

## Social Network Analysis of Fan Activism in #BintangEmonBestBoy

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Fandom movement in socio-political issues has received attention recently. In Indonesia, this fan movement can be seen when Bintang Emon was reported to be involved in drugs, K-Poppers immediately worked hand in hand to help by raising the hashtag #BintangEmonBestBoy to become trending topic on Twitter. Fans can mobilize many people through small groups on each fan base.

**Methods:** This research employs social network analysis to get an overview of the structure and pattern of relationships between actors in a network of K-Pop fandom accounts. By mapping out relationships between individual users, the study identifies key nodes and the flow of information within the community.

**Findings:** Response from K-pop fans in the hashtag #BintangEmonBestBoy can be interpreted as a fan activism. There is no tight connection or cohesiveness between fan activism and political participation realistically, rather it is only sporadic activism in the online realm that is inclined to be clicktivism.

**Originality:** The novelty of this research lies in the mobilization of K-pop fandoms, specifically on how these fan groups participate in online movements and influence social issues, with or without communities. By applying SNA to K-pop fandoms, one can better understand the underlying structure of fan participation and identify key actors who drive fan-based social movements within the network. The chamber-echo effect from the hashtag shows how digital communities leverage their collective power for advocacy, suggest a new type of democracy built on social media disrupting conventional type of popular culture and activism.

**Keywords:** Fandom, Social Networked Analysis, Bintang Emon, Fan Activism.

### Introduction

The rapid rise of the Korean Wave, or Hallyu, has captivated global audiences, transcending geographical and cultural boundaries. This phenomenon is not merely the result of the hybridized Korean popular culture, but rather the vital role of legions of dedicated fans who have played a crucial part in its global dissemination (Yong Jin, 2018). As Korean entertainment content, including dramas, films, and K-pop music, have gained popularity worldwide, the activities of these fan communities have become increasingly significant in shaping the trajectory of the Korean Wave. Existing research has highlighted the important role of online fan communities in cultivating loyalty and cooperation among fans. These communities provide a platform for fans to engage with their favorite Korean content and artists, fostering a sense of belonging and shared identity. These fans--often referred to as K-pop stans or Korean culture enthusiasts--have become key players in the Hallyu phenomenon, serving as the catalysts for its widespread adoption and continued growth. These devoted fan bases operate across various digital platforms, particularly social media, where they forge a sense of global connectivity and collective identity. Through hashtags, fan-driven campaigns, and coordinated digital

efforts, they have turned niche interests into global trends, contributing significantly to the global popularity of Korean cultural exports. Whether supporting their favorite K-pop idols, participating in charity projects, or engaging in socio-political activism, these fans are not passive consumers but active participants in shaping the narrative surrounding Hallyu. Choi argues that the new Korean Wave should be understood through both production and consumption. He coins the term Hallyu-hwa (literally Hallyu-ize) to highlight the strong will of both sides to promote the Korean Wave. About the perspective that the Korean Wave exemplifies local cultural agents' negotiation with global forms, 'using them as resources through which Asian people construct their own cultural spaces'. This two opposite positions raise the question of to what extent cultural hybridization is creative enough to represent local concerns and identity and thus to alter the global-local relations (S. Huang, 2017).

In the article, *"Development of Korean Wave Trends in Indonesia, From K-Pop to K-Style"* issued by the online media Hai Grid, states that Indonesia ranks 3rd out of 20 countries showing enthusiasm for K-Pop music on Twitter. This data is obtained through the @TwitterData account. This shows that the Korean wave was well received by the people of Indonesia. Spreading from K-Pop and K-drama, Korean culture has also expanded and even been implemented in everyday life. However, this passion is not only shown through how Korean culture is implemented in everyday life through food, skincare, and fashion alone, they often imitate the behavior shown by their idols. As stated by Ismail Fahmi as the founder of Drone Emprit, according to him, K-Popers also have great socio-political potential. The potential for the K-Pop movement is no joke and can be global. This group is known for being generous in providing assistance to people affected by disasters as the actions exemplified by their idols.

In the past, social movements or social actions in the United States had been able to change various social issues. For example, in 1917, the 'Silent Sentinels' protested outside the White House for women's suffrage. Then, between the 1950s and 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement had evolved to reduce discrimination, segregation, and racial inequality. In 1969, the Stonewall Riots took action for LGBT rights (M. Li et al., 2021). In recent years, with the introduction of social media, any individual can be an active part of a social movement by publicizing their opinions and 'sharing' or 'retweeting' information to a global audience. Because of this, social media activism has expanded immensely, and many social issues have since been brought to the forefront. For example, the movement in the United States, when there was a movement with the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter, this fandom joined in cheering up the social movement. Suray Agung Nugroho, who is an observer and lecturer at the Korean Language and Culture Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Gadjah Mada University, does not deny that phenomena in the US can inspire Indonesian K-Popers, especially when there are unifying issues. On the other hand, Suray is not worried about the possibility of using the power of the K-Pop fandom by certain elements as a political commodity. *"I can't see the shadows that are worrying, because they will actually kill the character or power subculture that they have built from the start,"* he concluded.

While many fandom activism studies see fans as a potential force to challenge the existing political order, participants of fan groups in China have been transformed into nationalists and government supporters (Liao et al., 2022). In his study, (V. G. Huang & Xie, 2021) analyses the discursive dynamics of fan activism under nondemocratic contexts. The authoritarian context such as China engenders distinct fan activism dynamics. Fan activism against nondemocratic politics is often confined to the virtual

domain, and is usually manifested through discursive practices such as debates and conversations (Yang 2009). Nonetheless, it has long been regarded as a form of political resistance (Yang and Jiang, 2015, Zhang, 2016). The concept of digital fandom explains that indeed k-pop fans have great access and great ability to know and respond to various contents, situations and social conditions through social media which in this study is Twitter. Fan movement or fandom as movement can explain how the movement can occur because it is driven by the values and culture that are embraced by k-pop fans. On the paper by Dynel & Rose, (Dynel & Ross, 2022) it is wrote that random tweets giving insight into online fandom and user engagement. and tweets with a hashtag conducive to a distributed fandom affinity space. K-Popers are very used to echoing popular topics on Twitter. As online communities are composed of self-motivated individuals who flock and scatter according to social trends and personal interests, the motivations and devotions of individual members are essential for maintaining the group's organizational structure (Lee, 2011, Noon and Meier, 2019, Nam et al., 2024).

In the article, Dynel (Dynel & Ross, 2022) mentioned that Bennett & Segerberg (2012) rightly observes, on Twitter, discussions surrounding hashtags have indeed facilitated new connections (although not all communication through this medium results in large numbers of people through small groups in each fan base. The issues that were brought up were then spread to other fan bases. The same method is also used to ward off rumors or hoaxes on this issue. Indonesian K-Pop fans have been carrying out such movements in the digital sphere for a long time, although they only received attention when they joined in rejecting the revision of the KPK Law in September 2019 by raising the hashtag #DiperkosaNegara. In addition, when comic Bintang Emon was accused of using drugs a few months ago--following his comments on the Novel Baswedan legal case, K-Popers gave him support by raising the hashtag #BintangEmonBestBoy. At that time, Bintang Emon released a video as a response to the verdict in the Novel Baswedan case. In the video, Bintang Emon quite criticizes the government. Not long after the video was published on a number of social media owned by Bintang Emon, news circulated that he was involved in a drug case. The Emon star was also virtually attacked on social media by several accounts, this then led to K-Pop fans uniting under the hashtag #BintangEmonBestBoy in giving their support.

Based on the study by Ardiyanti (Ardiyanti et al., 2022) Twitter have both a direct and mediated effect on public opinion, the study shows than increasing the ability of Twitter Activism, activists who campaign #FreeWestPapua or those who campaign against #FreeWestPapua activism must be able to increase emotional contagion. The response from K-pop fans in the hashtag #BintangEmonBestBoy as well as other such hashtags can indeed be interpreted as movement from fans. As a fan movement, this phenomenon shows that K-pop fans have turned into a movement to support freedom of opinion and criticize the authorities and fight against the anti-criticism shown by the authorities or the supporters of the authorities. However, most digital movements only end up as clicktivism with no social impact, so it is interesting to observe how this clicktivism works in fandom communities. In their article, Bernard et al (2021) showed how social media movements are often criticized for 'slacktivism' or 'clicktivism,' because of the little to no change in political and social structures they appear to generate (Y. Li et al., 2021). According to Kavada (2015), Clicktivism or slacktivism is 'liking,' upvoting, or 'following' an activist social media post or blog. Clicktivism signals endorsement of an existing post. While clicktivism indicates advocacy, it does not provide a voice to the participant to express original views (Kavada, 2016).

The first research is *“Digital Opinion Movement #Truebeauty on Twitter for Webtoon Comic Adapted Film Actors”*. This study uses the Social Network Analysis (SNA) method, which is a method for analyzing and describing the structure of social networks. The result of this study is that the #TrueBeauty hashtag communication network on Twitter was formed from the digital opinion movement of Webtoon True Beauty comic fans in expressing their opinion about the appropriate actor to play the comic adaptation film. As for the structure of the network, it can be concluded that in conveying their opinions, actors in the network tend to use retweets and mentions rather than direct replies to dominant accounts discussing the topic. Text analysis produces data that the words that are often mentioned in tweets are Jisoo Blackpink with lots of mentions directed directly to @ygofficialblink as the official account of Blackpink's management to allow Jisoo to play the main character in True Beauty. This shows that the film industry or artist management should not underestimate the opinions of fans conveyed on social media because fans prefer to collect opinions and convey their feelings and emotions towards their idols spontaneously through social media. (Tjahyana, 2020).

The second previous research used in this research is *“Understanding a digital movement of opinion: the case of #RefugeesWelcome”*. In this study the method used is quantitative method triangulation (Twitter network and metadata analysis) and text-based validation which is more qualitative, after which a series of hypotheses regarding the structure of the discussion network, modes of interaction of network users, their degree of linkage, and the profile of the network's main influencers are tested. further in this research. The aim of this research is to explain the structure and dynamics of what are considered as forms of political engagement that are increasingly important in the digital age. The study then isolates one--the most widely used and most symbolic--hashtag, which comes close to fulfilling the condition of defining a 'mass audience' of digital movement opinion also presents some limitations. Ideally, a holistic study of the force fields (positive and negative, digital and associational, etc.) in the conflict around issues would provide a more comprehensive picture (Barisione et al., 2019). The third previous study, *“Beyond Clicktivism: What Makes Digitally Native Activism Effective? An Exploration of the Sleeping Giants Movement”* the article explores how digitally native activism can generate social change. Digitally native movements are initiated, organized, and coordinated online without any physical presence or pre-existing offline campaign.

The fourth previous research is *“From Clicktivism to Hacktivism: Understanding Digital Activism”* (George & Leidner, 2019). In this paper, digital activism is unpacking through an exploratory literature review that provides descriptions, definitions, and categorizations. Digital activism provides new opportunities for social movement participants and social movement organizations (SMOs). This paper suggests that digital action repertoires as part of a virtual toolkit of technology artifacts and activities to be used for social change. Social media is particularly important for digital activism, such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. Participation in data activism is often limited to those with data science and analysis skills (Baack, 2015). Lending itself to virtual tasks, data activism may be performed anywhere. It may be performed by individuals but also lends itself to large groups such as organized civic hackathons with hundreds of participants. Digital Fandom

Fans are traditionally understood as people who have a special interest in or take part in practices that are rooted in intensive and extensive engagement with the object of interest (Stanfill, 2019; Jenkins, 1992). Fans are an interesting subject to follow and study because we can meet them in various places and situations. Almost everyone is passionate

about something or at least knows people who are passionate about something (Gray et al., 2007). Fan fiction is also traditionally understood as an identity obtained by fans who have an emotional attachment to the object they like or as a practice carried out by fans when they are involved in activities with the object they like and construct meaning for that object and activities related to that object (Booth, 2018). This traditional understanding, however, needs to be re-examined when digital media is present and used by fans. For at least the past decade, the presence of digital media has mainstreamed both fan culture and fan studies because digital media has encouraged and strengthened the participatory and productive forms of media consumption that fans themselves have long coveted (Click & Scott, 2018). Thus, the definition of fans is slightly enhanced which is the use of digital technology to engage in fannish activities and practices with respect to specific cultural texts. Digital fandom does not represent a separate category of fandom like sports, music, or media fandoms; rather, it denotes fannish activities facilitated by digital technology (Sa'diyah, 2019).

There were two waves of fandom studies. The initial phase of fandom studies focused on analyzing fandom in relation to the object of popular culture (such as music, films, and sports) as a counter-hegemonic force against high culture (including classical music, fine arts, and performing arts). It highlighted the production and consumption of culture in society (Fiske, 1989; Gray et al., 2007; Jenkins, 1992; Llamas & Belck, 2018; Storey, 2001; Storey, 2012). On the other hand, critiques of fandom studies that failed to explain a majority of fans, many of whom consume cultural materials individually and produce no fannish creations, and held under the empirical scrutiny of the so-called *elite* fans defined the second phase of fandom studies (Jancovich 2002; Llamas & Belck, 2018; Sandvoss 2005; Scodari 2003). Inspired by these two waves of fan studies, academics proposed the third wave in which fan behaviors are also ingrained in the economic, social, and cultural systems of society and tend to reinforce rather than challenge these hierarchical structures, even within fandoms (Hills, 2002). This argument prompts discussion on fan participation not only in the production, consumption, and distribution of cultural materials but also in actively engaging with the social movement existing in nowadays society.

#### Fan Activism

The current period of fan studies is typically defined by the release of Henry Jenkins's (1992) *Textual Poachers* and Camille Bacon-Smith's (1992) *Enterprising Women*. Both works investigate the subculture(s) of media fans, uncovering the depth, complexity, and significance of fan activities in groundbreaking ways. Since then, fan studies have grown into a dynamic, interdisciplinary, and global field of research (Harrington & Bielby, 2005).

Fandom communities' practice of 'cultural acupuncture' in democratic societies has been extensively examined (Hinck, 2019, Kligler-Vilenchik, 2018, Brough and Shresthova, 2012), but the political engagement of fandoms and their implications for political agency in nondemocratic contexts are largely unexplored (Jeffreys and Jian, 2017, V. G. Huang & Xie, 2021). Fan's cyber protest on social media tends to be a great social movement. Coppa (2014) states that fans are human beings, fans are not just followers and fanfare is not just a matter of profit for the media industry. This statement shows that fans have their own values and culture that enable them to respond critically and creatively to various issues and social conditions they face. This character or dimension, when combined with access and the ability to play around with or interact with media texts made possible by digital technology, makes fans a community or group

that can easily turn into a movement or activism. It is important to note that, from a cyber-skeptical paradigm, online activism has faced criticism for its lack of correlation with offline actions, as individuals behave differently in digital environments compared to real life. Skeptics argue that the impact of social media activism is constrained and ineffective in terms of authenticity. Critics of slacktivism argue that social media activism undermines genuine political participation by prioritizing personal enjoyment over meaningful engagement and commitment to action (Morozov, 2012; Yılmaz, 2017).

Beyond the elaborations to movement society theorizing, for social movement scholars who coin the term 'fan activism' because they believe the use of protest tactics for 'frivolous' ends devalue protest and activism, comparing fan activism (or other nonpolitical uses of protest tactics) to clearly political activism allows access to a question that social movement scholars have never been able to gain explicit purchase over. Despite the moves to define contentious action with reference to the involvement of the state as a target or claimant (McAdam et al. 2001), recent research has shown that the state is often not the target of protest, whether protest is occurring offline (Van Dyke et al. 2004) or online (Earl and Kimport 2008). At the same time, globalization has made many increasingly aware of the role of corporations in daily life. Thus, while fan activism and other nonpolitical uses of protest forms might seem frivolous to some, in many ways its investigation begins to broach the dynamics of private power contests where consumers are no longer comfortable playing the role of passive purchasers and seek to actively affect the decision making of cultural producers (Earl, J., & Kimport, 2009).

Jenkins (1992) has vanguarded investigating the purely cultural protests, labeled fan activism. According to Jenkins, the audience has shifted from passively cultural purchasers to active consumers through the production of fan media. The shift, by his definition, was not quantified as less to more, rather the substantial increase in fan activism is in line with fan action of all types transitioning to online platforms. Fan activism went beyond consumerist or cultural spheres and showed how fan activities impact politics. Participatory culture, unlike passive media culture, is a networked practice and collective intelligence. Fan communities became knowledge communities that creatively appropriated and transformed mass culture, improving their relationship with corporate media. New power has been added to the entertainment system. Additionally, it could be integrated into politics (Jenkins, 2006b). Nevertheless, concluded that the transfer between fan activism and political participation is not seen, even though participatory culture fostered through fan activities is found to be transferred into civic engagement. Other scholars have noted a significant increase in fan activism over time, which has been informally associated with the rise in Internet usage, albeit not causally linked. The ubiquitous movement practices trend and their correlation with Internet usage provide cultural academics with insights into the emergence of online fan activism, encompassing its scale and various manifestations.

Raising fan activism as a practice social movement can open a hidden opportunity, contrasting tactically identical campaigns of social and political change. The cultural ones, like fan activism, are not a frivolous venture into nonpolitical terrain (Earl, J., & Kimport, 2009). There is an overemphasis on newness in many studies of digital activism across different disciplines and contexts, although the 'digital revolution' started much earlier than with the rise of social media in the 2010s. However, there are only rare attempts to historicize the role of digital media for political activism. Prior to social media, mobile phones, video-handheld cameras and personal computers had changed the way social movements self-organized and documented their activities (Askanius, 2012). In an

attempt to historicize digital activism, Trebor Scholz (2010) links political practices to the history of the Internet, going back to the 1970s (Kaun & Uldam, 2018). Michael Hardt links the emergence of digital activism where a focus on media and communication aspects of social movement organization and an increasingly swift rate of technological change gives an impression of 'accelerated rhythms of political shifts' (Hardt, 2017).

#### Networked Social Movement

Internet galaxy has changed the definition of space and time, affecting many aspects of society, including altering social movements where the logic of collective action has turned to the logic of connective action (Castells, 2010; Bennett & Segerberg, 2012). In addition, Castells (2015) mentioned the concept of a networked social movement which is a social movement in a digital era characterized by multimodal, viral, leaderless, spontaneous, and autonomous due to the essential network of the Internet and mobile communication. The network can reform itself as long as enough participants are involved in the movement, loosely connected by their common goals and shared values. The space of the movement is always formed by an interaction between the space of flows on the Internet and wireless communication networks, and the space of places of the occupied sites and of symbolic materials.

One of the important concepts of the networked movement to capture its characters is a culture of autonomy, which exists because of the space of autonomy, the third place constituted by the hybridity of cyberspace and urban space (Castells, 2015). Social media platforms, for example, provide a space for fans to express their admiration, feelings, and hopes for their idols, in addition to building connections with fellow fans around the world to strengthen the fandom (Pearson, 2010). As previously mentioned, fan placement, fanfare, and fan culture are complex issues faced by researchers in the field of fan studies. However, there have been many studies showing that fans are no longer just a group of people who like certain texts, media, or objects that the media industry approaches, embraces, and gives them a platform to later manage and monetize (Stanfill, 2019) but also can develop into a particular movement or activism. For example, the anthology studies on the activism of football fans in Poland edited by Kossakowski (2021) or Iraqi studies (2019) on the relationship between football fondness, protest movements and democratization that took place in Turkey. Shifting from outrage to hope is achieved through contemplation inside this realm of autonomy. Nevertheless, defiance without a persistent base for autonomy in the space of flows is almost equivalent to sporadic activism (Castells, 2015).

Horizontal and multimodal networks in the space of autonomy foster togetherness. This togetherness is a key issue for the networked movement since it allows individuals to overcome their fear and find hope. However, most importantly, togetherness is not community since community implies a set of common values, and this is an ongoing endeavour in the movement since most people participate in the movement with their own motivations and aims, looking for commonalities in movement practice. Individuation differs from individualism, as it may be directed towards collective action and shared values. While diminishing the necessity of official leadership, the horizontality of networks fosters cooperation and solidarity (Castells, 2015). To capture the unique dynamics of fandom, characterized by highly engaged fan interactions, research trends have evolved from viewing fandom as a cultural group with shared traditions to understanding it as a social group emphasizing the role of individual fans and finally as a network focusing on the relationships among fans. This study similarly conceptualizes fandom as a network of fans, employing various social network analysis techniques and

metrics to classify and define fandoms (Jin et al., 2025).

## Methods

The first stage of the research begins with data mining on 22.729 nodes and 21.466 edges and 20 influencers in the network formed through #BintangEmonBestBoy. Social network analysis is carried out to get an overview of the network and dominant actors in the network (in this case KPop fandom accounts) linked in #hashtags. When applied to portray social movements in fan participation, especially in the context of K-pop fandom accounts and their engagement through hashtags, SNA can offer insights into the structure, dynamics, and influence of various actors (fans or accounts) involved. The connections between actors (nodes) are formed through hashtags. These hashtags are used to track discussions, organize content, or show support for particular K-pop groups, songs, or events. If two accounts use the same hashtag, an edge (link) is formed between them, indicating some form of participation or alliance in the same social movement. Hashtags play a crucial role in the SNA framework as they connect people around shared topics, by analyzing these hashtags, one can identify how fans are interacting. Through SNA, it's possible to see how social movements (in this case, fandom-driven campaigns) spread, grow, and influence people within and outside of the network. Hashtags can serve as tools for mobilization, organizing fan-driven campaigns for support or activism. The unit of analysis in social network analysis is nodes (actors) and ties (relationships between actors). According to Kozinets (2010), networks are formed from relationships between actors who are connected to one another. Social networks are formed when a group of people are connected because of certain social relations, for example family, friendship, work, the same hobbies, including K-Pop fandom, exchanging information via the internet (O'Donohoe, 2010).

From network analysis, the resulting data can not only be analyzed quantitatively but also qualitatively through the network structure which is useful for netnographic studies. To conduct a netnographic study, it is necessary to clearly describe the relationships in the social network first, to see how the relationships of actors in the network are in the ego-network perspective, to get the dominant actor so that further the person's profile (or pseudonym) can be explored and provide an overview of how the actors relate in the world. digitally through the information they exchange. Furthermore, an analysis of the text exchanged was also carried out. In analyzing the text exchanged on the network, this study will use content analysis in the form of a word cloud which takes into account the frequency of the distribution of information through social media listening (Kozinets, 2010). The words that dominate in the world cloud are then analyzed further to get the hidden meaning that exists in the exchange of information in the network.

## Results

For the data collection, there are 22.729 nodes regarding the hashtag, and 21.466 edges. There are also 20 influencers that arise from the network. These influencers have the most engagement.

Table 1. Top Influencers in #BintangEmonBestBoy (June 15, 2020 – June 30, 2020)

No	Account	Engagement
1	indostruggles	2727
2	LJ_Mansy	1602
3	syahraanst	1561



4	OelekBuloe	1300
5	abdnzza	1167
6	yogaferri	1140
7	Semputra18	1012
8	anastasiadw	787
9	nanda_Selfiana	772
10	hsbul_	703
11	elajalah_	684
12	Akh_Mahfud	641
13	mraofficial30	597
14	moslemday	583
15	NfalRkan	462
16	kangbasocuanki	445
17	fanfandhi	430
18	guebanget__id	414
19	Jurig20201	398
20	dandimaulana__	384

Note: This table shows network properties based on SNA with Gephi.

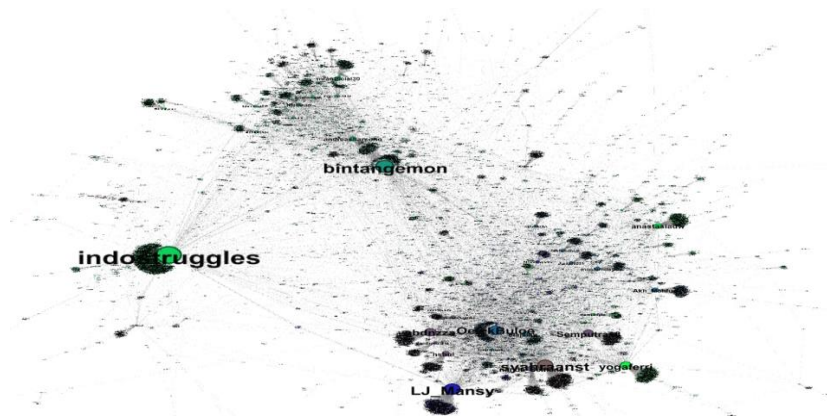


Figure 1. #BintangEmonBestBoy Activism Networks based on SNA visualization (June 15, 2020–June 30, 2020) (source: Primary Data, 2020)

Figure 1 known that the # BintangEmonBestBoy networks have five big clusters, which are represented by big circles. The first cluster is formed with the @indostruggles account as the centre or as an opinion leader. The second cluster is formed with the account @bintangemon, as opinion leader. The third cluster is composed of ties with @LJ\_Mansy and @syahraanst and @OelekBuloe as opinion leaders.



Figure 2. @indostruggles Tweet as the Centre or Opinion Leader on #BintangEmonBestBoy

(source: <https://x.com/indostruggles/status/1272462644398751744>)

Table 2. Network Structure in #BintangEmonBestBoy (June 15, 2020 – June 30, 2020)

Parameter	Value
Network Size	22729
Network Density	0
Network Diameter	5
Network Distance	1.335
Network Modularity	401

Note: This table shows network properties based on SNA with Gephi.

Network structure refers to the description of the general characteristics of a network involving all network members and the relationships between all network members. The network structure can be understood by using several parameters, namely network size, network density, network diameter, network average path length, and network modularity. The following table presents a summary of the network structure (Bintang Emon). Based on the table above, the network size is the number of members of the network. The Emon Star Network has 22729 Twitter accounts as members. The size of this network can be seen as a network with a large size. Network size is closely related to the level of network cohesiveness because, logically, the larger the network size, the more difficult it will be for each network member to be able to relate to all or most of the other network members. That is, the larger the network size, the less cohesive the network tends to be. Based on that, the Emon Star network is a non-cohesive network.

Network density is the ratio of the number of connections (edges) in the network when compared to the maximum number of connections that may arise if all members (nodes) are connected to one another. In the Bintang Emon network, it was found that the network density number is 0, which means that only 0 percent of the connections are made out of the maximum number of connections that may appear if all the Twitter accounts that are members of this network are connected to each other. This means that the intensity of the relationship between Twitter accounts in this network is very low. This also shows the low cohesiveness of this network as expected from the large size of this network. Network diameter is the farthest distance between members in a network. In the Bintang Emon network it was found that the network diameter number is 5, which means that the farthest distance between one Twitter account and another Twitter account is 5 steps.

Network distance is the average number of steps (path) needed by all network members to be able to interact with each other. In the Bintang Emon network it is found that the average distance (average distance) of the network is 1.335, which means that the distance between one Twitter account and all other Twitter accounts in this network is

one to two steps away. The diameter and distance of this network indicate that the Bintang Emon network is a network that is spread out and spaced.

Network modularity indicates the number of groupings or community formation in the network. The Modularity of the Bintang Emon network has a value of 401 which indicates that this network forms 401 groups or communities. Of these 401 groups or communities, the 4 largest communities are 13.27 percent, 10.95 percent, 9.9 percent, and 6.99 percent. This shows that the formation of communities in this network is quite dispersed but still has dominant communities. In a network, each node occupies a different position. Based on this position, we can understand the role played by that node in the network. The assumption is that the more central the position of a node in a network, the more important and prominent the role played by that node or actor.

The Bintang Emon network is a directed network. That is, the relationships (edges) in this network are relationships that have direction. Concretely, this relationship is a relationship that is formed because mention and retweet activity has a source, namely the account that mentions and retweets, and has a target, namely the account that is mentioned or retweeted. To see nodes, namely Twitter accounts that occupy a central position in a network that has direction, there are several centrality parameters that can be used, namely eccentricity centrality, closeness centrality, in-degree centrality, outgoing level centrality, (out-degree centrality), and intermediary centrality (betweenness centrality).

Table 3. Eccentricity Centrality in #BintangEmonBestBoy  
(June 15, 2020 – June 30, 2020)

Label	Eccentricity
AryTGunadi	5
Allodewii	5
aziz_lian	5
fie3anahaerudin	5
MuhammadMario	5
quotesbucin_15	5
Abd_Karepsina	5
Manusia54527529	5
alfa1174	5
RosaRosaniasari	5

Note: This table shows eccentricity centrality based on SNA with Gephi.

Eccentricity centrality is centrality which indicates the maximum distance from a node (node) to other nodes in the network. The table above shows the Twitter accounts as the node of this network which has the highest eccentricity centrality which is 5 steps. When the diameter of this network is 5, it can be assumed that the Twitter accounts in the table have the opportunity to reach all other Twitter accounts in this network.

Table 4. Closeness Centrality in #BintangEmonBestBoy  
(June 15, 2020 – June 30, 2020)

Label	Closeness Centrality
LonerBo65008320	0.933333
hantuawanmerah	0.928571
Tamyixian	0.928571
Lintaspolitik	0.923077
Exvegazzt	0.918699
Fzhoktav	0.916667

Tworbena	0.916667
MeliWibowo3	0.916667
AdopakpricyllaN	0.916667
AbibRolanda99	0.916667
Moonsharery	0.916667
Sikecilmarmut	0.916667
MarbotAlAqsa	0.916667
Sumadiseloguno	0.916667
Jozgandz	0.913043
vExNjpZKDx	0.909091
Kuncisialan	0.909091
Adadiadikakiku	0.909091
agus_soekro	0.909091

Note: This table shows closeness centrality based on SNA with Gephi.

Proximity centrality is a parameter that indicates how close a node is in the network to be approached and approached other nodes because of the reciprocity of the relationship between these nodes. The table above shows the value of normalized closeness centrality which is above 0.9 or close to 1. This means that these Twitter accounts can approach or be approached by other Twitter accounts in this network with a distance of about 0.9 percent of the average distance. (average path length) in this network which is worth 1355 steps. Thus, about 1 to 2 steps.

Table 5. Indegree Centrality in #BintangEmonBestBoy (June 15, 2020 – June 30, 2020)

Label	indegree
Indostruggles	2594
Bintangemon	1835
LJ_Mansy	1595
Syahraanst	1536
OelekBuloe	1290
Abdnzza	1153
Yogaferri	1126
Semputra18	1000

Note: This table shows indegree centrality based on SNA with Gephi.

Indegree centrality is a parameter that indicates the number of connections received by an actor from other actors in a network (Prell, 2012). In the Bintang Emon network analysis, this parameter shows the number of mentions or retweets that one Twitter account received from another Twitter account. The table above shows the Twitter accounts in the Bintang Emon network that get a lot of mentions or retweets, indicating that these Twitter accounts have influential posts as opinion builders because they are retweeted by other Twitter accounts. In addition, it is also a party that is the goal of discussion because it is mentioned by other Twitter accounts.

Table 6. Outdegree Centrality in #BintangEmonBestBoy  
(June 15, 2020 – June 30, 2020)

Label	outdegree
exvegazzt	105
AsmiYaummi	83
dee_azahraa	75
caramell__0	66

patranitee	59
IndiartiNastiti	53

Note: This table shows outdegree centrality based on SNA with Gephi.

Outdegree Centrality is a parameter that indicates the number of relationships that lead from one actor to other actors in a network (Prell, 2012). In the analysis of the Emon Bintang Twitter network, this parameter indicates the number of mentions or re-tweets made by one Twitter account that lead to other Twitter accounts.

Table 7. Betweenness centrality in #BintangEmonBestBoy (June 15, 2020 – June 30, 2020)

Label	Betweenness centrality
syahraanst	3.062.833.333
mutchiala	81.833.333
mongrniel	53.166.667
JanuariNadia	29.833.333
dlaaptr	4.833.333

Note: This table shows betweenness centrality based on SNA with Gephi.

Betweenness centrality is a parameter that indicates the position of the actor who has the best ability to become an intermediary connecting other actors who are not directly related. this measure shows which nodes are ‘bridges’ between nodes in a network. It does this by identifying all the shortest paths and then counting how many times each node falls on one (Disney, 2020). The table above shows the nodes that have the ability to connect Twitter accounts that are not connected to each other.

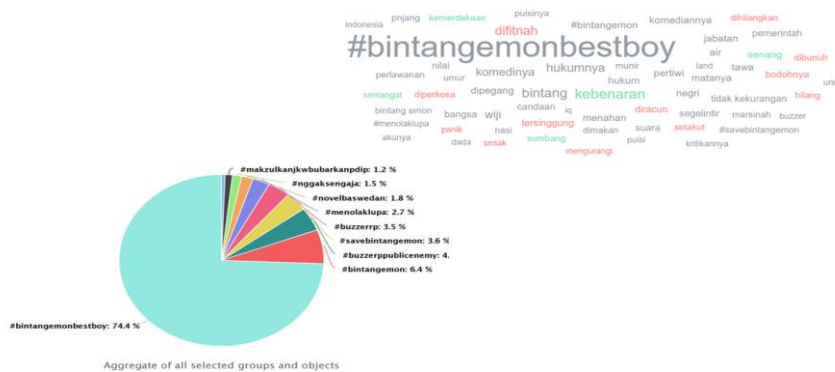


Figure 3. Top Words Most Frequently Used on #BintangEmonBestBoy with Sonar Listening Tools (source: Primary Data, 2020)

From text analysis carried out by researchers manually, in a collection of comments with keywords, these words give negative tendencies related to the case. The picture regarding the finding of social listening tools, there are some words that arise such as Novel Baswedan, save bintang emon, *perlawanan* (resistance), *menolak lupa* (refuse to forget) means that words related to hashtag of Bintang Emon full represent what the public's think of the case. It shows how they fight against the issue online, or we can say as digital activism. This suggests that the general public sentiment toward the case is unfavorable or disapproving. The specific keywords that contribute to these negative tendencies are not detailed in the excerpt, but it's likely that the words reflect anger, frustration, or dissatisfaction with the situation, the handling of the case, or the individuals involved. These sentiments can be critical for understanding how public opinion is shaped

and mobilized around contentious issues, and they provide valuable insights for stakeholders, such as policymakers or activists, in addressing the public's concerns. People are using online platforms to express their thoughts, engage with like-minded individuals, and mobilize others to take action. In this case, the online discourse surrounding *Save Bintang Emon* and *Menolak Lupa* shows that the public is actively participating in efforts to ensure justice and social change through digital platforms.

The questionnaire was distributed to 150 samples, the questions are “*are you following the #BintangEmonBestBoy, are you doing offline activities regarding #BintangEmonBestBoy, and are you making any tweets using #BintangEmonBestBoy?*” There is 72.7% answer yes for the first question, 58.7% answer yes to the second question, but only 4% answer yes for the third question. From this, it can be concluded that they carried out follow-up activities from online activities by looking at Twitter to follow hashtag developments, explaining to friends around about Bintang Emon, making scathing comments against the government. The finding that fandom members are discussing the Bintang Emon case in their surroundings signifies a shift from mere online engagement to real-world conversations. This indicates a deeper commitment to the cause and the desire to keep the momentum of the movement alive. Bintang Emon's main reason for voicing his opinion regarding the acid attack on Novel Baswedan was actually a form of concern. According to him, this is an effort to silence a new model so that it is quite dangerous if allowed to continue. At that time, Bintang Emon made a video as he usually makes videos on Instagram to express his opinion.

He explained that it was purely their own concern. He mentioned that before, had been a stand-up comedian, creating material based on anxiety, but when Covid hit, stand-up and open mic activities completely disappeared. However, since they were used to writing, they shifted to making videos on social media. Before the case of Novel Baswedan, they had discussed similar topics several times, but never really touched on public policy, especially since cases like that had never occurred. They shared that they made the video about Novel Baswedan after seeing the news, which had been out for a day or two, and they felt it hadn't received the attention it deserved. Bintang Emon further stated that it was quite scary and significant, explaining that Mr. Novel wasn't an ordinary person, and yet he was being treated in such a way. He questioned whether people realized how dangerous the situation was, pointing out that it could happen to anyone. In fact, this actually made his name tarnished because he was declared a person who had a history of drug use. Not remaining silent, many then supported Twitter on social media by using the hashtag #BintangEmonBestBoy as a form of resistance from the Twitter community against attacks on Bintang Emon.

The response from K-pop fans in the hashtag #BintangEmonBestBoy as well as other such hashtags can indeed be interpreted as movement from fans. As a fan movement, this phenomenon shows that K-pop fans have turned into a movement to support freedom of opinion and criticize the authorities and fight against the anti-criticism shown by the authorities or the supporters of the authorities. However, most digital movements only end up as clicktivism with no social impact. The results of the interview with Bintang Emon show that Bintang Emon is also aware that the activity of K-pop fans in voicing positive things is something that they often do. This is shown through a statement from Bintang Emon as follows, “*This isn't the first time that Korean fandom friends have participated in things that are outside of Korea. They also do a lot of things for them ... and this is not my first time. I mean they are also uh ... not something foreign*”

*to them ... I'm used to it ... because even now I think ... whenever I see a trending topic on Twitter, it's always dominated by Korean fandoms."*

## Discussion

The purpose of this study is to observe how a popular culture fan community can change over time to become a social movement in the digital world. This study seeks to observe the factors driving fandom to carry out movements to see how digital culture in the form of clicktivism is formed through the #BintangEmonBestBoy fandom movement on Twitter, as well as to obtain a description of Fandom's Digital Culture. One of the characteristics of media fandom is the recognition of a positive, personal, relatively deep, emotional connection with a mediated element of popular culture (Bangun et al., 2022).

As mentioned before, fan behaviors are not only intended to actively produce, consume, and distribute cultural materials but also engage with social movement. It is supported by the access and the ability to interact with media texts made possible by digital technology, making fans a community or group that can easily turn into a movement or activism, that goes beyond consumerist or cultural spheres and impacts politics (Jenkins, 1992). In this case, K-pop fans engage with political issues through the #BintangEmonBestBoy to advocate Bintang Emon seeking to prevent criminalization stemming from his advocacy for justice for Novel Baswedan, who was a victim of an acid attack linked to corruption within the context of opposing political power relation. Here, fan activism became a networked practice and collective intelligence under the hashtag to impact politics as a counter-political power. #BintangEmonBestBoy with a large size network (see Table 1) also demonstrates the ubiquitous movement practices trend and their association with Internet usage proving fan activism as a social movement can reveal a hidden potential to contrast tactically identical social and political struggle (Earl, J., & Kimport, 2009).

The Internet has increasingly served as a platform for the emergence of cybermovements. A significant portion of scholarly work on e-activism emphasizes groups with political objectives rather than advocacy centered on entertainment. While opinions differ on whether online mobilization qualifies as genuine social movements, the research highlights several key concepts relevant to this case study (Scardaville, 2005). Social media platforms, like Twitter, give the space of autonomy (Castells, 2015), allowing followers to share their adoration, feelings, and hopes for their idols and interact with other fans worldwide to strengthen the fandom (Stanfil, 2019). Based on the result of social listening research, it is found that the combination of manual text analysis and social listening tools offers a powerful way to track fan activism emerging under the hashtag. The keywords identified through these methods reflect a larger narrative of resistance and demand for accountability. The rise of phrases like *Perlawanan* and *Menolak Lupa* highlights the significant role social media plays in modern activism, providing individuals with the tools to protest, resist, and demand justice in real time. Based on the findings, most tweets that used these hashtags were retweets, for that, the use of social media in a social movement can amplify the movement where the fandom turns into activism as seen by the highest indegree centrality of Indostruggles which is the K-Pop fandom base (see Table 4). Barisione & Ceron (2017) mentioned that social-networking platforms and other digital media affordances, having objectively enhanced and transformed the public space for opinion expression and citizen mobilisation, are challenging established notions of public opinion and collective action.

Having said that, there are important stances that this study also reveals. Firstly, fan activism can occur with or without communities. A culture of autonomy, constituted by the space of autonomy, converts outrage into hope in individuals under the value of togetherness. Here, it does not have to belong to given communities, rather the activism is individual, leaderless, horizontal, and spontaneous (Moreno Esparza, 2015) in spite of the same fandom basis. The phenomenon can be seen in the highest outdegree and betweenness centrality which is triggered by individuals who are fans instead of fandom communities (see Table 5 and 6). Under the #BintangEmonBestBoy, fans delicate their shared value of justice and solidarity which brings them collective action. Nevertheless, fan activism does not turn into real social action but social media roaring. Despite the large network of #BintangEmonBestBoy, its network density is considered low (see Table 1). It proves that there is no tight connection or cohesiveness between fan activism and political participation realistically, rather it is only sporadic activism in the online realm that is inclined to be clicktivism (Castells, 2015; Jenkins, 2015; Morozov, 2012; Yilmaz, 2017). The rise of social media as a networked space for public opinion formation, circulation, and expression does not necessarily tell us much about the content of those interactions (Luna et al., 2022). The goodness criteria in this research aim to generate a hypothesis that can be evaluated for its applicability across different contexts.

(Jenkins et al., 2016) mentioned that participatory politics are enabled by networked collectives and new media. Studies that have applied the confrontation between fandom and state power to nationalism and digital culture (Liu, 2019; Schneider, 2018) have shown that fandom and its culture are never free from the power structures and values of the society to which individuals belong (Shimauchi, 2024). Even though not most people actually engage in groups, the internet makes it more accessible. There's incredible potential to increase personal agency in politics and social change. Youth recognize that they can build meaningful networks and challenge the status quo. They often organize through networked publics, using technology to coordinate, communicate, and activate. Regarding this, Jenkins stated that there's no single ideological orientation has a monopoly on the virtues of a more participatory culture. Just like the internet culture, the participatory culture has countercultural and anti-authoritarian valences reflecting its roots, but it is also increasingly intertwined with commercial and capitalist forms of cultural and technological production. The orientation towards collective action and peer-to-peer sharing sits uneasily next to values of individual freedom and autonomy. In another study, the reason why fans participating in the campaign because they feel like it became a means of validating their cumulative history as fans and a way to reinvest meaning into something that had been devalued (Scardaville, 2005). The most cited reason the respondents gave for their activism related to their perception of the show as an extended family. Seeing the results of the questionnaire distributed to 150 samples, almost all respondents stated that they did not carry out further offline activities after they tweeted about #BintangEmonBestBoy.

They only used the internet, participated in the hashtag to communicate online, and echoed their concerns regarding Bintang Emon. Participatory culture depends upon processes of collective deliberation and shared reflection. The results of the questionnaire, where nearly all respondents indicated that they did not engage in offline activities after tweeting about #BintangEmonBestBoy, raise several key issues about the nature of participatory culture and the limitations of digital-only activism. Although the respondents participated in the hashtag online, they did not extend their participation into real-world actions such as protests, meetings, or events. This indicates the absence of



offline engagements. The statement that "*participatory culture depends upon processes of collective deliberation and shared reflection*" might suggest that true participation requires both online and offline actions. The lack of offline participation doesn't necessarily mean the movement is not part of a participatory culture, it just shows how the digital activism took place in internet only movement. The lack of success to extend to offline activities does not negate the value of the online engagement itself. While the absence of offline engagement may limit certain aspects of participatory culture, it still constitutes a meaningful form of expression and collective action in the digital space. Acknowledging the limitations of digital-only participation is also important. As for the continuation of the hashtag #BintangEmonBestBoy, it turns out that it was also carried out, so that the issue of clicktivism did not only stop at embedding hashtags or tweeting on social media, but also talking to the surrounding environment so that they would continue to enliven the conversation about the Bintang Emon case. The findings surrounding fan activism in the digital world, particularly in the context of hashtag movements like #BintangEmonBestBoy, open up several areas for future research and studies. These areas can help further understand the dynamics of online movements, the role of fandoms in activism, and how digital activism could evolve in the future.

The limitation and weaknesses of this research is from the sample size of 150 respondents that may not fully represent the broader fanbase or the diversity of participants in the hashtag movement. the questionnaire only captures online participation (tweets and hashtag usage) without probing deeper into the quality of engagement behind the online actions. It's possible that respondents might feel they contributed meaningfully by tweeting, even if no offline actions followed. The study may overlook other forms of offline engagement that don't involve traditional activities like rallies, protests, or meetups. For example, some fans might engage in indirect offline actions such as discussions with friends, influencing others' opinions about Bintang Emon, even though in the questionnaire result, there is the answer about explaining to others about the hashtag activities, but researcher not digging deeper into this answer. The other limitations according the result is that the K-pop fan movement supports freedom of opinion and criticizes authorities, but it also acknowledges that such digital movements often result in clicktivism, which implies a lack of real-world change. While fans using hashtags might represent an effort to mobilize, social movements typically involve sustained collective action with broader social goals, a shared agenda, and strategic objectives. By focusing solely on digital actions, the study overlooks the possibility of offline activism that could arise from digital movements.

## Conclusion

There are several supporting and driving factors for fandom in carrying out this movement, the researcher had assumed that one of them was due to political elements, but after conducting a survey it turned out that this was not the main issue. Apart from that, Bintang Emon also knows that fandom movements are common, that when there is an issue that needs to be raised on social media, they can actively move, participate by responding together under certain hashtags so that the topic can become trending. topic. It can be concluded that the participation of fans in carrying out movements on social media is a phenomenon that is quite significant and can be ignored, that they do repeated voicing on social media so that they get attention from various groups. One of the results was that the accusations against Bintang Emon were not proven and the charges were withdrawn from the police. Participation is not absolute; it's defined in opposition to the

dominant structures of institutionalized power. Future studies could explore how the mobilization techniques used by fandoms (e.g., viral campaigns, hashtags, and collective action) could be applied to more traditional social justice movements.

### Conflict of Interest

We certify that there is no conflict of interest with any financial, personal, or other relationships with other people or organization related to the material discussed in the manuscript.

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