

Malang's K-Pop Fans Hyperreality

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Abstract— This article made on purpose to review about popular culture that is Korean Hallyu star or well-known as K-Pop (Korean Pop) culture, from South Korea. Based on this research, K-Pop is a popular culture that pretty famous in any ages, especially the teenager that made K-Pop fandom being popular around the world, including Indonesia. Malang is one of the city who have many K-Pop fans. That's why this research has done in Malang with qualitative descriptive approach and interview by giving some questions to the subject who are K-Pop fans in Malang. This research explains about hyperreality action who did by K-Pop fans in Malang. Hyperreality means to create a new reality that didn't match with the reality itself, it's based on research to K-Pop fans act in Malang. Many of them (fans) admitted that they are the lover from their idol and assume their idols are near them but actually not.

Keywords: *popular culture, K-Pop, hyperreality*

I. INTRODUCTION

In this digital era, all forms of information can be accessed easier. Likewise the development of culture from all directions can we see and learn through the technological advancement that exists today. The number of cultures that comes from one country to another, one region to another raises a new term, namely popular culture. The popular culture itself, according to [1], is a form of idea whether related to fashion, style or behavior that is favored by someone and develops a lot through

communication and technology media which is easy to understand and follow. Furthermore, popular culture began to develop in the late 20th century and grew rapidly in the beginning of the 21st century. One of the popular cultures that is currently very loved by a lot of people [2], especially in Indonesia, is the Hallyu Star Korea, or the exact term is K-Pop culture. Culture does have a role in the formation of identity [3]. Then, technology is a tool used in comparing that identity, through products of technology, namely the media [4]. The presence of technology also has a significant impact in changing the patterns of life of people throughout the world [5]. Technology will eventually change the pattern of people's behavior wherever they are [6]. Technology is also able to create branding with all the elements contained in the technology as a product that can be utilized for various purposes [7].

Generally, the development of Korean culture in Indonesia is dominated by women of adolescence and above even though it is not denied that lately *hallyu* fever is also felt by children and even not only a few men that contribute in it. The most striking of these cultural developments, is that most of Korean fans began to follow the growing trend in Korea. It is not only the matter of fashion trends, but also the matter of their attitude and personality. If what is commonly used in Indonesia is mixing Indonesian and English, among K-Pop fans it has also become natural to speak in Korean style.

Not only speaking, in the terms of personal individuals, they did not escape being like their idols. Idol, in this case, K-Pop idol is not infrequently a source of inspiration and fantasy for fans to imitate some of the actions and things that the idol is doing. So that it will lead to hyperreality actions which occur among adolescents. Hyper reality which is a person's inability to distinguish reality and fantasy so that someone will excessively like what they think is right and do everything even though it is not real. According to [8] hyper reality will lead to conditions that are considered to be a reality, which then will be trusted as reality and a fake will be believed as a truth. This is reinforced by Baudrillard's opinion that a simulation creates a new reality which he calls hyperreality. The authors themselves have seen many teenagers are now very fond to K-Pop culture, especially around the writer's environment. There are also many K-Pop lover organizations found whether in small organizations such as K-Pop dance lovers or even fan clubs from various boy groups and girl groups in Korea.

Therefore, in this article the authors are very interested in conducting research related to how the development of the K-Pop fans' hyperreality level that occurs among teenagers and students in Malang at this time. Actually, researches about K-Pop culture has also been done by several previous researchers, it is just that there is no similarity with the theme that the authors took. The first article was made by [9] from Brawijaya University, Malang with the title of the article "Celebrity Worship Relationships against K-Pop Idols (Korean Pop) with Imitation Behavior in Teens". In the article, the content is more about how a teenage K-Pop fan is being very obsessed with her idol, which is called as Celebrity Worship, where someone wants to always be involved in idol life. The article is also explaining about the factors that affect Celebrity Worship to reach at the stage of imitation. In this first article the current authors did not find similarities in both title and focus of the research because the research that the authors did more specifically describes about how the hyperreality of K-Pop fans in Malang concerning the actions taken and the forms of imitation performed.

Next, the second article by [10] with the article title "Conformity and Fanaticism in Young Korean Wave (Research on Super Junior Community Fans ELF Club in Samarinda)". In Sella's research, the results section and discussion explaining about how an ELF or a fan of Super Junior, a boy group from Korea, was much influenced by conformity that occurred in society, namely behavior changes caused by social normative and informational which eventually led to acts of fanaticism so that a Super Junior's fan will do anything to maintain his/her loyalty to his/her idol boy group. This is different from the research that the current authors did, because the article the authors did was written to explain the whole K-Pop fans. Not only Super Junior fans, but all K-pop fans in the form of drama, dance, and K-Pop music that are related to excessive behavior, so there is a desire to follow and imitate whatever their idols do.

Then, the third article by [11] with the article title "Characteristics of Social Media in Forming a Popular Korean Pop Culture Among the Samarinda and Balikpapan Communities" which focused on how the role and function of the media as an intermediary for the formation of K-Pop culture to teenagers in Samarinda. Media has a big influence on the spread of popular culture so that teens easily get the latest information about K-Pop on social media, which in turn, many teenagers are following the flow of popular culture. Whether it's good or bad, everything is considered true as long as the media is right. Whereas in the article written by the current authors, is more emphasis on how the attitudes and behavior of K-Pop fans in Malang in appreciating what is liked through daily life and also forms of action that can be regarded as a hyperreality action of a fan.

Next, the fourth article by [12] with the title of the article "K-Pop Fan Fanismism in Netizenbuzz Blog". The article explaining about netizenbuzz blog which is divided into two important texts, namely fans-gift and sasaeng fans. Fans-gift culture get negative responses from a lot of fandoms, because they are considered as fans who are too fanatical to give expensive and luxurious items to their idols. As well as sasaeng fans which also get negative responses from the fandom, because they violate the rules and laws that had been applied. Furthermore, the fanaticism of K-Pop fans portrayed in the netizenbuzz blog itself is inclined to all actions and behavior carried out by fans excessively even beyond common sense. Therefore, fanatical fans are different from fans who are simply amazed without doing any activity and considered as ordinary fans. In this fourth article, maybe both authors discussing the same K-Pop fans, but in the articles written by the current authors does not discuss fanatical fans that portrayed through netizens' blogs, it is rather lead to excessive fan actions that mimic every style and behavior carried out by his idol that even sometimes is difficult to be reasoned with common sense.

And the last article by [13] from the University of Indonesia with the title of the article "Contribution of Social Identity to Conformity to K-Pop Enthusiasts" which discusses about how conformity in K-Pop fans is formed and the conformity in a group is caused by interest and norm values which is believed and embraced by every K-Pop fan who has similarities. Furthermore, it is also explained that conformity in adolescents can arise as a result of an individual being able to imitate the attitudes and behavior of someone he deems to be respected to take real action. This is different from the focus of the article written by the current authors, because the article the authors did is more likely to discuss about the hallucinatory attitudes carried out by K-Pop fans who think that their idols' figures are in their daily lives that can accompany them every day, even though it is not real. That way, the previous articles that the authors took as reference sources did not have similarities whether in the title nor the content of the discussion so that the author tried to find a discussion update by taking the focus on hyperreality that

happened to K-Pop teenager fans in Malang. Particularly because the authors themselves saw almost half of their colleagues and some teenagers in Malang liked K-Pop whether in fashion style, music, drama, and so on. Also, this information about K-Pop culture is very easy to access on social media, anywhere.

II. METHOD

A. Research Approaches and Types

In this study, the authors used a qualitative method that was descriptive analysis. This method explains and describes the hyper-reality that occurs in adolescents of K-Pop fans in Malang which is done through direct observation so that it can be explained in detail about how the hyper-reality acts that occur in teenagers of K-Pop fans. Then the authors themselves are also expected to be able to analyze well the influence and results obtained from the hyper-reality actions that occur to K-Pop fans on their daily lives.

B. Research Sites

The research locations chosen were Malang City, considering that Malang is one of the largest cities in East Java which has quite a number of well-known universities so that the number of teenagers in Malang is also quite large because many are visited by teenagers from outside the city to work or study. In addition, in the shopping center of Malang itself, Korean cover dance dances are often held, which certainly does not rule out the possibility that the city has K-Pop fans who are also quite buried among other cities.

C. Data Collection Procedure

In this study, the researchers used data collection techniques for interviewing, observation, and documentation.

- Interviews are conducted on informants using open interviews so that researchers and resource persons will be more familiar. Researchers, namely K-Pop fans, one of them is Riski Amalia. Other speakers came from one of the K-Pop fan communities in Malang University, as well as several high school teenagers in Malang who were included in K-Pop fans.
- The observation that the researchers did was to see firsthand how the actions and behavior of K-Pop fans that the researchers made as speakers began from their speech style, dress style and health in their surroundings.
- Documentation is done to perpetuate events that are in the place of research on how reality occurs in the object of actual research. So that the existence of this documentation can be used as tangible evidence that researchers actually conduct research.

D. Data Analysis

The data analysis technique used in this study refers to the theory put forward by Miles and Huberman [14] that an analysis is carried out simultaneously and three activities namely, (1) data reduction, (2) data presentation, (3) conclusion. Data analysis like this is called flow model analysis, flow model analysis begins with data reduction. Reduction of data in the form of data collection carried out with various stages then the second step is the presentation of data in this process displayed many data that have been analyzed previously because in qualitative research basically there are many narrative texts presented, and the last step is drawing conclusions based on findings and then proceed to verify the data that has been obtained.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the current millennial era, the development of popular culture has become very rapid, supported by increasingly adequate technological developments [15]. One culture that is currently being talked about a lot by Indonesian teenagers is Korean Hallyu culture that comes through Korean drama and music. With all the ease of access to technology and the internet, the Hallyu virus can quickly spread and invade teenagers of K-Pop fans. From here, then various kinds of reactions arise from K-Pop fans. Many of them become more imaginative and consider their idols to be their life partners. This is in line with the statement of Jean Baudrillard [16] which describes this world as hyperreality. Hyperreality here means that a media stops being a reflection of reality, but becomes reality itself or even more real than reality itself. In relation to the rapid pace of Korean Hallyu culture in Indonesia, many later fans of idol idols were lulled into the hyperreality created by the media.

The hyperreality and imitation behavior carried out by K-Pop fans is based on several factors, namely:

- The desire of fans to be like their idols
Being a fan of K-Pop idols usually makes a person always follow the daily activities of his idol. From the daily activities of his idol, then the desire arises to follow what is the habit of his idol. At a more severe stage, fanaticism wants to be like this idol can be a reference for someone to do other reckless things.
- Idol as a role model from fans
Someone who becomes an idol means having a special attraction in the eyes of his fans. Not infrequently then his idol's kindness and good habits became a role model for fans.
- An environment that encourages someone to become a K-Pop fan
Because there are many fans from various groups, then they will spread a lot about their idols to other colleagues. The

domino effect brought from these fans proved to be very effective in improving the image of his idol.

Next, the researchers tried to find answers to the hyperreality problems of K-Pop fans in Malang, so the researchers conducted interviews with several informants who produced several important points as follows:

- On average, informants have liked K-Pop since a relatively young age, when they were still in junior high school or high school, but there were also some informants who liked K-Pop, the term was new fans.
- The reasons for informants like K-Pop also vary, some like it because idols and K-Pop actors/actresses have beautiful faces, some like K-Pop because they like the flow of music, or because they are influenced by invitations and stories- a story that was delivered by a friend who first loved K-Pop.
- When compared to Korean actors/actresses, most informants preferred K-Pop idols because according to them the visuals shown were far more interesting. Another reason is also that K-Pop idols who are members of girl groups or boy groups have a variety of great talents, such as being good at singing, playing music and dancing or dancing.
- The informants did a lot of things that they realized would have a negative impact but they often did. Among other things, they often neglect school assignments because they are too engrossed in watching dramas or checking their idol's SNS. This did have a negative impact on them, but it was difficult for them to change, not infrequently the informants fantasized and imagined that their idols were beside him. Some of the more severe cases, their bolster pillows conjured up with additional faces of idols they like because they think that their idols are close to them.
- Apart from the negative things they also do positive things like they support their idols while supporting the works made by their idols such as buying their albums, buying merchandise issued by their idols and even those who are willing to save to watch the concert the K-Pop idol they like.
- Apart from songs, music, and drama, the informants also like the fashion worn by Korean idols/ actors/ actresses because according to them the fashion trends used are simple but still stylists.
- According to some informants, the way to support their favorite idols is by supporting all their works, and not interfering in the idol's personal affairs, because according to them the K-Pop idols/actors/actresses have personal spaces that people don't want to interfere with a person. Although sometimes they are also not willing if their idols are close to other idols or are in a romantic relationship with

other people because the fans sometimes feel very jealous because fans also feel scared if their idols will change.

- According to some informants, when someone likes K-Pop there is a positive influence and there is also a negative influence, it depends on what the environment of the K-Pop fans is like. If most of their fellow K-Pop fans are bad, then the risk of being badly affected such as being obsessed with idols so losing their identity and ignoring their idols' privacy is very possible. But in contrast to the environment of fellow K-Pop fans who share information and grief to become a fan will have a positive impact by expanding the friendship environment, increasing self-confidence by developing hobbies related to K-Pop and forming strong solidarity among fellow K-fans Pop.
- Furthermore, there were some informants who said that they loved the idol too much in favor of their idols. They have done things that could be said to be unfair, such as crying when they found out that the idol he admired was married, or knowing the idol who was admired had to leave the group. They do this solely because they have the deepest love for their idols, so if something happens to their idols they will usually be sad, even crying.

From the results of the interviews conducted, it can be said that the informants who are on average still young are very fond and idolized from the country of Korean ginseng. Both the idols and the actors and actresses. They can lure the hearts of every fan to be able to fall in love with them, both falling in love with the works they make or the visuals they have. The fans will try their best to be able to know and relate both directly and online with their idols/biases. Various things and how they do it. Either by buying all the albums that their idols release, watching every drama and film that their idol plays, going to concerts that their idols hold, going to fan meeting and fan sign, following their official account accounts and fan bases and idols and of course always supporting whatever is done by his idol.

All the things they did were sole because they loved and admired their idols, even when there were fans who were willing to spend enough money to come to concerts and buy their idol albums. They are willing to save in a long enough time to be able to collect a lot. Even many of them have abandoned their obligations such as studying because they are too cool to stream Korean dramas. Not just idolizing, most of them from the hyper level to the idol, or can be said to be a maniac. They often imagine even claiming that the idol they idolize is their husband or wife, or commonly referred to as '*halu/ fanciful*' among K-Pop fans.

This behavior can be said as a form of excessive love for the idol that makes them enter into fantasy, fans are willing to send messages to their idols every day even though the idol himself has never been responded to. In fact, not infrequently they will cry if the exposed rumors with someone and make them as big

fans jealous and of course hurt. Even one of the fans was so in love with the idol that he was willing to commit suicide because the idol he loved so much died of suicide. Not only that, the fans who did not receive the date or marry the idol did not even hesitate to leave the fandom (fan group), because they felt betrayed by the idol. Though if you can think back to their personal lives, of course, it is not the business of the fans because the person who lives the personal life of the idol is the idol itself.

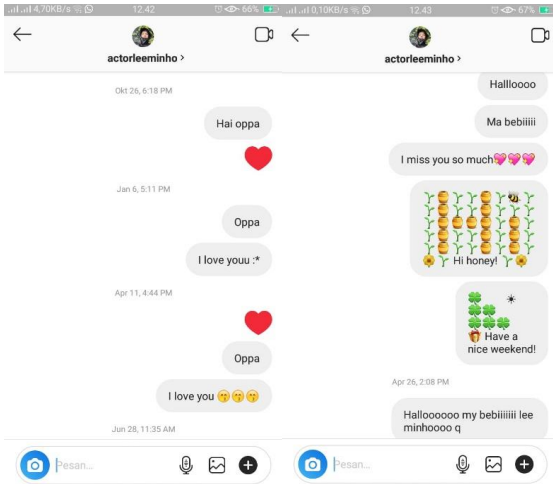


Fig. 1. Screenshot of one of the fans' Instagram message

The picture above shows the pattern of hyperreality behavior that occurs in fanatics on social media. But behind the fans who did not accept sincerely the news of the idol's date, there were also fans who could sincerely accept. Even they will support and pray for their idols so they can live happily with their choice of his/her heart. Both behaviors are different and each of these fans can be influenced by several factors, one of them being environmental factors. If one of the fans gathered with fellow fans who had a good goal in idolizing the idol, namely to see them succeed and be happy, the fans would not do strange things that are not desirable and always support the best for the idol. But if one of the fans gathered with a group of fans who only want to have and feel they have the idol, then they will tend to do strange and beyond reason to be able to approach the idol. The hyperreality action carried out by fans is in accordance with the theory of hyperreality proposed by Baudrillard [17] that a simulation creates another reality beyond the reality that is factual, the new reality that is created is an imaginary reality but is real. This is in accordance with the results of research conducted by K-Pop fans in Malang, where many fans claimed that they were lovers of the idol, even they often imagined being near the idol and the fans of hyperreality thought that the actor / his idol actress is their own, in accordance with what Baudrillard put forward someone will

create a new reality, just as a K-Pop fan will create a new reality that he gets from his imagination or imagination about his idol.

IV. CONCLUSION

From the results of the discussion described earlier, popular culture is a culture that is developing and is being liked by many people. One of them is Korean culture which is now being loved by teenagers in Indonesia; both from the music, boy band, girl band, and clothing styles of Korean artists. This makes Indonesian teenagers by themselves following the Korean artist's styles that become their idols and it is not uncommon for Indonesian teens to spend a lot of money just to buy items that are similar to what their idols use.

Imitation behavior or imitating idol artists performed by K-Pop fans is influenced by several factors, namely: the desire of fans to be like their idols, idols as rollers of models from fans, and environments that encourage someone to become a fan of K-Pop. These three factors are the most dominant factors that encourage each individual to like K-Pop and related factors. This is based on the actions of each individual who must have a logical and illogical reason to follow what they think is interesting and bring enthusiasm to themselves K-Pop fans in particular.

The facts obtained from the field show that many K-Pop fans have hyperreality, as well as fans, assume that they are their idol lovers and the idol is close to him even though it is just imagination. So that hyperreality fans always believe that their idols are only fully owned by individuals, even sometimes a hyperreality K-Pop fan will do anything for his idol excessively, even tending to follow the idol's life.

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