

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze fan labor practices within the framework of participatory culture, focusing on the social media activities of NCT fans (NCTzen) in Indonesia. Adopting a constructivist paradigm, this research employs a qualitative approach through digital ethnography. Data were collected through digital observation of Instagram activities of six NCT fan informants and in-depth interviews, which were analyzed thematically by linking empirical findings to the theoretical framework of participatory culture and fan labors. The findings indicate that participatory culture among NCTzen Indonesia is manifested through interconnected practices of affiliation, expression, collaboration, and circulation, which subsequently transform into various forms of fan labor. These practices take the form of promotional work, content production, community management, and the maintenance of affective relationships with idols. Fan labor is performed voluntarily and consistently despite fans' awareness of economic risks, as affective attachment and the logic of the gift economy serve as the primary foundation sustaining fan labor within digital fandom.

Keywords: participatory culture, K-pop fandom, NCTzen, fan labor, digital ethnography.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis praktik *fan labor* dalam kerangka budaya partisipatif, dengan fokus pada aktivitas penggemar NCT (NCTzen) di Indonesia melalui media sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan paradigma konstruktivisme dengan pendekatan kualitatif melalui metode etnografi digital. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi digital terhadap aktivitas Instagram enam informan penggemar NCT serta wawancara mendalam, yang dianalisis secara tematik dengan mengaitkan temuan empiris pada kerangka teori budaya partisipatif dan *fan labor*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa budaya partisipatif NCTzen Indonesia terwujud melalui praktik afiliasi, ekspresi, kolaborasi, dan sirkulasi yang saling berkelindan, serta bertransformasi menjadi berbagai bentuk *fan labor*. *Fan labor* tersebut termanifestasi dalam bentuk kerja promosi, produksi konten, pengelolaan komunitas, serta pemeliharaan relasi afektif dengan idola. Praktik ini dijalankan secara sukarela dan konsisten meskipun penggemar memiliki kesadaran terhadap risiko ekonomi, karena afeksi dan logika ekonomi hadiah berperan sebagai fondasi utama keberlanjutan kerja penggemar dalam fandom digital.

Kata Kunci: budaya partisipatif, fandom K-Pop, NCTzen, *fan labor*, etnografi digital.