

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Entertainment brings a pleasure to billions around the world. It consists of many segments such as drama, film, comics, gaming, adventure, and also music. The development of the music industry began in the middle of 18th when Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart market their music and performances in general public (Lebrecht). After that, the music industry becomes one of the interesting segments in the global entertainment industry. The internet, nowadays, makes the distribution of the music from an artist to their fans become easy to access. It makes the growth of the fans becomes bigger and bigger. That is why, the artist does not only have their fans in their local region, but it is also from outsiders. In this case, there is one of musician terms that is called pop group which consist of Boy Band and Girl Band. Girl Band is a common term for some girls who is singing while dancing when they perform. Instead of Girl Band, some of the artists prefer to be mentioned as Idol Group.

Nowadays, the term of idol group becomes popular, especially in Indonesia. According to the oxforddictionaries.com, idol means a person or a thing that is greatly admired, loved, or revered —accessed on 15th January 2016. An idol must be young and has a frenzy followed by the point of being a social phenomenon (Matsutani). An idol becomes a common term for young entertainers in Japan. Idol may be a singer, an actress, or a model. The uniqueness of the Idol compared to the

other entertainers is their capability that is not fully pledged. Instead of being superstar figure, actually their excess is in their progress to become a superstar.

The recruitment of some idol groups involves the few of girls who are not polished yet and expected to progress time by time. The lack of an idol is their advantages in the beauty of idol world and it makes their fans admire and also notice of the Idol progress from the beginning. In short, all of the system or regulation in idol world makes them to be someone who is innocent, but if someone trusts in them, they will be able to become the worthy and important someone (Matsutani). The “Idol Phenomenon” —*aidoru gensh* ー *o* in Japan began in the 1970s (Galbraith & Karlin 2). It has grown to the extent that one critic argues the Japanese nation is ruled by the principles of idolatry (e.g., the emperor) and that its most important cultural products are idols. It is nearly impossible to grasp the Japanese media culture without a substantial discussion of idols. For example like a project that is already under - way in Japan, spread by journalists, critics, and fans. However, there is a growing awareness of the lack of academic organization and analytical rigor that lead to obsessive descriptions of the “here and now” (Nakamori 115).

If we talk about idol, it is automatically near from the term of supporters or fandom. Fandom, in the most basic terms, is a group of fans who form social networks with one another that is based on their common interest in reading and watching particular texts, and the fans in turn write or otherwise produce materials for that text (Gooch 3). Fandom, the state of being a fan, is usually related to the popular culture rather than high culture. People, who appreciate the high culture, are often being passionately participants as the pop culture's “fans,” that are

described as *connoisseurs* or *aficionados* rather than as fans. Whilst connoisseurship is typically deemed culturally legitimate, fandom has been analyzed as rather more problematic: the stereotype of “the fan” has been one of geeky, excessive, and unhealthy obsession with culturally trivial objects such as TV shows, film, music, etc (Hills 1). Fandom is the future. The author prefers to use the word “fandom” rather than “fans” for good reason. It seems a little paradoxical that the rest of the people involved in this conversation focus more and more on the consumption activity as a social, networked, and collaborative process — “harnessing collective intelligence,” “the wisdom of crowds,” and all of that, whereas many of the recent works in fan studies has returned to the focus of the individual fan (Jenkins).

Fans are usually described in relation to its etymological Latin root, *fanaticus*, which means enthusiastic, frantic, frenzied, or inspired (Wiatrowski). We also know “fandom” word as the fanatical groups and we can find them around us. According to Urban Dictionary, “fandom” or “fans kingdom” is the community that surrounds a TV show or movie or book etc —by urbandictionary.com. The existence of fandom becomes an interesting issue because of their characteristic and behavior in it. This phenomenon creates a pattern in terms of the cultural fandom. Basically, every fan has their own emotions, desires, and fantasies through their idol (Galbraith & Karlin 166). Many ways for the fans to fulfill their desire and fantasies, for example, Paramore fans from USA always follow Paramore gigs in every country outside USA, because that is a pleasure for them even they have to pay the big costs. One of Taylor Swift fans adores her so much because he has a

girlfriend like Taylor Swift in his dream. There are top 5 musicians that have the biggest fans in the world —by fanpop.com accessed on 7th June 2015, such as Justin Bieber —Beliebers, Taylor Swift —Swifties, Selena Gomez —Selenators, Katy Perry —Katy Kats, and One Direction —Directioners. In Indonesia, those musicians above also have a big population of fans. Indonesia does not only have the portion just as a fan, but it also has their own idol. The common fandom in Indonesia like OI —fans of Iwan Fals, Slankers —fans of Slank, Baladewa —fans of Dewa 19, Sahabat Noah —fans of Noah, Nidji Holic —fans of Nidji, Comet —fans of Coboy Jr., and Fans JKT48 —fans of JKT48 have a big population members of fandom as well.

In this research, the author chooses JKT48 as the re-entry of Japan waves in Indonesia and also creates a new term for Indonesian music industry such as Idol Group that adopted from Japan, after the entry of Japan waves in 1990s when Doraemon and Tokusatsu aired on Indonesian television (Soraya 1). Before the existence of JKT48, Indonesia was dominated by Korean wave/Hallyu. In 2002, there were 2 popular Korean dramas such as *Winter Sonata* and *Endless Love*. After that, Indonesian audience was distracted by Korean culture. In 2007, there are also '*Full House*', Korean drama series which is liked by the Indonesian audience. There were other Korean drama series that also popular in Indonesia such as *Boys before Flower*, *Jewel in the Palace*, *The Great of Queen Seandeok*, *Devil beside You*, *49 Days*, and *Naughty Kiss*. Besides that, the existence of Wonder Girls, Korean Girlband, divined as the pioneer of the growing of Indonesian Boyband and Girlband phenomenon at the end of 2010. Now, the existence of a Japanese wave

after the domination of Korean wave are being able to seen since the existence of JKT48 at the end of 2011. The growth of Boyband and Girlband in Indonesia sank between several TV programs and channel which bring the Japan culture now as the theme of the show, such as Nippon Keren Deh —aired on ANTV, March 29th, 2015; Ini Talk Show —aired on NetTV that presents Haruka Nakagawa, a member of JKT48, as the one of the characters in this show. Yokoso JKT48 —aired on ANTV, December 14th; Waku-Waku Japan in 2014; an entertainment channel which brings the Japanese program. The interesting part is that all of these programs and channels use JKT48 as the iconic star.

In the period from the end of the 1980s to the early 1990s, known variably as the “idol ice age” —*aidoru hyōgaki* or “winter time of idols” —*aidoru Fuyu no Jidai*, the importance of idols has only grown in Japan. Without a doubt, there has been in recent years an enormous surge of interest in idols at all levels of society (Galbraith and Karlin 24). Nakamori Akio is a well-known cultural critic believed to have coined the term *Otaku*. In the following passage, he provides his conceptual understanding of Japanese idols: Idols are not necessarily good singers or actors. If we look at them closely, we realize that they are not extremely beautiful or attractive. This is the interesting part of this research, when some people who they are adored and supported are actually not extremely attractive. JKT48 fans are nearly form, the term of *Otaku* which means “nerd” and “geek”. The character type denoted by *Otaku* is found in many nations and cultures, even though there are not every language has a precise name for it, and the common image the word brings to mind, an unattractive male obsessed with technology, can be traced back as far

as Hephaestus, the ugly, crippled blacksmith-god of fire and the forge in Greek mythology. This universal type of course exists in Japan as well, but a number of unique factors during the 1980s cultural structures, social conditions, educational institutions, were responsible for the coining of the derisive term Otaku (Morikawa).

In this research, the author takes Fans of JKT48 as the data and explores their activity and consumption through their idol itself. Why is JKT48? There is something different with JKT48 instead of the other music groups in Indonesia. JKT48 officially adopts its sister group, AKB48, who included in Top 10 Idol Group That Japan Wants the World to Know by muripo.com. Moreover, JKT48 is placed in the first place in Best Asian Idol Groups by hetoptens.com, defeat their sister group, AKB48. Even of their popularity, according to Nakamori Akio, as the author said above, Japanese idols: Idols are not necessarily good singers or actors. If we look at them closely, we realize that they are not extremely beautiful or attractive. But still, most of JKT48 fans show their fanaticism and support to their idol. Through those phenomena, the author tries to dig more about how fans of JKT48 consume this term of idol group and finds out of Japanese culture that influence both of JKT48 and the fandom itself, in order to show up the variety of fan culture in Indonesia.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Indonesian music industry is close with piracy that makes Indonesian musicians always think twice to make a music project. JKT48, a newcomer of idol group in Indonesia, try to find a gap between this conditions. Using a concept of

idol group adopted from its sister group from Japan, AKB48, JKT48 brings a new color in the Indonesian music industry. However, in this complicated condition in the Indonesian music industry, JKT48 gets a big mass of fans successfully and the management as if does not vary with the case of piracy because fans always chase the project such as CD, DVD, goods, gimmick, and so on.

Based on the background of the study elaborated above in which fans of JKT48 consume this concept of an idol group, the research question addressed in this study is as follows:

- How do fans of JKT48 consume JKT48 as the first idol group in Indonesia?
- How does Japanese culture influence JKT48 and the fans itself?

1.3. The Objective of the Study

The purpose of this study is developed from the research question as it is mentioned are:

- This study aims to find the way JKT48 fans consume the product of JKT48
- This study intends to seek the influence of Japanese culture through this idol group and also this fandom

1.4. Significance of Study

JKT48 is the form of Idol group, which is a new kind of music industrial form in Indonesia. Adopted from Japan pop culture, this phenomenon brings various types of fan culture in Indonesia. According to Joli Jensen, the fan is understood to be, at least implicitly, a result of celebrity. The fan is defined as a

response to the star system (Lewis 10). That means, the product of JKT48 brings the responses through the fans. JKT48's marketing strategy brings a different kind of fans that exist in Indonesia. By gimmicks —for examples: Theater, Photo Pack, Handshake Event, Vote Tickets, that also sold by the management, it brings their own fanaticism and phenomena in Indonesia music industry. Between the widespread of music piracy in Indonesia, JKT48 management seems like they do not really worry about it. Fans willingly spend their money and time to support their idol.

In this case, Japan pop culture also brings the power through this phenomena. We now recognize that the forms and practices of music, sports, comics, film, fashion, and other areas of leisure and consumer culture are just as essential to fully understanding Japan as its factories (Kelly). The term Otaku can be seen as the one of Japanese culture which portrays how fans culture in Japan looks like. The obsessive and fanaticism of Otaku are familiar with JKT48 fans which gives high dedicated to their idol even they have to immolate themselves. This becomes interesting, such the piracy is common like I stated before, fans like JKT48 fans still contribute to buy CD's/DVD's and many products that management of JKT48 sold.

1.5. Scope and Limitation

This study focuses on how fans JKT48 in Surabaya respond JKT48 since its existence in 2011. The target data respondent in this study is limited in Surabaya. The author will do In-depth Interview and focus on some questions that already

arranged by the author one by one. This interview will dig more about their response to this idol group.

1.6. Definition of Key Term

- Fans : Group that consumes a text or texts and mass, that in turn uses that consumption as a basis for creating something new that is tailored to their specific concerns (Jenkins)
- Fandom : The world of fans and enthusiast, especially by fans of science fiction magazines and conventions (McCardle)
- Idol Group : In an interview with The Wall Street Journal, Yasushi Akimoto, main producer of AKB48, stated that idol group at first is not as skilled as girl band and will develop their skills up as time goes by. The notion of idol group is growing up together with its fans (Soraya)
- JKT48 : The first overseas sister group of AKB48 as well as the self-proclaimed first idol group in Indonesia. (JKT48.com)