

Fujoshi Viewed From Moral Reasoning in Otaku

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ABSTRACT

The rise of foreign cultures entering Indonesia has made people, especially teenagers, following popular trend. One of the cultures that infiltrates Indonesia is Japanese culture. Otaku/Weeaboo phenomenon is a common trend among children, teenagers, and adults. One of the negative influences of these trends is having a woman who likes boys' love or yaoi, commonly known as Fujoshi. The present research is qualitative one because it uses interview and observation methods to deeply explore the perceptions of an Otaku based on moral reasoning with interactive data analysis from Miles and Huberman. Using a snowball sampling technique with four subjects and three informants, the results showed that based on moral reasoning on Otaku, three out of four Otaku had a positive perceptions of Fujoshi, while one out of four Otaku had a negative perceptions of Fujoshi.

Keywords: Fujoshi, Moral Reasoning, Otaku.



INTRODUCTION

Japan has a lot of popular culture that is in demand and recognized in Indonesia or other countries. Japanese popular culture such as anime (Japanese cartoons), manga (Japanese comics), fashion styles, online or offline games, music, and language, and the lifestyle of Japanese people in general have been greatly enjoyed by fans of Japanese culture in Indonesia (Saito, 2017). Lovers of Japanese culture create many communities among fans in the Indonesian region. Anime is one of the factors influencing Japanese culture which is spread by new media in Indonesia (Hidayat & Hidayat, 2020). Japanese anime or cartoons are in great demand by Indonesians, fans of Japanese culture are often known as Otaku or Weeaboo. Otaku or Weeaboo are Japanese sentences or words intended for individuals who like anime, manga, and Japanese culture (2019).

Otaku are people who are fanatic about the world of anime and manga, while Weeaboo are people who are fanatic about all things Japanese or someone who is fanatical about all aspects of Japanese culture (Guo & Zeng, 2020). Otaku is literally a term that refers to individuals who are involved in a Japanese subculture such as anime, video game games, manga, fiction, films, and so on. In Indonesia, there are many social groups created by Otaku both in the real world and in cyberspace (Lacuesta & Fallon, 2020). Becoming an Otaku is not only by watching television shows or anime, but you also have to keep abreast of anime developments in terms of titles, genres, casts, and so on that are currently popular so that you can participate in the discussion of the Otaku community. This can only be obtained from the internet because anime marketing on DVD is very rare in Indonesia (Sya'dian, 2016).

Studying anime to become an Otaku means exploring all the genres in it, such as action, romance, comedy, adventure, slice of life, *yaoi*, *yuri*, and many others. Some people go deep into Japanese culture so that they can be referred as Otaku. The process of becoming an Otaku is very influential in the person's life. Many Otaku cannot differentiate anime life with real life to the point that so many Otaku are carried away by this influence in real life. One of the influences that deviate from Indonesian culture

because studying to become an Otaku is that it allows someone to fall under the influence of the yaoi genre, a genre that shows love relationships between men and men (boys' love).

Otaku comes from the Japanese language which describes people who are interested in and enjoy anime and manga. Otaku according to the Otaku Encyclopedia can be defined as a geek, fanboy, big fan of anime and manga (Civardi & Gavin, 2020). Weeaboo is a derogatory term for a person who is fanatical about all things Japanese or fanatic about all kinds of culture in Japan. Weeaboo is someone who is too in love with Japanese culture more than the local people themselves, claiming to know very well about culture in Japan (Nurhidayah et al., 2012; Nurhidayah & Pramintari, 2017).

Fujoshi (腐女子) is derived from Japanese term which means rotten woman/girl. It is basically used to degrade women who have a penchant for romantic relationships between men (Fitriana et al., 2021). This term has become a label for fans of the boys' love manga genre. The identity constructed by the Fujoshi is formed in each layer of identity from following ideas of Hecht's identity communication theory: 1). Personal layer, a woman can become a Fujoshi due to her background knowing the term yaoi and feeling happy when viewing homosexual content, and finally social media helps to show one's identity as a Fujoshi; 2). Enactment layer, the Fujoshi have their own way of showing their identity, such as posting photos, names, and biodata related to homosexuals; 3). Relationship layer, the identity that is formed because of the influence with whom they interact (Gerungan et al, 2022). The Fujoshi women are able to posit themselves. When interacting with fellow homosexual lovers, Fujoshi will be more open whereas when interacting with someone who is against homosexuality Fujoshi women will close themselves off. In communal layer, individual identity is closely related to the community that binds it. As there are a lot of pros and cons views on homosexual content, they will form an identity for Fujoshi, where Fujoshi will provide support to one another in facing criticism from people who are against homosexual matters.

Yaoi is an abbreviation of the Japanese phrase 「ヤマなし、オチなし、意味なし」 (*yama nashi, ochi nashi, imi nashi*), often translated as "no climax, no point, no problem" (Napier, 2022). This term appeared to describe *doujinshi* contains humorous and grotesque parodies; but then refers only to homosexual material between men that is sexually explicit. *Yaoi* is a Japanese comic genre that tells stories of romantic to erotic love relationships between men, this genre is usually told explicitly and in detail. *Shounen-ai* is a genre that tells the love story between men but does not feature explicit scenes (Fitriana et al., 2021).

People who like *Yaoi* are called *Fujoshi* for women and *Fudanshi* for men. According to Ani,(2018) said that *Fujoshi* is a term used by Japanese people to refer to women who like manga, comics, or novels that have *yaoi* (boys love), also according to Ammar (Fitriana et al., 2021) *Fujoshi* Derived from Japanese which means damaged women, this term refers to demeaning women because they have a hobby of seeing men's romance with men/gay. *Yaoi* himself means a reading genre and a spectacle that displays a romance relationship between men and men (Allen, 2011).

Yaqin (2019) reveals that moral reasoning is an assessment of values, social, and assessment of individual obligations in carrying out an action. Kohlberg's interpretation explains that an action to be taken by an individual originates from thoughts regarding a fundamental assessment of individual values, social and obligations. Setiono in Iskandar et al., (2016) states that moral reasoning is an individual's thoughts about right-wrong or good-bad. Moral reasoning possessed by individuals is used to make an assessment and consider which behavior is good and which behavior is bad that arises from conscience and not from coercion, which is accompanied by social responsibility and experience that influences judgments and judgments within the individual. According to Yaqin (2019), moral reasoning or moral reasoning can be defined as an individual point of view which is formed as a reference for moral judgment. The aspects of moral reasoning according to Kohlberg (1971) are the pre-conventional reasoning stage, the conventional reasoning stage, and the post-conventional reasoning stage

Research Venturini et al., (2021) regarding the effect of broadcasting *2gether*: the series on women's tolerance towards homosexuality reveals that female fans of boys' love (Fujoshi) partially play their gender role or are interested in same-sex relationships (men with men) and some really pay attention to the implied message that the series wants to convey. The message is that love is not only based on the opposite gender, but love can be owned by anyone and for anyone. This creates a sense of tolerance for homosexual couples in real life as shown by the series.

This Fujoshi phenomenon is clearly very deviated from moral values and religious morals, but there are still many Fujoshi who still carry out their hobbies without thinking about religious morality. Even though it is clear that there is a prohibition on LGBT in the Qur'an and Hadith, many connoisseurs have a hobby as Fujoshi. The contents contained in the Al-Qur'an also explain the prohibition of LGBT, as in Surah Al-Ankabut verse 29: "Is it obligatory for you to go to men/rogue, and do evil in your meeting place? So the answer of his people is nothing but saying, 'Come on us Allah's punishment, if you are one of the righteous'" (Arif & Sayska, 2018). Fujoshi has an interest in seeing same-sex relationships between men and men where this is not in accordance with the theory of psychosexual development described by Sigmund Freud (Nurhidayah et al., 2012). Eric Erikson mentioned that he is an individual who experiences ego identity defusion (Nurhidayah & Pramintari, 2017). In appropriate behavior is considered as something abnormal. Nolen-Hoeksema explains that abnormal behavior can be seen through three aspects; cultural relativity (depending on cultural norms), unfamiliarity (rare behavior is considered abnormal), and discomfort caused by a behavior (Andina, 2016).

The preliminary study was conducted through interviews with five Otaku people on December 29, 2021 with the subjects with the initials D, G, and A. In addition there was a second interview on January 1, 2022 with the subjects with the initials R and N. The results were three subjects (60%) including subjects N, G, and A have a negative view on Fujoshi, while R and D (40%) think that Fujoshi is normal because it is a hobby they like. In their opinions, as long as it does not interfere with other people's lives, it

is still permissible and reasonable. Therefore, being a Fujoshi is anyone's right. The purpose of this study is to find out what aspects and factors influence a person's perception of the pros (positive) and con (negative) towards an object or Fujoshi in an Otaku.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive with a phenomenological approach according to Husserl. The research steps use Husserl's phenomenology and phenomenological elements according to Spirgrlberg as a basis (Asih, 2005). The steps taken in this research include determining the phenomenon to be studied and the role of the researcher, data collection, data treatment and analysis, literature study, defending the truth of research results, and ethical considerations. On the other hand, research location refers to the notion of social location which is characterized by the presence of three elements, namely actors, places and activities that can be observed. The research locations are the houses of the subjects who are members of the Otaku/Weeaboo community in Cileungsi, Bogor; Cosudesu (Cosplay Community and Kameko Jabodetabek), Cosplay Bogor, and Otaku Bogor. The research subjects who were obtained using the snowball sampling technique were 4 (four) people with the initials RM, Z, REP, and NA while the research informants were 3 (three) people who were obtained based on recommendations from the research subjects. The criteria for informants in this study are people who are close to or know the life of the research subjects. Collecting data in this study using interviews and also observation. This research uses interactive data analysis techniques from Miles and Huberman (Musdalipa, 2020). The process of interactive data analysis was carried out in four stages, namely: data collection, data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. This study uses a triangulation technique to test the validity of the data which consists of source, technique, and time (Arikunto, 2009).

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Perception toward Fujoshi

The process of forming perceptions about Fujoshi occurs because the four subjects have the closest person who is a Fujoshi or a woman who likes to see same-sex romance (men with men). Subject RM admitted that he knew the term Fujoshi from a friend in high school. Subject Z admitted that he knew the term Fujoshi from a friend in early college. The REP subject claimed to know the term Fujoshi from a TikTok video recommendation and the NA subject claimed to know this from his sibling.

"Eh... my friend likes watching things like men and boys who love each other, right, whether it's anime or drama or something like that, so I'm eee I was told that, right?"
Said RM.

According to the understanding of RM, Z, and NA, Fujoshi is very positive. These three subjects know the meaning of Fujoshi well because they were told by their closest people who are Fujoshi. Besides from being told by people closest to them, subjects RM and Z searched for more in-depth information via the internet because of their curiosity. The subject knows the meaning of Fujoshi because of his interest in the BL genre so he digs deeper into Fujoshi.

"E from myself, Fujo is like a girl who likes watching anime or the man x man series, that's how it is" Said Z.

This perception occurs due to the different sensing processes and experiences of the subject, so that the results of one's perception differ from another. Subject RM claimed to have a positive perception because he felt that he was someone who had an open mind so that he was able to accept all the differences that existed. Subject Z claimed to have a positive perception because he felt that the Fujoshi was a kind and friendly person, thus making subject Z interested in making friends regardless of differences in hobbies between the two. REP claimed to have positive perceptions because he felt that this hobby was not an aberration and REP subjects were also female actors who had a hobby of seeing BL (Fujoshi).

"At first I was surprised at first, boys and girls can like it, then over time, yeah... it's just normal," REP said

"It's normal, it's their rights," said the REP

The NA subject had a bad perception because he felt that Fujoshi was an aberration and was prohibited by religion. This perception was obtained because the NA subject was a religious person who studied religion, so that everything he thought and lived had to be in accordance with the teachings of the religion he adhered to.

"In my opinion, actually I don't really agree with things like that, because religion also prohibits it. Like what I said at the beginning, I'm more religious too, so I don't really agree with Fujoshi or something like that, so I'm also really trying to get my brother to get rid of this hobby, that's all", said NA.

Moral Reasoning

The results at this conventional reasoning stage were that RM, Z, and REP were able to provide perceptions in accordance with Fujoshi's interpersonal norms, where Fujoshi felt happy because they are not opposing the hobby she likes. The perception given by the NA is not in accordance with the interpersonal norms of a Fujoshi, because the NA wants to force it to eliminate the hobby of a Fujoshi.

"Yes, because she's a fun person, fun despite being a Fujo but her hobby doesn't disturb the surrounding community, so I'm just having fun as a friend," said RM.

The results of perceptions based on the morality of the social system on subjects RM, Z, REP, and NA are in accordance with the values, social duties, law, and justice that exist in the community around them. These differences suggest the differences on society's ideas on Fujoshi. In addition, responding to the Fujoshi phenomenon is taboo and sensitive. IT can also bring social sanctions to the individuals because it seems like they support LGBT people.

"Hehemmm, in my opinion, everything goes back to each other's personalities, if he likes BL Fujo, I'm his friend and I'm Muslim, just to remind you, actually Fujo can't, indirectly it's like telling me that it's not good, it's just the name. I like it as long as it doesn't cross the line it's okay in my opinion" Said Z.

Perceptions based on the post convention reasoning stage show the results that RM, Z, and REP have been able to go through this stage. The perceptions generated by RM, Z, and REP are based on community rights, individual rights, and universal ethical principles which means that RM, Z, and REP provide perceptions in accordance with universal human rights and recognize that each view is shared between one individual and another.

“Yeah.. that's their right anyway, Fujoshi or not. So we don't have the right to manage them, as long as they are good to us it doesn't matter” Said REP.

The results of the NA subject's perception when viewed based on the post conventioning reasoning stage cannot be passed, because the NA subject only gives perceptions in accordance with his religious understanding without wanting to look at individual rights universally. This understanding also makes NA unable to see that each individual has their own views and choices.

“Hm to be able to respect that, I don't need to respect that because I don't like that. But maybe when he tells me about it, yes I just listen and after that I direct her to change” Said NA.

There are factors that influence perceptions of Fujoshi in terms of moral reasoning in an Otaku. According to (Warsina & Subandi, 2017), factors that influence perceptions are experience and knowledge, emotions, and culture. Research obtained through interviews with four subjects who are Otaku, get the result that the factor influences perception.

Factors that influence a perception in research on four subjects are experience and knowledge. RM, Z, and REP's experiences of being friends with Fujoshi made their views or perceptions positive because Fujoshi's good personality made RM, Z, and REP subjects happy to be friends with her. NA has a negative perception because according to the teachings of the religion he adheres to. This view includes an idea that being LGBT people are sinful. Another factor that influences perception in this study is culture. The culture in Indonesia when responding to LGBT and Fujoshi is a taboo and sensitive matter. This factor influences one's judgment or perception of another foreign culture. Although RM, Z, and REP had a positive perception, they did not deny that Fujoshi would receive social sanctions if this became known to the public in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it was shown that three of the four subjects (RM, Z, and REP) had a positive perceptions toward fujoshi and they did not feel disturbed by the hobbies of the Fujoshis. While RM subject was a person who was open to a difference, Z likes to be friends with Fujoshi because of her friendly attitude and

kindness. REP feels that Fujoshi hobbies are still normal as she is a Fujoshi. Subject NA's perception of Fujoshi was negative, this was because subject NA felt that Fujoshi was one of those who supported LGBT and this was not in accordance with the teachings of the religion he adhered to. Subjects' perceptions of RM, Z, and REP were reviewed based on good moral reasoning, where they could perceive an object based on individual and community rights, morality, and individual rights universally. This perception arises in accordance with what is expected by the Fujoshi, where Fujoshi expects peace for the hobby he is pursuing without having to listen to insults from other people. The NA subject's perception based on moral reasoning is still not good, but for moral reasoning based on his moral identity/religious teachings it is very good because all perceptions generated by NA subjects are based on religious teachings. Subject NA did not want to think about other people's rights or preferences (Fujoshi) as long as this was not in accordance with the religious teachings adhered to by subject NA.

Based on the results of research parents have an important role in parenting. Parents pay more attention to their children's associations and shows to avoid things or cultures that are not in accordance with Indonesian culture or religion. Limiting the use of gadgets so as not to damage the body's health and avoid bad content. It is hoped that the Weeaboo/Otaku community can better sort out the content to be watched and it is hoped that this will deepen religious knowledge so that it increases understanding and is able to limit oneself from anything that is negative and self-destructive. Increasing understanding of religion is also intended so that Weeaboos/Otaku can provide a good perception in addressing everything without looking at it from a certain point of view.

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