



BTS Boyband Fever Among New Students 2019 Faculty of Social Sciences, State University of Malang

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ABSTRACT

During its development, many of the kpop products that were successfully in demand among teenagers included a boy band. This study raised the theme of BTS boyband fever among teenagers with the object of research being the new students of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Malang State University (FIS UM) in 2019. The purpose of this study was due to the researcher's curiosity about how the enthusiasm of new students in responding to this popular culture fever. In this study, researchers used several relevant concepts and theories, including the concept of group membership by Robert K. Merton. Then researchers also associate with the theory of action by Max Webber and Talcott Parsons, the concept of social action according to Max Webber and also the characteristics of industrial society. From the results of research by digging up information on 10 student informants in the selection of purposive sampling through data collection techniques in the form of interviews, it appears that there is indeed a BTS boyband fever that occurs in new students of FIS UM. Then with the BTS boyband fever this will be correlated with the concept of popular culture and several theories relevant to this topic.

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1. INTRODUCTION

South Korean boy bands and girl groups that bring the flow of "KPOP" or stands for "Korean Pop" in their music are so widespread in various circles ranging from children, teenagers to adults even around the world. They have made many achievements, from there many people are curious and finally follow every development of Korean boy groups and girl groups. Then they decided to become fans of the Korean boy group and girl group. These Kpop fans are willing to spend their money to realize their existence as fans, namely buying tickets for the idol's concert, and buying albums that have been released. In addition, many of them imitate the way they dress even to daily behavior.

Popular culture is a commercially produced culture and there seems to be no reason to say this will change for the foreseeable future. Popular culture is seen as the meanings and practices produced by popular audiences at the moment of consumption, and the study of popular culture becomes centered on how it is used (Saputra, 2013). Kpop fever is one of the impacts of pop culture, especially in Indonesia itself there have been many Kpop fans spread in various regions. It is proven that there is a concert of one of the boy bands or girl groups held in Jakarta, the concert tickets were sold out by the kpop lovers. Moreover, it can be said to be adaptability, adaptability is someone who is able to adjust as a general or group and the person shows a pleasant attitude and behavior, meaning that the person has been accepted by the group and environment (Pratiwi and Pritanoya, 2017; Lee and Kwon, 2003). Therefore, Pop Culture in Kpop itself has been able to adapt into the territory of dominance. It is undeniable if this happens, because indeed they follow the trend at this time or can be as profitability which is a benchmark in the community (Lee and Kwon, 2003; Zanger, 1983).

There are several other journals that researchers have found that discuss the influence of Pop Culture itself on lifestyle (Prasetyo and Andiwarti, 2021), consumption patterns (Wulandari, 2018), behavior change (Fachrosi, et al., 2020), and the social life of fans of Kpop.

In the journal that researchers found, it is stated that Korean culture can influence the lifestyle of fans, especially among students where they like to watch Korean Wave shows, because it has its own charms such as the handsomeness and beauty of the faces of Korean artists. Then those who like Korean culture join one of the Ever Lasting Friends communities that occur in the Surabaya area (Saraksak and Utami, 2021; Frequency, 2017). The influence of consumptive culture that occurs in Manado on young people where they are obsessed with modern Korean style fashion brought by high-selling Korean artists. So that fans always follow the path of the development of Korean culture.

Therefore, researchers are interested in researching BTS Fever among FIS UM 2019 students, which has never been studied by other academics before. Researchers examined more specifically, namely one of the South Korean boy bands BTS, which has many fans known as "ARMY". Researchers are interested in whether there are ARMYs among the 2019 FIS UM maba and also how the ARMYs react to idols that more or less affect their lives.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The fans are the most visible part of the audience of pop culture texts and practices. Fans have always been characterized as potential bigotry. This means that fan groups are seen as

excessive behavior and adjacent to madness. Jenson points out two typical types of fan pathology; obsessed individuals and hysterical crowds (Adiyanto, 2021; Zanger, 1993). He argues that both figures were born out of a certain reading and critique of an unacknowledged modernity in which fans were seen as psychological symptoms of alleged social dysfunction. The fans are presented as one of the dangerous 'others' in modern life. These 'we' are sane and respectable, 'they' are obsessed and hysterical (Zachariah, 2016; Adiyanto, 2021).

Fans are understood as passive and pathological victims of the mass media. The mass media constructs discourse to fans and shapes their theatre of mind. This makes fans unable to discriminate and creates distance between themselves and objects of pleasure. The most common stereotypes for example are groups of hysterical girls and women who shout at their idol celebrities, groups of fans who compete with each other adopting their idol style or groups of fans who are willing to do anything to meet their idols (Wiradimadia, 2016; Lather, 1993).

Fandom is seen as a pathological symptom of the inevitable cultural, moral and social collapse following the transition from rural and agricultural societies to industrial and urban societies. At its softest stage, the fan group represents a desperate attempt to compensate for the weaknesses of modern life. Fandoms tend to always pursue interests, flaunting tastes and preferences so they are well-suited to a variety of pop culture texts and practices. These audiences can be said to flaunt their pleasure to cause an emotional sense, while dominant audiences are always able to maintain respectable distance and aesthetic control (Hatami, 2023; Hay, 2012).

This shows how passive the audience of pop culture fans in receiving media content, so they want to 'craze' something that is considered to have no aesthetic value like the dominant culture. However, Jenson does not agree with the term passive audience because according to him, this view is formed because of the dominance of social thought from more dominant groups of society. According to Jenson, there are three main characteristics in marking the mode of giving fan culture meaning in media texts, namely: (1) the way fans attract texts approaching the realm of their life experiences; (2) the role played through re-reading in fan culture; (3) processes that incorporate program information into social interactions continuously (Schivinski and Dabrowski, 2016).

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses descriptive qualitative methods and approaches. Because in this study, researchers want to find in-depth data according to the point of view of the informants who have been selected. In the elaboration of research results using descriptive analysis where here the elaboration is carried out with a narrative explanation and describes in detail how the data has been obtained.

The technique chosen in collecting data is by interview technique through sample selection in the form of purposive sampling. In the interview technique, there are some questions that do not refer to the interview guide, where the question the researcher asks the informant during the interview process so that the researcher can dig deeper than some of the answers they have expressed. In the selection of this sample, special characteristics and information are needed that have a correlation with the topic of this study. Then from the selection of samples, 10 informants from each department were found at the Faculty of

Social Sciences, State University of Malang. In this study, researchers also included interview guidelines as a reference for researchers in conducting interviews in accordance with the procedures in this study.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Researchers selected 10 informants from five majors in the Faculty of Social Sciences, consisting of Sociology, Social Studies Education, Civic Education, History, and Geography. From the five majors, researchers took two informants each. Our informants are all female. Where most of the fans of the BTS boyband are women. The first informant from the sociology department said that before he liked the boy band BTS, he was already interested in Korean culture and several other boy bands that were popular at that time. Then from this interest began to glance at the BTS boyband which was famous in 2015. But the wisdom of the BTS boy band began in high school in 2017, he was influenced by friends at school who were watching BTS music videos, from there he considered BTS videos very interesting and the songs were very inspiring then he began to be interested in knowing more about BTS. But our respondent never spends money to buy anything related to BTS because he only considers BTS as a mere pleasure.

There is a difference between the first respondent and our second respondent, where the second respondent already liked BTS when they were famous in 2015. He really likes the charisma that BTS members bring both in music videos and their performances on the concert stage. According to him, in every BTS music video there are always theories in every scene and attract people who see to solve those theories. So far, he has watched BTS's performance in Jakarta at that time. Both of our respondents shared the benefits of being BTS fans, where they can feel different things contained in each BTS song, especially their songs related to life. They also know the development of BTS where the boy band began to fame in 2015 in Korea then became more famous again when they won a billboard award.

The next informant came from the Social Studies Education department. This first informant said he started liking BTS 3 years ago in high school, but before that he already liked K-POP. He also likes Korean culture. In fact, he was about to apply for a scholarship in Korea. But it turned out that he was accepted to study at UM. Finally, he decided to continue his S1 at UM. Since the 2nd grade of high school he began to like BTS, he even tried to cover BTS songs. He started liking BTS at the beginning of the trend, Gen Halilintar covered BTS's Mic Drop song, the song sounded good. Since then he began to find out the development of BTS from the beginning of debut until now. By listening to all BTS's songs that are delicious and have meanings that hit their hearts and hard work, they make them inspired to face the problems of life experienced, especially he himself tells the situation of a broken home. As an ARMY, he also buys BTS-related items using his own savings money. He is now also starting to save money so he can buy tickets for BTS's concert in Korea.

From the development of BTS that he knows so far, the longer the better, the more happy he is to follow its development. But actually, since they won billboard awards, BTS started collaborating on songs with western artists and he felt BTS began to be influenced by them and more or less singers who collaborated with BTS influenced BTS songs. But he still likes BTS, especially now that it has started to go international.

He said that even though he was an ARMY, he would not condone their behavior as long as it was wrong. He only takes the positive side of BTS and he is very proud to be an ARMY because indeed they inspire his life, his songs also encourage his life regardless of their songs related to romance. He felt many benefits as an ARMY. BTS's songs can really influence me in dealing with life's problems. I even had time to find out some life stories of a Korean ARMY high school teenager who really loves BTS, but still does not leave his obligations as a student.

According to him, the Korean ARMY is very different from the Indonesian ARMY. The Korean ARMY consists of 3 levels. Levels 1, 2, and 3. Tier 3 is the biggest, where to become a level 3 ARMY they must have all BTS albums. While at ARMY level 1 they only know the development of BTS. Even to move up in each level, they have to pass an exam, where they will be interviewed for everything about BTS in detail. If they are considered successful, they will graduate and move up the ranks. If the ARMYs make a mistake, they will definitely be blacklisted from the ARMY. For a small example, they were caught not defending BTS but instead defending other boy bands. The Korean ARMY is a hardline ARMY. Indonesian ARMY, they are more difficult to meet BTS and only certain can meet them, in contrast to Korean ARMY.

Based on his narrative, ARMY's activities are very positive. Among them, fundraising for disaster victims then donating them, where they sell items about BTS that they have. They also celebrated each BTS member's birthday at a café, where they exchanged information about BTS they also got along well with each other.

Once he even faltered, because his friend denounced and blasphemed him as an ARMY. They hate him very much. Why can he like BTS when they are atheists, and it's all not in accordance with the teachings of the religion he professes (Islam). But their family and even his mother supported him as long as he was willing to take responsibility for what he did, e.g. as a student his obligation was to study.

Furthermore, the informant from the Department of Civic Education, said that he liked BTS since 2016, and he liked BTS because he liked the conception of BTS itself, one of which is also, BTS is always famous and growing every year. Initially, he liked BTS from concerts held around the world in 2013-2019. With the development of BTS, he still likes BTS. But he didn't like one of BTS's songs because in his song, BTS's initial concept of hip-hop began to disappear. As an ARMY, he once spent money to buy cellphone cases, pop sockets, BTS-themed bags. He also always follows the development of the BTS boy band to date. He as an ARMY also participated in ARMY associations at the district level and in that association there was an activity to watch BTS together somewhere.

According to his presentation, ARMYs in Korea are different from ARMYs in Indonesia, where in Korea ARMYs know more about the conflicts in BTS and are closer to BTS. As for Indonesian ARMYs, if anyone doesn't like BTS they will blaspheme that person. As a BTS fan, he is very proud. As an ARMY, the benefit he gets is that he can make many friends even from ARMYs in various cities. According to him, he still loves Indonesian culture because he only likes the concepts brought by BTS.

Our second informant from the Civic Education department said that she had liked BTS since 2014. At first he liked BTS because the song had appeared on the radio and he was immediately interested in the song. In addition, he also likes BTS's energetic and compact dance. The visuals in each of their music videos are very attractive. So far, he knows the

development of BTS, namely BTS fans who used to be few are now more and more global. During his time as an ARMY, he once spent money to buy goods related to BTS. The benefit he feels is that he can learn a foreign language, in this case Korean, he can also get to know Korean culture and make friends more easily because ARMYs are scattered in various regions. But as an ARMY he still loves Indonesian culture.

The second informant from the history department said that he has liked BTS since 2018. He likes BTS because one of the members named Seok Jin, he also likes BTS because they are from a small agency in Korea which is now global. But he doesn't know much about the development of BTS, he only knows that BTS debuted in 2013 and went global in 2015 until now. From the existing development, he has stopped liking BTS since 2019. Because in his opinion, BTS is not cool anymore. He identifies himself as an ARMY, that is, joins the ARMY group, as an ARMY he never spends money to buy goods related to BTS, he only follows BTS through social media and internet media such as youtube. According to him, the difference between Korean ARMY and Indonesian ARMY, Korean ARMY is easier to meet BTS than Indonesian ARMY which is far from Korea. The benefits felt as an ARMY are more connections from various regions and as a self-entertainer. Even though he is an ARMY, he still loves Indonesian culture.

Our informant from the Department of Geography, said that he has liked BTS since 2015, he just likes the songs BTS performs and likes to see BTS perform every concert because they always look cool. BTS since their development has always worked hard to perform since the beginning of their debut. With the development of BTS, he still likes BTS, but he doesn't really follow every development. He has also spent to buy BTS albums. He felt that BTS could entertain him from the songs and performances performed. He also still likes Indonesian culture.

From the interview results that researchers got, it can be seen that among these new FIS UM students, ARMYs who are fanatical about BTS they just like BTS's performance performed in songs, concerts, and music videos. But it is undeniable that there are still ARMYs who always follow every development of BTS even they are able to make BTS as an encouragement for their lives. It can all be seen from every meaning in BTS's songs that are quite relatable. Those who identify themselves as ARMYs also participate in activities in each ARMY association. From there they can get diverse relations from various regions. It can be seen that existing K-POP trends can greatly influence the development of ARMYs even in the lives of each individual.

So it can be known that KPOP culture has a positive impact such as increasing the confidence that exists in fans, improving relationships between fellow fans from various regions when gathering communities, and never giving up in facing their problems because the spirit brought by BTS members can be carried into their fans. But it is undeniable that negative impacts can occur, especially the status of ARMYs who are still studying, where they will be lazy and not even responsible for their role as students. In addition, those who are too fanatical and do not accept if their idols are insulted by other fans, will ridicule each other and cause a commotion.

Based on the results of the research above, then an explanation can be described between the relationship of the data obtained with theories and conceptions that exist in popular culture. In this discussion, researchers will relate several theories that exist in sociology which will later have a relationship with the findings and research results that

have been obtained including, the concept of membership and reference group by Robert K. Merton, then the theory of action from Marx Weber and Talcott Parsons, the concept of social action according to Marx Weber in (Hay, 2012). Then the characteristics of industrial society which will later be related to popular culture.

Then, according to (Prasetiyo and Andjarwati, 2021) explained about the characteristics of industrial society which later have implications for popular culture. Here are the characteristics of the industrial community which here are associated with findings and research results including:

1. Trend, is where a result of a new culture has been accepted and penetrated and embraced by society. This is closely related to the findings of the researcher's field data. Based on interviews that have been conducted, informants said that they started to become fans when the rise of k-pop culture entered Indonesia and then became a trend.
2. Durability: Popular culture is a culture bound by time. That is, there will be a duration between the beginning and end of the development of a popular culture itself. It is likened to a mountain. There will be an initial stage where a culture will become a trend by being known by the community then a stage where how the culture will be at the peak point and will gradually fade back its existence. Then there will be a new popular culture that invades and erodes the previous popular culture. In this case, the development of the BTS boyband has reached the peak stage, marked by its high existence among the community, especially teenagers.
3. Uniformity of form, meaning that a popular culture will be introduced and spread through mass media. Then from here the community will accept and eventually be influenced by this culture. In the findings, informants who incidentally are fans will have uniformity in both form of attitude, and style of speech. For example, female students will throw a style of speech that tends to be like Koreans.
4. Profitability, basically popular culture is a reflection of industrial society where the latent goal of popular culture is to get profit opportunities or profits from those who make up this culture. In the results of the study, evidence was found that female students who like the BTS boyband will spend their money to buy products produced by the BTS boyband itself in this case ranging from internet packages to find out the development of the BTS boyband through mass media, merchandise related to the BTS boyband and even to watch concerts from the BTS boyband itself.
5. Adaptability, initially this culture is accepted into society then accepted by society. Popular culture that is still being adapted from where this culture was formed. Then this culture is also adapted in society and adapts its society. Related to the results of the study is how fans accept kpop as a new culture among them and then learn and adapt to the development of this culture. then the appearance of BTS in 2013 was also the initial stage of adaptation of this boy band which was then accepted in the community, especially by respondents.

A variety of sociological theories that can be attributed to findings and results is the theory of action of Max Webber and Talcott Parson (Ritzer, 2012). According to Webber, the theory of action as an action based on experience and understanding of certain situations.

Then according to Parsons, action theory is an action resulting from the guidance of social values and norms that are influenced by social systems, cultural systems, and each individual's personality. In this case, it relates to data findings in the field. That is how the informants finally positioned themselves as BTS fans as a result of understanding of this boy band. how the BTS boy band then introduces themselves in the realm of society which eventually from here the public will begin to be interested in opening up and acting as they define themselves as fans.

Then it can also be associated with the concept of rationality of social action by Max Webber in this case, the orientation of social action is divided into four namely Zwerk Rational, Werkrational, Affectional Action, and Traditional Action. Researchers then examined and found four orientations related to the findings including,

1. Zwerk Rational (Instrumental rationality action), this action is an action aimed at achieving the rational goals of the perpetrator which is then transmitted to the instrument or tool as a medium in achieving goals. The link to the results of the study is how fans use a tool, this means the products they consume are related to the boy band BTS. From this it can be seen that the use of this tool as a form of their goal to act in accordance with the values that exist in their circles in this case means among fans of the boy band BTS.
2. Werkrational action, meaning that rational value action is action with consideration of good and bad in society which is above the interests of the individual. The relation to the results of the study is how fans are members of the fan association. This is regarded as a truth that then unconsciously forms into a value if they indeed identify themselves as fans.
3. Affectional Action, the act of affection focuses on the emotional impulse that arises in the community. Regarding the form of emotion can be said to be a form of feeling sad, happy, loving, and loving. In relation to the results of the study, the fans will then try to protect their idols or boy band BTS from all forms of crime. In this case, the term affection or feelings of love and greeting emerged from fans and their idols. In addition to the affection applied to the boy band BTS as their idols, the fans also perform the function of affection between fans. This can be proven through the association carried out by fans as well as a form of self-introduction and then a friendship is established which will eventually also apply the affection function.
4. Traditional Action (traditional action) this action is considered from the traditions that exist in the community. The consideration of this tradition is then also related to BTS fans. Researchers found that there are still traditional actions from fans in the form of their first love for the country of Indonesia, even though what they like is not something local.

In addition, researchers also related how the characteristics of informants who identified themselves as fans of the boy band BTS. Namely the concept of membership group by Robert K. Merton in (Soekanto, 1982). This concept is included in the discussion of types of social groups. In the concept of group membership, it is explained that a group in this case is a member of the group physically is an official part of the group. The corroboration of the data findings was that the informants admitted that they were physically part of the official

members of the group. The results that researchers can get are, each informant is a member of a fan group both from the surrounding environment and even the international realm which is united in a fan application.

5. CONCLUSION

From the research journal above, it can be concluded that BTS or ARMY fans among FIS UM 2019 students are many who like the BTS boy band because of many things, namely from the songs they released and the good looks of BTS members. Many BTS fans now no longer follow the development of BTS because many things include this changed genre which causes many ARMYs who are no longer or follow the development of the BTS boy band. From the findings, it can also be seen that informants identify themselves as ARMYs through various things such as joining a community, buying items related to BTS and even watching concerts. Later, the discussion of this research was linked to the theory of action by Marx Webber and Talcott Parsons that they identified as ARMY as a result of their understanding of the development of K-POP and the boy band BTS itself. Then the concept of membership group by Robert K. Merton which can be related to how ARMYs form associations or communities as a form of their identity. In addition, the concept of value-oriented, affectionate, instrumental, and traditional social actions is related to how ARMY uses products from BTS boy bands with the aim of liking and maintaining the order of this group of fans as a form of affection but still loving their homeland as a form of their traditional actions. Then the behavior of ARMYs can also be analyzed through the characteristics of industrial society that there is a relationship between ARMY behavior patterns with characteristics of adaptability, trends, uniformity of form, profitability, and durability.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

In connection with this research that has been carried out has limited taking subjects, very specific material and very simple methods. So the researcher suggested that other parties to conduct further research imposed on a wider range of subjects, more general material and more relevant methods so as to bring up better research results.

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