INFORMATION NEEDS FULFILLMENT OF K-POP FANS THROUGH THE USE OF LYSN SOCIAL MEDIA

Jesslyn Laiyenes[1], Lusia Savitri Setyo Utami[2*]

[1]Faculty of Communication Science, Tarumanagara University, Jakarta
[2]Faculty of Communication Science, Tarumanagara University, Jakarta
Email: lusias@fikom.untar.ac.id

*Corresponding author

ABSTRACT

Technology development eases the process for humans to fulfill information needs by giving birth to new media. One form of new media is social media. Nowadays, to meet humans' information needs, we can use many social media, one of them is Lysn. Lysn is a social media that only provides information about K-Pop. This research aims to describe the fulfilment of K-Pop fans' information needs through the use of Lysn, uses several supporting theories: mass communications, new media, social media, uses and gratifications theory, information needs, and fandom. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Research data were obtained from observation, in-depth interviews with four informants, documentation, and literature study. This research shows that K-Pop fans get the fulfilment of their information needs through Lysn. Information obtained from Lysn has succeeded in meeting the five needs of audiences in media. In addition, K-Pop fans also expressed their satisfaction with the information obtained from Lysn. Lysn's presence positively impacts the K-Pop fandom because it provides a fun experience and information that cannot be found in other media.

Keywords: *Mass communication, social media, uses and gratifications theory, korean wave*

1.   PREFACE

Nowadays, obtaining and exchanging information is made easy thanks to the help of the internet. According to Kadir, the internet is a communication medium in a computer network connected to the whole world that allows users to obtain and exchange information quickly without recognizing regional, cultural and legal boundaries [1]. Therefore, many phenomena are easy to experience and are known by people from various parts of the world. One of these phenomena is K-Pop. Social media is one of the internet products that play an important role in the globalization process of the K-Pop phenomenon. The rapid growth of social media has helped K-Pop have many new opportunities and be able to enter many markets that used to be challenging to reach, such as America, Europe, and Southeast Asia [2]. K-Pop is a music from South Korea, but thanks to the help of social media, K-Pop fans from all over the world can access various information they need about their idols without having to physically come to the country where their idol is located. One social media that can help K-Pop fans fulfill their information needs is Lysn social media. Lysn social media is an application that only provides information about K-Pop [3]. Data from Google Play Store reveals that Lysn has been released since 2018 and until this day has been downloaded by more than one million users [4]. Lysn's social media features distinguish it from others because some parts cannot be found on other social media, such as ACE and bubble. Through these features, fans of K-Pop idols can get a lot of information about their idols. Starting from their idol's latest schedule, exclusive content, to chatting directly with their idol [3]. Satisfaction will be present if a media succeeds in meeting the information needs of its users [5]. Just like other media, if it has fulfilled the information needs of its users, then Lysn's social media will provide satisfaction for K-Pop fans who use it. Based on this background, the formulation of the research problem is how to fulfill the information needs of K-Pop fans through the use of

Lysn social media. Katz, Gurevitch, and Haas classify the types of audience needs that can be satisfied by social media into five categories [6]. These categories are: (a) cognitive needs; (b) affective needs; (c) Personal integration needs; (d) social integration needs; (e) tension release needs.

Novianto in his research, stated that information is needed to meet the needs of audiences in the media [7]. Information needs can occur because of an imbalance of knowledge in humans, namely between the knowledge possessed and the ability needed [8]. If the information needs are met, there will be a sense of satisfaction for the media users [9]. The focus of Lysn's social media users is K-Pop fans because the information provided is only about K-Pop. The term for a group of fans is fandom [10]. The fan community themselves created the term to meet and communicate with people interested in the same thing [11]. The presence of social media makes the experience of being in fandom more enjoyable because it can make it easier for fans to interact with people who have the same interests and meet each other's information needs by creating and sharing information about the things they like [12].

Mass communication

Bittner stated that "mass communication is a message communicated through mass media to a large number of people (mass communication is messages communicated through a mass medium to a large number of people") [13]. The mass media referred to by Bittner are print media, online media, radio, and television. This research is related to mass communication because mass media is a tool used by the object of study in providing information to a dispersed audience. The media is Lysn's social media.

New media

New media is a term that emerged when technological developments allowed interactions to be carried out online with the help of the internet without having to meet face-to-face [14]. New media can be interpreted as a communication technology tool that can be a place for online interactions, for example, social media, blogs, and online discussion forums [14]. According to Holmes, the internet is the initial cause of the emergence of new media because conventional media has many shortcomings. It cannot be used at any time, is not real-time, and does not allow interaction for media users [14]. In this study, the research subject, namely K-Pop fans, used new media, namely Lysn social media, to obtain information about K-Pop idols.

Social media

One form of new media is social media [15]. The birth of social media makes information delivery more effective and efficient [16]. Cahyono defines social media as online media that allows users to easily participate, share, and create content, including blogs, wikis, forums, social networks, and virtual worlds [17]. As internet technology-based media, social media comes in two forms, namely sites and applications [18]. A site is a page that contains various data such as text, images, to sound and is accessed through a browser [19]. Meanwhile, the application is software that must be downloaded first through the device's operating system to be accessed by users via mobile devices such as smartphones [20].

Kaplan and Haenlein classify social media into six types [17], namely: (a) Collaborative project, this type of social media allows users to add, replace, and delete various content in this media. An example of this type of social media is Wikipedia; (b) blogs and microblogs, this type of social media has a diary-like format and has many complementary features such as comments, images, and videos. Users are freer to express what they want because of the

more personalized form. An example of this type of social media is Twitter; (c) community content. This type of social media allows users to share content to discuss the content. The profile information that needs to be filled in is only basic information, such as nickname and date of joining. An example of this type of social media is YouTube; (d) social networking sites, this type of social media allows users to connect and show and share personal information about users, such as photos, videos, and text. An example of this type of social media is Facebook; (e) virtual game world, this type of social media is in the form of a virtual world that contains games where many players (multiplayer) can show themselves in the form of avatars and interact with other users. An example of this type of social media is Mobile Legends; (f) Virtual social world, this type of social media is in the form of a virtual world and displays real-life situations and displays users in the form of avatars, making users feel as if they are living in this virtual world. An example of this type of social media is The Sims.

Lysn social media is included in the category of community content because it allows users to interact and share information but does not require users to show detailed identities about themselves. In addition, Lysn social media is included in the form of an application because users must first download it to use it.

Uses and gratificatios theory
Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch stated that the Uses and Gratifications Theory is a theory that seeks to find out social and psychological needs that encourage audiences to use specific media and explain why audiences actively choose certain media to satisfy their needs [21]. Katz, Gurevitch, and Haas classify the types of audience needs that can be satisfied by social media into five categories [6].
These categories are: (a) Cognitive needs, the need to gain understanding and knowledge; (b) affective needs, the need to get an uplifting, sentimental, and aesthetic experience; (c) personal integration needs, the need to increase one's self-confidence, credibility, and status; (d) social integration needs, the need to strengthen interactions with family, friends, the world, and others; (e) tension release needs, the need to avoid problems, stress, and tension.

Using Uses and Gratifications Theory in this study, the author wants to describe in depth how to fulfill the information needs of K-Pop fans through the use of Lysn social media to meet the five types of audience needs in social media, according to Katz, Gurevitch, and Haas.

Information needs
Novianto in his research, stated that information is needed to meet the needs of audiences in the media [7]. The thing that causes the emergence of information needs in humans is the imbalance of knowledge, namely, between the knowledge possessed and the knowledge needed [8]. If humans act looking for every effort to meet the information needs and the information needs have been completed, there will be a sense of satisfaction [8].

Fandom
The focus of Lysn's social media users is K-Pop fans because the information provided is only about K-Pop. The term for a group of fans is fandom [10]. The fan community themselves created the term to meet and communicate with people interested in the same thing [11]. The presence of social media makes the experience of being in fandom more enjoyable because it can make it easier for fans to interact with people who have the same interests and meet each other's information needs by creating and sharing information about the things they like [12].

2.   RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach. According to Moleong, a qualitative approach is used to analyze to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects and have descriptive characteristics and have the form of research data in the form of text or narrative [22]. Mwambakulu & Chikumba reveal that the number of Uses and Gratifications Theory research that uses a qualitative approach is limited in terms of number and also says that this is very unfortunate because although a quantitative approach can find out about usage patterns. The quantitative approach tends to be general and does not provide more specific, in-depth, unique, and personal views like a qualitative approach [23]. The method used by the author in this study is a case study method. The author chooses the case study method because it is considered appropriate for this research to describe in-depth and detail what K-Pop fans get, feel, and experience who use Lysn social media to meet their information needs. This is following the opinion of Lincoln and Guba that the case study method is used to conduct an in-depth analysis of the research subject [24]. The subjects in this study were selected according to the following criteria: (a) K-Pop fans; (b) active user of Lysn social media and have been using Lysn social media for more than one month; (c) 18-25 years old; (c) have used all the features available on Lysn social media, including the paid ones.

Based on these criteria, the author then selected four informants who fit the criteria above as informants for this research. The authors use in-depth interviews, participatory observation, literature study, and documentation to obtain research data. Meanwhile, the data analysis technique that the author uses is the Miles and Huberman Model data processing and analysis technique which includes data reduction, data presentation, and concluding [25]. To test the validity of the author's data, the author conducted interviews with a lecturer at the Faculty of Communication Studies who has taught at the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta since 2008. She acts as the triangulator for this research. The focus of her studies is on new media and the Korean Wave phenomenon.

3.   RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Lysn's social media as a mass media has a mass communication process that goes well because all of the informants of this research often give the same answer regarding the information obtained. This research's triangulator stated this in an interview with the author. She also added that this indicates that the context of the information can get the same understanding from its users. There are five types of audience needs in the media in the uses and gratifications theory. The information obtained by the informants of this study succeeded in fulfilling these five types of needs. Here is the description:

(a)   Cognitive needs
Informant I obtained information to fulfill the cognitive needs is a new fact about his idol. What informant II obtained is the daily schedule of his idol, such as doing music promotion activities. Meanwhile, the information obtained by informant III is information about the style and pattern of sending messages to his idol, and the information obtained by informant IV is new facts and his idol's daily routine. The author made observations on Lysn's social media by using its features and got the result that in the DearU bubble feature, K-Pop idols freely tell new things what is happening to them that fans don't know yet. Meanwhile, the community feature ultimately informs the activities of K-Pop idols starting from the name of the activity, the hour of the activity, to the members who take part in the activity in the schedule section by marking the date.

(b)   Affective needs

Informant I obtained information to fulfill the affective need is information about the content being prepared by her idol. Informant II gets information in the form of news about the condition of her idol. Information obtained by informant III is information about the concept and appearance of her idol for new song promotion activities. Information obtained by informant IV is the latest news about the condition of her idol and what her idol is doing. Based on the author's observations, K-Pop idols often send messages they don't share in other media. The context is personal, like their daily lives and feelings. The message was conveyed to fans directly by the idol through the DearU bubble feature. The language used is also informal, giving the impression of exchanging messages with close friends.

(c)   Personal integration needs

Information that meets the personal integration needs of informant I and informant II is information about their idol's daily life. Meanwhile, information that fulfills the needs of informant III is information about the everyday life of her idol, along with photos from photoshoots that do not qualify for inclusion in albums and posters. And for informant IV, information that meets her personal integration needs is information about her idol's appearance for upcoming music promotion activities. The four informants said they felt that they had fulfilled the need for personal integration because the information they got from Lysn's social media increased their social status among fellow K-Pop fans, which grew their self-confidence.

(d)   Social Integration Needs

Information that can meet the social integration needs of informant I is a new fact about her idol. For informant II, information that can satisfy her social integration needs is information about her idol's comeback activities or new music promotions carried out by her idols. For informant III, information that can meet this need is information about the daily life of her idol and information about her idol's comeback activities. Meanwhile, the information obtained by informant IV to fulfill this need is information about the daily activities and information about her idol's comeback activities. The four informants revealed that they fulfilled social integration needs because the information they got from the DearU bubble feature was mysterious, current, and had never been discussed before. Thus, causing interaction between the informants and their friends to discuss it.

(e)   Tension release needs

Information that satisfies the need to release Informant I's tension is information in the form of photos, the contents of which tell the news and condition of the idol's self and information that her idol cares about fans. Informant II, Informant III, and Informant IV revealed the same information to fulfill their tension release needs, namely that their idols are very considerate of fans. Based on the author's observations, K-Pop idols often take the time to talk, ask about their fans' day, and encourage. The K-Pop idol started the conversation in an everyday language that created an atmosphere close to the idol.

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that the information obtained from the use of Lysn's social media can meet five types of audience needs in the media, thus indicating the fulfillment of information. In addition, all informants also revealed that they were satisfied with the information obtained from Lysn's social media. This also shows information fulfillment, as Nindariati said that media that has fulfilled information needs would give users satisfaction [5]. The triangulator of this research said that the informants could get a sense of satisfaction because the information they were looking for but could not find in other media

could be obtained on Lysn's social media. Saraswati & Nurbaity said that social media makes the experience of being in fandom more enjoyable because it can strengthen interaction activities between fans, and fans can meet each other's information needs by creating and sharing information about the things they like [12]. The four informants who are part of the K-Pop fandom revealed that Lysn's social media presence could further increase interaction activities between them and their friends who have the same interests by sharing and discussing information about idols they like.

Figure 1
Lysn Social Media Logo
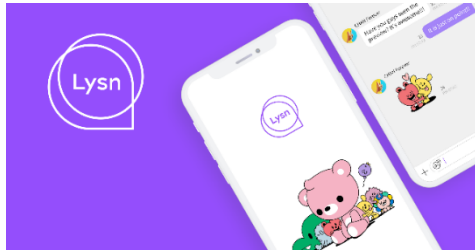
Source: *Lysn.com (2019)*

This research's triangulator said that the presence of Lysn's social media had a positive impact on the K-Pop fandom because it could quickly meet their various needs. In addition, she also said that the demand for information is increasing over time, including the K-Pop fandom. She noted that K-Pop fandoms are increasingly looking for personal information about their idols. That's because they want to feel closer, as friends with their idols. Therefore, according to her, Lysn's social media is a technology product that is very useful for the K-Pop fandom because it provides a lot of personal information about K-Pop idols. Based on the explanation above, the author sees that Lysn's social media provides the information needed by K-Pop fans. According to the Uses and Gratifications Theory, this shows from the audience's five needs in the media, which experienced fulfillment and satisfaction expressed by all informants. In addition, the author also sees that Lysn's social media presence has a positive impact on K-Pop fandom.

4.   CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study results show that K-Pop fans obtain information fulfillment through the use of Lysn's social media. Fulfillment of information occurs because the information obtained from Lysn's social media has succeeded in fulfilling the five needs of the audience in the media, namely cognitive needs, affective needs, personal integration needs, social integration needs, and tension release needs. As well as the emergence of satisfaction from all informants regarding the information they get from Lynn social media. The author also finds that Lysn's social media has a positive impact on the K-Pop fandom because it strengthens the interaction between fans and provides a lot of information sought after by the K-Pop fandom but cannot be found in other media. Based on the results of this study, the authors would like to suggest that further research should compare the fulfillment of information obtained by K-Pop fans from Lysn social media with other social media to find out how much satisfaction of information obtained from Lysn social media. Expanding research subjects to the international realm can also help researchers develop the topic. Then, the results of this study also show that the fulfillment of information obtained by all informants from Lysn's social media only comes from three of the five features available on Lysn's social media. Therefore, the author suggests that Lysn's social media can further optimize the other two features so that K-Pop fans can also use it to meet their information needs.

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