

The Reality Behind the Fantasy of K-dramas: An Analysis of Indian Fans

Research Purpose

This paper aims to create awareness about how the media influences perceptions of viewers worldwide, specifically, how the gap between K-dramas and the current situation in Korea affects the way Indian fans view Korean men, love and ideal relationships. Korean society continues to see an increase in gender-based violence and relationship abuse targeting women, but there is also a great increase in the number of K-drama fans.

Issues examined include:

- Beliefs regarding feminism, sexism
- Korean popular culture and its influence on Indians
- Recognition of the gap between fiction and reality

Survey Quotes and Additional Results

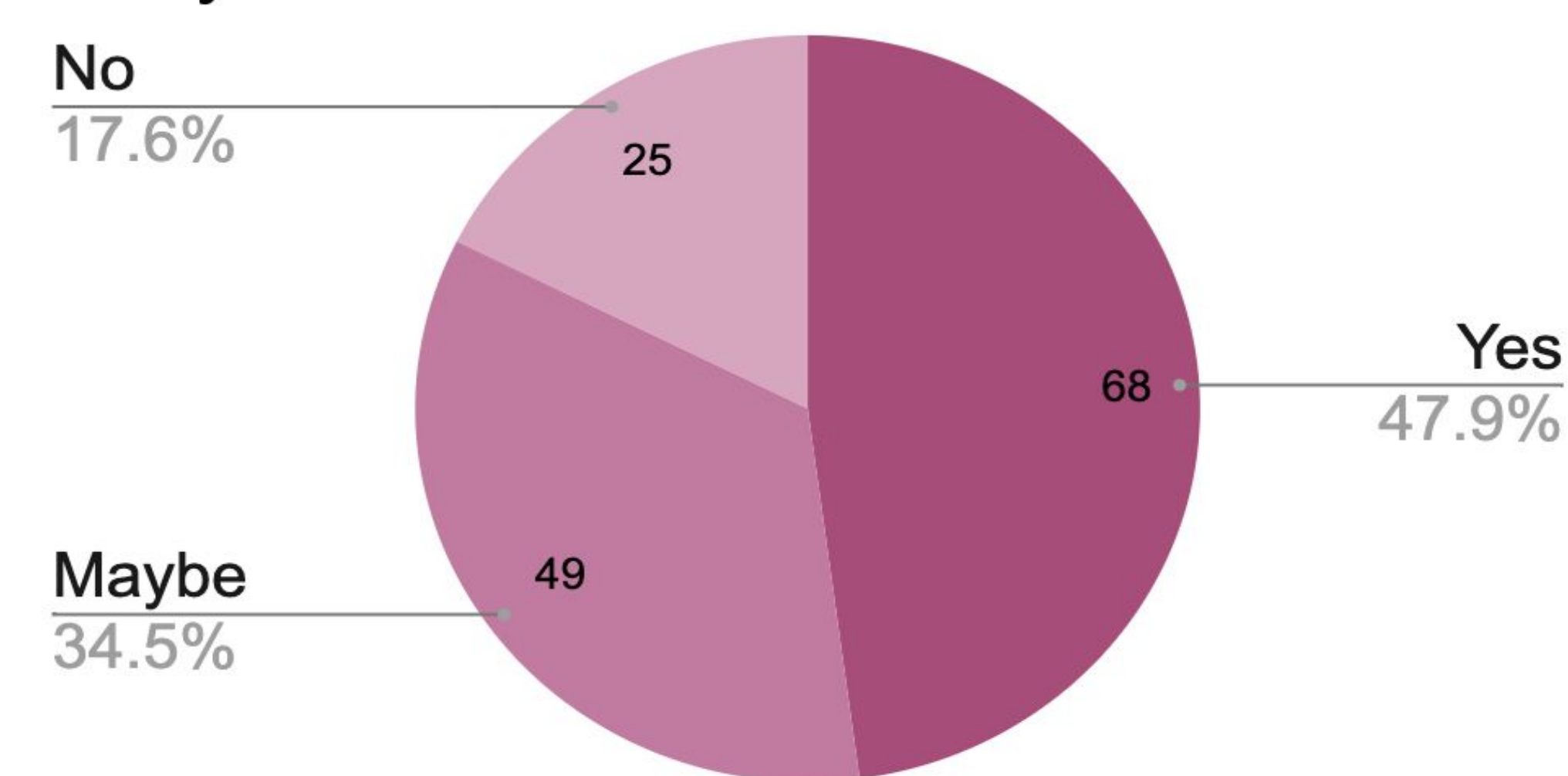
Beauty: “After watching the drama ‘*My ID is Gangnam Beauty*’, I wanted to get plastic surgery...but I changed my mind because of BTS (K-pop boy group)... they taught me to love yourself as you are.”

Preference in partners: “I always wish for a handsome guy with good dressing sense...a gentleman whose sweet gestures would make me fall in love with him.”

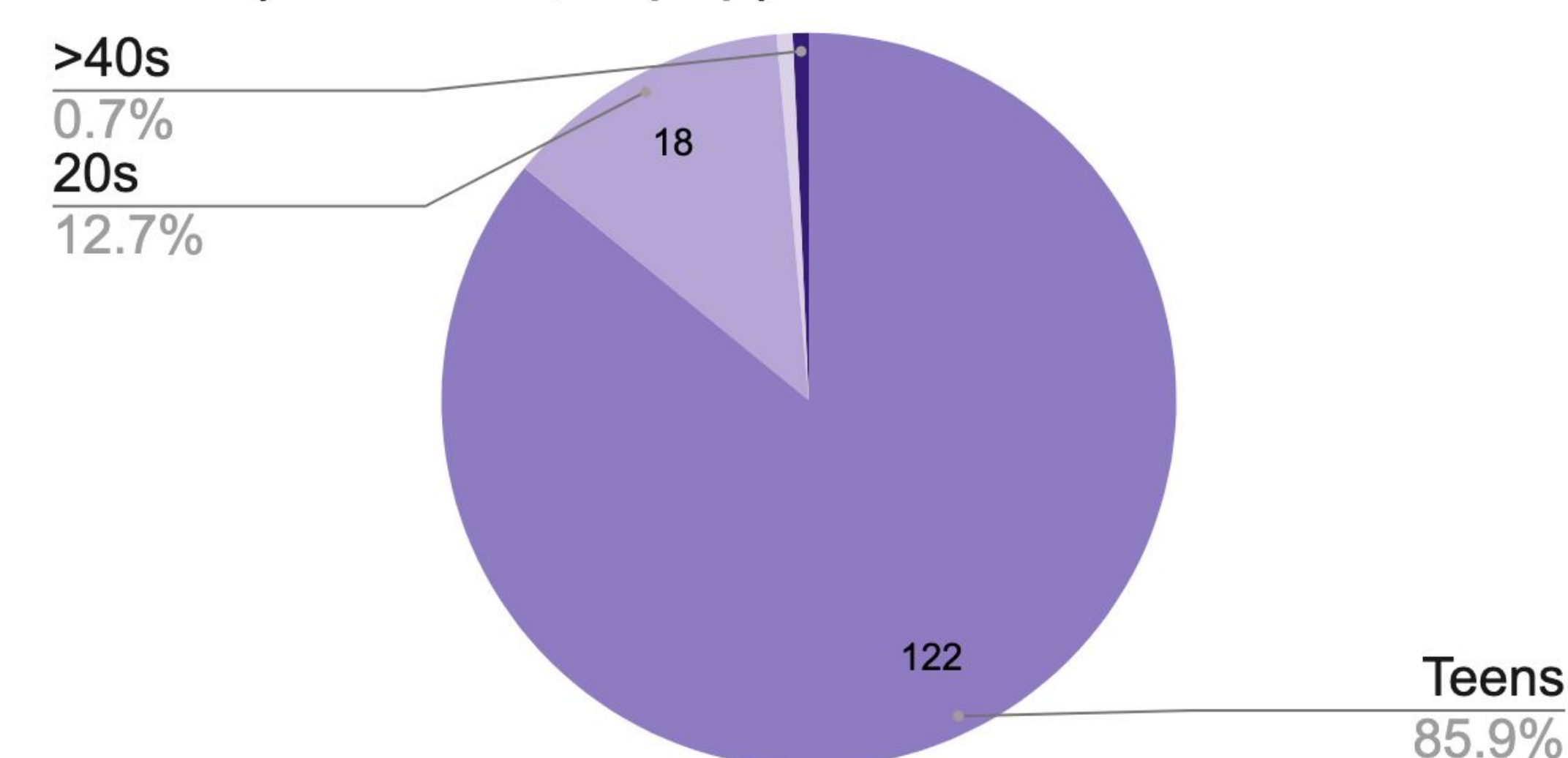
“K-dramas have a cute love story and it seems *magical* watching them.”

Overall: “I like guys that do little things for girls in K-dramas. Their kiss scenes seem gentle and comforting, exactly what I wish for. How they confess their love to each other in drama. How they stick only to the one they love. Their dating style, eating street food, nothing fancy... I love that. I want all that...”

Are you a feminist?



From what age did you get into Korean culture(K-dramas, K-pop)?



Methods

A survey was circulated among Indian fans of Korean pop culture. There were a total of **142 responses**, with **95%** identifying as **female**, **81 participants in their 20s** and **59 in their teens**. The survey determined that:

- Fans fantasized about the perfect (Korean) man, the ideal relationship and love, influenced by K-dramas.
- Style, makeup and fashion in K-dramas are coveted
- Almost **80%** are **learning or want to learn Korean language**
- Personal beliefs about feminism and sexism don't affect their preference for the Korean men and the ideal romance they see in dramas
- Koreans are fascinated by how passionate international fans are; interviews with Koreans revealed how they also acknowledge the illusion fans have of Korean men

Conclusion

The Korean drama industry is becoming more well-known thanks to their good looking actors, “true love” plots and the concept of the “perfect guy”.

It is inevitable that viewers of a certain content will form a biased opinion, but it is important to distinguish the truth from fiction. What used to exist as the “**American dream**” has been replaced by the “**Korean dream**” for Indian fans of Korean culture.

I hope to encourage viewers of any kind of popular culture to be socially and culturally aware when engaging with content on a global scale.