JKT48 as the New Wave of Japanization in Indonesia

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Abstract

This paper discusses the cultural elements of JKT48, the first idol group in Indonesia adopting its Japanese sister group's, AKB48, concept. Idol group is a Japanese genre of pop idol. Globalization is commonly known to trigger transnational corporations as well as to make the spreading of cultural value and capitalism easier. Thus, JKT48 can be seen as the result of the globalization of AKB48. It is affirmed by the group management that JKT48 will reflect Indonesian cultures to make it a unique type of idol group, but this statement seems problematic as JKT48 seems to be homogenized by Japanese cultures in a glance. Using multiple proximities framework by La Pastina and Straubhaar (2005), this study aims to present the extent of domination of Japanese culture occurs in JKT48 by comparing cultural elements of AKB48 and JKT48. The author observed the videos footages and conducted online survey and interviews to JKT48 fans. The research shows there are many similarities between AKB48 and JKT48 as sister group. It is then questioned how the fans achieved proximity in JKT48 which brings foreign culture and value. The research found that JKT48 is the representation of AKB48 in Indonesia with Japanese cultural values and a medium to familiarize Japanese culture to Indonesia.

Keywords: JKT48, AKB48, idol group, multiple proximities, homogenization

Introduction

"JKT48 will reflect the Indonesian cultures to fit as a new and unique type of idol group".
(JKT48 Operational Team, 2011)
"JKT48 will become a bridge between Indonesia and Japan".
(Akimoto, 2011)

The aforementioned statements are claimed by JKT48's management and total producer. These statements imply that JKT48 is claimed to promote cultural diversification between Japan and Indonesia. However, both statements are problematic since JKT48 seems to represent domination and homogenization of Japanese cultures instead of Indonesian cultures at the same time. It is seen from the fact that JKT48 is the official sister group of Japanese idol group, AKB48. This makes this group able to offer different concept of music groups compared to common music groups in Indonesia. *Idol you can meet every day*, that is, the very concept brought by JKT48, the self-claimed first idol group in Indonesia. JKT48 is Indonesian pop group who has the biggest number of members in Indonesian music industry. As of January 2014, JKT48 has 44 members. 48 in JKT48 is only a brand; the members do not have to be 48 girls. AKB48 itself has 89 members by now. Yasushi Akimoto, the total producer of AKB48, owns and has the control over JKT48. Another interesting fact is that JKT48 is the first overseas sister group of AKB48. The previous sister groups of AKB48 are all from Japan; there are HKT48, SKE48, NMB48, and the last, SDN48, which had been disbanded in 2012.

Multiple proximities framework is employed in this study. (La Pastina & Straubhaar 2007) This framework argues that if there are choices between national production and global production, audiences prefer cultural product that is most proximate to their own culture in the series. According to Lu (2010, p. 621) multiple proximities could be considered as two strategies that could be used to promote foreign cultural product into local sites. The first one is using genre proximity that focuses on homogenization and the second is using cultural proximity that underscores diversification. This framework work on two different levels: the first is between the text adaptation and second, the proximities between text and

audiences. Iwabuchi (2002, cited in Pastina and Straubhaar 2005, p. 275) described 'genre proximity as a desired proximity with modernity'. Genre proximity offers the local audiences/consumers 'modernized' product; and cultural proximity assimilates two or more cultural elements that is familiar to local audiences' cultures.

Although the oversimplified position of cultural homogenization is already being debated by many scholars, Lu, using cultural proximity framework, finds that homogenization occurs to some extent in Chinese television commercials. She questions the strategy that China KFC and McDonald's used in promoting their products, whether it is homogenization and diversification, using quantitative method. The findings are that McDonald's operates within genre proximity to which the American modern value is more appealing than traditional Chinese food while KFC 'tries to integrate genre proximity and cultural proximity'. (Lu 2010, p. 628) However, she does not address consumers' preference in her study and only conducts quantitative content analysis.

Another study is done by Lothar Mikos and Marta Perrotta (2012) who compare the first episode of five adaptations of *Betty La Fea* in five different countries. It is found that various elements were added to each local adaptation that makes it represent the characteristics of local culture. Each local adaptation still takes its basis on telenovela genre, but elements of different genres, like comedy, were added to create a unique subgenre. Mikos and Perrotta did not conduct any audience research concerning their preference whether it is the local or national production or the original production. The author found large similarities that are almost homogenous between JKT48 and AKB48, as what Mikos and Perrotta found that 'there is a complex web of similarities and differences between local adaptations of the same format'. (2012, p. 94)

The question then arises: to what extent the homogenization of culture occurs in JKT48 and if JKT48 is really homogenized by Japanese cultures, in what way JKT48 fans find their proximities with JKT48. The study focuses on seeking what cultural elements that JKT48 are retained and transformed from AKB48 which makes JKT48 called as sister group of AKB48. Audience research is also conducted to know the Indonesian audience preference between AKB48 and JKT48 and how the audience reaches sense of proximity towards their preferred group. This study explores cultural adaptation of sister group of pop idols by doing comparative studies of AKB48 and JKT48's videos to understand the concept of sister group which shows cultural homogenization, and provides the results on how JKT48 fans achieve sense of proximity from their preferred idol group.

Historical Context between Indonesia and Japan

In seeing the emergence of idol group phenomenon, it is essential to first understand the historical context between Japan and Indonesia. Indonesia has developed strong economic and historical relations with Japan. The Treaty of Peace was signed in 1958, marking their diplomacy relationship after Japan occupied Indonesia for 3 years during World War II. Japan and Indonesia have undergone many cooperative program ever since. One of them is sister city. Sister city scheme bridges different countries in fostering closer cultural and economic links. (Ramasamy and Cremer 1998, cited in Dai 2008, p. 170) Sister group concept that JKT48 brings is also claimed to bridge Japan and Indonesia, like sister city. Sister city relationship is a form of diplomacy practice between two cities, making it easier to do collaboration projects in the field of education, economic, etc.

During 1990s, Japanese popular cultures, including dramas, tokusatsu, manga, and anime, were imported to Indonesia and they began to boom in Indonesia. Some notables titles are *Ordinary People, Doraemon, Kamen Rider* series (*Ksatria Baja Hitam*), and many more. Along with that, Japanese pop music popularity in Indonesia has also increased; Utada Hikaru – *First Love* and Mayumi Itsuwa – *Kokoro no Tomo*, for examples, became widely popular and often broadcasted in Indonesia television channel. The rapid expansion of foreign popular culture into one country, more or less, is one of the consequences of globalization. Globalization has increased broader transaction across nations (Meerhaeghe 2011, p. 240; Hartungi 2006, p. 729), including the establishment of partnership across nations, 'the widening of economic capital', and the penetration of foreign cultures. (Acker 2004; Hartungi 2006, p. 728)

Although there was the decay of Japanese popular cultures in Indonesia at the beginning of 2000s as they began to be outnumbered by Bollywood, Mandarin, and Korean popular cultures, the influence of Japanese music still exists in Indonesia. *Super Girlies*, *Zivilia*, *Geisha*, indie musicians like *Melody Maker* and *Obake* are among hundreds examples of Indonesian musicians that have Japanese cultural elements like wearing Japanese style of costume, having Japanese music genre, and using some Japanese language in the lyrics. Japanese popular culture popularity in Indonesia mainstream media had been in decline for the past ten years while the New Korean Wave has reached its peak in 2011. However, in the middle of the New Korean Wave and the emergence of lots of girl band and boy band in 2011, JKT48, which is based on Japanese music genre, was born.

It is then questioned whether sister group, another form of international sisterhood relationship, have mutual benefits by employing cultural diversity or it is just a form of homogenization of culture since JKT48 as a sister group of AKB48 does not seem to bridge Japan and Indonesia like sister city scheme. It might be that Indonesia represents new opportunities for business growth for Japan. According to *The World Bank* (2013), during 2009-2011, economics of Indonesia increased by 4.63 percent (2009), 6.22 percent (2010), and 6.49 percent (2011), while the global average economic growth – including Japan – weakened.

Idols Phenomenon in Indonesia

Idol is derived from Late Latin *idolum* and Greek *eidolon* that means image. In religion, idol represents a deity who is being worshipped like God. Idol could be a person or object that is favorably admired, loved, and adored. Pop idol, particularly in Indonesia, is a contested term. As the globalization of culture occurs, the term of Idol in Indonesia has been affected by three different concepts: Western idol, Korean Idol, and the one that is happening recently, Japanese Idol. The term of idol which is popular earlier in Indonesia has different concept with the term of idol in Japan. The term of idol in Indonesia has particularly been influenced by Western countries. Before the term idol group is emerged in Indonesia, we already have *Indonesian Idol*, a television show of singing competition that is adopted from its British's show, *Pop Idol*.

In *Idol series*, contestants with high ability to sing, even though they have less popularity on the show, would likely to be chosen as idols rather than the vice versa since it will be easier for media to boost the popularity of such idols than to boost the popularity of idols with mediocre talent that 'will eventually wane'. (Amegashie 2009, p. 274-275) Coutas (2008, p. 112-113) observes the consumer culture on Indonesian Idol and argues that *Idola* is a 'new form of celebrity' in which talent is especially needed in order to be successful in entertainment industry. Being *idola* is achieved through reality television, a competition. Korean idols or Korean-style idols as another form of idol emphasize on several aspects of the idols: singing, dancing, acting, and physical appearance. People have to 'undergo years of rigorous training' before they begin their debut. (Shin-Hyun 2011, p. 83)

On the other hand, Japanese idols are not expected to be talented to become famous and even worshipped by its fans. (Brasor & Masako 1997, p. 55) This really contradicts with people would assume. Here, the term idol is being contested. There are male and female idols, but the one that is discussed here is the female idols. Craig (2000, p. 77-78) believes that being talented is not sold enough in the mainstream Japanese music industry. The idols have to be groomed by the management first. They will learn how to laugh, smile, pose, and behave in front of audiences. Aoyagi (1999) even argues that to some extent, the cultures Japanese or Japanese-style pop idol brings 'has no apparent equivalent in the American pop star scene'.

Methodology

This study used comparative textual analysis and audience research. While main data were collected from audio-visual materials like images and videos, online survey and interviews with fans of JKT48 were also conducted. The text comparative analysis was meant to find the cultural elements of JKT48 that are adopted from AKB48, while audience research was meant to find the audience proximities towards JKT48. Samples used in this research are the theatre performances, concerts, and promotional videos (PVs) of JKT48 and AKB48. In order to explore the cultural elements of JKT48, the author collected all

videos footages needed using purposive sampling to which English subbed videos are chosen. The videos were collected around August until November 2013.

The author then published an online, close-ended questionnaire and received 315 responses from JKT48 fans. Questionnaire was published on November 1st until November 4th 2013 in nine JKT48 online fans communities in *facebook, twitter*, and *kaskus*. The questionnaire was meant to check the fans demography and whether most people know that JKT48 is a sister group of AKB48. Questionnaire is useful in collecting facts. The questionnaire was followed by open-ended interviews 'to fill out certain features of the questionnaire replies'. (Woods 2006) For the data interviews, structured and open-ended interviews were conducted online during November 17th until 26th, 2013. In this research, the interview techniques depended on which way that respondents wanted. One interview was done via phone call, 3 interviews via instant messenger, and 17 interviews via email/private messages on *Kaskus*.

The interviewees consisted of 2 females and 18 males. Their ages range from 13 to 32 years old. The interviewees were all JKT48 fans. These fans either have JKT48 merchandises or at least have gone to JKT48 theater at least once. The author used purposive sampling in selecting respondents in Kaskus JKT48, a non-official JKT48 fans community based on *Kaskus*. Kaskus JKT48 was chosen because *Kaskus* is the largest Indonesian online forum in which the fans discussions are accessible and available to public. Hence, it is easier to find fans that fulfill the criteria as fans audiences. Total members of Kaskus JKT48's social group in Kaskus on January 14th 2013 are 5881 users, while total likers in JKT48 official facebook fanpage are 2,020,262. Due to ethical considerations, some data were kept anonymous to protect the respondents.

Firstly, after collecting the materials, the author selected the most appropriate data for the research. Since this research draws on multiple proximities frameworks, the author filtered the data that are related to the audience preference towards particular cultural products. The final step was making interpretation of the data findings. The author interpreted the meaning of cultural adaptation derived from the comparison between JKT48 and AKB48 to find out whether the concept of sister group is a form of cultural proximity or genre proximity.

Findings and Discussion

JKT48 as Japanese Idol Genre Proximity

JKT48 adopts the genres of AKB48, Japanese idol group, but to which extent does the cultural homogenization occurs? It is found that JKT48 and AKB48 have similar concept, music, and costume design. It is also shown how JKT48 members perform Japanese cultures. AKB48 and JKT48 are built on the concept of '*idol you can meet every day*'. In an interview with CNN's Talk Asia**,** Akimoto Yasushi (2012), the producer of 48 group explains the basic concept of AKB48 in which it implies that AKB48 are kind of academy where ordinary girls develop their talents in acting, singing, dancing, and so on from scratch. Talent is not important since they sell process and interaction to their fans. No wonder that Japanese idols or the ones followed the concept or prototype of Japanese idols would be considered as 'amateurish 'by many. (Aoyagi 2000, p. 310) The concept of 'idol you can meet every day' provides multiple sites of consumption and promotion methods that are rarely provided in Indonesia entertainment industry such as theater, handshake, and direct selling.

JKT48 also adopts the golden rules: members are forbidden to have romantic relationship – having boyfriend or married – because they belong only to their fans. If the idols were caught with their boyfriend, they will be forced out of AKB48. The images constructed for JKT48 members are that they are pure, cheerful, and innocent as in inexperienced in romantic relationship; so having boyfriend will definitely destroy fans' delusion. In other words, having boyfriend could also destroy the idols' career as she is no longer pure. Since everything is mediated, the fans will only know the images of these idols by how the producers construct them to give amusement and pleasure for its fans, not how these idols in reality.

Why then idols have to be constructed in such images? The images of cute, pure, and innocent are actually part of Japanese culture in which there is phenomenon of interest towards young girls or prepubescent girls. Those depictions of idols are associated with children or Lolita images. In Japan, the

definition of Lolita has been shifted and is not limited to children; according to Durham (2011) it is used to define young girls or adolescence girls that are 'deliberately provocative and causing adults to think of them in a sexual way' who cultural presence has stirred public controversy. It is usual in Japan to consume sexualized images of young girls. (Galbraith 2011, p. 84)

Besides concept, JKT48 has similar sites of consumption to AKB48. AKB48 and JKT48 have theaters where they can perform almost daily exclusively. Theater fees for men, women, and students are different. For AKB48, men need to pay 3000 while women and students pay 2000. For JKT48, men need to pay IDR 100,000 while women and students pay IDR 50,000. One of the informants, AR (21) in an interview on November 19th 2013 stated that 'in theater, JKT48 performs lots of songs that are never broadcasted and wears costumes that are never worn in television shows'.

Merchandise, usually called as SWAG (Stuff We All Get), is also sold in front of the theater. The CD/DVDs are released in two versions: regular and theater edition. In order to promote their CDs, they hold *direct selling*, in which fans can buy the CDs directly from the idols and get a chance to high-touch with them. CD/DVDs come with photo of one of the members randomly (*photopack*) and handshake ticket. It is not like typical handshake in any meet and greets events with artists in Indonesia; handshake event in 48 group means fans can have their hand held by their idols hand for 10 seconds per one ticket. HF, one of the respondents, stated that he always buy at least three JKT48 CDs' so that he could have three handshake tickets.

JKT48 also performs Japanese cultures like *ojigi* and speaking in simple Japanese words. JKT48 in their live performance often performs the most formal form of *ojigi*, that is, bowing about 90 degree, looking at own feet. This form of *ojigi* 'signifies deep gratitude, a respectful greeting, a formal apology, asking for favors, and so on'. (Mishima n.d.) *Ojigi* is a gendered custom; while men place their hands in their sides, women place both of their hands on their thighs. JKT48 often performs *ojigi* to show their deep gratitude towards fans that have supported them all along. A member usually shout *se no* before perform *ojigi* together. *Se no* is equivalent to ready, set, go in English. Sometimes JKT48 members speak in some simple Japanese words in JKT48 reality television show and in their social media account to greet their fans, for example, *ohayou* (good morning) and *oyasuminasai* (good night). In addition, Japanese terms used in AKB48 fandom like *kamioshi*, *senbatsu,* et cetera are heavily used among Indonesian fans.

Different with any other sister group of AKB48 in Japan, JKT48 does not have their own songs. All of JKT48 songs are basically only covers of AKB48, except it is roughly translated to Indonesian language. Nevertheless, some Japanese words are being left untranslated as they are in their lyrics. So are the pronunciations; some of English words in the lyrics are pronounced with Japanese accent. The song titles are also kept in its original language with the translation besides the titles.

It has been criticized by many that AKB48 has sexual suggestive lyrics; they also have suggestive dance moves. (Mayeda 2013) In Heavy Rotation PV AKB48 version, the girls wear lingerie, kiss each other on the lips, and take a bath in the same tube. Nevertheless, in JKT48 version, the girls wear uniform-style costumes and the PV is very much 'Indonesia'. The PV pretty much portrays Jakarta and Indonesia, shown by its cultural signifiers: *bajaj*, *kopaja*, *ojek*, white-and-gray high school uniform, and Indonesia's red-and-white flag everywhere. However, in the next PVs, JKT48 members begin to wear costume really similar to their sister group in each song.

Figure 1. Music video of AKB48, Heavy Rotation. (King Records 2010)

Figure 2. JKT48 version of Heavy Rotation. (HITS Records 2013)

This sexualization of Japanese idols is part of Japanese gravure culture. It is common for Japanese idols to release gravure photobook; so is AKB48. Japanese idols have at least one gravure photographs of themselves in swimsuits, lingerie, or naked to emphasize their sexual attractiveness, targeting for male audience. (Galbraith 2012, p. 191) In Japan this gravure is also done by those idols under 15 years old. This is related to the *lolicon* phenomenon. Johnson (2010) describes gravure as 'pink porn' which 'enticing young magazine/video models who tease the viewer in swimsuits…, presented in an imaginative, visually stimulating way'. Johnson adds that gravure idol has become Japan's national obsession and a pop culture phenomenon relatively unknown beyond Japan. As a matter of fact, JKT48 does not completely remove AKB48's gravure culture. It is just adjusted to Indonesian norms. JKT48 has released an Official Guide Book where the girls dress up in beach dress, not bikinis or lingerie, like what AKB48's girls do. Some under aged members even show their cleavages. (see figure 3) JKT48 also released a photobook of the member where the member wear *Yukata*, a traditional Japanese garment and summer version of *Kimono*. In JKT48 photobook and 2014 calendar, some of the photos are presented in an imaginative stimulating way, like posing on the bed, kissing pose, et cetera.

Figure 3. (top-left) AKB48 in Young Jump Magazine. (AKB48 2010); JKT48 2nd Official Guide Book (JKT48 2013)

In Japan, idols age does not really matter when performing gravure. In fact, *The Telegraph* reported that it is legal to possess sexually explicit images of underage kids; the Japanese government and Japanese ruling party see this as individuals' freedom of expression and prohibit any campaign against child pornography (Ryall 2010), while some others might see this as sexualization or exploitation. It is not too uncommon for seeing underage kids depicted in sexual images in Japanese society.

The findings show that JKT48 as sister group is a clear example of homogenization instead of hybridization or diversification of culture. Sister group is clearly a form of genre proximity instead of cultural proximity. JKT48 is not only 'adapting ideas, themes, products, and services, but also entire organizations'. (Matusitz 2009, p. 678). Genre proximity is less flexible to cultural proximity since its priorities is to follow the original cultural product's notion and introduce it to another diverse culture; in other words genre proximity gives less concern about the audiences' culture. JKT48 introduces and promotes lots of Japanese culture and value to Indonesia society.

Although it is found in JKT48's first PV, Heavy Rotation, that JKT48 uses national symbols and local characteristics as cultural signifiers, the author argues that it is only used as identification and engagement with the Indonesian audience. (Baltruschat 2009, p. 41) As the first overseas sister group of AKB48, who has achieved global fame, identification and cultural signifiers that JKT48 comes from across diverse culture need to be shown. It is proven when all JKT48 PVs and costumes until now are really similar to AKB48's. JKT48 does not engage in gravure culture to gain acceptance in Indonesia society which is the largest Muslim population country in the world. JKT48 adjusts to the norms in Indonesia but not 'reflect' Indonesian culture like what the management claimed. JKT48 does not represent Indonesian culture but Japanese culture.

After it is found that JKT48 is associated with genre proximity and shows Japanese culture domination, one question arises: how does JKT48 audience achieve proximities to JKT48?

Audience Preferences and Proximity

In the survey, only 3 of 315 respondents do not know about AKB48 and 67 people admit they have no interest towards JKT48. From the interviews, 19 of 20 respondents still prefer JKT48 to AKB48 although they know AKB48. Their reason varies, but it is classified in three aspects: geographical and linguistic aspect, national identity, and feels of modernity and familiarity.

> "Because of the language aspect, I prefer JKT48."
> (AP, 25 years old, interviewed on November 19th, 2013 via email)
> "I like JKT4…JKT48 members are Indonesians; they are closer and easier to understand."
> (DD, 20 years old, interviewed on November 16th, 2013 via email)

Different language could reduce the audiences' sense of belonging and understanding to the foreign cultural products that are loaded with foreign cultural value. It creates what Straubhaar called as 'barriers of cultural capital'. If there are two cultural products available, audiences will prefer to choose a cultural product that has greatest proximity in cultural and linguistic terms, whether it is foreign or locally produced, despite the general trends in globalization. Audiences will make sense of media first through a set of identities based on space and place. (La Pastina and Straubhaar 2005, p. 275) The 48 family producer creates JKT48 so that it would be more appealing to Indonesian consumers. It makes JKT48 more accessible to broader consumers, not limited to those fandoms of J-POP music. When the songs are in Indonesian language, it will be more understandable. The respondents stated:

> "(I prefer) JKT48 since they are easier to meet. AKB48's location is too far. Thus, my interest is somewhat less." (PRM, 22 years old, interviewed on November 15th, 2013)
> "…Because of the geographical situation, I feel closer to JKT48, hence I love JKT48 more." (FF, 15 years old, interviewed on November 16th, 2013)

Audiences prefer global products that are reproduced within national or local culture; it could be material that produced within audiences' language.'The expertise to produce the material' does matter; it has to be really similar to the global ones to meet the potential demand. (La Pastina and Straubhaar 2005, p. 273) JKT48, as an official sister group, is most likely to gain trust and reliability from its audiences. In a survey, 5 out of 317 respondents do not know that JKT48 is a sister group of AKB48, yet they still actively consume JKT48 by engaging in multiple sites of consumption: going to theater and collecting some merchandise of JKT48.

> "…I prefer AKB48 but I still support JKT48 because it is a proud thing to have JKT48 in Indonesia." (BC, 17 years old, interviewed on November 16th, 2013 via email)

"I obviously prefer JKT48 because the members are Indonesians." (CP , 32 years old, interviewed on November 15th, 2013 via email)

"…(I prefer) JKT48 because I am trying to support Indonesian (cultural) product. For me, it is better to support local musician instead of foreign musician, though both of them are 48 family." (CI, 19 years old, interviewed on November 16th, 2013 via email)

It is showed that JKT48 fans feel 'sense of belonging' and achieve proximity through national identity as Indonesian. Nevertheless, sister group notion is a form of genre proximity and even though the members are Indonesian, JKT48 is still controlled and managed by Japan. It is revealed as JKT48 becomes ambassador for some prestigious products, in which interestingly they are all Japanese products: Honda Brio Satya, Yamaha Mio J Teens, Pocari Sweet, Laurier, Namekara Honpo, Pocky, Rakuten, and Sharp Aquos. The producers use JKT48 to disguise themselves as 'Indonesian' products to attract Indonesian. Like what the respondent 4, CI, said, he supports JKT48 because it is Indonesian cultural product. However, JKT48 is not Indonesian product. As celebrities, JKT48 need what Rojek (2001, p. 9-10) called as 'cultural intermediaries' to make sure that the 'public presentation of celebrity personalities' appeals and attractive to the fans. It is revealed in JKT48 Official Guide Book that almost all JKT48 cultural intermediaries are from Japan: the JKT48 producer, executive producer, assistant project producer, general manager, creative director, assistant creative director, merchandizing, sound director, costume director, stage director, and technical director. The producer has the most power as cultural intermediaries.

"It is a matter of tastes. Indonesian pop music was good, but now it is not. In my opinion, if people prefer J-POP and K-POP, it might be because of (the recent quality) of Indonesian pop music… If Indonesian pop music producers at least try to make quality songs, people might re-consider it." (DD, 20 years old, interviewed on November 16th, 2013 via email)

"The terrible quality of Indonesian music makes me prefer JKT48...They have unique concept; their songs are always cheerful, *anti-galau*." (CI, 19 years old, interviewed on November 16th, 2013 via email)

"It is good to see new music genre in Indonesia…but (I am afraid) Indonesian pop music might wane." (ZH, 14 years old, interviewed on November 16th, 2013)

"JKT48 is like revolutionist. When many K-POP-style girl band or boy band music groups are emerged, they show up bringing J-POP-style…their songs add more variation to music industry, (keep in mind that) their Japanese (musical qualities) rhythm and chords progression are not mainstream. Their songs brighten my day; there are no *galau-galau sendu* songs…I hope Indonesian songs can adopt (Japanese music), so that Indonesian songs are no more *melayu melayu mendayu dayu*." (BII, 23 years old, interviewed on November 16th, 2013)

In this case, the best theory to explain this is by using Iwabuchi's description about genre proximity: a desired proximity towards modernity. Genre that does not exist in popular culture elsewhere is another unique and appealing aspect of Japanese popular culture. Fans see the Japanese idol genre like JKT48 brings more attractive, advanced, and superior than any Indonesian musician. For them, JKT48 songs are also more attractive since it 'brightens their days'. They also suggest Indonesian musicians to start adopting Japanese music genre. JKT48 songs, as the author has explained in the previous section, are all cover songs of AKB48. Audience who has been familiar with certain culture for periods of time can achieve sense of proximity if they were presented. Media such as television programs are mediator for shaping this audience preference. One of the respondents recognized what shapes his preference:

"In fact, Japanese culture has been existed for long (in Indonesia). but it is not too popular. People love to watch anime, Japanese cartoon, (read) comics, and (play) games since they were little kids, so the cultures subconsciously exist in their mind". (DD, 20 years old, interviewed on 17 Nov 2013)

It has been explained by La Pastina and Straubhaar that there are some notable factors that could shape consumers' preferences and interests in culture. They are 'the nature of various genres and their fit to specific cultures, the development of subgenres that divide broader audiences, and the maintenance of historical or interest ties between subgroups of larger culture'. (2005, p. 273) As the author explained before, Japanese culture's rapid expansion to Indonesia has been happened in 1990s. JKT48 fans might have been familiar to Japanese culture and thus enjoyed JKT48. As a proof, it is revealed in the survey

that 261 of 315 fans have been becoming fans of Japanese pop culture before they know JKT48. The next section will discuss the issue about the Japanization discourse brings by JKT48.

JKT48 as Japanese Culture Diplomacy Instrument and Vehicle of the New Wave of Japanization

The domination of AKB48 as well as Japanese cultures in JKT48 is a form of genre proximity; JKT48 adopts AKB48's Japanese idol genre, its concept, and even performs Japanese culture. JKT48, which clearly offers homogenization of Japanese culture, does not add any new cultural elements that make it as unique type of idol group genre like the management claimed. In the study done by Mikos and Perotta (2012), each adaptation of *Yo soy Betty, la fea* in different countries adds elements of different genres like comedy to create unique subgenre of telenovela; it is an example of cultural proximity. It is different to the case of JKT48; instead of adding new elements, it is only adjusting the 'controversial' – gravure – culture to Indonesian norms. It is not something unique to Indonesia nor is it creating unique type of idol group. However, the adoption of genre proximity itself makes JKT48 distinct to local or national production and thus attracts Indonesian audiences. (Lu 2010. p. 628) The Japanese cultures that JKT48 carries underscore JKT48's agendas as Japanese cultural diplomacy instrument and Japanization vehicle.

Firstly, JKT48, despite of being Indonesian-based pop group and having Indonesian members, could be considered as an iconic representation of Japanese idols culture in Indonesia. While Akimoto Yasushi (2011), the total producer of 48 groups, stated that JKT48 will 'bridge between Indonesia and Japan', the findings of the study found the otherwise. Rather than bridging between Indonesia and Japan, JKT48 performs as a Japanese cultural diplomat. Milton Cummings suggests two definitions of cultural diplomacy: the first one is to promote national interests abroad and the second is to facilitate cross-cultural dialogue and exchanges. (Einbinder 2013) JKT48, in this case, acts as a one-way street cultural diplomacy. JKT48 does not include cross-cultural exchange; it mainly promotes Japanese cultures to Indonesian society. It does not involve cross-cultural exchangeand cooperation between two government parties like what sister city scheme did. Sister group concept that JKT48 carries involves Japanese government one-way attempt in disseminating Japanese cultures to Indonesian society,

As a former colonial, Japan indeed needs to improve its reputation and gain trust in Asia. Japanese cultural industries and government officials then use Japanese popular culture 'in the mission to enhance Japan's cultural diplomacy'. (Allen & Sakamoto 2006, p. 21; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, n.d.) The popular culture itself is meant to deliver Japanese spirits to foreign people. (Ogura 2004, cited in Allen & Sakamoto 2006, p. 4-5; Iwabuchi 2006, p. 25) The author believes that JKT48 is one of the instruments to this issue. 156 respondents know about AKB48 because of JKT48; it is like that JKT48 also helps to foster and spread AKB48's popularity. JKT48 is not only introducing Japanese products, but also its pop culture genre phenomenon, Japanese idols, and Japanese cultures like language and value. As the author aforementioned, so far, JKT48 has become ambassador for many Japanese products which also sponsored their music video like Pocari Sweat, Lawson, Sharp, and Honda. We can take this argument about Japanese cultural diplomacy further to Japanization paradigm.

Besides being one-way street Japanese cultural diplomacy, the emergence of JKT48 also marks the new wave of Japanization in the context of Indonesia. The author termed it as the 'New Wave of Japanization' to relate it in the same context as the New Korean Wave. Ahn Shin-Hyun (2010, p. 84) distinguishes the first Korean Wave, which happened in the early and mid-2000s, and the New Korean Wave, which happened in 2010s. The first Korean Wave mainly promotes television drama genres throughout Asia, while the New Korean Wave also marks the spread of K-POP across the world. The first wave of Japanization in Indonesia, as the author explained above, has been happened from 1990s to early 2000s – mainly in the import of Japanese television dramas, manga, anime, and games – along with many others East and Southeast Asia countries. (Iwabuchi 2002, p. 2), and the New Wave of Japanization in Indonesia has been marked by the establishment of JKT48, followed by other significant multinational and transnational corporations.

In recent years, after the emergence of the New Korean Wave and its influence in Indonesian music industry such as the boom of Korean-style girlbands and boybands in 2010s, Japan seems to be more

active in expanding and importing their products into Indonesia. A member of JKT48 stated that Japanese musicians have begun to come to Indonesia after JKT48 is formed. In the following year, a lot of famous Japanese musicians were 'invading' Indonesia, such as L'arc~en~ciel, AKB48, angela, Bless4, LiSA, and Stereopony. AFA (*Anime Festival Asia*), the biggest Japan popular culture event in Southeast Asia has been hold for the first time in Indonesia in 2012. After AFA, the largest and famous Japan studio game which popular for its *Final Fantasy* series, *Square Enix*, has opened its first Indonesia branch located in Surabaya in June 2013, named *Square Enix Smileworks*.

Besides AFA and *Square Enix*, there are other evidences that mark the huge expansion of Japanese products and companies to Indonesia. *Ishimori Production*, the production house of *Ksatria Baja Hitam* or *Kamen Rider* series based in Japan who has achieved global fame, produce similar series entitled *Bima Satria Garuda*, that has been airing on RCTI in 2013. *Bima Satria Garuda* is falsely claimed as the first Indonesian superhero by the executive vice president of *Ishimori Production*, Masayasu Takigawa, but it got many critics from Indonesians twitter users. The most recent issue is LCGC, *Low Cost Green Car*, which is in fact dominated by Japanese cars. *Pajak Pertambahan Nilai Barang Mewah* (PPnBM) for these cheap cars is reduced; the one who will get benefits is Japanese industry.

The issue of Japanization in East Asia and South East Asia – including Indonesia – is not new. The invasion of Japanese business and companies into Indonesia can be constituted with the significant growth of Indonesian economics. According to *The World Bank* (2013), during 2009-2011, economics of Indonesia were increased by 4.63 percent (2009), 6.22 percent (2010), and 6.49 percent (2011), while the global average economic growth – including Japan – has weakened. In an survey held by Credit Suisse (2011), it is revealed that Indonesia, among other seven developing countries: China, India, Brazil, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Russia, has the most consumptive consumption pattern despite being one of the lowest income country and being the poorest countries. It is also witnessed in a research done by Nielsen (2012) that Indonesia has experienced significant shifts in consumers' media consumption habits as the consumers' ability to access internet has increased. JKT48, partnered with *Rakuten*, Japanese electronic commerce and huge internet company based in Japan, has huge potential to success in selling their merchandise effectively. Indonesia is clearly a potential market for the New Wave of Japanization.

Perhaps we can relate the issue of this New Wave of Japanization to McDonaldization paradigm. In the case of McDonaldization, people in many countries recognized the dangers McDonald's poses to their lifestyle; how McDonald's highly affects their life to be Mcdonaldized to some extent, like changing the way they eat and consume, like using credit card which enable consumers to spend money beyond their available capital. (Ritzer 1998, p. 77) Not to mention that there was also protest and boycott from, for example, China nationalists and anti-America movement to McDonald's as America product. (Lu 2010) In some facet in France, the globalization of Coca Cola, what is termed as coca-colonization, was seen as a threat to French's way of life (e.g.: wine-drinking) and caused a protest. In the context of Indonesia, there was also an attempt to boycott Israel-American products – including McDonald's, Starbucks, Coca Cola – in 2009 by Muslim communities as a protest and reaction to the war between Palestine and Israel. However, Sudarsono (2008) believes the act of boycott American product will decrease Indonesia's economic growth because, sadly, Indonesia's human and natural resource management has become too dependent on America products.

In the New Wave of Japanization, some Japanese products have disguised themselves as national products. It has to be underscored here that Japanization's mission is not only disseminating Japanese cultures but also lingering economic exploitation to the young in Indonesia. Igarashi in Iwabuchi (2002, p. 35) points out that while Americanization embeds cultural hegemony and American ideas and way of life to less powerful countries, Japanization embodies consumerist value and represents highly materialistic cultural dissemination, even higher to Americanization. While Indonesian Idol introduces a new means of consumption through democratic process which involves audience participants to a capitalist global culture (Coutas 2008), JKT48 as a vehicle of New Wave of Japanization introduces a new means of consuming celebrities through its pseudo-relationship between fans and idols which eventually leads fans into impulsive, consumptive behavior as part of capitalist culture. Fans can easily

lead into its capitalist system since fans experience high emotional attachment and obsession to the idols, who are intentionally constructed as object of pleasure for its fans.

As Japanese cultural diplomacy instrument and vehicle of the New Wave of Japanization, JKT48 exists to make more Indonesians embrace Japanese popular culture; they try to shift the taste of Indonesian society by delivering Japanese spirit to Indonesian youth through popular culture. It can be seen on how all of JKT48's songs are purely translated from its Japanese version with no different arrangement to the original songs. This is no other than the marketing strategies to promote J-POP, Japanese music, to make more people accept and consume Japanese culture. Young generations which have embraced this culture will eventually lead to consumptive behavior which is the notion of Japanization. The notion of capitalism here is no longer about workers' exploitation, but consumers' exploitation.

Issues of Consumerism

Indonesian music industry is in its critical state; piracy has been widely spreading globally, including Indonesia, and it harms music industry, especially those newcomer musicians. (Tingstad 2007, p. 20) JKT48 are different with common musicians in the music industry; idols are not only focusing on their albums selling in this time where piracy is everywhere, resulting the declining of CDs selling. (Fairchild 2008, p. 3; Tingstad 2007) JKT48, based on idol group concept, has successfully created what Fairchild called as 'imperial condition' in consumer cultures in which consumers of idols are experienced 'the joy and pleasure…from consuming popular music the right way' (2008, p. 3), that is, engaging in several sites of consumption like spending money on original merchandises willingly without being forced. The increasing global capitalism marks one's power that stimulates people to adopt and share foreign lifestyles through the consumption of commodities, like JKT48 fans that perform the same cultural practices with AKB48 fans.

Just like AKB48, JKT48 producers provide a lot of venues for consumption for its fans such as handshake event, election system, voting system, theater, multiple editions on each single/album, and huge variations of official merchandises. 226 of 315 respondents consume JKT48 by buying its original merchandise including CD/DVD, poster, mug, *happi* coat, t-shirts, light stick, photopack, photobook, official guide book, et cetera. As a strategy to lure the fans into buying original merchandise, JKT48 producers create the idol in such a way; that is, selling and luring fans into delusional world of idols.

The producers intentionally create JKT48 – along with other 48 groups – as fantasy object for its fans. JKT48 that has cute, pure, and innocent images are meant 'to collectivize public imagination, taste, desire, or consciousness'. (Aoyagi 1999, p. 11) 48 groups, including JKT48, are mainly targeted for single male. In Satvika's survey, it is revealed that 97% of 561 respondents are single; the other 3% are married. JKT48 offers pseudo-romance experience to its fans; the construction of the idols' image appeals to the fans' feelings. JKT48 total producer also said that 48 groups are created so fans could imagine the idols as their perfect classmates or girlfriends. No dating policies, handshake event are united mechanisms to be able to create delusion for its fans. This clearly shows how its agency sees male fans as more potential targets of commodities than the female fans.

Other factor that is appealing from JKT48 is the process of growth – and thus imperfect – they sell. Like McDonald's that emphasize on its quantity rather than quality (e.g. Big Mac) (Ritzer 1998), JKT48 emphasizes on its quantity. It offers a wide range of media-personalities that fans can choose as their favorite idols. Each idol has distinctive uniqueness. PRM, a fan, admitted that JKT48 has so-so quality. However, this precisely becomes JKT48's attractive point. CP, a lecturer that becomes JKT48 fan, in an interview underscored that JKT48 'sells process that often presents along with its imperfectness'. He added that its imperfectness is what urges him to support them by buying original merchandise.

By the existence of JKT48 itself, people in Indonesia could experience things they could not do before, that is, idolling; now they can visit the theater, come to handshake event to interact directly with their idols, et cetera. As of September 15th 2013, fans can propose certain chat topics that will be presented by JKT48's members in the theater by sending premium SMS that are charged fans at a higher rate than standard SMS; IDR 2000(+ tax) for each message. Fans are also encouraged to send as many as possible

and only the most interesting topics will be presented at the theater's stage. This seems to be positive since the management provides the fans a chance to speak out their ideas and to be heard by the producers.

Nevertheless, if we think about it critically, JKT48 fans are not only being consumers, but they are also being workers. It is true that it is not only the producers who get huge profit from the commodity, fans also experience the pleasure by consuming their object of desire. However, it has to be noted that the act of consumption is no other than detrimental to the consumers to some degree. (Ritzer 1998, p. 119) He puts examples of fast-food restaurants that lure people into eating junk food, credit cards that lure people to spend money 'beyond their available capital', catalogues and shopping malls that often persuade people to buy unneeded things.

In the case of JKT48, JKT48 management does not have to think about the topic anymore; they let the fans doing the job. Ironically, fans are not getting paid for their job; instead, fans have to pay for their own ideas that, in the end, the ideas will be used by other parties. Just like what Ritzer suggests about capitalism that capitalism 'wants to keep us at it because instead of paying workers, people are willing, even eager, to pay for the privilege of working as consumers'. (1998, p. 121) For instances, purchasing multiple of the same exact CD/DVDs are definitely not necessary, but JKT48 fans are willing to do so just to get more handshake tickets or 2-shot tickets. JKT48 is not only consumed by its fans because of its music, but rather because of its commodification of the female body and its offered pseudo-romance relationship. Both AKB48 and JKT48 itself are paradoxes; they are being constructed as accessible yet exclusive, innocent yet sexy. On one hand, both of them are accessible in the way the producers sell interactivity between the idols and fans. On the other hand, both of them are exclusive in which people have to pay more to be able to enjoy the idols; for example, people have to visit the theater or buy their theater performance's DVD to enjoy huge variation of songs and variation of cutesy costumes since it is not available for television consumers.

As shown in the findings in which JKT48 performs a lot of Japanese cultures including gestures and language, this is an attempt to bring Japanese cultures closer to our daily life. (Castelló 2010, p. 214) In an extreme case happened during 1990s, speaking Japanese is even considered as "very cosmopolitan". (Steven Wong 1990, cited in Terry 2002, p. 135) The key of success of Japanese cultural invasion in Asia during 1990s was simply because Japan has the power. (Barack 1990, cited in Terry 2002, p. 135) As the consequence, people might think Japanese culture is more sophisticated than theirs, like what have been shown by JKT48 fans. They even think Indonesia music has to adopt Japanese music. The Japan Foundation, organization commissioned by Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affair has been conducting "Survey on Japanese-Language Education Abroad 2012" and the results of the survey shows the number of Japanese language learners from Indonesia has increased to 21 percent from 2009 to 2012, makes Indonesia ranks 2 in learning Japanese language worldwide.

Basically, the New Wave of Japanization affects culturally and economically. Indonesian government should consider the act of New Wave of Japanization since it has the power to influence and shape norms, values and ideas. JKT48 has the imprint of its producing country, even though it may not be recognized easily. The invasion of foreign culture represents a threat to national identity, national interest or as a sign of foreign country's cultural power. (Elger & Smith 1994, cited in Ritzer 1998, p. 72; Iwabuchi 2002, p. 32) It does not mean to be involved in moral panic or exaggerated about the extent of the damage caused by foreign cultures to Indonesia value. It is believed that local or national cultures will still continue to be necessary as a guide to people's way of life and a guide to 'modify and alter' the import of foreign cultures into own societies. (Ritzer 1998, p. 89) However, learning from the case of McDonaldization that also affects Indonesian society in the way people eat and consume, people have to recognize the threat it posed. This requires cross-cultural awareness and critical thinking so that people won't fall into capitalist, consumerist culture. Deep understanding of national and foreign culture is also needed so that foreign culture can be filtered.

As a form of genre proximity, JKT48 may embody foreign culture that is inappropriate to Indonesia's culture. Policy concerning limitation of foreign cultural value shall be made to minimize the negative effects of the New Wave of Japanization. Furthermore, to make it balances, Indonesian government

should not be passive and should improve Indonesia-Japan cross-cultural dialogue and exchanges using JKT48, so JKT48 won't be one-way street cultural diplomatic instrument. JKT48 often performs in Japan so it could give advantages to Indonesia to actively participate promoting Indonesian cultures. Moreover, considering the fans' demand and desire in which they think that Japanese music is more superior to Indonesia's, JKT48 clearly poses a threat to Indonesian music; how Indonesian music can stand against foreign culture without losing its distinctive cultural characteristics as Indonesia.

This proves Japanese government have successfully disseminating, positioning, and embedding Japanese spirits to some facet of Indonesian society. The claim from JKT48 management about JKT48 will embody Indonesian cultures is no other than a marketing strategy to gaining acceptance from Indonesians society. As long as we still have viewpoint that foreign cultures are better and we ought to be more like them to be better, Indonesia will always be 'below' these foreign cultures. Some of foreign cultures have definitely been beneficial, but if we cannot differ which is which that is beneficial to our own cultures without having to lose our distinctive national character, global cultures will continue to dominate and undermines indigenous cultures.

In economic aspect, JKT48 with its camouflage as Indonesian national product also smoothes the economic expansion of Japanese 48 corporation into Indonesia and thus bring more profits to Japanese. For example, in JKT48 Mini Concert event, fans have to buy Sharp products in order to watch the concert. JKT48 association with Japanese cultural industries and Japanese governments cannot be underestimated as it brings capitalist consumer culture value. Exporting the consumerist value to other societies is highly important than simply exporting the products alone. (Ritzer 1998, p. 91) It will give more long-lasting profits to the powerful country. JKT48 fans are provided with the capitalist, consumer culture values that fulfill their desire and emotions; that is, the pseudo-romance experience.

While Coutas (2008, p. 123) argues that Idola in Indonesian Idol 'signifies a new trend in celebrity production and consumption', that is, 'direct democratic election via an interactive process', JKT48 signifies a new trend in 'marketing' and consuming celebrities, selling fantasies and pseudo-bonds to its fans. As results, it is now known that JKT48 has die-hard, militant, fully-devoted, and loyal fans that are called as *wota*, another name for *otaku*. The author argues that Indonesia accepts foreign cultures easily today. It causes the emergence of instant culture, in which there are many popular cultural phenomena in Indonesia that are easy come and easy go, for example, the phenomenon of Korean-style girlband and boyband during 2011. The gravure culture brought by AKB48 and JKT48 is inappropriate to be applied in Indonesia, the largest Muslim population country in the world, since it is most likely being seen as children and women sexual exploitation in Indonesia.

This can actually relate to the case of *Miss World 2013* which was held in Indonesia, which is, surprisingly, managed by the same channel, MNC. It has enraged some parts of Indonesian Muslim population since *Miss World* is originated from bikini contest. JKT48's sister group, AKB48, is still not widely known among Indonesians; hence, the emergence of JKT48 is not controversial like *Miss World* even though its sister group basically has gravure culture, not so much different to *Miss World*'s bikini contest and even more inappropriate for Indonesian culture. This proves lots of Indonesian still does not know the idol cultures JKT48 carries. Also, considering the number of young members in JKT48, such acts – gravure – could be considered as children and women exploitation in Indonesia. It is prohibited in Indonesia which is against children sex exploitation. It is legislated under the Republic of Indonesia Law r. Number 23 Year 2002 on Children Protection article 66, 69, and 78. As in article 66 number 2 and 3, it is stated that many facet of Indonesian society including government and society has to be involved to eradicate children sexual and economic exploitation and all parts of society are prohibited from placing, allowing, doing, ordering, or involving in children sexual exploitation.

One thing that should be remembered: fans are not passive. Jenkins (1992, p. 23) argues that fans are not mindless consumers who are passive and take everything for granted, though people are no longer striving for use value but rather the exchange value. (Adorno cited in Jarvis, 1998, p. 55) Fans can always have choice in consuming something. Further studies are needed to know to what extent the New Wave of Japanization and JKT48 as the representation of AKB48 and Japanese culture affects Indonesian fans audience's way of life. There is also some rising issues on women sexploitation in these young idols.

Conclusion

As developing country with highly consumptive behavior and high economic growth, Indonesia represents new opportunities for business growth for Japan. JKT48 sister group concept is more dominant with its homogenization of culture; it is a form of genre proximity. JKT48 adopts and performs lots of AKB48 and Japanese cultures, including Japanese idol genre, costumes, music, language, and customs. It is found that there is contradiction to the statement JKT48 management made in which they claimed JKT48 will reflect Indonesia culture and create a new and unique type of idol group. Adjusting to Indonesian norms does not make JKT48 a unique type of idol group; in fact, JKT48 is still example of Japanese-homogenized cultural product.

Indonesian audiences still prefer JKT48 to AKB48 despite of the global trend, in tune with the multiple proximities framework which argues audience prefer national production of global product to the global production itself. Although JKT48 is loaded with foreign cultural value, there are three aspects that affect audience' preference: geographical and linguistic aspect, Indonesian national identity of the idols, and feels of modernity and familiarity to Japanese idol genre and cultures, respectively. These three aspects help the audience to achieve proximity. Fans audience feels inferior towards Japanese music and suggests Indonesian music industry to adopt their genres.

The inferior feelings of the audience prove Japanese government have successfully disseminating, positioning, and embedding Japanese spirits to some facet of Indonesian society. The claim is no other than a marketing strategy to gain acceptance from Indonesian society. As long as we still have viewpoint that foreign cultures are better and we ought to be more like them to be better, Indonesia will always be 'below' these foreign cultures. Some of foreign cultures have definitely been beneficial, but if we cannot differ whichone is beneficial to our own cultures without having to lose our distinctive national character, global cultures will continue to dominate and undermines indigenous cultures.

JKT48 is a Japanese cultural diplomacy instrument and vehicle of the 'New Wave of Japanization'. JKT48 acts as one-way street Japanese cultural diplomacy instrument as it mainly promotes Japanese cultures. As Japan being the transmitting nation and Indonesia as the receiving nation, one can see that there are similarities in the way of consuming celebrities between Indonesia and Japan fans in this issue. JKT48 embodies highly capitalist, consumerist value as vehicle of the New Wave of Japanization. It also acts as ambassador of many Japanese cultural industries' products.

In the middle of globalization era, Indonesia is accepting too much foreign cultural products easily. Individual cultural awareness towards global capitalism should be enhanced to avoid its threat. Indonesian government should consider the act of New Wave of Japanization since it has the power to influence and shape norms, values and ideas. As a form of genre proximity, JKT48 embodies foreign culture that is, in some aspects, inappropriate to Indonesia's culture. It is proven that many Indonesians still do not aware of cultures JKT48 brings. Policy concerning limitation of foreign cultural value shall be made to minimize the negative effects of the New Wave of Japanization. Furthermore, to make it balance, Indonesian government should not be passive and should improve Indonesia-Japan cross-cultural dialogue and exchanges using JKT48, so JKT48 won't be one-way street cultural diplomatic instrument.

Although the rapid expansion of Japanese corporations to Indonesia can be seen as a part of business cycle, its threat has to be recognized by the society. JKT48 embodies capitalist, consumerist value and represents problematic foreign values. This study yielded several suggestions for further research. First, it needs further studies to know how the New Wave of Japanization affects Indonesian society's way of life, particularly those who have not been familiar or engaged with Japanese cultures before. The author has also briefly addressed rising issues about gender, how young and adolescence girls are constructed and presented to its fans. Instead of consuming the music, fans are consuming the idols' sexual appeals and its delusional relationship. It would be interesting to know how the female idols are being constructed for its male fans.

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