

## K-POP Immitation On Male Fans (Fanboy) In Medan City

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### ABSTRACT

*K-Pop shows its existence in the entertainment world. The development is increasingly fast, giving rise to new phenomena that are no less interesting among fans. This research focuses on the imitation done by fanboys and how the masculinity construction is formed based on the imitation results of fanboys. The research method used is a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The results of the research obtained are the various forms of imitation performed by fanboys. Starting from the style of clothing that is considered to be updated, the personality of an idol who is warm and friendly to others, the attitude of an idol who is a role model for fanboys to follow, language, culture to the role of the idol's position in the group such as the role of a leader. This research also shows a shift in the value of traditional masculinity to modern masculinity, also known as soft masculinity, in which men care about their physical appearance, have flexible body movements in the field of dance, and have a gentle attitude towards others. Based on this, fanboys are included in the flower boys and pretty boys categories.*

**Keyword :** *Fanboy, Imitation, K-Pop, Soft Masculinity*

### ABSTRAK

*K-Pop menunjukkan eksistensinya dalam dunia entertainment. Perkembangan yang semakin pesat, memunculkan fenomena-fenomena baru yang tidak kalah menarik dari kalangan fansnya. Penelitian ini berfokus pada imitasi yang dilakukan oleh fanboy serta bagaimana konstruksi maskulinitas yang terbentuk berdasarkan hasil imitasi dilakukan fanboy. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif. Hasil penelitian yang diperoleh, beragamnya bentuk-bentuk imitasi yang dilakukan oleh fanboy. Mulai dari style pakaian yang dianggap update, kepribadian idol yang hangat dan ramah kepada orang lain, sikap seorang idol yang menjadi panutan bagi fanboy untuk diikuti, bahasa, kebudayaannya hingga peran dari posisi sang idol di dalam grupnya seperti peran seorang leader. Penelitian ini juga menunjukkan pergeseran nilai maskulinitas tradisional ke maskulinitas modern disebut juga soft masculinity, yang manalaki-laki peduli pada penampilan fisiknya, memiliki gerakan badan yang lentur dalam bidang dance, sikapnya yang lembut terhadap orang lain. Berdasarkan hal tersebut fanboy termasuk dalam kategori flower boys dan pretty boys.*

**Kata Kunci :** *Fanboy, Imitasi, K-Pop, Maskulinitas Lembut.*

## A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, is one of the many countries affected by the Korean wave, enthusiastically accepting the entry of the Korean Wave into their country. This is marked by the number of dramas from South Korea on Indonesian television broadcasts. Using the concept of boy groups and girl groups, K-Pop is able to captivate the hearts of anyone who sees it until it reaps success like in Indonesia (Kusuma, 2014). One of the various types of K-Pop that fans in Indonesia are most interested in are Korean boy groups. A boy group is a vocal group consisting of a number of male teenage singers or who were in their average age when the group was formed. Most boy group personnel sing while dancing, usually they perform with a high level of choreography.

The rapid development of technology and new media plays a major role in the construction of this masculinity. Sean Nixon (in Hanana, et al, 2018) in his study explains the redefinition of masculinity by using the term "new man". According to him, today's masculinity combines boyish softness and assertive masculinity. The concept of masculinity continues to develop in response to the phenomenon of K-Pop music which is currently very popular with teenagers. Masculinity, as part of gender discourse, is something that is socially and culturally constructed by society. Masculinity is also considered to have a relationship with, or rather to, those who are considered non-masculine (Beasley in Praptika, et al, 2016). Although most people generalize that masculinity is about strength and power, cultural and social influences influence the appearance of one's masculinity. As a result, men can perform different masculinities based on their social conditions. Masculinity is something that is dynamic, can continue to change and also is not always the same from one moment to the next (Reeser in Praptika, et al, 2016).

The development of K-Pop in the current era, brings the development of new masculinity values as well. The new masculinity value was brought by the boyband, an ideology that directed its fans to redefining the concept of "masculinity". Masculinity which was previously only associated with the impression of being "manly" or male and represented by the male body and of course by gender has now developed into a representation that includes symbolic aspects (Handaningtias, et al, 2018). K-Pop has made a significant contribution in redefining the concept of masculinity throughout the Asian region. Masculinity is often known as soft masculinity. One of the controversies is how K-Pop is redefining character for men through music that presents a

new model of masculinity (Ainslie in Kartika, et al, 2019). There are fanboys who imitate idols, such as hairstyles, accessories used (necklaces, rings, earrings and so on), attributes that smell like K-Pop (smartphone wallpapers, straps, etc.) skincare used, how to dress, and so on. other. However, there are also fanboys who don't really imitate what their idols use. It's still within reasonable limits, because most of them are school teenagers compared to fanboys who are adults.

Based on this, there is an interest in researching further about how the imitation of male fans (fanboys) on K-Pop idols and the construction of masculinity formed from the results of imitation behavior carried out by fanboys and how fanboys respond in responding to views. labeled by society.

## **B. LITERATURE STUDY**

### **Imitation Behavior**

Imitation behavior according to gerungan (Walgito in Yudi, 2016) imitation is the urge to imitate other people. The process of self-imitation goes deeper, the imitator is not only limited to aspects of symbolic appearance, but includes the totality of his personality, including things that in principle need to be avoided. Imitating destructive behavior in the form of hedonism (self-satisfaction beyond limits).

### **Conditions for Imitation**

To imitate at least there are conditions that must be met, according to Sarwono (in Yudi, 2016) there are certain conditions for imitation, including:

1. Must be interested in something to be imitated. Interest is a basic requirement for each individual to imitate. It's impossible to imitate an object we don't like.
2. The next step is to admire the things to be imitated. The meaning of admiration is a step higher than just liking.
3. Must give high social appreciation to the object that will be the object of our imitation.
4. The last condition, the party who will do the imitation must have knowledge of the party or something to be imitated.

### **Kinds of Imitation Behavior**

Various kinds of imitation behavior according to (gerungan in Yudi, 2016) can be done in various ways, such as:

1. Style of speech: The process of imitation that is done because of paying attention to people who are admired through their speech style.
2. Dress Style: In this imitation process, it does not only include the style of speech, but also the style of dress or clothing of a person who is admired through the five senses..
3. How to express yourself: How to express yourself includes several aspects such as how to give greetings, and habits like what people you idolize.

### **Factors Occurring Imitation Behavior**

There are many driving factors why someone behaves in imitation, Slamet (in Yudi, 2016). State the reason for the imitation behavior, namely:

1. This imitation behavior occurs because of the existence of idol figures who are used as models to be imitated: humans identify themselves with the characters they like, thus creating a great interest in imitating the characters they idolize.
2. Fascination or admiration for the character they idolize: everyone has a character they admire, when humans begin to identify the character they like, it all comes from admiration. Example: a small child starts to like Lionel Messi because Lionel Messi is a great soccer player, besides that he has a good personality on the field and off the field (not playing soccer) so that the child admires him even more.
3. Satisfaction to make oneself like an idolized character: this is one of the high stages in the imitation process, namely the symptoms of hedonism (self-satisfaction beyond limits) to fulfill one's self-satisfaction when imitating the totality of the idolized character.

### **Masculinity**

Hegemonic masculinity is a form of culturally idealized masculine character (Connel in Fathinah, et al, 2017). So that there is a certain uniformity of the concept of masculinity which is the standard for men to be masculine. Then came the concept of traditional masculinity that highly values strength, power, fortitude, action, control, independence, self-satisfaction, male

solidarity and work (Barker in Fathinah, et al, 2017). This is in stark contrast to the modern concept of masculinity. The concept of modern masculinity is described by men who are more attentive, sensitive, expressive and willing to do domestic work (Beynon in Fathinah, et al, 2017).

### *Soft Masculinity*

A new order in terms of masculinity from South Korea, one of which is soft masculinity. Soft masculinity is a product built through transcultural amalgamation of South Korean seonbi masculinity (which is heavily influenced by Hong Kong masculinity), Japanese masculinity, and global metrosexual masculinity. This transculturation created mugukjeok (non-citizenship). Mugukjeoka is an example of the cultural closeness created through cross-cultural flows between South Korea and Japan. In terms of masculinity, mugukjeok proves the way both countries produce and consume images of beautiful men (kkonminam) derived from Japanese shōjo manga bishōnen. This image of ishōnen has repeatedly appeared and commodified by various regional pop stars. This image has evolved to finally create a shared imagination of the gentle masculinity of East Asia (Jung in Kartika, et al, 2019).

Jung revealed in his book entitled Korean Masculinities and Transcultural Consumption explaining about the figure of Bae Yong Joon in his role as Joon Sang in the Korean drama Winter Sonata which represents soft masculinity. Through the role of Bae Yong Joon's character in the drama, there are three characters that can be taken from the soft masculinity of Joon Sang's character. The character consists of tender charisma, purity, and politeness (Jung, 2011).

*Joon Sang's tender charisma is played by Bae Yong Joon through the drama Winter Sonata, not as a character like male men in general. However, tender charisma is identical to the appearance of a neutral male, that is, he does not look manly like a "macho" or dashing man but is not too feminine either. He is gentle, charming and polite. He became the man every woman wanted. That is what Sung Jung (in Astuti, 2016) expressed about tender charisma as a neutral masculinity.*

The second characteristic is purity. Purity owned by Bae Yong Joon describes the problem of "first love" between Joon Sang and Yoon Jin. The first love shown is a pure "first love". According to fans, Joon Sang and Yoon Jin's "first love" is reminiscent of their youth.

They added that the ideal depiction of "pure" is the innocence shown by loving what is (Jung in Astuti, 2016).

The third thing is politeness. Politeness described by Bae Yong Joon is well-behaved and wise. He speaks to Yoo Jin in a polite manner and always shows concern for his partner. Fans say that Bae Yong Joon is very polite and considerate. This can be seen from the way Bae Yong Joon treats his fans as part of his family (Jung in Astuti, 2016).

### C. RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used in this study is qualitative research with the intention of explaining social phenomena that are currently happening or explaining the reasons for these phenomena (Neuman, 2013). Social research using a descriptive qualitative descriptive format also aims to describe, summarize various conditions, various situations, or various phenomena of social reality that exist in society to be the object of research and try to draw that reality to the surface as a feature, character, nature, mode, sign, or a description of certain conditions, situations, or phenomena (Bungin, 2007). The research location is in the city of Medan. This research was conducted by means of interviews, observation and documentation. The informants in this study are as follows: 1) Have been a Korean Pop fan for at least 3 years and are male. 2) Those who are active members of a fan club. 3) Those who are fans outside the K-Pop community. 4) Those who actively participate in K-Pop events in Medan City. The informant selection procedure used by the research was purposive. This procedure is the selection of the subject who is in the best position to provide the required information.

### D. DISCUSSION

*Fanboys in Medan City know K-Pop from their friends or closest people. Many of them like K-Pop from the booming song performed by the boy group Super Junior entitled Sorry Sorry, although there are also those who like drama from the start and then switch to the music genre. The K-Pop artist favored by fanboys comes from boy groups. The reason behind the fanboys liking the artist is because of the visuals and posture of the artist. Apart from visuals, the thing that makes fanboys fond of them is their talent, charisma when the artist performs on stage, there are also those who make K-Pop artists a mood booster for him.*

A fan usually does something that is intended to support his idol artist, this also happens to fanboys in Medan City. Fanboys make various efforts to support their idols, starting from streaming videos on youtube to get a lot of views, buying physical albums that have been launched, supporting merchandise, even voting at an award event so that their idol wins an award.

Enjoying an idol, making the fanboy imitate what is in the idol itself. Imitation made by fanboy as follows:

1. **Clothing Style And Physical Appearance Of His Idol.** Not far from imitation by fanboys is the style used by his idol and physical appearance. Because for them the style of clothing used by their idols looks unique and interesting. Not only clothes, hairstyles are also an attraction for fans to follow. Not only that, there are imitations made by using an ear piercing. In addition to the style of clothing, hairstyles and accessories they imitate, they also follow the use of skincare. It is also important for a man to take care of their face and body to look well-groomed.
2. **Korean Language Usage.** No less interesting imitation to do is Korean, even if only a few words or even a few sentences they understand, they will use it in conversation with the other person who has the same hobby as him..
3. **Warm Personality From His Idol.** *Fanboy is also interested in the good personality of his idol. This causes fanboys to be interested in imitating a good personality so that they can be humble to others.*
4. **Spirit of Leadership.** Another form of imitation that is imitated by fanboys is the souls of a leader who is able to protect the members in the dance group. The purpose of this form of imitation is that in a K-Pop boy/girl group, there is a role that one member of the group must take to become a leader or leader in the group both in his work and in his daily life. So, the fanboy who became the informant of this research applied how to be a good leader for his group members in the dance cover group and also be able to protect his group members.
5. **Talents Possessed by His Idol.** Another form of imitation that is imitated by fans is that the talent possessed by his idol inspires him to practice dance harder so that he can become a reliable dancer like his idol or just practice dance as a substitute for sports. According to him, the talent possessed by his idol is a motivation to become a reliable dancer like his idol..

**6. Forming a Body Like His Idol.** Having a proportional body shape like his idol is a dream for every fan, be it fangirl or fanboy. Fanboys in this study are also interested in the ideal body shape of their idol. It also motivates him to shape his body to look more ideal like his favorite idol.

**7. Idol's Career Journey.** Another form of imitation that is imitated by fanboys is being interested in the career process that must be taken by an idol in order to become a famous idol. Even the struggle of an idol who has to survive in the entertainment world.

**8. Idol's Attitude.** Attitude is the attitude shown by a person towards others, good or bad depending on the other person who receives the attitude treatment from that person. The attitude of an idol is also included in the things that are imitated by his fans.

**9. Korean culture.** Table manners are procedures including etiquette in eating. One form of table manner that is imitated by fanboys can also be in the form of eating using a spoon and chopsticks. Indeed, this is not only from Korea, even Japan and China also use chopsticks when eating. However, since Korea has attracted the attention of other countries, it is becoming more and more followed by other people.

Other forms of culture besides table manners, there is also a way for someone to greet others by bowing his body with the intention of respecting people who are older than himself or respecting the other person. This has become a culture in this ginseng country when greeting other people. It's not just Korea that applies this culture, Japan also applies this way of greeting. Fanboy also imitated the greeting method used by Koreans in general, to other people.

Imitation made by fanboys has meaning for itself, as follows:

**1. Fashionable.** Fashionable is one of the meanings obtained by fanboys who imitate in terms of appearance from their idols, be it clothing styles, hairstyles, accessories used by their idols. The meaning obtained by the fanboy with the imitation is that he looks fashionable. According to fanboys, their idol's appearance is an inspiration for fanboys to follow a new style to look more fresh. So, fanboys have references for different looks every day.

**2. Self-confident.** The confidence that fanboys get comes from worrying about the suitability of the clothing style that he imitates from his idol. However, in the end the fanboy



became confident in the choice he chose. It can increase self-confidence. Then he can apply it to the sing cover competition that he participates in.

**3 Warm Personality In Socializing With Others.** Warm personality, means having a friendly attitude to others. This is one of the meanings of imitation obtained by the fanboy who became the informant in this study, in which he imitated the idol's warm and friendly personality to others. This is a positive example for him to try to be a kinder person to others..

**4 Learn to Be a Leader.** Being a leader is not easy. The leader is a difficult position when everything is nailed to a leader, not only that the leader has a heavy burden to bear. In this case, having a leadership spirit is needed, especially in a group. An idol who has a position as a leader is an inspirational example for fanboys.

**5 Hard worker.** Hard work is an effort made by a person in order to get the results that he ultimately wants to achieve. Especially an idol, being an idol in Korea has a hard and even hard struggle to achieve a big career. Starting from a long training period before becoming an idol. Participate in competitions that can improve the quality and even raise the name and group, to go on a strict diet. Through this process, it is the motivation for fans, especially fanboys who are informants in the research. After seeing the struggles of their idols to achieve success in their careers, fanboys are also motivated to follow the model of their idol's hard work to achieve the success they want to achieve.

**6 Ideal body.** Having an ideal body is everyone's dream, especially a woman. But not only women who want to have an ideal body shape, men also want to have an ideal body as he wants. Idols become role models for their fans to form an ideal body like their idols.

**7 Increase Knowledge in Language.** Having a hobby with different languages, even the language we don't understand, is an inspiration to learn the language as well. Nothing more so that he can understand even what his idol is saying in his mother tongue. But in everyday conversation, there are insertion of words or sentences in Korean against the other person. They use this language when their interlocutor is also a K-Pop fan as well. They admit that this way they can broaden their horizons in a new language, namely Korean.

The imitation also invites people's views about fanboys. Young people who realized this said they looked like Korean oppas and even Korean boy bands. Another view also says that fanboy looks like a snub. This is because their appearance is not like the appearance of men in

general. Fanboy responds to the views of the community they receive, namely they don't really care about what people say, and they prefer to menunjukkan hal positif apa yang bisa ia perlihatkan pada orang lain. *Fanboy* beranggapan bahwa *K-Pop* juga memiliki sisi yang positif serta tidak perlu mencontoh apa yang tidak perlu dicontoh.

In everyday life, fanboys show things that they imitate. appropriate imitation in everyday life, is very important for fanboys. The application of clothing styles, the fanboys choose to adjust the style of clothing they choose to the place and conditions that they will visit and live in. But the hairstyle is still fairly normal for them, they don't mind it. In addition to clothing style, learning to be a leader can also improve his abilities both in the dance cover group and outside the group. Practice Korean with someone who understands the language, how to greet someone who is older than him. It's different with some fanboys who are members of dance covers and sing covers. For the cover dancers, they really imitate the idol's style when on stage. Starting from the clothes, the accessories used, even the facial expressions are also similar to the idol. But when off stage they return to their normal idol style. In contrast to the appearance of the sing cover. For the appearance of the sing cover, it is classified as free, it does not have to follow the style of the idol itself.

In relation to the image of masculinity that is generally known by the public, the image of a man who has a burly body, is valiant, a man who is strong and has power and does not show his soft side like actors in Hollywood films or Indonesian action film actors who have bodies. strong stock. The value of masculinity like that is constructed by society when they hear the words masculinity. Following the development of technology and the development of social phenomena, the construction of masculinity also experienced a shift which can also be called modern masculinity or soft masculinity. This study shows that there is a shift in the construction of macho masculinity that is built in the view of society to modern masculinity, even men can show their soft side to others. This does not mean that the man is not a pure man, femininity does not only apply to the realm of women but has entered the realm of men.

The image of soft masculinity itself, describes a man who displays his male side but, there is also a soft side that is owned by men. Soft masculinity is identified with a man who has a beautiful face, a slim but muscular body, showing the soft side of a man. The image of soft masculinity is realized by *K-Pop* artists which is depicted through the distribution of mass media,

showing also a physique of a strong and muscular body, capable of sweet and gentle behavior in front of their fans. The image of soft masculinity built by the K-Pop artist repeats the understanding of masculinity and develops over time, but also invites debate between the pros and cons of the modern masculinity value.

Based on the data obtained in this study, it is explained that soft masculinity in the form of Korean soft masculinity construction built by fanboys is in the pretty boys and flower boys categories. 1). Flower boys themselves are described as men who have a beautiful appearance and fair skin, soft hair, and a feminine attitude. Fanboys belonging to the flower boys category in this study are described by the efforts made to carry out skin care using skincare so that their skin looks more well-groomed. This includes efforts to have white skin. In terms of hair appearance, fanboys also have hair that is no less soft than the hair of women and also style their hair to look the same as their favorite idols. In addition, the fanboy also does not hesitate to show a gentle attitude towards other people, both women and men, and they also look softer in their physical appearance. Fanboys also don't hesitate to wear clothes with floral motifs, which are not commonly used by men. 2). Pretty boys, like men who have good looking faces, attractive smiles, tall bodies and thin faces. Similar to the criteria described in Japanese comics. Apart from men who have beautiful faces, pretty boys are more of a face that is good-looking by others or good looking even though they don't look beautiful, but they are not as beautiful as men's faces in general. In addition, they also have a slim facial line or also known as thin and even have a sweet smile. In addition to having a good looking face, a firm jawline, and a thin face, the fanboy also has a slender height and is also supported by long legs. The facial criteria in the pretty boys category have a little bit of firmness compared to the criteria in the flower boys category, which looks softer. Not only the face, from a physical point of view, they are more assertive than flower boys.

## E. CONCLUSION

Fanboy in this study based on soft masculinity construction is included in the category of flower boys and pretty boys. Based on the imitations done by fanboys, these results are in accordance with the criteria of flower boys and pretty boys, such as taking care of their skin so that it has well-groomed and smooth skin, taking care of their skin to keep it white, having a



gentle attitude, sweet smile , has a tall body. Besides that, they also have thin faces, that's why fanboys are included in the flower boys and pretty boys categories.

Fanboy also gave his response to the views they received from society on him. For them, fans who like K-Pop are not all negative, there are also those that they can sort out which ones need to be followed and which ones don't. They also show that K-Pop can produce achievements for itself, and K-Pop also has a positive side. Fanboys in this study are also trying to improve their good impressions on K-Pop even though they have to face the views that are not pleasing to the public.

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