



저작자표시-비영리-변경금지 2.0 대한민국

이용자는 아래의 조건을 따르는 경우에 한하여 자유롭게

- 이 저작물을 복제, 배포, 전송, 전시, 공연 및 방송할 수 있습니다.

다음과 같은 조건을 따라야 합니다:



저작자표시. 귀하는 원저작자를 표시하여야 합니다.



비영리. 귀하는 이 저작물을 영리 목적으로 이용할 수 없습니다.



변경금지. 귀하는 이 저작물을 개작, 변형 또는 가공할 수 없습니다.

- 귀하는, 이 저작물의 재이용이나 배포의 경우, 이 저작물에 적용된 이용허락조건을 명확하게 나타내어야 합니다.
- 저작권자로부터 별도의 허가를 받으면 이러한 조건들은 적용되지 않습니다.

저작권법에 따른 이용자의 권리는 위의 내용에 의하여 영향을 받지 않습니다.

이것은 [이용허락규약\(Legal Code\)](#)을 이해하기 쉽게 요약한 것입니다.

[Disclaimer](#)

**Master's Thesis of Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion
Design**

**Exploring Global Fan Consumers'
Motivations for Purchasing Fashion
Idol Goods**

글로벌 팬 소비자의 아이돌 패션 굿즈
구매동기에 대한 연구

August 2022

**Graduate School of Human Ecology
Seoul National University
Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design Major**

Nikol Zaharieva

Exploring Global Fan Consumers' Motivations for Purchasing Fashion Idol Goods

Academic Advisor

Ho Jung Choo

**Submitting a Master's Thesis in Textiles,
Merchandising, and Fashion Design**

May 2022

**Dept. of Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design
Seoul National University**

Nikol Zaharieva

Confirming the Master's Thesis written by

Nikol Zaharieva

June 2022

Chair _____(Seal)

Vice Chair _____(Seal)

Examiner _____(Seal)

Abstract

For the past several years, South Korea has taken the globe by storm and has been in the spotlight. From K-Cuisine to K-Fashion to K-Drama and K-POP, Hallyu, also known as the Korean Wave, has attracted millions of admirers and followers. For some, consuming Korean culture has become a trend, while for others it has become a way of life. One of the key reasons for Hallyu's enormous success has been K-POP. The K-POP idol system has spawned a thriving market with a wide range of items to sell, both tangible and intangible. Idol Goods are a broad category of products based on the image of K-POP artists and designed to meet the demands of fans. Idol Goods have been separated into Non-Fashion Idol Goods and Fashion Goods for the purposes of this study. Furthermore, clothing products in the Idol Goods industry have been demonstrated to be important and commonly purchased by consumers. Fashion items differ from non-fashion items in terms of attributes. They are inextricably linked to appearance management, necessitating a distinct research strategy. Nonetheless, there is a paucity of academic research on Fashion Idol Goods, which is why this study intends to investigate and explore the buying reasons of Fashion Idol Goods in depth. Aside from academics, business and management are also important. Thereby, recognizing the prevalence of products of such sort, this research sets its main focus on fashion idol goods. Fan consumers' Fashion Idol Goods purchasing motivation is primarily emotional, however when comparing non-fashion and fashion goods their attributes of importance change, and these distinctions are visible in the case of idol goods. When purchasing clothes or fashion accessories, however, which do not suit one's taste, the individual goes beyond their taste's limitations, and rather an expansion in their personal taste can be assumed. Since the study's main focus falls on fashion goods, design as a product attribute is

another subject to explore. This research aims to contribute to the academic field by studying fan consumers' motivations behind purchasing Fashion Idol Goods and fans' attitudes towards the design of said goods. Data acquired through this research will, as well, be beneficial for successful Idol Goods marketing.

Due to the nature of the imposed research questions, this study selected a qualitative research method to explore the motivations and attitudes of fan consumers with accuracy. The research sample for this study consists of 12 individuals aged 18 to 30, who identify themselves as K-POP fans. Participants must have previously bought fashion idol goods, in order to accurately answer the Interview questions in a detailed manner based on their experience. In order to discover Fan consumers' Motivations for purchasing fashion idol goods, and respectively their Attitudes towards the design of said goods, semi-structured 1:1 in-depth interviews have been conducted. This study employs Thematic Analysis as an analysis approach, as it is a strategy to answer specific research questions and create informative analysis by discovering, interpreting, and reporting patterns in data.

In accordance with Research Question 1, Four main extrinsic and four intrinsic motivations emerged collecting motivations, support motivation, social consumption, where social identity and conspicuous consumption manifest as well; and lastly social norm with peer pressure and fandom validation as sub-categories are the extrinsic motivations behind the purchases of fashion idol goods. Intrinsically motivated fans consumed fashion merchandise because of emotional stimulation, uniqueness motivation, experience consumption, and idol relationships. Nonetheless, three main obstacles such as price consciousness, negative fandom image, and frequency of merchandise release also manifested as a result of the analysis.

Fan consumers' attitudes toward the design of fashion merchandise have been

placed on a negative to positive spectrum and two main categories in regard to attitude are illustrated as follows: The very negative end of the spectrum shows consumer dissatisfaction. Following consumers' responses, the design was proven to be one of the most important product attributes, which plays a significant role in determining whether a product is to be bought or not. Participants continuously expressed their big dissatisfaction with the design of fashion merchandise. Fashion idol goods lack gender and body diversity, making it a rather exclusive fashion category. Additionally, fashion merchandise is repeatedly following the same design scheme, resulting in a further negative attitude toward the goods. At the positive end of the attitude, the spectrum is placed in aesthetic appeal. Fashion idol goods have a generic design, making it difficult for a wide range of consumers to enjoy the products and utilize them in their daily wear. Participants, however, expressed their rather positive attitude toward the prospects design fashion merchandise holds. As established through Research Question 1 one of the reasons for fan consumers to purchase fashion merchandise is their uniqueness motivation. Their need for uniqueness is more or less satisfied owing to the rare design fashion merchandise has in comparison to regular fashion items. Fashion idol goods have exclusive designs meant for recognition mostly by those involved, making it aesthetically attractive to fan consumers.

Purchased and utilized fashion idol goods were in contrast to what participants claimed to be in congruence with their personal taste. When wearing fashion merchandise participants shared that they feel like another person, with new character traits matching those of the artist they support. Regardless of the fashion merchandise not matching their personal taste, participants felt themselves become new people, which resulted in the observed expansion of boundaries. Thus, it can be further hypothesized that K-POP idols have an effect on fan consumers' personal taste and thereof result in an

expansion of said taste.

The limitations of this study lie in the fact that fan consumers' fanship level has not been previously measured and thereof depriving the study of relevant data in accordance to fanship level types of motivations behind the purchase of Fashion Idol Goods. Moreover, considering the fact that this is a research based on fashion products, participants' fashion involvement should have been measured in so to observe various types of attitude towards design.

Keyword : idol goods, purchase motivations, fan consumers, fashion idol goods, k-pop merchandise, design attitude, product attributes, personal taste

Student Number : 2019-23386

Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Introduction	1
1.1 Study Background	1
1.2 Research Purpose	5
Chapter 2. Background Literature.....	7
2.1 Hallyu & K-POP Idols.....	7
2.2 Idol Goods	12
2.3 Fashion idol goods	20
2.4 Fan consumers	26
2.5 Purchase Motivations	31
2.6 Product Design.....	37
2.7 Consumer Attitudes	42
2.8 Personal Taste	45
Chapter 3. Methodology	48
3.1 Research Questions	48
3.2 Research Sample	50
3.4 Research Approach.....	53
3.4 Data Collection	54
3.5 Data Analysis	56
Chapter 4. Research Results.....	20
4.1 Purchase Motivations for Fashion Idol Goods.....	48
4.2 Attitude toward Design.....	50
4.3 Importance of Personal Taste.....	48
Chapter 5. Conclusion.....	83
5.1 General Discussion.....	83
5.2 Limitations of the Study	90
5.3 Implications	90
Bibliography.....	92
Appendix	109
Abstract in Korean.....	110

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Study Background

For the past few years, South Korea has been continuously gathering the attention of more and more people worldwide. Korean Wave, also known as Hallyu, refers to the rise of Korean popular culture and its worldwide spread all over the world market (Lee, 2011) , and due to its prevalence, the Hallyu is one of the reasons why South Korea has been in the global spotlight. Following Forbes'(2018) reports, the number of Hallyu fans all around the world has reached 89.19 million in 2018. K-POP, specifically, has played a big role in said growth, with, according to the Korea Creative Content Agency (KCCA), total sales of the music industry accounting for 2.87 trillion KRW just in the first half of 2018 (Yonhap, 2019). According to IFPI, a global music industry organization, K-POP accounts for 3.1% of the world's music market, while Korea is the sixth-largest market in the world market. Adding to the worldwide statistics, the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) released its annual Global Music Report and it names South Korea not only the sixth-largest music market in the world but also the fastest-growing major market as an account of K-POP since it attributes to South Korea's growth of 44,8% in 2020 (IFPF, 2021). More specifically, in 2018, sales of K-POP products topped 150 billion KRW, within both official and pirated items (Yonhap, 2019).

Undoubtedly COVID-19 not only affected the lives of many, but it also had a huge impact on various industries all over the world. Numerous businesses suffered great losses, while others, to avoid them, had to accept the challenges brought by the pandemic and, respectively, implement changes in their workflow. The K-POP industry is not an exception to this. Before COVID-19 K-POP idols would often embark on domestic or world tours, hold fan meetings or other gatherings of such sort in person which, naturally, accumulated for a big part of the entertainment

company's revenue. As a result of COVID-19, however, such offline events were put on hold, and K-POP idols started holding their fan-engagement social activities online, in an attempt to avoid the financial damage caused by the pandemic. K-POP artists being able to continuously generate income even if they are not actively promoting has also become a concern for entertainment companies during the pandemic, and this is where K-POP merchandise steps in. Idols management companies have implemented Idol Goods, or also merchandise, in their marketing strategies, to increase their profit to a maximum in minimum time. (Jung & Lee, 2009). The popularity of idol merchandise is expanding in tandem with the consumption of Korean music. Following the year 2000, the popular music industry saw a decade of decline, making CD albums and live performances less profitable. This is why Korean agencies expanded their goods production and sales business to include things with printed images of idols, which have since become a tool for motivating fans to continue purchasing collectibles of this nature (Chung & Kim, 2020). From a business standpoint, the Idol Goods business is becoming increasingly vital in securing revenues, as more than 40% of sales remain profitable once production expenses and fees are subtracted (Chung & Kim, 2020).

Execution of product planning through collaboration with brands is also more commonly seen, as various product brands are marketing their products by releasing them as a collaboration with idol celebrities (Chung & Kim, 2020). Despite widespread consumption of idol-related products, there is a gap in knowledge of consumers' motivations behind purchasing them. Idol Goods carry a symbolic meaning that consumers are fans of certain celebrities and, thus, as products, they have different utilities from other general products (Kim, 2019). Existing knowledge and literature on the topic, nonetheless, is not sufficient enough to understand Fan consumers' behaviors when it comes to Idol Goods.

Based on data from Korea Intellectual Property Office (KIPO), K-POP companies'

trademark applications, which in the past focused to a big extent mainly on music- and entertainment-related ventures, have now expanded to encompass food products, cosmetics, accessories, stationery, and fashion goods (Billboard, 2020). What is more, clothing products, specifically, ranked 2nd, textiles and clothing decorations, respectively 14th and 15th across KPOP's top 15 branding sectors (Billboard, 2020). Thereby, recognizing the prevalence of products of such sort, this research sets its main focus on fashion idol goods.

Despite idols' inability to perform in front of live audiences as a result of COVID-19, entertainment companies can compensate for financial losses by launching new goods and increasing their production. Fans consume their favorite artists not only through their favorite music but also through Idol Goods, this is why a deeper understanding of how and why Idol Goods are consumed is needed. Further, the product values of non-fashion idol goods and fashion idol goods naturally differ, and while there are studies on non-fashion idol goods, the extant literature on fashion idol goods is close to none. This research aims to contribute to the academic field by studying fan consumers' motivations behind purchasing fashion idol goods and fans' attitudes towards the design of fashion idol goods. Data acquired through this research will, as well, be beneficial for successful Idol Goods marketing.

1.2. Research Purpose

As consumers, fans use goods related to their favorite idols based on emotional values, therefore when targeting fans, entertainment companies consider this particular consumer group's emotional intelligence. What is more, fans' consumption attitudes are believed to be related to celebrity attractiveness, celebrity-fan consistency, and advertising creativity (Yan, 2009). Fans' idol-related consumption behaviors reflect a sense of self-identity in their fan qualities, resulting in a sense of belonging and satisfaction within the group, as well as mental pleasure. When fans buy idol-related merchandise, they are more likely to associate with specific purchase habits or products that are affected by adoration and result in intense emotional responses (Zhuang, 2019). In this regard, fan consumer goods purchasing motivation is primarily emotional, however when comparing non-fashion and fashion goods their attributes of importance change, and these distinctions are visible in the case of Idol Goods.

In terms of design, Idol Goods frequently feature symbolic design aspects fitting for the specific idol and fandom, which on its own helps differentiate them from other idols and fandoms. When entertainment companies produce fashion idol goods, they make efforts to preserve the identity of idols and fandom in mind, developing simple designs that may be worn by as many fans as possible. Putting their own identity and personal taste aside, many fan consumers are expected to buy and wear fashion idol goods, due to the mere reason that they are after all Idol Good as well. When purchasing clothes or fashion accessories, however, which do not suit one's taste, the individual goes beyond their taste's limitations, and rather an expansion in their personal taste can be assumed.

Since the study's main focus falls on fashion goods, design as a product attribute is another subject to explore, consequently, the purpose of this research is to look into whether there is a connection between fans' purchasing motivations

and their attitudes toward the design of fashion idol goods. To obtain needed data, global K-POP fan consumers aged from 18 to 30 with previous purchase experience in fashion idol goods, have been chosen as a study sample.

In academic marketing literature, researchers are able to more thoroughly observe and study consumers' thinking processes alongside their behaviors by conducting qualitative research. For this reason, the following study implements a qualitative research method, and applies a thematic analysis to explore fan consumers' motivations for purchasing Fashion idol goods and their attitudes toward the design of such goods.

Chapter 2. Background Literature

2.1. Hallyu, K-POP and Idols

2.1.1. Hallyu

The popularization of Korean popular culture emerged back in the 90s, and its continuous growth was what led to the coining of the term Hallyu, also known as the Korean Wave (Qui, 2013). The term Hallyu originates in the 2000s, the beginning encompassing mainly Korean Drama and Korean Music, but with time passing and Hallyu, taking the world by storm, Korean Cuisine, Korean Comics (Manhwa), and the Korean Language as well are attracting more and more attention worldwide (Park, 2019). Jung & Lee (2010) also define Hallyu as the global expansion of Korean culture and related cultural goods owing to the exposure to Korean Cuisine, Hanbok (Korean traditional wear), Hangeul (the Korean alphabet), and sports which reflect the life and history of Korean People by appearing in popular cultures such as Korean dramas, K-POP, and Korean movies. Hallyu has greatly contributed for Korean Culture to receive worldwide recognition; after being exposed to Hallyu-related content, a great deal of individuals' awareness of South Korea has changed in a positive way (KOFICE, 2018). From an economic point of view, the Korean Wave contents and its impact have surely left their footprint: exports of the content sector rose at a high annual rate of 6.8% during the past few years from 2012 to 2016, whereas exports of the content industry grew at an annual rate of 8.8% in 2018, up roughly \$7.5 billion from \$6.89 billion in 2017 (Park, 2019; KOCCA, 2019).

2.1.2. K-POP and Idols

As stated above, Hallyu includes various types of Korean popular culture and

as it can be expected, each category receives a different amount of attention. K-POP is the first thing that comes to mind when people from all over the world, hear of South Korea (KOFICE, 2021). By definition, K-POP refers to” popular music originating in South Korea and encompassing a variety of styles” (Merriam Webster Dict.). Even though the K in the abbreviation is supposed to stand for Korean Pop, K-POP is not just one music genre strictly limited to traditional Korean sounds, on the contrary, the range K-POP music encircles consists of numerous different styles, from electronic, R&B to hip-hop and ballad. A big portion of K-POP songs are indeed sung in Korean and have a very catchy chorus, which makes them easy to distinguish from other music genres. The increasing popularity of K-POP placed the music genre at 7th place as the most popular music genre worldwide (IFPI, 2019) and South Korea, respectively, came 6th in the top 10 music markets for 2020 (IFPI, 2021).

Idol culture is deeply rooted in K-POP, and is one of the things that make K-POP so unique. Korean singers are widely referred to as K-POP Idols or just Idols. The word “idol” on its own originally carries a sense of a deeper and profound admiration, or more precisely “idol” is defined as “an image or representation of a god used as an object of worship” (Oxford Languages). Particular individuals receiving immense love and respect have also been called idols by others. Korean singers, just like other celebrities, are a subject of great attention, the levels of attachment and the extent of admiration from their fans have been often compared to worshipping. In order for K-POP idols to be able to debut and gain fans’ support they first undergo a very thorough training process through which their skills must be polished to perfection. The entertainment companies' K-POP idols are signed under, make sure their idol is showing only the best version of themselves in front of the public. K-POP idols must always keep their flawless image both on- and off-stage, ensuring the general public will fall for their diverse charms. There are not

only solo performers but also performers working in groups, in which case each group member has a specific role: main vocal, main dancer, visual of the group, rapper etc. Before K-POP idol debuts, the entertainment company adjusts its image and create a concept for the said performer, betting on personal branding, making the idol public-pleasers (Kang, 2017; Skvortsova, 2020). In other words, Idols can be perceived as products created via the implementation of a star system presented by a management company (Cha and Choi, 2012; Raviv et al., 1996). What is more, as a brand K-POP, once labeled as such, has in fact a boosted marketability and by being a form of categorization it gives a certain freedom to the people consuming it, in terms of consumer choice (Unger, 2015). Apart from that, when marketing their K-POP idols, talent agencies implement various tools: from interactive content (Vlive, for example, is an online video streaming platform where Idols stream live broadcasts and communicate with their fans in real-time) to very strong social media presence (Idols are active on multiple social media platforms which are used not only for promoting new albums or merchandise releases, but also for simple updates from their daily lives).

Another successful approach entertainment companies have implemented in their business strategies is the one-source-multi-use method. Following the steps of Japanese entertainment, Korean companies, instead of relying fully on income from albums and concerts, started producing spin-off products in relation to their K-POP Idols (Jung & Lee, 2009). Jung & Lee (2009) further explain that idols' faces or names are used when designing this wide variety of goods, for example, a single album, repackage album, DVD, etc. By adopting this method not only is the relationship between Idols and fans enhanced but also revenue is notably boosted as well. International sales of K-POP Idols-related products have been hitting the roof with each year, as reported by the Korea Customs Service data; exports of physical CDs and DVDs products alone increased by 94.9% on-year to \$170

million, not accounting for the undeclared items (The Korea Herald, 2020).

2.2. Idol Goods

By definition the word goods means “something manufactured or produced for sale” (Merriam-Webster dict.), as well as products generally satisfying human needs and provide some sort of utility (Wikipedia) making it interchangeable with the term Merchandise.

When releasing promotional posters for new Idol products, entertainment companies use the term “Merchandise” (MD), yet in academic literature, on K-POP-related products the terms “K-POP Goods” or “Idol Goods” are the ones most frequently used, and that being the case, for the sake of consistency this study will as well use the term “Idol Goods.

K-POP goods are products designed and manufactured to satisfy K-POP fans’ needs. As the name suggests K-POP goods are strictly related to K-POP and their design is based on K-POP artists, often including the logo, name of the fandom, representative colors, and others.

With the success of K-POP, the Idol Goods market has been growing rapidly, adding a significant increase to the statistics each year. K-POP started making its first steps in the 90s, with the 1st generation of K-POP performers, when the industry mainly profited from album records and music performances. Even though the domestic industry had a secure start, the popular music market suffered a slump in the 2000s, forcing talent agencies to come up with a new model as a means to expand their business areas. Jung & Lee, 2009 explain that “with the Korean music record market shrinking and more idol groups with distinct concepts emerging, the entertainment industry has undergone a change in its business structure through having to deal with the shortened life cycle of idol groups in Korea.“ , which when it comes to profitability makes it difficult for companies to gain income solely from the music. Jung & Lee, 2009 further underline that the reasons for the industry to be forced to make maximum profit in a short time is exactly the higher breakpoint

and shortened life cycle of idol groups, as a result of the shrinking of the music market. This was achieved by creating and selling various goods based on star images, which were expected to make up for the profit insufficiency, given that as a result of the music market recession CD albums and music performances alone were not able to generate considerable profit (Chung & Kim, 2020). When 2nd generation idols debuted in the 2000s, the varieties of merchandise gradually broadened and expanded to whole Merchandise businesses, advancing beyond the regular fan culture (NToday, 2018).

Owing to the goods market's growth, the types and categories of Idol Goods likewise expanded remarkably. Idol Goods can be classified into two big categories; Official and Unofficial Idol Goods. Official Idol Goods are all products produced or licensed by the K-POP Idol's company, and are directly connected in meaning to the K-POP Idol by carrying their name, face, artist's fandom colors, etc. Whereas, Unofficial idol goods are all K-POP Idol-related products that have been manufactured by a third party, without the official approval of the entertainment company. Official idol goods tend to be priced higher, whilst the quality is rather low or simply dissatisfactory, resulting in multiple complaints from fans, thus the reason behind the popularity of Unofficial idol goods, as their price range is lower and corresponds to the quality of the product (Chung & Kim, 2020). Not only that, but design-wise many fans have been left rather disappointed on multiple occasions, inducing many to design and produce any merchandise item that would satisfy their aesthetic needs.

Distribution-wise supplying channels for idol goods have also ameliorated, accumulating outstanding numbers for their sales figures. Idol goods can be easily purchased through both offline and online channels, making it easier for fans to acquire their needed product. The distribution industry is vigorously pursuing higher and higher numbers as the Idol Goods market doubled its 100 billion KRW

per year revenue for 2018 to 200 billion KRW per year for 2019 (Herald Business, 2018; Newsis, 2019). More precisely, sales related to Idol Goods from the top five entertainment agencies, including SM Entertainment, YG Entertainment, and JYP, had an estimated growth to 75 billion won in 2014, 100 billion won in 2015, 150 billion won in 2016, and about 200 billion won in 2018, showing a steady and continuous progress (JoongAngIlbo, 2019). Big entertainment companies started broadening their distribution channels by opening their own official offline stores, as well as partnering with various e-commerce businesses. SM Entertainment, for instance, is one of the most eminent talent companies in Korea; the company SMTOWN not only runs a celebrity offline shop where a great range of products related to their K-POP artists are put for sale, but they also offer their own celebrity food in the restaurant section of their offline store, and by doing so they extend their range of goods and services in order to produce a bigger economic impact (Chung & Kim, 2020). As for their online store, an even wider range of Idol Goods is marketed through the SMTOWN & Store e-commerce platform. The website offers "Celeb for You," a personalized service that allows online customers to view latest products from the K-POP Idol they selected upon logging in. YG Entertainment, another top company in the industry, also operates official goods stores called YG PLACE, which can be found not only in Seoul but also in Bangkok, contributing to accumulated income from abroad. Moreover, as a more specialized approach, YG Entertainment created their very own character "Krunk" and, implementing it, produces Idol Goods which portrays a specific star under the company (Park, 2019). According to Yonhap (2019), by managing assorted subsidiaries with their artists brands, YG Entertainment's revenue only from royalties and brand-related sales accumulated 76.91 billion KRW. Another example for an online store would be Hybe Corporation's WEVERSE – a global fan community platform. WEVERSE partners with K-POP idols from other companies,

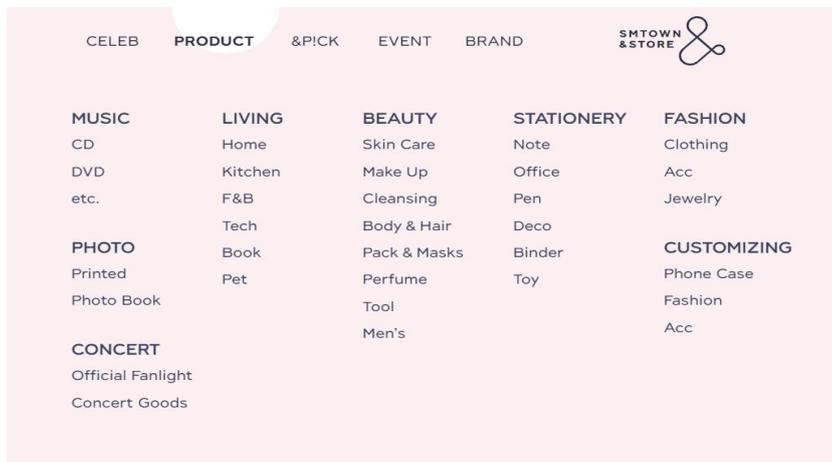
as well as artists from outside Korea. Through WEVERSE fan consumers can purchase official Idol Goods from the list of artists provided, including watching contents and communicating with their favorite K-POP Idols. The quarterly WEVERSE payment amount for 2020 accumulated roughly 30 billion KRW in first, up to 80 billion KRW in second, and 100 billion KRW in third quarter, aiding WEVERSE's annual profits surpass 328 billion KRW and this way accounting for 41.2 percent of the total sales (TheBell, 2021).

Distribution channels are further expanded through partnerships between entertainment companies and Korean online shopping mall platforms, Chung & Kim (2020) list Gmarket, 11Street and CJmall as examples, where separated Idol Goods are sold through special events in which fan consumers can participate. Additionally, such e-commerce platforms provide international services further shortening the bridge between domestic and international distribution. Withdrama, another store for producing and distributing Idol Goods in Korea and abroad, estimates their sales for 2021 to be approximately 50 billion won, the percentage of international sales increasing continuously, reaching 40% (NateNews, 2021).

The Idol Goods market supplies a wide range of products. When Idol Goods first appeared on the K-POP market the only products fans could choose from were ones for fan activity purposes; for example, fan cheering goods for concerts like Cheering stick and raincoats. Nowadays, however, the market has expanded tremendously, and the product categories of Idol Goods have, likewise, grown bigger in choice - from fashion items like clothing, hair accessories, bags, and scarves to regular merchandise like music albums, posters, photocards; or products for daily use – pencils, keyrings, cups, calendars, etc. SM Entertainment, for instance, offers a wide selection of official Idol Goods through their offline and online stores. As shown on [Image 1.] fan consumers can browse through a scopious selection of Idol Merchandise to while trying to find the product best

matching their needs.

[Image 1.] SM Entertainment official online store



Source: <https://www.smtownandstore.com/>

Collaborations between K-POP Idols and various product brands are also one of the reasons for the big surge in the market's net worth. In the past few years a number of brands saw a significant increase in their sales through implementing Idol Goods marketing: inviting group Wanna One as a model, skin care brand Innisfree's mask pack [Image 2.] had a 300% increase in sales, whilst Mediheal, a mask pack brand, collaborated with boy group BTS in the past to offer a 25,000 won special package [Image 3.], which sold out 3,000 original stocks in three days (Sisa Journal, 2018).

[Image 2.] WANNA ONE X INNISFREE Collaboration

[Image 3.] BTS X MEDIHEAL Collaboration



Source: <https://www.innisfree.com/kr/ko/Main.do> & <https://www.amazon.com/Mediheal-Special-Photocard-Hydrating-Moisture/dp/B078W3NV4P>

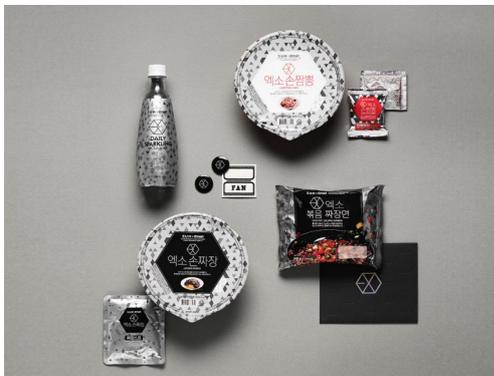
In a similar fashion, the retail industry has also taken advantage of the success of Idol Goods's market. E-Mart, one of the biggest retailers in South Korea, partnered with SM Entertainment and introduced their private label products by using the name or image of K-POP Idols from said music label [Image 4. & Image5.]. Even though the already existing PL products were only packaged anew with the names of artists such as TVXQ, Red Velvet, EXO and others, sales jumped to 190.5% on average (HankookIlbo, 2016).

More and more are recognizing the significance of this trend-setting market, as experts and researchers expect it to keep growing and expand further, hence the need of more academic research on the topic. Based on the literature discussed above it can be understood that Idol Goods differ from regular products, especially in regards to the symbolic meanings they carry for their main consumer group, which contribute to the way these products are being consumed. Yet, most research related to K-POP and Fandom culture is dedicated to the interpersonal relationships between Fandom Members or the way fans consumer K-POP as a whole. Idol Goods literature is only just starting to broaden more with a focus on the consumption of the additional products K-POP release – the merchandise.

[Image 4.]

SUM X E-Mart

[Image 5.]



Source: https://store.emart.com/detectLife/detectLife_detail.do?YY_MM=1603&FILE_NM=04_01

2.3. Fashion idol goods

Attributable to the Idol Goods' market prosperity, products' categories and types have likewise grown in numbers, granting fan consumers larger purchase choices. Idol Goods range from stationery, home products, edible products, cheering sticks, banners, albums, clothing, accessories, blankets, etc. A large diversity of products such as the one of the Idol Goods scope calls for further classification of the merchandise groups. For the sake of this study, the term Idol Goods will be separated into two groups of Non-Fashion idol goods and Fashion idol goods, where Fashion idol goods will include all products related to clothing and apparel, fashion accessories, such as jewelry, bags, socks, wallets, any sort of clothing decorations, hair accessories and keychains included, as many K-POP fan do incorporate them in their outfits as a final touch.

According to data from Korea Intellectual Property Office (KIPO), K-POP companies' trademark applications, once focusing mainly on music-related ventures, climbed to 71% since 2015 and now have a wide range including cosmetics, clothing, accessories, stationery and food products (Billboard, 2020). Additional information from the same report indicates that clothing ranks second in K-POP's top 15 branding sectors by product types, accessories - ninth, textiles - thirteenth and clothing decorations – fifteenth. Fashion merchandise can be considered as a prevailing category among the others, therefore making it a sector worth concentrating on.

Official Idol Goods, no matter the category fashion or non-fashion, can also be additionally divided into Regular Idol Goods that fan consumers can buy any time as long as there is enough in stock; Limited Idol Goods that are sold for a specific period of time or places and cannot be bought outside of said period or place; Special Event Idol Goods, offered only while stock lasts and when purchased the

buyer receives a special benefit: either another item (for example a photocard of the K-POP Idol) or an opportunity to participate in events (for instance an event of a Luckydraw nature) and Collaboration Idol Goods, result of a collaborative partnership between the K-POP Idol and a specific Brand or Retailer.

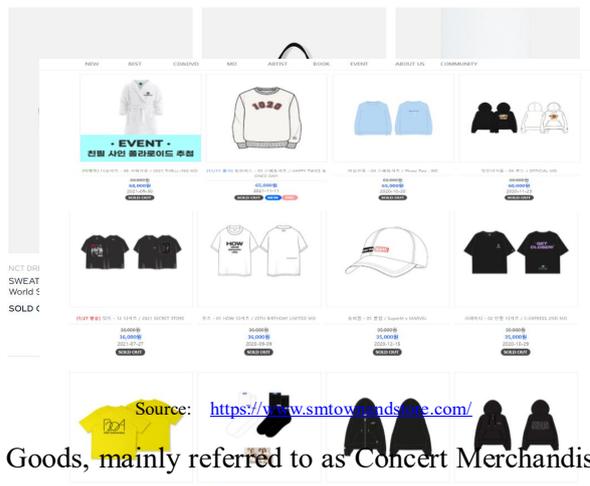
Regular merchandise on Withdrama’s Fashion MD section includes products like ballcaps, clothing, socks and even bathrobes [Image 6.].

[Image 6.] Online Retailer for Official Idol Goods “Withdrama”’s
Fashion idol goods section

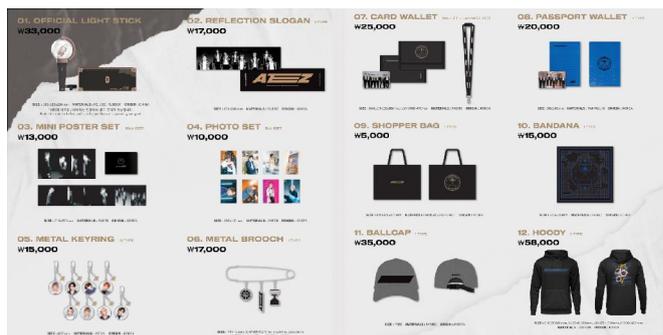
Source: <https://withdrama.co.kr/>

Similarly, SM Entertainment vends as great of a variety for Fashion idol goods, as on their online store fan consumers can find Fashion products such as jewelry, clothing, bags, and etc. [Image 7.].

[Image 7.] Fashion idol goods on
SM Entertainment’s online store



Concert Idol Goods, mainly referred to as Concert Merchandise (MD), are the



most consistently put on the market fashion products for the category of Limited Idol Goods. In most of the cases Concert MD is sold at the concert venue and buyers cannot purchase it from somewhere else. Fashion idol goods are almost on every Official Concert MD list, in being the fact that concert merchandise has become a fashion trend on multiple occasions both in the past and recently. K-POP group ATEEZ, for example, managed by KQ Entertainment, released Official Concert MD [Image 8.] for their first official concert in 2020, where more than half of the MD list included Fashion idol goods.

[Image 8] ATEEZ The Fellowship Tour Official MD

Source: <https://twitter.com/ateezofficial/>

Special Event Idol Goods, as aforementioned, give buyers the chance to participate in events where they can win something or automatically come with a bonus product. K-POP boy group “The Boyz” launched their special MD list to celebrate the release of their album THRILL-ING with a bathrobe item on it, as this apparel item fit the concept of the album. Among those people who bought the robe 11 were to enter in a lucky draw and win a polaroid signed by the artist [Image 9].

[Image 9.] THE BOYZ [THRILL-ING] OFFICIAL MD



Source: <https://cafe.daum.net/officialTHEBOYZ/Rf4o/270>

In the case of Collaboration Idol Goods, they most often fall into the category of Limited Idol Goods and Special Event Idol Goods, due to their nature of the goods. In the past YG Entertainment sold a limited edition of a padding worth 519,000 KRW in collaboration with outdoor brand NEPA. The product is designed with an image of boy group IKON's member on the inside of the jacket [Image 10.], making it sell out in no time, despite the high price, as it made fans feel like they were in their favorite idol's arms when they wore the jacket (Maeil Business Newspaper, 2015)

[Image 10.] NEPA x IKON Collaboration Jacket



Source: <https://www.mk.co.kr/>

Fashion idol goods are now included in diverse marketing strategies by the most and majority of Korean entertainment companies, making them an inseparable part from Idol Goods as a whole.

Even though Fashion and Non-Fashion products both fall under the Idol Goods category, Fashion products in general carry properties different than those of a regular Non-Fashion product. Fashion is distinguished as something requiring high involvement, inasmuch as fashion products can be usually more expensive, or bought with much consideration and not so often, as well as relate to consumers' personal identity, and even carry high risks in term of society for example (Wolny & Mueller, 2013). Moreover, Fashion products are directly related to appearance management, hence requiring a separate research approach. As fashion products, Fashion idol goods must, therefore, be studied separately from Non-Fashion idol goods.

2.4. Fan consumers

Fans can be seen as a more special group of consumers as their consumption habits are rooted in stronger adoration and fondness compared to other regular consumers. The word fan itself means “an ardent admirer or enthusiast (as of a celebrity or a pursuit)” (Merriam-Webster Dict.), it is also an abbreviation from fanatic, deriving from the Latin word “fanaticus” – with a literal translation of “a temple servant” and “a devotee” (Samra & Wos 2014). In relation to its semantic origins, passionate supporters of ideas, physical entities or intangible things have been long referred to as fans. Jenkins (1992) defines the term fan as “inspired by orgiastic rites and enthusiastic frenzy” . Denotations on as such on their own prompt a more profound connection between the fan and the object of devotion, in this case – K-POP Idols.

Using sociological and managerial descriptions classifications discussed in their study on Sport Fan consumers, Samra & Wos, (2014) identify three eminent features of fans as consumers: (1) fans exhibit intense emotional attachment toward the objects of consumption; (2) fans demonstrate loyal behaviors, with regular and repeated consumption as an indicator of emotional investment, emotional commitment and repeated consumption proven to be related (Brooker & Jermyn, 2002; Harrington & Bielby, 1995); and (3) fans engage in non-formal behaviors like co-production and investment, desiring to be involved in the production process and thus, fan’ s consumption value intensifies by combining the cultural value of production (Cavicchi, 1998).

Consistent to those features discussed by Samra & Wos (2014), K-POP fans are known for their intense attachment to their Idols, and are individuated with profoundly loyal behaviors resulting in repeated consumption patterns. K-POP fans are characterized with: a great spending power directed not only towards their Idols,

but also towards brands they endorse and represent from various industries (dataspring, 2021); a high loyalty for their favorite artists expressed through repeated material purchases or strong patronage as well as striving to create a stronger or maintain the current relationship between brands or products (Samra & Wos, 2014; Ardhiyansyah, 2021); and their consumption activities may often be interpreted as a representation for their own identity within the K-POP fandom (Jenol, 2020). Fandom is a term used in sociology to describe the connection between audiences and popular media in culture studies. (Horton and Wohl 1956). In addition, Fandom is defined as the result of unique social and cultural interactions, institutions, and communities that emerge from the close engagement of dedicated groups of fans in a sub-cultural environment (Fiske, 1992). In other words, K-POP fans are part of the K-POP Fandom as whole, and additionally to that sub-groups of fandoms within the Fandom have and keep emerging, as each artist has their own Fandom, be it as a solo artist, an individual member of a group, or the group as a whole. Celebrity attractiveness, celebrity-fan consistency, and advertising creativity has been found to be linked to fans' consumption attitudes (Yan, et al., 2009), as well as the degree of emotionship is claimed to be the most important factor influencing fans' purchasing decisions (Zhuang, 2019). Bearing this in mind, multiple entertainment companies have implemented in their marketing tactics ways to influence Fan consumers, as they are a group with consumption habits based on their emotional intelligence. Lead by their emotional states, fans are differentiated from general consumers on the basis of their strong emotional affiliation (Grossberg, 1995) and emotional attachment with the objects they consume (Samra & Wos, 2014).

As a result of emotional attachment and devotion to their favorite artists, as well as the joy they experience from being a part of a community (Fandom), Fan consumers have slowly turned into Prosumers – “a prospective consumer who is

involved in the design, manufacture, or development of a product or service” (Oxford Languages Dict). As Prosumers they not only engage in manufacturing activities of Unofficial Idol Goods, but they also actively organize and participate in additional advertisement and promotion undertakings, all for the sake of their K-POP Idol. By doing this, Fan consumers in fact become of a great help to companies and let companies benefit from them, since unlike devoted customers, who purchase items frequently, Fan consumers aid companies greatly even without actually buying their goods directly (iconsumer, 2021) – instead of staying passive consumers Fan consumers have become active producers personally engaged into managing their K-POP Idols (Jung & Lee, 2009). Fan consumers play a crucial role in the development and success of K-POP Idols, on account of the fact that they are not only the main source of income, but also in charge of representing and promoting the artists, always ensuring their favorite artists is in general public’s spotlight and gets the treatment and recognition they deserve. For example, when their favorite Idols have particular activities, Fans sometimes send to the schedule’s location a truck full of food or drinks. As much as Fan consumers are patronizing over the K-POP Idols they support, they are also quite vocal on matters that do not fit their taste, ways of thinking or values. In such cases Fan consumers can boycott the entertainment company or even directly the artists, once something falls into their spectrum of criticism. A case in point would be when fans of girl group GFRIEND boycotted the project for a full-size body pillow the company Source Music, had released, deeming it inappropriate, and resulting in full cancellation of production for said product. Fan consumers are, indeed the biggest variable responsible for artists’ success, however they can also be their downfall unless kept satisfied – happy customers equal a happy business, in the same way as happy fan consumers equal happy and successful entertainment companies.

Fans as consumers value more the process of experience and participation,

rather than the actual consumption (iconsumer, 2021) , which should prompt companies to focus on providing this target group with a better experience even just through a purchase, instead of focusing only on making them complete the transaction.

In addition to their qualities discussed above, in terms of motivations and consumption behaviors Fan consumers differ from that of the wider public of consumers (Zhuang, 2019), this is why due to their distinctiveness as a consumer group, a separate research is an appropriate step to take in order to add to the extant literature on fans as consumers.

2.5. Purchase Motivation

Motivations are a core part of human nature, becoming the driving force for numerous basic to complex decisions and behaviors. For their paramountcy, motivations have been a research topic for many years, with researchers coining the term motivation as: a state of arousal further prompting certain goals (Park and Mittal 1985); that one thing which stimulates and directs behavior (Young, 1961); the pushing force that drives individuals' actions (McClelland 1951); actions that impels us to pursue needs constantly (Engel et al., 1995); the activation of internal desires, needs, and concerns that stimulate behavior, while directing the organism in a direction for satisfaction of the motivational topics which culminated in the increased energy (Pittman, 1998).

Consumer behaviors is one of the areas with the biggest interest in marketing, and motivations are in fact what helps marketers understand and predict the way consumers will act in certain situations, which is why motivations have long been a topic of interest for consumer behavior researchers. Purchase motivations are the key basis for why consumers purchase specific products or use certain services to satisfy their needs (Lee, 1994). Therefore, understanding of purchase motivation will play an important role in understanding and predicting consumers' purchasing behavior. For this reason, just as Solomon and Robot (2004) assert, exploring and fully understanding purchase motivations is crucial to predicting consumers' purchasing behavior.

With the course of academic literature expanding more and more, motivations have been recognized by many researchers as a multidimensional notion. In marketing context, these dimensions have been further studied and adopted in relation to purchase motivations. Considering the flow of the expected results, as more or less this study follows a deductive approach, and the research questions posed, this study is guided by two motivational types Extrinsic and Intrinsic

motivations.

Ryan and Deci (2000) take an approach, assuming that people have evolved predispositions for learning, mastering problems, and integrating new experiences into a unified sense of self. Intrinsic motivation is a concept that explains a person's innate desire for assimilation, mastery, spontaneous interest, and exploration, which is fundamental to cognitive and social growth and a main source of joy and vitality throughout life (Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993; Ryan, 1995). In contrast, extrinsic motivation refers to taking action because it is thought to be beneficial in accomplishing a goal (Davis et al., 1992) and is triggered by factors outside of a person's control. Extrinsically motivated people engage in activities for the purpose of the benefits gained from the engagement, according to motivational theorists (Reis, 1994), as opposed to intrinsic motivation, which refers to doing something for the sake of doing it.

Extrinsic and intrinsic motivations are yet to be often implemented in marketing research, as not that many studies have adopted them in their framework, and same goes for fashion-oriented research literature. Based on the aforementioned theoretical background, Fan consumers and their unique purchase habits fit the model of extrinsic, and intrinsic motivation. For example, extrinsic motivations do entail receiving a reward if engaging in an activity, and many of the Idol Goods come with special benefits. Fan consumers are a rather unique group of consumers that behaves and acts upon motivations differently than the regular consumer. The way fan consumers act is highly predictable, and they have consuming habits unchanged for a longer period of time (Cavicchi, 1998). When exposed to goods related to their favorite artist fans are expected to blindly purchase and consume them in accordance to their motivations. Previous research shows that Fan consumers exhibit repeated consumption patterns (Sandvoss, 2005), and K-POP Fan consumers would be not any different, bearing in mind that among

this consumer group there are many individuals who are in fact collectors and do repeatedly purchase Idol-related items. Whether or not K-POP Fan consumers exhibit the same habitual patterns as other fan consumer groups are yet to be studied. K-POP fans are known for holding strong sentiments and engaging in Para-Social Relationships with their favorite Idols. Hung (2014) states that “individuals participating in celebrity-related activities would become “transported” and immersed in the presence of the celebrity” - purchasing Idol Goods in this context is a celebrity-related activity and, thus, as Hung (2014) continues - “the para-social bond that characterizes fan-celebrity relationships allows these individuals to take on the celebrity’s perspective (Green & Brock, 2004; Green et al., 2004), making fans empathic and investing strong emotions in the celebrity”- by purchasing idol goods fan consumers may expect their relationship with the Idol to be maintained or even straightened. As for fashion idol goods, fan consumers can be expected to be driven by the desire to be recognized by their Idols when engaging in other fan activities (like going to concerts for example) for wearing Idol Goods and respectively feel a sense of bonding with the Idol.

Another specific factor in K-POP culture is fandom. Fandom plays a very important role in the consuming experience of every K-POP fan, as many describe it as “finding their second family” or just being happy to have so many people all over the world to socialize and be able to form an instant relationship with. Fan consumers can be also expected to purchase fashion idol goods in an attempt to assert their place in the fandom and feel validated, as well to form new relationships with other fans, since it is believed that consumers, in general, do show themselves in front of others or even establish “themselves” and use fashion as a tool to communicate with others through the clothes (Solomon, 1988). However, such social groups may exert also a feeling of peer pressure which may

push fan consumers to purchase fashion idol goods in order to be validated by the rest of the fandom. Idol goods are perceived as products of high and symbolic value to Fan consumers, as such they can be seen as “prestigious” even. According to Gil et al. (2017) overall, general consumers on the younger side are in constant pursuit of for goods they see as prestigious, by associating them with a specific, for instance, brand names and others, which can also be applied in the context of idol goods, as many of them are limited editions, including fashion idol goods. fan consumers may be motivated by the need for “conspicuous consumption” in the fandom to purchase fashion idol goods, which can be easily worn and displayed in front of other fans.

Fan consumers can be motivated by numerous factors any other regular consumer would not even consider; hence it is of importance to study this specific consumer group and determine what lies in the core of their motivations. Popular music has long been linked to goods preservation practices and the growth of personal collections even (Bennett et al., 2016); nevertheless, academic attention to these practices and the items themselves has been sparse. Many companies nowadays do not follow a reasonable goods release scheduled pattern, and instead keep overwhelming their consumers with a continuous overflow of products they expect to unconditionally purchase. K-POP industry's prosperity is also slowly raising concerns, as more and more begin to argue that agencies are exploiting fan consumers by leveraging celebrity marketing to encourage excessive consumption and mostly impulse purchases (The Korea Times, 2018). This is why it is crucial to understand what triggers Fan consumers to purchase idol goods, in this context – a more special category being – fashion idol goods, and further study their attitudes towards product design.

2.6. Product Design

There are hundreds and thousands of products on the market and sometimes consumers can get overwhelmed by the amount of goods they can choose from. As a part of the consumers' decision-making process, alternatives evaluation is the step that helps consumers find the products best matching their needs by comparing them with others. Consumers tend to view products as a bundle of attributes and further show preferences towards them (Aaker, 1991; Kotler, 1997; Lancaster, 1971). These product attributes are expressive features that help consumers distinguish one product from others (Bian and Moutinho, 2011) and can further assist consumers during the product evaluation stage, as product attributes are a major component that affects the buying behavior of a consumer (Mohammad, 2017).

Product attributes can be various aspects of a product, such as: quality, design, price, practicality, etc. This study is focusing mainly on Fashion idol goods, and when fashion products are concerned design and aesthetics are the first things potential consumers would put their main point of focus at. Product design has been proved to significantly affect consumers' purchase intention (Kotler & Keller, 2012), as well as a results of cognitive & affective responses product design has been found to significantly affect brand loyalty (Chia-Lin et al., 2018, Chitturi, 2008). Product design' s importance has also been implied to lie in the fact that it is the sole point making one product stand out compared to another on the market (Peters, 2005).

Idol Goods, as any other regular goods, also have characteristic product attributes, the importance of which is yet to be studied. Even though there is a significant lack of academic literature on Idol Goods' attributes, Kim et al.(2018) found in a related study that fan consumers put a different level of importance on Idol Goods Product Attributes like design, price, quality, practical feature &

scarcity, according to their income group, design came out as an essential attribute throughout all fan consumer groups, together with quality. Furthermore, when discussing the types of attributes pertinent for each idol goods category, Ra (2018) points out that when it comes to fashion idol goods, aesthetics is one of the attributes prevailing in both the smart idol goods and regular idol goods categories.

In the process of designing fashion products, analyzing trends is a must, in order to predict in advance based on previous, behaviors and habits, what fashion consumers would prefer buying. In the case of idol goods, however, market trends have just started gaining importance. Entertainment companies count that fan consumers would end up buying each and every merchandise the company releases, as a result of the strong attachment they have for their favorite artists, this is why companies inflate idol goods prices, while the quality goes down, without particularly considering Fan consumers' attitude on the matter. That being the case, production and manufacturing of unofficial goods among fan consumers has become a regular practice, for the reason that unofficial idol goods tend to be on the cheaper side with a quality corresponding to it. Recently, companies started taking into consideration fan consumers' preferences by first investigating online platforms where fans publish notices about the unofficial idol goods they will produce. In terms of design, design houses would now also gather ideas from what fan consumers post online when manufacturing their own unofficial idol goods, and then respectively implement the ideas in the design of official goods.

In idol goods context, it can be claimed that design is one of the most significant parts of the product. Separation of fandoms is an inseparable factor in K-POP fan culture – in the past it was frowned upon when an individual was a fan of more than one K-POP artist, thence with the purpose of an easier identification between fandoms Idol Goods were designed to match the fandoms. Each artist has a logo, fandom color and name, or a specific mascot character as a part of their

brand, that is used as a representative symbol in fandom culture. During the first generation of K-POP, those specific design elements of idol goods were used as the standard symbols for division, whilst also building a collective identity through distinction between each fandom (Hong, 2014). At that time fans would obtain Idol Goods like balloons, raincoats, and lightsticks in the colors of their fandom to discern them from other celebrities' fans – through the implemented design idol goods were an indicator of which star's fandom the fan consumer belongs to as well as it reflected fan consumers' identity (Jung, 2009). Previous research on idol goods demonstrates that the design characteristics of merchandise had a stronger influence on emotional responses towards said goods, further stating fan consumers with stronger emotional and cognitive responses display higher intention to reuse Idol Goods (Park et al., 2019).

With K-POP culture further developing and spreading around the world, gaining recognition from everywhere, idol goods market is proliferating as well emerging in various forms and diverse designs. Design of idol goods, fashion or non-fashion, plays an essential role in K-POP fandom culture and fan consumers' fan activities. Taking this into consideration, along with the fact that with apparel products and fashion products as a whole, design is in most of the cases a deciding factor (Eckman et al., 1990; Zhang et al., 2002; Tong 2014), this study has taken a focus point the design element of Fashion idol goods and will further explore fan consumers' attitudes toward design of fashion idol goods. Even though fan consumers tend to be on the generous side when purchasing idol goods, when displeased with said products fans do not show reluctance to voice their complaints and dissatisfactions. Talent management officials also recognize the importance of K-POP fandoms, admitting that the role of fan consumers is an inextricable aspect of K-POP idols' success. Fan consumers are the ones whose role is to more or less expand the market, this is why the K-POP industry is bound to suffer losses, if fans,

as the primary consumers, are constantly led down or misled by Idol Goods (Dailian, 2021). Irresponsible goods marketing based on adolescent consumption habits are problematic point that requires attention, by studying the attitudes of fan consumers towards the most central aspect of Fashion idol goods – the design - this research will be able to contribute to marketers in the industry.

2.7. Consumer Attitudes

Allport (1980) defines attitude as the tendency of consumers to feel in a favorable or unfavorable way towards a product or service, and claims that depending on the object or the specific situation, attitudes are usually formed and accumulated through personal experiences. In other words, attitude is those positive or negative feelings, consumers showcase towards goods or services. Similarly, Ajzen & Fishbein (1980) denote that attitude is an individual's assessment of conduct in relation to any item, behavior, or event; and translating this to consumer context, attitude is factor with a direct effect on consumers' purchase intention considering it is related to consumers' way of appraising an object and respectively engaging in a followed action.

In addition, Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) state that attitudes directed towards products are driven by the actions consumers take in relation to products; for example, selecting products which is the basis for consumer behavior, or determining the advantages, attributes, and specific qualities of a product or service. Lee (2020) also asserts on the role of attitudes in consumer aspect as they are considered to be a psychological tendency related to the overall standard evaluation or judgment made by consumers with a certain degree of positivity and, or negativity on certain concepts such as products or brands, and also attributes like design, price, country of origin, etc. (Lee, 2020).

Moreover, for attitude is further pointed out as a predictor of purchase intention, as it has a direct effect on consumers' fashion product purchase behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975), it can be, thus, expected that fan consumers' attitudes towards fashion idol goods would also be of significance before the stage of consumption. Design as an attribute is, nonetheless, one of the most important characteristics of fashion idol goods, not only due to the nature of the said product but also because design features of idol goods are often a tool to represent both

your favorite star and the fandom you belong to. For fan consumers, the design of idol goods at some point becomes a representation of who they are, or whom they chose to be in front of the social masses, in case they openly put their idol goods in use. By expressing a favorable attitude toward fashion idol goods, fan consumers engage in further behavioral activities like completing, repeating or even recommending a purchase. However, as a result of fan consumers' profound dedication, i.e high loyalty towards the artists they support, even a negative attitude is followed by a purchase.

Further to that, as Lee (2020) specifies attitude does have influence on consumers' consumption behaviors, thus this calls for marketers' comprehension in order to successfully influence buyers. Fan consumers display consuming behaviors different than those of regular consumers, i.e. fan consumers emerge with a stronger form of intensity or affection when compared to general consumers (Grossberg, 1995) for this reason, and the fact that design is a major factor in idol goods, it is essential for marketers in the industry to grasp to what extent design matters for fan consumers when purchasing fashion idol goods, and whether specific attitudes will emerge as patterns among various purchase motivations. Extant research points out that highlighting the hedonic benefits of a utilitarian product boosts consumers' favorable attitude towards goods (Lim and Ang, 2008). Considering idol goods carry symbolic meanings for fan consumers, such goods are expected to be acquired on the basis of hedonic motivations, as idol goods most prominent features are of hedonic nature as well. Insisting on a distinction between fashion and non-fashion idol goods, this study will thereby further probe for potential relations between purchase motivations and fan consumers' attitude towards design.

2.8. Personal Taste

By definition, taste refers to a “person’ s ability to judge and appreciate what is good and suitable, esp. in art, beauty, style, and behavior” (Cambridge Dict.), and also “what a person likes or prefers” (Oxford Learner’ s Dict.). With regards to philosophy and sociology are concerned, Kant (2000) defines taste as “the faculty for judging a priori the communicability of the feelings that are combined with a given representation (without the meditation of a concept)”– meaning that individuals’ emotions, along with any aesthetic response to an object in nature, becomes the subject of a taste judgment, for instance, the feeling’s quality or cause (Sweet, 2009). In other words, the choices an individual makes in their daily life, alongside the things one inclines toward are what shape people’s taste. One’s everyday choices are to predominantly influenced by their own taste, making it an inseparable part of their life. While good taste carries an objective character, as it is based more or less on accepted aesthetic norms, personal taste on its own is rather individual, yet at the same time, it is affected by numerous factors. personal taste is influenced by both internal and external elements - human internal factors such as needs, personal experiences, and a lifestyle as a result of various experiences; as well as it is also influenced by external factors like the surrounding environment (Hwang, 2007).

As far as fashion is concerned, according to Kant fashion has little to do with one’s taste judgment, but it is, contradictorily, a mere form of blind imitation (Gronow, 1997). In the Kantian sense, fashion may solely be considered as an aesthetic phenomenon, yet personal taste as a factor cannot be excluded when consuming fashion. If anything, fashion becomes a tool through which individuals can convey their personal taste, viz. fashion is a visual form of expression for personal taste in a very detailed way, owing to the fact it can be channeled through alterations in design elements (Hwang, 2007). Thus, when consuming fashion, personal taste can

be discerned as deciding factor, considering consumers purchase goods and services based on it. Even though consumers lead very similar lifestyles nowadays, their acceptance and understanding of fashion is not identical, and for that reason types of consumption are as diverse as consumers' preferences and taste (Hwang, 2007). Park & Kim (2017) further imply that the taste of consumers is directly related to the purchase intention of a product or service or the consumer attitude that leads them to complete a purchase.

Matching every single consumer' s preferences and tastes is a challenging task, this is why when producing goods, rather than satisfying consumers' tastes to a great and extremely accurate extent, by employing depths and widths of a product's composition, goods somewhat match, as close as possible, consumers' taste, can be provided (Gans, 1996). In idol goods context, entertainment companies come up with a rather generic design, matching as many fan consumers' preferences as possible. Nonetheless, in view of design, idol goods are composed of special design elements congruous with the K-POP Idol's brand: colors, logo, fandom name, etc. Fashion products, however, serve as a tool for consumers to express their personal taste and their aesthetic preferences as a whole. Disregarding their own identity and personal taste, many fan consumers not only buy but even wear fashion idol goods. Taking that into account, when purchasing clothes or fashion accessories which do not suit consumers' taste, they surpass the limitations of their own personal taste spectrum, and rather an expansion in their personal taste spectrum can be expected. That being the case, this study will explore whether Fan consumers access Fashion idol goods in accordance with their personal taste when purchasing them.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1. Research Questions

In the previous chapter the notion of idol goods, and more precisely fashion idol goods, as well as fan consumers as a particular consumer group have been delved into. As explained in Chapter 2, fan consumers can be expected to manifest purchase motivations differently than other consumer groups when it comes to consuming idol goods. What is more, fashion idol goods being one of the most prominently demanded product categories of idol goods, will be used as the focal point of this study, and thus the reasons and obstacles behind fashion idol goods purchases will be scrutinized. The importance of design as a product attribute has been pointed out more than once in previous literature, nonetheless due to the consumption habits fan consumers exhibit, whether they blindly consume and purchase fashion idol goods without putting much consideration into the design characteristics of said goods is another question worth imposing and clarifying. In addition to displayed attitudes toward the design of idol goods, the role of fan consumers' personal taste should also be considered when looking into purchasing fashion idol goods, as one's personal taste is a pivotal factor in the consumption of goods. By exploring these concepts based on literature from previous studies and further analyzing them, this research has designed and will aim to answer the following research questions:

- 1) What are fan consumers' motivations and obstacles for purchasing fashion idol goods?
- 2) What are fan consumers' attitudes toward the product design of fashion idol goods?
- 3) Is personal taste important when purchasing fashion idol goods?

3.2. Research Sample

Bearing in mind that the focus of this study is fashion idol goods, and for the purpose of investigating the purchase motivations for and attitudes towards the design of goods, this study has chosen global fan consumers part of fandoms from 3rd to 4th generation of K-POP idols with previous purchase experience of fashion idol goods, as the most suitable consumer group for a research sample. Based on gathered data, K-POP fans' average age ranges from 15 to 26 (towardsdatascience, 2021), however, Hong (2014) reports that the adult part of the K-POP fandom has purchasing power and continuously consumes idol goods, regarding their type, is 20 years and above. Considering this, the research sample for this study consists of 12 individuals aged 18 to 30, who identify themselves as K-POP fans. Participants must have previously bought fashion idol goods, in order to accurately answer the interview questions in a detailed manner based on their experience.

Due to the nature of the imposed research questions, this study selected a qualitative research method to explore motivations and attitudes of fan consumers with accuracy. According to Sandelowski (1995), the size of the qualitative study sample should be big enough to understand the phenomenon being studied in a new and textured manner, and small enough not to exclude in-depth analysis of qualitative data. The more useful data is collected from each research participant, the smaller number of them is needed. (Morse, 2000). In order for researchers to manage the complexity of the analysis, it is appropriate to conduct less than 50 interviews for a 1:1 inquiry (Elam et al., 2003). Correspondingly, this study recruited 12 people as research subjects to closely find out on what grounds fan consumers purchase fashion idol goods. Existing literature on idol goods has predominantly taken only domestic fan consumers as a research sample, however, all things considered, even though fans outside of Korea take a bigger portion of the K-POP fandom, studies focusing on purchase or consumption behaviors of idol

goods for said fan consumer group is close to non-existent.

This research was conducted in the English language, therefore given the fact that participants are from various demographic backgrounds, each participant had to be fluent in English, so as to needed information to be conveyed as errorless as possible.

A visualized representation of participants' characteristics can be seen in [Fig. 1.]

[Fig.1] Research sample

Participant ID	Gender	Age	Country	Fan Level	Artist	Collector	Purchased Items
P_1	F	20	GERMANY	passionate supporter	ATEEZ, NCT DREAM, BTS, stray kidz	✓	Tote bags, pins, t-shirts, hoodies
P_2	F	24	SINGAPORE	passionate supporter	ATEEZ, BTS	✓	Shirts, caps
P_3	F	25	UK	passionate supporter	ATEEZ	✓	Slippers, hoodies, jewelry, t-shirts
P_4	F	26	BULGARIA	average fan	MONSTA X	x	Tote bags and shirts
P_5	F	25	COSTA RICA	passionate supporter	SEVENTEEN	x	Jewelry, a sweater, pins
P_6	F	27	NORWAY	average fan	AREEZ, ACE, THE ROSE	✓	Pajamas, t-shirts, hoodie, jewelry
P_7	F	21	USA	passionate supporter	ATEEZ, DREAMCATCHER	x	Slippers, pajamas, a cape, shirts, hoodies

P_8	F	20	MALAYSIA	average to passionate	ATEEZ, DAY6	~	Hoodies, pajamas, t-shirts
P_9	F	26	BULGARIA	average to passionate	MONSTAX, BTS	x	Sweaters, tote bags
P_10	F	22	BRAZIL	average to passionate	EXO, STRAY KIDZ	✓	Jewelry, keychains
P_11	F	24	ITALY	passionate supporter	NCT	✓	Sweater, hoodies
P_12	F	20	AUSTRALIA	average to passionate	PH1, BLACKPINK, TREASURE, GOT7, ATEEZ,	x	A bucket hat, t-shirts, hoodies

3.3. Research Approach

In marketing literature, consumers' thoughts, values, and behaviors can be explored in great detail through qualitative research. It entails the gathering of data that can be interpreted, such as people's opinions, without establishing statistical validity. Qualitative research is particularly beneficial for examining motivations, attitudes, beliefs, and intentions of individuals. (Brassington and Pettitt, 2003), and when aiming to provide answers to the question "why" quantitative methods face certain limitations. Taking this into consideration and the fact that the objective guiding this research is entirely exploratory, the following study has adopted a qualitative method as a research approach. In order to discover fan consumers' motivations for purchasing fashion idol goods, and respectively their attitudes towards the design of said goods, as well as the importance of personal taste when purchasing fashion idol goods, semi-structured 1:1 in-depth interviews have been conducted.

This study employs Thematic Analysis as an analysis approach, as it is a strategy to answer specific research questions and create informative analysis by discovering, interpreting, and reporting patterns in data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Moreover, the approach taken by the researcher was deductive, whereby extant literature on the topic was considered and used as a basis when creating the interview questionnaire.

3.4. Data Collection

This study has chosen to follow a qualitative research approach, and thus semi-structured 1:1 in-depth interviews have been adopted as the most appropriate method of data collection. To create an opportunity for flexibility within each interview, a semi-structured interview guide was designed (Turner, 2010). Data were collected from 12 participants: 6 Fan consumers with a direct K-POP culture consumption in South Korea, and 6 Fan consumers with previous K-POP culture consumption outside of South Korea.

K-POP fans engage in online fan activities mostly through social media – and Twitter is one of the most widely used social media online platforms and was selected as the channel for recruitment of eligible study participants. A poster with the criteria study participants must match was posted on Twitter and interested K-POP fans were invited to contact the researcher by e-mail to express their willingness to participate in the study, as well as to receive further information on the process.

After the recruitment process was completed, by taking extra cautious measures because of COVID-19, as well as with regard to the location of some of the participants, the semi-structured 1:1 in-depth interviews were conducted in an online environment, by using ZOOM – an online teleconferencing software program. Before the actual interview began, participant information sheet and participant consent form were sent to the study participants by participant's e-mail. The researcher went through all the information together with the participants, while on ZOOM, formalizing participants with basic contents of the study, interview time, audio only recording, benefits or potential risks from participating in the study, and personal information management.

Upon receiving informed consent, the interviews began, following a 1:1 interview question guide that has been developed by reviewing related literature on

idol goods and fan consumers. One interview session was enough, with each interview lasting from 30 to 90 minutes, depending on the flow of the conversation with the respective participant. However, to increase the reliability of the research, some participants were asked for a follow-up session. The interview guide addressed the following topics: motivations for purchasing fashion goods; attitudes toward fashion idol goods' design; and personal style.

Interviews with participants were audio-only recorded, with each session being transcribed after the interview and correspondingly prepared for further analysis.

3.5. Data Analysis

According to Creswell (2009), as qualitative research is conducted to obtain in-depth knowledge of a specific phenomenon, this study was conducted by adopting a 1:1 in-depth interview method. Through 1:1 interviews, the thoughts, perspectives, and experiences of the study participants on the topic of Fashion idol goods were revealed. Data was collected by audio recording the 1:1 interview sessions with participants. All interviews were transcribed verbatim by the author and checked for accuracy. Data organization and linkage identification were done manually by the author by using Microsoft Excel as well as tangible manuscripts and notes.

Thematic analysis was chosen as the main method for analysis of the gathered data, as it is a technique for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes in data (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and is used to comprehend participants' shared meanings and experiences (Braun & Clarke 2012). Braun and Clarke (2006) propose six main steps to follow when conducting a thematic analysis. At the initial stage of coding, line-by-line analysis was conducted to search for codes relevant to the theoretical interest. Themes and subthemes were developed at a later stage in a meaningful way for the theoretical background. After devising a set of candidate themes, a refinement step was undertaken (Braun and Clarke, 2006). An intelligible pattern was sought through each participant's data, and if missing – themes and sub-themes were refined by combining or separating (level one of reviewing process). After the developed themes were refined, the process moved to level two of the reviewing by matching and relating the themes and subthemes to the data set as a whole rather than individual stack of data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Themes were named after terms based on terms related purchase motivation and further reflected the motivation types mentioned in the background literature. Theme titles were then reviewed once again to ensure that they precisely match the analysis.

After a close review the most detailed quotes were selected as a data extract sufficient enough to support the themes within the data.

Chapter 4. Research Results

4.1. Purchase motivations for Fashion idol goods

4.1.1. Extrinsic motivations

Extrinsic motivation refers to doing something for the sake of achieving a certain goal (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and is linked to participation in an activity that may result in external benefits or expected recognition (Amabile, 1997; Vlachopoulos et al., 2000).

Collecting motivations

Collectible items play a significant role in the K-POP world. Official products such as CD albums, DVDs, and any merchandise released by the entertainment company is of great value to fan consumers. Idol-related products carry specific symbols, as well as feelings that fan consumers often associate directly with the idol, hence increasing their product value. Furthermore, within each fandom, a product's collective value is established, and interaction with the goods becomes a pleasant and sensory experience, heightened by the tactile character of the products themselves (Oliver, 2020).

Regardless of the fact that fashion products are usually purchased to be worn and not collected, just as Non-Fashion Idol products, Fashion Idol Goods are purchased for their collecting worth. Participants expressed their strong wish to obtain Fashion idol goods, as they hold bigger importance than regular fashion products found in stores. What is more, a big portion of Fashion idol goods are being offered to fan consumers with a specific benefit – a photocard (a small piece of paper with the image of the K-POP idol). There has been an increase for the past few years in the significance of photocards and due to their collecting value, photocards have been used as a marketing tool to secure more sales.

Based on participants' responses, the collecting value of Fashion idol goods affects the way fan consumers perceive and judge the products, since product

attributes such as quality or practicality lose their significance when compared to scarcity. As for the collecting value of a Fashion Product, the more involved the K-POP idol has been in the production and designing stage of the product, the higher the value of the Fashion Idol Product is.

Having said this, Collecting Motivation has three main points:

Idol Involvement: the more involved the artist is in the production and design process of a fashion merchandise product, the higher the product's value is.

Product Attributes: Among other product attributes, fan consumers with manifested Collecting Motivation pay less attention to attributes such as quality, practicality and price— rather, scarcity emerges as the most essential product attribute in regards to said motivation.

Photocards: If a photocard benefit is included in the product packaging, fan consumers lose interest in the fashion merchandise as a product on its own, and instead make the photocard benefit a focal point of their purchase decision.

If I have to be completely honest, most of the fashion merch they offer us is either too unpractical or the quality is super questionable. It really is very off-putting and it makes me not even consider getting the merch. However, it changes the game for sure if a photocard is involved. Like, unless there is some extra benefit. That would definitely make up for the trash they give us.

P6, Norway, 27

Is the design important...hm I would say yes, but if it has a benefit then no. If something is not that nice, but it has the benefit and if I think it's going to be expensive to buy (the benefit) off from a reseller then I'd buy it. I've done it in the past. I've bought it to prevent me

from spending a lot of money to buy the benefits separately from someone on Twitter or something. So that's the only reason I think I've bought things I don't necessarily like but I want to have the benefit. Because I've judged it to be better financially as it is, rather than buying it separately online.

P3, UK, 26

Support Motivation

K-POP fans are known for their high levels of loyalty, however when it comes to acquiring fashion merchandise their motivations go beyond simple loyalty toward the idol. Supporting is a selfless act of caring for another's well-being while putting one's own needs aside. Fan consumers express a strong desire for supporting their K-POP idols, especially through fashion merchandise, because fashion products are often put on display for others to see. On its own, a behavior like the former one contributes to the artist, as though the fashion merchandise the artist receives a bigger exposure. Furthermore, participants are devoted to financially supporting their favorite idols and believe their success depends on the fashion merchandise purchases fans make.

With fashion merchandise, I feel like I'm supporting them in some way even more compared to regular merch..

.. I support them and this is above all my main motivation, no matter how I look at it.

P5, Costa Rica, 25

I have to support them because you know, their value goes up and people will see it. Ooh people like them! Also, once I wear my merch and go out in public, I suddenly become like a walking

advertisement for them. How cool! They do deserve all the exposure they can get so why not help them get it.

P1, Germany, 20

Social Consumption motivation

Individuals who desire to display their consuming behavior to others are said to be motivated by social consumption motivation (Gil et al., 2017). Consumers are motivated by a desire to impress others with their capacity to afford prominent brands (Mason, 1981). Based on The aforementioned findings, social consumption motivation has been divided into two sub-themes:

Social identity communication – Clothing is a tool for identification, which helps to define symbolic boundaries between people in society. Fashion and clothing are utilized to express and construct cultural and social identities, they are furthermore used as a language to communicate one's selective messages and put them for others to see. In other words, fashion products embody the person's identity in the body of the wearer. Individuals prefer products with meanings that correspond to their sense of social identity, meaning that consumption of fashion products aids individuals present themselves in a certain way in front of the society, most often through communication of socially constructed symbolic cues. Fashion idol goods, as a social symbol, determine the way fan consumers are perceived by others. Their meaning is passed from the product to the fan consumer. In a K-POP environment, a K-POP fashion item can convey information as a fan's bias in a group, the fandom they are a part of or personal interests. Participants expressed that Fashion Idol Goods are significant tools in the process of communicating their social identity as a fan because they through the merchandise their thoughts, values, beliefs, and affiliations as a fan are conveyed through their clothing.

Showing off my merchandise is often connected to showing my bias because if we talk about the group, it very often relates to who my bias is, so it's kind of like an ID card for me. Because when you meet other people this is the first thing they ask you, this is why it's definitely something like some kind of an ID card, something I show in front of the others.

P4, Bulgaria, 26

Conspicuous consumption – The motivational process through which individuals attempt to achieve a social position through the status consumption of consumer products that impart and signify status both for the individual and for others around them is referred to as conspicuous consumption (Kilsheimer, 1993). A social hierarchy exists in K-POP fandoms – those who possess Idol merchandise are on the top of the social hierarchy, while those who have less items in possession are on the bottom. Fashion idol goods as fashion items are directly connected to the communication of symbols to others. Fan consumers purchase Fashion idol goods, in order to establish a higher status in the Fandom and to present themselves as a more superior supporter of their group. Most Fashion Idol products are either very limited or more expensive compared to other merchandise, this is why fans expect their perceived status to undergo positive changes, provided they purchase fashion idol goods. Each Fashion merchandise purchase is connected with an imitation of those on the top of the fandom hierarchy, aiming to obtain social status as theirs. In other words, lower-level fan consumers attempt to imitate or replicate those fan consumers lying at higher levels in order to give the impression of affluence and social standing among other people in the fandom. It is clear that the purchase and display of fashion goods of conspicuous consumption is not directly related to idols themselves but rather that this pattern of behavior guarantees fan consumers a

higher status.

*I like flexing sometimes, you know, especially for rare fashion items”
I’d be like “I have it and you don’t” But that’s probably because I
care a lot about what people would think of me.*

P1, Germany, 21

*It makes me happy when the rest don’t have a fashion piece I do.
Especially, those that run out of stock quickly. Like “oh I got it faster
than you” “I have more money than you”. A subtle flex.*

P2, Singapore, 25

*I joke around with my friend like I guess you could say arrogance?
That I’m actually better than this person in the fandom.*

P7, USA, 22

Social Norm

Norms are explicit or implicit rules that lead, control, proscribe, and prescribe social behavior in certain settings (Hechter and Opp, 2001, Horne, 2001). In the context of Fashion idol goods purchase motivations, social norm is divided further into two sub-themes:

Peer pressure - Insistence and encouragement from the group for an individual to participate in a group activity in a specific way is coined as peer pressure. (Santor et al., 2000). Feelings of obligation and guilt have been noticed throughout the participants when inquired about their fashion merchandise purchases. Fandom plays an important role in fan consumers’ decision-making process. The fandom purposefully or unintentionally forces fans to exert on one another, causing them to respond or behave in a similar manner – and in this case,

to purchase fashion merchandise. Fan consumers focus on the concept of not only membership and boundaries but also on a shared symbol system, which makes them believe they are being distinguished from others. Moreover, the direct influence of members of the fandom results in purchasing and consumption behaviors from fan consumers, as psychologically members from the same social group affect each other, as to preserve the bond and connection.

More often than I would like to admit, I feel the need to buy fashion merch because of the fandom. I want to be included in some way and if I don't get the thing, I end up feeling guilty or judged by the others.

P9, Bulgaria, 26

I would feel like obligated, or that I have to buy something just the rest have it. Like if everyone is wearing it, I need it.

P1, Germany, 20

Fandom Validation – K-POP fandoms are inclusive for the most part of it, however fans' purchase behaviors, or a lack of them thereof can have an effect on one's validation as a part of said fandom. Establishing that an individual identifies as a fan is related to fashion merchandise purchases. By buying fashion idol goods, fan consumers' sense of belongingness increases and they are considered as an active part of said consumer group. Purchasing fashion idol goods is seen as an obligatory experience, guaranteeing one's recognition and validation as a fan. Participants expressed their sense of guilt and disappointment in themselves as fans when having to imagine failing to purchase fashion goods. Fan consumers in particular closely identify with either the fandom this is why they try to enhance their fandom's image in comparison to other fan groups. Through fashion merchandise, participants are not only showing support for their favorite artist, but also

showcasing their belongness to a particular social group – the fandom. As a result of the long-term competition between K-POP fandoms, fan consumers express a strong will for distinction from the rest. That distinction is largely possible owing to the design elements carrying symbolic meanings related to the fandom one belongs to or the artist they like. Fan consumers have own products with identity-related K-POP design since the products symbolize something about their fandom and, by implication, themselves. Results also indicate that design elements contribute to the fan consumers' sense of belonging to the fandom.

If I don't purchase fashion merch that the rest of the fandom has, I'll most probably end up feeling super sad and very... left out.

P10, Brazil, 21

Okay but being completely honest, not having a fashion merch will make me feel left out, not part of the fandom.

P11, Italy, 24

4.1.2. Intrinsic motivations

The term intrinsic motivation refers to doing something just for the sake of doing it and the sheer satisfaction that is brought by engaging in the activity (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Pleasure, interest, adventure, curiosity, and satisfaction motivate intrinsic behavior (Amabile, 1997; Vlachopoulos et al., 2000).

Emotional Stimulation [MOU1]

The purchase of Fashion merchandise is related to the stimulation of positive emotions such as happiness and excitement, reducing depressing states in fan consumers. Participants described the reasons behind their purchases as purely hedonic and therapeutic, whimsical; rather than stimulated by specific product cues

or provided information. Hedonic needs and emotional motivation are proven to be important factors when buying Fashion idol goods.

Depression is a big factor for me when buying merch. I think the main reason behind it is just happiness, getting new stuff and looking forward to getting something delivered. It all creates a happy feeling I crave.

P1, Germany, 20

Hmm.. buying merch? It actually makes me feel excited and when I receive it I get really happy to see how it turned out or how it would look. But yes, pretty much about it, being happy.

P12, Australia, 21

Uniqueness Motivation

Uniqueness motivations are concerned with attempts to follow a specific fashion trend, create a personal and unique fashion style, or shun mainstream fashion due to a desire for authenticity and uniqueness. Respectively, participants expressed their willingness to create a unique and personal style of clothing by obtaining fashion merchandise. Fan consumers are attracted by the idea that fashion idol goods cannot be easily bought by the general public of consumers, as they are not distributed to regular fashion stores. What is more, fan consumers' need for uniqueness was proven to affect their fashion merchandise purchase decisions. K-POP fashion is often related to unique design elements and themes; therefore, it creates an exclusive environment for fan consumers and their fashion expression.

I think for me personally just wearing something that sets me apart from the rest of the people is enough to make me buy goods.

P5, Costa Rica, 25

The fashion merch items I bought add something unique to my style or a specific outfit because they have prints or designs that cannot be found in local store..

..Maybe I feel that something I can buy only there so I feel a bit fancy.

P7, Italy, 24

Experience Consumption

In the case of K-POP Idol goods, products often include tour merchandise which is in most cases advertised not only at the concert venues but nowadays also online – making it accessible to a bigger portion of the fandom. The strong desire to experience an event, regardless of physically being unable to leads fan consumers to purchase fashion merchandise. Participants felt a stronger connection to an event they watched online while wearing their fashion merchandise at the moment, which suggests that fashion idol goods are consumed not for their corresponding product attributes, but rather for the fact they can enhance the experience of the consumers. As for fan consumers who physically attend said events, wearing merchandise makes them feel more connected to the experience as a whole.

Under the experience category falls the following sub-theme:

Recreational Motivation – Through various cues and symbols a visual stimulation and pleasant emotions emerge in consumers, making them relive a moment connected to said product. Fan consumers are pursuing nostalgic pleasure when purchasing fashion merchandise, and when found – they are able to recollect past experiences and memories. Participants view fashion merchandise also as a

souvenir or memento, through which they get to re-experience a moment from the past.

Concert merch for example and stuff, it's also more for me to commemorate that I did go to the concert and it was someday that I really, really, really enjoyed. Another thing as well since I'm a collector I do put specific importance on things that are connected to events. In that way, if it's like a concert hoodie I think there is a specific closeness that I do feel but it's more because it's connected to a day I spent with them, and other fans.

P6, Norway, 27

Idol Relationship

As a K-POP fan, interactions with K-POP idols are not limited to physical ones. Fans interact with their artists in numerous ways, including goods consumption. In order to maintain the relationship, they have with their idols, fan consumers purchase licensed merchandise. Fashion idol goods, however, are of a different significance as they are products related to appearance. Participants in the study revealed that their need for a stronger connection to the idol is what motivates them to purchase fashion goods. Moreover, fan consumers expressed that the para-social bond between them and the artist deepens when they wear the idol's merch, they become immersed in the emotional presence of the K-POP idol. Participants feel that spatial boundaries between fans and idols are closed, and through purchasing fashion merchandise they further invest in the relationship with said artists.

When I buy merch that I can actually wear it feels.. I don't know, it just makes me feel in a way closer to them. And no, I really don't

think it's a one-sided relationship. My love and support for them are appreciated and reciprocated in other ways. You know, like parasocial relationships.

P8, Malaysia, 20

Hmm.. when I want to feel closer to them. I think this is one of the reasons I don't think much when it comes to purchasing merch, especially fashion merch. Plus, it feels really nice when you see them wearing the same thing you do, you're matching! I also would say I kind of feel special in a way that I have some connection with these people that I look up to and special in a way that I have contributed to their well-being.

P4, Bulgaria, 26

4.1.3. Purchase Obstacles

During the data analysis of purchasing motivations for Fashion idol Goods, 3 major factors emerged as obstacles that may hinder the decision-making process of consumers. The obstacle factors are the following:

Negative Fandom Image

Being a fan in popular culture has been viewed as a negative in several circumstances. K-POP gaining popularity worldwide has not only gained positive recognition but negative one as well. Due to the close bond between K-POP artists and their fans, the image of each is transferred to the other and vice versa, however, each entity carries an image of its own too. Participants expressed their negative attitude toward the image of the fandom they are a part of. Additionally, prejudices the general public has against K-POP fans and certain specific fandoms affect fan consumers' desires to purchase fashion idol goods. Fashion merchandise reflects

the image of said fandom, hence fans' hesitation to purchase it and be negatively judged.

I do like being a part of fandom but sometimes showcasing it publicly through my clothing.. I don't know about that. The negative side of the fandom can really play a big part. Sometimes it makes me want to hide my merch, hide myself and just not be recognized as a K-POP fan. There are so many people ready to judge me just for the fact that I am a K-POP stan.

P3, UK, 26

Price Consciousness

Price consciousness is a psychological construct that measures how focused consumers are on low prices (Lichtenstein et al.,1993). It can be viewed in two ways positive, which is a willingness to spend, and negative, reluctance to spend. Based on the results of this study, price consciousness was viewed negatively, as an obstacle for purchasing fashion merchandise. Participants viewed price as a rather essential product attribute and were not ready to always make the monetary sacrifice, as they make rather often price comparisons between regular fashion goods and fashion merchandise. The premium price fan consumers have to pay, in order to obtain a fashion merchandise product influences consumers' purchase decision negatively. Design is the main feature distinguishing Fashion Idol Goods between regular fashion products, this is why, as such, the relation between design and price of fashion merchandise must be pointed out.

Money makes me hesitate whether to buy goods or not. I guess if the design is okay and I don't know.. if I want to spend money on it, then I might buy it.

P7, USA, 22

Sometimes I just prefer non-fashion merch because first of all, fashion stuff, especially hoodies, everything is pretty expensive. Most of them are just expensive and overpriced for the heck of it..

..I try to ignore it it's overseas merch. It's expensive to buy it, expensive to ship, expensive in general. So, I just pretend it doesn't exist.

P6, Norway, 27

Frequency of merchandise release

The amount of times goods are announced and put for sale for a specific period is considered as the frequency of merchandise release. Participants shared that the frequency the fashion merchandise is released affects their decision whether to make a purchase or not. Consumers consider factors such as frequency of release together with the price and other product attributes, therefore a significantly frequent merchandise release demotivates fan consumers. Participants also suggested that the more often merchandise is put up for sale, the more it affects their loyalty toward the artists and their desire for patronage toward the entertainment company. Unconditional affection and repeating purchase behaviors cannot be expected, as fan consumers are more cautious regarding the frequency they are being offered products to choose from. Continuous merchandise release had a rather negative effect on fan consumers desire to engage in purchase and consumption activities of fashion idol goods.

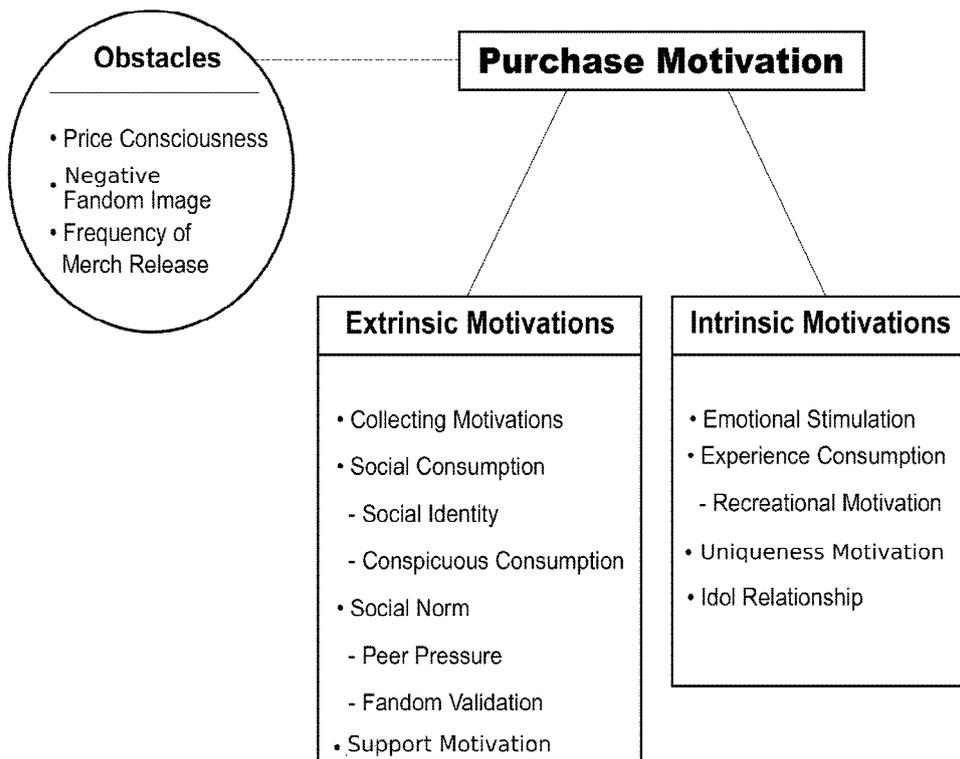
I am very frustrated when I see my favorite artist releasing new merch. Honestly, they just keep releasing stuff. There was these

pendants they released, customized by the members. I wanted to buy them a lot but since they released so much things I couldn't. Because they keep putting out merch.. and they release like at the same time. It's a little hard for fans to keep up with everything and be able to buy it.

P5, Costa Rica, 25

A visualization of the motivation categories, as well as the results of this study are illustrated below [Fig. 2].

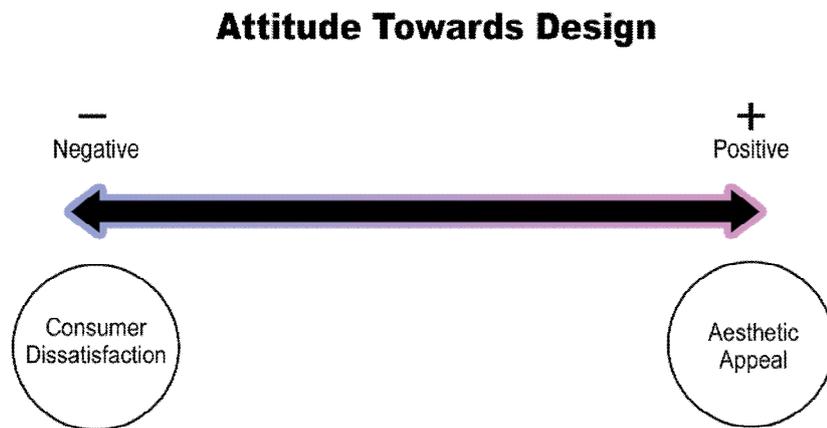
[Fig.2] Fan Consumers' Motivations and Obstacles for Purchasing Fashion Idol Goods



4.2. Attitudes toward design

Fan consumers' attitudes toward the design of fashion merchandise have been placed on a negative to positive spectrum and two main categories in regards to attitude toward design emerged as a result of the data analysis – consumer dissatisfaction, and Aesthetic Appeal. Results were illustrated as follows:

[Fig.3] Fan Consumers' Attitude towards Design of Fashion Idol Products



Consumer Dissatisfaction

The very negative end of the spectrum shows Consumer dissatisfaction. Entertainment companies are notorious for releasing products that do not meet consumers' expectations, since fan consumers are often left rather unsatisfied with the products they have to choose from. Fashion goods as products directly related to outer appearance are expected to have design well thought out and planned through, however, participants showed a great displeasure with what they are being currently offered. Following consumers' responses, the design was proven to be one of the most important product attributes, which plays a significant role in determining whether a product is to be bought or not. Participants continuously expressed their big dissatisfaction with the design of fashion merchandise. Fashion

idol goods lack gender and body diversity, making it a rather exclusive fashion category. Additionally, fashion merchandise is repeatedly following the same design scheme, resulting in a further negative attitude toward the goods.

Constantly releasing merch is one thing but constantly releasing ugly merch, yeah that's just no. I'm sorry but all of these companies keep stuffing in our faces the same old designs of the same old hoodies or ballcaps. It's all the same! Looking the same and ugly as usual. I wish merch followed fashion trends at the moment, I really do. Imagine how much more people would start buying the stuff.

P12, Australia, 21

Aesthetic Appeal

At the positive end of the attitude spectrum is placed aesthetic appeal. Fashion idol goods have a generic design, making it difficult for a wide range of consumers to enjoy the products and utilize them in their daily wear. Participants, however, expressed their rather positive attitude toward the prospects design fashion merchandise holds. As established through Research Question 1 one of the reasons for fan consumers to purchase fashion merchandise is their uniqueness motivation. Their need for uniqueness is more or less satisfied owing to the rare design fashion merchandise has in comparison to regular fashion items. Fashion idol goods have exclusive designs meant for recognition mostly by those involved, making it aesthetically attractive to fan consumers.

Fashion merch is fun in so many ways, seriously! Especially the design. Of course, it can be a bit repetitive sometimes, but um.. there is something about people not being able to find out where your shirt is from. Plus, let's be real, I'm more likely to meet someone wearing

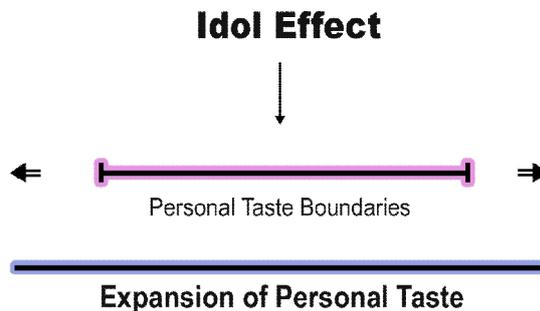
the same thing if I go out with my H&M shirt, compared to if I go out wearing my ATEEZ one.

P2, Singapore, 25

4.3. Importance of Personal Taste

The last research question this study poses is to what extent personal taste is important when purchasing fashion idol goods. Participants affirmed that their own fashion preferences have priority during the decision-making process. Personal taste was claimed to be of utmost importance and not something participants were willing to sacrifice in order to obtain fashion merchandise from their K-POP idols. In addition, each participant asserted that they have never purchased anything that went beyond the limitations of their personal taste. Contrary to the directly delivered information, as a result of the effect idols have on them fan consumers did go beyond the boundaries of their personal preferences and an expansion of their personal taste can be observed as illustrated in Fig.4.

[Fig.4] Fan Consumers' Personal Taste Boundaries and Expansion Observed



Purchased and utilized fashion idol goods were in contrast to what participants claimed to be in congruence with their personal taste. When wearing fashion merchandise participants shared that they feel as another person, with new character traits matching those of the artist they support, i.e their personal taste expands on the ground of their favorite idols being involved. Regardless of the fashion merchandise not matching their personal taste, participants felt themselves become a new people, which resulted in the observed expansion of boundaries. Thus, it can be further hypothesized that K-POP idols have an effect on fan consumers' personal taste and thereof result in an expansion of said taste.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

5.1. General Discussion

South Korea has taken the world by storm and has been in the world's spotlight for the past few years. From K-Cuisine, K-Fashion, K-Drama to K-POP, Hallyu, also known as the Korean Wave, has converted millions of people into its fans and followers. Consuming Korean culture has become a part of a trend for some and a lifestyle for others. K-POP, specifically, has been one of the main reasons for Hallyu's huge success. The implementation of K-POP Idol system has created a prosperous industry with many products to offer – from tangible to non-tangible ones. Together with K-POP Idols' rapid growth in the industry, K-POP merchandise or Idol Goods are something starting to gather more and more attention. Idol Goods are an inseparable part of K-POP Idols' career as they accumulate a big portion of their income. By implementing the one-source-multi-use method entertainment companies manage to reach fan consumers in multiple ways through only one main product – the idols.

Idol Goods on their own are a very wide category of products based on the image of K-POP stars meant to satisfy fan consumers' needs. For the sake of this study Idol Goods have been divided into Non-Fashion Idol Goods and Fashion Goods. What is more, as clothing products in the Idol Goods sector have been proven to be of a significant importance and widely purchased by consumers. Fashion products have different features than regular Non-Fashion ones. They are directly related to appearance management, hence requiring a separate research approach. Nonetheless, academic literature on Fashion Idol Goods is still very lacking, this is why this study aims to investigate and explore in-depth the purchase motivations of Fashion Idol Goods. Apart from academic, business and managerial contributions are expected to be bigger. Thereby, recognizing the prevalence of products of such sort, this research sets its main focus on fashion idol goods.

aiming to contribute to the academic field by studying fan consumers' motivations behind purchasing Fashion Idol Goods and their attitudes towards design. Considering the nature of fashion products, the importance of personal taste has also been studied.

As aforementioned, Hallyu has brought millions and thousands of people from around the world together to enjoy and consumer Korea's culture. This is why, this study has chosen global K-POP fan consumers as the focal point when looking for answers to the research questions. Previous studies on Idol Goods have limitations in their approach as they have been conducted with a Korean audience as a research sample. This research, however, takes this into consideration and investigates the purchase motivations of Fashion Idol Goods from a foreigner's point of view.

In order to answer the research questions, 12 1:1 semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 12 participants from 11 countries. Moreover, This study has chosen fan consumers part of fandoms from 3rd to 4th generation of K-POP idols with previous purchase experience of fashion idol goods, aged between 18 and 30 years old, as the most suitable consumer group for a research sample. Taking into consideration that the objective guiding this research is entirely exploratory, the following study has adopted a qualitative method as a research approach. This study employs Thematic Analysis as it is a strategy to answer specific research questions and create informative analysis by discovering, interpreting, and reporting patterns in data. In regards with the background literature, a questionnaire based on and structured around the research questions posted by the researcher, was utilized during the interviews, Considering the whereabouts of the participants, as well as the situation at hand with COVID-19, all interviews were conducted in an online environment. After receiving SNU IRB's approval, the interviews took place and each of them lasted about 60 to 90

minutes. After all data has been collected, transcription of the interviews was conducted by the researcher and a Thematic Analysis followed.

Research findings are as follows:

Firstly, research question one deals with fan consumers' motivations for purchasing Fashion Idol Goods. Two motivational types defined by motivational theorists – Extrinsic and Intrinsic motivations – have been used as a theoretical frame where emerged motivations from the data to be divided into. Following this, four main extrinsic and four intrinsic motivations manifested as a result of the data. Collecting motivations, Support Motivation, Social Consumption, where Social Identity and Conspicuous consumption emerge as well; and lastly, Social Norm with Peer Pressure and Fandom Validation as sub-categories are the extrinsic motivations behind the purchases of fashion idol goods. Intrinsically motivated fans consumed fashion merchandise because of emotional stimulation, uniqueness motivation, experience consumption (recreational motivation), and Idol relationships. Aside from that, three main obstacles such as price consciousness, negative fandom image, and frequency of merchandise release were also discovered. In accordance with motivational factors, fandom's role has been further reestablished as fan consumers purchase fashion idol goods as a form of communication and asserting one's place in fandom's society. Interpersonal relationships have further been strengthened through the consumption of fashion merchandise, as both the relationship between members of the social group and the idols themselves are concerned.

Secondly, research question two deals with fan consumers' attitudes toward the design of fashion idol goods. Fan consumers' attitudes toward the design of fashion merchandise have been placed on a negative to positive spectrum and two main categories in regard to attitude are illustrated as follows: The very negative end of the spectrum shows consumer dissatisfaction. Fashion goods as products

directly related to outer appearance are expected to have design well thought out and planned through, however, participants showed a great displeasure with what they are being currently offered, and regardless of the importance of design as a product attribute, it emerged as a reason for dissatisfaction due to its lack of diversity in regards to gender and body types, as well as trendy designs. Moreover, in regards to negative attitudes toward design, the more dissatisfied consumers are, the more involved they wish to get with the production and design. At the positive end of the attitude spectrum is placed aesthetic appeal. Regardless of expressed dissatisfaction referring to the lack of diversity, fashion merchandise still possesses unique design elements when compared to general fashion items. What is more, the scarcity of fashion goods plays a significant role and makes products aesthetically appealing.

The last questions asked by the researcher is whether personal taste is important when purchasing fashion idol goods. Participants affirmed that their own fashion preferences have priority during the decision-making process. Personal taste was claimed to be of utmost importance and not something participants were willing to sacrifice in order to obtain fashion merchandise from their K-POP idols. However, purchased and utilized fashion idol goods were in contrast to what participants claimed to be in congruence with their personal taste. Idols' direct effect on fan consumers resulted in new personality traits being adopted and further personal taste boundaries expanding.

Noticed from the interviews was that depending on the motivational type, consumers' focus changed from one product attribute to another. What is more, apart from design, scarcity and price appeared as the most valued attributes of fashion idol goods. Furthermore, unconditional admiration and loyalty was not observed among the participants, rather design and other factors such as frequency of merchandise release affected fan consumers' loyalty toward to human brand that

is the K-POP idols, as well as the patronage toward entertainment company. As the role of fan consumers in the fandom is an absolute part of idol success, keeping in mind that fandom, idols, and the entertainment company are inseparable, design of fashion idol goods should not be neglected to lead to more consumer dissatisfaction.

By exploring fan consumers' motivations for purchasing fashion idol goods from an extrinsic and intrinsic focal point, it has once again been proven that fan consumers and regular consumers have consumption habits and needs differ from one another, in regards to a social group standing. Fan consumers are willing to engage in purchase and consumption activities for reasons that regular consumers might not even consider. Moreover, this research contributed in terms of developing a further distinction between fashion and non-fashion idol goods. In comparison to previous literature on purchasing behaviors regarding idol goods, different product attributes were considered important here – i.e. design and scarcity.

When design is concerned, fashion idol goods should not follow a genetic design, but rather be more inclusive and correspond to current fashion trends design. As after all, fashion merchandise is products like apparel and accessories that one implements in their daily wear, consumers' needs for fashion expression must be met.

5.2. Limitations of the Study

This research is limited in that participants' fanship level was not previously measured and further analyzed in regards to the motivational types. It can be expected that different fanship levels might show different and more specific results. Also, as this study focuses on fashion products and consumers' attitudes toward the design element, participants' fashion involvement could also play a significant role. Nonetheless, participant's fashion involvement has also not been measured in advance, limiting this study in the aspect that each and every corresponding fashion group, e.g. fashion leaders and fashion innovators might carry completely different opinions on fashion idol goods' design element in comparison to those participants that have low fashion involvement.

5.3. Implications

The implications behind the discovery of this research provide an essential analysis of what drives fan consumers to purchase Fashion Idol Goods and their corresponding attitudes toward the design of said products. In contrast to previous research on fans' purchase behaviors of idol goods, this study specifically focuses on fashion idol goods. Previous research on fan consumers suggest that fans consumption habits are extremely predictable and are very likely to remain stable over time, however, this research proves that unconditional affection and loyalty are not related to fashion idol goods. Such results may aid entertainment company in a way to comprehend the importance between the design of fashion idol goods. What is more, based on the importance fan consumers put on the relationship they have with their idols, entertainment companies can try involving fans more in the process of designing goods. A product created as a collaboration between the fan consumers and the idols themselves would have more significance and higher value, not only resolving in a stronger connection between the human brand – that is the idols – but also will further increase consumers' satisfaction levels. The amount of unofficial idol goods released, which affects the entertainment companies as no actual profit is accumulated from such goods, can be minimized. The more prosumer power fan consumers are given by the entertainment company, the less they would want to purchase fashion idol goods from other unofficial and unlicensed sources. Lastly, fashion merchandise is often released together with other non-fashion merchandise, making it not only blend in with the rest of items but also depriving it of a crucial product information. As a results from the interviews, it can be noticed that fan consumers were thrilled by the idea of fashion merchandise being released as a separate batch of goods. By doing so, companies can lower the levels of dissatisfaction of consumers, as they can focus more on

product and design diversity as well as inclusivity of consumers. As fan consumers are the ones helping the K-POP industry keep growing, their satisfaction and experience as consumers is of utmost importance.

Bibliography

1. References in English

Aaker, D. A. (1991). *Managing brand equity: Capitalizing on the value of a brand*. New York: The Free Press

Ajzen, I. and Fishbein, M. (1980). *Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Social Behavior*, Prentice-Hall, 1980, pp.249-259

Allport, G. W, 『The Psychological Nature of Personality Gordon W. Allport』 , The Personalist, 1953, p.34

Amabile, T. M. (1997). Motivating creativity in organizations: On doing what you love and loving what you do. *California management review*, 40(1), 39-58.

Ardhiyansyah A. (2021). K-Pop Marketing Tactics That Build Fanatical Behavior. *1st ICEMAC 2020: International Conference on Economics, Management, and Accounting 2021*

Bennett, A. & Rogers, I. (2016). Popular Music and Materiality: Memorabilia and Memory Traces, *Popular Music and Society*, 29(1), 28–42.

Bian, X. & Moutinho, L. (2011). The role of brand image, product involvement, and knowledge in explaining consumer purchase behaviour of counterfeits: Direct and indirect effects. *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 45 No. 1/2, 191-216.

Bourdieu P. (1984). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984. Print.

Braun V. & Clarke V., 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology.

Qualitative Research in Psychology 3, pp.77-101.

- Braun, V. & Clarke V. (2012). APA handbook of research methods in psychology, Vol. 2: Research designs: Quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and biological (pp.57-71)
- Brooker, W., & Jermyn, D. (Eds.). (2003). The audience studies reader. *Psychology Press*.
- Cavicchi, D. (1998). Tramps like us: Music & meaning among Springsteen fans. *New York: Oxford University Press*.
- Cha, W.J. and Choi, J.S. (2012) Understanding Pop Music, *Hanwol, Paju*.
- Chen, T., Kalra, A., & Sun, B. (2009). Why do consumers buy extended service contracts? *Journal of Consumer Research*, 36(4), 611–623.
- Chia-Lin, H., Yen-Chun, C., Tai-Ning, Y., Wei-Ko, L. & Liu, Y. 2018, "Does product design matter? Exploring its influences in consumers' psychological responses and brand loyalty", *Information Technology & People*, vol. 31, no. 3, pp. 886-907.
- Creswell J. (2009). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed-Method Approaches.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Rathunde, K. (1993). The measurement of flow in everyday life: toward a theory of emergent motivation.
- Davis, F. D., Bagozzi, R. P., & Warshaw, P. R. (1992). Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation to use computers in the workplace 1. *Journal of applied social psychology*, 22(14), 1111-1132.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). Cognitive evaluation theory. In *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior* (pp. 43-85). Springer, Boston, MA.
- DeLong, M., Heinemann, B., & Reiley, K. (2005). Hooked on vintage!. *Fashion Theory*, 9(1), 23-42.

- Eckman, M., Damhorst, M. L., & Kadolph, S. J. (1990). Toward a model of the in-store purchase decision process: Consumer use of criteria for evaluating women' s apparel. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 8(2), 13–22.
- Elam, G., Lewis, J. and Ritchie, J., 2003. Designing and Selecting Samples. In: *J. Ritchie and J. Lewis, ed., QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PRACTICE: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers, 1st ed. London: SAGE Publications*, pp.77-104.
- Engel, J. F., Blackwell, R. D., & Miniard, P. W. (1995). Consumer behavior. *Fort Worth: Dryden Press*.
- Engel, J. F., Blackwell, R. D., & Miniard, P. W. (1995). Consumer behavior. *Fort Worth: Dryden Press*.
- Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). Belief, Attitude, Intention, and Behavior: An Introduction to Theory and Research. *Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley*.
- Fiske, J. (1992). The cultural economy of fandom. In L. A. Lewis (Ed.), *The adoring audience: Fan culture and popular media* (pp. 30–49). *Routledge*.
- Gans H. J. (1974). Popular Culture and High Culture: An Analysis and evaluation of Taste. *New York: Basic Books*
- Gil, L. A., Dwivedi, A., & Johnson, L. W. (2017). Effect of popularity and peer pressure on attitudes toward luxury among teens. *Young Consumers*.
- Gronow J. (1997). The sociology of taste. *Jukka Gronow Routledge London ; New York*.
- Gronow, J. (1997). *The sociology of taste*. 1st Ed. Routledge.
- Grossberg, L. (1995). Cultural studies vs. political economy: Is anybody else bored with this debate? *Critical Studies in Media Communication - CRIT STUD MEDIA COMM. 12*. 72-81.

- Harrington, C. L., & Bielby, D. D. (1995). Where did you hear that? Technology and the social organization of gossip. *Sociological Quarterly*, 36(3), 607-628.
- Hechter, M., & Opp, K. D. (2001). *Social Norms* (Russell Sage Foundation, New York, NY)
- Horne, C. (2001). *Sociological perspectives on the emergence of social norms* (pp. 3-33). na.
- Horton, D., & Richard Wohl, R. (1956). Mass communication and para-social interaction: Observations on intimacy at a distance. *psychiatry*, 19(3), 215-229.
- Hung, K. (2014). Why celebrity sells: A dual entertainment path model of brand endorsement. *Journal of advertising*, 43 (2), 155-166.
- Jenkins, H. (1992). *Textual poachers: Television fans and participatory culture*. Routledge. New York: Routledge, 1992
- Jenol, N. (2020). K-Pop fans' identity and the meaning of being a fan. (*Doctoral dissertation, Thesis submitted*).
- Kananen, J. 2011. Rafting through the thesis process: Step by step guide to thesis research. *Jyvaskyla: JAMK University of Applied Sciences*.
- Kang, J. M. (2017). Rediscovering the idols: K-pop idols behind the mask. *Celebrity Studies*, 8:1, 136-141
- Kant I. (2000). Critique of the Power of Judgment, *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)*.
- Kim, Y.J., Lee, J. and Lee, M., (2018). Purchasing Behavior of K-pop Idol Goods Consumers in Korea. *Journal of Fashion Business*, 22(6), pp.1-13.
- Kotler, P. (1997). *Marketing management: Analysis, planning, implementation and control* (9th ed.). *New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc*.
- Kotler, P. & Keller, K. L. (2012). *Marketing management* (15th

- ed.), *Pearson, England (2012)*
- Lancaster, K. J. (1966). A New Approach to Consumer Theory. *Journal of Political Economy*, 74, 132-157
- Lee, W. H. (2011). A research on policy direction for voluntourism. *Korea Culture & Tourism Institute*.
- Lichtenstein, D. R., Ridgway, N. M., & Netemeyer, R. G. (1993). Price perceptions and consumer shopping behavior: a field study. *Journal of marketing research*, 30(2), 234-245.
- Lim, E. A. C., & Ang, S. H. (2008). Hedonic vs. utilitarian consumption: A cross-cultural perspective based on cultural conditioning. *Journal of Business Research*, 61(3), 225-232.
- Madrigal, R. (2001). Social identity effects in a belief–attitude–intentions hierarchy: Implications for corporate sponsorship. *Psychology & marketing*, 18(2), 145-165
- Mason, R. (1981), *Conspicuous Consumption*, St Martin's Press, New York, NY
- Mason, R., Rath, P., Husted, S. (1995). *Marketing : Practices and Principles, 5th. Published by Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, New York, NY (1995)*.
- McClelland, D. C. (1951). Measuring motivation in phantasy: The achievement motive. *Groups, leadership and men; research in human relations*, 191-205.
- McClelland, D. C. (1951). Measuring motivation in phantasy: The achievement motive. *Groups, leadership and men; research in human relations*, 191-205.
- Mohammad, Z. (2017). *Impact of Product Attributes on Purchase Decision: A Study of Processed Food Consumer in India*.

- Morse J. M. (2000) 'Determining Sample Size' , *Qualitative Health Research*, 10(1), pp. 3–5.
- Park E. J., Yoo W.J & Oh I. H. (2019). The influence of star marketing and the design characteristics of 'Idol Goods' on consumer responses and purchase intentions: focus on fandom culture. *International Journal of Economics and Business Research*, Inderscience Enterprises Ltd, vol. 18(1), pages 49-72.
- Park, C. W. and Mittal B. (1985), "A Theory of Involvement in Consumer Behavior: Problems and Issues," *In Research in Consumer Behavior*, vol. 1, Sheth Jagdish N. ed. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press Inc, 201–3.
- Peters, T.J. (2005), Design: Tom Peters Essentials, *Dorling Kindersle, London*
- Pittman, T. S. (1998). Intrapyschic and interpersonal processes: Cognition, emotion and self as adaptations to other people or to reality. *Attribution and social interaction: The legacy of Edward E. Jones*, 235-242.
- Raviv, A., Bar-Tal, D. and Ben-Horin A. (1996) 'Adolescent idolization of pop singers, causes, expressions, and reliance', *J. Youth Adolesc.*, Vol. 25, No. 5, pp.631–650, ISSN: 0047-2891.
- Reiley, K., & DeLong, M. (2011). A consumer vision for sustainable fashion practice. *Fashion Practice*, 3(1), 63-83.
- Reis, H. T. (1994). Domains of experience: investigating relationship processes from three perspectives.
- Ryan, R. M. (1995). Psychological needs and the facilitation of integrative processes. *Journal of personality*, 63(3), 397-427.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American psychologist*, 55(1), 68
- Samra, B. & Wos, A. (2014). Consumer in Sports: Fan typology analysis.

Journal of Intercultural Management.

- Samra, B., & Wos, A. (2014). Consumer in sports: Fan typology analysis. *Journal of Intercultural Management*, 6(4), 263-288.
- Sandelowski M. (1995). Sample size in qualitative research. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 18(2), 179–183.
- Sandvoss, C. (2005). Fans: The mirror of consumption. *Oxford: Polity*.
- Santor, D. A., Messervey, D., & Kusumakar, V. (2000). Measuring peer pressure, popularity, and conformity in adolescent boys and girls: Predicting school performance, sexual attitudes, and substance abuse. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 29(2), 163-182.
- Sherry, J. (1990). Dealers and dealing in a periodic market: Informal retailing in ethnographic perspective. *Journal of Retailing*, 66, 174–200.
- Skvortsova, A. (2020). Emotional attachment to brands in the K-pop industry: The case of male K-pop bands in Russia.
- Solomon, M. R. (1988). Mapping Product Constellations: A Social Categorization Approach to Consumption Symbolism. *Psychology & Marketing (1986-1998)*, 5(3), 233.
- Solomon, M. R., & Douglas, S. P. (1985). The female clothes horse: From aesthetics to tactics. In S. Michael (Ed.), *The psychology of fashion* (pp. 387–401). *Lexington, MA: Lexington Books*.
- Solomon, R. M. (2002). *Consumer Behavior* (5th ed). *New Jersey: rentice-Hall*.
- Sweet, K. (2009). Reflection: Its Structure and Meaning in Kant's Judgements of Taste. *Kantian Review*, 14(1), 53-80.
- Tong, X., (2014). Factors affecting purchase intention of university-licensed apparel. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 43(2), pp.160-172.

- Turner III, D. W. (2010). Qualitative interview design: A practical guide for novice investigators. *The qualitative report*, 15(3), 754.
- Unger, M. A. (2015), The Aporia of Presentation: Deconstructing the Genre of K-pop Girl Group Music Videos in South Korea. *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, 27, 25-47
- Vallerand, R. J., Pelletier, L. G., Blais, M. R., Briere, N. M., Senecal, C., & Vallieres, E. F. (1992). The Academic Motivation Scale: A Measure of Intrinsic, Extrinsic, and Amotivation in Education. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 52(4), 1003–1017.
- Vlachopoulos, S. P., Karageorghis, C. I., & Terry, P. C. (2000). Motivation profiles in sport: A self-determination theory perspective. *Research quarterly for exercise and sport*, 71(4), 387-397.
- Wolny, J., & Mueller, C. (2013). Analysis of fashion consumers' motives to engage in electronic word-of-mouth communication through social media platforms. *Journal of marketing management*, 29(5-6), 562-583.
- Young, P. T. (1961), Motivation and Emotion: A Survey of the Determinants of Human and Animal Activity, *New York: Wiley*.
- Zhang, Z., Li, Y., Gong, C., & Wu, H. (2002). Casual wear product attributes: A Chinese consumers' perspective. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*.
- Zhuang, L. (2019, February). The influences of idol effect on the purchasing decisions of their fans. In 2018 International Symposium on Social Science and Management Innovation (SSMI 2018) (pp. 164-171). *Atlantis Press*.

2. Internet Materials in English

- Billboard. (2020). "For the K-Pop Industry, Merch Is As Important As the

Music"

<https://www.billboard.com/articles/deep-dive/k-pops-merch-madness/9331910/for-the-k-pop-industry-merch-is-as-important-as-the-music>

Forbes. (2019). "BTS Lead the Growth of Hallyu to Nearly 90 Million Fans Worldwide In 2018"

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/caitlinkelley/2019/01/11/bts-lead-growth-of-hallyu-90-million-fans-2018/?sh=f199f3a70bcb>

IFPI. (2021). "Global Music Report 2021"

<https://www.ifpi.org/ifpi-issues-annual-global-music-report-2021/>

IFPI. (2019). "Global Music Report 2019"

<https://www.ifpi.org/ifpi-global-music-report-2019/>

The Korea Herald. (2020) "Exports of K-pop albums, videos hit record"

<http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=2020121700834>

Yonhap. (2019) "K-pop superfans' craze for special items creates new potential market"

<https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20190228011700320>

dataspring. (2021) " The Power of K-Pop Groups in Endorsement Deals | Eye on Asia"

<https://www.d8aspring.com/eye-on-asia/the-power-of-k-pop-groups-in-endorsement-deals>

towardsdatascience. (2021) K-Pop in the Eye of International Fans An Analysis about K-Pop Survey Data

<https://towardsdatascience.com/k-pop-in-the-eye-of-international-fan->

[7fe51dbdb712](#)

The Korea Times. (2021) A singing success: K-Idol Goods market annual sales close to \$90 million

https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/art/2021/07/732_253658.html

3. References in Korean

Chung, S. W. & Kim S. Y. (2020). A Study on Increasing Profits of Performing Arts Merchandise via Online Platforms Focusing on the Comparison of Idol Goods and Performing Arts Merchandise. *문화와 융합*, 4, 403-443

Hong J. Y. (2014). *Fandom Culture*. Communication Books

Hwang S. M. (2007). (The) fashion preference and tastes of youth owners toward ball jointed doll. *국내석사학위논문 연세대학교 생활환경대학원*

Jung H. J. & Lee G. H. (2010) The influence of Neo-Han Ryu on Revisit Intention Among Japanese and Chinese Visitors: An Exploration of the Moderating Effect of Psychological Involvement within the TPB Framework. *관광학연구*, vol.34, no.6 pp.249-270.

Jung M. W. & Lee N.Y. (2009). Fandom managing stars, entertainment industry managing fandom. *Media, Gender & Culture*, 12, 191-240.

Kim N. M. (2019). Do Celebrity Memorabilia Improve Consumer Happiness?. *소비문화연구*, 22.3 1-17.

Lee S. J. (1994). 의생활양식에 따른 의복구매행동에 관한 연구: 서울시내 남녀대학생을 중심으로. *숙명여자대학교 석사학위논문*.

Lee, W. H. (2020). Influences that consumers' perception of the characteristics of V-commerce have on consumer immersion and attitude: focusing on

millennial generations. *국내석사학위논문* *홍익대학교*
광고홍보대학원, 2020. 서울

Ohr S. W. (2009). The Implications of Taste Education in Moral Politics: Focusing on J-J Rousseau's Political Philosophy. *Philosophy of Education, vol. 38, no. 0*, pp. 115-147.

Park S. H. (2019). A Study on the Consumer-Driven Business Model in the K-Wave 3.0(In-Depth Korean Wave) Era

Park Y. N. & Kim C. S. (2017). A Study on the Influence of Fashion Interest and Personal Taste on their Attitude of Fashion Curation Service (FCS) and Purchase Intention of Fashion Products -Focused on People aged 20s to 30s who experienced FCS. *기초조형학연구, 18(1)*, pp.173-188

Qui S. S. (2013). A Study on the Effects and Development Plans of Korean Wave.

Ra S. J. (2018) A Study on Development of Interactive Smart Goods for Raincoat - Focused on the Analysis of Idol Fandom Culture –

4. Internet Materials in Korean

Dailian, (2021) [D:이슈] “불량 아니면 감사할 정도”...팬심 악용하는 아이돌 굿즈 시장

<https://m.dailian.co.kr/news/view/1017083>

HankookIlbo. (2016) ‘엑소 손짜장’ ‘슈주 라면’ 잘 나가네

<https://www.hankookilbo.com/News/Read/201604050828455921>

Herald Business. (2018) [유통家 아이돌 특수 ①] 순식간에 동나는 워너원 굿즈...1000억 아이돌 굿즈 시장 ‘활짝’

<http://news.heraldcorp.com/view.php?ud=20180413000676>

iconsumer. (2021) 이젠 내가 지휘한다! 팬슈머의 등장

<http://www.iconsumer.or.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=16196>

JoongAngIlbo. (2019) "BTS 셔츠 환불 어렵다"... '아이돌 굿즈' 갑질
엔터사 제재

<https://www.joongang.co.kr/article/23534411>

Kinews. (2018) 아이돌 마케팅 아세요? 유통업계, 굿즈로 몸집 키우기

<http://www.kinews.net/news/articleView.html?idxno=201161>

KOCCA. (2019). "Report on the Contents Industry: Closing accounts for 2018
& Prospects for 2019"

<https://www.kocca.kr/>

KOFICE (Korean Foundation for international cultural exchange), 2018
"White Papers 2017"

http://kofice.or.kr/b20industry/b20_industry_00_view.asp?seq=981

KOFICE (Korean Foundation for international cultural exchange), 2021
"Global Hallyu Trends 2021"

http://kofice.or.kr/b20industry/b20_industry_00_view.asp?seq=1200

Maeil Business Newspaper. (2015) 청소년 사로잡는 신종 등골브레이커
'굿즈'의 세계...60만원 피규어·50만원 패딩도 '매진사레'

<https://www.mk.co.kr/news/business/view/2015/12/1177243/>

NateNews. (2021) [단독]'트와이스·ITZY' 등 K팝 아이돌 굿즈 성지
'위드드라마'...국내 PEF에 매각

<https://m.news.nate.com/view/20210401n12918>

NEWSIS. (2019). 11번가, 온라인 중심 '아이돌 굿즈' 시장서 선전

https://newsis.com/view/?id=NISX20190130_0000546368

NToday. (2018). "[팬덤에 빠진 대한민국] 황금알 낳는 거위 '아이돌

굿즈 산업”

<https://www.ntoday.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=61498>

SisaJournal. (2018)진화하는 ‘아이돌 굿즈’...엇갈린 소비자 시선

<http://www.sisajournal.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=179629>

TheBell. (2021) 빅히트, 제자리 찾아가는 몸값...!위버스' 저력

<https://www.thebell.co.kr/free/content/ArticleView.asp?key=2021032215>

[14077320103687](https://www.thebell.co.kr/free/content/ArticleView.asp?key=202103221514077320103687)

Appendix

Interview Guide

- 1) How would you describe your fan level?
(casual fan, passionate supporter, die-hard, sasaeng)
- 2) Do you consider yourself someone who spends a lot on K-POP merchandise?
- 3) What type of official fashion merchandise do you own?
- 4) What prominent features do they have?
- 5) Have you ever hesitated to purchase a fashion merchandise released by your favorite group?
-> (if yes) What made you hesitate?
- 6) Is there fashion merchandise released by your favorite group that you have purchased and regret buying afterwards?
-> (if yes) What is the reason behind it?
- 7) What are the main things stopping you from buying K-POP fashion merchandise?
-> How would you justify your choice?
- 8) How do you feel in general about fashion and non-fashion merchandise of your idol?
- 9) Would you prefer buying fashion or non-fashion K-POP merchandise?
-> How would you justify your choice?
- 10) How do you feel when you see your favorite idol releasing new fashion merchandise?
-> Could you describe your thought process between seeing the fashion merchandise and deciding whether to buy it?
- 11) How likely are you to buy a fashion merchandise of low / average / high quality?
- 12) Do you usually buy K-POP goods in order to use them?
-> What about fashion merchandise?
- 13) Would you rather buy merchandise which has practical use?

- 14) On what occasion have you worn official K-POP merchandise?
- 15) Would you buy fashion merchandise for collective purposes?
- 16) Would you buy two or more identical merchandise items just to save one of them as a collectible?
- > What about fashion merchandise?
- 17) How does buying official merchandise from your favorite group make you feel?
- > What about fashion merchandise?
- 18) Would you feel any less of a fan if you do not buy merchandise? What about fashion merchandise?
- 19) Do you think of your favorite idol as a friend?
- 20) How would you describe the relationship between you and your idol?
- To what extent do you feel close to your favorite idol?
- 21) Does buying official merchandise from your idol make you feel closer to them?
- 22) How does wearing fashion merchandise associated with your idol make you feel?
- 23) Have you ever bought an official fashion merchandise just to show support for your idol or their company?
- 24) Would you consider your fashion merchandise purchase as important to your idol's career or their company?
- 25) Do you think of yourself as being a part of your idol's fandom?
- > How does being a part of a fandom make you feel?
- > Would you consider people from the same fandom as close or similar to you?
- > How often do you identify with people from the same fandom as yours?
- 26) Do you like showing off your fashion merchandise in front of other people in the fandom?
- 27) How does it make you feel when you own a fashion merchandise that someone from your fandom does not?
- 28) Have you ever felt the need to purchase fashion merchandise because the rest of the fandom did?
- 29) Would it make you feel left out if you don't own a fashion merchandise that the rest of the fandom does?

- 30) Do you feel the need to impress people from your fandom by wearing fashion merch?
- 28) Does a fashion merchandise item have to be aesthetically pleasing for you to buy it?
- 29) How do you visualize the ideal fashion merchandise?
- 30) Imagine the fashion merchandise you would never buy and try to describe it.
- 31) Does a fashion merchandise item have to possess a visual quality distinguishing it from regular non-KPOP fashion items?
- 32) If you had to choose between a fashion merchandise with your favorite idol's logo or the fandom you identify yourself as a part of, which would you decide on?
- 33) Do you think fashion merchandise design should match current fashion trends?
- 34) How would you describe your fashion style?
- 35) Do you buy fashion items you end up not wearing?
-> (if yes) Could you think of a reason for it?
- 36) Do you consider yourself a person who follows fashion trends?
- 37) Have you ever bought an official fashion merchandise which does not match your fashion taste?
-> Did you wear said item?
-> (if yes) How did it make you feel? -> Would you do it again?
-> (if no) What is the reason for not buying it?
- 38) How does wearing fashion merchandise out in public make you feel?
-> Imagine someone recognizes the group associated with your fashion merchandise. How would you feel?
(in Korea too?)
- 39) Do you yourself feel as another person when wearing idol goods?
- 39) Have you ever bought a fashion item after seeing your favorite idol has one as well?
-> have you bought an official fashion merchandise after seeing your idol interact or wear said item?
- 40) Do you plan to continue buying fashion merchandise of your favorite idol?

Participant Information Sheet

Research Title : Exploring Fan Consumers ' Motivations for Purchasing Fashion Idol Goods

Researcher : Nikol Zaharieva (Master's Course, Dept. Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design, Seoul National University)

This research aims to study in-depth fan consumers' motivations behind purchasing fashion idol goods. As a foreigner fan consumer of K-POP aged between 18-30 having previous purchase experience of K-POP fashion idol goods, you are encouraged to participate in this study. The study is carried out by Nikol Zaharieva (010-2807-9518), a MA student at Seoul National University, and as the researcher in charge, Nikol Zaharieva will provide you with an explanation about this research. The study will be conducted only with those who voluntarily express their willingness to participate, and it is important that you understand why this research is being done and what content is involved before you make your decision to take part. Please read the following information carefully, and discuss it with your family or friends if necessary. If you have any questions, the researcher will explain them in detail. Take your time to decide whether or not you wish to participate in the research.

1. Why is this study being conducted?

The purpose of this research is to explore in-depth fan consumers' motivations for purchasing fashion idol goods and to further investigate fan consumers' attitudes toward the design of fashion idol goods.

2. How many people are participating in this study?

12 people aged between 18-30 will take part in the study,

3. What will happen to me if I decide to take part?

If you choose to take part, you will go through the following process:

1) First you will be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview together with the researcher in charge. The interview will be conducted in an online environment, with ZOOM being the online platform to be used. The link for the private ZOOM meeting will be sent to you by email and only you and the researcher in charge will have access to the link.

2) After joining the ZOOM meeting through the provided link, you will be asked to turn your microphone on and verbally answer the researcher's questions. There will be no



need for your camera to be turned on.

3) For more accurate data acquisition the 1:1 ZOOM interview will be audio recorded.

4) Once the researcher has made sure there are not errors in the audio recording device, the interview will begin.

5) You will be asked simple questions covering topics such as your experience as a K-POP fan, the official K-POP merchandise you have previously purchased and your opinion on fashion idol merchandise.

4. How long will the interview be?

The one-on-one interview follows an open-question format therefore an exact time cannot be stated, however it can be estimated to last approximately 40 to 60 minutes.

5. Can I drop out in the middle of the study?

Yes, you may quit at any time during your participation without any disadvantage. If you wish to stop participating in the study, please tell the researcher in charge immediately. If you drop out, all collected data will be discarded immediately.

6. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no disadvantages or risks of taking part. As this is a study conducted in an online environment there are no physical risks of taking part. The audio files recorded during the one-on-one interview will be discarded immediately after the researcher in charge has finished their transcription on a Word file. In the meantime, all data acquired through this research will be kept on researcher's personal laptop device in folder protected by a password, disclosed to nobody else but the researcher. Moreover, when data is analyzed and published instead of your real name, an identification code will be used (for example Participant_1).

7. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There are no immediate benefits to participating in this project, however it is hoped that this research will contribute for the lack of academic literature on K-POP fashion idol goods.

8. Will there be any disadvantage to me if I decide not to participate?

You have the freedom not to participate in this study. In addition, there is no disadvantage to you if you do not participate in this study.



9. Will all personal information acquired through this study be kept confidential?

The person in charge of personal information is Nikol Zaharieva (010-2807-9518) of Seoul National University. Personal information collected in this study includes name, gender, age, country of origin, e-mail and audio recordings. Forementioned personal information will only be accessible to the researcher in charge Nikol Zaharieva and will be stored on the researcher's personal laptop device in a folder with a password. The consent form will be stored for three years in accordance with the relevant laws and regulations, and the research data will be stored permanently in accordance with Seoul National University's research ethics guidelines. We will do our best to ensure the confidentiality of all personal information obtained from this study. Your name and other personal information will not be used when personal information obtained from this study is disclosed to academic journals or conferences. However, your personal information may be provided if the law requires it. In addition, monitor agents, inspectors, and the Institutional Review Board can directly access the findings to verify the reliability of the research's procedures and materials to the extent prescribed by relevant regulations without infringing on confidentiality of research participants' personal information. Your signing of this consent form will be considered as an agreement that you are aware of and will allow such matters.

10. Will I be reimbursed for taking part?

We apologize but there is no financial reward for participating in this study.

11. Contact for further information

If you have any questions about this study or have any problems during the process, please contact the researcher in charge:

name: Nikol Zaharieva phone & email: 010-2807-9518
nikzaharieva@gmail.com

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant at any time, please contact the Seoul National University's Institutional Review Board:

서울대학교 생명윤리위원회 (SNUIRB) phone: 02-880-5153 email: irb@snu.ac.kr



Consent Form (For Participant's Use)

Research Title : Exploring Fan Consumers ' Motivations for Purchasing Fashion Idol Goods

Researcher : Nikol Zaharieva (Master's Course, Dept. Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design, Seoul National University)

1. I have read this participant information sheet and discussed it with the researcher in charge.
2. I was informed about the risks and benefits and got a satisfactory answer to my questions.
3. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.
4. I agree any information about me obtained from this study to the extent permitted by current laws and the Institutional Review Board to be collected and processed.
5. I agree to confirm my personal information that remains confidential when the researcher or delegated representative conducts research or manages results, and when the national institution and Seoul National University Institutional Review Board conduct a fact-finding survey.
6. I can withdraw my participation in this study at any time and I am aware that this decision will do me no harm.
7. My signature means that I have received this consent form and I will keep the consent form with the signature of the researcher who is receiving my consent.
8. I agree with the audio recording process during the one-on-one interview.

Agree Do not agree

9. I am aware that my name, age, gender, country of origin and e-mail address are collected, and I allow them to be used in research.

Agree Do not agree

Participant (Name)	Sign	Date (y/m/d)
 Researcher Receiving Consent (Name)	 Sign	_____ Date (y/m/d)



Consent Form (For Researcher's Use)

Research Title : Exploring Fan Consumers ' Motivations for Purchasing Fashion Idol Goods

Researcher : Nikol Zaharieva (Master's Course, Dept. Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design, Seoul National University)

- 1. I have read this participant information sheet and discussed it with the researcher in charge.
2. I was informed about the risks and benefits and got a satisfactory answer to my questions.
3. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.
4. I agree any information about me obtained from this study to the extent permitted by current laws and the Institutional Review Board to be collected and processed.
5. I agree to confirm my personal information that remains confidential when the researcher or delegated representative conducts research or manages results, and when the national institution and Seoul National University Institutional Review Board conduct a fact-finding survey.
6. I can withdraw my participation in this study at any time and I am aware that this decision will do me no harm.
7. My signature means that I have received this consent form and I will keep the consent form with the signature of the researcher who is receiving my consent.
8. I agree with the audio recording process during the one-on-one interview.

Agree [] Do not agree []

- 9. I am aware that my name, age, gender, country of origin and e-mail address are collected, and I allow them to be used in research.

Agree [] Do not agree []

Participant (Name) Sign Date (y/m/d)
Nikol Zaharieva Sign
Researcher Receiving Consent (Name) Sign Date (y/m/d)
Nikol Zaharieva Sign
Researcher (Name) Sign Date (y/m/d)



초록

글로벌 팬 소비자의 아이돌 패션 굿즈 구매동기에 대한 연구

Nikol Zaharieva

Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design

The Graduate School

Seoul National University

지난 몇 년 동안, 한국은 전 세계를 휩쓸었고 주목을 받아왔다. K-Cuisine을 비롯해서 K-Fashion, K-Drama, K-POP까지, 한류로도 알려진 수백만 명의 숭배자들과 팔로워들을 끌어 모았다. 어떤 사람들에게는, 한국 문화를 소비하는 것이 하나의 트렌드가 된 반면, 다른 사람들에게는 삶의 방식이 되었다. 한류가 엄청난 성공을 거둔 주요 이유 중 하나는 K-POP이었다. K-POP 아이돌 시스템은 유무형의 다양한 아이템을 판매할 수 있는 번성하는 시장을 낳았다. 아이돌 굿즈는 K-POP 아티스트의 이미지를 바탕으로 팬들의 요구를 충족시키기 위해 만들어진 광범위한 제품 카테고리이다. 본 연구의 목적상 아이돌 굿즈는 비패션 아이돌 굿즈와 패션 굿즈로 구분되었다. 게다가, 아이돌 굿즈 산업의 의류 제품들은 중요하고 소비자에 의해 흔히 구매되는 것으로 입증되었다. 패션 아이템은 비패션 아이템과 속성 면에서 다르다. 이들은 외모 관리와 불가분의 관계가 있어 뚜렷한 연구 전략이 필요하다. 그럼에도 불구하고 패션아이돌 굿즈에 대한 학술적 연구가 부족하기 때문에 본 연구는 패션아이돌 굿즈의 구매 이유를 심도 있게 조사하고 탐구하고자 하는 것이다. 학문과는 별개로 사업과 경영도 중요하

다. 따라서, 이러한 종류의 제품들의 보급률을 인식하여, 본 연구는 패션 아이돌 제품에 중점을 두고 있다. 팬 소비자의 패션 아이돌 굿즈 구매 동기는 주로 감성적이지만, 비패션과 패션 굿즈를 비교할 때 그 중요성 변화 속성을 비교할 때, 아이돌 굿즈의 경우 이러한 구별이 보인다. 그러나 자신의 취향에 맞지 않는 옷이나 패션 액세서리를 구매할 때, 개인의 취향 한계를 넘어서고, 오히려 개인의 취향의 확대를 가정할 수 있다. 이 연구의 주된 초점은 패션 상품에 있기 때문에, 제품 속성으로서의 디자인은 탐구해야 할 또 다른 주제이다. 본 연구는 팬 소비자의 패션아이돌 굿즈 구매 동기 및 해당 굿즈 디자인에 대한 팬들의 태도를 연구하여 학술 분야에 기여하는 것을 목적으로 한다. 이 연구를 통해 얻은 데이터는 성공적인 아이돌 굿즈 마케팅에도 도움이 될 것이다.

본 연구에서는 부과된 연구 문제의 특성상 팬 소비자의 동기와 태도를 정확하게 탐구할 수 있는 정성적 연구 방법을 선정하였다. 이 연구를 위한 연구 대상은 18세에서 30세 사이의 12명의 사람들로 구성되어 있으며, 이들은 자신을 K-POP 팬이라고 밝힌다. 연구 참여자들은 사전에 패션 아이돌 굿즈를 구매해야 면접 질문에 자신의 경험을 바탕으로 세세하게 답할 수 있다. 팬 소비자의 패션아이돌 굿즈 구매 동기, 해당 굿즈 디자인에 대한 '태도'를 각각 발굴하기 위해 1:1 심층면접을 진행했다. 본 연구는 데이터에서 패턴을 발견, 해석, 보고함으로써 구체적인 연구 질문에 답하고 유의한 분석을 만들어내기 위한 전략인 만듦 분석 접근법으로 주제 분석을 채택하고 있다. 연구 문제 1에 따르면, 4가지 주요 외재적 동기와 4가지 내재적 동기가 나타났다. 사회적 정체성과 수집 동기 및 응원동기 그리고 사회적 커뮤니케이션은 외재적 동기로 나타났다. 이어서 패션동기, 쾌락적 동기, 경험동기, 아이돌 관계는 내재적 동기로 나타났다. 그럼에도 불

구하고, 가격 의식, 팬덤 부정적인 이미지, 상품 출시 빈도는 세 가지 주요 장애물도 분석 결과 나타났다.

패션 상품의 디자인에 대한 팬 소비자의 태도는 부정적인 스펙트럼에서 긍정적인 스펙트럼으로 배치되었으며 태도에 관한 두 가지 주요 범주가 다음과 같이 설명된다. 스펙트럼의 부정적인 끝은 소비자의 불만을 나타낸다. 소비자들의 반응에 따라 디자인이 가장 중요한 제품 속성 중 하나라는 사실이 입증돼 제품 구매 여부를 결정하는 데 중요한 역할을 하고 있다. 연구 참여자들은 계속해서 패션 상품의 디자인에 대한 큰 불만을 표현했다. 패션 아이돌 굿즈는 성별과 몸의 다양성이 부족해 오히려 배타적인 패션 카테고리 자리 잡고 있다. 게다가, 패션 상품들은 반복적으로 같은 디자인 방식을 따르고 있으며, 그 결과 상품에 대해 더욱 부정적인 태도를 보이고 있다. 태도의 긍정적인 끝에서, 스펙트럼은 미적 매력에 놓인다. 패션아이돌 굿즈는 디자인이 일반적이어서 다양한 소비자가 제품을 즐기고 일상복에 활용하기 어렵다. 그러나 참여자들은 패션 상품들이 가지고 있는 전망에 대해 다소 긍정적인 태도를 표명했다. 연구문제 1을 통해 밝혀진 것처럼 팬 소비자들이 패션 상품을 구매하는 이유 중 하나는 그들의 독특성 동기이다. 그들의 독특함에 대한 욕구는 일반 패션 아이템에 비해 패션 상품들이 가지고 있는 희귀한 디자인 때문에 다소 충족된다. 패션아이돌 굿즈는 주로 관련자들이 인지하기 위한 독점적인 디자인을 가지고 있어 팬 소비자들에게 미적으로 매력적이다.

패션아이돌 굿즈를 구입해 활용한 것은 참여자들이 개인의 취향과 일치한다고 주장한 것과는 대조적이었다. 패션 상품을 착용할 때, 참여자들은 그들이 지지하는 아티스트의 특징과 일치하는 새로운 성격의 특징을 가지고, 다른 사람처럼 느낀다는 것을 공유했다. 개인의 취향에 맞지 않는

패션 상품과는 상관없이 참여자들은 자신이 새로운 사람이 되는 것을 느꼈고, 이는 관찰된 자기취향 경계 확대의 결과를 낳았다. 따라서 K-POP 아이돌이 팬 소비자의 자기 취향에 영향을 미치고, 그로 인해 해당 취향의 확대가 이루어진다는 가설이 더욱 제기될 수 있다.

본 연구의 한계는 팬 소비자의 팬십 수준이 이전에 측정되지 않았고, 패션아이돌 굿즈 구매 배경의 팬십 수준 유형에 따른 관련 데이터 연구를 박탈하는 데 있다. 더욱이, 패션 제품을 기반으로 한 연구라는 사실을 고려할 때, 디자인에 대한 다양한 태도를 관찰하게끔 참여자들의 패션 참여도를 측정했어야 했다.

주요어 : 패션 아이돌 굿즈, 구매동기, 팬 소비자, 자기 취향, 디자인 태도
학번 : 2019-23386