Exploration of Stuart Hall's Reception on Gen Z Surabaya towards the dressing style of Ghibli Anime Characters on the TikTok account @Delvinyauu

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Abstract

One of the popular entertainment mediums in Japan is anime, and Japanese popular culture has rapidly expanded in Indonesia. Since its debut in the 1980s, Japanese anime has garnered a vast audience of Indonesian viewers through national television broadcasts. With advancements in technology and internet access, the appeal of anime has grown, particularly among Gen Z members who now have access to streaming services. Studio Ghibli, one of the most renowned anime production studios in the world, was founded in 1985 by animators Hayao Miyazaki and Isao Takahata. This study delves into two of Studio Ghibli's animated films, Whisper of the Heart and Ocean Waves, which revolve around the characters Taku Morisaki and Seiji Amasawa. These characters were chosen to investigate how Gen Z individuals in Surabaya interpret messages and meanings in the dress portrayed by these characters through the content of a TikTok creator account, @Delvinyauu. This content serves as a representation of the attire worn by the two characters. The study applies Stuart Hall's Reception analysis to examine Gen Z Surabaya's acceptance of Ghibli anime fashion on the TikTok @Delvinyauu account. The study concluded the following: in the discussion of soft masculinity portrayed in Ghibli anime characters, six informants held a dominant hegemonic position; in the discussion of Ghibli anime outfit styling content on the TikTok @Delvinyauu account, six informants also held a dominant hegemonic position. Regarding Gen Z Surabaya's acceptance of the dressing style of Ghibli anime characters, four informants held a dominant hegemonic position with regards to the Seiji Amasawa character, five informants held a dominant hegemonic position with regards to the Taku Morisaki character, and one informant held an oppositional position

Keywords: Anime Studio Ghibli, Japanese Popular Culture, Studio Ghibli, Soft Masculinity, Reception.

Abstrak

Budaya populer memiliki dampak yang begitu besar khususnya dalam penyebaran nilai – nilai lintas budaya. Salah satu nilai yang disebarkan ialah nilai gender. Penelitian ini membahas Manga sebagai salah satu budaya populer dari Jepang yang digemari oleh masyarakat dari berbagai kalangan membawa berbagai macam nilai Budaya Jepang termasuk konsep maskulin baru yaitu *soft masculinity*. Manga Tokyo Revengers merupakan manga dengan genre action dengan bumbu supranatural, keunikan manga ini adalah Ken Wakui melakukan penggambaran karakter dengan memakai aksesoris yang mengarah ke arah feminin, serta beberapa sifat dan perilaku karakter yang identik dengan sifat keperempuan. Melihat tingginya pembaca aktif manga di Indonesia, penelitian ini menggunakan metode analisis resepsi didukung dengan teori *encoding-decoding* Stuart Hall bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana resepsi khalayak pembaca manga khususnya pada mahasiswa di Surabaya terhadap *soft masculinity* yang ada pada Manga Tokyo Revengers. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa resepsi para informan ditentukan dari latar belakang lingkungan dan pengalaman pada realita kehidupan mereka maupun di media sosial. Resepsi tersebut terbagi menjadi tiga posisi khalayak didominasi dengan *hegemonic-dominant reading* yang berisi tiga sampai empat informan disetiap indikator, lalu *negotiated reading* berjumlah dua orang dan satu orang dalam posisi *oppositional reading*.

Kata Kunci : Anime Studio Ghibli, Budaya Populer, Tokyo Revengers, *Soft masculinity*, dan Resepsi.

INTRODUCTION

Not only is Korean culture still beloved, but Japanese popular culture also continues to be adored with each passing year, even in the current era. Japanese pop culture encompasses various cultural products originating from Japan, including comics, movies, music, clothing, and technology that are deeply rooted in traditional Japanese culture. In Indonesia, manga and anime are among the most popular subgenres of Japanese pop culture. Their enduring appeal predates the surge of Korean pop (K-pop) and Korean drama fans by a significant margin. The intriguing term "anime" is derived from the English word "animation." In Indonesia, anime gained popularity in the 1990s, with series such as Shinchan, Doraemon, Sailor Moon, and Saint Seiya becoming particularly popular (Prinando et al., 2022). As a result, anime has been passed down from one Indonesian generation to another. Initially introduced through television shows, anime has since maintained its popularity in Indonesia. The advancement of technology, particularly the easy access to the internet at any time and from any location, has further reinforced this situation. Fans can now instantly obtain a vast array of anime-related materials and engage in flourishing discussions about anime (Aisyah, 2019). The internet has facilitated easy access to manga and anime for fans of anime films. Through social media platforms, discussion forums, and worldwide streaming services, fans can appreciate, debate, and share their experiences with these works. Streaming platforms like Bstasion, Funimation, and Netflix offer a wide selection of anime films, both new and old, with multiple language subtitles. Furthermore, by accessing websites, blogspots, and other online resources, users can delve deeper into the cultural context of manga and anime (Pristianti, 2024). Even now, anime continues to evolve through social media, allowing it to reach a broader target market, particularly Generation Z.

Rasyid's research indicates that, based on the 2020 population census data, Generation Z constitutes the largest demographic group in Indonesia. This generation has exhibited a pronounced preference for consuming Japanese anime as a form of entertainment, surpassing other options. Since its inception in 1963, anime has grown to become a significant component of Japanese culture, captivating global audiences, including those in Indonesia. For Generation Z, consuming Japanese anime is a prevalent leisure activity. The term "anime" is derived from "animation," a medium that combines traditional hand-drawn techniques with computer processing to produce moving visuals. Over time, animation and photography have amalgamated to create a distinct art form recognized as animated films (Rasyid et al., 2024) .

The development of anime over time has become increasingly popular on social media platforms, particularly TikTok. Japanese popular culture has gained traction among Generation Z, who engage with it through technological media, specifically TikTok videos. Researchers have specifically observed this phenomenon through TikTok. According to a report by CNBC, Generation Z has shifted their preference from using Google to the TikTok video-sharing platform. Internal research conducted by Google indicates that 40% of Generation Z individuals prefer to search for information on TikTok rather than using Google's search feature. The information they seek on TikTok often pertains to vacation plans,

clothing choices, skincare products, dining options, and entertainment (Dewi, 2023). Generation Z actively seeks entertainment media, including popular cultures rooted in Indonesia. This generation, often referred to as digital natives, has grown up in the digital era, which has both positive and negative implications. The quest for self-identity among young people is closely intertwined with their lifestyle choices, particularly how they spend their leisure time, as evidenced by their social media activities. They draw fashion inspiration from TikTok and incorporate these styles into their daily attire. In Surabaya, many Gen Z individuals prioritize their appearance. Previous studies, such as "Korean Fashion Style (Social Practice of Dress Patterns of Korean Style Users in Surabaya)," have demonstrated the significance of fashion styles influenced by mass media, particularly K-Pop idols. Similarly, anime films produced by Studio Ghibli have a strong influence on fashion, as seen in the recreation of Ghibli anime character outfits by TikTok content creator @Delvinyauu. TikTok serves as a platform for Generation Z to explore and access the entertainment information they seek. Outfit styling content on TikTok primarily focuses on fashion. Susan B. argues that fashion serves as a medium for expressing one's social, gender, and cultural identity through clothing and accessories (Kaiser, 2012). Fashion encompasses not only everyday attire but also outfits for special occasions, as well as accessories, pants, hairstyles, and makeup. TikTok content creators have produced numerous videos showcasing outfit styling, featuring both masculine and feminine styles, as well as recreations of outfits from Japanese characters. Notably, the TikTok account @Delvinyauu, which began posting in January 2021 and started publishing outfit styling content in August 2021, has gained recognition for its unique content. The creator behind the account, Delvin, has earned the nickname "cowo Ghibli" due to his content that recreates the outfits of anime characters from Studio Ghibli films.

Upon observing this phenomenon, researchers developed an interest in comprehending the audience's perception of gender within the content published on the TikTok account @Delvinyauu. Their focus lay specifically on posts that recreate the outfit styling of Ghibli anime characters, as these serve as a form of representation. Notably, the content showcases characters such as Seiji Amasawa from "Whisper of the Heart" and Taku Morisaki from "Ocean Waves." The decision to study the @Delvinyauu account was driven by its significant engagement: the Taku Morisaki outfit recreation accumulated 662.8K views, 81.6K likes, 1.3K comments, 5.8K saves, and 3.7K shares, while the Seiji Amasawa outfit recreation received 461.1K views, 58.7K likes, 1.2K comments, 3.9K saves, and 2.5K shares. What distinguishes the @Delvinyauu TikTok account from other creators of fashion-related content is Delvin's unique representation of the dressing style of Ghibli anime characters, which has led his audience to dub him as the "Ghibli guy." In order to comprehend how audiences interpret gender within the dressing styles of these characters as presented in the content of TikTok's @Delvinyauu, researchers have chosen to employ Stuart Hall's reception theory. This theory, through its encoding/decoding process, allows for an examination of how a message is interpreted by the audience, as well as the relationship between the communicator and the audience in relation to the conveyed message (Supriyatman & Nugroho, 2019).

In the process of semiotic encoding, the source engages in the translation of ideas into messages that evoke emotional responses in individuals through the utilization of diverse codes. Decoding, on the other hand, pertains to the audience's proficiency in interpreting this informational content by means of comparing it with their pre-existing knowledge, encompassing personal experiences, connotations, and

cognitive processes. It is noteworthy to regard the audience as an active participant, primarily due to their ability to reproduce and derive meaning from the text (Pujarama, 2020).

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative approach within an interpretive paradigm. The objective is to acquire a comprehensive understanding of social phenomena through subjective interpretations of individual experiences. The interpretive paradigm regards social reality as intricate and dynamic, with each element being interconnected and possessing subjective significance (Rahardjo, 2018). Researchers utilize Stuart Hall's reception analysis method to comprehend how Gen Z in Surabaya perceives TikTok content featuring Ghibli anime character outfit styling by content creator @Delvinyauu. This study incorporates both primary and secondary data. Primary data is collected directly from informants through data collection techniques such as Focus Group Discussions (FGD). The informants consist of Gen Z individuals from Surabaya, aged 14-29, who follow @Delvinyauu and have an interest in anime or fashion. Secondary data is gathered through literature reviews, including books, journals, articles, and previous research relating to clothing styles and social media content (Moleong, 2008).

Primary data was collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with 6 informants who were selected based on their interests in anime and fashion. The informants were chosen using a purposive sampling method that was relevant to the research topic. The FGDs followed a structured format which included initiating the discussion, managing and distributing the conversation, refocusing, debating, and concluding the discussion (Purnama, 2015). Secondary data was obtained through literature reviews from various sources that were relevant to the research subject. The data analysis consisted of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Rijali, 2018). Data reduction involved sifting through and simplifying information from interviews and FGDs to identify relevant data. Data presentation was accomplished by organizing the results from the FGDs into narrative text and transcripts that were related to research theories and concepts. Conclusions were drawn by analyzing the data using Stuart Hall's encoding and decoding processes, as well as reception theory, in order to understand how Gen Z in Surabaya interpreted the dressing style of Ghibli anime characters in TikTok content.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Informant Data

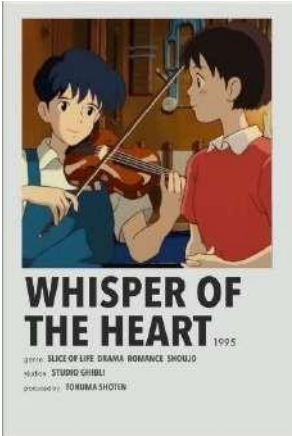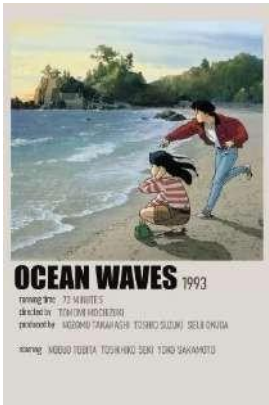| Nama	Usia	Domisili
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S	18	Dukuh Kupang, Surabaya
U	21	Simo, Surabaya
M	22	Ketintang, Surabaya
A	23	Semampir, Surabaya
O	22	Semolowaru, Surabaya

A. Ghibli Anime Characters (Seiji Amasawa: Whisper Of The Heart & Taku Morisaki: Ocean Waves) & Dress Styles in movies

Studio Ghibli defines its main characters using a variety of archetypes, such as heroic figures who exhibit perseverance and protect the vulnerable as saviors, as well as wise and determined individuals who fight for justice. Additionally, antagonists play a significant role in character portrayals within Studio Ghibli anime. Notably, characterizations in Studio Ghibli anime often occur in pairs. The following section outlines the different types of characterizations and provides specific examples of characters found in Studio Ghibli anime (Hidajat, 2017). However, it is important to note that this study has a limitation in its analysis, specifically focusing on the characters in TikTok @Delvinyauu content, including Seiji Amasawa and Taku Morisaki. These characters are described as follows:

Tablel 2. Anime Figures and Characters

Studio Ghibli Anime Figures and Characters		
No.	**Character and Character Name**	**Movie Title**
1.	Seiji, a confident young man, initially becomes enamored with Shizuku. Upon their first encounter, Shizuku characterizes him as a "foolish jerk" and perceives him as impolite, a term she frequently employs. Nevertheless, as the narrative unfolds, it becomes clear that Seiji is actually a kind and considerate individual, as evidenced by his growing affection for Shizuku, particularly towards the culmination of the film. His unwavering ambition to attain mastery in the craft of violin making, coupled with his willingness to abandon everything for this pursuit, serves as a testament to his self-assurance and expertise. He even divulges his aspiration to independently travel to Italy. (Wiki Ghibli, 2019) **Gambar 1. Tokoh Seiji Amasawa**	**"Whisper Of The Heart"**
2.	Taku possesses brown eyes and dark brown hair. He adorns himself in a Japanese school uniform, comprising a green tie and a white shirt. Additionally, he wears a light pink shirt and a white and blue t-shirt throughout the school year. Taku exhibits thoughtfulness as an individual and is unhesitant in articulating his emotions, a distinctive characteristic. In his time spent in middle school, he demonstrated considerable fondness for Rikako and Yutaka. However, it should be noted that he occasionally exhibits impatience (Wiki Ghibli, 2019). **Gambar 2. Tokoh Taku Morisaki**	**"Ocean Waves"**

Tabel 3. Ghibli Anime Movie Synopsis

No.	Movie Synopsis	movie poster
1.	During her last summer break in junior high, Shizuku dedicates her time to reading and translating foreign song lyrics. The film "Whisper of the Heart" depicts the romantic relationship between Shizuku Tsukishima and Seiji Amasawa, both middle school students. Shizuku's fervor for literature leads her to the revelation that Seiji Amasawa, the individual who had borrowed all her past library books, is the person with whom she embarks on a journey to fulfill her aspirations (Blibli Friends, 2023)	*Gambar 1. Poster Anime Ghibli "Whisper Of The Heart"* (Sumber: Whisper Of The Heart)
2.	The main protagonist in "Ocean Waves" is Taku Morisaki, a student in junior high school. One fateful day, Taku's closest companion, Matsuno, introduces him to Rikako Muto, an exceptionally beautiful girl from Tokyo who has recently relocated to their school. The introduction of such an alluring newcomer undoubtedly foreshadows the development of the narrative (Blibli Friends, 2023).	*Gambar 4. Poster Anime Ghibli "Ocean Waves"* (Sumber: Ocean Waves)

Seiji Amasawa (*Whisper Of The Heart*)

      Seiji Amasawa, a prominent character in the anime film "Whisper of the Heart" by Studio Ghibli, is depicted wearing a meticulously maintained white short-sleeved shirt, complemented by gray trousers. As he sits in a relaxed manner, he engrosses himself in a book. In a separate scene, Seiji is attired in a light green knit sweater adorned with dark yellow stripes along the right sleeve. Lastly, during the third scene where Seiji is engrossed in playing the violin, he is once again seen donning the aforementioned white short-sleeved shirt. However, this time it is paired with a blue jumpsuit.

Figure 5. Clothing style of Seiji Amasawa's character

(Sumber: Whisper Of The Heart)

Taku Morisaki (*Ocean Waves*)

Taku Morisaki, the protagonist in the anime film "Ocean Waves" produced by Studio Ghibli, is renowned for his minimalist yet appealing fashion choices. In one particular sequence, Taku is depicted donning a vibrant red jacket coupled with a white T-shirt, complemented by light blue jeans. Another scene showcases Taku sporting a short-sleeved yellow shirt, harmonized with blue jeans, thereby completing his ensemble. Furthermore, Taku is observed in a subsequent scene wearing a long-sleeved pink shirt meticulously folded up to his elbows, accompanied by a white T-shirt underneath. Additionally, he adorns a black sling bag, stylishly draped over his shoulder.

Figure 6. Taku Morisaki's Clothing Style

(Sumber : Ocean Waves)

Overview of Gen Z Surabaya in the research

Generation Z, often referred to as the transitional generation due to the rapid advancements in technology, comprises individuals born after 1995. Elizabeth T. Santosa, in her book *Raising Children in the Digital Era, defines this generation as those born after 2000 (Santosa, 2015). Generation Z has witnessed significant technological progress. Currently in their teenage years, this generation is known for their receptiveness to a wide range of ideas and perspectives, particularly in relation to technological advancements, multiculturalism, and social and environmental concerns (Sherlynda, 2023). In this study, the researchers established the boundaries of Generation Z in Surabaya based on the following criteria,

1. Follow the TikTok content @Delvinyauu

2. Have an interest in Anime

3. Have an interest in Fashion

A. The Dress Style of Ghibli Anime Characters towards Gen Z Surabaya

This discussion aims to examine the initial responses of Gen Z informants from Surabaya towards the clothing choices of Ghibli Anime characters Seiji Amasawa and Taku Morisaki. The objective is to gain insight into how these styles symbolize Japanese popular culture. The majority of Gen Z informants from Surabaya view Seiji Amasawa's dressing style as encompassing aspects of Soft Boy aesthetics.

The Soft Boy interpretation is in accordance with the notion of Soft Masculinity, which encompasses qualities of gentleness, naivety, and purity in males. Four participants (A, O, S, and I) from Gen Z Surabaya offer comprehensive explanations, asserting that Seiji Amasawa's character exemplifies elements of Soft Masculinity through his clothing and demeanor.

Informant A (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Kalau misalnya tokoh pertama itu Seiji ya, itu. Kalau Seiji itu lebih ke cutie boy ya. Karena sempat ada kayak pakai jumpsuit gitu, menurut aku, gak semua orang, gak semua cowok itu cocok. Tapi di dia itu cocok gitu, maksudnya ini cuma 3D. Terus itu akhirnya merepresentasikan dia itu sebagai cowok yang soft boy dan yang lovely boy ya."

Translate in english:

Informant A (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"For example, the first character is Seiji. Seiji is more of a cutie boy. Because there was like wearing a jumpsuit, in my opinion, not everyone, not all guys are suitable. But in him it fits, I mean this is only 3D. Then it finally represents him as a soft boy and a lovely boy."

Informant O (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Kalau yang buat pertama ya, itu lebih ke Softboy, dan menurutku ya itu, ini gak tau bener-bener apa salah, itu masih kebawa fashionnya Jepang jaman dulu banget. Kayak, ya tentunya udah lama gitu"

Translate in english:

Informant O (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"For the first one, it's more about Softboy, and in my opinion, I don't know if it's really wrong, it's still the old Japanese fashion. Like, yes of course it's been a long time"

Informan S (FGD, 12 Mei 20204):

"Seiji sering pakai polo warna putih, warna yang tenang kaya soft boy"

Translate in english:

Informant S (FGD, May 12, 20204):

"Seiji often wears a white polo, a calm color like a soft boy"

Informan I (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Menonjol di Seiji itu karena kan emang dia anak musik ya, anak biola. Jadi, pakainya anak-anak, eh yang anak-anak biola itu kan soft boy, terus kayak lucu. Mempresentasikan bahwa dia tuh anak baik-baik banget gitu loh. Jadi, menurutku ya anak musik Seiji match banget sama outfitnya dia gitu."

Translate in english:

Informant I (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"Seiji stands out because he is a music kid, a violin kid. So, wearing children's clothes, uh the violin children are soft boys, then like funny. Presenting that he is a really good boy. So, I think Seiji's music kid matches his outfit really well."

The four informants expressed a positive view of the soft boy anime character, positioning themselves in a dominant hegemonic stance regarding Seiji Amasawa. They embraced the character as a soft boy, evident from their enthusiastic and smiling responses. These four FGD participants have accepted and understood that men do not need to conform to traditional masculine norms. They provided their own interpretations of "Softboy," with informants A, O, S, and I describing it as a man with a kind, gentle, and humorous personality, typically associated with feminine traits. The other two informants shared a similar understanding.

"Soft Boy" refers to an adult male who challenges traditional gender norms through his appearance, behavior, and interests. This style is characterized by soft aesthetics, such as long hair, cardigans, pastel colors, and nail polish. While K-Pop culture heavily influences the Soft Boy look, there is also an underlying belief that "nice guys deserve a chance." Common traits among Soft Boys include a sensitive demeanor and a tendency to be perceived as outsiders due to their nonconformity. They often have a strong educational background, display feminine behavior, and possess emotional intelligence and strong ethics. Soft Boys typically enjoy educational documentaries and indie music. Their commitment

to rejecting toxic masculinity and supporting gender equality is frequently showcased on their Instagram profiles. They place high importance on mental health and often advocate for self-care and therapy (Frantz, 2022).

The researcher switched to showing the appearance of the character Taku Morisaki at the FGD venue, there was one informant who gave a new statement in the discussion room,

Informant M (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"In the last scene, he was wearing a pink shirt. Well, that's what it is. It's like college kids who are really candy people. I mean candy boys, cake boys, who like girls' colors. But there are some guys who like colors like that. Like I also had several internships or classes wearing clothes like that and there are also many like that. Taku's character represents an okay student. I mean like ambitious yes, and then the organization yes"

Translate in english:

The statement from Informant M was agreed by Informant I by adding some personal opinions,

Informant I (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Lucu sih bener kayak candy-candy boy gitu. Lucu, bajunya pink. Jadi, menggunakan baju yang genderless fashion gitu. Gak warna-warna yang dulu kan masih cowok tuh pakenya yang gelap-gelap. Cewek tuh pakenya yang terang-terang gitu kan. Nah, dia tuh gak mengotak-otakan kalau cowok Anime itu tuh gak mengotak-otakan kalau cowok tuh harus pake yang gelap, harus pake yang warna cerah. Jadi, kayak genderless fashion. Uniknya, Candy Fashion itu bagus sih apalagi cowok-cowok ya di cowok-cowok jadi itu jadi ka yak bentuk protes toxic masculinity ya jadi kalau cowok tuh nggak harus yang hitam gelap cowok tuh bisa ya pakai baju-baju cerah gitu jadi bentuk protes toxic masculinity sih menurutku"

Translate in english:

Informant I (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"It's really cute like a candy-candy boy. Funny, his clothes are pink. So, using clothes that are genderless fashion. Not the colors that used to be used by boys who wear dark colors. Girls wear bright colors. Well, he doesn't compartmentalize that Anime boys don't compartmentalize that boys have to wear dark colors, have to wear bright colors. So, it's like genderless fashion. Uniquely, Candy Fashion is good, especially for guys, so it's a form of protest against toxic masculinity, so if guys don't have to wear dark black, guys can wear bright clothes, so it's a form of protest against toxic masculinity in my opinion."

Seeing the new statement in the FGD room by the two informants M and I gives back to the dominant hegemonic position which accepts that the style of clothing worn by the character Taku Morisaki represents a man with a "candy boy" style which is not far from the "Soft Boy" character. The term "Candy boy" itself is not far from the term "soft boy", both have the same tendency In recent months, a new nickname known as "Candy Boy" has emerged on social media, especially on TikTok and Instagram. Often associated with South Korean and Japanese pop culture, the phrase is used to characterize young men who have a feminine aesthetic and sense of style. feminine sense of style.

However, not all young men who like South Korean and Japanese pop culture or dress in a feminine style fit the mold of a "Candy Boy". This phrase does not necessarily indicate a person's gender identity or sexual orientation, but rather a description used to describe a certain aesthetic and personality (Smothers, 2019). However, there was one participant who stated that Taku Morisaki's character was not between the two, but rather the reverse, who saw that Taku Morisaki's character still had a masculine side.

Informan U (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Aku liatnya tokoh Taku ini visualnya tuh visual-visual kayak bertander gitu ya kuat garis wajahnya jadi kaya laki banget"

Translate in english:

Informant U (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"I see Taku's character visually as a bertander, so his facial lines are very strong"

In this discussion, researchers observed differing opinions about the character Taku Morisaki. Informant U perceives Taku as embodying more traditional masculine traits compared to the views of other informants. From a visual perspective, this participant's opinion stands in opposition to the others.

B. Soft Masculinity in Ghibli Anime characters

Researchers explore the connections between masculine and feminine concepts and soft masculinity in relation to Ghibli anime characters. The aim of this discussion is to analyze the insights gained from FGD participants regarding masculine, feminine, and soft masculinity as they relate to these characters. Initially, researchers inquired about the participants' understanding of masculine and feminine concepts. Following this, the discussion shifted to exploring soft masculinity and its application to Ghibli anime characters.

Informant A provided a detailed and critical explanation of his personal understanding of masculinity and femininity.

Informan A (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Kalau menurut aku sendiri, setahu aku feminin sama maskulin itu kan terbentuk dari pandangan masyarakat ya. Dari stigma masyarakat yang akhirnya menjadi konstruksi sosial yang diyakini sampai sekarang. Masih banyak secara mayoritas. Jadi lebih kayak pandangan pengelompokan yang mewajibkan jenis kelamin perempuan untuk bersifat feminin. Begitu juga dengan laki-laki yang harus maskulin gitu. Yang udah disampaikan sebelumnya. Yang lebih identik dengan cowok yang kayak nge-gym. Itu baru maskulin. Tapi kalau misalnya cowok-cowok yang nge-gym itu akan dianggap kayak itu feminin banget gitu. Kayak dianggap kayak cowok lemah. Kayak representasi kayak cowok-cowok ghibli itu aja bisa dibilang itu feminin. Karena dianggap kayak kok sih kayak kok terlalu soft banget gitu. Kok pakai bajunya kayak gitu gitu. Mungkin akan merasa representasi di masyarakat itu akan laki-laki banget. Itu warnanya itu harus hitam. Kalau nggak hitam, warna-warna dark yang bisa kayak hijau, navy, segala macem gitu. Tapi sekarang kayak, kayaknya orang-orang lebih open-minded sih"

Translate in English:

Informant A (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"In my own opinion, as far as I know, feminine and masculine are formed from the views of society. From the stigma of society that eventually becomes a social construction that is believed until now. There are still many in the majority. So it's more like a grouping view that requires the female gender to be feminine. Likewise, men must be masculine. That was mentioned before. Which is more synonymous with guys who like to do gym. That's masculine. But if for example the guys who do the gym will be considered like it's really feminine. Like it's considered like a weak guy. Like the representation of the ghibli boys can be considered feminine. Because it's considered like how come it's too soft. How come he wears his clothes like that. Maybe it will feel like the representation in society will be very male. The color has to be black. If not black, dark colors that can be like green, navy, everything like that. But now it's like, I think people are more open-minded anyway"

Informant I reinforced informant A's argument in his opinion explaining that gender, whether masculine or feminine, is formed by the influence of the social environment,

Informan I (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"sebenarnya feminim sama maskulin Terbentuk karena society kan Jadi perempuan ya harus Perempuan, pakai bajunya Pakai baju rok Sebenarnya kan padahal Rok itu adalah kain Kalau misalnya dipotong di tengah jadi celana dan kalau nggak dijahit jadi rok gitu loh maksudnya kayak harusnya tidak ada seperti itu Terus kalau maskulin ya yang harus laki Harus bisa angkat galon. harus yang Bisa berantem gitu menurut aku. Jadi menurut aku feminim sama maskulin Harusnya tidak ada dikotak-kotakan arah Wehh cewek tuh harus feminim aja Cowok tuh harus maskulin aja Kan apalagi sekarang Cowok-cowok patriarki yang Toxic maskulin itu selalu Kayak Cewek masa nggak bisa masak Cewek masa nggak bisa cuci baju Nggak bisa nyapu, nggak bisa ngepel Padahal kan Patriarki Padahal kan kegiatan seperti Aktivitas seperti itu kan Harusnya bisa dilakukan juga dengan laki-laki kan Maksudnya nggak perlu seperti itu"

Translate in English:

Informant I (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"Actually, feminine and masculine are formed because of society, right? So women have to be women, wear clothes, wear skirts, right? In fact, the skirt is a cloth If for example it is cut in the middle, it becomes pants and if it is not sewn, it becomes a skirt. So in my opinion, feminine and masculine should not be compartmentalized in the direction of Wehh girls should just be feminine Guys should just be masculine, especially now that patriarchal men who are Toxic masculine are always like Girls can't cook Girls can't wash clothes Can't sweep, can't mop Even though it's Patriarchy Even though activities like that should be able to be done also with men, right?"

Both informants A, and I in the FGD participants, the researcher saw the tendency of their answers that gender either Masculine or Feminine is formed due to social or environmental stigma. The opinions of these two informants are in accordance with what the researcher wrote in the conceptual foundation that gender is formed due to the product of social construction, where society develops a culture that serves as a standard for what makes a person male or female. Meanwhile, two of the others

(informants M and O) emphasized their opinion that Masculine will always be associated with men while feminine for women

Informan M (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Menurut aku kayak pembagian antara dua lawan jenis. Seperti feminin itu kan selalu dikaitkan dengan perempuan dan maskulin laki-laki"

Translate in English:

Informant M (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"I think it's like a division between two opposite sexes. Like feminine is always associated with women and masculine with men"

Informan O (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Kalau yang feminin itu lebih dikaitkan sama si perempuan. Kalau maskulin itu lebih ke cowok. Intinya garis besarnya gitu."

Translate in English:

Informant O (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"The feminine is more associated with the woman. The masculine is more like a guy. That's basically the outline."

There is only one informant who responds to masculine and feminine based on social reality in one's facial identity,

Informan U (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Semua itu disangkut pautkan dengan muka identitasnya gitu. Bisa dilihat dari visual ini kan biasanya nih contoh nih ada ya sekarang. Kayak yang cowok yang visual dan karakternya kayak Feminin. Atau kadang cewek juga ada yang Maskulin gitu. Kalau menurut aku sih itu."

Translate in English:

Informant U (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"All of that is related to the face of the identity. It can be seen from this visual, usually there are examples now. Like guys whose visuals and characters are like Feminine. Or sometimes there are also Masculine girls. That's what I think."

In this discussion, researchers aim to understand each FGD participant's perception of gender-related information. This understanding sets the stage for the second part of the discussion, which focuses on the participants' views on soft masculinity. The discussion started with Informant I, who described soft masculinity as a man with a good personality who dresses in an unremarkable manner. Informant S then shared his perspective on the topic,

Informan I (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Soft maskulin ini merupakan laki-laki yang luar biasa ya menurut saya, soalnya kan dia bisa Maskulin tapi dia bisa menerima Pandangan perempuan Berarti dia bisa kita simpulkan Bahwa tipikal laki-laki Yang mau mengurusi rumah tangga juga Jadi mau menyapu Kalau dari personality Mau menyapu, mau Nyuci baju, mau jemur baju Terus juga kalau tentang Fashion, dari fashionnya sendiri Yang gak judging Tentang orang Laki-laki yang pakai baju pink Terus pakai kulot Berarti itu Nothing wrong with kulot, lagi dipakai laki-laki Keren Soft maskulin"

Translate in English:

Informant I (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"Soft masculine is an extraordinary man in my opinion, because he can be masculine but he can accept the views of women, which means that we can conclude that he is a typical man who wants to take care of the household too, so he wants to sweep, if from his personality, he wants to sweep, he wants to wash clothes, he wants to dry clothes, and also when it comes to fashion, from his own fashion, which is not judging about men who wear pink clothes and then wear culottes, which means that there is nothing wrong with culottes, again used by cool men Soft masculine "

Informan S (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Sepertinya balik ke opini kak I, kayak dia bisa menerima dari fashion feminin jadi misalkan me-mix and match dari masculine sama feminine tadi"

Translate in English:

Informant S (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"I think it goes back to kak I's opinion, like he can accept feminine fashion so let's mix and match from masculine and feminine."

In the discussion, Informant M responded to Informant I's opinion, explaining that soft masculinity is in a position between masculine and feminine genders,

Informan M (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Menurutku alternatif daripada Maskulin dan Feminin Mungkin itu ada di tengah-tengah Jadi mungkin orang-orang yang maskulin Tetapi dia mencoba untuk berpakaian Secara feminin . Yang saya tangkap itu kurang lebih berapa sama dengan mbak I tadi tapi ada yang Ingin saya tambahin, itu soft-masculine itu diantara tengah-tengah dua itu Dari maskulin dan feminin ambil aja tengah-tengahnya"

Translate in English:

Informant M (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"I think the alternative to masculine and feminine might be in the middle so maybe people who are masculine but try to dress femininely. What I captured was more or less the same as Ms. I earlier but there is something I want to add, that soft-masculine is in the middle of the two, from masculine and feminine, just take the middle."

Informant A responded to informant M's opinion by more critically explaining how men should not be limited to environmental stereotypes.

Informan A (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Sebenernya tuh sama aja kayak pandangan orang sebelumnya yang mau memaparkan tadi ya lebih ke mungkin tuh pandangan baru semenjak kayak laki-laki tuh bisa bebas berekspresi apalagi yang merepresentasikan tuh biasanya kayak orang-orang kayak idol atau artis karena mungkin kalo menurut pandangan aku ya alasannya adalah oh ya mungkin karena mereka kulitnya putih jadi dipake apa aja tuh cocok gitu padahal sebenernya enggak jadi itu ya pandangan baru dari adanya orang-orang yang bisa influence mereka jadi kan sekarang banyak tuh orang-orang yang mulai pede juga pake warna cerah atau pake baju yang kayak cutie cutie kalo misalnya kita menarik sejarah ke belakang kalo sekarang kan mikirnya girly itu perempuan itu yang pake rok bahkan yang kaya berhijab pun akan dianggap lebih perempuan banget ketika dia pake rok, pake gabis padahal sejarahnya dulu itu semuanya pake roh bangsawan eropa, kalo misalnya kita ngeliat bangsawan jepang, korea, gak ada yang pake celana ibaratnya kan akhirnya mereka kayak handbook aja itu kan modelannya kayak roh jadi banyak sih mungkin kayak perspektif yang salah menuju era-era sekarang yang akhirnya membuka kembali gitu pandangan ternyata oh salah ya gitu Dari pakaian juga terus kalau aku ya, mungkin Karena adanya patriarki Indonesia tuh Masih salah satu negara yang patriarki yang tinggi Padahal kalo misalnya Dengan kita yang agamanya Mayoritas Islam Harusnya tuh mengerti ini kalo misalnya kalian mau nikah Itu pasti akan dikasih tau Tanggung jawab sebenernya membersihkan rumah Segala macem itu tanggung jawab suami bukan tanggung jawab Istri, bahkan Nabi pun melakukan itu Jadi kembali lagi Banyak banget miss persepsi Kayak pada akhirnya tuh Banyak banget gitu pandangan yang tergeser kaku ya harus diuruskan gitu Jadinya tuh kayak jangan anggap perempuan itu Justru cuci baju gitu Justru ya kita perempuan yang nyuru tuh laki cuci baju Gitu"

Translate in English:

Informant A (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"Actually, it's the same as the views of the previous person who wanted to explain earlier, it's more about maybe a new view since men can be free to express themselves, especially those who represent them are usually people like idols or artists because maybe according to my view, the reason is oh yeah maybe because they have white skin so whatever they wear is suitable, even though it's actually not so it's a new view of the existence of people who can influence them so now many people are starting to be confident too wearing bright colors or wearing clothes that are like cutie-pies if for example we pull back history if we look at the history of the world. So now there are many people who are starting to be confident in wearing bright colors or wearing clothes that are like cutie cuties if for example we pull back history, now we think that girly is a woman who wears a skirt, even those who wear a hijab will be considered more female when they wear a skirt, wearing a gabis even though historically all of them used to wear the spirit of European aristocrats, if for example we look at Japanese, Korean aristocrats, For example, if we look at the Japanese, Korean aristocrats, no one wears pants like that, in the end they are like a handbook, the model is like a spirit so there are many things, maybe it's like a wrong perspective towards the current era which finally reopens the view, it turns out that oh it's wrong, Even the Prophet did that So back again There are so many misperceptions Like in the end there are so many views that are shifted rigidly, yes, they have to be managed So it's like don't think that women are actually washing clothes So in fact, we women are the ones who ask men to wash clothes That's it"

In the implementation of this discussion, there are differences in responses from other informants. These 2 informants tend to respond that soft masculinity has a waving character,

Informan U (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Kalo dari yang aku sendiri ya sebenernya enggak jauh-jauh banget Sama anak-anak Cuma, apa ya Kalo dipandang di era sekarang Itu Kalo masih Kayak menerima gitu Kayak yaudah gitu loh Tau ga sih? Jadi kaya Istilah kasarnya kayak melambai gitu kan? ya kalau aku punya teman melambai juga ada gitu. Cuma sekarang orang-orang pandangannya, ya udahlah ya gitu. Selagi gak ganggu kita, kenapa enggak gitu. Terus sebenarnya kalau dipandang dari agama sih, salah gitu loh. Cuma, yang namanya juga dia gen Z ya, menganggapnya kayak gitu gitu loh. Kalau dari aku pribadi, dari aku sendiri, kalau soft masculine itu, yaudah suka-suka dia gitu loh, Ya dari kayak perilaku atau pakaian. Terus sekarang banyak tuh kayak fashion-fashion gitu loh. Kayak Jefri Nichol dan lain-lain. Kayak fashion yang cewek gitu. Ya kalau misalnya lagi dibuat fashion, ya gitu loh terkesan melambai"

Translate in English:

Informant U (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"From my own point of view, it's actually not that far away from the children, it's just, what if you look at it in this era, if you still accept it, it's like it's okay, you know? So it's like a rough term like waving, right? Yes, if I have friends waving too. It's just that now people look at it, so be it. As long as it doesn't bother us, why not. Then actually if you look at it from a religious perspective, it's wrong. But, his name is also gen Z, so he thinks like that. For me personally, from myself, if it's soft masculine, it's like he likes it, yes from behavior or clothing. Then now there are a lot of fashions like that. Like Jefri Nichol and others. Like female fashion. Yes, if for example a fashion is made, it looks like waving"

Informan O (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Kurang lebih sama kayak kak S misalnya gitu ke pribadian, lebih kayak melambai. Soalnya ya balik lagi, kalau misalnya dibuat style, ataupun kayak role model, kan emang kalau dalam zaman sekarang kan, misalnya di modelnya yang diluar itu kan kayak nyeleneh gitu .Model-modelnya entah itu. Pakaiannya di-combine sama yang apa, jadinya gini, blablabla. Dan itu juga pernah dicontohin sama Jefri Nichol itu. Dan itu udah mulai banyak, itu kan, pro-contra gitu. Jadi memang menurutku itu masih pro-contra sampai sekarang. Dan memang ada yang sisi terima, dari segi agama, dari segi lainnya itu lumayan kompleks gitu"

Translate in English:

Informant O (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"More or less the same as kak S, for example, to the personality, more like waving. The thing is, again, if for example it's made into a style, or like a role model, right, in this day and age, for example in the models that are out there, it's like weird. The clothes are combined with what, so it becomes like this, blablabla. And that has also been exemplified by Jefri Nichol. And it's already starting to have a lot of, right, pros and cons. So I think it's still a pro-con until now. And there is indeed a side that accepts it, in terms of religion, from other aspects it is quite complex."

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From this discussion, the researcher examined that 4 out of 6 FGD participants gave a positive response to Soft Masculinity, which means they are in the dominant-hegemonic position, while 2 out of 6 participants thought that soft masculinity was an unnatural thing to do so they were in the opposition position. After the discussion related to soft masculinity, the researcher again questioned how the FGD participants interpreted soft masculinity in the implementation of ghibli anime characters Seiji Amasawa and Taku Morisaki.

Informan O (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Yang seiji, yang itu lebih soft maskulin banget tapi kalau secara overall, jadi dua-duanya termasuk soft maskulin,. Aku lebih nangkap dari segi perpakaiannya, sama how to dia berperilakunya, dia lebih, bener-bener soft banget, kalau dibandingin sama tokoh karakter anime lain kaya tokoh Kira di Anime death note dari segi visual aja udah beda. Kira punya visual yang tajam dan karakter yang membunuh melalui buku death notenya sedangkan si Seiji ataupun Taku kan lebih kearah laki-laki yang lembut terhadap perempuan"

Translate in English:

Informant O (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"The seiji one, that one is more soft masculine but overall, so both of them are soft masculine. I catch more in terms of his clothes, as well as how he behaves, he is more, really soft, when compared to other anime characters like the character Kira in Anime death note in terms of visuals, it's already different. Kira has sharp visuals and a character who kills through his death note book, while Seiji or Taku are more like men who are gentle with women."

Researchers recognize that Informant O, who has a strong interest in anime, is able to clearly articulate the distinctions between characters perceived as masculine and those as soft masculine. Consequently, Informant O holds a dominant hegemonic position regarding the Ghibli anime characters Seiji and Taku, aligning with the researcher's view of soft masculinity, which encompasses men with a gentle nature.

In this discussion, the majority of the six participants also hold a dominant hegemonic stance, indicating that Seiji and Taku embody soft masculine identities. Their interpretations of soft masculinity vary, encompassing both the characters' behavior towards women and their clothing styles.

Informan U (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Kalau dari aku sendiri, untuk kedua karakter ini menurut aku soft masculinity. Karena udah dilihat dari... Penjelasan dari kak Irene sendiri, kayak soft yang bukan dari perilaku ya. Jadi soft dari... eh,

apa? Perilaku ya? Iya pakaian, terus sama perilaku ke wanita gitu yang benar-benar kayak gentleman gitu. Itu lebih ke pertama sih"

Translate in English:

Informant U (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"For myself, for these two characters, I think soft masculinity. Because it's seen from ... The explanation from kak Irene herself, it's like soft that is not from behavior. So soft from... eh, what, behavior? Yes, clothes, then the same behavior towards women who are really like gentlemen. That's more like the first thing"

Informant I responded in agreement with informant U's opinion and added how soft masculine was formed between the two characters,

Informan I (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Oke. Soft, maskulin banget karena dua-duanya tokoh sama seiji. Ya, karena dari penampilannya sama di film kan personality-nya dia juga sudah ditampilkan bahwa dia sangat gentleman, bener kata Supi Ya, soft, maskulin"

Informant I (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"Okay. Soft very masculine because both characters are the same seiji. Yes, because from his appearance and in the movie, his personality has also been shown that he is very gentlemanly, right Supi said, yes, soft, masculine."

Translate in English:

Informant M identified soft masculine in both characters based on the color of the clothes used,

Informan M (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Ya, menurutku dua-duanya juga soft. Entah, saya nggak pernah menonton anime Ghibli ya, tetapi yang saya lihat dari color palette, color palette dari dua anime tersebut itu semua menggambarkan soft. Nah, asumsi saya... Dua... dua karakter tersebut soft dan memang genre animenya itu tentang romance"

Translate in English:

Informant M (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"Yes, I think both of them are also soft. I don't know, I've never watched Ghibli anime, but what I see from the color palette, the color palette of the two anime all depict soft. Well, my assumption is... Two... the two characters are soft and the anime genre is about romance"

Informant A interprets soft masculine not only from the choice of colors but from his behavioral personality,

Informan A (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Iya, soft masculinity Dua-duanya Bukan karena pemilihan warna ya, tapi kepribadiannya bener-bener yang kayak soft banget gitu, kalau misalnya ke perempuan gitu, terus kayak bener-bener really put the effort of the relationship"

Translate in English:

Informant A (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"Yes, soft masculinity, both of them. Not because of the color selection, yes, but the personality is really soft, if for example to a woman, then it's like really putting the effort of the relationship."

Meanwhile, Informant S interprets that soft masculine in ghibli anime characters (Seiji and Taku) can be seen from the behavior and color of the clothes they use,

Informan S (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Dari video tampilan tadi, dua-duanya soft masculinity dari perilakunya sama yang kepacarnya dan penggunaan warna yang digunakan warna-warna soft gitu"

Translate in English:

Informant S (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"From the video display, both of them are soft masculinity from their behavior and the boyfriend and the use of colors used are soft colors."

From the FGD discussion, the researcher concludes that the view of soft masculinity concerning the Ghibli anime characters Seiji Amasawa and Taku Morisaki is predominantly held by the six informants in a dominant hegemonic position. The interpretation of this view is influenced by each participant's individual background.

C. Recreating Ghibli Anime Character Outfit Styling on @Delvinyauu's TikTok account

After analyzing the FGD participants' interpretations, the researcher redirected the discussion to focus on the representation of Ghibli anime character outfits featured on the @Delvinyauu TikTok account. The aim of this discussion was to explore how the concept of soft masculinity is represented and accepted in Ghibli anime characters as presented through social media content. The researcher initiated the discussion with the following question:

Moderator (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Menurut kalian akun Tiktok @Delvinyauu pada konten styling outfit anime ghibli itu sudah bsa mewakili identitas soft masculinity atau enggak?"

Translate in English:

Moderator (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"Do you think the @Delvinyauu Tiktok account on the ghibli anime outfit styling content can represent the identity of soft masculinity or not?"

3 FGD participants interpreted that the TikTok account @Delvinyauu can represent soft masculinity through Delvin's personality and is also associated with characters from ghibli anime characters,

Informan A (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Cocok... Karena dia tuh... Kayak kata informan I ya. Dia kan kategori A yang ganteng banget. Dan gak usah ngeliat bajunya dulu ya. Kita liat bagian muka aja. Mungkin orang ketemu dia aja udah bisa ngeliat. Dia tuh soft banget. Mukanya itu innocent-anak polos... Baik, jujur... Iya bener-bener mukanya tuh... Muka anak baik gitu. Dan muka aja udah... Apa lagi ditambah kaya ngeliat yang kaya... Anime-anime ghibli itu ya. Semakin mendukung gitu. Personalitinya yang... Soft as body."

Translate in English:

Informant A (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"It fits... Because he is... Like what informant I said. He is a category A who is really handsome. And we don't need to look at the clothes first. We just look at the face. Maybe people who meet him can already see. He's really soft. His face is innocent-an innocent child... Good, honest... Yes, his face is really... The face of a good child. And the face alone is already... What else plus seeing that rich... Those ghibli anime. It's even more supportive. His personality is... Soft as body."

Informan I (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Iya, sudah mewakili banget dari perampilannya dia yang ternyata iseng-iseng matching outfit sama si Seiji dan Taku itu ya sangat cocok. Terus kalau misalnya ada kayak followers selayang ngomongin dari personality-nya Delvin, yang ngikutin dia pas sama Tessa dulu, pas sama mantannya itu, dia juga kayak si Seiji sama Toko, sweet, romance, gentleman gitu, ya."

Translate in English:

Informant I (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"Yes, it really represents his appearance, which turns out to be a casual matching outfit with Seiji and Taku, it's very suitable. Then if for example there are like followers who are talking about Delvin's personality, who followed him when he was with Tessa, when he was with his ex, he is also like Seiji and Toko, sweet, romance, gentleman, yes."

Informan U (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Ya kalau dari aku cocok-cocok aja sih. Soalnya udah relate banget. Relate dari kontennya si Delvin, waktu recreat dirinya juga cocok sama yang di Seiji sama yang di Taku ya, ya dari penampilan outfit-nya, dari visualnya udah kelihatan banget kayak soft-soft, Visual muka sampai dengan rambut"

Translate in English:

Informant U (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"Yes, from my point of view, it's suitable. The thing is, I already relate to it. Relate from the content of Delvin, when he recreates himself, he also matches the one in Seiji and the one in Taku, yes from the appearance of the outfit, from the visuals it really looks like soft, visual face to hair"

Meanwhile, there is 1 informant who interprets that @Delvinyauu's TikTok account can be interpreted as soft masculine from her appearance and face,

Informan S (FGD, 12 Mei 2024):

"Waktu ngelihat si Delvin ngecreate itu juga sangat soft, sama kaya kak Informan I itu dari penampilannya juga sangat mendukung dari penampilannya dari wajah dari konten-kontennya dia kaya anak baik-baik yang kelihatan polos"

Translate in English:

Informant S (FGD, May 12, 2024):

"When I saw Delvin create, it was also very soft, just like Informant I's brother, from his appearance it was also very supportive from his appearance from his face from his content he was like a good boy who looked innocent."

Discussion in research findings

In the reception analysis method, the diverse backgrounds of the informants (heterogeneity) are crucial to this study. The research subjects are Gen Z individuals from Surabaya who follow the @Delvinyauu TikTok account, categorized by their interest in anime or fashion, and aged between 14 and 29 years.

During the analysis of the collected data, which encompassed coding from both the encoding and decoding processes, the information was categorized into three distinct stages: Hegemonic dominant, negotiated, and opposition. This study uncovers novel insights into the concept of soft masculinity as manifested in the dressing style of Ghibli anime. The purpose of this discussion is to tackle the research question: "How does the Gen Z population in Surabaya perceive the dressing style of Ghibli anime characters within the styling content on the @Delvinyauu TikTok account?" Subsequently, the analysis will center on the findings pertaining to the styling of Ghibli anime characters as presented in the TikTok content.

A. Popular Culture through the Dress Style of Ghibli Anime Characters

Five out of six participants in the discussion concluded that the clothing style of Seiji Amasawa and Taku Morisaki characters aligns with the concept of "Soft Boy," and introduced alternative terms such as "Candy Boy." This terminology first emerged on popular social media platforms, specifically Twitter and Tumblr, in 2014. The terms "Soft Boy" and "Candy Boy" are associated with men who possess traits such as friendliness, compassion, sensitivity, creativity, and artistic inclination, as well as elements of femininity. Individuals embodying the "soft boy" and "Candy Boy" characteristics tend to excel in active listening, readily offer assistance to those in need, express their emotions openly, possess a more considerate and open-minded perspective compared to their male counterparts, and exhibit a penchant for vibrant attire and unique accessories (Kautsar, 2024).

In the realm of Japanese anime, there exists a notable portrayal of characters who embody the concept of a "Soft Boy" or "Candy Boy". The traditional gender roles in Japan are undergoing a transformative process, whereby men are increasingly open to expressing their emotional and feminine qualities. This evolution serves to enhance their ability to resonate with anime audiences. Within the domain of Ghibli anime, characters are often portrayed as complex and multidimensional, which makes it challenging to assign them to a single categorization. Ghibli's overarching objective is to appeal to viewers from diverse age groups and backgrounds. Although the terms "Soft Boy" and "Candy Boy" are often associated with specific characters, they reflect a broader trend that permeates the world of anime (Wiki Ghibli, 2019.) The findings of a recent study indicate that out of 6 participants, 5 maintain a hegemonic dominant perspective, perceiving the characters Seiji Amasawa and Taku Morisaki as exemplifying the essence of the "Soft Boy" and "Candy Boy" concept. This perception is grounded in their clothing styles, which are regarded as cute, serene, and vibrant, aligning with the soft masculinity concept discussed in the research. Conversely, one informant holds an opposing viewpoint, adhering to traditional gender norms and arguing that Taku Morisaki still exhibits masculine traits due to his character's prominently defined facial features.

Traditional gender stereotypes remain deeply ingrained in society, dictating that men must embody characteristics such as strength, aggression, and dominance in accordance with conventional notions of

masculinity. These stereotypes also extend to specific fashion trends, wherein men are expected to don sporty, casual, and dark-colored clothing with minimal accessories, or even dresses. Nevertheless, the evolution of men's fashion, influenced by modern Western society, demonstrates that men are no longer strictly bound to adhering to masculine styles, and can instead embrace a more hybridized approach to their sartorial choices (Barry, 2018). Unfortunately, men can experience adverse consequences as a result of these misconceptions, finding themselves under pressure to conform to rigid and unattainable standards. Those who do not conform to these expectations may face rejection or bullying. Even when feeling uncomfortable in their attire, men may feel compelled to dress in ways deemed "masculine" by societal norms. This pressure often leads to feelings of discomfort and a lack of authenticity. Gender stereotypes can significantly limit men's ability to express themselves through clothing, causing some to avoid bright colors, patterns, or accessories out of fear of being perceived as less "masculine" (Barry, 2018).

B. Soft Masculinity of Ghibli Anime Characters

In the findings, six informants explained that soft masculinity can be observed in two Ghibli anime characters, namely Seiji Amasawa and Taku Morisaki. They pointed out that the soft masculinity is reflected in the characters' behavior and attire. These six informants hold a dominant position in terms of hegemony, as they collectively agree that the two Ghibli anime characters embody a soft masculinity identity based on their interactions with female characters in the anime film. The character of an individual can serve as an indicator of their gender identity, In the discussion, the majority of participants in the focus group (four informants) provided detailed explanations on the concept of soft masculinity, which they described as a blend of masculine and feminine qualities. The idea of soft masculinity has gained significant recognition over the past decade, with "soft masculinity" now being acknowledged as a well-established concept. This can be observed in the representation of Korean male singers, known as Korean idols, who embody a form of masculinity known as soft masculinity. These idols exhibit a gentle demeanor both in their daily lives and performances. The emergence of this trend signifies a change in the perception of masculinity, as demonstrated by various K-Pop boy bands that challenge traditional norms, highlighting that masculinity does not necessarily equate to solely being masculine.

To be a man, which does not have to be masculine. K-Pop's socially constructed definition of masculinity is diffused, as evidenced by boy band members using eyeliner, lip balm, lip tint, and other makeup products, which are widely accepted by K-Pop fans. In Korea, it is considered unattractive for boy band members to maintain beards or mustaches (Usman et al., 2019). Likewise, in Japan, masculinity with a softer image and appearance, characterized by smooth skin, polite and well-mannered behavior, and the use of makeup, is prevalent among Manga characters known as Bishounen (Dhuhafa, 2023). K-Pop defies hegemonic norms of masculinity, demonstrating that men can engage in feminine practices, such as wearing clothes in softer or pastel colors, which are stereotypically associated with femininity (Luo, 2023). Some participants in the focus group discussion noted that the choice of colors in clothing expression can also be a characteristic of soft masculinity, with younger-looking colors being indicative of this identity.

C. Content in constructing Ghibli Anime Fashion

The TikTok account @Delvinyauu is renowned for its fashion-related content showcasing Ghibli anime characters Seiji Amasawa and Taku Morisaki. During the FGD discussion, six participants

unanimously agreed that the content produced by the @Delvinyauu account exemplified soft masculinity. This consensus established the informants' position of dominance within the hegemonic framework, implying that they perceive soft masculinity in both the creator's personality and visual representation. The @Delvinyauu account is distinguished by its visually captivating portrayal of male figures and the gentle demeanor of its creator. In the context of Mugujeok (non-citizenship), soft masculinity is epitomized through appealing visual aesthetics, meticulous attention to fashion, and the incorporation of makeup (Indira et al., 2023).

One of the realities concerning the evolution of masculinity in modern times, as influenced by the rise of Kpop trends and South Korean popular culture, is the emergence of the concept of soft masculinity. The dissemination of this soft masculinity is facilitated by social media, which allows for the widespread acceptance among audiences. This acceptance is largely attributed to the amalgamation of diverse cultures through media products, thus positioning the media as a crucial intermediary between audiences (Kartika & Wirawanda, 2019). The concept of soft masculinity is frequently portrayed in the media through a feminine aesthetic. The term "kkonminam," derived from the fusion of "pretty" and "boy," specifically denotes the soft masculinity that is attributed to Korea. The notion of "soft masculinity" implies that men can possess a sensitive disposition or even exhibit a physically delicate stature (Kartika & Wirawanda, 2019).

CONCLUSION

In Chapter 4, the research findings and discussion indicate that Generation Z in Surabaya largely maintains a dominant hegemonic position with regard to their reception of TikTok content featuring Ghibli anime character styling. Among the six informants, the clothing styles worn by the Ghibli characters Seiji Amasawa and Taku Morisaki are perceived as embodying pure soft masculinity and innocence due to their gentle nature. The informants suggest that the TikTok account @Delvinyauu has not influenced their perceptions of soft masculinity in the realm of popular culture, resulting in their dominant stance on the meaning of Ghibli anime character outfits in @Delvinyauu's content. Most participants in the focus group discussions are aware of the presence of soft masculinity on social media and acknowledge that men are not obligated to adhere to traditional masculine stereotypes. They believe that men can also express themselves in ways that are not conventionally masculine. However, two informants still maintain the belief that men should embody traditional masculinity and view soft masculinity as contrary to their expectations, thus placing them in an opposing stance. Despite this, they also expressed that they would not react negatively to soft masculinity in their surroundings as long as it does not interfere with their personal lives.

The varying interpretations of soft masculinity among respondents may be shaped by their cultural contexts. An analysis of the transformation of masculinity in Indonesia from the 1980s to the 2000s reveals discernible shifts. In the 1980s, masculinity was closely linked to attributes such as physical prowess, objectification, and authoritative roles. However, by the 2000s, the understanding of masculinity had expanded to encompass men's engagement in personal grooming and self-preservation, signifying the emergence of novel gender norms associated with masculinity (Demartoto, 2010).

During the 2000s, the proliferation of South Korean and Japanese popular culture in Indonesia brought about a transformation in the perception of masculinity, moving it beyond the confines of physical strength. This transition has persisted into the 2020s, with the emergence of the notion of soft masculinity finding acceptance in Indonesian society. This alteration signifies that soft masculinity is regarded as a socially constructed idea influenced by media and popular culture, prompting Indonesians to regard masculinity as a multifaceted and all-encompassing concept (Indira et al., 2023).

Suggestions for Research

1. Anime fans and followers of the TikTok @Delvinyauu account can view anime movies not just as entertainment or mere sources of clothing references, but also as a way to explore the evolution of popular culture through anime and social media content.

2. For future researchers, this study acknowledges its limitations and imperfections concerning the concept of soft masculinity. It is hoped that subsequent research will further investigate soft masculinity in other popular cultural contexts, particularly within anime and TikTok content.

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