

# ***Analysis on the Influence of Fandom Culture on Contemporary Young People and Countermeasures***

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**Abstract:** This study aims to explore the influence of star-chasing culture on young people and corresponding strategies. To achieve this goal, a discussion on fan culture was carried out, and the comprehensive impact of popular culture on people's daily social life was studied as economic globalization, social informatization, and cultural diversification deepened. The star effect and the worship of star idols, as important forms of popular culture and carriers of dissemination, popularize popular culture and become an essential force. The worship of star idols, as a part of popular culture, promotes the connection and development between idols and fans, fans and fan culture, gradually entering the public's view. With the rapid development of new media, supported by capital and traffic, the youth lacks discernment, and the traditional fan culture has upgraded to a fan circle culture, which has caused many negative effects on teenagers, such as wasting time and energy, influencing personal cognition, leading to deviation in consumer attitudes, and hindering the formation of correct moral concepts. Fan circle culture not only brings negative influences but also brings psychological comfort to fans. Idols create a perfect image that fans love and transmit positive energy to them. Some fans take idols as examples and motivate themselves to become better people.

**Keywords:** Fan circle culture, young people, idols, fan psychology

## **1. Introduction**

This study focuses on the enthusiasm of contemporary young people for star-chasing. It is of great significance to study how young people understand their obsession with star-chasing and how the public can properly address the problem of excessive star-chasing. This study mainly discusses the aspects of the era background, characteristics of star-chasing, and solutions. By using the method of literature analysis, searching, and reading relevant materials and documents, it can deeply analyze the pros and cons of star-chasing, which is helpful for promoting research. The ultimate goal of this study is to explore the influence of star-chasing culture on young people and propose coping strategies. To achieve this, it has discussed fan culture and studied the comprehensive impact of popular culture on people's daily social lives as economic globalization, social informatization, and cultural diversification deepen. The star effect and the worship of star idols, as important forms of popular culture and carriers of dissemination, popularize popular culture and become an essential force [1]. People are the carriers of culture, which also means that culture shapes people. The worship of star

idols is a transitional behavior during adolescence, since the reform and opening-up, teenagers mainly idolize and pursue star idols.

## 2. Background

In the era of the rise of the entertainment wave and the rapid development of new media technology, popular culture not only influences the living environment of the public but also shapes the image of star idols and popular culture through the cultural behavior of fans and the public, including the cultural relationship between fans and non-fans. Secondly, idol worship as popular culture has maintained and developed the relationship between idols and fans, as well as the emergence of fan culture into the public eye [2]. The development of fan culture has also been driven by the idol economy. With the booming entertainment industry, the number and influence of idol groups and celebrities have greatly increased. Idols promote their works through various channels to attract followers. At the same time, idol management companies have also realized the commercial value of fan culture and profit from fan activities and merchandise sales. This further promotes the development of fan culture. In summary, fan culture, as a new type of social culture phenomenon among young people, has rapidly emerged and continues to develop under the impetus of the Internet and the entertainment industry. It not only has a significant influence on contemporary young people but also has profound effects on the entire society and culture. Positive and uplifting fan culture plays a leading role among young people, but in recent years, distorted fan culture has had a negative impact on their sense of right and wrong, consumption outlook, moral standards, and independent personality formation. It also poses significant challenges to the ideological and political education of contemporary young people. Fans engage in commenting, supporting, and showcasing their love for idols in the "fan circle" to achieve self-identification and group identity [3]. Not only in China but also with the invasion of overseas popular star culture, this phenomenon has been exacerbated: the maturity of the Korean Wave in its star-making model has attracted a large number of loyal fans in China, especially K-Pop fans. The interactive process of fans interpreting, sharing, and discussing star-chasing practices in the online space has gradually surpassed the scope of ordinary entertainment and has become a discourse practice integrated into fans' daily lives. Alongside this interactive practice, a series of cultural phenomena have emerged in the process of media usage and consumption by K-Pop fans.

Chinese K-Pop fans, in the process of cross-cultural idol worship, not only engage in localized interpretation and practice of foreign cultures but also maintain a high degree of political sensitivity. In recent years, the changes in the political and cultural context have made K-Pop consumption in China more complex. Chinese K-Pop fans face various challenges in the process of transnational fandom. On the one hand, there has been a rise in anti-Hallyu movements in China's online space, tarnishing the identity of Chinese K-Pop fans with nationalist stigmatization. The cultural disputes between the two countries hinder fan activities. On the other hand, Chinese idol groups that emulate the K-Pop style are rapidly developing, providing Chinese youth with more culturally familiar and politically safer choices for idol culture. Unexpectedly, despite these challenges, the number of K-Pop fans in China has not decreased. With the rapid development of new media, coupled with capital and traffic support, as well as the weak discernment of the youth group, the traditional fan culture has evolved into the fandom culture, which has many negative influences on adolescents. It wastes time and energy, affects personal cognition, leads to distorted consumption perspectives, and hinders the formation of correct moral awareness. Therefore, sorting out the impact of the current "fandom culture" on the values of young people, actively responding to and guiding new ideas for the education of young people's values, is conducive to promoting the correct formation of values from various perspectives and angles.

### 3. Overview

The fan community has expanded into a massive Internet society with high levels of organization, actionability, and influence. Its culture and subculture deeply intertwine with various social issues, refreshing mainstream society and the academic community's perception of fan culture and fan communities. "Fandom" fans idealize idols as their own 'personal ideal,' projecting their empty selves onto the idols they aspire to be, seeking identity and self-affirmation. This projection often creates a significant gap between fantasy and reality, leading young people to indulge in their imagined 'perfect world,' resulting in a need for ideological transformation among adolescents.

The idol worship culture in China has undergone a transformation from singularity to diversity, from elitism to populism, and from politics to culture. Chinese idols have developed from heroic idols to celebrity idols, from talent shows to grassroots idols, and from popularity-driven idols to nurtured idols. Currently, idol worship among Chinese youth exhibits generalization and high involvement. Celebrity idols are the mainstream, while second-dimensional idols reflect the characteristics of the times. Technological usage and consumer behavior have become norms in idol worship activities, with active self-awareness. Fandom culture is a typical form of youth culture, where young people who immerse themselves in idol chasing may experience irrationality, hollow life beliefs, and false collective behavior. The underlying reasons include the mismatch of satisfaction needed for adolescent growth, the implicit induction of group life, and the value influence of virtual environments.

### 4. Influence

Fandom culture has had a multifaceted impact on contemporary young people. Firstly, it provides a social platform for young individuals to find like-minded friends and share common interests and hobbies. This environment of mutual support and communication helps foster a close-knit community among young people, promoting emotional and psychological exchanges, and enhancing their sense of belonging. Secondly, fandom culture cultivates young people's teamwork and organizational abilities. Within fandoms, fans actively organize online and offline activities, create fan merchandise, and plan celebratory events for their idols' birthdays, among other things. These activities require fans to collaborate and work together, nurturing their spirit of cooperation and organizational skills. However, if "fangirls" are not guided in a targeted manner, they may easily become obsessed. To some extent, the chaos and behaviors that occur in the "fan circle" have brought negative impacts on the values of some young people, greatly affecting the positive cultivation and practice of their values [4]. Taking the recent highly popular Chinese boy band 10th-anniversary concert as an example, nine out of ten trending topics are related to them. One of the topics is about the excessively passionate behavior of fans: two groups of fans even got into a physical fight in order to secure the best cheering spot for their idols, resulting in further chaos at the venue, which was already in a disordered state. This disorder extends to the online arena, where fan wars are even more intense, featuring various means of verbal disputes and conflicts. In addition to the above-mentioned incidents, forced hugs, hotel voyeurism, airport delays, online verbal violence, and excessive obsession to the point of emotional involvement are common negative fan incidents. "Fangirls" and "fanboys" among young fans have sparked widespread discussions in society. These incidents reveal that excessive idolization and obsession with celebrities often lead to irrational and serious consequences and social issues [2]. It is necessary to strictly control online order, enhance media control, and also strengthen the guidance on fans' mentality to change their unhealthy obsession with idol worship.

"Fan culture" not only has negative impacts but also brings psychological comfort to fans. Idols create a perfect image, which fans love and are influenced by. They spread positive energy to fans, some of whom take idols as role models and motivate themselves to become like them. At the same

time, some fans add happiness and a mental pillar to their lives through idols. They see idols as mirrors, reflecting the person they most want to be.

## 5. Strategies

Teenagers are the future of a nation, and the subcultures they create are diverse and significant. What sets them apart from mainstream popular culture is that they emerge and spread rapidly within the youth community. Not only do they form a distinction from the general adult population through the use of new media technologies, but they also undergo rapid changes, elimination, and succession in cultural forms. "Fandom culture" originated on internet platforms and quickly rose to prominence with the development of internet technology. A healthy online environment is a vital external force for its healthy development. To ensure the healthy development of "fandom culture", it is necessary to create a clear online environment, regulate it, and govern unhealthy online environments. The "obsessive" nature of "fandom culture" not only disrupts normal communication order but also directly harms the healthy growth of young people who are in a crucial period of development, thus becoming a pressing issue that various sectors of society urgently need to address.

In order to deal with the negative impact of fan culture, it is necessary to take some countermeasures and suggestions. Firstly, families and schools should strengthen the education of young people, guiding them to have a proper attitude towards fan culture and balance their interest in idol worship and drama-watching with the needs of normal life. Parents can provide children with more meaningful activities and hobbies to cultivate their diverse interests. Secondly, social media platforms and idol agencies should enhance guidance and management of fan behavior. By promoting correct values and moral standards, fans can be guided towards positive and constructive idol worship, while strict measures should be taken to combat online violence. At the same time, idol agencies should focus more on the healthy development of idols and avoid excessive packaging and commercial exploitation of young idols. Lastly, young people themselves should maintain a rational and objective mindset, avoiding excessive immersion in fan culture. While pursuing idols and dramas, one should always remember their own identity and goals, striving to balance entertainment with education, and work, in order to participate in fan culture in a healthier manner.

Through sorting out the harm of the fandom culture, the "Clean and Rectify Fandom Chaos" special action aims to promote the healthy development of the fandom culture [5]. Adolescents are a vital force for advancing the modernization of national governance. To promote the healthy growth of adolescents, it is essential to guide the positive functions of the fandom culture in terms of values, purify the interpersonal ecological network of the fandom in terms of communication methods, and regulate idol and fan behavior to eliminate extravagance and waste [6]. With a scientific understanding of the fandom culture, while respecting differences and interests, it should govern uncivilized and non-compliant aspects of the fandom culture. By supervising and restraining negative fandom culture, it can create a harmonious and positive online environment. To address the problem of rational confusion among adolescents caused by the fandom culture, it is necessary to create a social environment conducive to rationality, cultivate a nurturing ground for rational incubation in schools, and establish a support system for rational growth within families. This will lead to the rational return of adolescents and help mitigate the negative impact caused by the fandom culture [7]. Public opinion should be positive, taking positive energy as the starting point, allowing idols to truly become role models so that university students can enhance their cognition and enrich their spiritual world in a relaxed and happy atmosphere [8]. No media should maliciously hype the uncivilized phenomena of the fandom culture [9]. Strategies and recommendations for dealing with the fandom culture include strengthening educational guidance, enhancing the management of social media platforms and idol agencies, encouraging diversified interests and participation, as well as promoting personal self-regulation and consciousness shaping. Through efforts from various aspects and shared

attention, it can better guide young people to view the fandom culture correctly and let it become a part of enriching life rather than a source of negative influence [10].

## 6. Conclusion

The research findings show that the influence of fan culture on contemporary young people is always a double-edged sword, but overall, the benefits outweigh the drawbacks. Therefore, the research conclusion indicates that with proper guidance, being a star-chaser does not generate the negative impact that the public often assumes, and positive advice can even lead to unforeseen positive effects. This research has provided valuable reference significance for future studies in this direction, mainly focusing on how to deal with excessive fanaticism toward star-chasing fan culture. Future research should delve into the positive guidance direction of star-chasing fan culture.

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