

Fandom, fans-gift, and fanaticism as drivers of fan loyalty to an idol group

Copyright: © 2026 by Authors.
Published by Solamarc Publishing,
this is an open-access article under
the CC BY-SA License.

Muhammad Zulfikar Akbar

STIE Mahardhika
Indonesia

Muhammad Gunawan Wibisono

STIE Mahardhika
Indonesia

Received: 8 March 2026 / Revised: 25 March 2026 / Accepted: 25 March 2026 / Published: 1 April 2026

Abstract

Since its emergence in 2011, JKT48 has attracted significant interest among Indonesian youth as the first sister group of AKB48 outside Japan. This phenomenon has given rise to fan communities known as WOTA, who demonstrate distinctive behaviors including wotagei, merchandise collection, and active participation in various events. Fanaticism, characterized by excessive conviction and emotional attachment toward idols, has become a defining feature of this fan culture. The culture of gift-giving, or fans-gift, has been practiced by JKT48 fans since the group's formation, serving as an expression of appreciation and a symbol of sense of belonging within fandom communities. Fandom provides spaces for individuals with shared interests to form bonds and express their authentic selves. Previous research indicates that JKT48 fans in various regions exhibit loyalty through their support activities. However, the interplay between fandom, fans-gift practices, and fanaticism in driving fan loyalty remains underexplored. This study aims to examine how fandom and fans-gift contribute to the development of fanaticism and subsequently foster loyalty among JKT48 fans. Understanding these dynamics provides insights for marketing management strategies in the entertainment industry and contributes to the academic discourse on fan behavior and consumer loyalty.

Keywords: fandom, fans-gift, fanaticism, loyalty, JKT48.

Introduction

Since the emergence of JKT48 in the Indonesian entertainment industry in 2011, the idol group has attracted substantial attention from young people, particularly males, as a sister group of AKB48 created by Japanese producer Yasushi Akimoto (Kiuchi, 2017; Mulya & Mulyana, 2022). JKT48 holds the distinction of being the first 48 Group sister group established outside Japan, adopting the concept of "Idol You Can Meet" through regular theater performances (Kiuchi, 2017). The phenomenon of fanaticism associated with popular culture has become increasingly relevant as fans constitute primary consumers of popular culture products (Fuschillo, 2020). Fans typically derive strength and enthusiasm from their ability to identify themselves as part of a community of fellow fans who share similar interests and face common challenges (Arizabal & Yabut, 2025). This collective identity formation within fandom communities has emerged as a significant area of scholarly inquiry within audience studies, particularly as technology and media continue to reshape fan engagement practices (Yoon, 2022).

The conceptual framework of this study encompasses three interrelated constructs: fandom, fans-gift, and fanaticism. Fandom, derived from "fan" (an abbreviation of fanatic) with the suffix "-dom," refers to a subculture constructed by fans based on sympathy and friendship with fellow fans who share similar interests (Hellekson, 2015). Fandom constitutes a fan subculture that offers space for communities where individuals with diverse backgrounds can form bonds around common interests, creating limited spaces where involved individuals can express their authentic selves (Hellekson, 2015). Fanaticism, originating from the Latin "fanaticus" (ecstasy, enthusiasm, fervor), can be defined as enthusiastic and fervent devotion, representing a conviction toward a fanatical object associated with excessive attachment manifested through activities, extreme enthusiasm, emotional attachment, and sustained interest over an extended period (Brooks, 2018). Additionally, the culture of gift-giving, known as "fans-gift" or "tribute gift," has become integral to fan-idol relationships, wherein fans demonstrate positive images for their idols through material expressions of support (Sun, 2020; Hellekson, 2015).

According to Sholehah in Qurrata A'yuna, Said Nurdin (2015), fanaticism derives from the Latin "fanaticus" (ecstasy, enthusiasm, fervor), "fanum" (sacred place, temple, place of worship), and "fano" (devotion). Terminologically, fanaticism can be defined as enthusiastic and fervent devotion to a sacred place or temple. Psychologists subsequently reformulated the definition of fanaticism as efforts to pursue or maintain something

through extreme and passionate means that exceed reasonable bounds. According to Mubarok in Qurrata A'yuna, Said Nurdin (2015), fanaticism can be described as an orientation and sentiment that influences an individual in: (a) Doing something, pursuing something, or giving something; (b) Thinking and deciding; (c) Perceiving and understanding something; and (d) Feeling. In the psychology dictionary formulated by Chaplin in Qurrata A'yuna, Said Nurdin (2015), fanaticism is simply defined as an overly enthusiastic attitude toward a particular viewpoint or cause, typically aimed at disparaging purposes. Fanaticism represents a conviction toward a fanatical object associated with something excessive toward a particular object. This fanatical attitude is demonstrated through activities, extreme enthusiasm, emotional attachment, and excessive love and interest sustained over an extended period (Abdussalam & Wahyudi, 2016).

Fanaticism constitutes an excessive conviction or belief in a particular doctrine or ideology — whether political, religious, or otherwise — characterized by the assumption that one's own beliefs are superior to other teachings (Noor, 2018). In popular culture consumption, groups or communities of fans, known as fandom, frequently form (Hellekson, 2015). Fandom (fan-, an abbreviation of fanatic with the suffix -dom as in kingdom or freedom) refers to a term used to describe a subculture constructed by fans based on sympathy and friendship with fellow fans who share similar interests (Hellekson, 2015). Fans are typically interested even in detailed matters related to their object of interest and devote considerable time and energy to their involvement in a fandom (Fandia, 2016). They often congregate in social networks with particular fandom practices. The subject of fan interest can be narrowly defined, focusing on matters such as celebrities, hobbies, genres, or fashion. In other words, fandom is an enthusiastic fan community with shared interests (Fandia, 2016).

Fandom constitutes a fan subculture that offers space for communities where individuals with diverse backgrounds and experiences can form bonds around common interests (Fandia, 2016). Such communities inform fans that they are not alone in their passions and interests. Fandom creates limited spaces where involved individuals can express their authentic selves. Fans are often portrayed as emotionally excessive elements in modern life — understood as passive and pathological victims of mass media who cannot create distance between themselves and their object of pleasure (Fuschillo, 2020).

According to John Fiske in Anggraini (2015), fandom is a characteristic feature of popular culture in industrial society. It is selected from the repertoire of entertainment

produced and distributed en masse in narrative or genre forms, drawing individuals into the culture they choose. Subsequently, intense pleasure continues to be repeated. Intensity can indicate the presence of popular culture. Fandom is typically associated with forms of cultural value systems that the dominant culture disparages. This occurs through cultural tastes from subordinate social strata, particularly through the paralyzing combination of gender, age, class, and race. Fandom offers a way to fill cultural deficiencies and provides social prestige and self-esteem through cultural capital.

According to Pintani Linta Tartila in Ridya Melanita (2019), the culture of gift-giving has long been practiced by JKT48 fans. Fans-gift literally means gifts given by fans to their idols. Another term for fans-gift is tribute gift. In dictionaries, tribute ('jo gong') is defined as a gift given from dependent to independent parties. Historically, this term had long fallen into disuse, but it has been revived in 21st-century fandom culture. The primary purpose of fan participation in 'jo gong' is to demonstrate a positive image for their idols. Fans ensure that they care not only for their idols but also for those around them. Fans perform activities that should be undertaken by their idol's agency. The 'jo gong' activity is typically evidenced by 'proof shots' — photographic proof that fans have performed 'jo gong' or that the artist has received 'jo gong.'

Beyond sending food to their idols, fans also give expensive gifts to their idol artists. Expensive or limited-edition items are typically given by fans personally, though some fans send fan-gifts on behalf of a fandom or fanclub. This culture reveals a particular dynamic in the relationship between fans and their idols, functioning as a form of affective labor through which fans express devotion and reinforce their position within the fan community (Sun, 2020). Although some within the fandom disagree with this practice, it continues to be sustained with support from the majority of fans.

In the context of popular culture consumption, there is a frequent tendency for groups or communities of fans to form, a phenomenon referred to as fandom. Fandom (derived from 'fan,' a contraction of 'fanatic,' and the suffix '-dom,' analogous to that in 'kingdom' or 'freedom') is a term used to denote a subculture constructed by fans, underpinned by a sense of sympathy and camaraderie with fellow fans who share mutual interests (Mulyana et al., 2019).

Beyond demonstrating affection, fans-gift also serves as a symbol of fans' sense of belonging. By giving gifts to their idols, fans' sense of belonging emerges alongside their identity as fans of that artist (Hellekson, 2015). Through fans-gift practices, fans also reinforce their recognized identity within the fandom community. In the context of JKT48, this belonging is further shaped by the parasocial bonds fans develop with idol

members — bonds sustained through theater performances, online platforms, and direct fan-idol interaction events (Mulya & Mulyana, 2022).

Fans-gift is prevalent among JKT48 fans, as evidenced by the numerous fans who bring gifts for JKT48 members in various forms, including flowers and letters to provide encouragement to their idols. This phenomenon reflects the broader fanatical devotion characteristic of JKT48's WOTA fan community, whose behaviors extend from gift-giving to active fandom participation and event attendance (Noor, 2018). However, fans cannot directly deliver these gifts to the members; they must deposit them through JKT48 management.

Despite growing scholarly attention to fan culture in idol group contexts, prior studies have predominantly examined fandom, fanaticism, and fans-gift as isolated constructs. Existing research on JKT48 has explored fandom as a social construction (Mulyana et al., 2019), parasocial fan-idol relationships (Mulya & Mulyana, 2022), and fanaticism as individual behavior (Noor, 2018), yet the integrative mechanism linking fandom and fans-gift practices to fanaticism, and subsequently to fan loyalty, remains empirically underexplored. Furthermore, while fan loyalty has been widely studied in consumer behavior literature (Fuschillo, 2020), its specific drivers in the context of Indonesian idol group culture — where material gift-giving and communal fandom identity are both salient — have not been comprehensively investigated. This study therefore addresses this gap by examining how fandom and fans-gift jointly contribute to the development of fanaticism as a mediating construct that drives fan loyalty among JKT48 fans. In doing so, this study contributes to marketing management scholarship by providing empirical insights from a non-Western entertainment context and offers practical implications for idol group management in sustaining fan engagement. The central research question guiding this study is: How do fandom and fans-gift drive fan fanaticism toward loyalty among JKT48 fans?

Method

The researcher selected qualitative descriptive research through a netnographic approach. The netnographic approach is an important method in qualitative research. This approach directly obtains sources and forms instruments related to abstract issues requiring novelty in social phenomena. This research focuses on describing the phenomenon of JKT48 fan fanaticism from the perspectives of fandom, fans gift, and the concept of loyalty. The netnographic approach in informant determination shares similarities with qualitative approaches, differing only in the use of online media as the

platform. This research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. To prevent undesirable circumstances, online media is the appropriate choice.

Population and Sample

Population

Population refers to the entirety of individuals from the analysis unit whose characteristics will be estimated. The population in this research is JKT48 fans. This research focuses on JKT48 fans as the primary subject and JKT48 as the object. JKT48, as an entertainment industry object, utilizes or manages the industry's sustainability by leveraging JKT48 fanaticism. JKT48 fans, as actors and social phenomena, are linked to management science through various concepts and research methods. The population in this research comprises JKT48 fans in Indonesia, totaling 191 fans distributed across various regions.

Sample

This research employs Purposive Sampling, defined as a sampling technique arranged by the researcher based on targets and suitability elements (Sugiyono, 2012). This determination technique involves structured interviews with informant selection from questionnaire results that have been distributed. The researcher considers relevant informants from JKT48 fans distributed throughout Indonesia, totaling 8 individuals.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection is structured through literature study analysis and information related to the research as secondary data. The netnographic approach is a development of ethnography utilizing online media (Lang et al., 2013). Netnographic research has flexibility in determining primary data while adhering to scientific principles. Primary data collection is divided into three:

Observation

Observation in this research model involves collecting literature studies and information related to the research as secondary data (Sugiyono, 2012). Observation in the netnographic approach utilizes online information from indexed and recognized sources (O'Donohoe, 2010). Subsequently, specific observation in this research utilizes online questionnaires. These questionnaires serve solely for quantitative data collection, which will be useful for statistical presentation (Lang et al., 2013). Furthermore, the

questionnaire employs snowball sampling, meaning data is continuously collected until saturation (Sugiyono, 2012).

Interview

Data collection is semi-structured, conducted through follow-up interviews after observation and data collection (Sugiyono, 2012). This relates to the focus group, namely JKT48 fans distributed across Indonesia. To reduce research duration, interviews are determined from questionnaire results for follow-up questions. Interview data contains facts and empirical perspectives from the JKT48 group.

Documentation

Documentation studies are conducted by collecting data obtained from books, journals, and internet sites that serve as supporting reference materials, followed by studying such data. Additionally, the researcher documents interview results and surveys conducted in the field in the form of activity photographs.

Data Sources and Collection

In qualitative research, research procedures are designed loosely because they may change according to initial plans. Nevertheless, researchers must arrange a series of research activities. There are three stages in conducting qualitative research:

1. Pre-Preliminary

Pre-preliminary activities are conducted to ensure the theme aligns with field conditions. Subsequently, preliminary assessments are performed so the researcher can evaluate field feasibility in terms of conditions, situation, setting, and context, enabling preparation of required instruments.

2. Field Stage

First step is entering the field. Researchers must prepare themselves mentally and psychologically to avoid conflict with field conditions, as they must adapt to the environment being studied. The second step is being in the field. A researcher's success in the field is determined by their understanding of research methods and ability to adapt to the environment through pleasant attitudes and behavior. The third step is selecting and using informants/resource persons/participants. Informants or participants are individuals involved in the research setting who assist the researcher in integrating with the community and serve as information sources. The fourth step is field data collection through triangulation, involving data verification from various sources encountered in the field. The fifth step is recording

field data. During fieldwork, researchers seek data or information through various methods such as interviews, observation, document studies, directed discussions, and others. Researchers must always record information to prevent loss.

3. Data Processing

Collected data must be written in detailed written form or reports. Reports are written according to obtained data, reduced, summarized, selecting essential matters and focusing on important aspects. Obtained data will be sorted and selected based on concept similarity, theme, and certain categories to provide more concentrated descriptions of observation results, facilitating researchers in retrieving data as additions to previously obtained data when needed. Data obtained by the researcher is grouped according to the problem statement and arranged in matrix form to facilitate pattern identification of relationships among existing data.

Data Analysis Techniques

AMS Analysis Technique

Netnographic research has specific data analysis techniques. One such method is Cyber Media Analysis (Analisis Media Siber/AMS), a combination of real and virtual ethnographic analysis processes (O'Donohoe, 2010). The AMS analysis technique elaborates offline and online elements as research processes, with each AMS aspect described inductively.

The AMS analysis technique in this research is simplified into text and context diversification. This decomposition is divided into micro and macro levels. Both micro and macro levels are essentially divided into four aspects: media space, media documents, media objects, and experience (O'Donohoe, 2010). The four AMS aspects have disparities or differences. Their descriptions are as follows:

1. Media Space Aspect

The media space aspect reveals how structuring and integration occur online. Online spaces serve as locations for indirect interaction. The internet, as a device, has binding rules in terms of tool terminology, action, process, and agreed methods. Thus, the media space aspect lies in the structure of human activity information and knowledge.

2. Media Document Aspect

The media document aspect describes the content of text-based content based on the semiotics contained therein. This aspect provides answers regarding what factors occur and what information is provided. Decoding or translation serves as a method to assess semiotics and explore virtual communities.

3. Media Object Aspect

In the media object aspect, the researcher provides descriptions of activities and interactions among general users, between users, and among communities within the same forum. In this research, cyber media serves as the context surrounding the text. At the documentation level in the media object aspect, the researcher provides interaction for each internet user.

4. Experience Aspect

The experience aspect serves as a macro model visualization of community members offline. This prevents logical paradox linking offline and online elements while utilizing critical logic.

Data Validity Testing

This research employs data validity testing as a specific feature of netnographic research (Kozinets, 1998). Subject linkage from interview and observation results involves the context of the research problem statement. Validity testing also serves to prevent data distortion and scientific errors. Confirmation data repetition is necessary from all analysis results obtained.

Data triangulation serves as a validity technique utilizing four triangulation models: source, method, investigation, and theory usage (Kozinets, 1998). This research employs two triangulation models: method and theory. Method triangulation is used to test data credibility by re-examining data from the same source using different techniques. Theory triangulation involves using multiple perspectives in analyzing data sources, providing different assumptions where researchers find assumptions and perspectives aligned with management science.

Results

Google Form Questionnaire Data Results

All collected data has been edited and input into the research findings chapter. In this subsection, the questionnaire data results serve as numerical data and are input directly or as primary data. The research methodology employs a netnographic approach, and numerical data collection is necessary to describe deductively and provide logic to the data. This questionnaire data collection utilized the Google Form platform with a total of 41 respondents, divided into ten questions that simultaneously serve as indicators.

Table 1. JKT48 fans data by domicile

Region	Count	Percentage
East Java	23	56%
Central Java & DIY	2	5%
West Java	6	15%
DKI Jakarta	5	12%
Banten	4	10%
Outside Java	1	2%
Total	41	100%

Table 1 describes JKT48 fan data based on employment status. The 41 respondents were divided into four categories: university students comprised the largest group with 19 respondents (46%), followed by employed individuals with 15 respondents (37%), high school students with 4 respondents (10%), and freelancers with 3 respondents (7%).

Table 2. JKT48 fans data by income level

Income (IDR)	Count	Percentage
0 - 1,000,000	22	54%
1,000,000 - 2,000,000	9	22%
Above 2,000,000	10	24%
Total	41	100%

Table 2 describes JKT48 fan data based on income level. The 41 respondents were divided into three categories: the income range of IDR 0-1,000,000 comprised 22 respondents (54%), IDR 1,000,000-2,000,000 comprised 9 respondents (22%), and above IDR 2,000,000 comprised 10 respondents (24%).

Table 3. JKT48 fans data by favorite team

Favorite Member Team	Count	Percentage
Team J	10	24%
Team K3	14	34%
Team T	10	24%
Academy	7	17%
Total	41	100%

Table 3 describes JKT48 fan data based on favorite team. Team K3 had the highest number of respondents at 14 (34%), followed by Team J with 10 respondents (24%), Team T with 10 respondents (24%), and Academy with 7 respondents (17%).

Table 4. JKT48 fans authorization data

Website Membership	Count	Percentage
Free	37	90%
Paid	4	10%
Total	41	100%

Table 4 describes JKT48 fan data based on website authorization. Free website membership had the highest number with 37 respondents (90%), while paid membership had 4 respondents (10%).

Table 5. JKT48 fans data by event attendance

Events Attended	Count	Percentage
Concert	27	66%
Handshake	10	24%
Never	4	10%
Total	41	100%

Table 5 describes JKT48 fan data based on event attendance. Concerts had the highest attendance with 27 respondents (66%), followed by handshake events with 10 respondents (24%), while 4 respondents had never attended any events (10%).

Table 6. JKT48 fans data by merchandise purchase history

Purchased Official Merch	Count	Percentage
Yes	34	83%
No	7	17%
Total	41	100%

Table 6 describes JKT48 fan data based on merchandise purchase history. Fans who had purchased official merchandise comprised 34 respondents (83%), while those who had never purchased official merchandise numbered 7 respondents (17%).

Table 7. JKT48 fan data by total merchandise purchases

Number of Purchases	Count	Percentage
1-5 times	27	66%
6-10 times	5	12%
More than 10 times	9	22%
Total	41	100%

Table 7 describes JKT48 fan data based on total merchandise purchases. Fans who purchased official merchandise 1-5 times comprised the largest group with 27 respondents (66%), followed by those who purchased more than 10 times with 9 respondents (22%), and those who purchased 6-10 times with 5 respondents (12%).

Table 8. JKT48 fan data by community membership

Group Chat Membership	Count	Percentage
JKT48 Member Group Chat	27	66%
Regional/City Group Chat	3	7%
None	11	27%
Total	41	100%

Table 8 describes JKT48 fan data based on community membership. JKT48 member group chats had the highest participation with 27 respondents (66%), followed by those not participating in any group chat with 11 respondents (27%), and regional/city group chats with 3 respondents (7%).

Table 9. JKT48 fans data by community organizational position

Group Chat Position	Count	Percentage
Member	21	70%
Administrator	5	17%
Leader	4	13%
Total	30	100%

Table 9 describes JKT48 fan data based on community organizational positions held. The majority held member positions with 21 respondents (70%), followed by administrators with 5 respondents (17%), and leaders with 4 respondents (13%).

Interview Instrument

In this research, interviews served as an induction model to collect primary data and analyze it according to a qualitative approach. This interview contained 23 questions incorporating variables and indicators. These questions continued to develop and diminish until the researcher determined that data saturation had been achieved. The selection of informants was determined as three subjects from the questionnaire respondents, each representing different domiciles. The netnographic approach was applied by interviewing subjects using online media such as messaging and telephone.

Table 10. Interview question list

No.	Question
1.	Why did you become a JKT48 fan?
2.	How did you first learn about JKT48?
3.	How long have you been interested in JKT48?
4.	Who is your current oshi (favorite member)?
5.	Why did you choose JKT48 over other idol groups in Indonesia?
6.	During your time as a JKT48 fan, have you remained a student or become a worker?
7.	How much do you spend on JKT48-related expenses?
8.	If you are employed and earning income, what budget do you allocate for JKT48?
9.	How many times have you visited the JKT48 theater and what was the total cost for one day?
10.	What types of merchandise do you frequently purchase and what is the total amount spent?
11.	Outside the theater, what events (handshake, direct selling, etc.) do you frequently attend?
12.	How much do you spend on voting for your oshi during elections?
13.	How often do you give gifts to your oshi, what types, and what is the total value?
14.	Would you invite friends or others to become JKT48 fans?
15.	How often do you provide rewards to members via Showroom and what are the costs?
16.	If a new group similar to JKT48 emerges, would you switch to that group?
17.	Are you a member of a community authorized by JKT48?
18.	Are you part of any JKT48 fandom?
19.	What contributions have you made in building that fandom for your oshi?
20.	How does your fandom manage loyalty toward your oshi?
21.	Do you agree that JKT48 fans are categorized as fanatical? Explain your reasoning.
22.	What is your benchmark for loyalty to JKT48?
23.	During the COVID-19 pandemic, what actions would you take if conditions remain unfavorable?

Interview Transcript Results

The analysis of the interviews reveals several consistent patterns in the motivations, durations, and financial practices of JKT48 fans in Indonesia, while also highlighting individual variations in engagement. All three respondents reported a prolonged period of fandom, with durations ranging from approximately 6 to 9 years since the group's inception, indicating sustained interest. The primary channels for discovering JKT48 were traditional media, specifically television broadcasts, and interpersonal networks, such as peers or senior classmates, underscoring the role of both mass media and social influence in the initial adoption of the fandom.

A key motivational factor articulated by the respondents was the perception of JKT48 as a uniquely well-organized and structured idol group within the Indonesian context. One participant explicitly chose JKT48 over other domestic groups due to this perceived organizational superiority, while another cited the group's motivational impact on their personal life. This suggests that the appeal is partially anchored in a comparative assessment of the local idol industry landscape. Regarding the object of support, while two respondents named specific members (*oshi*) as their current focus, one participant expressed a preference for supporting the entire group, indicating a spectrum of parasocial attachment styles within the fanbase.

The financial dimension of fandom was a significant theme. All respondents transitioned from being students to working professionals during their time as fans, and their spending patterns evolved accordingly. Reported expenditures on JKT48-related activities varied considerably, from a modest monthly budget of IDR 100,000 to a total outlay of approximately IDR 2,000,000 over two to three years. Specific event-related costs, such as handshake events, could reach around IDR 300,000 per attendance. This financial data illustrates a range of engagement intensities, from casual hobbyist to dedicated supporter, with spending directly correlated to event participation and the type of interaction (e.g., gift-giving). The practice of allocating a fixed monthly budget, as described by one respondent, points to a systematic integration of fandom expenses into personal financial management. Collectively, these findings depict a fanbase that is long-term, financially invested to varying degrees, and fundamentally oriented toward JKT48's perceived structural and motivational uniqueness in the Indonesian market.

Discussion

Implementation of JKT48 Fan Treatment from the Perspective of Fandom and Fans Gift

Undoubtedly, there are numerous aspects in the implementation of JKT48 fan treatment that relate to fandom and fans gift. Broadly speaking, fandom and fans gift are defined as treatment from fans with the intention of demonstrating moral appreciation.

"Because the idol group/music group in Indonesia that is well-organized and can be met every day is only JKT48, that's why I prefer JKT48 over other groups in Indonesia."

"Yes, I am still a student. After an announcement is made that an event will be held in my city, I set aside my allowance every day to be able to attend that event."

(Novaldi, 2021)

As evidenced by the interview results from Novaldi, fandom and fans gift emerge and develop due to various push and pull factors. For something to be implemented in this context, JKT48 must strive to maintain the organizational structure they need, including both management and members of various types, as well as masses with low wages, semi-skilled, and unskilled backgrounds.

"For contributions, I provide ideas and input on how to run a fanbase properly. We share information to determine what is good or not for the fandom and its members. Everyone working in the fandom does it mostly for the members, though there are pros and cons, such as wasted time. The positive side is that I gain many friends. My contribution is providing input and ideas, such as analyzing data during Senbatsu elections."

(Alam, 2021)

The formation of fandom is not merely a means of support. Based on the interview results from Alam, JKT48 fans within fandom groups can contribute to unifying thoughts and elevating specific members, such as through Senbatsu elections. If JKT48 regularly loses its fans, their ability to compete in the entertainment industry market will suffer. For others, the large influx of sales revenue and disparities in fandom and fans gift between JKT48 members often causes conflicts, typically between member fandoms and other fandoms. Consequently, many fandoms prefer to maintain their existence and value through direct authorization from JKT48.

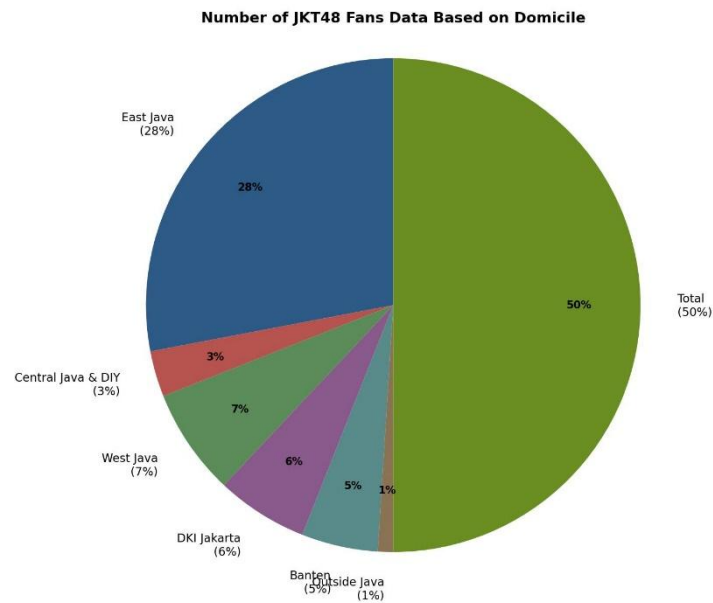


Figure 1. Number of JKT48 fans data based on domicile.

Examining the data on JKT48 fans by domicile, Banten, East Java, and West Java show high numbers, which is logically consistent with JKT48 being centered in Jakarta. JKT48 employs a marketing strategy as an entertainment industry by holding regular theater events in Jakarta and organizing activities outside Jakarta. JKT48 does not merely engage in 'singing on stage' but also offers activities that seem novel in the entertainment or music industry, such as handshake events, high-touch events, and direct selling for album sales. The variety of activities or events organized by JKT48 is classified as innovative and brings them closer to their fans.

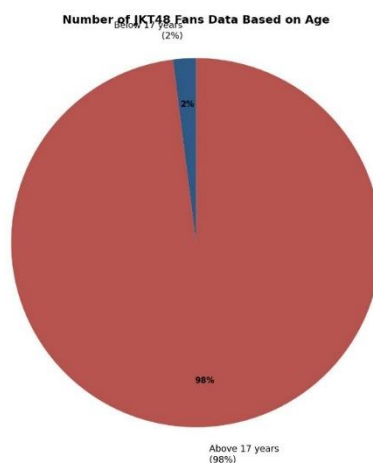


Figure 2. Number of JKT48 fans data based on age.

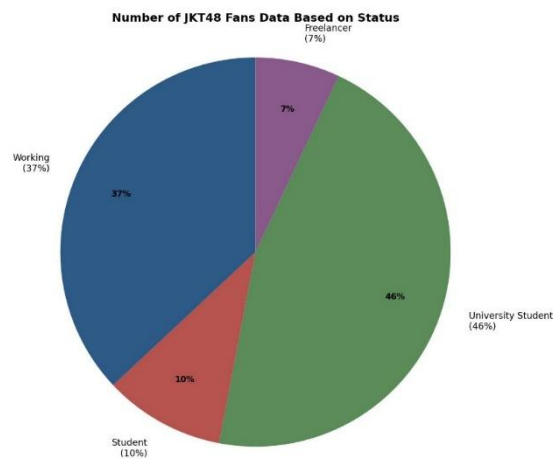


Figure 3. Number of JKT48 fans data base on status.

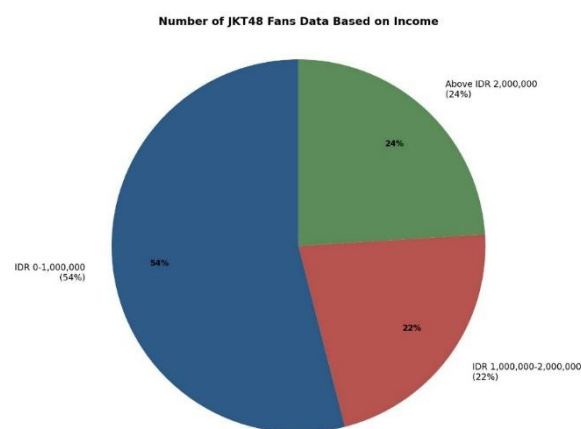


Figure 4. Number of JKT48 fans data base on income.

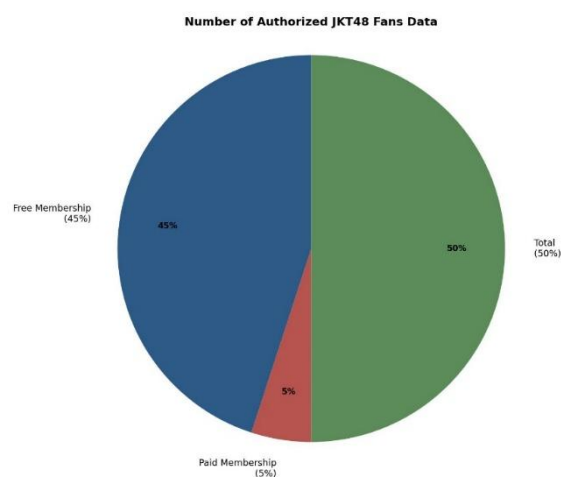


Figure 5. Number of authorized JKT48 fans data.

With the variety of activities offered by JKT48 and the correlation that JKT48 fans come from all segments of the general public in Indonesia, as shown by the data on age, status, and income, JKT48 does not impose special requirements for becoming a fan or joining a group. Instead, JKT48 utilizes a rural fan model by offering Free and paid

official membership categories, with paid members receiving benefits not available to free members. Most JKT48 fans are over 17 years old and are considered capable of managing their finances for JKT48-related activities.

Fandom can take various forms. Fandom may be temporary, permanent, or circular, and includes unorganized individuals. Fandom refers to the movement of individuals with the intention of maintaining and forming a unity with shared characteristics. Although this definition does not specify a minimum number of members or a particular form or purpose of migration, in another definition, fandom can occur for shorter periods or specifically assigned parties and be circular in nature. Oshi is a term in JKT48 fandom that refers to support directed toward a specific JKT48 member. Thus, the fandom that forms is not only general in nature but specifically directed at individual JKT48 members.

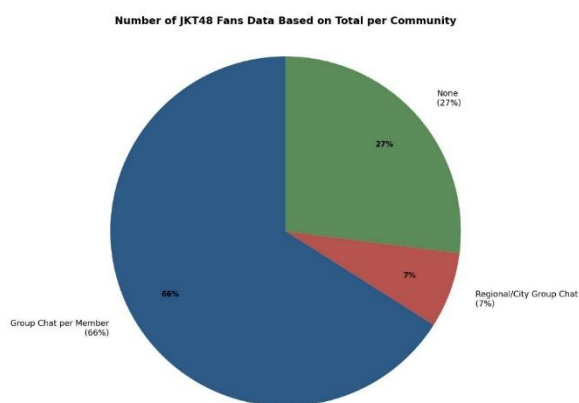


Figure 6. Number of JKT48 fans data based on total per community.

Fandom is an integral part of JKT48’s vision, which is characterized by the widening, deepening, and rapid growth of connections between aspects of contemporary social life. Fandom occurs due to the facilitation of objects in a model of increasing flows, including modern information and advanced communication technology.

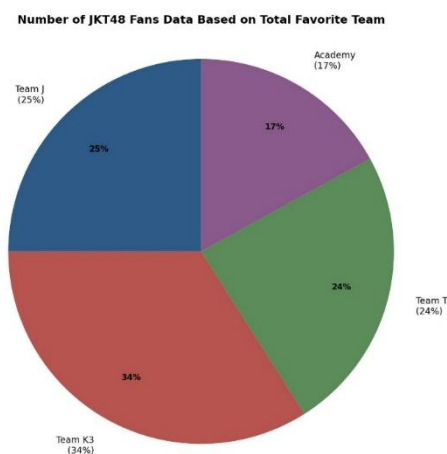


Figure 7. Number of JKT48 fans data based on total favorite team.

JKT48 allows its fans to choose from four teams: Team J, Team K3, Team T, and Academy. These four teams have different and varied performances. This variety is necessary for JKT48 fans so that they do not become monotonous, especially to attract the general public who are not yet familiar with JKT48. In the future, these four teams will provide details to fans about one member called *oshi*.

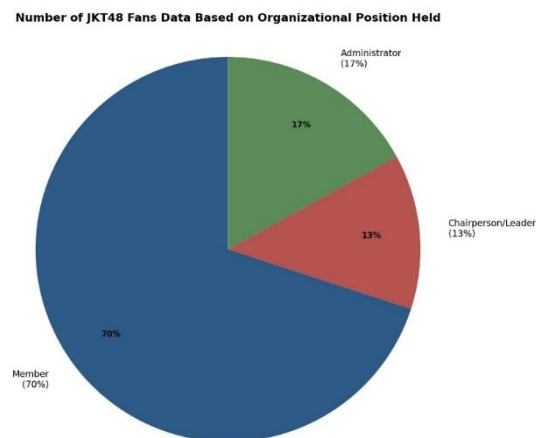


Figure 8. Number of JKT48 fans based on organizational position held.

The formation of fandom actually logically leads to gender diversification. JKT48 consists of female personnel and has become the largest entertainment industry in Indonesia. Understanding the role of women in fandom involves not only separating data based on gender, but also understanding how gender relations play a role in every aspect of fandom.

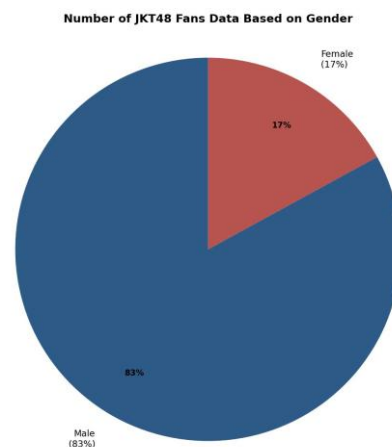


Figure 9. Number of JKT48 fans data based on gender.

Gender as a social construct of “male” and “female”, and gender norms shape the roles, expectations, and behaviours associated with masculinity and femininity. Differences in the social concept of gender have given rise to differences in the roles of women and men in society. In general, the existence of gender has given rise to differences in roles, responsibilities, functions, and even the spaces where humans engage in activities.

Cultures driven by patriarchy interpret these biological differences as indicators of appropriateness in behaviour, which ultimately leads to restrictions on rights, access, participation, control, and enjoyment of resources and information.

JKT48 empowers women, enabling greater equality and gender norms, and strengthens the fandom with the ability to independently create entertainment to achieve desired results. Conversely, gender can also exacerbate vulnerabilities, including abuse and sexualization, especially when fandoms are low-key or disorganized. Understanding the intricacies of gender and fandom can result in better programs and management that increase the benefits and efficiency of activities related to the cultural industry.

The Emergence of Fanaticism Among JKT48 Fans

It is explained that the emergence of fanaticism will be observed and based on an ideology within a belief, value, habit, and other aspects that will be delivered in a formed manner through dissemination in the form of social norms. The dictatorial formation of fanaticism is carried out in society as a form of invitation indicating that ideology is formed coherently. Fanaticism can also be used for social interests within social, economic, or political structures, but broadly speaking, it relates to gender, race, religion, or social groups.

The purpose of fanaticism is as a form of response in adopting beliefs or attitudes from the object's character. Fanaticism can form rules through the legitimacy pressure of an institution directed at certain activities. The emergence of fanaticism in JKT48 falls under the response results to new culture or, in this case, pop culture. Pop culture provides focus and develops a particular fanaticism. In this model, through social action from someone through the figure of JKT48, special fan groups are formed and drawn toward fanaticism.

The formation of fanaticism identification originates from JKT48 as the object. The identity of JKT48 is open in its fanaticism identity and can provide identity to individuals who are rural in nature, representing deliberative distortion. JKT48's organizational structure for creating fanaticism is based on strong optimal leadership with a hierarchical system within the organization. The explanation is similar to an organizational structure starting from leaders, managers, and other members who manage together within that organization. However, followers and organizational members are separately different within such a structure. A structure among JKT48 fans that becomes more complex and widespread indicates greater success in introducing JKT48. This resembles the framing model in an organization by introducing indirectly.

"Regarding fanatical fans, I both agree and disagree, because in every fandom there are fanatical and non-fanatical fans. For JKT48 fans, in my opinion, fanatical fans certainly exist but not as many as before because JKT48 fans have matured. Personally, I support JKT48, but if JKT48 makes mistakes, they need to be criticized. Additionally, fans must understand members' privacy."

(Harvi, 2021)

Based on the subjective view of fanaticism through the interview results from Harvi, JKT48 fans generally still accept the conception of fanaticism. The metaphor of fanaticism among JKT48 fans is still reluctantly accepted entirely because it is sentimental in nature. The disparity between JKT48 members and fans certainly still exists, as mentioned by Harvi. Fanaticism needs to be directed at full support while still respecting privacy.

The benchmark for fanaticism toward JKT48 fans is JKT48's predisposition in the audience in forming resonance or reflection of similarity. This means that JKT48 will use a convincing model and utilize social hormonal aspects to bind JKT48 fans through pop culture connections. This will also form new values into a group resulting from fanaticism. Fanaticism will continuously channel or connect in the form of norm formation.

Brand Loyalty of JKT48 Fans Toward JKT48

Entering the implementation of loyalty, it is diversified into several indicators. As a brand, JKT48 to its fans can be interpreted as a form of trust or loyalty. This loyalty is voluntary in nature. JKT48 views JKT48 fans as consumers with a sense of attachment. The business formed by JKT48 arises from social interests, namely the need for entertainment. This business form is attempted to create consumer satisfaction by influencing JKT48 fan behavior.

Distribution of JKT48 Fans Based on Total Attendance at Theater Performance

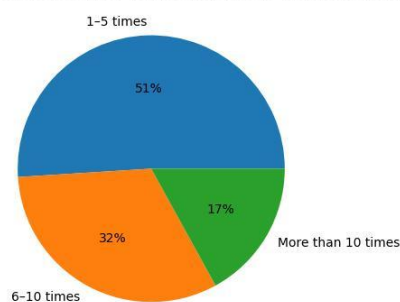


Figure 10. Distribution of JKT48 fans based on total attendance at theater performance.

JKT48 fan loyalty can be visualized through emotional commitment or consumer commitment. Based on JKT48 fan data by total theater attendance, JKT48 fans based on the data taken are relative according to region, ability, and capability of each JKT48 fan. However, JKT48 fans based on interview results domiciled in Jakarta have at least visited the JKT48 theater once. For JKT48 fans outside Jakarta, they adapt to this data and are relatively likely to have visited the JKT48 theater.

Distribution of JKT48 Fans Based on Participation in Organized Events

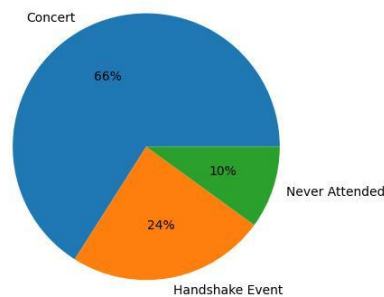


Figure 11. Distribution of JKT48 fans based on participation in organized events.

Furthermore, JKT48 fan loyalty is based on Word of Mouth or consumer publicity behavior toward the market. In the results of JKT48 fan data by total event types attended, 66% represents JKT48's focus in the entertainment industry centered on music. JKT48 is able to invite its fans as consumers to concert activities. Overall, JKT48 fans throughout Indonesia have attended JKT48 concerts. The loyalty triggered by JKT48 through marketing strategies by holding annual concerts throughout Indonesia with the slogan 'Idol you can meet' is very effectively applied to JKT48 fans. JKT48 is also able to hold detailed activities proving the slogan to get closer to fans, such as handshake events.

Distribution of JKT48 Fans Based on Merchandise Purchase History

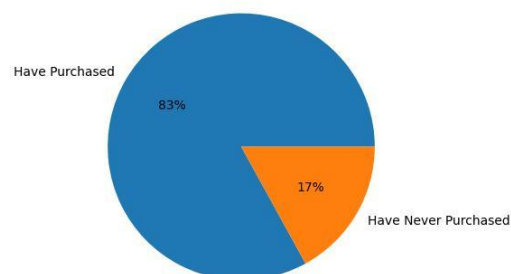


Figure 12. Distribution of JKT48 fans based on merchandise purchase history.

Distribution of JKT48 Fans Based on Total Purchase Frequency

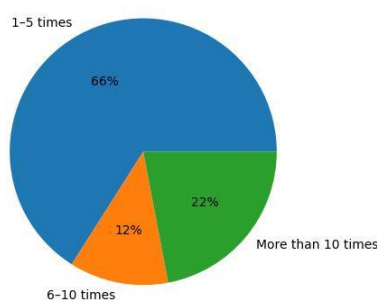


Figure 13. Distribution of JKT48 fans based on total purchase frequency.

JKT48 fan loyalty is further based on JKT48 fan data by merchandise purchase history and total purchases. Almost all JKT48 fan respondents have purchased merchandise or goods produced by JKT48. This factual description shows that JKT48 fans frequently purchase merchandise from JKT48. This falls under the concept of loyalty, where whatever is released or produced by JKT48 is certain to be purchased by JKT48 fans according to their respective income capabilities.

"Loyalty is directed toward the oshi they support. Wherever they have dreams or achievements they want to reach, they are supported, always present at every important moment. They don't have to come to the theater every day, but for the most important moments, they attend and provide support. During Senbatsu, it is supported and managed by the fanbase; that's loyalty—whether there is money or not, it can still be done."

(Alam, 2021)

Based on the interview results from Alam, subjectively defining loyalty as a repetitive form of support for a particular member or oshi. Loyalty directs either to a place like a theater or indirectly. The derivative based on fandom toward loyalty is forming repetitive resolution in support or as consumers, one of which is helping members become Senbatsu.

JKT48 fan loyalty currently faces one of the biggest changes during the pandemic with the reduction of JKT48 members, and the visible indicator is Switching Cost, defined as consumer response to the burden received when changes occur. JKT48 strives to overcome or improve its industry's finances but must eliminate elements like members and the postponement of activities. JKT48 management has actually determined a resolution policy with major media parties such as RCTI+ to partner with the theater simultaneously as a form of resolution in presenting online theater. Furthermore, JKT48

partners with Showroom as a platform media that publishes directly online for each member.

Based on inductive analysis of interview results and supporting statistical data, JKT48 fans accept the resolution positively. JKT48 fans indicate that the solution is appropriate for overcoming the pandemic and even offer to jointly help JKT48's finances.

Based on the entirety and comparison of data, interviews, and derivatives based on fandom and fans gift, JKT48 fans are classified as premium loyalty, a form of loyalty that has high attachment with driving capabilities aligned with consumer activities. JKT48 has high preference for JKT48 fan loyalty despite internal changes within JKT48.

The effect of loyalty becomes a driver for dissemination and as one of the management strategies that can be adopted by the object, in this research, JKT48. The dissemination of loyalty based on theoretical conception indicates that loyalty has important power but is dangerous when it can damage or change the normative values of human life. Therefore, loyalty requires control, either from a group or faction, and JKT48 fans have regulated their loyalty model and attitude.

JKT48 fans were previously influenced by JKT48 as an object and the diversion of traditional thinking leading to the adaptation of new values. JKT48 fans provide rationalization to control emotions and determine choices to become JKT48 fans. The influence of JKT48 on its fans wants to be highlighted as idols and needs attention. This strategy is formed by the emergence of loyalty among JKT48 fans. JKT48 is able to control its fans by holding activities such as Direct Selling, Handshake, and daily activities at the Theater.

JKT48 utilizes loyalty as a brand in marketing management strategy. Over time, JKT48 has provided influence from globalization flows and the entertainment industry. JKT48 fan loyalty continues to develop following the development of JKT48. The change or arrival and departure of members from JKT48 greatly affects the loyalty of JKT48 fans. The popularity role of a JKT48 member can spread and detail that loyalty. The group of JKT48 fans is very abstract and rural in nature. If a JKT48 member leaves, the existence of the oshi group is questioned.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that fandom, fans gift, and fanaticism serve as significant drivers of fan loyalty toward JKT48. The research demonstrates that JKT48 fans exhibit strong loyalty characterized by emotional commitment, active participation in fan communities, and consistent consumption of

JKT48-related products and events. The formation of fandom provides a platform for fans to connect, share experiences, and collectively support their favorite members, thereby strengthening their attachment to JKT48 as a brand.

References

- Abdussalam, S., & Wahyudi, M. (2016). Principles and strategies of creative broadcasting program for Indonesian local tv: a descriptive study. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*. <https://doi.org/10.17576/jkmjc-2016-3201-28>
- Anggraini, D. (2015). Dynamics of idol worship in jkt48 fandom. Undergraduate Thesis.
- Arizabal, J. J. R., & Yabut, H. J. (2025). The mediating effect of social connectedness in the relationship between K-pop fandom identity and mental health. *SAGE Open*, 15(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440251369989>
- Brooks, S. K. (2018). FANatics: Systematic literature review of factors associated with celebrity worship, and suggested directions for future research. *Current Psychology*, 40, 3524–3552. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-018-9978-4>
- Fandia, M. (2016). The Fandom for Idols: A Survey Report on Kpop Fans in Indonesia. Blog.Jakpat.Net.
- Fuschillo, G. (2020). Fans, fandoms, or fanaticism? *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 20(3), 347–365. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540518773822>
- Hellekson, K. (2015). Making use of: The gift, commerce, and fans. *Cinema Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1353/cj.2015.0017>
- Kiuchi, Y. (2017). Idols you can meet: AKB48 and a new trend in Japan's music industry. *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 50(1), 30–49. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jpcu.12526>
- Kozinets, R. (1998). On netnography: Initial reflections on consumer research investigations of cyberculture. *Advances in Consumer Research*.
- Lang, G., Mamonov, S., & Lang, K. R. (2013). Netnography. In *Cross-Cultural Interaction*. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-4666-4979-8.ch085>.
- Mulyana, A., Briandana, R., & Puspa Ningrum, D. A. (2019). Social construction fandom as cultural industry marketing of jkt48 fan group. *International Research Journal of Business Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.21632/irjbs.12.3.257-266>
- Mulya, S. N. M., & Mulyana, A. (2022). Parasocial interactions: JKT48 fans in forming relations with idols and social environment. *Journal of Social and Political Sciences*, 5(3), 108–115. <https://doi.org/10.31014/aior.1991.05.03.368>
- Noor, A. A. (2018). Fanaticism behavior of sharia fandom toward JKT48 idol group. Undergraduate Thesis, Universitas Brawijaya.
- O'Donohoe, S. (2010). Netnography: Doing ethnographic research online. *International Journal of Advertising*. <https://doi.org/10.2501/S026504871020118X>

- Qurrata A'yuna & Said Nurdin (2015). Fanaticism in religious psychology review. Program Studi Bimbingan dan Konseling, FTK, UIN Ar-Raniry.
- Ridya Melanita (2019). Survey of indonesian k-pop fans' attitudes toward the fan gift phenomenon. Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada.
- Sugiyono. (2012). Quantitative, qualitative, and R&D research methods. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Sun, M. (2020). K-pop fan labor and an alternative creative industry: A case study of GOT7 Chinese fans. *Global Media and China*, 5(4), 389–406. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2059436420954588>
- Yoon, K. (2022). Between universes: Fan positionalities in the transnational circulation of K-pop. *Communication, Culture & Critique*, 15(4), 328–337. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20570473221136667>