

Scanlated vs. Physical Japanese Comic “Manga”

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Abstract:- This research aimed to study the influence of scanlated manga on physical manga purchasing intention in Denpasar, Bali. To answer the research objective, this research used purposive accidental sampling and data was obtained through semi structured interview that was analyzed through data reduction, display and data interpretation. The result of this research was scanlated manga affecting physical manga purchasing intention negatively in Denpasar, Bali. In addition, the factors affecting consumer preference in this context were price, product availability, consumer hobby, and the most affecting factor was manga release time. As for the author suggestions are for the next researcher to research the factors affecting consumer manga preference with quantitative research method to find out the precise influence in numbers for each factor and for the publisher and bookstore to shorten physical manga release time. The other alternative is to be more focused on certain favourite genre from consumers like fantasy for instance to fasten the release or more focused on one shot story so that the consumer does not need to wait for

the next volume. In addition, if the copyright law has been changed by Japanese government and become more flexible then publisher can cooperate with the scanlation group to fasten the release legally because in this era, online based business tends to develop better than the traditional one.

Keywords:- Japanese Comic; Manga; Scanlated Japanese Comic; Physical Japanese Comic; Purchasing Intention; Bali.

I. INTRODUCTION

The author saw the similarities between scanlated manga and physical manga as substitute goods. Theoretically speaking substitute goods sales affect each other negatively, when a demand for goods increase then the demand for the substitute goods will decrease. Readers prefer reading manga online than buying it officially because reading manga online is free of charge and online manga releases manga faster than the one officially published [1].

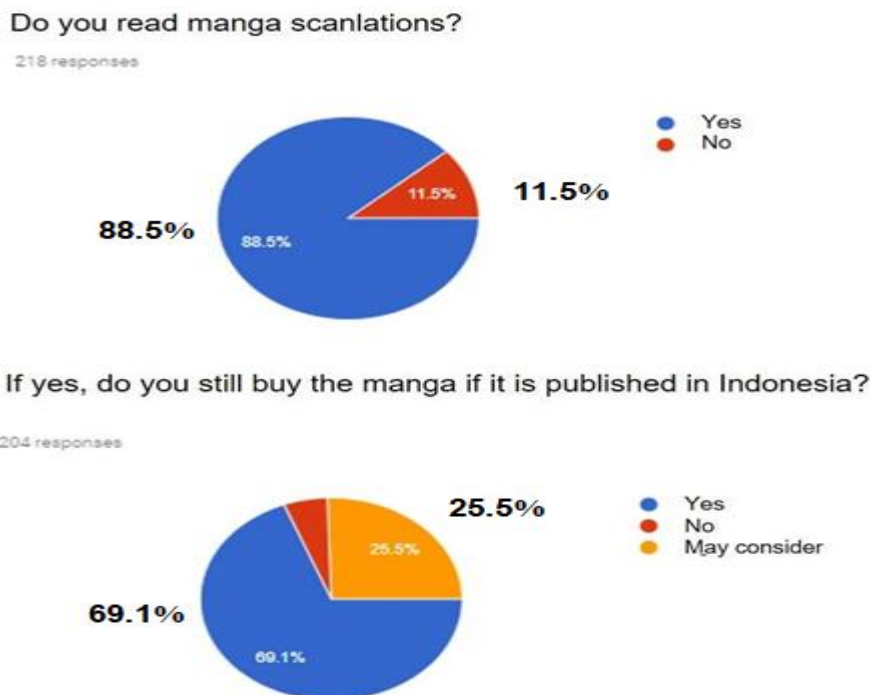


Fig 1:- Scanlation Influence
Source:- KAORI Nusantara Manga Readers Survey in Zacky Dhaffa article

While it is logical if scanlated manga decreased physical manga consumption and the purchasing intention, seems the opposite effect is happening. According to KAORI Nusantara survey, scanlated manga won't affect physical manga consumption negatively instead, the reader will know more manga from the scanlated one and will buy the physical one when it is licensed and published in Indonesia [2]. KAORI Nusantara respondents are centered in Java, thus the author is trying to find out about the similar phenomena in Bali. Based on the explanation, the point of issue in this research is how does scanlated manga affecting physical manga purchasing intention in Denpasar, Bali?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Manga

Manga is known by most people as Japanese comic when actually on terms of language, manga refers to “comic or cartoon” which is not only limited to Japanese but all kind of comic. People refer it to Japanese comic because its original word is from Japan and Japanese comic has its own characteristic that differ it from other comics. And so it becomes habitual to people to refer this term especially for Japanese comic. Manga is a deeply intertextual medium, combining language and visuals [3]. In other words, manga (Japanese comic) is a form of art which combine language and visual or text and illustration aiming wide range of age from children to adult.

B. Scanlated Manga

Scanlations are the scanning, translation and editing of comic from one language into another. The term scanlation refers to scanning, translating, editing and distributing manga freely and illegally online as done by traditional groups of fans or scanlators [4]. In short, scanlated manga is a scanned and translated manga by groups of fans or scanlators. Scanlation group (the group who make scanlated manga) also manage the editing and distribution of their own projects (manga titles).

C. Physical Manga

Physical manga is printed manga released by a publisher and can be found in bookstore. Physical manga is an official or legal manga that translated by a professional translator. Even so, physical manga titles are limited because it needs to be licensed first in the country before translated and published.

D. Purchasing Intention

Purchasing intention is an intention that appear while purchasing create a motivation which is recorded in mind and become a very strong act that will eventually actualize the thing in mind when a consumer has to fulfill his/her needs [5]. Purchase intention is the preference of consumer to buy the product or service [6]. In another words, purchase intention has another aspect that the consumer will purchase a product after evaluation. Decision making about purchase

is affected by the group in selection procedure of a brand for known products. Factors affecting consumer purchasing intention vary from consumer itself for instance, demographic, consumer behavior, consumer perception towards product quality, previous experience, customer knowledge or from the product for example, product packaging, celebrity endorsement, price, product quality, brand (brand name, brand image, etc.), service quality, advertisement and many more.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

The research will be conducted in Denpasar, Bali. The reasons why the author chooses Denpasar as the research location are consist of: (1) Denpasar is the capital city in Bali so the education, technology development, etc. are guaranteed, (2) The people in capital city are most likely more common with online activity, and thus the people will be more common with scanlated manga. (3) There are well-known bookstores (Gramedia) in Denpasar that sell lots of manga and so the place that provide physical manga are also guaranteed.

The data will be obtained through semi structured interview with informant. The informant in this research is chosen with purposive accidental technique which consists of the readers of both types of manga, PT Gramedia supervisor in Level 21 Mall, and an admin from a certain scanlation group. Data will be analyzed through data reduction, display and data interpretation and the validity will be checked using source triangulation.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Num.	Category	Content
1.	Manga consumption	Current manga consumption
		Manga preference
		Scanlated manga influence on physical manga purchasing intention
2.	Factors affecting consumer preference	Price
		Translation quality
		Release time

Table 1:- Data Coding

The interview results are in Bahasa but for better understanding, the author translates it into English.

Readers start reading manga from physical manga. However their consumption in nowadays have changed and the majority are more focused on scanlated manga. Even so, two out of five informants still read both types of manga and those statements are explained as follows:

Num.	Informant	Statement
1	Indra	<p>“Read both of it, sometimes i buy the offline in my spare time and sometimes i read online version while having a spare time at works”</p> <p>“The truth is i prefer offline manga. Because it can be consume anytime, anywhere for instance it can relieve boredom in a secluded place. It’s hard to find connection in a secluded place.”</p>
2	Agata	<p>“Still read both of it”</p> <p>“... sometimes i buy offline manga if the online one is not available but the offline one is already available”</p>

Table 2:- Research Result 1

While Agata buy physical manga when scanlated manga chapter availability is incomplete, Indra on the other hand prefers physical manga for the efficiency to consume it anytime and anywhere once he has obtained it without being bothered by unavailable connection.

Aside from it, those statements shows that two out of five still read both types of manga, however only one who prefer physical manga over scanlated manga. So in short, all informants in reader category consume scanlated manga. Thus, physical manga popularity, consumption and purchasing intention are less than scanlated manga. This condition is proven through the occurrence in a bookstore and a scanlation group as follows:

Numb.	Informant	Statement
1	Gramedia’s supervisor	<p>“...from the revenue, there is a decrease in our comic section. Indeed most of it is dominated by the Japanese comic however as for the online media development as the caused or decrease in reading power or purchasing power is unclear, but surely there is a significance drop...”</p> <p>“The drastic decrease has occurred for more than 3 years, as for now it still happen but not so obvious... Gramedia in 2006-2009 sold 1000 copies of Conan in a month in a branch, however in nowadays selling 200-300 copies in a month are good enough. It decreased for approximately 60% or more...”</p> <p>“...it is possibly caused by online manga moreover the kids in nowadays are used to it, if it was in my era they still prefer offline...”</p>
2	Scanlation group	“Manga readers increase daily... around 100 persons for a week...”

Table 3:- Research Result 2

Therefore those statements show physical manga consumption decrement and scanlated manga increment. The cause of the drastic downfall on physical manga can’t be ensured by the supervisor. However, readers’ statement and the fact of scanlated manga development show that scanlated manga is mainly the cause of it. The millennial society are used to digital technology and prefer practical things, therefore scanlated manga is more suitable for them.

Scanlated manga decreased physical manga purchasing intention. Thus the connection between both types of manga is the same as substitute goods theory. Substitute goods theory is goods that can substitute other goods function [7]. In this theory, substitute goods affecting each other negatively. Informants’ opinion concerning scanlated manga influence on physical manga purchasing intention.

Num.	Informant	Statement
1	Indra	“They complement each other, person preference is different. When there is no connection and i want to read it I can read offline manga while if I look for the update i can read online manga, one of them can't be removed. Positive impact because it complement each other.”
2	Agata	“Still consume offline manga although there is online manga.” “Compared to before it's not really, but lately it decreased since the long released.”
3	Yoga	“Yes, it decreased.”
4	Widnya	“Decrease, one of it is caused by financial factor because i am a college student and don't have a job.”
5	Oka	“Drastic decrement...”

Table 4:- Research Result 3

Informants are being asked about their opinion concerning scanlated manga influence on their physical manga purchasing intention. Most of them experience physical manga consumption decrement since knowing scanlated manga. The informants are chosen with the category that has read both types of manga therefore they clearly know each type advantages and disadvantages. And so, there are certain factors affecting consumer product switching that will be explained later according to the research findings. In conclusion, physical manga

consumption and purchasing intention decrease because of scanlated manga.

➤ *Price*

Manga price increase from time to time for instance, Gramedia bookstore manga price has reached Rp 25.000., therefore hereby the author explained both the readers and Gramedia's supervisor opinion regarding the price effect on physical manga purchasing intention:

Num.	Informant	Statement
1	Indra	“Some comics that I used to bought just like that have been stopped, I only buy the story that I follow continuously” “Price has a slight effect but once I like it, I'd buy it even if it's expensive”
2	Agata	“Still buying, I usually buy rare comics”
3	Yoga	“Price doesn't have any affect for comic's lovers, but it does for me.”
4	Widnya	“I don't really know, in my opinion it may affecting because if the price increase then a person tends to be reluctant except for the fanatic one in which they will buy it even if the price increase.”
5	Oka	“Not for me, because it's long and rarely published therefore price increment is normal”
6	Gramedia's supervisor	“From my observation there is no case in which price affecting purchasing intention. They mostly complaint if there is price increment without notice. Until now there is no complaint from the price increment itself...we also explain and consumers understand everything moreover if basic food price increase”

Table 5:- Research Result 4

Price has an effect on consumer purchasing intention, however the effect is measured through informants answer in which some of them are not bothered by the fact that physical manga price keep increasing. The consumer is still willing to buy the story that they like, even so consumer who prefer to consume scanlated manga is influenced by other bigger factor. From the statement above, it can be concluded that price has a slight effect on physical manga purchasing intention. The phenomenon is the same as the demand law in which the higher the product price the fewer the demand for

that product [7]. Demand law used while assuming that other factors are constant (*ceteris paribus*).

➤ *Product Quality (Translation)*

The product quality used in this research as the main indicator is translation quality because there is a difference in scanlated and physical manga translator. Scanlated manga is done by non-professional translator meanwhile physical manga is done by professional translator. Thus hereby the author showed informants respond to this fact:

Num.	Informant	Statement
1	Indra	<p>“Some words that should be censored are sometimes inserted by the fans. Meanwhile, Elex Media Komputindo has censor. Translations are not that different, we got the point.”</p> <p>“...sometimes the translation is unrelated and rude comments are still inserted. It tends to happen on the online one because offline manga already has their published rights so the grammar have been considered, checked, and fit even though there is an unmatched part it still tolerable”</p>
2	Agata	<p>“Sometimes the online manga translation is incompatible, when they mean A but stated B instead. Meanwhile, offline manga has no problem. Online manga has more missed”</p>
3	Yoga	<p>“Offline is better, because online manga is done by group therefore it’s still raw one, they take from the English version first and then translate it to Indonesian. Meanwhile, offline manga are done by expert editors therefore the translation is better.”</p> <p>“No, because I can read Indonesian and English translation for online manga, so if the translation is not good enough I can read English version.”</p>
4	Widnya	<p>“It depends on the understanding, because different language can cause different plot understanding.”</p>
5	Oka	<p>“Offline translation is better, it lacks on longer release time. Online manga translation is also good enough though it’s not as good as offline manga.”</p>
6	Scanlation group	<p>“...so far the responds are positive, there has never been any complaint concerning translation quality or typeset.”</p>

Table 6:- Research Result 5

The product quality used in this research as the main indicator is translation quality because there is a difference in scanlated and physical manga translator. Scanlated manga is done by non-professional translator meanwhile physical manga is done by professional translator. Informants are aware of the fact that scanlated manga translation is not as good as physical manga, even so it doesn’t change their preference about scanlated and physical manga. Informants accept the fact that scanlated manga translation is sometimes ambiguous, some of them also find other alternative which is to read in another language. Thus they still consume

scanlated manga because translation quality is not the main reason. In conclusion, product quality doesn’t affect consumer purchasing intention and it is the opposite from the fact that product quality has significant and positive influence on purchasing intention [8].

➤ *Release Time*

Other factor that may influence consumer preference is manga release time. Informants opinions about manga release time affecting their preference are consist of:

Num.	Informant	Statement
1	Indra	“Online is more update because it is publish per issue and keep pace with the original while offline takes longer”
2	Agata	“I have, and I often do it because usually the chapter ends in the exciting part. Waiting for the physical is way too long.”
3	oga	“Because online manga update faster, while offline manga need editor to translate it into Indonesian thus it updates longer”
4	Widnya	“Yes definitely. For example online manga release for a week or more, however in the bookstore it needs 2-3 weeks.”
5	Oka	“It’s more practical, waiting for offline manga is too long. As for online manga it release every week...”
6	Gramedia’s supervisor	“It often happens mainly on impatient people. There was also a complaint saying I already obtained it, i obtained the online version...”

Table 7:- Research Result 6

Manga release time has big impact on consumer purchasing intention and preference regarding the type of manga. Most of them decide to consume scanlated manga because physical manga release longer. Consumer feels impatient to wait for the next release for weeks or months and they prefer practical and instant goods, Gramedia’s supervisor explained that impatient consumer often criticize the bookstore for the late release while the complaint for other factors didn’t occur. It shows how big the impact of manga release time is. While some of them consume scanlated manga first and then will buy the physical manga, the majority choose to read scanlated manga only.

➤ Other Factors

There are some other factors which affecting consumer decision and some of it are:

- Prefer physical manga for collection because he loves to collect manga.
- Prefer scanlated manga because scanlated manga availability is assured while physical manga availability depends on the editor decision.
- Prefer scanlated manga because scanlated manga is simple, no need to go to the bookstore and ended up not finding the book.
- Some readers still prefer physical manga because they like the physical form, and easy to attain.

According to the informants, copyright infringement doesn’t affect consumer preference and some of it didn’t aware of the fact. Meanwhile, scanlation group has put notice in their credit page that tells the readers to support the *mangaka* by buying the physical manga in the closest bookstore to avoid another disadvantage on the *mangaka* and bookstore.

V. CONCLUSION

Scanlated manga affects physical Manga purchasing intention in Denpasar, Bali negatively. According to readers preference and their purchasing intention also supported by the information from Gramedia bookstore and certain scanlation group in which physical manga consumption have decreased rapidly while scanlated manga consumption increase rapidly and consumer purchasing intention for physical manga has also decrease due to scanlated manga existence and the faster release time.

In addition, this research found that the factors affecting consumer decision on consuming certain type of manga consist of price, release time, product availability, and consumer hobby. Meanwhile the illegality and product quality do not affect consumer decision. The main factor affecting consumer preference on scanlated manga consumption is the faster release time.

As for the author suggestions are for the next researcher to research the factors affecting consumer manga preference with quantitative research method to find out the precise influence in numbers for each factor and for the publisher and bookstore to shorten physical manga release time because based on this research, the other factors only have slight impact compared to the manga release time. The other alternative is to be more focused on certain favourite genre from consumers like fantasy for instance to fasten the release or more focused on one shot story so that the consumer does not need to wait for the next volume. In addition, if the copyright law has been changed by Japanese government and become more flexible then publisher can cooperate with the scanlation group to fasten the release legally because in this era, online based business tends to develop better than the traditional one.

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