

# Pop Culture & The Cities:

The Power of K-Wave in City Branding

***Presented by:***

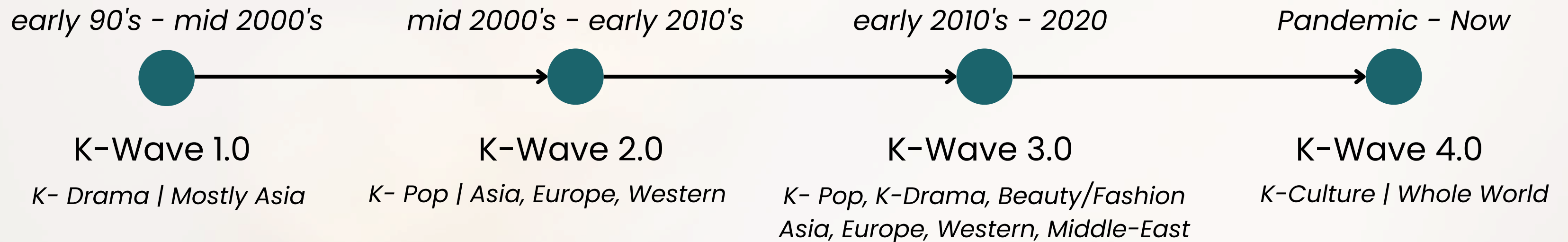
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# Introduction

## Global rise of Korean pop culture (K-pop, K-dramas, K-food, etc.).



**South Korea's Efforts:** \$6.2 million allocated in 2012 for country branding.

**Impact on Tourism** 275.9% increase in international tourists in 2023 compared to 2022.

**Seoul's Government Role** The capital city as a dynamic hub for culture and innovation.

# Literature Review

## **City Branding** *Chan et al., 2021; Parkhomenko, 2023*

Strengthening a city's identity to attract tourism and investment.

Key Attributes for City Branding : **Image, uniqueness, and authenticity**

*Riza, et al - City branding and identity 2012*

## **Role of Culture in Branding**

- Enhances city attractiveness.
- Supports economic and social growth.

## **Pop Culture as a Tool**

- Engages global audiences.
- Promotes immersive experiences (e.g., fan tourism).

# Methodology

## Qualitative Research Approach

- Examines K-Wave's influence on Seoul's city branding.
- Focus on tourism and urban landscape transformations (2010–2024).
- Data sources are collected from official tourism statistics, government documents, promotional materials, academic literature, and media analysis.

## Analysis Techniques:

- Integration of K-Wave elements in branding efforts.
- Examination of urban development influenced by K-Wave.
- Triangulation of data to reduce bias and enhance reliability.

# Finding & Analysis

## Strategic Use of K-Wave

**Historical Shift:** Post-1997 Asian Financial Crisis marked a significant pivot towards cultural industries as an economic driver.

**Slogan Evolution:** The campaign aimed to refine Seoul's global image.



**Celebrity Partnerships:** Leveraging K-Wave stars like **BTS and other K-Pop icons** to amplify the city's branding efforts globally.

# Finding & Analysis

## Urban Landscape Transformation

*K-Wave has significantly influenced not only cultural perceptions but also the physical and social fabric of Seoul*

### K-Star Road

Located in Gangnam, this attraction features statues of popular K-Pop groups and draws global fans.

### Modern Venues

Renovated Olympic Gymnastics Arena and the upcoming Seoul Arena (2027), reinforcing the city's position as a cultural hotspot.

### HiKR Ground

An interactive space that immerses visitors in K-Culture through digital technology, doubling visitor numbers within a year.

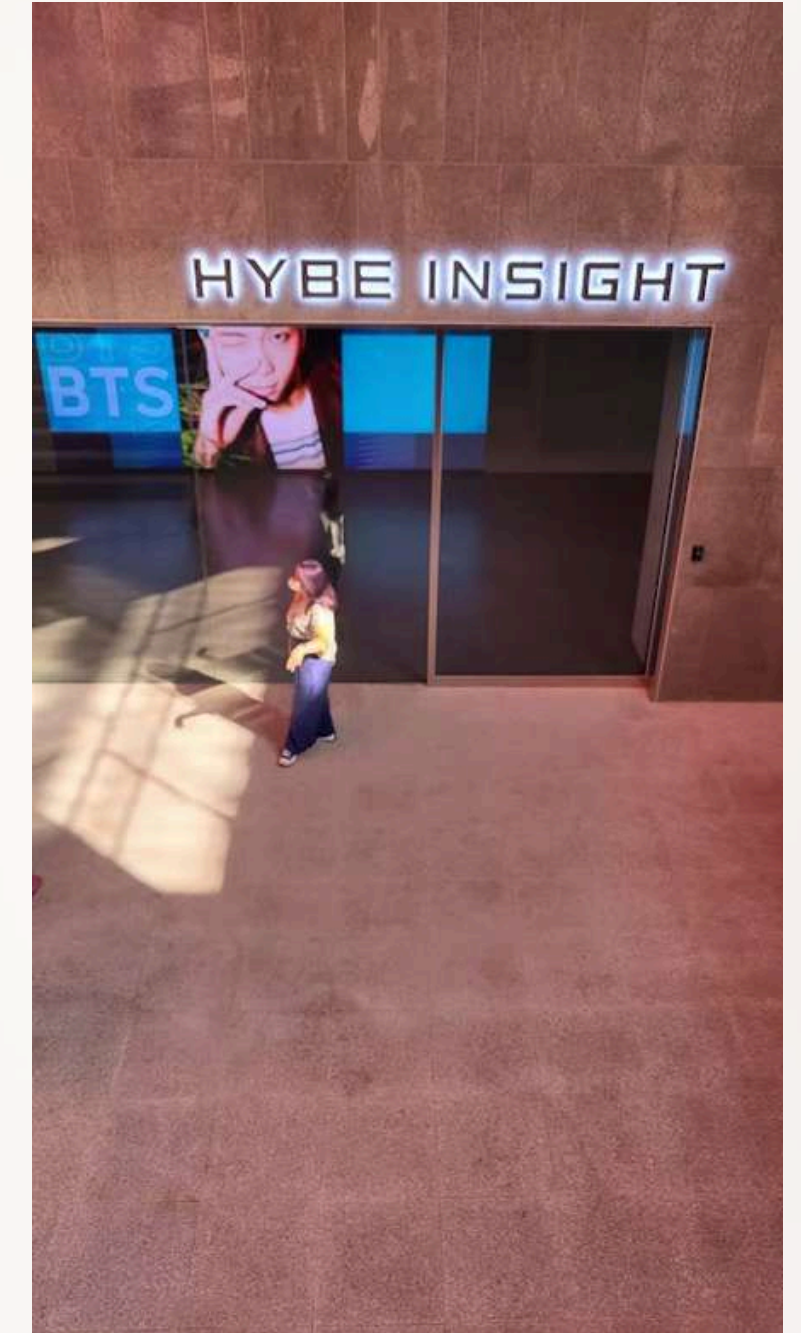
### Idol Agency Office Building

Korean idol agency buildings are currently being used as destinations for fans by using exhibition areas and showcases of various items related to the idols.



# Finding & Analysis

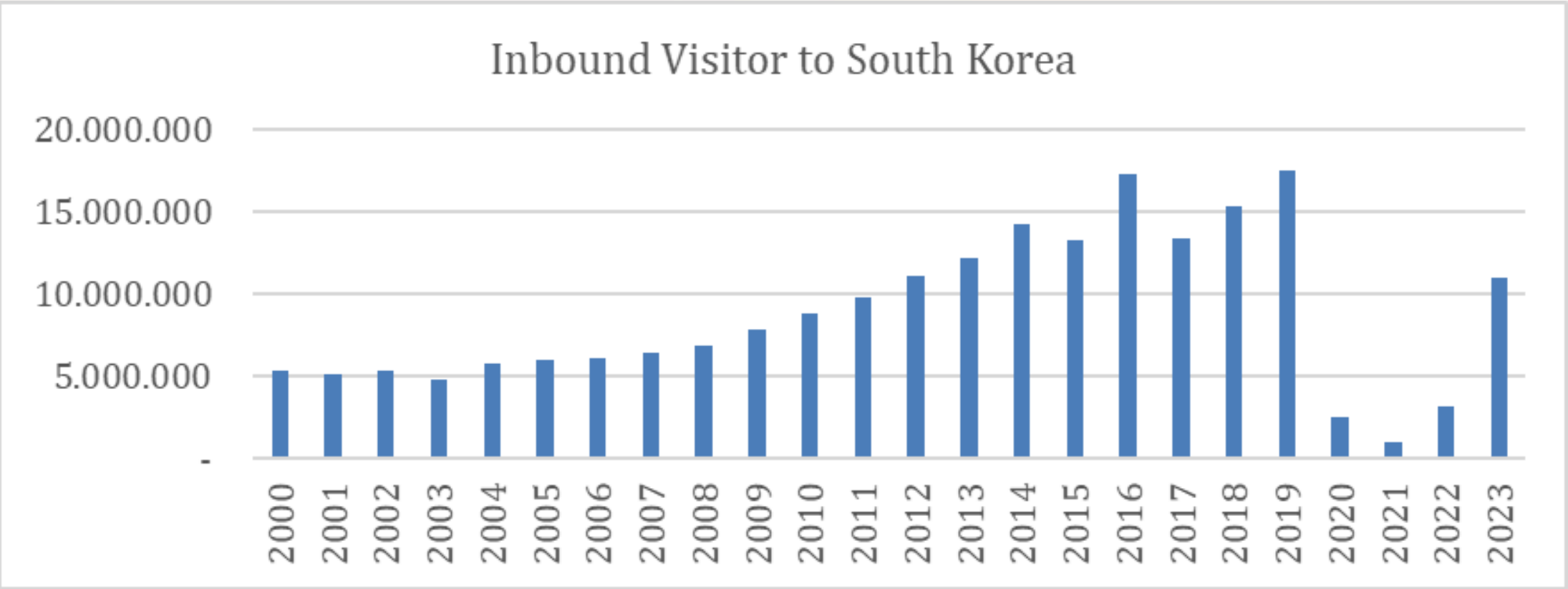
## Urban Landscape Transformation





# Finding & Analysis

## Tourism Impact



Source: Statista, 2024

## Rising Numbers:

A remarkable recovery in inbound tourism post-COVID-19, fueled by global interest in Korean culture.

## Iconic Destinations:

Gyeongbok Palace, Lotte World, and more, promoted through strategic campaigns with Korean celebrities.

## Economic Growth:

Tourism linked to K-Wave has significantly boosted Seoul's economy and global standing.



# Finding & Analysis

## Tourism Impact



Reproduced from Seoul Open Data Centre, 2024

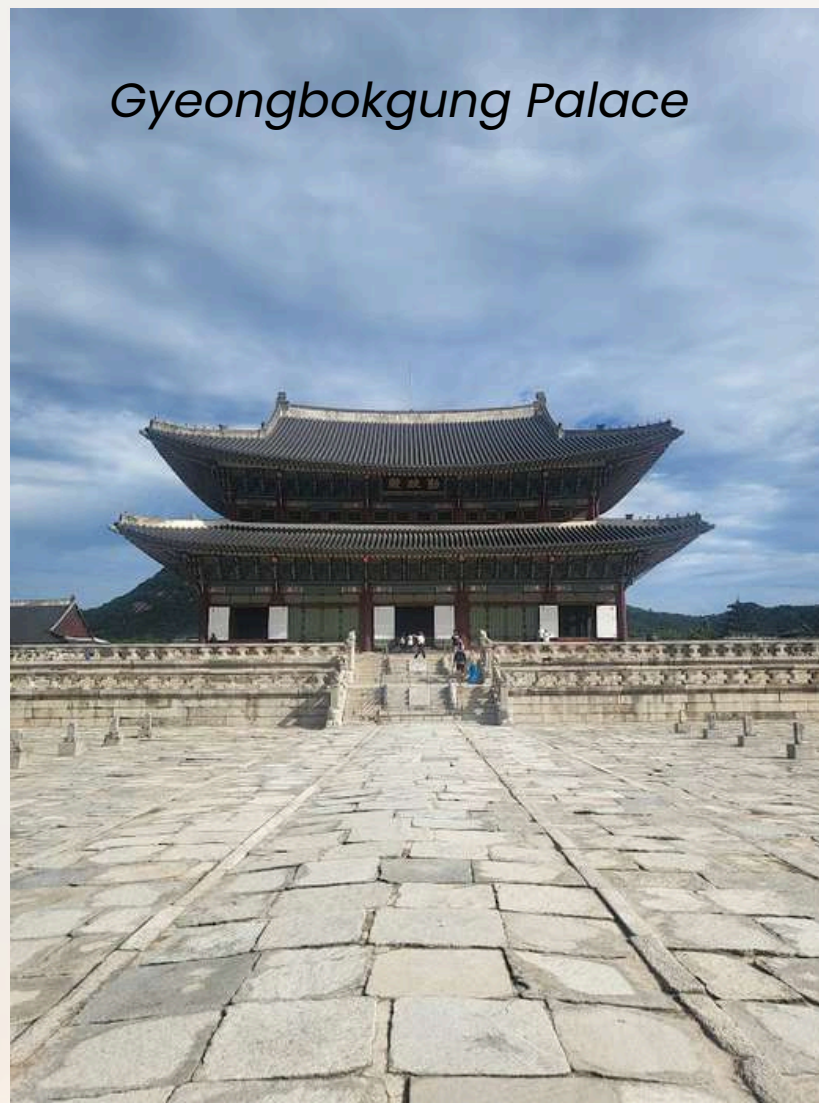
- Dominates as the main purpose of international tourism to Seoul throughout the period.
- Peaks around 2018–2019, followed by a significant decline in 2020–2021, likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related travel restrictions.
- Sharp recovery observed in 2023, surpassing all other categories.



# Finding & Analysis

## Tourism Impact

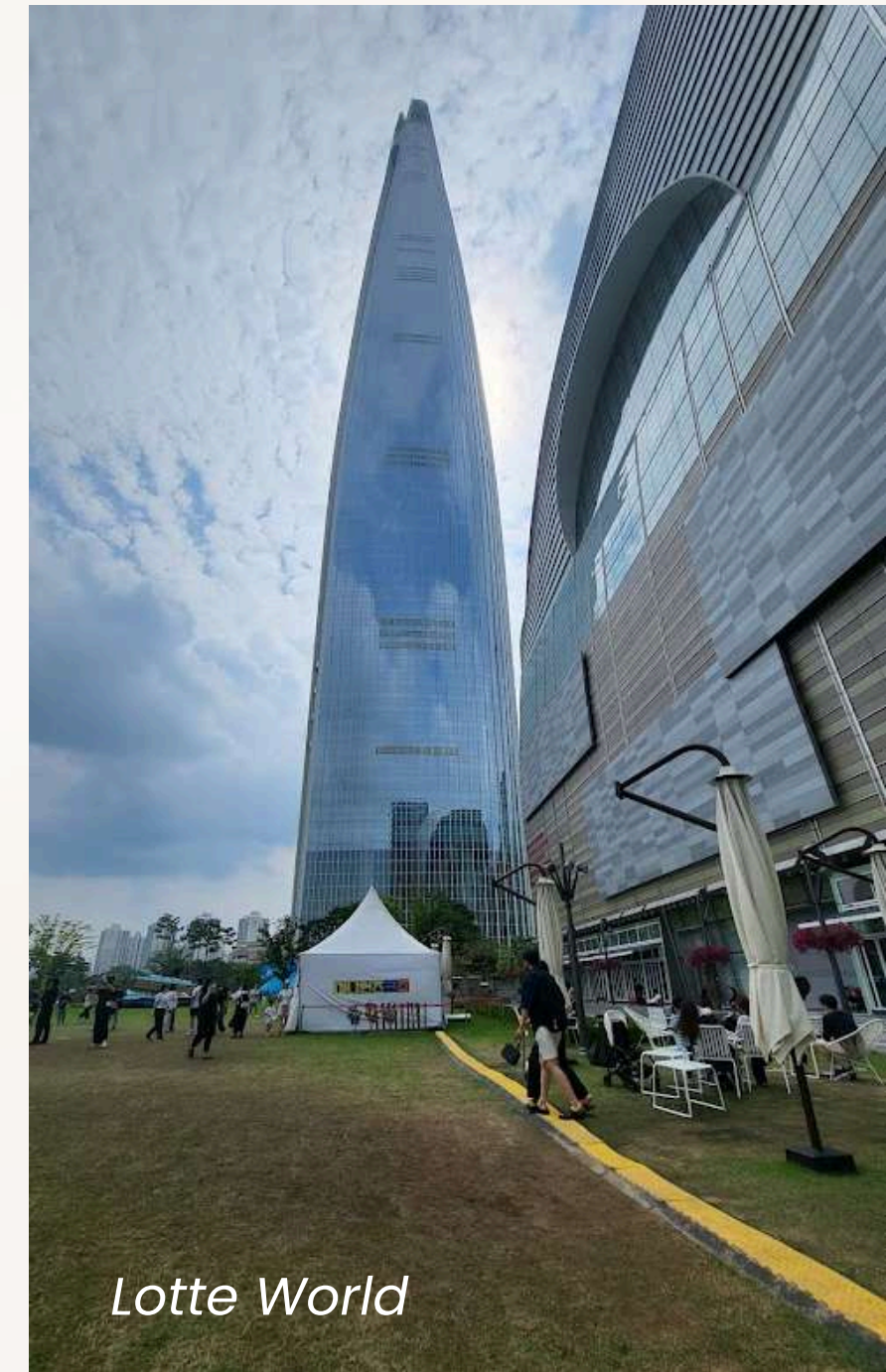
***Top destinations for  
International Tourist***



*Gyeongbokgung Palace*



*National Museum of Korea,*



*Lotte World*



# Finding & Analysis

## Cultural Integration

### **Blending Old and New**

*Seamless integration of Seoul's rich history with cutting-edge cultural trends, appealing to diverse demographics.*

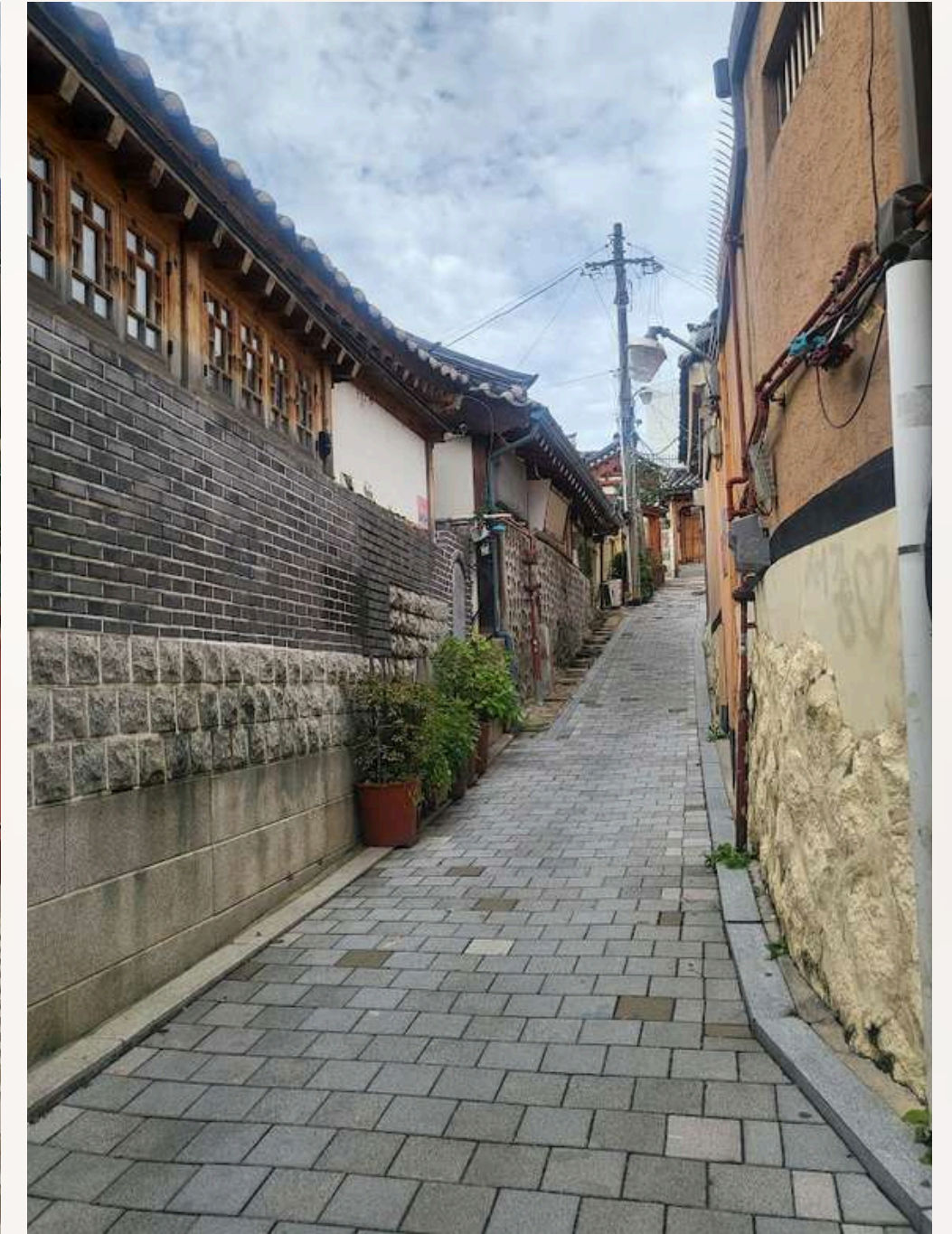
### **Collaborative Efforts**

*Government, local communities, and entertainment agencies work collectively to sustain and innovate urban spaces.*



# Finding & Analysis

## Cultural Integration





# Key Takeaway

## **K-Wave's Influence**

*Positioned Seoul as a leading cultural hub.  
Boosted South Korea's global reputation and tourism.*

## **Integration of Culture and Urban Development:**

*Seamless blend of cultural branding and urban  
infrastructure. Attractions tailored for global audiences.*

## **Broader Implications**

*The power of culture as a strategic tool for city and nation  
branding. Inspiration for other cities to leverage unique  
cultural assets.*

# What Jakarta can Learn from Seoul Branding?

- Jakarta can similarly **capitalize on its rich and diverse cultural heritage**, such as traditional arts, culinary offerings, and contemporary creative industries.
- Jakarta can **adopt a similar approach by developing infrastructure that reflects its cultural identity** while also catering to modern tourism trends. For instance, **creating spaces that highlight Betawi culture or showcasing Indonesian art and crafts through interactive exhibitions** could transform the city into a cultural hotspot.
- Jakarta could collaborate with renowned Indonesian artists, athletes, or cultural icons to act as **ambassadors for the city**.
- **By blending historical landmarks like Kota Tua with innovative developments**, Jakarta can offer a unique mix of nostalgia and progress. Additionally, fostering collaborations between the government, private sector, and local communities can ensure sustainable and impactful city branding efforts.





# CERTIFICATE

NON-PRESENTER (PARTICIPANT)

NO. 71/UN1/PSSAT/TU/DL/2025

Presented to:

**Meyriana Kesuma**

as **Presenter at The 17th International Asian Urbanization Conference 2025**. Organized by Center for Southeast Asian Social Studies (CESASS), Universitas Gadjah Mada  
**Bali, 14-16 January 2025**

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The 17th International Asian Urbanization Conference

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