like fan labor. Fan labor is when fans do things to the success of contribute to their favorite idols (Sun, 2020). For instance, fans will rent a whole cafe just to celebrate their idol's birthday and promote their favorite idol at the same time.

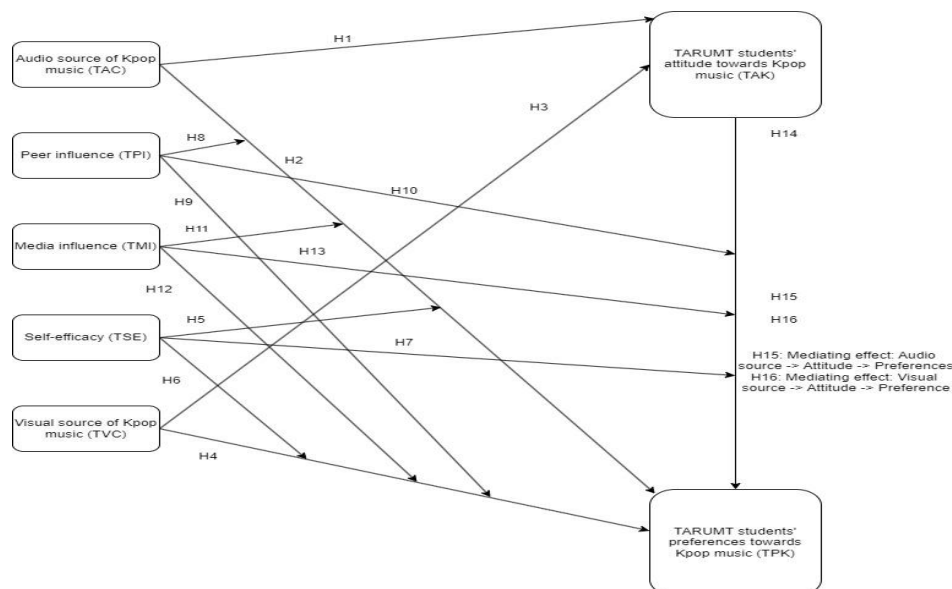


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is carried out at Tunku Abdul Rahman University (TAR UMT), and there is an estimated 18,000 population in this university. In this research, we conducted a random sample from a university of 18,000. The method we use to collect data is through data collection. The method we have used to conduct this research is to collect data through questionnaires. We distributed questionnaires with the help of Google Forms to TAR UMT students all over the campus to fill out. We shared the survey through various types of channels, WhatsApp messaging, Instagram, WeChat, and got respondents to fill the survey face-to-face. We collected a total of 170 students to complete this research. The questionnaire we distributed consisted of five options for the students to fill in for each question. There are a total of 63 questions. The questions we used are from an article by Ryu et al., 2018. The survey will be evaluated using a Likert 5-point scale (1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Neutral; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree). Our survey only involves questionnaires with scalable answers, which prove that this is a quantitative survey. These options allow students to rate their preference and attitude towards K-pop. Our questionnaire is divided into 8 sections, as shown in Table 1. Hypotheses are verified through path analysis. Regression analysis is the method that we use to verify the relationship between our components. We paired the regression weight with the p-value. The process was carried out using IBM SPSS Statistics 23 and IBM SPSS AMOS 26 tools (Yi et al., 2022; Ting et al., 2024).

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Respondent demographics

According to Table 2, most of the responses come from students whose ages are between 18 and 25 years. The percentage between male and female students is the same, 50% for females and 50% for male students.

Table 2. Demographics of the respondents.

	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Age		
17years and below	7	4.1
18-25	162	95.3
26-30	1	0.60
31years and above	0	0
Gender		
Male	85	50
Female	85	50
Total	170	100

Validity and reliability analyzes were performed using AMOS 23 and 26 confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in Table 4. All the standard deviation, mean, and Cronbach Alpha (CA) values calculated produced results that were acceptable (Black et al., 2006). Cronbach's alpha is usually used to determine the internal consistency dependability of a scale or test. Displays the degree to which the items on the scale are correlated with each other, indicating how consistently the items assess the same underlying concept or trait.

Table 4. Descriptive, validity, and reliability statistics.

Code	Question	Mean	Std.Dev	CA
Audio sources				
AC1	Korean singers express emotions well.	3.694	0.8908	AC1
AC2	The voices of Korean singers are nice to hear	3.824	0.8659	AC2
AC3	The range of voice of Korean singers is wide.	3.753	0.9472	AC3
AC4	The singing skills are well-harmonized	3.747	0.9235	AC4
AC5	K-pop melody matches well with lyrics	3.753	0.9024	AC5
AC6	K-pop melody is easy to sing	3.494	1.0277	AC6
AC7	K-pop melody matches well with voice	3.841	0.8862	AC7
AC8	K-pop melody is simple	3.376	1.0318	AC8
AC9	K-pop melody is easy to memorize	3.676	1.1126	AC9
AC10	Korean singers' voices show emotion a lot	3.541	1.0269	AC10
AC11	Korean singers' music tells my mood well	3.547	1.0990	AC11
AC12	Korean singers' voices evoke empathy	3.471	1.0669	AC12
AC13	Korean singers' voices dominate or overwhelm me	3.412	1.0239	AC13
AC14	K-pop lyrics are easy to memorize	3.365	1.1497	AC14
Visual sources				0.936

VC1	Korean singers' performance are skillful	3.941	0.9465	
VC2	The styles of Korean singers match well with their music	3.918	0.7951	
VC3	Korean singers' styles are satisfiable	3.888	0.9130	
VC4	Korean singers' performances are always consistent with	3.806	0.9121	
VC5	the music	3.841	0.8795	
VC6	Korean singers' performances express their skills	3.988	0.9166	
VC7	dynamically	3.788	0.9742	
VC8	Korean singers' styles look professional	4.194	0.9186	
VC9	Korean singers' performances are unique and unusual	3.965	0.9224	
VC10	Korean singers are handsome or beautiful	3.647	1.0229	
VC11	Korean singers have good impression	3.682	0.9816	
VC12	Korean singers' faces have strong characteristics	3.788	0.9307	
VC13	Korean singers look warm and friendly	3.741	1.0223	
	Korean singers' performances dominate and overwhelm the stages			
	Korean singers' styles is very unique			
Attitude toward K-pop				0.958
AK1	Listening to K-pop is familiar to me	3.629	1.1452	
AK2	I like to listen to K-pop	3.665	1.1561	
AK3	Listening to K-pop is comfortable for me	3.688	1.1729	
AK4	Listening to K-pop is valuable to me	3.482	1.1473	
AK5	I usually pay attention to K-pop's current situation	3.106	1.3370	
AK6	I actively look for and read news articles about K-pop	2.929	1.3828	
AK7	I usually collect the information on K-pop	2.871	1.3437	
AK8	Having the newest K-pop commodity is meaningful	2.947	1.2930	
AK9	Listening to K-pop is pleasing to me	3.524	1.1877	
AK10	I listen every time I hear K-pop playing	3.300	1.3183	
Preferences toward K-pop				0.922
PK1	I often purchase K-pop products	2.194	1.3203	
PK2	I can encourage my friends to purchase K-pop products	2.188	1.3674	
PK3	K-pop products make me happy	2.541	1.3372	
PK4	I would regret it if I do not purchase K-pop products	2.165	1.2904	
PK5	Listening to K-pop or looking at K-pop singers through pictures makes me happy	2.918	1.3864	
Peer influence				0.896
PI1	I usually get the K-pop news from my friends	3.035	1.2351	
PI2	My friends often discuss about K-pop information	3.088	1.3753	
PI3	My friends and I exchange K-pop news reported	2.724	1.3717	
PI4	If my friends envy K-pop products that I buy, I will be more	2.241	1.3034	
PI5	likely to buy it	2.341	1.3505	
PI6	If my friends around me do not like K-pop, I would not also like it	2.165	1.3310	
	If I buy K-pop products that anyone else does not have, my friends will envy me			
Media Influence				0.880

MI1	If famous people do not like Korea, I would not like K-pop	2.118	1.3226	
MI2	If a group I am joining does not like Korea, I would not like	2.147	1.3084	
MI3	K-pop	2.376	1.3277	
MI4	If media shows bad opinions on Korea, I would not like K-	2.829	1.2965	
MI5	pop	3.406	1.3257	
MI6	If Koreans are rude to my countrymates, I would not like	2.641	1.3034	
	K-pop			
	I usually use media to get information of K-pop			
	If Korean policy is poor for my country, I would not like K-			
	pop			
Self-Efficacy				0.897
SE1	K-pop puts me in a good mood	3.676	1.0692	
SE2	K-pop initiates positive and comfortable emotions to me	3.547	1.0773	
SE3	K-pop helps me forget my problems and worries	3.365	1.1600	
SE4	K-pop helps me perceive my thoughts and feelings more	3.347	1.1880	
SE5	intensely	3.724	1.1041	
SE6	I do not care others' opinions on K-pop	3.282	1.0616	
SE7	I am an important person in my group	3.424	1.2439	
	Listening to K-pop is one of my happiness			

Referring to the table below, Table 5 reveals how strongly two different variables are related to each other. A positive correlation coefficient indicates a direct relationship as one variable increases; the other tends to increase, whereas a negative correlation coefficient indicates an inverse relationship. According to the table, both audio and visual have the highest correlation. This indicates that these two variables are difficult to separate and depend on each other. For example, if a TARUMT student likes K-pop because of its music and melody, then their liking will also be influenced by the whole visual representation of K-pop. On the other hand, visuals and media have a low correlation. This means that if the student is attracted by the visuals of K-pop, they will unlikely be affected by the disliking of K-pop.

Table 5. Correlation matrix

	Peer	Audio	Visual	Attitude	Prefer	Media	Efficacy
PEER	1.000**						
AUDIO	0.448**	1.000**					
VISUAL	0.349**	0.797**	1.000**				
ATTITUDE	0.575**	0.709**	0.565**	1.000**			
PREFER	0.761**	0.474**	0.322**	0.663**	1.000**		
MEDIA	0.672**	0.339**	0.240**	0.376**	0.576**	1.000**	
EFFICACY	0.574**	0.739**	0.617**	0.791**	0.578**	0.427**	1.000**

sig < 0.001**

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Structural equation modeling (SEM) via AMOS 26 was used for hypothesis testing; the overall model results in Table 6 show that most of the hypotheses are supported, except for four hypotheses H5, H8, H11, and H12. Peer influence,, media influence and self-efficacy positively moderate between audio source and preference and between attitude and preference. However, all three peer influence,, media influence and self-efficacy do not have a positive moderating effect between visual source and preference. However, both audio sources positively influence both attitude and preference, making the relationship strong.

Table 6. Summary of hypotheses results.

	Hypothesis Statement	R	Overall
H1	K-pop audio sources positively affect the attitude of TARUMT students towards K-pop music.	0.762**	Support ed
H2	K-pop's audio sources positively affects TARUMT students' preferences toward K-pop music.	0.279**	Support ed
H3	K-pop's visual sources positively affects TARUMT students' attitude towards K-pop music	0.659**	
H4	The visual sources positively affect the preferences of TARUMT students toward K-pop music	*	Support ed
H5	Self-efficacy moderates the connection between audio sources and the preferences of TARUMT students toward K-pop	0.206**	Support ed
H6	Self-efficacy negatively moderates the connection between visual sources and the preferences of TARUMT students toward K-pop	0.044	
H7	Self-efficacy positively moderates the connection between the attitudes and preferences of TARUMT students towards K-pop	-0.106*	Rejected
H8	Peer influence moderates the connection between audio sources and TARUMT students' preferences toward K-pop	0.235**	Support ed
H9	Peer influence negatively moderates the connection between TARUMT students' preferences toward K-pop and visual sources	*	Support ed
H10	Peer influence positively moderates the connection between TARUMT students' attitudes and preferences toward K-pop.	0.043	
H11	Media influence moderates the connection between audio sources and TARUMT students' preferences toward K-pop	-0.089*	Rejected
H12	The influence negatively moderates the connection between visual sources and TARUMT students' preferences toward K-pop.	0.560**	Support ed
H13	The influence positively moderates the connection between the attitudes and preferences of the TARUMT students about K-pop music.	0.029	Support ed
H14	The attitudes of TARUMT students' attitudes toward K-pop positively affect preferences toward K-pop	-0.077	Rejected
H15	TARUMT students toward K-pop mediates the connection between audio sources and their preferences toward K-pop	0.406**	Rejected
H16	TARUMT students' attitudes toward K-pop mediates the connection between visual sources and their preferences toward K-pop	0.363**	Support ed
H17		*	Support ed
H18		0.478**	Support ed
H19		*	Support ed
H20		0.312**	Support ed
H21		*	Support ed

p < 0.05 *, p < 0.001 ***

The preferences of TARUMT students for K-pop are correlated with audio sources, but the relationship is moderated by self-efficacy, according to hypothesis H5, which was rejected ($p > 0.05$). The reason for this rejection could be due to various factors such as methodological limits, the complexity of moderation effects, the limitations in self-efficacy measurement, and the characteristics of the student sample (Cabaldon et al., 2023).

Furthermore, hypothesis H8 which proposed that the association between audio sources and the preferences of the TARUMT students for K-pop is moderated by peer influence was rejected since the p-value was greater than 0.05. Shahrudin et al. (2018) highlighted the considerable influence of friends on adolescents due to their close relationship and time spent together; therefore, this rejection may have been due to limits in how peer influence was quantified. Peer influence is known to have an impact on cultural consumption, including K-pop acceptance, but the way it was implemented in this study may not have fully captured how it moderates the relationship between audio sources and K-pop preferences among TARUMT students. Although people around TARUMT students do not prefer the idea of K-pop, once they have heard or experienced the audio source of K-pop, they will not be easily influenced.

On top of that, the two hypotheses that were rejected were H11 and H12, which suggested that the influence of the media moderates the relationship between the preferences of the TARUMT students towards K-pop and their audio and visual sources, respectively. According to Manan et al. (2022) and Fadhila, Z. (2021), social networks had a significant influence on K-pop culture during the pandemic, which may have contributed to rejection. The specific implementation of media influence in this study may not have adequately captured its moderating effect on the relationship between audio and visual sources and K-pop preferences among TARUMT students, resulting in the rejection of both hypotheses, even though social media is a powerful platform to introduce people to K-pop culture and cultivating fan communities. The relationship between the preferences of the students of TARUMT for K-pop and its audio and visual sources may not be affected by the influence of the media. Once students are drawn to the attractive aspects of K-pop, such as its visual and audio sources, they are unable to change their tastes in the face of influence from outside media.

With AMOS 23, both mediating relationships, which are attitude mediators between audio and preference, attitude mediators between visual and preference, were supported by having a p-value lower than 0.05 as shown in Table 6. However, according to TARUMT students, the visual source of K-pop does not play a significant role in influencing them. With the standardized values obtained, two of the three main factors in this investigation are peer influence ($Z_{\text{visual preference}} = -0.129$) and self-efficacy ($Z_{\text{visual preference}} = -0.235$) that states that the visual source can be easily influenced; it can be known that the visual sources are different compared to the audio source with all positive values. It means that although the visual source of K-pop does influence their preference towards K-pop, other factors like peer influence and self-efficacy will affect the relationship between the visuals and their preference in K-pop.

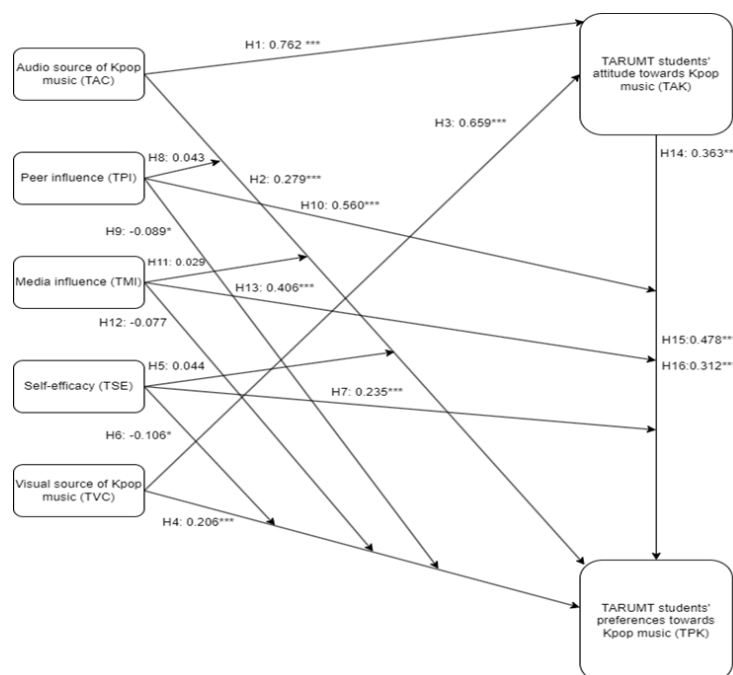


Figure 2: Overall SEM result

In conclusion, the SEM analysis provided support for several hypotheses regarding the relationships between K-pop sources, individual characteristics, and TARUMT students' attitudes and preferences toward K-pop music. Self-efficacy and peer influence demonstrated mixed findings as moderators, while media influence significantly moderates the relationship between attitudes and preferences toward K-pop. These findings contribute to the understanding of the factors that influence K-pop consumption among TARUMT students.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, there are some limitations and directions for future research that can be done. The first limitation is the coverage of the sample. Although this is only a TARUMT student study, we can compare with different universities as well, including more opinions from others is a value-adding direction. Universities such as Sunway University, Taylors University, and other universities are also emerging markets for K-pop.

The second constraint is its cross-sectional nature. At this point in its evolution, K-pop is releasing songs on a regular basis from both individual artists and K-pop group subunits. Taeyeon of Girls' Generation, whose powerful voice has propelled her to the top of the charts and surpassed Girls' Generation, the best-selling female group, in sales, and Taemin of SHINee, whose exceptional dancing abilities showcase his distinct musical style. These solo acts should be considered since they predominantly focus on one of the two sources rather than both, which may influence opinions of what K-pop is as it evolves.

Examining the same data from a different angle is another possible avenue for this inquiry. Since there are not many quantitative survey-based K-pop studies, there are plenty of opportunities for related research and discussion starters. In addition to SEM, other techniques that can be used to deepen the academic and practical debate on the subject include cluster analysis, which analyzes potential groups that influence K-pop market segmentation and targeting decisions (Black et al., 2006).

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