

Identities, Integration, and Deviance: Lived Experiences of Filipino KPOP Fandom Members

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Abstract

The idolization of individuals for a particular subject creates a shared identity and group, such as fandom. Despite differences among members within a fandom, this collective identity provides a space globally where groups of people perform and reinforce their shared passion, ultimately becoming fans and fandom members. Considering its growing relevance, this study contributes to the increasing body of research on fandom by exploring members' individual beliefs, motivations, values, and purposes, as well as their effects on sustaining one's identity as a fan and the group's identity as a fandom. This study examines the impact of individual differences on the level of devotion and participation in fandom activities and identities using semi-structured interviews with six identified fan and fandom members of any Korean Popular group from a specific highly urbanized geographic location in Laguna, Philippines. The transcribed data were analyzed using traditional Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The findings highlight the significant role of individual differences in shaping the intensity of fan engagement. Furthermore, fandom members integrate better mainly on the degree of social influence and personal attachment. The quality of relationships formed within the fandom is also a massive factor in a fan's self-ascription process and may determine the length of their fanship's duration. In conclusion, the study separates the analysis of fandoms from previous rigid organizational social theories, moving towards a view of fan and fandom membership as a temporary identity ascribed by a person from a particular period.

Keywords: fan; phenomenological; psychological; qualitative; sociological