

## **The Potential and Limits of Fandom-based Charitable Activism in Indonesia**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Fandom-based social movement, particularly charitable activism, has become increasingly widespread globally in today's digital era. The digital platform plays a massive role in the emergence of a new crowdfunding trend. This study aims to examine the potential and limitations of fandom-based charitable activism in Indonesia and to what extent this activism plays a role in empowering marginalized communities. This research employed a qualitative approach based on secondary data collected from several sources. This article finds that high loyalty and solidity positively correlate with the level of fan involvement in contributing to charitable activities. The youth's dominance and attachment to technology and social media potentially make this movement a broader and long-term impact. However, these activities tend to be sporadic and have not yet addressed the specific issues of marginalized communities. Also, the dependence of fans on the existence of their idols is a challenge for this movement.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

For most of human history, citizens of civilised regions have provided social welfare as non-governmental initiatives in the form of charities motivated by religious beliefs (Midgley, 1999). In fact, fundraising through the charity movement has significantly impacted society since the reign of the Dutch East Indies, presently Indonesia (Fauzia, 2017b). The budgetary constraint of government for social policies makes this charity movement have a significant impact. Also, the high solidarity and generosity of the Indonesian people make this activity carried out consciously and voluntarily as a form of love and humanity that can collect considerable funds. World Giving Index 2021 confirmed Indonesia as the most generous country globally (Filantropi, 2021).

In today's digital era, new trends have emerged in fundraising through charity activities since crowdfunding platforms have become more popular as they offer many conveniences. Digital

platforms, such as Kitabisa.com, Ayopeduli.id, and Gandeng Tangan, can be used for social campaigns to raise funds for education, humanity, medical, natural disasters, SMEs, and many more. As a result, charity activities are increasing globally, including those organised by fandom. The fans of celebrities, bands, movies, books or TV series make charity one of their areas of activity.

The distribution of charity donations has reached various vulnerable and marginalized groups in society. Marginalized groups experience discrimination and exclusion in society because they do not have access to resources and are under-represented in social life because of unequal power relations in socio-economic, political, and cultural terms. Ghana S. Gurung and Michael Kollmair explain the two main conceptual frameworks of marginality, namely societal and spatial. Marginal groups based on social status are formed due to demographic factors, religion, culture, and social structure (ethnicity, gender). While spatially, marginal groups are those in remote areas in a physical sense and live in areas with poor infrastructure (2007). In Indonesia, we can further say that this group includes the poor, vulnerable workers, child labourers, women, people with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, and religious minorities. This study aimed to analyze the extent to which the potential and limitations of fandom-based charity movements in Indonesia. Besides, this article sought to unravel whether the activity contributes to fighting for certain issues and plays a role in empowering marginalized communities. Several fandom groups in Indonesia have been taken as case studies, complemented by a related topic in another country to get a picture of this phenomenon.

Based on the background indicated earlier, this study proposes to answer the following questions. First, what are the potential and limitations of fandom-based charity activism in Indonesia? Second, to what extent does fandom-based charitable activism play a role in empowering marginalized communities?

Some researchers have analyzed the fan culture phenomena, including how it influenced the fans' social actions. Kusuma et al. (2020) and Wahyuningtyas and Kusuma (2021) studied how fandom groups' cultural identity takes manifestation in the role of local fandom groups as social agents that influence the popularity of their idols. As social agents, they promote social awareness among the youth to build the idol group's positive image.

However, some people still perceive loyal fans with a negative stigma as they see the toxic side of fandom competitiveness. Some studies (Kusuma et al., 2020; Wahyuningtyas & Kusuma, 2021) found that doing charity activities in the name of the fandom gave members a sense of pride, representing their solidity and contribution to society. This also aims to fight against fandom's negative stigma, which images them as fanatical and extravagant fans. Similarly, Wonho Jang and Jung Eun Song (2017) argue that fans (K-Pop fans) contributed to philanthropy for their reputation and improved their image regarding the negative stigma attached.

In charitable fandom-based, initiatives emerge from the idol or the fans themselves. Some researchers pointed out that most fundraising was initiated by those active in the fandom. When it comes to donating, everybody gets involved, regardless level of engagement with the fandom. For instance, they will organize charity activities or assist the poor during a natural disaster. Sometimes

these activities are carried out to coincide with certain moments, such as the idol's birthday (Kusuma et al., 2020; Seymour et al., 2014; Wahyuningtyas & Kusuma, 2021).

On the other hand, the internet and digitalization give a significant role by providing easy access to communication to collaborate and carry out campaigns, fundraising, and charity projects. Social media helps build good relations and trust among fandom members. Likewise, the existence of a digital platform can provide convenience in making donations. Transparency in collecting and distributing funds can also increase donors' trust in charity or digital philanthropy and eliminate the negative stigma sometimes attached to conventional donation activities (Hidayat, 2019).

However little research has focused on how fandom-based charities in Indonesia have the potential as non-state welfare providers and how their actions affect marginalized groups in society. This study examines fandom-based charities from that perspective.

## **METHODS**

This study employs qualitative research methods to analyze the extent to which Fandom-Based Charity Activism occurs in Indonesia. It uses secondary data to address the research questions by reviewing and analyzing existing scholarly papers and public information relevant to the issue such as online news articles, academic journals, books, social media, and other relevant sources. According to John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell (2018), a qualitative method is an approach used to explore and understand the meaning of research subjects for social or human problems. This method on text and image data where the researcher interprets the meaning of the data. Furthermore, qualitative data and analysis of the results of this study are presented descriptively.

The research data are charitable activities that have been carried out by several fandom groups in Indonesia in the 2020-2022 period. The authors chose two fandom groups in Indonesia, namely ARMY, fans of the Korean band BTS and Leslar Lovers as fans of the artist couple Lesti Kejora and Rizky Bilar by considering the number of followers and their existence in charity activities. The collection procedures in this research are digital materials in the form of information, reports, photos, or infographics that are accessed through the official social media of each fandom, the online crowdfunding platforms used, and online news. Considering that there are quite a several campaigns carried out by small ARMY groups in Indonesia, this research takes 25 campaigns conducted by ARMY on 3 platforms, namely kitabisa.com, benihbaik.com, and Twitter as research data. As for Leslar Lovers, 17 campaigns can be found on the kitabisa.com platform with the keyword "Leslar Lovers" within the specified timeframe.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Models of Charitable Activism: Past and Present**

The terms charity and philanthropy are occasionally interchangeable, although there are some notable differences. While charities address immediate situations in the short term, philanthropy further addresses the root causes of social problems and needs a more strategic long-term approach (Fauzia, 2017a). However, both philanthropy and charity are mentioned as non-governmental welfare-needs providers (Guerrero O & Wilkins, 2016).

Charitable activism has played a role in providing social welfare in Indonesia since the reign of the Dutch East Indies. It was initiated by faith-based organizations, especially Protestantism and Catholicism, followed by Islamic modernist organizations in the 20th century (Fauzia, 2017b).

The concept of faith-based charity is carried out through social activities to provide services to people in need or with difficulty. Both Catholic and Protestant churches have promoted the church's social involvement in community development and health care. While in Islam, charity is in line with the concepts of *zakat*, *infaq*, and *sadaqah*, which aim to redistribute wealth in society equitably. The emergence of Muslim organizations (*Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdatul Ulama*) and the *Dompot Dhuafa Foundation*<sup>1</sup> was able to increase public awareness to distribute *zakat*, *infaq*, *sadaqah*, and *waqaf* to be further allocated for poverty alleviation (Sakai, 2012).

On the other hand, the private charity movement also emerged in the mid-20th century when famine and food shortages hit Dutch East Indies. Several charitable organizations active in Semarang played a relatively small yet significant role in assisting the poor (A. E. G. (Sander) Tetteroo, 2014). Furthermore, during the Mount Semeru and Mount Kelud eruptions in the early 1900s, local notables formed a relief committee called Semeru Fund (*Smeroefonds*) to organize donations to help victims (S. Tetteroo, 2015).

As technology advances and crowdfunding platforms become more popular, charities often use them to raise money, so new charity trends are emerging. In parallel, young people's increasingly widespread use of social media in this digitalization era has also contributed to the rise of social activities. There are many ways to collect donations. Apart from faith-based charities, other mediums such as fandom-based have spread worldwide and got more popular in Indonesian society.

*Fandom* is a term used to describe a community built around mutual enjoyment of certain aspects of popular cultures, such as movies, TV series, books, bands, sports or sports teams, and public figures. Eva Cheuk-Yin Li (2021) perceives this community as a socio-cultural phenomenon with creativity, fun, and productivity that characterizes its members. Seymour et al. (2014) argue that fandom is a vibrant and socially rewarding place where people come together to share interests and ideas and sometimes work to change the world in both online and offline spaces. Not only limited to personal fulfilment in expressing aspirations but fandom is also seen as having another significant potential, for example, its involvement in influencing socio-political changes in society (Li, 2021). Fandom's participatory culture runs in both online and offline spaces. The ability of fans to participate and share excitement among the member is one of the most striking features of the fandom phenomenon.

### **Fandom-Based Charitable Activism in Indonesia**

This study examines two fandom groups in Indonesia with numerous members. To begin with, a K-Pop fandom called ARMY stands for "Adorable Representative M.C. for Youth," the official

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<sup>1</sup> Dompot Dhuafa is a non-profit organization belonging to the world community dedicated to raising the social dignity of humanity for the poor. It was founded in 1993 by a journalist in the Indonesian daily newspaper *Republika*.

fandom of the Korean boyband BTS (Bangtan Sonyeondan). ARMY is considered the enormous fandom in the current K-pop scenario in the world, and according to a survey conducted by the BTS ARMY, Indonesia is the third-ranked country with the highest number of fans. The survey also shows that 96.23% of fans are female and under 30 (2022). The influence of Korean culture in Indonesia has begun to develop since the 2000s and continues. The Korean Wave has attracted many fans, especially young people, starting with Korean dramas (K-Drama) on television, followed by Korean Pop (K-Pop).

Based on the data the authors collected, the 25 fundraising campaigns carried out by the BTS fandom (ARMY) cover various sectors such as support for victims of natural disasters, the poor, victims of sexual violence, persons with disabilities, as well as for environmental causes, and even animal protection. Fandom groups usually hold fundraisers on various occasions such as a member's birthday, a form of support for an idol campaign, or during a disaster or emergency. In Indonesia, ARMY is spread across various provinces, giving rise to small fandom groups based on region and interest, and so does in terms of fundraising. Based on the data in Table 1 below, the charity activities carried out by ARMY are dominated by fundraising for victims of natural disasters. Interestingly, the "ARMY Bantu Ojol" campaign (donation of lunch and health kits for online drivers), a thank you form from fandom members to the drivers in the BTS Meal program, managed to collect large donations reaching 465 million in a relatively short time (Validnews, 2021; Kitabisa, 2021). Conversely, sexual violence toward women and empowering persons with disabilities still receive little attention.

NO	CAMPAIGN	AMOUNT	
1	Bantu Difabel di Ulah Suga	Donation of 37 wheelchairs for people with disabilities	Rp 73,016,293
2	Menanam Pohon Untuk Ulah J-Hope	Planting 5,417 tree seedlings in Bontang (East Kalimantan) and Semarang (Central Java)	Rp 60,000,038
3	ARMY Indonesia Peduli Bencana	Donation of basic food packages for flood and earthquake victims	Rp 694,141,831
4	Ulah V Berbagi untuk Satwa	Donations made to animal shelters	Rp 83,915,782
5	Berbagi untuk Saling Peduli	Planting mangrove seedlings and assistance in the education sector	Rp 28,234,883
6	Ulah Seokjin Berbagi Makanan di RS	Free food donation for patients and health workers at Mitra Sejati Hospital Medan and for flood victims in Medan	Rp 90,079,536
7	Cinta untuk Yayasan Peduli Kasih dari BTS Jimin	Donations were handed over to Yayasan Peduli Kasih	Rp 30,287,340
8	CINTA UNTUK YKAKI DARI BTS RM & JK	Donations were handed over to Yayasan Kasih Anak Kanker Indonesia (YKAKI)	Rp 37,088,149
9	BTS ARMY UNTUK INDONESIA	Basic food packages for underprivileged communities	Rp 31,216,548
10	BTS Army Indonesia Lawan Corona	Donations for health workers, poor families, SWAB/PCR tests.	Rp 398,764,891
11	Sambut BTS Meal & BTS Anniv Dengan Berbagi	Donation of food packages, basic necessities, and swab test for online motorcycle taxi drivers during the BTS Meal event	Rp 262,610,769
12	Swab Gratis dari ARMY untuk Ojol		Rp 59,788,527
13	Sambut BTS Meal & BTS Anniv Dengan Berbagi		Rp 48,729,800
14	Sambut BTS Meal & BTS Anniv Dengan Berbagi		Rp 41,038,184
15	Dari ARMY Untuk Ojol		Rp 27,176,300
16	Sambut BTS Meal & BTS Anniv Dengan Berbagi		Rp 25,780,044
17	ARMY Indonesia x Difalink Peduli Disabilitas Lewat PTDChallenge	Organizing an internship for blind people for 3 months to support job seekers with disabilities, social media classes, design classes, sign language learning classes, "Permission to Dance" challenge to build disability awareness	Rp 2,043,054
18	Seokjin In Harmony - Share Your Abyss: Peduli Kesehatan Mental	Provide mental health & suicide prevention services and create a safe place for mental health survivors	Rp 3,050,000
19	Bantu Orang Dengan Gangguan Jiwa Hidup Layak	Provide food for People With Mental Disorders	Rp 64,642,140
20	RAYAKAN ULTAH J-Hope BANTU KORBAN PKS	Campaigning to stop Sexual Harassment and Violence and provide medical treatment of victims	Rp 6,443,312
21	Ulah Jimin: Bantu Korban Pelecehan Seksual	Clinical psychological assistance and psychosocial support assistance for victims of sexual harassment	Rp 35,451,245
22	Berbagi Untuk Adik - Adik Yatim Piatu & ABK (J-Hope dan Suga birthday)	Donations in the form of food, parcels, basic necessities, and money for orphans & children with special needs	Rp 46,620,006
23	Art for Autism Creativity and Self Love	Exhibition of paintings by children and adolescents with Autism, cast of a special painting themed Kim Seokjin with the Hadiprana Art Gallery, and donations for the operational training and art skills of people with Autism under the care of Toto Suwarsito in Jakarta	Rp 10,026,740
24	Dukung Difabel Siap Kerja!	Organizing an internship for blind people for 3 months to support job seekers with disabilities, social media classes, design classes, sign language learning classes, "Permission to Dance" challenge to build disability awareness	Rp 5,585,716
25	SOPE Berbagi untuk Kereta Mimpi	Scholarship	Rp 29,643,658

Table 1: Some of the charity activities carried out by ARMY in Indonesia in 2020-2022

Compiled by the authors based on data obtained through fandom groups' social media and online fundraising sites such as kitabisa.com and benihbaik.com [source]

In addition to working with music and as entertainers, BTS is also concerned with humanitarian issues. Teaming up with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to launch the "Love Myself" campaign against violence towards children and youth worldwide is one of their notable actions. The fandom's high level of militancy and admiration for their idols makes both the songs and actions of the idols able to inspire them. ARMY Bandung, for instance, is not limited to

collecting donations but also supports campaigns by creating a consulting community called ARMY Help Center and Love Myself Movement and actively spreading campaign messages using the hashtag BTSLoveMyself on Twitter social media (Maharani, 2020).

BTS' songs and performances also convey a profound message reaching their fans. For example, the song "Permission to Dance" has peace and happy message, and there are sign language movements in the dance. Resonating with that, each BTS member is actively involved in charities, such as Jhope and Shuga, who recently donated to people with disabilities in South Korea. Inspired by these things, ARMY Indonesia embarked on a campaign in collaboration with Difalink to help connect job seekers with disabilities and companies in need. ARMY and Difalink collaborate to raise funds through BenihBaik.com and kitabisa.com. This collaboration provides training to enhance skills and equip people with disabilities to enter the world of work (Antaraneews, 2021; Liputan6, 2021). In a similar vein, ARMY contributes to programs to support people with autism through exhibitions, training, and art skills.

Since an idol's birthday is a precious moment for ARMY, they are stepping up efforts to celebrate it by spreading kindness. On J-Hope and Jimin's birthday, ARMY recently created a charity project in the form of ARMY Indonesia for Victims of Sexual Harassment and Violence. After witnessing that violence against women increased sharply during the pandemic, they came up with this action to support the victims and raise awareness of ARMYs, which women mostly dominate. ARMY collaborated with Harapan Fian and SWGP Indonesia in raising funds through the Kitabisa.com platform (Sewaktu, 2021).

The second fandom is Leslar Lovers, a reasonably solid fanbase formed to support Indonesian celebrity couple Lesty Kejora and Rizky Billar. As a community that supports its idols, this fanbase also has a vision in terms of humanity. Leslar Lovers generally focuses on raising funds for natural disasters, the poor, children, people affected by Covid-19, and Palestine (Leslarloverworld, 2021). This fandom has received much attention after successfully collecting donations of 700 million to be awarded the Muri record as the "Fanbase of Artist Couples with the Most Donations." In their social actions, they collaborate with institutions and foundations in Indonesia such as Dompot Dhuafa, Aksi Cepat Tanggap (ACT), Bahagia Bantu Sesama, Raia Adelio Foundation, Ayopeduli.com, and Rockupank in distributing aid. Meanwhile, the donation collection process is mainly through the *kitabisa.com* platform.

NO	CAMPAIGN		AMOUNT
1	LESJAR Berbagi Kebaikan Ramadhan	Iftar food and basic necessities for the poor, orphans, and street children	Rp 8,031,046
2	Sedekah Mukena untuk Masjid & Mushola	Donation prayer hijab and prayer tools given to masjid and the elderly, as well asempowering local tailors in remote areas	Rp 37,840,827
3	Bantu korban bencana di Indonesia	Donation of basic necessities for flood and volcanic eruption victims	Rp 28,411,166
4	Sedekah Bantu Renovasi Masjid Rusak	Donation for masjid renovation	Rp 206,491,098
5	Bantu Warga Terdampak Banjir Kalteng	Donation of basic necessities for flood and volcanic eruption victims	Rp 2,035,778
6	LESJAR LOVERS Peduli Bencana Kalbar	Donation of basic necessities for flood victims	Rp 6,162,830
7	Bersama LESJAR Bantu Warga Hadapi Covid-19	Donation of medical equipment and medical kits	Rp 23,130,624
8	Berbagi Makanan untuk Dhuafa	Donation of basic necessities for orphans and people living in poverty in Indonesia and Palestine	Rp 160,145,224
9	LESJAR LOVERS Bantu Masyarakat Terdampak Bencana	Donation of basic necessities for flood, landslides, and volcanic eruption victims	Rp 208,669,412
10	LESJAR LOVERS PEDULI ANAK	Medical care for poor children	Rp 81,756,079
11	LESJAR LOVERS PEDULI BERSAMA	Donation of basic necessities and medical equipment for disaster victims	Rp 120,569,378
12	Dukung Pendidikan Anak Disabilitas Bersama Leslar	Support inclusive education programs for children with disabilities	Rp 10,660,821
13	Leslar Lovers Cepat Tanggap	Medical care for people living in poverty and basic necessities for disaster victims	Rp 14,177,173
14	Bantu Korban Banjir Bandang NTT	Donation of basic necessities for flood victims	Rp 22,879,849
15	Lli berbagi berkah ramadhan bersama dhuafa	Donate iftar food and basic necessities for the poor, vulnerable workers, and disaster victims	Rp 22,184,163
16	Leslar Lovers Cepat Tanggap	Construction of masjid	Rp 1,162,000
17	LESJAR LOVERS BERSATU Bantu Longsor Sumedang	Donation of food, basic necessities, cleaning tools for disaster victims	Rp 1,897,873

Table 2: Charity activities carried out by Leslar Lovers in 2020-2022

Compiled by the authors based on data obtained through fandom groups' social media and online fundraising sites such as kitabisa.com [source]

Similar findings were found in the Leslar Lovers charity activities. Most of their donations are intended for victims of natural and non-natural disasters such as the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia. Disasters in Indonesia drew their attention to help by optimizing the members who live in these areas to participate in distributing aid whenever possible. Meanwhile, the second largest donation was allocated to the construction/renovation of masjids and worship equipment. Most of the donations are in kind or cash. However, the fandom also strives to empower remote local tailors to produce that prayer hijab (mukena).

On the other hand, this fandom rarely conducts campaigns aimed at persons with disabilities. So, to speak, people with disabilities still receive less attention from the fandom in their charitable activities. However, Leslar Lovers has made an initial step in 2022 by creating a campaign to support the inclusive education of children living with disabilities with other institutions such as the government, UNICEF, religious institutions, and the private sector.

### **Potential and Limits of Fandom-Based Charitable Activities in Indonesia in Reaching Marginalized Groups**

This study examines the potential and limitations of charitable activities carried out by the fandom groups described in the previous section and the extent to which these activities play a role in empowering marginalized groups and who these groups are. This research shows that fandom can manage fundraising in a timely manner by conducting fundraising campaigns through social media. The high intensity of surfing on social media makes campaigns carried out on media such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Tiktok, and Youtube attract attention and influence fans more effectively to determine their actions. Furthermore, this study argues that technological sophistication positively impacts collecting donations for a charity efficiently, given that fandom mainly uses online fundraising platforms, such as kitabisa.com and benihbaik.com, that offer the convenience of making donations. In addition, fandom has tremendous power in mobilising its members for a specific purpose because they are tightly knit. Members tend to have high loyalty to their idols. In fact, fandom often donates to a cause that its idols support. Therefore, fandom can raise funds effectively.

The social actions of idols greatly influence and inspire the fandom groups to do similar things as BTS has raised many social, educational, and environmental issues through its songs and campaigns. Moreover, both BTS and Leslar contributed to charity activism for their reputation and improved their image regarding the negative stigma attached. Charity activities in the idol's name also give members a sense of pride. These social actions could target several marginal groups frequently excluded from the system in Indonesia. Take the case of ARMY's actions in collaboration with Difalink in collecting donations to empower people with disabilities in getting decent work. Likewise, the Leslar Lovers movement supports inclusive education for children with disabilities. Although still relatively small compared to others regarding the number of campaigns and donations, fandom groups make an essential contribution through their empowerment program.

Furthermore, fandom groups organise several programs dealing with issues of violence against women. In this case, girls and women are generally among the more vulnerable and marginalized of society, especially if they have other conditions such as living in poverty or with a disability. Based on the World Economic Forum in its 2021 global gap report, Indonesian women are still under-represented in the workforce compared to men, with a 33% gap where only 56% of women participate (World Economic Forum, 2021). Furthermore, as reported by the National Commission on Violence against Women, women are very vulnerable to violence. A total of 8,234 cases of violence against women occurred in 2020, dominated by personal or family domains (Rugebregt, 2022). Unfortunately, the patriarchal system and gender norms remain firmly maintained by conservative people in Indonesian society (Putra et al., 2019). In this system, the attention is directed to the subordination of women, where gender relations accord men than women better privileges and opportunities, which emphasize the obedience of a wife or daughter to their husband or father. The campaign carried out by ARMY is essential in providing awareness to the community to prevent acts of violence against women and the importance of advocacy for victims.

The dominance of the young generation in fandom membership is a potential that needs to be taken into account. This young generation is most likely to say a desire to impact the surrounding environment positively, not only in material but also in ideas, thoughts, and energy. Moreover, charity communities often consist of people engaged in various fields of interest (Surahya, 2020). They not only focus on providing funds but also prioritize experience and skills. Thus, the development of fandom-charitable activism has the potential not merely to focus on raising funds to address current issues. Instead, how to provide more productive assistance that can handle the root of the problem and empower marginalized groups to feel the impact in the long term.

On the other hand, fandom's charitable activities usually respond to current events or issues of public concern. In general, fandom's charitable activities are carried out sporadically and tend to occur in specific situations or coincide with precious moments, often idol birthdays. Distributing assistance to victims of disasters and pandemics dominates the actions of both fandom groups. The rest help the poor with in-kind and cash or provide medical expenses for the sick, and only a few focus on development and empowerment programs for marginalized groups. Furthermore, fandom groups tend not to do adequate research in determining beneficiaries. Current issues are often the basis for determining target beneficiaries and allocation of charitable funds rather than further and in-depth analysis. Fandom, such as ARMY and Leslar Lovers, lacks a structured organisation where spontaneous and flexible reactions underlie most of the action. In addition, given that fandom groups are often made up of several smaller groups, the focus tends to be different.

This study argues that aid channelled through fandom-based charities in Indonesia tends to have a short-term impact only as its distribution is mainly in money or goods. Direct cash transfer has been subject to criticism from some scholars due to their narrow vision and little possibility of overcoming long-term problems (Angélica et al., 2018; Marins, 2021). Learning from the fandom-based charitable activism from other countries, a Harry Potter fandom, the so-called Fandom Forward (formerly The Harry Potter Alliance) already has a social action with a long-term impact. Fandom Forward mobilized their member passion and creativity to fight for social justice and, hence make the world more compassionate. This fandom makes use of social media

to make their voice heard, whether in protests or fundraising, to protect and fight for issues such as immigrant justice, fighting supremacy and oppression of people of colour, fighting for gender equality, advocating for youth, and reducing economic inequality (Fandom Forward, 2021; Li, 2021; Martens, 2019).

The Fandom Forward has campaigned for immigrant justice since 2012. In this role, the fandom support immigrants and fight white supremacy by working to dismantle racist institutional practices and social behaviours. They successfully advocated for immigrants, completing over 650 actions to reunite families. They also encourage fan activists to join local immigrant organizations wherever they live by holding workshops to help fans take action and participate in the community's struggle for immigrant rights and security. They also opposed when the U.S. State Department declared limiting refugee admissions to a historically low of 30,000 people (Fandom Forward, 2021).

Based on the phenomena of the two fandom groups previously discussed, their motivation to donate varies, not only on the current issues raised but also on the influence of their idol per se. Therefore, it could be argued that fandom-based charitable activism tends to be unsustainable as fandom is quite susceptible to disbanding. Fandom relies heavily on the existence of the idol, which results in the group's disbandment, and so does charity activism when the idol is no longer around or when they commit acts that disappoint their fans. At the time of writing, Leslar Lovers, for instance, is in danger of disbanding as their idols face a domestic violence case.

This study offers several recommendations in responding to the limitations of fandom-based charitable activities in Indonesia. This study argues that technological sophistication has a positive impact where social media and online platforms can effectively influence people in each campaign while offering the convenience of making donations. Previous studies found that the digital philanthropy movement is one way to realize social justice, social empowerment, and social welfare for the people of Indonesia (Nurdiyanti & Suryadi, 2019). Through these media, fandom can make a difference by contributing further to encourage and raise fans' awareness in fighting for more specific issues related to vulnerable groups. The high intensity of surfing on social media makes campaigns carried out on media such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Tiktok, and Youtube with more interactive and attractive communication patterns according to millennial style to attract attention and influence fans more effectively to determine their actions.

As previously discussed, many criticize and label fandom with a negative stigma as wasteful and useless activities. Some people perceive fandom as fanatical and extravagant fans whose activities focus only on idols. Fandom is also considered very consumptive and often cannot rationally think (Fachrosi et al. (2020). Moreover, female-dominated fandom members further exacerbate the stigmatization. Consequently, their positive activities are aimed at breaking this assumption in addition to loyalty as fans. The domination of women as members of the fandom can be seen as a prominent force for them to fight for gender equality and gender-based violence. Fandom can be optimized as a means to show the existence and contribution of women in society. They can carry out more campaigns against sexual violence toward women, participation of women in the workforce, or involvement of women in the political system.

Fandom has tremendous power in mobilizing its members for a specific purpose. In their research, Yumna et al. (2020) analyzed one form of fan fanaticism to protest their idol's disbandment through a series of fan projects and demonstrations in various media using the funds they collected themselves. Fachrosi et al. (2020) also found that fans' fanaticism and emotional attachment to idols were constructed due to their involvement in a community. That said, this potential can be utilized for broader benefits. Besides being active in raising funds to respond to current problems such as natural disasters and helping people living in poverty with goods and cash, fandom groups can continue the campaigns they have created to empower other marginal groups. The program that ARMY has initiated with Difalink has the potential to attract more fandom members with a program concept that has sustainability without being limited to special events with more intense promotions. Likewise, Leslar Lovers, who have started to pay attention to inclusive education for people with disabilities, can make it routine and organized. They can make it a fandom project and allow active participation from members in its implementation, given that this issue is in line with what their idols are concerned about.

The fandom's loyalty is undoubtedly given the numerous social movements they carry out. Regardless of the main reason fans do such charity activities is for their idol's publicity, the movement's positive impact cannot be ignored. One of the fandom groups, One In An ARMY, a cross-country BTS fan group, organized itself to own start-up efforts and help nearby communities to have a more visible impact instead of sending donations to large and existing organizations (Kim & Hutt, 2021). Therefore, it is necessary to have initiators and movers to create social movements organized by fandom groups that resonate with the actions of idols to make their impact more significant and sustainable. It is feasible since fandom members in Indonesia, both ARMY and Leslar Lovers, are numerous and come from various educational and professional backgrounds, such as academics, entrepreneurs, practitioners, and activists who can make fandom-based charitable activities as a movement and campaign toward social change.

## **CONCLUSION**

Fandom-based charitable activism in Indonesia, especially in the case of ARMY and Leslar Lovers, is dominated by donations for victims of natural disasters. Marginal groups who become beneficiaries of these fandom activities include people living in poverty, women victims of sexual violence, and people with disabilities. Charitable activism has potential and limitations in contributing to society's welfare and empowering and advocating for marginalized groups. High loyalty and solidity positively correlate with the level of involvement and activeness of the fans contributing to charity activism. It is also supported by technological sophistication that offers convenience in donating and can reach fans more effectively through campaigns conducted through social media. On the other hand, the dominance of the young generation as fandom members who have lifestyle characteristics that want to have a good impact on the surrounding environment has the potential to make fandom-based charitable activism not limited to the distribution of aid that has a short-term effect.

However, fandom-based charitable activism still tends to be done sporadically and responds more to current issues. Fandom groups tend not to have a particular issue to fight. There is also a correlation between charity motivation, idols' influence, and the desire to show a good image as a fandom. In the end, the existence of fandom is also very dependent on the presence of the idol

itself. As a result, if idols are no longer active in the entertainment world, the fandom will likely disband, and so will their charity activities.

This study offers several recommendations in responding to the limitations of fandom-based charitable activities in Indonesia. First, fandom groups can optimize the role of social media and online crowdfunding platforms to influence the public through campaigns, especially on issues that have not been widely reached, such as empowering women and people with disabilities. Second, fandom groups can optimize the dominance of female members for women's empowerment and advocacy for the protection of victims of violence. Third, fandom can increase campaign initiations to fight for marginalized groups with sustainable programs. Finally, the fandom needs to optimize its internal potential rather than simply collecting donations and handing them over to existing organizations. In sum, fandom-based charitable activism can contribute to the welfare of society with some developments towards empowerment that have long-term impacts.

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