

## **Gestaltic Relationship Between K-Pop Idol's Symbol and the Symbols of Their Fans**

ZURLY LINTA ADZHAN<sup>1</sup> , ZAMURA BASHARUDDIN<sup>2</sup>, ALVIATUN RIZQI EKA  
FITRIANA<sup>3</sup>, BINTANG MAHAYU YODAWATI<sup>4</sup>, NOFIAN FAJAR RAMADHANI<sup>5</sup>, NITA  
KHARISMA<sup>6</sup>, TRITAN ANUGRAHAYU JERING KUSUMA<sup>7</sup>, YUSTIN SARTIKA<sup>8</sup>  
*UIN Raden Mas Said, Surakarta, Central Java, Indonesia*

<sup>1</sup>[zurlyadzhan@gmail.com](mailto:zurlyadzhan@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>[zamuraa7@gmail.com](mailto:zamuraa7@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup>[ailvzqy02@gmail.com](mailto:ailvzqy02@gmail.com)

<sup>4</sup>[bintangmy617@gmail.com](mailto:bintangmy617@gmail.com)

<sup>5</sup>[nofianfajarramadhani@gmail.com](mailto:nofianfajarramadhani@gmail.com)

<sup>6</sup>[nitakharisma181@gmail.com](mailto:nitakharisma181@gmail.com)

<sup>7</sup>[hayutritan@gmail.com](mailto:hayutritan@gmail.com)

<sup>8</sup>[yustin.sartika.@staff.uinsaid.ac.id](mailto:yustin.sartika.@staff.uinsaid.ac.id)

### **Abstract**

Studies on the meaning of the symbols in K-pop Idol's Logo and the relation with their fandom symbol meaning. Correlation and relationship represented by the meaning of every symbol in a logo from K-Pop Idol and their fandom that bonds each other is beneath the surface. Through this descriptive qualitative study, The analysis aims to unravel the meaning relation based on the phenomenon and how this meaning is carried out. This study employs Reinhart's (1984) Principle of Gestalt Perception to address the description of a form of a perception process by arranging elements with patterns, relationship, and needs into a single unit. This study also employs Gregory's Boy Bands and Performance of Pop Masculinity to address what branding do the symbols that used by K-Pop Idols and fans try to convey. Calling on the theories to the phenomenon and utilizing Spradleyan analysis, the researchers argue that the K-pop Idol represent their branding based on the symbols meaning in their logo and it is influencing their musical taste for their fans. The relationship and meaning have a continuous relationship and correlation based on the meaning conveyed through the meaning of each symbol from K-Pop idol groups and their fandoms. By using this type of qualitative research with a descriptive approach, it is concluded that the results of the analysis in this discussion can provide in creation of a logo to have a meaning and story that can be conveyed through the meaning in each symbol.

**Keywords:** k-pop, idols, symbols, fandom, gestalt



Copyright © 2024 The Author(s)  
This is an open-access article under the CC BY-SA  
license.

## HUBUNGAN GESTALT ANTARA SIMBOL K-POP IDOL DAN SIMBOL-SIMBOL PENGGEMAR MEREKA

### Abstrak

Penelitian tentang makna Simbol Idola K-pop dan hubungannya dengan makna simbol basis penggemar mereka. Korelasi antara logo Idola K-pop dan simbol basis penggemar mereka yang menghubungkan keduanya ternyata memiliki kedalaman yang lebih dari yang terlihat. Melalui penelitian kualitatif deskriptif ini bertujuan mengungkap hubungan makna berdasarkan fenomena yang terjadi dan bagaimana makna tersebut dijalankan. Penelitian ini menggunakan Prinsip Persepsi Gestalt dari Reinhart (1984) untuk mendeskripsikan proses persepsi dengan mengatur elemen-elemen seperti pola, hubungan, dan kebutuhan menjadi satu kesatuan. Teori Gregory tentang *Boy Bands and Performance of Pop Masculinity* digunakan untuk menjelaskan penjenamaan apa yang ingin disampaikan melalui simbol-simbol yang digunakan oleh para Idola K-pop dan basis penggemar mereka. Dengan memanfaatkan teori-teori ini dalam kaitannya dengan fenomena yang ada dan menggunakan analisis Spradley, para penulis berpendapat bahwa Idola K-pop merepresentasikan penjenamaan mereka berdasarkan makna simbol yang ada dalam logo mereka, yang pada akhirnya memengaruhi selera musik penggemar mereka. Hubungan dan makna ini memiliki keterkaitan yang terus menerus dan korelasi berdasarkan makna yang disampaikan melalui setiap simbol dari grup K-pop dan basis penggemar mereka. Dengan menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif deskriptif, penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa dalam pembuatan sebuah logo, setiap simbol harus memiliki makna yang jelas dan menceritakan kisah yang mudah dipahami.

**Kata kunci:** k-pop, idola, simbol, basis penggemar, gestalt

### INTRODUCTION

The open door, which is the logo for the boyband BTS, is apparently not just a symbol. This also reflects a distinctive identity or branding that uniquely describes BTS' values and differences from other boy groups. K-Pop idol logos are symbols used to represent a concept, idea, or object from the K-Pop idol itself. Usually, symbols in K-Pop are lines, shapes, sizes, colors, and fonts. Not only K-Pop idols have them, but their fans or fandoms also have symbols that are almost the same. For K-Pop idols, symbols are not just for self-branding but also as a promotional medium that attracts the interest of many people. This symbol is a characteristic of a K-Pop idol whose meaning will be absorbed by his fans and then interpreted in the form of almost the same symbol, with the aim of complementing each other. As stated by Georgina Gregory (2019) in *Boy Bands and the Performance of Pop Masculinity* said that the correlation of branding and symbols, in this context means branding plays a role in helping users recognize and differentiate one popular

music group from another, thus ensuring consumption is carried out efficiently. Furthermore, in the same book, it is explained that according to Rossolatos (2015) brand coherence is the main requirement that must be met to maintain credibility. According to Elliot and Wattanasuwan (1998), the experts in interpreting popular culture are the fans. They utilize aspects of the message communicated by the brand to define and support their identity through a process of “discursive elaboration.” This quote explains the relationship between the symbol of a music group and the symbol of its fans.

The examples of symbols and letters as an identity can be seen in BTS boy group and its fans, called ARMY. BTS and ARMY have their own symbols where the symbols of the idols and fans are closely related. BTS fans are certainly familiar with the symbol of this boy group, which is shaped like an open door. The BTS symbol has its own meaning. This symbol has a very deep meaning, namely that it is hoped that fans can pursue their dreams and provide energy and enthusiasm for fans. The symbol shape of BTS is a geometric shape in the form of a trapezoid. The inverted shape with the ARMY symbol is then seen forming a shield shape. Apart from that, the meaning of BTS and its symbol is also protection from bad things. (Baker, 2019) ARMY is an abbreviation for Adorable Master of Ceremonies Representative for Youth. That designation has meaning as a representation of the Master of Ceremonies, or the more referential Master of Ceremonies to hip-hop genre terminology for rappers, which is carried in BTS music. According to Kim (2018), in another sense, the word “Bangtan” means “bulletproof”, so ARMY in the military sense will always be attached to “bulletproof” clothing. Meanwhile, the ARMY symbol is also related to the BTS symbol. (BTS Wiki, 2013) states that BTS and ARMY are almost mirrored images of each other, and they have a relationship that is affected by each other. The symbol of ARMY is expressed as a door from their viewpoint, who is waiting and welcoming BTS on the opposite door when BTS opens a new door. In the BTS logo, there are several elements, according to Khoerunnisa et al. (2020), the straight lines on the BTS logo give a solid, calm impression while maintaining professionalism. The straight lines on the BTS logo appear to form a shield. If you pay attention while reading, you will see an image of BTS. The shape of the BTS logo is a geometric.

Trapezoid-shaped like an inverted number with the ARMY logo, it appears to form a shield shape. The size of the BTS logo seen here is the same, like a trapezoid forming a shield. Then there is the writing BTS, which is an abbreviation for “Beyond the Scene” or the Korean name is “Bangtan Sonyeodan”, and in the

text it says ARMY. Both texts are the same size, and there are two colors used in the BTS logo. Namely, black and gray. Black represents a strong, mysterious, elegant, dramatic, and masculine color. Meanwhile, gray has a simple meaning. Fans need to gain experience with their group's symbol to know its meaning.

In accordance with the relationship between the symbols of K-Pop idols and the symbols of their fans, the first thing to know is how the identity of the K-Pop idols and the identity of the fans are formed, come to the world, and bring their own identity through their process of identity creation (Paula Guerra, Sofia Sousa 2011). A symbol, or logo, is an identity, a representation of how a group of certain people try to convey their objectives by the certain meaning of the logo that is analyzed by semiotic approach studies of the type of sign and meaning of the Korean group's logo (Hariani, 2018). Logo comes with a meaning; the meaning of the K-Pop logo can influence their fans, and they came to the conclusion that the connection between idols and fans can lead to fanaticism, and the result is that the logo did not affect the fanaticism of the fans Khoerunnisa et al. (2020). How are the fandoms reflected in the logo they have made? How does the logo convey a certain meaning to be delivered to the world? (Susanto & Azeharie, 2022). Fans-to-fans relationships in loving the same idols as they are brought them into an alliance and created a collaboration to support their artists based on reciprocity

The relationship between idols and fans is concerning in terms of the meaning and relationship that exists between them. Their representation and relationship with their respective logos shows a distance. Therefore, the meaning conveyed through fan logos and group logos is questionable. This raises the question of whether the logos reflect the closeness between artists and fans, or whether they actually have no meaning. Based on this gap, two important questions arise namely:

1. What branding do the symbols of K-Pop's idols and their fans convey?
2. How do the symbols of K-Pop's idols cohere with the symbols of their fan clubs in Gestaltic relationship perspectives?

This article explains how the fan logo and the group logo are connected and have some meanings. Previously, the logo was represented as a symbol of identity and the relationship between K-Pop idols and their fans. As discussed by BTS agency on July 5, 2017, BigHit Entertainment, their agency at the time, has now transformed into HYBE Entertainment, showcasing the BTS logo with a different appearance and enhanced elegance. BigHit Entertainment even gave them a new nickname, Beyond the Scene, which means "young people who are not satisfied with the current situation and continue to strive to move forward, grow, and achieve their

dreams". This logo is symbolized by BTS fans (ARMY) as a shield and also an open door, while the ARMY logo is depicted as a closed door. This signifies that BTS members and their fans are committed to always being individuals who continue to move forward, develop, and strive to achieve their dreams without ceasing. Apart from that, these BTS members also entertain their fans through several of their songs whose lyrics have mental health themes. By referring to Gregory (2019), who discusses the meaning of a logo for a group, this is also incorporated into the selling value provided by BTS itself. Whether as an attractor of fans, a representation of the group itself, a characteristic that they want to highlight, or as a link with their own fans, this group and its fans are very bonded (Reinhart, 1984).

The term "symbol" that was mentioned before, refers to any branding that is hidden behind the symbolic elements attached to the BTS and ARMY logos, such as color, shape, size, line, and text. Gregory (2019) explains that branding, which is represented through symbols, influences musical taste and social aspects. Music tastes have an influence on consumer purchasing behavior towards products or brands. The music genres that consumers like influence their decisions regarding purchasing products or brands that align with those musical tastes. In contrast, the social aspect focuses on the role of society in consumers' decisions to purchase products or brands. The musical tastes that consumers value influence how they interact with coworkers, family members, and friends, as well as how they approach social situations. There are several factors that support BTS' success. History shows that smart marketing has always been important in popular music (Ogden et al., 2011). Gregory (2019) states that leveraging music as a promotional tool is an interesting way to connect brands with sponsorships, a trend that is prevalent throughout the world and accelerated by the globalization of music marketing. Gregory (2019) describes how a reflective process allows fans to determine who is successful in their fame. For example, BTS has released a number of songs, which has resulted in an increase in their album sales. Today's music audience has a global scope, with album distribution internationally (Latrop, 2013:6).

Globalization brings great opportunities for Idol, which is reflected in the album sales information available on the official websites of leading music platforms. Gregory (2019) emphasized that popularity is important for commercially popular music artists, no matter what genre. Because BTS has a large and active fan following, the average number of views for their music videos varies. According to Gregory (2019), fans participate in the selection process and are changing consumers. For example, BTS music videos often reach tens of millions to hundreds

of millions of views, depending on the video content released. Gregory (2019) explains that concert ticket sales are an indication of the emergence of new capitalism and innovative monetization strategies in popular music. For example, the success of BTS' world tour, which was attended by millions of fans, is proof of this. From here, it can be seen that there are many factors that support BTS branding. Gregory (2019) explains that branding helps consumers recognize and differentiate one popular music group from another. The strong relationship between idols and fans helps strengthen this branding, encouraging people's interest in continuing to follow their work. The close relationship between fans and idols is a strong foundation, but maintaining it is not easy, as Gregory (2019) explains. Taste and social class go hand in hand in shaping a brand's image, illustrating their role in maintaining identity, as seen in Bourdieu's observations. Therefore, mutual support is crucial in this relationship.

Branding, according to Gregory (2019), has two things that are in harmony in the subtle process of forming a brand image. Branding is the process of building and managing the image and identity of a product, service, or company. This includes creating a logo, name, design, marketing message, and other elements that differentiate and recognize your brand from other brands. The goal of branding is to leave a strong impression on consumers, create positive perceptions, and build long-term relationships between brands and customers. Overall, branding helps you create a unique identity that the market recognizes and remembers. Musical tastes can be used to predict fans' cultural activities and consumption practices, for example in the BTS and ARMY logos, which, when combined, form a shield. The shield shape in the BTS logo means protecting BTS and ARMY, with this shield-shaped logo influencing the flow of BTS music. This concept is conveyed by the BTS song entitled *Magic Shop*, which carries a theme about mental health. The song has the message that when we hate ourselves and want to disappear from the world, we actually are a place of refuge and healing from all the negative emotions that arise in the world. Social class is a marketing strategy to attract certain social classes by adapting the values, lifestyles, and aspirations of the target, thereby influencing purchasing decisions and brand loyalty. BTS' global fame and influence have given them a strong position in the music and entertainment industry, which can create economic and social impacts at various levels of society. Because BTS's branding is good in the eyes of the public, sales of goods related to the BTS logo have soared.

## METHOD

This research adopts a qualitative descriptive in its design. Based on Sugiyono (2010) who states that qualitative research is descriptive. It means that collected data was in the form of words rather than numbers. In addition, Gay (2006) who said that qualitative research is the collection, analysis, and interpretation of comprehensive narrative and visual data in order to gain insights into a particular phenomenon. Therefore, this study uses a qualitative descriptive method because the data is in written form. The data source comes from YouTube released in 2017. The method used to collect data in this study is a documentation technique. Then data analysis aims to reveal the significance of the data. There are several techniques that can be used. According to Spradley (1979), there are four steps in analyzing data using a qualitative research design. Namely domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, component analysis, and cultural theme analysis.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### *Findings*



Figure 1. The BTS Logo

Table 1. The Meaning of the BTS Logo

<b>Element</b>	<b>Logo</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Color	Black and Gray	This logo has two colors. Black and gray. Black is a strong, mysterious, elegant, dramatic, and masculine color. Meanwhile, gray means simplicity.
Shape	Trapezoid	With a trapezoid shape in the BTS logo, draw a shield, which is expected to protect the fans.
Size	Symmetric	With the same size of two trapezoids, it makes a shield.
Line	Straight	BTS has straight lines in their logo. The straight lines in their logo imply that this line is a steady and calm impression.

Text	BTS	BTS text itself is the name of the boyband with the abbreviation from "Beyond The Scene" or its own Korean name "Bangtan Sonyeodan".
------	-----	--

A logo is formed because the figure has a goal, namely seeking achievement for his hard work in creating in the world of music. This is where BTS took advantage of the opportunity to become more widely known, especially by promoting their work at various leading music events, both in Korea and abroad. They achieved international recognition by getting a nomination for the biggest music event, namely Billboard Music. So far, BTS has successfully held several world tours, such as "Love Yourself" in 2018–2019, with concerts in Asia and in various corners of the world seven times. This concert aims to introduce their works, from their initial debut to their latest. For this reason, they must provide a large-capacity venue for the audience. As is known, BTS has many fans from various countries. From this situation, it can be concluded that fans are always there to support idols. If they don't have fans, there is little chance for idols to hold concerts and sell albums in large numbers. This is where the influence of fans on idols lies. Fans also definitely need recognition from idols in the form of identity or branding, which is interpreted through their fandom logo, to support their social presence. The logo usually has a shape that is almost the same as the idol group logo. Therefore, the logo for Idol Group and K-Pop fans was formed to show the social relationship between the two.



Figure 2. The ARMY Logo



Table 2. The Meaning of the ARMY Logo

<b>Element</b>	<b>Logo</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Color	Black and Gray	This logo has 2 colors. Black and gray. Black means a strong, mysterious, elegant, dramatic and masculine color. Meanwhile, gray means simplicity.
Shape	Trapezoid	The logo is a geometric trapezoid. Shaped like an inverted number with the ARMY logo, it appears to form a shield shape.
Size	Symmetric	With the same size of two trapezoids, it makes a shape of shield.
Line	Straight	The straight lines on the BTS logo give a solid, calm impression while maintaining professionalism. The straight lines on the BTS logo appear to form a shield.
Text	ARMY	ARMY is an abbreviation for Adorable Master of Ceremonies Representative for Youth. That designation has meaning as a representation of M.C or the more referential Master of Ceremonies to hip-hop genre terminology for rappers which is carried in BTS music.

ARMY logo generally reflects the positive messages that BTS conveys through their music and presence, including messages about self-love, courage, and acceptance. This creates an emotional identity between fans and the group. ARMY logo selection process requires active fan participation. The decision to include ARMY in the creation of the logo helped create a strong sense of fan involvement in their identity. ARMY logo is not only a symbol of fandom but also the identity of fans. This is reflected in the way fans identify themselves as part of the ARMY community through this logo. then the design of the door and shield and the words "ARMY" below it can be interpreted as a symbol of unity and strength between BTS and the fans. This gives the impression that ARMY is an integral part of the BTS family. The Army logo design in the form of a door and shield means that every time BTS opens a new door, the Army will always faithfully wait and will always be BTS's protector. ARMY logo was created with a consistent aesthetic in mind, paying attention to the design elements that have become a hallmark of BTS's overall branding. This helps

create a consistent and easily recognizable brand identity. ARMY logo is not just a visual symbol but also reflects the values and messages that BTS practices in its branding. The success of the ARMY logo as part of BTS branding lies in fan engagement, emotional identification, and visual consistency that strengthen the connection between the group and the fandom.

Table 3. Componential Table

	<b>MT</b>		<b>S</b>	
	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>
<b>BTS</b>	✓	✓	✓	X
<b>ARMY</b>	✓	✓	✓	X

MT = Music Taste

S = Social

F = Figure

G = Ground

The BTS logos feature a distinctive design that is easily recognizable, serving as prominent figures or standout elements. This design has the ability to capture the attention of fans and potential listeners, creating a strong visual identity for BTS. Their powerful and well-known logo can establish a visual association with the music group. Listeners may be more inclined to explore or choose BTS songs due to the strong visual connection through the shield-shaped logo. The combination of the BTS and ARMY logos forming a shield carries the meaning that BTS is committed to protecting their fans. This intention of BTS to protect their fans is realized through the songs they perform. BTS addresses mental health themes in their songs to safeguard their predominantly teenage fans from mental disorders. For instance, in the song "Magic Shop," the theme revolves around mental health, conveying a message that when one despises oneself and wants to escape the world, one's own self serves as a refuge and a place of healing from all the negative emotions in the world. Another example is found in the song "Yet to Come," which incorporates encouraging words and promises of a brighter future. There is much hope and beauty ahead, and that is the meaning that BTS aims to convey in this song.

In some instances, ARMY may perceive the logo as a symbol of exclusivity or membership in a specific group or community. This can foster a sense of camaraderie that can influence how individuals feel or are identified in a social context. The BTS logo, as a symbol of success and popularity, may have an impact on how people perceive themselves in a social context. Someone who identifies with BTS through the logo may feel part of a group that has achieved significant success. Identification with the BTS logo can create a sense of acceptance within the fan community, playing a role in how individuals feel recognized or embraced in their social environment.

### **Discussion**

Open doors, the symbol that brands BTS, is able to influence someone's music taste and social life. Music taste itself influences consumer behavior in purchasing products—in this case, songs from certain groups of musicians. Music tastes have an influence on consumer purchasing behavior towards a product. The music genres that consumers like influence their decisions regarding purchasing products that align with those musical tastes. Music taste can be influenced by various factors, such as family background, place of residence, economy, social group, and culture. For example, someone who lives in an Islamic environment where Islamic poetry is often played will naturally develop into an individual with a taste for Islamic music. Music tastes are also closely related to genre preferences, such as classical, pop, country, ballad, indie, rock, and reggae.

Since their debut on July 13, 2013, BTS has carried the hip-hop music genre, but as they develop into world artists, the variety of music genres they perform has become increasingly diverse. The BTS logo depicts two parallel white trapezoids on a black background, interpreted as BTS members moving from the past towards a better future through an open door, reflecting the concepts of change, progress, and acceptance. By opening their doors, BTS shows their commitment to change and progress and invites fans to join the journey. The BTS branding is reflected in songs that are upbeat, easy-listening, cheerful, and motivating. Just like in the song "21st Century Girls," which states that someone doesn't need to listen to negative judgments about other people regarding their physical appearance because feeling insecure will only backfire on themselves. This message is specifically for women to always be confident because all women are valuable figures and worthy of love. The BTS logo inspired the ARMY logo, which features a closed door as a symbol of unity and protection, reflecting the Army's readiness to support BTS. ARMY's loyalty is manifested through material and moral support, such as buying albums, providing positive comments on social media, and forming communities. If the two logos are put together, they form a shield symbol, showing that BTS and ARMY strengthen

each other and survive obstacles.

There are factors that support Social Class BTS in building their branding, including promoting their music. As we know, BTS has had millions of active fans all over the world for several years. They have released a number of award-winning songs with easy-listening music; this is proven by BTS's album sales, which have increased since the release of their album until now. We can see information about the sales of this album on the official BTS website, as well as on music platforms such as iTunes, Amazon, Spotify, and others. This shows the level of popularity of their album sales. Because BTS has many active fans, the average number of viewers for their MVs also varies. BTS MV's often reach hundreds of millions views in just a few days after being released. Some of their MVs have reached billions of views on YouTube. BTS has achieved many achievements and awards as a result of their hard work over the years. They managed to win various awards at both national and international levels, such as the Billboard Music Awards, American Music Awards, MTV Europe Music Awards, and a number of other awards. The main awards they received included being nominated for "Artist of the Year" at various awards events. They also won "Top Social Artist" one of the categories in Billboard Music Awards in several consecutive years and also received nominations in the music category at the Grammy Awards. Apart from achieving achievements in the world of music, BTS also contributes to encompassing social and cultural change. For example, they partnered with UNICEF in an effort to combat violence against children and adolescents with the theme "Love Myself." Love Myself is also one of their song titles, which describes the importance of loving and accepting yourself. This song also depicts the importance of having self-confidence, overcoming insecurities, and finding happiness within oneself. Apart from that, they also donated financially to UNICEF Programs. From this, it can be seen that there are factors that support the formation of BTS's social class branding. Idol invites fans to be together, and there is a strong reciprocal relationship between the two. As a result, this branding has been key in attracting the interest of many people to continue following their work so far. Fans feel comfortable tracing their idol's journey through the work, encouragement, and contributions that their idol has made, helping them become more positive individuals. Therefore, maintaining a close relationship between fans and idols is not an easy task, and that is why mutual support is very crucial to maintaining this closeness.

BTS's success exemplifies the profound relationship between branding, symbols, and fan engagement in K-Pop. The group's logo, the Bulletproof Boy Scouts emblem, embodies their resilience and journey. This symbol became a

powerful brand element, featured on albums, merchandise, and promotional materials. The fandom, ARMY, embraced this symbol, incorporating it into fan art and creating a distinctive visual identity. BTS's remarkable achievement with their album "Love Yourself: Tear" further illustrates this connection. The album's design incorporated the flower motif from the group's logo, symbolizing growth, and self-love. This intentional branding resonated deeply with fans, who not only embraced the symbolism but also actively promoted it through social media campaigns and fan projects. In this example, BTS's strategic use of symbols in their branding not only contributed to the group's success but also fostered a strong sense of community among fans, emphasizing the symbiotic relationship between K-Pop idols, their symbols, and the dedicated fan base.

The emergence of fandom for K-pop idols resulted in the emergence of a new community that was founded for certain purposes. This community has a certain goal. They usually hold various types of activities carried out by communities in each country or region, including holding regular events every BTS birthday or for all Lantern Boys members who have birthdays. Donate and attend K-POP festivals and other events. Of course, every community from various countries or regions also has additional elements from the original logo. For example, ARMY logos from various countries, such as ARMY logos from Indonesia and the USA, and ARMY logos from various regions, such as the Surabaya and Yogyakarta ARMY logos.



Figure 3. The ARMY Indonesia Logo

The logo above is the BTS ARMY logo from Indonesia; this logo uses elements from the BTS identity. ARMY Indonesia uses the "ARMY BOMB" element, which is part of BTS' light music. The BOMB represents a globe. Then, in the BOMB element, there is the writing BTS ARMY INDONESIA, and in the bracket (AMINDO), the writing shows the identity of the community from Indonesia. The logo uses black and gray, taking the latest logo colors from the BTS logo.



Figure 4. The ARMY USA Logo

ARMY from the USA uses the newest BTS logo element, namely a shield with the words US BTS ARMY, as a symbol of the community from the USA. The BTS ARMY USA symbol uses the additional element of a wing next to the shield image. These wings are the ones that allow BTS and ARMY to fly together. Then the meaning of the circle symbol in the symbol is to represent unity, wholeness, and eternity between BTS and ARMY. The color used for the logo is a color that is identical to the BTS ARMY color, namely purple. According to Taehyung from BTS, purple is the last color of the rainbow and symbolizes love and affection. Purple can also mean trust and eternal love. Since then, ARMYs around the world have been using purple to express their love for BTS.



Figure 5. The ARMY Surabaya Logo

Surabaya ARMY has a logo with the symbol of a bulletproof military vest with the words “ARMY we are bulletproof SURABAYA”. With the dominant color yellow which has the impression and meaning of happiness, optimism and youth, there are elements such as the radiance of light with a firm impression and two lightning symbols on the right and left which have been symbols of strength, intelligence, intuition and spiritual enlightenment. This reflects the wishes of the Surabaya regional ARMY.

---

Usually the meaning of K-Pop logo with fans logo doesn't have an actual meaning. The logos that K-pop fans have, had been made by their fans. They made it referring to their artist. The fans know the meaning of their logos's artist from the group explanation and expand it to a logo which had connection and correlation. So, the fans logo can be linked with the group logo. It means a fan's logo doesn't have permanent meaning. Every fan can make a logo itself. Where the meaning of the existing logo is based on the meaning of the K-Pop group.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research has explored how the relationship between K-pop idols and their fans is shaped by the symbols used in their logos. The findings show that these symbols, such as the logos of BTS and their fandom ARMY, are a key part of the group's branding, helping to create a strong identity that resonates with fans. The connection between idols and fans is strengthened through these symbols, which reflect not just the group's music and values, but also the sense of community and loyalty within the fandom.

The logos of both idols and their fans serve as powerful symbols of this bond, with fans often incorporating these images into artwork, merchandise, and online content. This shared visual language fosters a deeper connection and creates a sense of belonging among fans. Although symbols can be interpreted in different ways, the overall meaning remains clear: they represent the strong, ongoing relationship between the idols and their fans.

In summary, this study has shown that K-pop idol logos are not just about branding—they help build a meaningful connection between the group and their supporters. Through these symbols, fans feel more connected to their idols, creating a community that goes beyond just music.

## **REFERENCES**

- Baker, A. (2019). *BTS: A Korean pop culture phenomenon*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Elliott, R., & Wattanasuwan, K. (1998). *Brands as symbolic resources for the construction of identity*. *International Journal of Advertising*, 17(2), 131-144.
- Gay, L. R., Mills, G. E., & Airasian, P. (2006). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and applications*. Columbus: Merrill Greenwood
- Gregory, G. (2019). *Boy Bands and the Performance of Pop Masculinity*. Routledge
- Guerra, P., & Sousa, S. (2011). *K-Pop and the formation of cultural identity: The case of South Korea's music industry*. *The International Journal of Korean Studies*, 15(1), 47-60.
- Hariani, D. F. (2018). *Semiotic analysis on idol group logo: a study of type of sign and*

---

*meaning of korean group's logo.* Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University

Semarang. Doi: [https://eprints.undip.ac.id/65348/1/THESIS\\_-\\_Farah\\_Disria\\_Hariani.pdf](https://eprints.undip.ac.id/65348/1/THESIS_-_Farah_Disria_Hariani.pdf)

Hybe Labels (2017). *BTS Logo Animation*. YouTube. Accessed from

[https://youtu.be/qx27yTK\\_KXw?si=ZMFLvEG2PKstGCP](https://youtu.be/qx27yTK_KXw?si=ZMFLvEG2PKstGCP) on 20 february 2024.

Kim, H. (2018). *The role of K-pop in the construction of Korean identity*. In *K-Pop, Culture, and Identity* (pp. 45-60). Palgrave Macmillan.

Khoerunnisa, F., Rakhmawati, A., & Sari, D. P. (2020). *The meaning of BTS logo: A semiotic analysis*. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature, and Translation*, 3(2), 45-50.

Ogden, J. R., Boller, G. W., & Goh, B. (2011). *The influence of music on consumer behavior: A case study of popular music marketing*. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 27(1-2), 91-108.

Reinhart, T. (1984). *Principles of gestalt perception in the temporal organization of narrative texts*. *Linguistics*, 22(6). DOI: [10.1515/ling.1984.22.6.779](https://doi.org/10.1515/ling.1984.22.6.779)

Rosolatos, G. (2015). *Brand equity planning with structuralist rhetorical semiotics*. Kassel University Press.

Sari, E. C., & Utomo, S. R. H. (2020). *Analisis pengaruh logo boyband dan girlband korea terhadap fanatisme penggemar*, *Jurnal Dassapura*, 2(1). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52005/dasarupa.v2i1.109>

Susanto, V., & Azeharie, S. S. (2022). *The meaning of fandom symbols in K-Pop: A semiotic approach*. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Linguistics, Literature, and Arts* (pp. 105-112).

Sugiyono. 2010. *Metode penelitian pendidikan pendekatan kuantitatif, kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.

Spradley, J. P. (1979). *Ethnography and culture*. *The Ethnographic Interview*, 3-16