

Gender Construction in the Chinese Fandom of Korean Pop Culture: A Case Study of BTS and BLACKPINK Fans

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Abstract. This research delves into the influence exerted by BTS and BLACKPINK, prominent K-pop idol groups, on Chinese K-pop fans' perceptions of gender, gender equality, and inclusivity. Employing data collected through a comprehensive survey distributed among a diverse cohort of fans (35 young Chinese K-pop fans), the study examines the impact of these musical phenomena's image and temperament on their Chinese followers' conceptualization of gender constructs and roles. A transformation from traditional binary notions of gender is revealed, that is, most respondents ascribe gender to a complex interplay of biological sex and social constructs. Besides, Fans' enthusiasm for gender temperaments, in particular, exhibits subtle patterns that resonate with K-pop's acceptance of a variety of gender presentations. Overall, this study substantiates the pivotal role of popular music acts in shaping Chinese K-pop fans' contemporary conceptions of gender and fostering a climate of inclusivity, as well as underscoring the vital importance of taking cultural context into account when interpreting gender representations in K-pop.

1 Introduction

The rise of platform-based governance and participatory culture, where information is rapidly shared, has led to a growing interest in the impact of digital communities on personal identity. While many scholars in Europe, the US, and China have researched this topic in different fields, there is little information on K-pop consumption and gender attitudes among K-pop fans, especially in the context of mainland China where censorship plays a role. Most existing research has focused on Western societies or capitalist countries. As such there is a gap in understanding the experiences and consumption of K-pop fans and the construction of their gender-related attitudes in the context of China. Therefore, this research aims to bridge this gap in the field of digital communities. Expressly, in the pages that follow, it will analyze how gender representations of K-pop idol groups, notably BTS and BLACKPINK, affect Chinese K-pop fans' perspectives, challenge conventional gender standards, as well as promote inclusivity.

The explosion of K-pop culture is a worldwide cultural phenomenon based on the marketing (commercial) expression of traditional Chinese culture, the expression of borderless popular discourse, and the Korean government's policy of 'cultural nationhood', which is manifested in the intergenerational transmission of idol groups and idol singers. Idol groups in K-pop use music videos and music stages as their main performance venues to influence the gender perceptions and value identities of contemporary youth through a gender-blurred artistic style. Of these, BTS and BlackPink each represent the influence of K-pop in the

gender-binary market for idol groups worldwide. They are influencing fans around the world at a world-class level, changing traditional gender-binary notions of identity through diverse performances and expressions. However, it should be notable that the market attributes of idol groups dictate that they must cater to the aesthetic and traditional values of their fans to gain attention and increase consumption.

For example, to provoke the male gaze, female groups often dress in overly revealing clothes to cater to male sexuality, while male group members interact ambiguously to cater to female fans' gaze, that is, the tendency to consume Boy's Love culture. The above phenomenon leads to a reflection on the relationship between idol behavior and fans in K-pop in terms of gender.

Lastly, this study is important for understanding how K-pop, as illustrated by BTS and BLACKPINK, has affected contemporary gender attitudes, especially among young Chinese fans. Clearly, it provides insights into the changing gender dynamics among young people and the ability of popular culture to question conventional norms, promote inclusion, and create new aspects of gender identity by examining the interaction between these representations and fan views. As well, this has consequences for the tactics used by the entertainment sector and adds to the larger conversation of how the media shapes cultural norms and societal change.

2 Literature review

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From the Gender Research Perspective, Smith discovered that the music, dance, and image portrayal of BTS and BLACKPINK have a certain impact on viewers' perceptions and understandings of gender [1]. BTS attracts a large number of female fans with their handsome appearance and charismatic image, while BLACKPINK appeals to female fans with their powerful dance and hip-hop style music. The music and lyrical content of both groups emphasize the importance of self-identity and self-expression, encouraging self-confidence, the pursuit of dreams, and challenging gender stereotypes [2]. This positive portrayal of gender in their performances has a beneficial effect on young viewers' perceptions and the formation of their gender identity.

Furthermore, Garcia and Lee found that fans of BTS and BLACKPINK actively participate in discussions and interactions on social media platforms, shaping and spreading gender perceptions [3]. By sharing and commenting on various elements such as music, dance, and image, fans reinforce the formation and dissemination of gender perceptions. The success of BTS and BLACKPINK exemplifies the potency of diversity and inclusivity in advancing gender equality and women's rights, both within their nation and on a global scale [4]. Besides, Chinese K-pop fans of BTS and BLACKPINK actively engage in various fan activities, including interacting with other fans, sharing information, and discussing music and performances. This level of engagement fosters the formation of a close-knit community and emotional connections among fans [1]. Fans develop a strong sense of identity through their interactions with the groups, considering themselves part of the fandom and constructing their fan identity based on this connection. This sense of identity deepens the emotional bond between fans and the groups [2].

Moreover, fans of BTS and BLACKPINK exhibit a high degree of loyalty and support. They actively purchase group-related music, merchandise, and concert tickets, providing financial support to the groups and strengthening the bond between fans and the artists [3]. Additionally, fans create a diverse fan culture through activities such as song covers, dance covers, painting, and writing, showcasing their creativity and enthusiasm while expressing their love and support for the groups [4].

Collectively, these studies outline the influential role played by the music videos, fans' activities, and interactions associated with BTS and BLACKPINK in shaping gender perceptions and influencing the development of gendered diversity. In other words, through their music, performances, and active fan engagement, these groups foster a positive portrayal of gender, advocate for inclusivity and diversity, and cultivate a devoted and cohesive fan base.

3 Methodology

This research employs the Chinese followers of BTS and BLACKPINK as a representative sample to investigate gender construction in the Chinese fandoms of K-pop

culture. Expressly, these followers, also known as fans, are those who actively participate in the respective fandoms, showing a strong interest in and commitment to the BTS and BLACKPINK-related events and content [5]. Further, the sample was representative concerning fandom affiliation, Chinese nationality, diverse age groups (including both younger and older), and varied gender identities (including male, female, and non-binary fans). By making certain representativeness across these dimensions, it enables a detailed understanding of the varied ways in which K-pop culture affects Chinese K-pop fans' attitudes towards gender within fandoms of BTS and BLACKPINK as well as the potential role K-pop culture plays in redefining and modifying gender norms in China.

Furthermore, many researchers have utilized content analysis and interviews to measure the influence of K-pop on gender construction within the Chinese fandom, which offers complementary insights, with content analysis giving a broad overview of the cultural messages and gender-related representations that are present in K-pop media, while interviews give a more in-depth, contextualized view of how these representations are absorbed and internalized by fans [6-11]. Given the short-term research, a participatory quantitative research approach, online surveys, is employed in this study. For this, surveys offer accessibility to a hard-to-reach population dispersed across diverse digital communities in the Fandoms of K-pop. Besides, due to surveys' effectiveness in gathering data, researchers may reach a sizable sample, allowing quantitative analysis and revealing trends and connections between BTS and BLACKPINK's influences and changes in Chinese K-pop fans' attitudes toward gender norms and traditional social roles. Given the challenges of social desirability bias and cultural sensitivity, that is, conversations about gender are a delicate subject, anonymity in surveys could create a safe space for respondents to freely express their thoughts and opinions without reservations. Significantly, the scalability of surveys enables adaptability to changing fandom patterns.

Structured questioning with multiple-choice, open-ended, and standardized formats enables systematic exploration and gathering of comprehensive data on specific aspects of gender construction in the context of China. Explicitly, this survey has consisted of three sections. In the first section, basic demographic information, including gender, age, fan base, and sexual orientation, was collected to understand the profile of the respondents. Followed by the second section of the survey introduced key concepts related to gender and feminism clearly and concisely. This presentation aimed to provide participants with a foundational understanding of the subject matter, fostering an accessible and engaging survey experience. The last section of the survey delved into the impact of K-pop idol groups, specifically BTS and BLACKPINK, on the experiences and attitudes of Chinese fans. This section explored how the portrayals of gender and feminism by these idol groups may influence the respondents' perspectives and behaviors.

Moreover, considering the challenges in accessing the hard-to-reach population of Chinese K-pop fans, the snowball sampling technique was employed to accomplish sample saturation and diversity. Initially, a limited number of fans who met the selection criteria were identified through several channels, including social media sites (WeChat) and online fan forums (in Weibo), known as “Seeds” [12]. The following step was to ask these initial participants to recommend and invite additional fans they knew who met the study's requirements [12]. Although the snowball sampling method suffers from selection bias which limits the external validity of the sample, this issue would not be harmful as this study investigated a relatively niche community that is highly connected by personal relationships and beliefs [13].

4 Result

Based on the survey data, a total of 35 fans participated, with the majority (32 respondents) identifying as female, and three respondents identifying as male. Regarding the age distribution of the respondents, the majority (34 individuals) were between the ages of 18 and 30, with only one person older than 30. Besides, concerning sexual orientation, 29 respondents as heterosexual, sticking to the conventional binary conception, whereas six participants identified as homosexual, bisexual, or with other sexual orientations. Significantly, eight of the 35 respondents said they were fans of BTS, twenty said they were fans of BLACKPINK, and seven said they were followers of both groups. From this, the provided foundational data suggests a credible and accurate representation of the influence of BTS and BLACKPINK on gender perceptions among young Chinese fans, especially among those with traditional gender conceptions, notably female fans.

According to survey data, the estimated mean rating of 2.9 among respondents indicates that they tend to agree that social and biological variables, as well as sex biology, impact gender. Further, as depicted in Figure 1, a sizeable percentage of respondents (55.17%) hold the view that social constructs and biological sex both have an impact on gender, with social constructs playing a larger role, while 24.14% of respondents attribute gender identity primarily to biological sex, assigning comparatively lesser importance to social constructs. From this, it indicates that respondents' conceptions of gender may be divided into two categories: those that emphasize biological sex and those that emphasize social constructions. In addition, in relation to gender pluralism (Figure 2), a significant majority of the respondents (68.97%) express the view that psychological gender, impacted by deeply ingrained societal constructions, contributes to the disparities between cisgender and transgender identities. Besides, a considerable proportion of the respondents (48.28%) reflect the perspective that gender is characterized by diversity and fluidity. Explicitly, the result demonstrates that Chinese fans of BTS and BLACKPINK exhibit a more receptive and

supportive perception of gender. Importantly, despite the fact that most identify as conventionally heterosexual, they display a notable level of tolerance and acceptance towards the impact of socially constructed gender and the acknowledgment of sexual minority identities, including LGBT-Q.

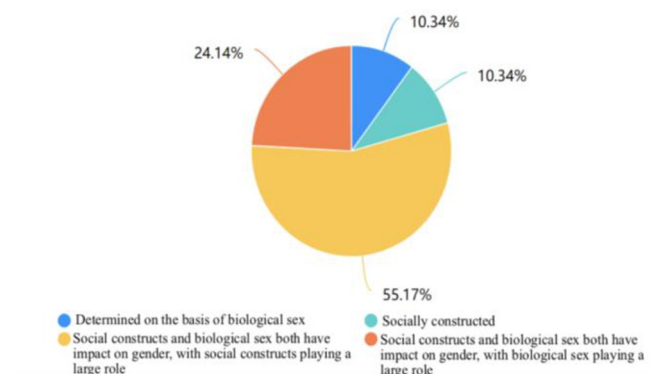


Fig. 1. Pie Chart of determinants of gender.

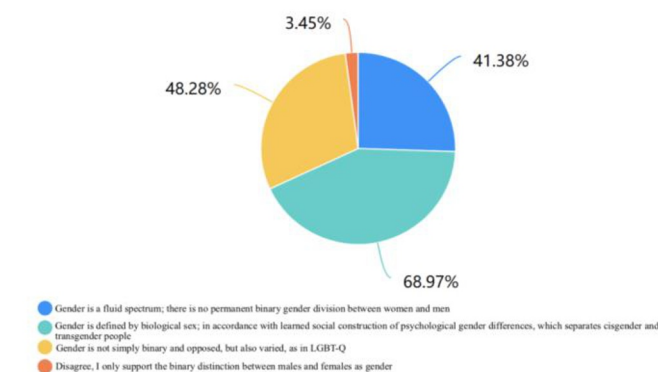


Fig. 2. Pie Chart of gender pluralism.

Moreover, masculinity and femininity serve as primary indicators of social constructs, that is, within the traditional binary framework of gender, males are typically perceived as possessing strength and masculinity, while females are typically perceived as possessing soft traits and a certain degree of sexual allure [14]. For this, the survey revealed that 48.28% of respondents agreed with the idea of associating specific gender temperaments with BTS and BLACKPINK, yet 51.72% disagreed, seeing this as a stereotype (as shown in Figure 3). This prompts an investigation into which gender temperaments of the groups attract their fans and whether fans adhere to conventional binary notions. From this, examining fans' perceptions of the groups' gender temperaments provides insights into whether they embrace or challenge traditional expectations, elucidating the dynamics between gender norms, fan preferences, and the artists' portrayals. Subsequently, the investigation centers on understanding the appeal of BTS and BLACKPINK's gender temperament to their fans. Gender identity is assessed along three dimensions: “Strength, Gentleness, and Sexualization” [15]. Further expressing, “Strength” is represented through physical attributes like well-defined muscles and powerful dance moves; “Gentleness” is depicted through soft speech and

kind, thoughtful behavior; “Sexualization” encompasses elements of sexuality conveyed through suggestive dance routines and provocative attire to captivate individuals’ fantasies about sexuality [11,15]. Employing the notion of gender identity in the survey, it reveals Chinese fans’ perceptions and connections with the projected gender temperament of BTS and BLACKPINK, providing insights into the relationship between fan attraction and the specific gender attributes embodied by these two Korean idol groups.

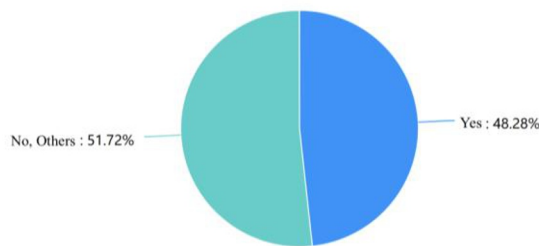


Fig. 3. Pie Chart of gender temperaments.

Based on the survey responses pertaining to these three gender temperaments, 14 individuals answered questions about BTS, while 21 individuals answered questions related to BLACKPINK. A comparative analysis of the survey results revealed the following patterns. Firstly, in Figure 4, the impression of power and gentleness associated with masculinity was found to be more enticing by female fans of BTS (71.43%), whereas sex appeal had a less significant impact (28.57%). Additionally, femininity’s sense of strength was the primary attraction for female fans of BLACKPINK, accounting for 80.95%, with limited impact from gentle temperament and sexual attraction (42.86% and 57.14%, respectively) (As shown in Figure 5). Besides, regarding emotional projection (Figure 6), less than 24% of respondents envisioned themselves as romantic partners of their idols, indicating that sex appeal is not the primary gender temperament that fans associate with their idols. Instead, about half of the respondents considered themselves closer to friends of their idols, while 24.14% adhered to traditional role boundaries between celebrities and fans. From this, the relevance of qualities other than sex appeal in determining the dynamics of idol-fan interactions, with friendship and respectful appreciation being prominent parts of these dynamics, is underscored by these findings, which emphasize the varying degrees of attraction that different gender temperaments evoke among fans.

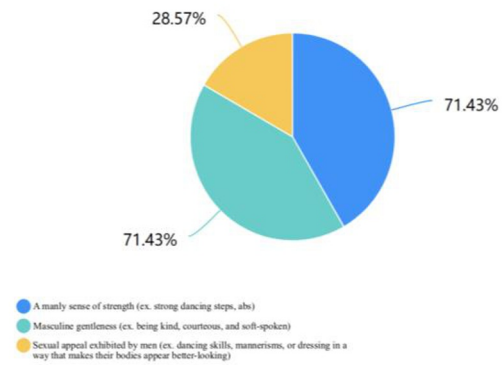


Fig. 4. Pie Chart of what attracts Chinese K-pop fans to BTS.

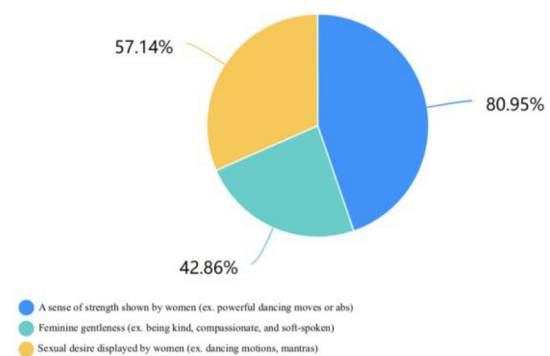


Fig. 5. Pie Chart of what attracts Chinese K-pop fans to BLACKPINK.

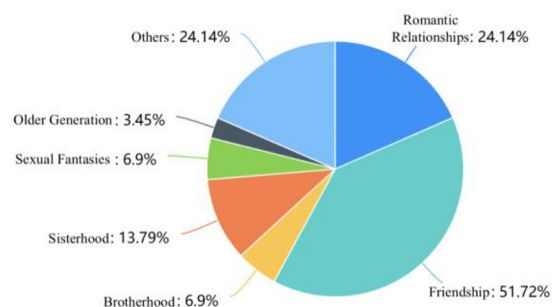


Fig. 6. Pie Chart of Chinese K-pop Fans' Emotional Projection of Idol Groups.

The final section of the survey was concerned with the transformation of gender temperament. For this, a significant majority (more than half) of respondents suggested that BTS and BLACKPINK have influenced their perceptions of boys' and girls' temperaments. Specifically, as shown in Figure 7, 48.28% of the respondents believe that the gender temperaments of men and women can overlap or blur, exemplified by the concept of androgyny. This shift in perspective has led to a re-evaluation of the social construction of gender. According to the majority of respondents (75.86%), the conventional binary idea of societal gender construction has been questioned, accepting that males may show emotion and weakness while women can be strong and rational. From this, such transformation has had an

impact on the division of roles within families, contributing to a certain degree of gender equality. Besides, Figure 8 displays that more than 65% of respondents stated that BTS and BLACKPINK's persona and demeanor had promoted a stronger sense of tolerance for different gender identities and sexual orientations. Approximately 55.17% of respondents reported a transformation in their binary gender concepts. Additionally, fewer than 30% of respondents believe that this transformation has partially dismantled the presumed link between the social division of labor and gender. These results show how BTS and BLACKPINK's image and temperament have a significant impact on fans' conceptions of gender and how this affects social gender structures.

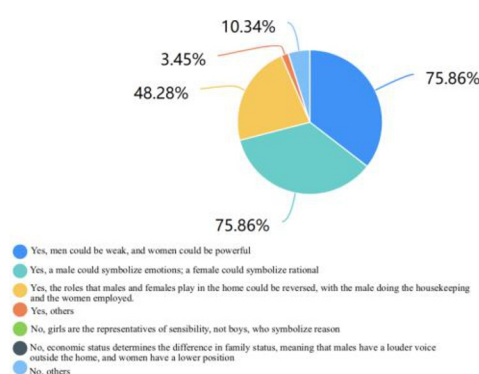


Fig. 7. Pie Chart of the transformation of gender temperament affected by BTS and BLACKPINK.

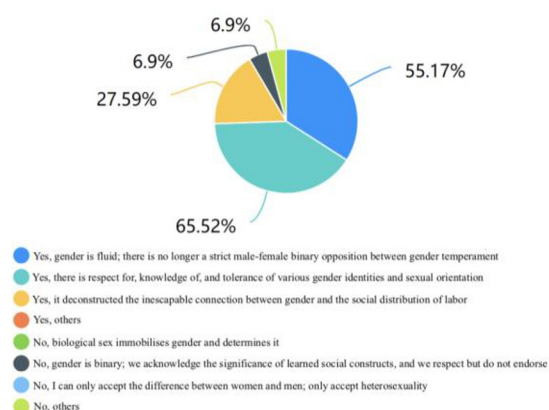


Fig. 8. Pie Chart of the transformation of gender perception affected by BTS and BLACKPINK.

Together these results provide important insights into the extent to which BTS and BLACKPINK's impact influences Chinese K-pop fans' perceptions of gender, encourages inclusivity, and challenges established gender norms and traditions.

5 Discussion

The present study was designed to determine the transformative influence of BTS and BLACKPINK's

gender representations on the gender perspectives among young Chinese K-pop fans. As mentioned in the literature review, in addition to the entertainment realm, K-pop exerts a significant influence on contemporary society, that is, having a direct bearing on cultural norms and traditional notions of gender roles and representations of masculinity and femininity, such as "Soft masculinity" [1-3]. Through a structured survey in this research, Chinese K-pop fans' comprehension of gender concepts, acceptance of various gender expressions, recognition of various gender temperaments, openness to gender transformation, and the level of gender equality and inclusivity advocated by these idol groups are explored and examined. By doing so, the findings from the survey shed crucial insight into the evolving dynamics between K-pop's gender representations and its fandom's ideas of gender identity and expression.

5.1 Shifting Perceptions of Gender Identity

What is surprising is that the current investigation found a considerable movement away from traditional binary gender conceptions among respondents. According to survey data, the majority of respondents acknowledged that gender is defined (characterized) by a combination of biological sex and social constructions, rather than simply determined by biological sex, known as the traditional binary conception of gender (Women/Men) [16]. Clearly, this departure from traditional binary gender notions reflects a broader cultural and social trend toward recognizing and accepting varied gender identities and manifestations. This finding is consistent with that of Dwidiaya who critically examines the impact of broader and prevailing societal norms on the production and reception of gender representations within K-pop, including "music videos, choreography, and idol images" [17]. In the same vein, Lin and Rudolf, in their article, Does K-pop Reinforce Gender Inequalities? Empirical Evidence from a New Data Set, notes "the gender depictions of BTS and BLACKPINK could resonate with their fans' openness and sensitivity to different gender identities and sexual orientations", highlighting the potential impact of gender representation in K-pop on reinforcing or challenging gender inequalities [18]. From this, the alignment indicates the intersection between popular culture, societal norms, and the construction of gender identities within the K-pop industry and its worldwide fandoms, emphasizing a transformative influence of K-pop on its fans' gender perceptions.

Furthermore, the most important finding in this research is Chinese K-pop fans' positive response to BTS and BLACKPINK's progressive gender depictions, further supporting the idea of gender inclusivity and acceptance within K-pop fandoms [11]. Despite the global appeal of gender diversity in K-pop, the comparative analysis with Song and Velding's work illustrates the potential divergence in young Americans' interpretations of K-pop masculinities as a result of distinct cultural and socioeconomic contexts, such as

“social norms, media influences, and educational systems in the United States” [15]. As such, the critical importance of contextualizing and evaluating gender depictions in K-pop as the transnational media within the broader and distinct cultural context is stressed, that is, how cultural and social backgrounds could shape fans' perspectives.

5.2 Gender Pluralism and Fluidity

As demonstrated in the survey results, Chinese Fans of BTS and BLACKPINK hold a progressive attitude towards gender diversity and fluidity. There is a majority of respondents who perceive psychological gender, as shaped by acquired social constructs, contributing to the distinction between cisgender and transgender identities, while also recognizing gender as diverse and fluid. These findings are in accord with recent studies indicating a notable tendency among K-pop fans, including male followers, towards accepting a more flexible perspective of gender identity [6, 19]. Indeed, the fandom's enthusiastic reaction to BTS and BLACKPINK's progressive gender representations displays the resonance between the performances of these idol groups and fans' personal experiences and identities. Expressly, acceptance of varied gender expressions among the fandom coincides with the greater theme of empowerment and self-expression advocated by BTS and BLACKPINK, namely the reinterpretation of gender norms including “diversified representation of masculinity and femininity”. This, therefore, produces an inclusive and empowering atmosphere that defies traditional gender stereotypes in fandom spaces and furthers the ongoing discourse on queer, sexual identities gender, and sexuality within the K-pop field.

5.3 Gender Temperaments and Fan Preferences

Another finding is the intriguing preferences for various gender temperaments among fans, both male and female, who follow identical idol groups. Chinese Female K-pop fans are more drawn to the sense of power and gentleness associated with masculinity, showing a preference for the expression of power and assertiveness shown via “physical attributes and dynamic performances”, while also showing a preference for the softer, more seductive qualities of femininity [20]. It is evident from this that admiring the sense of power and masculinity in males implies a desire for qualities consisting of strength, assertiveness, and confidence; admiring gentleness suggests recognition of qualities involving tenderness, empathy, and emotional expression, which could resonate with their desire for emotional connections and relatability with idols [18]. On the other hand, Chinese male K-pop fans show a strong interest in the sensitivity, seductiveness, and sex appeal of femininity. Explicitly, this propensity implies an affinity for traits commonly associated with tenderness, emotional sensitivity, and sexual appeal.

From this, these findings reveal the variety of gender temperaments that BTS and BLACKPINK fans find appealing, which defies conventional gender norms, that impose strict standards of masculinity and femininity. Further explaining, the fandom's acceptance of a variety of gender manifestations confirms that BTS and BLACKPINK's depictions of gender have positively contributed to fans' notions of gender identity and expression. In other words, fans may view gender as more than a binary concept because of the idol groups' capacity to question and broaden conventional gender standards, and this inspires them to explore and enjoy a wider range of gender identities and manifestations.

Notably, the fact that sex appeal has less of an impact on fans' opinions than other gender characteristics shows how complex and varied their views on gender portrayals are. By highlighting the importance of other gender-related characteristics in forming fan preferences, such as emotional ties, relatability, and adoration, this phenomenon highlights the variety of elements that go into the development of fan-idol relationships.

5.4 Transformation of Gender Perceptions

A substantial majority of respondents recognized that BLACKPINK and BTS had an impact on their opinions about gender temperaments. Expressly, according to survey data, a significant proportion of them imagined the merging of gender temperaments, epitomized by the idea of “androgyny”. This finding is reassuring since the traditional binary notions of gender, that is rigid distinctions between masculinity and femininity, are challenged, and in their place, a more flexible and receptive view of gender is developed. Importantly, these paradigmatic transformations corroborate the idea of Kwon, who proposed the theoretical framework, named “K(Q)ueerness” or “K-pop queerness”, advocating for a progressive theorization of gender and sexuality in the context of K-pop [19]. According to this theoretical viewpoint, K-pop has the capacity to defy social conventions and create a space where people of various gender identities and expressions may feel accepted and welcomed. Besides, fans who are open to exploring and adopting a more flexible concept of gender identity are drawn to BTS and BLACKPINK's gender portrayals because they reject traditional gender stereotypes and show a more inclusive and varied image of gender. From this, these results provide further support for the hypothesis that the gender pictures of BTS and BLACKPINK have a significant impact on how fans view gender and contribute to advancing a more accepting view of gender identity.

Furthermore, another finding that stands out from the results is that fans' thoughts of social roles and familial duties changed as a result of this change in their conceptions of gender perceptions. A possible explanation for this might be that the positive and progressive depictions of BTS and BLACKPINK challenge and deconstruct traditional gender norms under patriarchy that have long prescribed certain responsibilities and expectations for men and women

within families. By offering alternative forms of gender identity and behavior, BTS and BLACKPINK provide their fans with a comprehensive view of the range of expressions possible beyond traditional gender standards. This might therefore prompt a re-examination of deeply ingrained gender roles and obligations within families, promoting a more equitable division of domestic work and caregiving tasks between genders [14].

6 Conclusion

The survey findings demonstrate that the image and temperament of BTS and BLACKPINK have had a significant positive impact on their fans' perceptions of gender, gender equality, and inclusivity. Fans generally embrace the idea that gender is a complex interplay between biological sex and social constructs, challenging the notion that it is solely determined by biological factors. This indicates a clear distinction between sex and gender in their understanding.

The majority of respondents perceive gender as a pluralistic concept, influenced by social constructs, leading to a diverse and fluid understanding of masculinity and femininity. This openness and supportiveness towards diverse gender identities and sexual orientations suggest a progressive attitude among fans. While most fans identify as traditionally heterosexual, they display a high level of tolerance and acceptance towards gender constructs and sexual minority groups. Additionally, the survey highlights distinct gender temperaments among male and female fans, with female fans expressing a preference for power and masculinity in males, while also appreciating femininity's gentleness and sex appeal. On the other hand, male fans show a stronger attraction towards femininity's gentleness and sex appeal. This indicates a nuanced and evolving understanding of gender roles and traits among fans.

Furthermore, a significant number of respondents believe that BTS and BLACKPINK have influenced a transformation in their understanding of gender temperaments. From this, fans perceive a blending of gender traits, leading to a more androgynous approach. This challenges traditional binary gender notions and promotes the belief that both men and women can express a wide range of emotions and traits, breaking down rigid gender stereotypes. This transformation is not merely confined to individual beliefs but also extends to influencing perceptions of the social division of labour based on gender, promoting greater gender equality.

Despite the positive findings, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of the survey. The inability to establish causation is a significant constraint, as surveys can only show correlations between BTS and BLACKPINK's influence and changes in attitudes toward gender norms. While the survey indicates a positive impact, other factors may also contribute to the evolving perceptions of gender among fans. For this, to demonstrate causal linkages and explore the intricacies of gender representation in K-pop more thoroughly, future studies may use longitudinal and mixed-methods

techniques. Besides, another limitation lies in the potential sampling bias of the survey. Online surveys may attract a specific demographic, such as younger, tech-savvy individuals while overlooking other age groups or individuals less engaged with social media. As a result, the survey's findings may not fully represent the diverse perspectives and attitudes toward gender in the entire fandom. Clearly, Future research can reach out to certain demographic groups that may not have been adequately represented in the sample by using focused recruiting techniques. Lastly, with women making up as much as 91.42% of the survey sample utilized in this study, there is a clear gender gap in the sample. Meaning, the sample's underrepresentation of men limits the study's ability to fully capture the opinions of its intended audience. To address this issue in future studies, it is advised to increase the sample size and include a more varied representation of male participants. Within the limitations of time and money, this expansion should be carried out with the goal of reaching a wider audience and gathering more thorough and representative data.

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