From Consuming to Producing: Otaku as free Labor in the Japanese Anime and Manga Industry

Nidar Lutfiyatur Rohmah[1], Kurniawaty Iskandar[2]

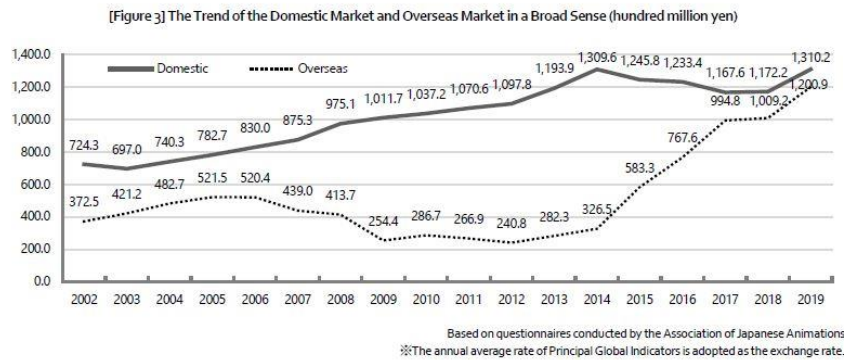[1,2] School of Strategic and Global Studies, University of Indonesia, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Published Online: 01 October 2022 Corresponding Author: **Nidar Lutfiyatur R.**	This study aims to analyze the role of otaku in the Japanese anime industry, where otaku is not only consumers but also producers in the Japanese anime industry. Furthermore, this study also analyzes how otaku work as free labor in the Japanese anime industry. In looking at the existing phenomena, this study uses the theory of free labor and database consumption to analyze the phenomenon more deeply. This study uses a qualitative method. The data used are primary data taken through in-depth interviews with two sources (otaku) and supported by secondary data from articles and related research. The results show that manga and anime fans (otaku) often form social interactions between fandoms and produce activities to acquire or expand the works they consume. Otaku is not only consumers of manga or anime but also often have derivative products, such as doujinshi, AMV, and others, from the manga and anime they consume. By creating derivative works, otaku act as free laborers who work not for material purposes but for satisfaction purposes (hobbies).
KEYWORDS: Otaku, Anime Industry, Free Labor, Otaku Consumer.	

I. INTRODUCTION

Japanese cultural products such as anime, manga, j-pop, video games, movies, and other popular culture products have reached global today. In Japan, anime refers to various kinds of animation, while outside Japan, anime refers to animation originating in Japan. Anime stories are usually created based on manga (Japanese comics). Manga magazines (weekly or monthly) are mass-produced, widely distributed, and sold at low prices. The manga consists of various genres, generally consisting of several categories such as manga for men, manga for women, and manga for adults. More detailed subgenres include fighting, war, sports, school romance, fantasy, adventure, science fiction, historical stories, professional careers (cook, dancer, actress, or detective), and erotic stories. Products related to anime and manga, such as video games, light novels, anime soundtrack CDs, DVDs, character miniatures, toys, etc., support each
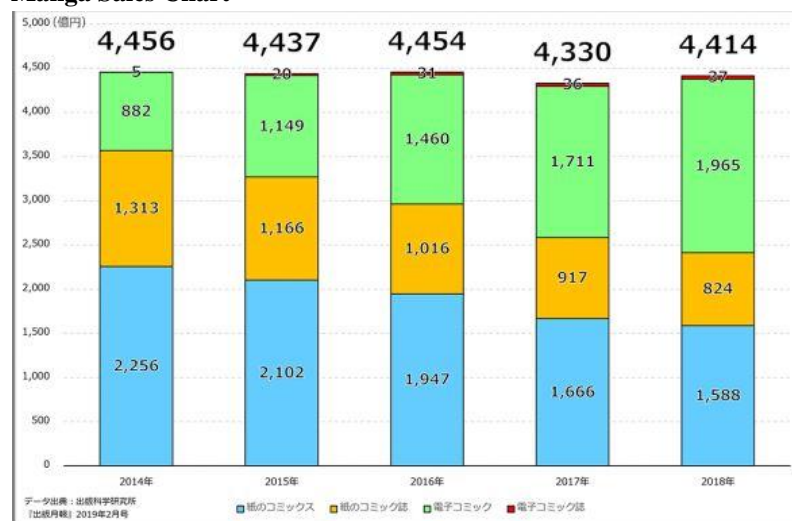
other and have developed into a large entertainment industry and become an important cultural export product in Japan. Where this cultural product also contributes significantly to the Japanese economy. It can be seen from data from The Association of Japanese Animations (AJA) in 2019, where the market value of anime (including movies, TV anime, anime games, merchandise, music, etc.) reached 251.1 billion yen from both domestic and overseas markets. . In addition to anime, according to a report from The All Japan Magazine and Book Publisher's and Editor's Association (AJPEA), sales of comics (manga) both in physical and electronic form in 2018 have also experienced a growth of 441.4 billion yen (HON.jp, 2019). With this increase in sales, the manga and anime industry has become one of the largest creative industries in Japan that have helped boost the Japanese economy.

[Figure 3] The Trend of the Domestic Market and Overseas Market in a Broad Sense (hundred million yen)

Based on questionnaires conducted by the Association of Japanese Animations
※The annual average rate of Principal Global Indicators is adopted as the exchange rate.

Anime Sales Chart in Japan and overseas
Source: AJA (2019)

Manga Sales Chart

Source: AJPEA (from HON.jp. 2019)

Anime and manga significantly influence the economy, culture, and daily lives. Manga "Hikaru no Go," for example, this manga tells about a boy's encounter with the ancient master spirit "Go." "Go" is a board game invented in China about 4,000 years ago, which has spread to Japan and Korea. Go professional members have experienced a significant decline in the last few decades in Japan. After the manga and anime Hikaru no Go was released, tens of thousands of children started signing up for Go classes. Another example of how anime influences culture can be seen in its influence on classical music. Classical music, especially among young people, is considered very formal and severe and is not very popular in Japanese society and many other Asian countries. However, classical music began gaining immense popularity among young people after the anime and manga Nodame Cantabile appeared. This anime tells the love story between the talented pianist Nodame and the genius musician (conductor) Chiaki. The background story tells the journey of the two characters who study at a Japanese music school and then study in Europe. With this story, young people in Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China, who previously rarely listened to classical music, started attending symphony orchestra concerts in droves. This phenomenon is what became known as the "Nodame phenomenon" in many countries in East Asia. By looking at some of these examples, it can be seen how manga and anime significantly influence society (Wang, 2010).

The fans who like anime and manga are called otaku. However, since the late 1980s, the term otaku has received a negative stigma in Japan (Welin, 2014). The negative stigma given to otaku is inseparable from the crimes committed by anime fans (otaku) in 1989, namely Tsutomu Miyazaki, who kidnapped and killed children. With this case being reported in various Japanese mass media, Japanese people think that otaku is a disease and has a negative connotation (Welin, 2014). It was only in the late 1990s, when Japanese animation began to receive international attention and anime exports to other parts of the world increased significantly, that otaku culture seemed to impact the economy. Research from the Nomura Institute in August 2004 estimates that otaku related to anime, comics, games, and idols, numbers about 2.8 million people, and their annual market scale amounts to 260 billion yen (Welin, 2014).

With the public's acceptance of anime, the Japanese government sees that anime is a great tool to promote Japanese culture and can help restore the vitality of the Japanese economy. Therefore, the government then supported the development of anime, one of which was the former Prime Minister of Japan, Taro Aso. In 2007, He organized the annual "International Manga Awards" and started the "Anime Ambassador" project, aiming to increase Japan's global interest in anime and manga. Seeing manga and anime becoming increasingly popular in recent years, the Japanese government then used manga and anime and other popular cultures as tools of cultural diplomacy. According to P.M. Aso, Japan can use anime and manga for packaging and creating a specific image of Japan as a "cool" or "kawaii (cute)" country to attract young people around the world. He also believes that in 10 or 20 years, when these young people grow up, their interest in Japanese culture will influence their decisions, which can positively influence Japan (MOFA, 2006).

Although otaku still has a negative connotation in Japanese society, for anime fans worldwide, it is often considered cool. Along with the worldwide distribution of anime and manga, anime and manga fans (otaku) nowadays, there are almost all parts of the world. This can be seen in the community's enthusiasm to participate in anime-related events held in various countries.

Even though during the covid-19 pandemic, visitor enthusiasm is still very high, it can be seen in the large number of visitors who come to this event. In Taiwan, for example, the annual Taipei International Comics & Animation Festival held from January 31 to February 4, 2020, at the Nangang Exhibition Center has attracted many visitors. This event includes exhibitions of unique, original limited edition products, discounted products, and meetings with well-known local and foreign illustrators and animators, voice actors, and idol groups (HWH, 2020). The number of visitors who came to this event reached 401,000 people, totaling 500 booths.

Pictures of Taipei International Comics & Animation Festival booths and visitors

(**Source:** Taiwan News)

(**Source:** Liputan6.com)

In Indonesia, Japanese cultural events such as Ennichisai are also one of the most awaited events by Japanese culture fans. The Ennichisai event, which was held on 22 and 23 June 2019 at Blok M, South Jakarta, attracted 310,000 visitors during the 2-day event. There are more than 200 bazaar booths at this event related to Japanese culinary and cultural products. This event was also attended by various

Japanese fan communities such as cosplayers, illustrators, idols, and others. Besides showing modern Japanese popular cultures such as cosplay, idol groups, bands, and others, this event also showcases traditional Japanese culture such as Mikoshi, Dashi, Taiko, Geisha, and Yosakoi. (Ennichisai, 2019).

2019 Ennichisai event pictures

(**Source:** Gatra.com)

(**Source:** Upstation.asia)

Not only in Asia, but Japanese cultural events are also held in America. Otakon, the largest anime convention in North America, is a place for Japanese anime and manga fans to gather and share their hobbies with Japanese culture. Otakon, held at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center on July 26-28, 2019, was attended by 28,430 people. The event is held to celebrate Asian pop culture (anime, manga, music, film, video games, etc.) and fandom, with various famous guests such as actors, singers, producers, animators, cosplayers, and voice actors—both from local and from Japan (Animecons, 2019).

Pictures of cosplayers and booths at Otakon events

(**Source:** Pressadvantage.com)   (**Source:** Washington.org)

Fans often celebrate, network, and have fun at these Japanese cultural events. Aside from being a gathering place for fans of anime and Japanese culture, this Japanese cultural event is also an effort to promote anime and Japanese culture widely, especially with events being held outside of Japan.

Besides the existence of events that also promote anime, the reason why Japanese anime and manga can develop so rapidly is because of the many genres and unlimited creativity, such as making videos by fans or commonly known as Anime Music Video (AMV). Usually contains snippets from the original anime, which are then compiled, and the story is made according to the fans' wishes. Not only that, but technological developments (especially the internet) also help products related to anime to be widely distributed worldwide. Communication, exchange of products, manufacture, and production of materials, as well as distribution, are almost all done over the internet at a very high speed. Overseas fans who used to be only able to find manga and anime available on comics or DVD sales now can download them from the internet via platforms such as Youtube, Niconico, Piapro, and so on.

Along with the development of the internet and the number of video-sharing platforms, fandom activities are also getting more accessible. Some fans volunteer to translate them into English subtitles (fansubs) or other languages with the advantages of video editing software. This activity is done to make it easier for overseas fans who don't understand Japanese. In addition, among fans, making doujinshi is one of the most popular fandom activities. Doujinshi is a term used to refer to amateur manga in Japan. Doujinshi comes from the words "doujin," which means people with similar interests, and "shi," which is short for Zasshi, which means magazine. Thus doujinshi can be interpreted as a magazine created by people who have the same interests. Doujinshi is growing along with the development of commercial manga and photocopying machines, making it easier for amateur manga artists to produce their works (Dewi). This doujinshi is an excellent resource for finding potential creative manga or anime artists. Many manga artists such as Yun Koga, CLAMP, and others who started as doujinshi artists became famous artists and succeeded in commercial publications (Ito, 2012).

With the global development of digital technology, otaku can efficiently distribute their work. Through a networked, participatory, and peer-to-peer online video sharing platform, amateur creators can share their work and collaborate. By establishing close relationships with the anime industry, and reproducing images, content, sound, and other materials from anime, manga, video games, light novels, and so on, otaku are extreme consumers of anime products. At the same time, they also play a role as a creative producer. According to Azuma Hiroki (2009), the consumption process by otaku is a form of "database consumption." In Otaku: Japan's Database Animals, Azuma argues that today's consumer culture, which is tied to interactive media, can no longer be explained by what Otsuka Eiji describes as "narrative consumption." In narrative consumption, society repeatedly consumes parts and fragments of "grand narratives" (such as anime episodes, TV, radio programs, and various anime characters and idol pop commodities), which the industry is expected to produce and distribute (Azuma, 2009). This consumption model concentrates knowledge production on the industrial side. Azuma describes narrative consumption as a characteristic of modernization, while the database consumption model is post modernization to see consumer culture through the internet. Azuma argues that a

grand narrative governs modernization. Meanwhile, in post-modernization, the grand narrative collapses, and social cohesion weakens (Azuma, 2009). To make it easier to understand, an example of a database model is the internet. The internet has no center and no hidden grand narrative that governs all web pages. Consumers can spend their time reading exciting subjects over the internet, and they can combine fragments, snippets, and parts of relevant digital images and text found in databases into what Azuma calls "derivative works," a term for rereading and reproducing original forms, such as fanzine (fan magazine), fan games (fan games), fan figures, and others. Depending on the different reading modes by the user, consumers may produce several derivative works that differ from the original (Azuma, 2009).

In a study by Khaled and Iskandar (2022) on the motivation of Indonesian gamers towards Japanese mobile games, it is also explained how Japanese entertainment industry companies create a grand narrative that directs otaku to consume characters from work. In this study, it was presented that one of the addictive behavior toward games or IGD (Internet Game Disorder) was because of the player's desire to get a character who was considered a 'waifu.' This player's wish is consistent with Azuma's concept in database consumption that otaku is often driven by simulacra consisting of fictional characters and consumes their designs. In database consumption, because of consumers' love, they want to give affection to the characters they love, which often eliminates their rationality. As in some cases where many otakus are addicted to collecting the characters they like, some are even willing to go into debt to buy and collect these characters. Even more irrational, some otaku chooses to marry fictional characters because of their love for these characters. The otaku's love for certain characters is not only expressed by consuming the characters they like, but they also pour it out by producing works such as making doujinshi images or fan art, blogging about their favorite series or characters, making videos, and so on which they do regular volunteer.

Following the explanation above, otaku, as consumers of anime and manga who are often involved on the internet, are not only consumers of narratives but also have become producers by producing derivative works they make. Therefore, the analysis in this study was conducted to answer the question, "What is the role of otaku as free labor in the Japanese anime industry?".

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach to analyzing the fandom phenomenon related to the historical development and economic conditions of the Japanese anime industry, especially in the consumption and production of fans. It takes a deep understanding of the history, processes, and actors involved in the anime industry to dig up information about this phenomenon. Therefore, this study uses a qualitative approach because this approach allows researchers to dig deeper into the Japanese anime industry. As stated by Moleong (2005), qualitative research is a method that can be used to understand sensitive issues and examine the background of phenomena that cannot be investigated using quantitative methods and can be used to explore something in terms of the process. Cresswell (2013) also states that qualitative research can be used to examine and understand a phenomenon or social problem, both individually and in groups.

This research uses the literature study method with secondary and primary data sources through interviews. Literature studies are carried out by documenting essential data and analyses by exploring the history and development of the role of otaku in the Japanese anime and manga industry from relevant literature on the role of otaku in the anime and manga industry from consumers to producers, both in reference books, scientific journals, official websites, as well as other sources. Primary data sources through in-depth interviews were conducted via telephone with two informants consisting of a male informant who works as a manga illustrator and one female informant who likes Japanese culture and often participates in fanart competitions.

III. OTAKU TERMS IN JAPAN

The use of the term otaku first appeared around the early 1980s. Before it became the term used to refer to anime fans as it is today, in 1983, writer Nakamori Akio first used the term otaku in an article in Manga Burikko magazine to mock anime fans because they used it as a second person pronoun when speaking to one another (Saito, 2011). The term otaku comes from the Japanese word 'taku' [宅], which means house. Otaku [御宅] is [御宅] is the polite form of 'taku,' which means "your house or your family." After the 1980s, the hiragana "o-ta-ku" [おたく] was often used among science fiction groups or anime fans to greet one another and then gradually became a common slang expression referring to anime, manga, or game mania.

Along with the growth of Japanimation, in the 1990s, the term otaku was also exported outside of Japan, replacing the terms sushi and karaoke. Along with the inclusion of the term otaku, in Europe and the United States, searches on the Internet found nearly seventy thousand pages containing the word otaku in roman letters (Saito, 2011). Although the term otaku has spread and is accepted by the outside community, in Japan, the term otaku often still gets a negative stigma. Despite the immense popularity of anime and manga in the global marketplace and attracting many fans worldwide who wish to identify themselves as otaku, otaku is still generally considered sick, weird, and socially incompetent in Japan. This is because of the many cases of deviation committed by otaku. For example, the Tsutomu Miyazaki incident in 1989 attracted the attention of the Japanese people at that time.

Tsutomu Miyazaki was arrested for killing four little girls (4-7 years old). When he was arrested, the police also found an extensive collection of pornographic anime in his room. Therefore, he is known as the "Otaku Killer." What Tsutomu did is often compared to the story "Kobe School Killer (Sakakibara Seito)," which tells the story of a 14-year-old boy who brutally beheads an 11-year-old boy and puts his head at the school gate. Therefore, whenever a terrible social incident occurs, many people will view it and associate it with erotic or violent anime. Society assumes the otaku community is a collection of weird and sick people.

Otaku is also often associated with "hikikomori," a phenomenon where individuals withdraw from social life and lock themselves in their respective rooms. In general, the hikikomori phenomenon results from social pressures (especially those related to competition with peers at school or work) that make young people stay at home rather than go out to interact with others. Since these "hikikomori" activities are confined to the home, and they usually spend their time reading manga, watching anime, or browsing online websites, they are often misunderstood as otaku.

There are incidents like those mentioned above, which then stigmatize the term otaku from simply referring to "people who like anime, manga, and games" to "people who are nerdy, weird, socially incompetent, and even deviant or criminal." However, as anime and manga became increasingly popular internationally, the Japanese government began to harness the power of otaku culture and its products. The term otaku seems to be under the trend of globalization and is becoming destigmatized. Although Japanese people still have a negative impression of otaku, they are starting to see that anime and manga are popular worldwide and are starting to reassess the influence of popular culture and otaku.

To understand more about otaku, it is also necessary to look at the personality of the otaku itself. Okada Toshio, nicknamed the "Otaku King," explains that otaku has three important traits to define: a developed visual sensitivity, advanced reference ability, and a tireless desire for self-improvement and self-affirmation (Saito, 2011). Okada thinks that otaku tends to cross genre boundaries, distinguishing otaku from maniacs, who usually concentrate on only one genre. Therefore, otaku is not only for anime fans but also for those interested in other fields such as special effects, films, and manga. Furthermore, Okada said that to become a true otaku, one must have three visual acuities: the eye of the aesthetics, the eye of the master, and the eye of the connoisseur (Saito, 2011).

Tamaki Saito, a Japanese psychologist, also defines several characteristics to identify otaku. According to Saito, an otaku is someone with a strong affinity for fictional contexts, someone who uses fiction as a way to "own" the object of his love, someone who inhabits not only two but several orientations, as well as someone who can find sexual objects in fiction itself (Saito, 2011). Even though otaku know that the object of their love has no material reality, they still show a strong passion for fictional contexts. Otaku can become attached to sexuality when representations of anime characters begin to fuel their erotic needs as male or female, further developing their desires. The existence of this otaku sexuality encourages a continuous connection between reality and representation. Therefore, otaku may engage in sexual relations with anime because individuals develop feelings of love and sexual attraction towards representations of anime characters as if the characters were romantic partners. This feeling of interest prompts otaku to form desires that drive their interactions with representations.

Otaku shows their love by sticking to fiction to own the object they love. Otaku collect objects such as moe character figures and hold them as their "transitional objects." Otaku who grow up interested and attached to a certain character will try to develop that character. For otaku, what is enjoyed is not making fiction into the material. The goal of otaku is to take existing fiction and promote it as their fiction (Saito, 2011). This process of fictionalization can be seen in the creation of works by otaku. Popular anime often attracts so-called SS (Short/Side Story) writers. These writers, especially otaku, often borrow settings and characters from famous works, write novels and screenplays in different versions, and then upload them to online forums. What these otakus want is not for material purposes or self-promotion, but rather to show how they managed to have through these works. They let the workers' own' them, create different stories from the same material, and share them with the community. This process is a kind of 'ownership ritual' practiced in the otaku community.

In the works created by otaku, Tamaki Saito also shows that there is an asymmetry of sexual differences between male and female otaku. This can be seen from the works they produce, such as doujinshi. Making doujinshi is a way for otaku to express their love by taking the anime they like and making the characters their own. These fan-made comics usually feature fan productions based on their gender. A female otaku is usually attracted to doujinshi Boys Love (BL). The homosexual relationships in this BL story cover the entire spectrum of love, from pure romance to passionate love, and the character's emotions are expressed in small details and with care (Sone, 2014). These fujoshi who like BL doujinshi are heterosexual but enjoy the homoerotic scenes of men in doujinshi. Therefore, the female otaku in her work tends to create yaoi doujinshi in the adult genre. Female authors often change the story's message to make the subject homoerotic. Yaoi doujinshi depicts fantasies about male homosexual relationships that the creators desire for themselves and the characters.

In contrast to the sexuality of female otaku, who occupy a more passive position and identify themselves as deficient (agents of desire), male otaku sexuality is more

active. For male otaku, the moe's character becomes one of their desired objects. For male otaku, moe is fictional, imaginary, sexual, fetishistic, and objective. Moe for male otaku is a fetishistic desire 'to have,' while moe for female otaku is the desire 'to be.' Therefore, male otaku tends to create kawaii-ero (cute eroticism) characters in their work.

IV. OTAKU AS FREE LABOR

Otaku as workforce refers to all fandom activities that generate value through participation, communication, consumption, and production. Otaku addicted to anime or characters are often motivated to connect with other fans, discuss certain topics, promote and share their love with others, and create works or cosplay to show their love for anime.

By becoming an otaku, one does not only consume anime or products related to anime but also a producer of the anime itself. With fandom activities, otaku often creates something new. In addition, with the development of technology, the appearance and distribution of anime have permeated the daily life of otaku. Otaku is motivated to exchange, sell, create, and reproduce anime through videos, doujinshi, photos, and other cultural products. In this case, otaku act as free laborers who work voluntarily and immaterially, especially in digital technology.

In the digital economy, the relationship between bodily influence, technology, and production is becoming more complex. Free labor emerged together with digital technology and the Internet (Terranova, 2000). This corresponds to activities involving otaku. Otaku spends much time surfing the internet, chatting about what they like, sharing information, and discussing their knowledge of anime with other fans. Thus, otaku work is free to work that is voluntary, especially in the field of the World Wide Web.

Otaku can be categorized as free labor, the hobbyist type, where they work not for commercial purposes but personal enjoyment. The works created by these otakus are a form of fan online activity, part of an immaterial workforce that generates value through creativity, productivity, and social communication. These fandom groups contribute their thoughts and knowledge online and then come together to produce something collectively. The works most often created by these otakus are OVA (Original Video animation), AMV (Anime Music Video), or MAD (Music Anime Douga), commonly called maddou douga, fansub video, and doujinshi.

Original Video Animation (OVA) works are a shape of otaku's aspirations to create their content material. OVAs are media in which otaku are producing, and they can animate certified characters or create their animations. As OVA producers, otaku emerge as personal designers, animators, and historical past artists, taking content material from different work and reusing it for brand new creations. In particular, creations just like the DAICON animation show off otaku's determination to the usage of their capabilities and

take over a specific identification to create content material. OVA animators are taken into consideration to realize their target market higher due to the fact they're otaku who animate content material for otaku. By sharing their otaku identification, they can awareness of the otaku's dreams and correctly goal their target market; therefore, here, otaku act as manufacturers and consumers (Pham, 2021).

Otaku additionally produces an OVA to offer remarks on otaku culture. This may be visible withinside the work of Otaku no Video, which affords a lively section that tells the tale of buddies wherein hobby in anime leads them to create a manufacturing studio referred to as Gainax and turn out to be the king of otaku (otaking). This OVA takes a high-quality shape, together with mockumentary interviews with otaku whose faces were disguised and their voices altered to guard their privacy, with those otaku being on the whole personnel of the Gainax studio itself. While this OVA is propaganda for Gainax, it demonstrates the company's center motive, which is growing content material for otaku via way of means of otaku. As business manufacturers, otaku has a bonus due to the fact they may be additionally a part of their goal audience. otaku can tackle the various identities of manufacturers and purchasers to similarly their love to anime, so it could be stated that withinside the procedure of consuming, the consumer otaku is in a sequence of preliminary procedures in reproducing the preliminary thoughts into merchandise which might be the result of improvement via way of means of the consumer otaku to turn out to be producer otaku (Pham, 2021). The precise analog is while researchers behavior studies withinside the discipline, the effects of discipline findings can turn out to be new troubles with exceptional themes.

OVA creation does not stop at the commercial level. Wotakoi: Love is Hard for Otaku is a popular anime about otaku having romantic relationships. In its opening series, "Fiction" has become a popular cover project for fans, with many fans then animating non-Wotakoi characters to dance to the chorus. This dance uses hand and head movements that will suit any character. These animations are then posted to Nico Video, YouTube, or TikTok. For example, the Haikyuu character!! parodied to dance to the chorus of "Fiction." Even though many fans aren't as adept at animation as the animation creators of DAICON, there's still a real commitment to reinventing dance with their favorite characters. OVAs are one of many styles of fan-generated content for fans. Through the creation of OVAs, otaku can take on multiple identities that accentuate their relationship with anime (Pham, 2021).

Video creation by fans is another way for fan artists to express their passion and thoughts. These videos show their love for anime or express their certain personal opinions. This has also been made easier by the development of digital technology such as websites, YouTube, audio and video converters, and film-making software, making it easier to

make videos. Therefore, more and more fans then participate in making videos and sharing their works via the internet.

V. FANART AND DOUJINSHI ARTISTS FREE WORK

In an interview conducted with ND (26) and JN (24), who are illustrators, they said that they would make drawings (works) regardless of whether the work is profitable or not because of their great love for anime. Both interviewees said that they did this because they had the ability and preference for it.

"I have loved anime since middle school, that's why I became interested in Japan and decided to major in Japanese literature. I also happen to like drawing, so I often draw and upload them on my social media. I never thought about earning money from my work, because I did it as a hobby. Sometimes I also take part in doujinshi competitions which are held when there are Japanese festival events. Once I won a competition and got prize money, but actually, the prize I got was nothing compared to what I did. To take part in the competition I have to pay a registration fee, after that I have to send my original work for selection, after passing the selection I have to go to the event venue to take part in the competition and make a new original work again, besides that I also need an accommodation to go to the competition venue. So actually if I do the calculations it may cost me more than the prize I get. It's just because I like it and there is an opportunity to share my hobby so I don't lose either…." (ND, 26).

In the case of ND, it can be seen that he is one of the free laborers of the hobbyist, who is driven by emotions and makes the work process his goal to satisfy his passion. As stated by Fast, the productivity of hobbyists as this type of affective workforce does not crave material things but a feeling of comfort, well-being, satisfaction, joy, or passion that they can get. ND also said that he had a hobby of drawing since childhood. Along with his love for Japanese anime and his drawing skills, as well as a fandom environment (circle) where they can exchange information and thoughts, have encouraged ND to create works and share them with their followers. Sharing his work on social media is indirectly a promotion to introduce the characters he draws. ND also said that many of his followers then asked about the film of the character, which gave ND pleasure when more and more people knew and had an interest in the character.

Not much different from ND, JN (24) also expressed the same thing. Although he currently works in a manga publishing house and creates commercial manga, he says that drawing was previously his hobby, and he never thought about selling his work.

"I've always loved drawing, it was just a hobby, I never thought about making money from drawing. Then joined the illustrator community, and finally got a job as an illustrator. Even though I get income from my current job, actually I still often make pictures for me to upload on my social media, even now I'm also making manga in one of the comic web applications. The work I've made hasn't been officially entered, so I don't get any income from it, just seeing my work being read by other people already makes me happy" (JN, 24).

JN also said that since childhood, he has liked to read comics and draw. His passion for comics is what makes him often draw in books, where at that time, the drawings he made were only plagiarized from existing drawings. Along with increasing drawing skills and technological developments that made it easier for JN to channel his hobbies, JN then began to draw his characters and began to publish his work. Departing from his hobby, what JN does can be seen as a form of affective work, where the feedback that JN wants is not material but satisfaction in the form of appreciation from readers.

From the experience of JN and ND, it can be seen that they use their respective social media to promote their work. In addition, their participation in the illustrator community also provides advantages where they can exchange experiences, discuss and provide input and evaluation of each other's work, exchange information such as doujinshi competitions or work related to manga and anime, and support each other. With current technological developments, fanart and doujinshi artists can easily get feedback from consumers where consumers can voluntarily submit their assessments through the comments column. This is different from before the existence of social media, where artists had to go to their consumers and conduct special research to get ratings from consumers.

The activities carried out by ND and JN, which are mostly carried out through the internet, illustrate what Terranova calls free labor. Activities carried out by artists where they create websites (social media) to publish their works, participate in an online community or discussion forums, and other activities on the internet have made them one of the free laborers. Terranova also explains that the free labor of the internet continues to produce immanent value in the mainstream of networked society. The activity of making fanart or doujinshi images carried out by ND and JN where they are not looking for commercial profits but only looking for satisfaction is under the definition of free labor according to Terranova, which is a working condition that is not produced directly for the benefit of capital but still creates monetary value from knowledge, culture, and influence.

Before becoming free laborers by making doujinshi works, JN and ND were anime fans and almost followed anime works from time to time. Not only anime but both ND

and JN also said that they also collect manga both in Japanese and those that have been translated into Indonesian. In addition to channeling their hobbies, reading Japanese manga and watching anime can provide benefits, especially for those who are majoring in Japanese literature on their Japanese language skills, for example, such as the use of onomatopoeia, the use of slang, or the use of regional languages such as Kansai ben which are seldom studied in lecture. Not only that, but they also said that the depiction of the anime characters they watched gave them a distinct impression in addition to the story depicted in the film. Both of them also have characters that they like from the anime they watch, or what is commonly called waifu/husbando among anime fans. Love for this character often affects the lifestyle of otaku and makes otaku fanatics of the character. Many otakus will then spend their time surfing the virtual world to follow the development of information from the characters they like. Not only that, but they also become more consumptive by collecting items related to the character or visiting places with the theme of the character.

> "Usually, I draw fanart based on the characters I like. So for example, if I like character A, I will draw A with a little retouch, or sometimes I add something like that, so my drawings are mostly inspired by that character, although there are also original drawings that I made myself" (ND, 26).

JN and ND watch anime not only because of the story but also because of the characters they like. This is a form of what Azuma calls database consumption, where otaku, as database consumers, do not focus on the narrative of the work but rather on the elements that trigger an affective response. In addition, as explained by Azuma, in database consumption, fans can acquire, add, modify, or even expand database elements that can trigger affective (moe) through the creation of works. This work is then referred to as a derivative work. In this case, what ND does by making fanart images, or what JN does by making doujinshi works is an affective response to the manga or anime they watch to produce derivative works. The existence of derivative works triggered by this affective response has provided an overview of the theory of otaku sexuality presented by Tamaki Saito, where otaku make anime characters as objects of their love, and then attachment to these characters will encourage them to create fan art or doujinshi to develop characters they like. Tamaki also explained that there are differences in sexuality between female and male otaku, where female sexuality towards affective objects is a desire to be, while males tend to desire to have these objects. The difference in the sexuality of male and female otaku can be seen in the genre of anime they watch or the work they make.

> "I used to be a fujoshi, but now I'm trying to stop being a fujoshi. I like yaoi stories because I don't know why the seeing romance between men is sometimes interesting and funny. Moreover, there

are uke and seme characters, and sometimes I see the soft character of uke or sometimes even being described as feminine. Moreover, like the omegaverse story where there is a male character who can get pregnant and have children, it's interesting in my opinion…. Even though I like yaoi stories, when it comes to drawing fanart with the yaoi genre, I rarely, at least only draw one of the characters from the pair. The problem here is that it's a bit taboo when it comes to homosexuals, let alone uploading them on social media, so I've never made a boy x boy picture." (ND, 26)

Based on ND's presentation, it can be seen that the BL (yaoi) genre is one of the favorite genres for female readers/viewers. Although they categorize themselves as fujoshi, many of them are heterosexual. For fujoshi, an abnormal romance between men gives a more attractive impression than a mainstream romance between women and men. In consuming BL works, fujoshi often allow themselves to fantasize; therefore, many of them describe that men can get pregnant and give birth, or in the BL genre, it is called Mpreg (male pregnancy). In contrast to ND, JN, who is a male, has his view of the genre he likes and the BL genre.

> "I like all genres, so there's no particular genre that I like... As for BL, I don't like it, I've never watched it either, because I'm a male, so I feel uncomfortable watching BL. I like hareem like that because there are a lot of kawaii female characters. ……. As for the works that I make, I usually prefer to make kawaii characters like that. The manga I'm making right now is in the romance genre." (JN, 24)

From the statements of ND and JN, it can be seen that there are differences in sexuality concerning the genres of the anime they watch and the works they produce. ND as a woman, tends to enjoy the yaoi genre of anime because the characters in the story have been able to attract her attention. Although he likes the yaoi genre, in doing his work, ND cannot express his love for the genre because of environmental influences on homosexual issues. Meanwhile, JN, who likes kawaii characters, can put these characters into his work. JN can also publish his work in the romance genre with kawaii characters that can be accepted or even liked by most readers.

VI. CONCLUSION

Japanese culture continues to develop and receive attention not only in Asia but also in Europe. This can be seen from the sales of manga and anime both in Japan and abroad, which continue to increase. Not only that, but fans of Japanese culture are also growing along with popular works such as manga and anime that are increasingly rampant. Fans of manga and anime, often called otaku, often form social interactions between them to obtain and share information and expand the work they consume. Not only that, but the consumption behavior of these fandoms also often produces

derivative works such as doujinshi, OVA, AMV, and other works they share with other fans. The derivative works that they produce are inseparable from their affective sense of the manga or anime they like. In doing these derivative works, otaku often works for free, where the work they produce is not for commercial purposes but only for personal enjoyment.

The research results also found that there are differences between derivative works produced by female otaku and male otaku. The difference in this work is inseparable from the sexuality of otaku, where the representation of anime characters can encourage their erotic needs as women or men. In creating works, female otaku is more likely to create characters where they want to be, while male otaku is more likely to create characters they wish to have and represent themselves as one of the characters considered kawaii or cute.

In addition, in this study, it can be seen that otaku plays a considerable role in the anime industry. Otaku act as consumers who are passionate consumers of manga and anime and are willing to spend their time and money to buy and collect characters they like, which can drive sales of manga, anime, and merchandise related to anime. Not only as fanatical consumers, but otaku also act as producers who work for free by creating derivative works that they distribute both within and outside the fandom. The distribution of derivative works carried out by otaku on social media is indirectly a form of promotion of anime or manga to their followers. In this case, the anime industry has the advantage of not having to pay for them. Meanwhile, the benefit for otaku is recognition/appreciation for their existence in the process of 'consuming' purely anime products, and in turn, they become actors involved in the production process of the derivative products they produce and can be accepted by the broader community rather than being paid for their 'hard work.'

REFERENCES

1. Ani, Y. A. (2018). *Fujoshi* Ala Indonesia dalam Penciptaan Komik. Invensi, 3(1).
2. Azuma, H. (2009). *Otaku*: Japan's Database Animals. University of Minnesota Press.
3. Brenner, R. E. (2007). Understanding *Manga* and *Anime*. London: Libraries Unlimited.
4. Craig, T. (2017). Cool Japan: Case Studies from Japan's Cultural and Creative Industries. BlueSky Publishing.
5. Creswell, John. W. (2013). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Method Approaches. California: Sage Publishing, Inc.
6. Dewi, P.A.(-). Budaya *Manga* di Kalangan Remaja Indonesia. Academia.edu.
7. Fast, K., Örnebring, H., & Karlsson, M. (2016). Metaphors of Free Labor: A Typology of Unpaid Work in The Media Sector. Media, Culture & Society, 38(7), 963-978.
8. Galbraith, P. W. (2014). *Otaku* Sexuality in Japan. Routledge handbook of sexuality studies in East Asia, pp. 223-235.
9. Hernandez, A. D. (2018). The *Anime* Industry, Networks of Participation, and Environments for the Management of Content in Japan. Arts. Vol. 7(42).
10. Ito, K. (2005). A History of *Manga* in The Context of Japanese Culture and Society. Journal of Popular Culture, 38(3): 456-475.
11. Ito, M., Okabe, D., & Tsuji, I. (Eds.). (2012). Fandom Unbound: *Otaku* Culture in A Connected World. Yale University Press.
12. Iwabuchi, K. (2002). Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
13. Khaled, P.D. & K. Iskandar . (2022). In-App Purchase in Japanese Free-To-Play Mobile Game: The Motivation of Indonesian Players. Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal), 5(1), Page: 6393-6405.
14. Kinsella, S. (1998). Japanese Subculture in The 1990s: *Otaku* and The Amateur *Manga* Movement. Journal of Japanese Studies, 289-316.
15. Moleong, L.J. (2005). Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
16. Moon, M. (2013). *Otaku* for Queer Theory and Media Theory. Criticism, 55(1), 147-154.
17. Newitz, A. (1994). *Anime Otaku*: Japanese Animation Fans Outside Japan. Bad Subjects, 13(11), 1-14.
18. Redmond, D. (2007). *Anime* and East Asian Culture: Neon Genesis Evangelion. Quarterly Review of Film and Video, 24(2): 183.
19. Rush, A. (2009). *Otaku* Creations: The Participatory Culture of Fansubbing. Kinephanos Journal, 1, 1-17.
20. Saito, T. (2011). Beautiful Fighting Girl. University of Minnesota Press.
21. Sone, Y. (2014). Canted Desire: *Otaku* Performance in Japanese Popular Culture. Cultural Studies Review, 20(2), 196-222.
22. Terranova, T. (2000). Free labor: Producing Culture for The Digital Economy. Social text, 18(2), 33-58.
23. Wang, P.T. (2010). Affective *Otaku* Labor: The Circulation and Modulation of Affect in The *Anime* Industry. City University of New York: ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.
24. Welin, A. (2014). The Meaning and Image of *Otaku* in Japanese Society, and its Change Over Time.

Website Reference:

1. *Anime*cons.com. (2019). Otakon 2019 Information. (https://*anime*cons.com/*event*s/info/11372/otakon-2019)

2. Ennichisai. (2019). Ennichisai 2019 The Biggest Japanese Culture *Event* in Indonesia. (https://www.ennichisaiblokm.com/)

3. GatraCom. (2019). Gim Honkai Impact 3 Ramaikan Ennichisai 2019. (https://www.gatra.com/news-423649/millennials/category-53-Olahraga.html)

4. HON.jp. (2019). Comic market in 2018 will grow by 1.9% year-on-year to 441.4 billion yen in both paper and electronic formats. Research by Publishing Science Research Institute (https://hon.jp/news/1.0/0/21536).

5. HWH Executive Consultant Limited. (2020). 2020 8th Taipei International Comics & Animation Festival. (https://www.hwhgroup.com.tw/en-us/achievement/3/45)

6. JETRO. (2005). Japan Animation Industry Trends. Industrial Report. JETRO Japan Economic Monthly. http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/reports/market/content/

7. Liputan6.com. (2022). Mengunjungi Festival Komik dan Animasi ke-10 di Taipei. (https://www.liputan6.com/global/read/4883015/foto-mengunjungi-festival-komik-dan-animasi-ke-10-di-taipei?page=6)

8. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. (2006). A New Look at Cultural Diplomacy: A Call to Japan's Cultural Practitioners (Speech by Minister for Foreign Affairs Taro Aso at Digital Hollywood University). (https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/fm/aso/speech0604-2.html).

9. Pham, P. (2021). Representations and Reality: Defining the Ongoing Relationship between Anime and Otaku Cultures.

10. Press Advantage. (2018). Otakon Convention in Washington, DC attended by TransMedia Powerhouse-Edmond, OK. (https://www.pressadvantage.com/story/21613-otakon-convention-in-washington-dc-attended-by-transmedia-powerhouse-edmond-ok)

11. Scanlon, C. (2002). Young Japanese Go for Go. BBC News. (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/2164532.stm)

12. Taiwan News. (2021). Mixed feelings at Taipei's Comics and Animation Festival. (https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/4121779)

13. The Association of Japanese Animations (AJA). (2020). Anime Industry Report 2020 Summary. (https://aja.gr.jp/english/japan-*anime*-data)

14. Upstation Media. (2019). Ennichishai 2019: Event Jepang Tahunan yang Kian Meriah!. (https://www.upstation.asia/ennichishai-2019-event-jepang-tahunan-yang-kian-meriah/)

15. Wang, P. T. (2010). Affective Otaku Labor: The Circulation and Modulation of Affect in The Anime Industry. City University of New York.

16. Washington DC. Cool Cosplay, Art Displays & Other Reasons to Attend Otakon 2019 in Washington, DC. (https://washington.org/visit-dc/otakon-*cosplay*-washington-dc)