

Identifying the Loyalty of Generation Z K-Pop Fans by Utilizing Regional Creative Economy Talents to Support Regional Culture

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Abstract. *The K-Pop phenomenon as part of global popular culture has influenced the lifestyle of Generation Z in Indonesia, especially in aspects of media consumption, community participation, and consumer behavior towards Korean-themed products. This study aims to identify the loyalty of Generation Z K-Pop fans and explore the potential for utilizing regional creative economy talents to support local cultural promotion. The research method used a mixed methods approach with a quantitative survey of 100 Generation Z respondents and qualitative analysis through interviews, observations, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Quantitative data were analyzed using multiple linear regression, while qualitative data were analyzed using NVivo software. The results show that K-Pop fan loyalty and regional creative economy talents have a significant influence, both simultaneously and partially, on regional culture. Thematic analysis shows that K-Pop fandom can be an entry point for introducing local creative products and making regional culture more relevant among the younger generation. Thus, this study concludes that Generation Z K-Pop fan loyalty can be utilized as an innovative and sustainable collaborative strategy in supporting regional cultural promotion by strengthening local creative economy talents.*

Keywords: *Fan Loyalty, Generation Z, K-Pop, Creative Economy, Regional Culture*

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INTRODUCTION

South Korean popular culture (K-pop) has become a global lifestyle that has significantly influenced the younger generation, including Generation Z in Indonesia (Karim & Farihah, 2025; Novianty & Srimulyani, 2024; Suratmi, 2024). Their fascination with the language, music, and lifestyle of K-pop has led them to learn Korean and actively participate in fan communities. Furthermore, their emotional involvement with K-pop idols also influences their consumer behavior, such as purchasing merchandise, concert tickets, and Korean-themed digital products (Youngsun et al., 2024; Chen, 2023; Conda et al., 2024).

Kim & Kim, (2022) and Asih et al. (2024) said that Generation Z, growing up in the era of technology and globalization, has easy access to the internet, enabling them to be exposed to global culture, including Korean culture. One significant impact of this phenomenon is the rise of K-pop (Hallyu), which encompasses Korean music, dramas, games, and lifestyle, and is now widely accepted, including in Indonesia (Pramadya & Oktaviani, 2016). With easy access to social media and digital content, Generation Z has adopted Korean culture in their daily lives. This study aims to delve deeper into the impact of Korean culture on Generation Z's identity and expression through interviews with key informants and analysis of literature and social media, with the aim

of understanding the role of globalization and digitalization in the spread of Korean culture (Zahra et al., 2024).

The phenomenon of consumerism in K-pop culture has transformed fans, particularly millennial women, from consumers into entrepreneurs managing businesses in products, services, and digital content (Setiani, 2025; Brassier, 2023). They leverage social media, digital platforms, and cultural knowledge to build sustainable businesses. This transformation creates new entrepreneurial opportunities that can integrate regional creative economy talent, support local culture, and encourage community-based business innovation (Choi, 2024). This study aims to identify factors influencing the loyalty of Generation Z K-pop fans in Indonesia and explore the potential use of regional creative economy talent to promote local culture through K-pop fandom enthusiasm (Prasetyo et al., 2023).

Therefore, it is important to identify K-pop fan loyalty and how it can be leveraged to support the creative and sustainable promotion of regional culture. This research begins with the phenomenon of K-Pop fan loyalty among Generation Z, characterized by intense involvement through music consumption, community participation, and support for idols in various forms. This loyalty is seen as a potential that can be utilized to support the development of regional creative economy talent. Using a consumer behavior perspective, this study identifies dimensions of fan loyalty, including cognitive, affective, and conative loyalty, as the basis for analysis (Kwon et al., 2005; Back & Parks, 2003).

Furthermore, the research integrates creative economy concepts, specifically the subsectors of music, performing arts, fashion, and local creative products relevant to K-Pop trends, as a bridge to strengthen regional cultural promotion. Generation Z, familiar with digital culture and global trends, is positioned as a primary target and agent of change capable of transforming fandom support into an appreciation of local culture (Musthafa, N. Q., & Darmawan, 2024). Through this conceptual approach, the research seeks to develop a collaborative strategy model between K-Pop fandom loyalty among Generation Z and the potential talent of the regional creative economy, resulting in a cultural promotion strategy that is adaptive, sustainable, and appropriate to the characteristics of the younger generation. Thus, the global K-Pop phenomenon becomes not only a form of entertainment but also a means of strengthening regional cultural identity in the era of globalization.

Research on K-pop fan loyalty, particularly among Generation Z, has shown significant growth in recent years. The K-pop phenomenon has not only influenced lifestyles and cultural identity but has also opened up economic opportunities leading to fandom-based entrepreneurship. Gajzágó & Dávida (2025) and Park & Kim(2023) said that, many previous studies have highlighted the transformation of fans from consumers to producers, leveraging digital platforms to sell K-pop-related products, such as merchandise, concert tickets, and digital content services. In the current climate, K-pop fan loyalty is strengthened by the phenomenon of consumerism in K-pop culture, which has transformed fans. This transformation opens up new entrepreneurial opportunities that can integrate the potential of regional creative economies, support local cultural preservation, and encourage community-based business innovation (Choi, 2024; Kalfas et al., 2024; Gurgu et al., 2024; Esteves et al., 2021).

Furthermore, with the current growth of K-pop culture, its influence on fans, especially the younger generation, is increasingly appreciated. K-pop culture has had positive impacts, such as increasing interest, expanding friendship networks, and enriching people's aesthetics. However, there are also negative effects, such as addiction to idol-chasing and neglecting real life. K-pop's international success is driven by government support, the unique characteristics of K-pop culture, and its distinctive music (Liu, 2023). This research offers a novel approach by combining two previously rarely linked domains: Generation Z K-Pop fan loyalty as a global cultural phenomenon, and utilizing regional creative economy talent as a means of preserving and promoting local culture. While previous research has focused more on fan loyalty in the context of marketing Korean entertainment products or the consumption behavior of the younger

generation, this study develops a new perspective by embracing fandom loyalty as a strategy for empowering regional culture. Another novelty lies in the conceptual approach that integrates loyalty dimensions (cognitive, affective, and conative) with local creative economy subsectors (music, dance, fashion, and craft products), resulting in a collaborative model that is not solely oriented toward entertainment consumption but also serves as a medium for promoting local culture that adapts to global trends.

Furthermore, this research introduces the concept of fandom glocalization, which explores how a global identity (K-Pop) can be adapted to strengthen local identity through the creativity of the younger generation. Thus, the novelty of this research lies not only in identifying K-Pop fan loyalty but also in leveraging it to create a sustainable regional cultural promotion strategy in the digital era.

METHODS

Types and Approaches of Research

The research used was a mixed methods study, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to obtain a comprehensive picture: (1) Quantitative methods were used to measure the loyalty level of Generation Z K-Pop fans through a questionnaire survey. Quantitative results were analyzed using multiple linear regression to examine the relationships between variables influencing loyalty; (2) Qualitative methods were used to explore the potential of regional creative economy talent through interviews, observations, and content analysis. Qualitative data were analyzed using software such as NVivo to identify key themes relevant to local cultural promotion strategies. The explanatory sequential mixed methods approach (Creswell & Clark, 2017) began with a quantitative phase to identify the forms and levels of fan loyalty, followed by a qualitative phase to explore the potential of the regional creative economy and develop cultural integration strategies. This approach was chosen so that the research would not only produce statistical data on fan loyalty but also provide contextual understanding and applicable strategic solutions to support regional culture through the utilization of creative economy talent.

Data Collection Technique

This study employed several complementary data collection methods. First, a questionnaire with a quantitative survey approach was used to measure the loyalty level of Generation Z K-Pop fans in Indonesia through a Likert scale instrument covering the cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions of loyalty. Second, in-depth interviews were conducted with creative economy actors, such as musicians, dancers, designers, and local creative product makers, with the aim of exploring the potential of regional talent that can be integrated with K-Pop trends. Furthermore, participant observation was conducted on K-Pop fan community activities, K-Pop events, and local creative economy activities to obtain contextual data on interaction patterns and cultural practices. In addition, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involving Generation Z K-Pop fans, creative economy actors, and academics discussed the possibility of integrating collaborative strategies between K-Pop fandom and local culture. Finally, documentation and literature studies were collected in the form of reports, journals, articles, and publications related to fan loyalty, Generation Z, K-Pop, and the creative economy, which served as a theoretical foundation and comparison to field findings.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in this study was conducted through several integrated stages. First, quantitative analysis used questionnaire data processed with descriptive statistics in the form of frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation to describe the level of loyalty of Generation Z K-Pop fans. This was then continued with multiple linear regression to test the influence of community involvement, media consumption, and social identity on fandom loyalty, with the help of SPSS software. Second, qualitative analysis was applied to in-depth interview, observation, and FGD data through thematic analysis to find patterns, themes, and categories related to the potential of regional creative economy talent and the possibility of its integration with K-Pop

trends, with the coding and visualization process of themes supported by NVivo software. Third, data triangulation was carried out by comparing quantitative, qualitative, and documentation results to ensure the credibility, reliability, and validity of the research findings. Finally, integrative analysis connected quantitative results regarding fandom loyalty with qualitative findings regarding creative economy potential, resulting in a collaborative strategy model as the main output of the research in order to support regional culture through synergy between K-Pop fandom and the creative economy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics Profile

Based on the research results, the characteristics of respondents show that the majority of Generation Z K-Pop fans are female (58.42%) compared to male (41.58%), with the most dominant level of education at the high school/vocational school level (44.55%), followed by undergraduate (26.73%), junior high (24.75%), and only a small portion have a master's degree (3.96%). In terms of employment, most respondents are students or university students (29.70%), then private employees (24.75%), civil servants (19.80%), entrepreneurs (14.85%), and other categories (10.90%). When viewed from the length of time as K-Poppers, the majority of respondents have followed K-Pop culture for 5–10 years (54.45%), followed by those who have only joined for less than 5 years (39.60%), and a small portion more than 10 years (5.94%), which indicates a level of long-term loyalty. In terms of spending on purchasing K-Pop products, most respondents allocated funds below Rp500,000 (57.42%), followed by Rp500,001–1,000,000 (24.75%), Rp1,000,001–2,000,000 (11.88%), and only a few spent more than Rp2,000,000 (5.94%). Meanwhile, in terms of frequency of purchasing K-Pop products, most respondents were in the category of quite often buying around once in three months (29.70%) and often buying around once in a month (24.75%), with some very often buying once a week (15.85%), rarely around two to three times a year (19.80%), and very rarely only once a year (9.90%). This illustrates that Generation Z K-Pop fans in Indonesia are dominated by young people, especially school and university students, with quite strong loyalty although most still limit their spending on purchasing K-Pop products.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

No	Characteristics	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	41	41.58%
		Female	59	58.42%
		Total	100	100%
2	Highest Education	Junior High School	24	24.75%
		Senior High School/Vocational High School	45	44.55%
		Bachelor's Degree	32	26.73%
		Master's Degree	4	3.96%
		Total	100	100%
3	Occupation	College Students	30	29.70%
		Civil Servants	20	19.80%
		Private Employees	25	24.75%
		Entrepreneurs	15	14.85%
		Others	10	10.90%
		Total	100	100%
4	Long Time a K-Pop Fan	< 5 Years	40	39.60%
		5-10 Years	55	54.45%
		>10 Years	5	5.94%
		Total	100	100%
5		<500.000	58	57.42%

	Spending on K-Pop Products	500.001 – 1.000.000	25	24.75%
		1.000.001 – 2.000.000	12	11,88%
		>2.000.000	5	5,94%
		Total	100%	100%
6	Frequently Buying K-Pop Products	Very Rarely (once a year)	10	9,90%
		Rarely (2-3 times a year)	20	19.80%
		Fairly Often (once every 3 months)	30	29,70%
		Frequently (once a month)	25	24.75%
		Very Often (once a week)	15	15.85%

Overall, the demographic profile of respondents in the study “Identifying the Loyalty of Generation Z K-Pop Fans by Utilizing Regional Creative Economy Talents in Supporting Regional Culture” shows that the majority come from the young productive age group with a relatively high educational background and are dominated by university and school students. This condition confirms that the research results are highly relevant to describe the views of Generation Z who are adaptive to technological developments, global popular culture, and the dynamics of social change. The relatively balanced gender composition also strengthens the validity of the research findings because it does not create bias in favor of one particular group, while the variety of occupations and education levels provides a more comprehensive picture of the characteristics of the K-Pop fan population. Thus, the results of this study are expected to be able to represent the perspectives of the younger generation more broadly, especially in relation to fandom loyalty, the utilization of regional creative economy talents, and efforts to support the sustainability of local culture amidst the currents of globalization.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 2. Validity and Reliability Test

Variable	Indicator	Correlation (r)		Coefficient	
		R	Status	Alpha Cronbach	Status
Fan Loyalty	LP1	0.614	Valid	0.744	Reliable
	LP2	0.566	Valid		Reliable
	LP3	0.756	Valid		Reliable
	LP4	0.826	Valid		Reliable
	LP5	0.736	Valid		Reliable
	LP6	0.712	Valid		Reliable
	LP7	0.733	Valid		Reliable
	LP8	0.667	Valid		Reliable
	LP9	0.696	Valid		Reliable
Regional Creative Economy Talent (Z)	TEKD1	0.655	Valid	0.885	Reliable
	TEKD2	0.744	Valid		Reliable
	TEKD3	0.780	Valid		Reliable
	TEKD4	0.604	Valid		Reliable
	TEKD5	0.583	Valid		Reliable
	TEKD6	0.606	Valid		Reliable
	TEKD7	0.615	Valid		Reliable
	TEKD8	0.561	Valid		Reliable
	TEKD9	0.543	Valid		Reliable
Regional Culture (Y)	KD1	0.608	Valid	0.796	Reliable
	KD2	0.790	Valid		Reliable
	KD3	0.793	Valid		Reliable
	KD4	0.674	Valid		Reliable

	KD5	0.589	Valid		Reliable
	KD6	0.746	Valid		Reliable

Table 2 shows that all statement items for the variables are valid and have a correlation value (r) greater than 0.5, as required. This means that all items can be used in further analysis. Furthermore, based on the reliability test results shown in Table 3, all variables in this study are declared reliable. These results align with the proposed criteria, with the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient value generated by each variable greater than 0.6. Therefore, data analysis can proceed to predict the relationship between variables according to the proposed hypothesis. In data processing using linear regression, several steps were taken to identify the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, through the relationship between the variables Product (X1), Price (X2), Place (X3), Promotion (X4), People (X5), Process (X6), and Physical Evidence (X7) with Service Quality (Y). The regression results can be seen in the table below.

Table 3. Regression Test

Variable	b	Std.error	T count	Sig	Information
(constant)	10.191	2.296	4.439	0.000	
Fan Loyalty	0.054	0.035	1.522	0.001	Significant
Regional Creative Economy Talent	0.041	0.035	1.999	0.000	Significant
R = 0.374		Sign. F = 0.000		Number of samples = 100	
R Square = 0.509		F count = 3,097		t Tabel = 2.380	
Adjusted R Square = 0.114		F table = 2.34		α = 0.05 (5%)	
Quality of Service = 10.191 + 0.054X + 0.041Z + e					

Based on the analysis in Table 3, the following equation is obtained:

$$Y = 10.191 + 0.054X + 0.041Z + e$$

Table 3 shows that the equation shows significant figures for all variables: Fan Loyalty (X), Regional Creative Economy Talent (Z), and Regional Culture (Y). The interpretation of this equation is: (1) The constant value (α) of 10.191 means that if the independent variables Fan Loyalty (X) and Regional Creative Economy Talent (Z) have a value of (0), then the value of Regional Culture (Y) is 10.191; (2) The parameter value or regression coefficient b1 of 0.001 indicates that for every increase in the Fan Loyalty (X) variable, an increase in the Regional Culture (Y) variable will increase by 0.001, meaning that for every increase in Blood Culture (Y), the Fan Loyalty (X) variable requires an increase of 0.001, assuming the other independent variables remain constant; (3) The parameter value or regression coefficient b2 of 0.000 indicates that if the Regional Creative Economy Talent (Z) variable increases, then Regional Culture (Y) will increase by 0.000, which means that every increase in Regional Culture (Y) requires a Regional Creative Economy Talent (Z) variable of 0.000, assuming that other independent variables remain constant; (4) Based on table 4, the correlation coefficient or R value of 0.374 indicates that the influence between Fan Loyalty and Regional Creative Economy Talent on Regional Culture has a positive influence of 0.374 or 37.6%. The determination coefficient or R square (r²) is 0.509, which indicates that 50.9% of Regional Culture is influenced by the variables Fan Loyalty and Regional Creative Economy Talent. Meanwhile, 0.86% (100% - 14%) is influenced by other causes not examined in this study.

Table 4. F Test and Ftable Value Sig = 5%

No	First Hypothesis	Mark
1	Fan Loyalty and Regional Creative Economy Talents Simultaneously Influence Regional Culture.	F = 3.097 Sig F = 0.000 F _{table} = 2.34

The first hypothesis states that the variables Fan Loyalty and Regional Creative Economy Talent have a significant simultaneous influence on Regional Culture. The F-test results in Table 4 show that the calculated F value is greater than the F table ($5.438 > 2.34$) with a significance level of 0.000. This means that the variables Fan Loyalty and Regional Creative Economy Talent simultaneously have a significant and simultaneous influence on Regional Culture. Therefore, the first hypothesis can be proven or accepted.

Table 5. t-test and t-table value sig = 5%

No	Second Hypothesis	Mark
1	The Fan Loyalty variable partially significantly influences Regional Culture.	t = 1.522 Sig t = 0.001 T _{tabel} = 2.380
2	The Regional Creative Economy Talent variable partially significantly influences Regional Culture.	t = 1.999 Sig t = 0.000 T _{tabel} = 2.380

Based on Table 5, it can be concluded that all variables partially influence Regional Culture because the calculated t value is greater than the t value. Therefore, the second hypothesis can be proven or accepted.

NVivo Analysis

Word frequency query results show that the most frequently appearing words are K-pop, culture, merchandise, creative, local, concert, support, dance cover, and collaboration. These findings suggest that in addition to loyalty to K-pop, there is also a connection between fans and local culture and the potential of the creative economy and last Main Theme (Nodes).

K-Pop Fan Loyalty

The analysis showed that fan loyalty is reflected in their initial interest, the form of support, and the emotional motivation they feel. Most respondents stated that music and choreography were the main reasons they started following K-pop.

As one respondent put it:

"Initially, I was interested because the music was different, more energetic, and the choreography was cool. From there, I started following my favorite group." (R2, student, 20 years old).

Loyalty is also evident in various forms of support, from purchasing albums and merchandise to participating in fan projects.

"I usually buy official albums or lightsticks. Even though they're expensive, it feels satisfying because it's a tangible form of support for the artist." (R8, student, 21 years old).

Furthermore, the community aspect of fandom is a factor that strengthens fan loyalty.

"I remain a fan because I feel connected to the fandom community. It feels like a big family supporting my idol." (R5, young worker, 23 years old).

Regional Creative Economy Potential

Respondents also saw an opportunity for local creatives to develop products with a K-pop touch. Several respondents reported seeing products made by local artists inspired by K-pop and found them appealing.

"I've seen tote bags made by local kids with K-pop designs. I think they're cool and more unique because they're not mainstream." (R1, student, 19).

Beyond products, the concept of local K-pop-themed events was also seen as having potential.

"If there was a local cafe with a K-pop theme but selling traditional food, I would definitely come. It would be fun, and I could also learn about local culture." (R7, student, 22).

Several respondents also saw the talent of young people in the region who possess design and illustration skills that could be combined with the K-pop fandom.

"Many creative kids here are good at design. If they made local K-pop products, I would be interested in buying them because it also supports local talent." (R4, young worker, 24).

Support for Regional Culture

Most respondents felt that regional culture was still less relevant to the daily lives of young people. However, if packaged with a K-pop feel, local culture could be more appealing.

"Regional culture is actually good, but honestly, it's rarely packaged in a way that appeals to young people. If it were combined with a K-pop concept, it might be more relatable." (R3, student, 20 years old).

Respondents' enthusiasm was also evident when asked about the possibility of attending local cultural events with a K-pop theme.

"If there was a cultural event that included a K-pop dance cover or fashion show, I would definitely participate. It could be a new way to connect with local culture." (R9, student, 21 years old).

Furthermore, the collaboration of K-pop fandoms with local culture is considered to increase the younger generation's awareness of traditions.

"I think collaborating with local fandoms can make young people more aware, because we feel directly involved." (R6, student, 19 years old).

Matrix Coding Query

A comparative analysis by gender reveals a different pattern. Women are more likely to provide financial support (purchasing merchandise and attending events), while men are more likely to provide non-material support such as streaming and attending local events.

Table 7. Matrix Coding Query

Factors/Themes	Man (n=4)	Woman (n=6)
Buying merchandise/albums	2	5
Streaming/voting	3	6
Interested in local K-pop products	2	4
Want to visit local cafes/events	3	5
Want to participate in cultural and K-pop events	2	5

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the loyalty of Generation Z K-Pop fans in Indonesia is not only reflected in their emotional attachment and participation in Korean cultural consumption, but also opens up strategic opportunities to support regional creative economy talents. The results of the regression analysis revealed that the variables of fan loyalty and regional creative economy talents have a significant influence, both simultaneously and partially, on regional culture. Qualitative findings through NVivo analysis show that K-Pop fandom loyalty can be a gateway to introducing local creative products and making regional culture more relevant to the younger generation. Thus, the loyalty of Generation Z K-Pop fans can be utilized as an innovative, adaptive, and sustainable local culture promotion strategy in the era of globalization

SUGGESTION

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that local governments, creative economy players, and fandom communities collaborate to create a more appealing cultural

promotion strategy for the younger generation by adopting a K-Pop-style approach. Local creative economy players need to leverage creativity and popular trends to package regional cultural products to make them more appealing to Generation Z. Furthermore, K-Pop fan communities can be involved in various cultural events combined with modern entertainment elements, thus creating synergy between fandom loyalty and local cultural preservation. Future research is expected to expand the sample and add other variables that may influence loyalty, such as the role of social media and community identity, to make the research results more comprehensive.

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