

Fans' Satisfaction on Watching Virtual Concert During COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract—Since COVID-19 pandemic hit the world, virtual concerts have become popular among live performance audiences. It is different from general concerts, the ticket holders do not come to the venue to watch the performance directly with other visitors, but rather through a computer monitor or mobile phone. Despite being broadcasted online and can be only watched virtually, virtual concerts in demand among fans. This study aims to see the gratification from watching virtual concert based on the uses and gratification theory. A quantitative research with a descriptive survey method was conducted using a questionnaire as an instrument for data collection. Using purposive sampling, a total of 78 respondents with criteria that they had watched paid virtual concert by BTS and BLACKPINK were recruited online. As a result, the highest score of gratification sought and gratification obtained were in the personal identity needs. Overall, positive value of the gap scores from each sub variable indicate audiences get satisfied by watching virtual concert.

Keywords—Covid 19, uses and gratification, virtual concert

I. INTRODUCTION

As of March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) has designated COVID-19 caused by the corona virus as a global pandemic after the virus that was first discovered in Wuhan, China in late December 2019 was spreading rapidly to more than a hundred countries within three months. All forms of activities must adapt to the current situation to slow the rate of spread of the virus in accordance with the government's appeal, such as closing permits in and out, studying and working from home, closing entertainment areas which are commonly visited by many people, and many more. A number of countries have also decided to implement quarantine or lockdown. These steps taken by the government certainly have a big impact on each existing sector of life.

One of those affected by this pandemic is in the art and creative fields. Because the suggestion to "stay at home", this certainly limits music industry players from holding live performances that are identical with crowd gatherings. Pandemic has hit the economic activities of those who work as performers, e.g. musicians, singers, due to the policy of implementing social distancing or physical distancing. Many planned concert have had to be postponed or even cancelled. This phenomenon occurs both domestically and abroad. However, with the development of technology and science, especially in the field of media, all these obstacles can still

take place normally but in virtual form, includes music entertainment or concerts. Therefore, a number of artists are holding virtual music concerts as a new alternative to keep them performing and working. Besides, online concerts will help implement government regulations to reduce the number of COVID-19 transmission because while being at home, we can still enjoy concerts even if we see only from a distance.

Several virtual concerts such as "Bang Bang Con: The Live" presented by BTS, "THE SHOW" by BLACKPINK, and "NYE LIVE" by Justin Bieber held during this circumstance. Even though it was held virtually, people interest in this activity was quite high, for example BLACKPINK which managed to earn more than 10 million US dollars from the event [1]. Another one is BTS with a total of USD 234 million worth of ticket sales, making this South Korean boy band concert as one of the largest online events with a huge number of audience participation involved, as many as 750 thousand audiences from more than 100 countries [2].

Unlike concerts in general, ticket holders do not come to the venue to meet the artist directly, but they will use a computer or mobile phone to watch the performance. Just like an on-site concert, online concert in cyberspace also charge tickets at different prices according to the selected facilities. Even though it is called virtual, in fact the set-up and the artists are displayed and performed well and attractively by utilizing rapidly developing technology. So, what about audience's satisfaction? This study aims to determine the satisfaction of virtual concert audiences based on the uses and gratification theory.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Uses and gratification is an approach focused on media usage depending on satisfaction, needs, desires, or motives felt from the audience. The origin of this approach is coming from searching for an explanation of the big appeal from certain main media contents [3]. This approach states that consumers actively choose certain media to use because of certain motives and the ability of the media to fulfill certain satisfactions and needs [4].

The uses and gratifications theory has five general categories of needs: cognitive, emotional, personal integrative, social, and escape, [5] which will then become sub variable in this study. Cognitive needs are related to

increasing information, knowledge, and understanding. Affective needs related to aesthetic, fun, and emotional experiences. Personal integration needs are related to the affirmation of credibility, trust, stability and individual status, while social integration is the need for individuals to socialize with their surroundings. Also there is escape needs which related to the need to avoid pressure, tension, and desire for diversity.

Basically, the uses and gratification approach reminds us of something very important, people use media for various kinds of different purposes. They use the media until their desire is fulfilled. If their desire is already fulfilled, the individual will achieve satisfaction. This method showed that the mass communication users are taking control [6]. Audience satisfaction after using the media should then be measurable. Mowen and Minor [7] define consumer satisfaction as the overall attitude that consumers show for goods and services, after they acquire and use them.

Philip Palmgreen developed the model using and gratification by questioning whether these motives could be fulfilled by the media. This approach views that the audience has needs and expectations. Audiences use media to fulfill their needs and gain satisfaction. The concept of measuring satisfaction is called Gratifications Sought (GS) and Gratification Obtained (GO) [8]. GS refers to the satisfaction that individuals seek or desire when consuming certain types of media. GS is a motive that encourages someone to consume media. In other words, users will choose or not choose a particular media influenced by certain causes, based on the motive to fulfil a number of needs that want to be fulfilled. Meanwhile, GO refers to the real satisfaction received after consuming a certain type of media. GO questioned specific things about what has been obtained after using the media by specifically mentioning certain events or rubrics. By comparing the two concepts of GS and GO, it will be possible to know the satisfaction discrepancy by looking at the differences in satisfaction obtained between GS and GO scores in consuming certain media. This research is a quantitative descriptive research, describing the current state of the subject or object of research based on visible facts or as it is. Descriptive research simply exposes a research situation or event, does not seek or explain relationships, does not test hypotheses or make predictions [10].

III. METHOD

The survey method is used in this study by using questionnaires as instruments for data collection. Survey link for online questionnaire was published via SNS by reaching fanbase accounts. So, all respondents were recruited online and completed the survey link via Google Form.

Author decided to use purposive sampling technique which determine the number of samples based on certain criteria made by researchers based on a predetermined research purpose. The criteria of respondents who were sampled in this study were people who watched the concert "Bang Bang Con: The Live" presented by BTS and "THE SHOW" by BLACKPINK. These two concerts were chosen because the two singer groups have a huge fandom. Other than that, the concerts are held virtually, but still charging the ticket or in other words not free. Hence, the assumption is

that the people who are willing to spend money for certain price to watch are definitely fans of the artists in question and are clearly looking forward to their show. The questionnaire was filled out by 78 respondents with their average age of 17 years old and were students of high school and university.

Quantitative data analysis was carried out after all the necessary data had been collected. Each answer from the given variables, both from the Gratification Sought (GS) and the Gratification Obtained (GO), is scored and added up to obtain the results in the form of a GS score and a GO score. From these results, the next stage is carried out the analysis technique using GS and GO measurements based on the gap between the two. The satisfaction gap is the difference in satisfaction that occurs between GS and GO scores in consuming certain media. The indicators of the satisfaction gap or not are as follows: (1) If the GS mean score > GO mean score, there is a satisfaction gap, then the media does not satisfy the audience; (2) If the GS mean score = GO mean score, there is no satisfaction gap because all the desired needs are met; (3) If the GS mean score < GO mean score, there is a satisfaction gap, then the media satisfies the audience.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After conducting descriptive analysis, result found that there is a difference in the mean score of GS and GO from the experience of watching a virtual concert. The mean score of each sub variable can be seen from Table 1 below.

TABLE I. RESULT OF MEAN SCORE OF GS, GO, AND GAP VALUE

Sub Variable	GS	GO	Gap
Cognitive needs	3,32	3,54	0,22
Affective needs	3,46	3,78	0,32
Personal identity needs	3,51	3,81	0,3
Social integration needs	3,23	3,32	0,09
Escape needs	3,11	3,19	0,08

Cognitive needs. Table 1 depicts the GO score in sub variable cognitive needs is 3.54 which is higher compared to GS mean score of 3.32. This means that virtual concerts can fulfill the needs of audiences to know the updated news and latest music from the artist.

Affective needs. By watching a virtual concert, audiences can get fun and feel entertained beyond initial expectation seeing the result of GO mean score higher than GS mean score in sub variable affective needs ($3.78 > 3.46$).

Personal identity needs. For sub variable personal identity needs, the author creates questions for respondents related to their identity as fans and the others associated with their self-confidence. Table 1 shows that GS mean score in this sub variable is the highest among all GS mean scores in other sub variables, which is 3.51. This explains that from the beginning respondents already have high expectations for the virtual concert. As for seeing a GO mean score that is higher than GS mean score, it shows that respondents feel like they are successful fans because they watched the virtual concert from their favorite artist.

Social integration needs. Although the difference is not much, respondents are satisfied being able to interact with

other viewers as fellow fans and satisfied with having topic to share with others.

Escapism. In sub variable escape needs, GO mean score is higher than GS mean score meaning the respondents' needs to get rid of fatigue and made them escape from reality were fulfilled.

TABLE II. RANK OF GRATIFICATION GAP SCORE

Rank	Sub Variable	Gap
1	Affective needs	0.32
2	Personal identity needs	0.3
3	Cognitive needs	0.22
4	Social integration needs	0.09
5	Escape needs	0.08

Meanwhile, seeing from the gap score, sub variable affective needs and personal identity needs have the highest number among others. Then followed by sub variable cognitive needs with a difference of 0.22. This means the need to have fun and recognized as a fan are what they wanted to seek and fulfill the most. Besides, the most gratification is also obtained from the needs to get the latest news and music updates from the artist.

Overall, the highest gratification sought are in the aspect of personal identity needs. It is also the aspect that gives the highest gratification obtained to virtual concert audiences. As for the needs of social integration and escapism, the number of gaps is not too big. This might happen because the audiences do not meet other visitors in person so the need to interact with other fans is not that high. Meanwhile, small number on escapism sub variable gap score is likely due to the age of sample is at an average of 17 years old, where person at that age is not susceptible to experience stress and the desire to relieve stress is not the main goal [11].

V. CONCLUSION

Although it has existed since a long time ago, virtual concerts became very popular during the COVID-19 pandemic because it can be an alternative for the artists to keep the show going. Not only that, for fans, virtual concerts are also able to accommodate their desire to still be able to

watch their favorite artist perform. Even though they do not meet the artist directly, the findings show that audiences are satisfied to watch the virtual concerts. It can be seen from the positive value in each gap score of sub variable. The suggestion for the future research is to examine fan satisfaction from other aspect, such as performance and ticket price and questioning whether the facility or performance worth the money.

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