

The Phenomenon of Fanaticism in the Cosplay Lampung Fun Community (Phenomenological Study of Fanaticism in the Japanese Cartoon Jujutsu Kaisen)

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Abstract

This research discusses the Phenomenon of Fanaticism in the Japanese Cartoon Jujutsu Kaisen (Phenomenological Study in the Cosplay Lampung Fun Community in Bandar Lampung). The problem raised here is why members of the Cosplay Lampung Fun Community are fanatical about the Japanese cartoon Jujutsu Kaisen and how the fanaticism process occurs. This research was conducted to find out more about why the Cosplay Lampung Fun community is fanatical about Japanese cartoons and to explain the process by which this fanaticism occurred. This research was conducted using a qualitative approach method. By using this approach, we are able to explain and describe the phenomenon of fanaticism that occurs among members of the Cosplay Lampung Fun community. This research was conducted from November 2023 to February 2024. Data collection was carried out by environmental observation and interviews with informants who met

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the requirements for this research. The results obtained from this research are the reasons and the breakdown of fanaticism that occurs among members of the Cosplay Lampung Fun community, through cause motives and goal motives can influence the way they dressed by doing cosplay, from the food they eat because it is inspired by a scene in the anime to they lifestyle like going to the gym because they want to look like one of the characters in Jujutsu Kaisen.

Keywords: Fanaticism, Japanese cartoon, Jujutsu Kaisen, Phenomenology

INTRODUCTION

Fanaticism originates from two words: "fanatic" and "ism" (Zulkarnain & Haq, 2020). The word "fanatic" comes from the Latin "fanaticus," which in English is translated as frantic or frenzied, meaning wild, frantic, intoxicated, or noisy. From this root, the word "fanatic" can be interpreted as a person's attitude of doing or loving something seriously and earnestly. On the other hand, "ism" can be understood as a form of belief or doctrine. According to the Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), fanaticism is defined as an excessively strong belief in a doctrine (political, religious, etc.). Therefore, from the above definition, it can be concluded that fanaticism is an excessively strong belief in a doctrine, whether political or religious.

Each student movement is generally associated with actions such as demonstrations, theatrical performances, and long marches. All these actions aim to convey certain messages, often rich in social criticism directed at the organs targeted by the demonstrations (usually the government). This social criticism typically addresses fundamental issues affecting the lives of many people, such as corruption, basic needs like food prices, fuel, or government policies considered not to be in the public interest. In carrying out their actions, there is, of course, coordination and communication networks used to coordinate and consolidate movement elements to ensure the actions are delivered effectively.

According to Seregina (2011), fanaticism is a very important phenomenon in modern culture, marketing, and the personal and social realities of society. This is because today's culture significantly influences individuals and the relationships within individuals, creating beliefs and understandings in the form of relationships, loyalty, devotion, love, and so on. Fanaticism represents a person's behavior towards something they are interested in or like, which could be an object or even a person. Fanaticism occurs because today's culture significantly influences individuals and the relationships within them, creating beliefs and understandings in the form of



relationships, loyalty, devotion, love, and so on. Fanaticism is defined as extraordinary devotion to an object, where "devotion" consists of passion, intimacy, and dedication, and "extraordinary" means going beyond the average or usual level. The object can refer to a brand, product, person (such as a celebrity), TV show, or other consumption activities. Fanatics tend to insist on their ideas, considering themselves or their group to be right and ignoring all facts or arguments that might contradict their thoughts or beliefs (Chung et al., 2008).

Recently, the phenomenon of rampant fanaticism has been sweeping the world, especially among young people. Often, fanatic behavior leads to dangerous consequences and thus needs to be studied. For example, someone's fanaticism often influences their behavior in showing their fanatic attitude, including both constructive and destructive behavior. With a high sense of fanaticism, a person tries their utmost to demonstrate their attitude in various ways. This is due to an excessive affection for a culture that permeates society, such as pop culture (Putra, 2013).

Pop Culture is derived from the words "Culture" and "Pop." According to the Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), culture is defined as (1) mind; intellect, (2) customs, (3) something related to developed, civilized, or advanced cultural elements, and (4) something that has become a habit and is difficult to change. Culture is also interpreted as the way humans respond to their environment to survive and win in the competition of life. The word "Pop" comes from "Popular," which in KBBI is defined as something known and liked by many people in general or the masses, suited to the needs of the masses, easily understood by many, liked, and admired by many. Pop culture can be assumed to be something that has developed and then become a habit and is liked by many people. One of the pop cultures that has entered Indonesia is Japanese culture.

The rapid flow of information and technology parallels the amount of cultural exchange occurring worldwide. One country actively involved in cultural transfusion is Japan. The influx of various cultures from the Land of the Rising Sun, targeting the youth segment, has brought many new popular subcultures, one of which is the "weaboo." According to The Japanese Way, "weaboo" is a term absorbed from "weaboo." A "weaboo" refers to a non-Japanese person who has an excessive obsession with Japanese culture, to the point that they almost seem like a Japanese person living in Japan. In severe cases, weaboos tend to undervalue their own culture, a phenomenon known as Japanophilia. Weaboos are those who enjoy specific aspects of Japanese culture, such as anime or manga, but neglect the broader Japanese traditions.

The term "weaboo" often carries a negative connotation for those interested in Japanese pop culture, as it is frequently used to mock fans of Japanese cartoons (anime) or Japanese culture



broadly. However, there are also individuals who enjoy watching anime without wanting to be identified as weaboo, giving rise to a new subculture known as anime lovers. While this can sometimes be seen as a manifestation of love and affection, there are instances where fanaticism can reach a harmful level, such as making exclusive statements about local culture or forgetting the principles that apply in their community. Due to this phenomenon, people fanatical about Japanese culture often isolate themselves and close off from the general environment but can fully express themselves within circles or among people with similar interests (Wardhana, 2023).

Fanatics of Japanese cartoons or anime can be found in Bandar Lampung as well. Often, these individuals withdraw and isolate themselves from the general public but are able to express themselves freely within a safe environment or among those with similar interests. This has led to the formation of communities of Japanese culture enthusiasts, one of which is the Cosplay Lampung Fun community in Bandar Lampung. The phenomenon of fanaticism is also evident in cosplay (costume play) activities. Cosplay is a form of performance art where individuals dress up as fictional characters from graphic novels, comics, anime, video games, or sci-fi or fantasy media (Winge, 2006).

Cosplay events are frequently held several times a month in Bandar Lampung and are always well-attended by both visitors and cosplayers. Most weaboos willingly attend cosplay events regardless of the weather to gain inner satisfaction. During these events, visitors who do not cosplay often seek out individuals cosplaying their favorite fictional characters. Fanaticism is shown through enthusiastic or freak-out behavior when seeing someone portraying their favorite character. Some weaboos even become obsessed with themselves for cosplaying a beloved fictional character. One currently popular Japanese cartoon is Jujutsu Kaisen. Based on this, the researcher is interested in studying the phenomenon of fanaticism toward the Japanese cartoon Jujutsu Kaisen among the anime community in Bandar Lampung. This phenomenon is intriguing because it highlights a strong tendency among community members to devote themselves to Japanese animated works, whether as loyal viewers, memorabilia collectors, or even creating social identities closely related to characters or stories from the anime.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method. Qualitative research is conducted intensively, where the researcher participates in the field for an extended period, carefully records what happens, performs reflective analysis on various documents found in the field, and writes a detailed



research report. Qualitative methods are also often referred to as naturalistic research methods because the research is conducted in natural settings (Sugiyono, 2016). Phenomenology is an approach used to help understand various social phenomena in society. The role of phenomenology becomes more important when it is practically applied as both a spirit and a method of social research in observing the behavior patterns of individuals as social actors in society. Therefore, this research is qualitative, related to the issue raised, namely the phenomenon of fanaticism. This qualitative research aims to understand the motives, causes, and goals behind the fanaticism towards Japanese culture in accordance with the study of phenomenological theory of motives. Using a phenomenological approach, which seeks to explore personal experiences and emphasizes individual perceptions (Smith, 2009).

SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

Fanaticism in Indonesia, in its various forms, has existed throughout the country's history for a considerable time. Several periods and events have reflected the existence of fanaticism in Indonesia. For instance, the extremism seen in the resistance during the colonial era by various Indonesian groups demonstrated a spirit of fanaticism in fighting for the nation's independence. Another form of fanaticism present in Indonesian history is religious and ethnic conflict. An example of this is the conflict in Ambon from 1999 to 2002, which involved the Muslim and Christian communities and illustrates how religious fanaticism can lead to violence.

Fanaticism takes many forms, including fanaticism towards sports teams, celebrities or public figures, religions or beliefs, and lifestyle and consumer behavior. This study will focus on fanaticism towards celebrities or public figures. Although it may not clearly be termed as a public figure, since Japanese cartoons are fundamentally fictional creations, the vivid imagination that makes these fictional characters seem real and garners a large following makes this topic worthy of study. Members of the Cosplay Lampung Fun community have exhibited a form of fanaticism characterized by a belief that blinds individuals, making them willing to do anything to uphold their beliefs, and displaying excessive or extreme enthusiasm and loyalty.

THEORETICAL INSIGHT

The main purpose of phenomenology is to study how phenomena are experienced in consciousness, thought, and action, including societal values and aesthetic acceptance; this is the focus of the field of phenomenology. Phenomenology often seeks to understand how humans



construct meaning and important concepts in interpersonal relationships, known as intersubjectivity. Intersubjectivity refers to our collective understanding of the world, influenced by interactions with others. Although the meanings created by society can be traced in the actions, works, and activities performed, there is still a role played by others.

The process of how humans construct their world is explained by Alfred Schutz through the process of meaning-making. This process begins with a continuous stream of experience received by the senses. The main flow of sensory experience inherently lacks meaning; they merely exist, and it is the objects that have meaning, utility, names, distinct parts, and specific markers. The identification of meaningful sensory experiences occurs within individual consciousness separately and then collectively, through the interaction of these consciousnesses. This aspect involves consciousness acting upon the raw sensory data to create inherent meaning, allowing us to perceive something ambiguous from a distance without getting closer. Consciousness acts, identifying it through a process that connects the data to its background.

RESULT

The Cosplay Lampung Fun Community, chaired by Deka Arianto, is a group of Japanese cartoon or anime enthusiasts, ranging from teenagers to adults. Japanese cartoons or anime come in various genres, including action, adventure, fantasy, romance, and more complex and philosophical stories. The Cosplay Lampung Fun Community is one of the largest communities in Lampung, located precisely in Bandar Lampung at Kota Sepang Indah Block I No. 14, Sepang Jaya, Way Halim. This community exists to accommodate Japanese cartoon fans, allowing them to freely express themselves within this community. Within the Cosplay Lampung Fun Community, there are various individuals with different interests and backgrounds. Some enjoy Japanese cartoons purely as entertainment, while others delve deeper into the anime industry, and some even work professionally in it. Therefore, the Cosplay Lampung Fun Community often uploads works from its members, showcasing creativity through cosplay.

Currently, the Cosplay Lampung Fun Community is more active as a media partner or online-based community to support or partner with every Japanese-themed event to be held in Lampung or outside Lampung. The Cosplay Lampung Fun Community plays an active role as a media partner, spreading information related to upcoming Japanese-themed events. The presence of the Cosplay Lampung Fun Community as a media partner not only adds value for event visitors but also helps expand the reach and influence of the Cosplay Lampung Fun



Community itself. As a media partner, the Cosplay Lampung Fun Community has the potential to collaborate with parties outside the anime industry, such as educational institutions, companies, or non-profit organizations.

The results of this research were obtained by the researcher from direct fieldwork. These results include observations, interviews with informants who meet the criteria for this research, and documentation related to the phenomenon being studied, namely fanaticism. The results from these three methods are described by the author with the observation results presented in text form and the interview results also written in text form. The researcher selected informants using purposive sampling techniques, ensuring that the chosen informants met the criteria for this study. The main requirement was that the informants had to be members of the community and fans of the Japanese cartoon Jujutsu Kaisen. The informants selected based on these criteria include: 1) Deka, a male who is the founder of the community, 2) Rahmat, a male who joined the community in 2022, 3) Lily, a female who joined the community in 2021, 4) Lintang, a female who joined the community in 2021, 5) Lia, a female who joined the community in 2022, 6) Dimas, a male who joined the community in 2022, 7) Ali, a male who joined the community in 2022, and 8) Bila, a female who joined the community in 2022.

The Cosplay Lampung Fun Community, which has many followers on its Instagram account, makes it one of the largest Japanese cartoon fan communities in Lampung. With the many people involved in it, it is possible that each member has a different cultural background. The cultural backgrounds of the members of this community often stem from their personal experiences that began in childhood. Most community members have been familiar with Japanese cartoons since a young age, which then shaped their identity and cultural interests. This makes Japanese cartoons not just entertainment but also a part of daily life, inspiring imagination and teaching moral values.

With members coming from different social strata, locations, and social environments, there are certainly many cultural differences among community members. However, they remain united as fans of Japanese cartoons. The diverse cultural backgrounds of the community members range from school children, college students, office workers, to those who are already married. It is not uncommon for parents who are Japanese cartoon fans to involve their children in their favorite activities, usually by including their children in cosplay and registering them for cosplay competitions.

The cultural backgrounds of the community members also influence their choice of



Japanese cartoon genres. Most community members who have busy lives tend to choose to watch Japanese cartoons with simple, relaxing slice-of-life stories. Meanwhile, for community members who are still in school, their viewing choices are more varied as they enjoy exploring new things. Additionally, some community members like certain Japanese cartoons because they were recommended by family members who also enjoy Japanese cartoons, and it is not uncommon for them to get recommendations from fellow community members or non-members. The interest in Japanese cartoons also often starts from watching local TV broadcasts that show Japanese cartoons dubbed in Indonesian. These TV shows pique their curiosity, leading them to explore other Japanese cartoons.

DISCUSSION

Members of the Cosplay Lampung Fun Community show great interest in Jujutsu Kaisen largely influenced by social media. In recent years, social media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok have become the main avenues for Japanese cartoon enthusiasts to share content, reviews, and recommendations related to anime. The consistent exposure to anime content on these platforms has sparked interest in watching and following the Jujutsu Kaisen series, which gained significant popularity during its release year. Additionally, an important factor in the influence of social media on anime-watching interest is the ease of accessibility. Through social media, Japanese cartoon fans can easily find clips, trailers, or even full episodes of various anime series. This makes the process of discovering anime easier and faster. Moreover, Jujutsu Kaisen was adapted by Studio MAPPA, a studio that has recently risen to fame among Japanese cartoon fans and the Japanese animation industry. Often, people are initially drawn to Jujutsu Kaisen by its visually stunning graphics. As informant Bila stated:

“What I like about the anime Jujutsu Kaisen is its exciting storyline and the main character, who starts from nothing to become what he is now. Also, the graphics during fight scenes are truly eye-pleasing.”

Most informants are attracted to Jujutsu Kaisen due to its amazing graphics. The anime has high-quality animation and stunning visuals that bring every scene to life dynamically. However, another factor is the emotional connection to the characters in Jujutsu Kaisen. Informants feel an emotional bond with the characters, whether through their visuals, life paths,



personalities, or even sympathy for characters whose lives are tormented in the storyline of Jujutsu Kaisen A behavior or action can be considered fanatic when it reaches an excessive level. Fanaticism is known as an irrational or extreme enthusiasm or devotion to a theory, belief, or course of action, characterized by highly emotional attitudes and almost limitless mission. The emergence of fanaticism towards Jujutsu Kaisen reflects the significant impact of this anime's appeal on its fans. Jujutsu Kaisen is one of the most popular Japanese cartoons today, capturing the attention of Japanese cartoon fans with its engaging story and complex characters. The story filled with action, mystery, and intense battles captures viewers' interest, while well-designed and emotionally developed characters allow viewers to deeply connect with Jujutsu Kaisen Analysis from observations and interviews with informants sought to determine the onset of fanaticism, as revealed by informant Lintang:

"Right after the first season finished airing, I immediately read the manga because I was interested, so I know more about the storyline than what's shown in the anime."

Fans of Jujutsu Kaisen who directly read the manga after the first season of the anime ended demonstrate a form of enthusiasm. They read the manga to satisfy their curiosity about the storyline that has not yet been adapted into the anime. This curiosity is also driven by advanced animation techniques and appealing visuals, which are supporting factors for the emergence of fanaticism towards Jujutsu Kaisen According to informants, Studio MAPPA's adaptation of the series into anime has produced impressive and detailed animation. This provides a captivating visual experience for viewers and encourages them to become more engaged with the world of Jujutsu Kaisen Social media also plays a role in increasing fanaticism towards Jujutsu Kaisen Discussions on fan pages allow fans to share thoughts, theories, updates, and works like cosplay or fan art related to Jujutsu Kaisen Informant Dimas stated:

"I follow several Instagram accounts that update information about 'Jujutsu Kaisen.' These accounts are where I find updates and discussions about scenes that might appear in the manga."

This statement reflects how social media has become the primary source of information and discussion for Jujutsu Kaisen fans. By following specific accounts that update information



about the anime, informants have direct access to various news, clips, and everything related to Jujutsu Kaisen Rahmat also responded similarly:

"I'm active on a Jujutsu Kaisen fan page on Instagram. I like and comment on several posts, and I also like others comments if I agree with their theories or opinions about Jujutsu Kaisen."

Besides being a source of information, fan pages also serve as platforms for discussion and sharing thoughts about Jujutsu Kaisen These discussions often cover characters, storylines, plot predictions, or theories about future developments in Jujutsu Kaisen There is also fanaticism resulting from adaptations on other platforms, as explained by Lily:

"I once joined a photo challenge posing as Jujutsu Kaisen characters that went viral on TikTok. I also often draw Gojo on blank papers while doing assignments."

Fans of Jujutsu Kaisen actively engage in trends and activities related to the anime on social media, especially TikTok. Informants participated in TikTok photo challenges to imitate the poses of Jujutsu Kaisen characters. Additionally, they showed their dedication to Jujutsu Kaisen in other ways, such as drawing their favorite characters. This reflects the high level of affection and engagement informants have towards Jujutsu Kaisen and its characters.

FANATICAL MOTIVES

The underlying motive that drives someone to take certain actions is based on their experiences and knowledge. This applies to fans of the Japanese cartoon Jujutsu Kaisen as well. Most informants stated that they have a special impression of Jujutsu Kaisen and valuable experiences from it; some even mentioned that Jujutsu Kaisen has influenced their lives. Rahmat, who has been following Jujutsu Kaisen since 2021, feels emotionally connected to the faithful love story of two characters, Yuta and Rika. Additionally, Rahmat said:

"I find the Japanese language interesting to listen to, and I've even idolized it since watching anime. Jujutsu Kaisen has further piqued my interest in the Japanese language. In Jujutsu Kaisen my favorite character is Megumi because many people used to call me



Megumi, which made me like Megumi even more."

In Japanese, Megumi means Rahmat. This connection makes the Japanese cartoon Jujutsu Kaisen special for Rahmat. Additionally, Dimas, who has been watching Jujutsu Kaisen since it first aired, expressed that:

"The complex story, combined with interesting action, graphics, and the opening song of Jujutsu Kaisen is very pleasant to watch and listen to. Oh, and I also like the character Toji because he looks strong, which is why I like 'Jujutsu Kaisen.'"

The interpersonal relationship between characters felt by Dimas is one of the factors that builds fanaticism towards Jujutsu Kaisen in him. Informants also mentioned that they feel emotionally connected to certain characters, especially when a character they like dies in the story. For example, Dimas felt emotional when Toji died in the second season of Jujutsu Kaisen. From interviews with informants, they stated that there are reasons they like Jujutsu Kaisen that can influence real life, both before and after joining the Cosplay Lampung Fun Community. As Rahmat mentioned, he once idolized the Japanese language, and he is still striving to learn Japanese, which led him to join the Cosplay Lampung Fun Community.

"I'm still trying to learn Japanese even now. But besides that, I also got a new hobby, which is cosplay. I started cosplaying in 2022 and eventually decided to follow Cosplay Lampung Fun. From there, I made many cosplay friends."

Rahmat's interest in an anime motivated him to try new things by continuing to learn Japanese and starting to express himself through cosplay. Meanwhile, Lintang, who has a very good impression of Jujutsu Kaisen joined Cosplay Lampung Fun to get information about Japanese-themed events or gatherings from Cosplay Lampung Fun itself. This differs from Dimas's motive, who likes the character Toji. The character Toji, who in the Jujutsu Kaisen storyline achieves extraordinary physical strength and faces challenges with determination, inspired him. Dimas said:

"I started going to the gym regularly since I learned about Toji. I got inspired to have a



great body like his."

This informant found additional motivation to maintain physical fitness after being inspired by a specific character, such as Toji from Jujutsu Kaisen. This character inspires his fans to achieve a healthy and strong body similar to Toji's appearance in the Jujutsu Kaisen series.

CONCLUSION

After conducting the relevant research, the researcher draws several conclusions based on the explanations provided in the previous chapters. These conclusions also address the research questions previously posed and answer the problem formulation of this study, summarizing the key findings revealed in the earlier chapters. The conclusions play a crucial role in presenting a comprehensive overview of this research's contribution to understanding and developing the examined problem formulation. The results of this study show that there is a phenomenon of fanaticism towards Japanese cartoons that is evident in Lampung through the Cosplay Lampung Fun Community, which can influence the daily lives of the fans. Through various aspects, fans of the Japanese cartoon Jujutsu Kaisen find that Jujutsu Kaisen has strong aspects that influence their level of preference for the series. One of the strongest aspects is the excellent graphics and the characters in Jujutsu Kaisen.

Some fans enjoy Japanese cartoons for their graphics, and thus Jujutsu Kaisen succeeds in satisfying them with next-level quality graphics and animation. Additionally, the visual appeal of the characters also attracts fans, especially those who enjoy cosplaying, as they are drawn to the visuals of the Jujutsu Kaisen characters. Social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram play a significant role in influencing fanaticism towards Jujutsu Kaisen among the Cosplay Lampung Fun Community. Through these platforms, fans can share content, participate in trends, and discuss the anime, creating an environment that strengthens social bonds and enthusiasm for Jujutsu Kaisen.

Fanaticism towards Jujutsu Kaisen also contributes to the formation of individual identities and connections within the Cosplay Lampung Fun Community. Through a shared interest in Jujutsu Kaisen, community members feel connected to each other and can strengthen their social bonds by creating a supportive environment to express their love for a Japanese cartoon. Moreover, the strong dedication to Jujutsu Kaisen leads members of the Cosplay Lampung Fun Community to actively engage in trends and challenges related to Jujutsu Kaisen. The dedication



to collecting official and fan-made merchandise, which is also a significant part of this fanaticism, symbolizes their identity and depth of love for Jujutsu Kaisen. Additionally, creating other works such as fan art has become common among fans of Japanese cartoons, including Jujutsu Kaisen fans. This fanaticism can also influence the daily lives of the fans. The influence of the Japanese cartoon Jujutsu Kaisen can affect their way of dressing by cosplaying, the food they eat inspired by scenes in the anime, and even their lifestyle, such as going to the gym to look like one of the characters in Jujutsu Kaisen.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Based on the conclusions drawn from the detailed research data, several recommendations can be considered to understand and comprehend the interest, emerging fanaticism, and motives behind the participation of the Lampung Fun Cosplay Community members who are enthusiastic about the Japanese cartoon Jujutsu Kaisen.

1. This research can contribute to the phenomenology and fanaticism cases related to foreign cultures entering Indonesia.
2. The results of this research are expected to provide a better understanding of the extent to which something can be considered fanaticism.
3. The researcher hopes that members of the Lampung Fun Cosplay Community can increase awareness of the impact of something, both positive and negative, through open discussions and mutual respect to strengthen social bonds and appreciation for Japanese cartoons with minimal conflict.
4. The researcher hopes that the Lampung Fun Cosplay Community can be critical and open to various perspectives and interpretations, both about Jujutsu Kaisen and matters related to Japanese culture. This includes appreciating the diversity and differing viewpoints on certain matters.

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