

Celebrities' Different Levels of Impact on Fan Economy

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ABSTRACT

With the booming development of the entertainment industry, various celebrities are also using their advantages to gain the attention of their fans, and at the same time, the fan community is also growing and expanding rapidly. "Fan economy refers to the consumption behaviour of fans for adoring idols. The consumer behaviour of fans is based on the main works of their idols and then develops into the endorsement of idols and other related commodities" [1]. The fans in the fan community will be the major object of the research, observing their internet activities; the internet will be the main resource of this observation, more specifically, applications that are commonly used by fans like Sina Weibo. This article concludes that how the difference between the culture of the fan community plays an impact on the fans' exaggerative purchasing endorsement behavior, and the way of socializing among fans will also have a certain connection with the celebrities themselves. Different celebrities tend to have different levels of influence on driving the fan economy; the fan community culture of different celebrities' fans can be influenced indirectly by the nature of the celebrities themselves.

Keywords: *Fan Economy, Fan Community, Fan Psychology, Celebrity Endorsements, Persona*

1. INTRODUCTION

The boom of the Internet has given us the opportunity to see the economic power of fans. In recent years, the trend of supporting celebrity endorsements has become more and more pronounced, and for many fans, supporting endorsements is not just a "choice" for their pleasure, but a necessary "task" to follow celebrities. However, not all fans seek to emulate this behavior, and there may be some indirect factors that influence fan behavior. This article will focus on the indirect effects of the differences between celebrities on the fans' purchasing behavior of endorsements. The connection between fans' extravagant behavior and the celebrities themselves is of great significance to the study of the fan economy; this connection helps us gain insight into the psychological activities of the fan community and the underlying logic of fan economy.

2. CELEBRITIES' "PERSONA"

The "persona" of celebrities, i.e. character design, could be considered a very popular topic in recent years [7]. The term "persona" itself is a synonym for the physical characteristics and personality traits of virtual

characters in anime and novels, and it has been widely applied to stars in recent years. A celebrity's distinctive character traits, unique attitude towards people, and even some interesting flaws or imperfections can be part of a successful "persona". Depending on the celebrity's "persona", the feelings derived by the fans toward the celebrity can vary greatly. It can be indicated with three of the most classic fan psychology.

2.1. The derivation of girlfriend fans

In this era when male celebrities are the most popular, the emergence of girlfriend fans is inevitable. Even more, for the benefit that will be brought by the huge amount of girlfriend fans, capitals tend to create "boyfriends" out of male celebrities or even masculine female celebrities. It is hard not to fall for a handsome young man of a similar age, with his caring, attentive personality. Fans tend to subconsciously regard themselves as a girlfriend position towards such stars, treating the celebrities as their boyfriends to love and care for them.

2.2. The derivation of mommy fans

Although "mommy fans" sounds like a position only fit people who have an age gap with the celebrity, there is actually no shortage of mom fans who are similar in age to the stars themselves, or even younger, because women are prone to motherhood towards people of their affection. If a celebrity has had a heartbreaking experience that creates sympathy and pity, the existence of mommy fans will arise in the fan community. Of course, there will also be celebrities who attract mommy fans because of their juvenile looks and cute behavior.

2.3. The derivation of shipper fans

Shipper fans are commonly called CP fans; they are fans who love a couple set up in a variety show or a TV series. CP fans are usually willing to support the endorsement of two stars at the same time; the attributes of CP fans are more complicated than other fans, as each person's preference in the pair of CPs is different, fans will have different psychological positions. Fans may interpret the "couple" as their own mother and father, brother and sister-in-law, sister and brother-in-law, or even son and daughter-in-law, daughter and son-in-law, although there are deviations in the details, the general direction is to attribute the celebrity couple to their own family. Celebrities with a certain number of CP fans do not necessarily have a certain classic characteristic, but rather the interaction and emotional intersection between the pair of CPs make fans addicted.

3. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FAN COMMUNITIES

3.1. Psychological activity: mutual influence among fans

Each fan community has a unique culture, and the way fans get along with each other will be different accordingly. "Every fan has traits that influence his or her social behavior and habits of consumption. When a fan finds others with similar preferences for a band or artist, they may create or join a "fan group" (such as a fan club), which can develop into a "fan culture" with identifiable customs, attitudes, and behavior. Fan groups often work tirelessly on the one thing they share together—supporting their idol and glowing in the satisfaction of their idols' achievements" [6]. As mentioned in part 1, the attributes of different fans vary greatly, and such differences also lead to different modes of getting along with each other. Girlfriend fans tend to focus their discussions on appreciation and even admiration of celebrities, while mommy fans will empathize with the efforts, achievements, and difficulties of their "children". Girlfriend fans will be in the position of "supporting their boyfriends", while mommy fans will be in the mindset of "taking care of their children's economy" to buy

endorsements. The desire to buy endorsements will gradually increase under the emotional influence of the fan community. When fans are immersed in a group that is actively buying and making endorsements, it is hard not to join the fun. For fans, the desire to buy is greater than the desire to actually enjoy the endorsement. Among them, the difference in psychological stance affects the level of the motivation to buy endorsements. If the motivation of purchasing endorsements is merely like or appreciation, then the desire to spend money will be in a rational range. However, if fans put themselves in a position of being pity or sympathy, or even regard celebrities' dignity as their own, then the intensity of spending money will rise considerably.

3.2. The difference in fan stickiness

The stickiness of the fans, as well as the loyalty of the fans to the celebrity. As part 1 mentioned, different celebrity personas create different fan communities, and naturally create different levels of stickiness. Some fans' stickiness is extremely strong. Taking the Chinese entertainment industry as an example, fans of Zhan Xiao (29.53 million followers in Sina Weibo) and Yibo Wang (39.03 million followers in Sina Weibo) after the duo burst into flames until now, through the birth of many new stars, but their fans are still riding high in supporting the endorsement of these two celebrities. "The value of fan labor is well recognized by many Chinese brands or even international brands taking their step to Chinese markets; they learn to incorporate fan leaders to set out a marketing campaign" [5]. One of the world's top 10 luxury brands, Tod's, has noticed Zhan Xiao's ability on the drive of the fan economy so that has invited him to be their global ambassador. Currently, Tod's has the main source of sales and the fastest-growing economy in China. In the first half of 2021, sales in Greater China are more than twice the same period last year; compared to 2019, before Covid, also grew by more than 40%. In Greater China, the second quarter saw a significant acceleration in revenue compared to the first quarter. At the same time, the share of sales in Greater China is close to 40%, close to the entire European market combined (Italy's sales share is around 20%). The interesting point here is that the difference in fan stickiness can actually be clearly shown by the difference in the number of fans of the celebrities. Celebrities with a large fan base do not necessarily have a greater impact on the promotion of the fan economy than those with a relatively smaller fan base, from which fan stickiness plays a big role. For instance, Han Lu (63.1 million followers in Sina Weibo), who is also a famous actor, has almost as many Weibo fans as Xiao Zhan and Wang Yibo combined, but his endorsement result is even relatively weaker than Xiao Zhan's endorsement results alone or Wang Yibo's endorsement results alone. This is what fan stickiness brings to the fan economy; fans need to reach a certain

level of loyalty to the celebrities so that they can throw a lot of money for them.

Euro mn	1 st sem. 2021	%	1 st sem 2020	%	% current exch. rates	1 st sem. 2021 constant exch. rates	% current exch. rates	1 st Sem 2019 constant exch. rates
Italia	88.8	22.3	65.6	25.5	35.5	88.8	35.5	(29,0)
Europa	74.9	18.8	61.2	23.8	22.1	74.9	22.3	(35.2)
Americhe	25.4	6.4	16.1	6.3	58.2	27.4	70.6	(21.6)
Greater China	156.2	39.2	74.3	28.9	110.2	159.6	114.7	43.5
Res to del monodo	53.1	13.3	39.7	15.5	33.8	54.8	37.8	(20,0)
Total	398.4	100.0	256.9	100.0	55.1	405.5	57.8	(10.9)

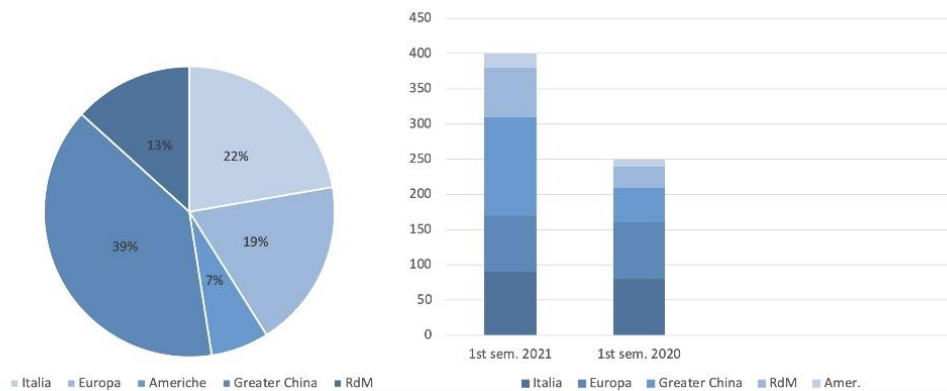


Figure 1 Comparison of changes in sales between 2020 and 2021 of Tod's

4. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN CELEBRITY PERSONA AND FAN COMMUNITY CULTURE

The content of Part 1 and Part 2 can be summarized that celebrity persona logically and indirectly affects the culture of the rice circle. Some of the most classic personas in the entertainment industry, such as comedian, sweet gentleman, or cool boy/girl, can create fan community culture. The comedian's fans, more often than not, will be passerby fans, or fans who see them as friends and don't have the "obsession" to spend money on them. Fans of sweet gentlemen, or cool boys/girls, are more likely to have boyfriend/girlfriend fans, and such fans will be more enthusiastic about purchasing endorsements. For celebrities who have made their debut in the talent show, the fans' empathy for them is way stronger because they have gone through this heartbreaking process with them, and the pity they feel for them is enough for them to continue to support them with money for the future.

Passion, pity, and even hatred, the classic styles of fan empathy, are all important elements of the fan economy, and they give fans the psychological comfort of purchasing endorsements in terms of psychology, making them feel that the pennies spent are more reasonable and worthwhile.

5. CONCLUSION

There are millions of personalities in the world, so for a person, "persona" may not be a well-intentioned word per se, but is gradually rationalized in people's daily discussions. The "persona" only represents the distinctive character traits and unique lifestyle of the celebrity; the celebrity persona will attract the attention of different groups, thus forming the fan community of different cultures. However, this logic does not apply to all fan communities, nor can it generalize all the people in a fan community. This connection is evident in the part of the fan base that is very important to the drive of the fan economy, or in the part of fans who are active on the internet. To be clear, the influence of a celebrity's persona on the fan community is not a direct and necessary correlation, but it is a logic worth thinking about and exploring. As for whether the agency has taken advantage of the fans' psychology to deliberately create a special "persona", it will be a question worth exploring in the future.

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