

# Excessive Consumption of K-pop Merchandise and its Environmental Impacts: A Survey of Fans' Opinions

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## Abstract

K-pop has gained global popularity in recent decades. The K-pop phenomenon is characterized by a sense of loyalty to the artist/group. The close affinity and loyalty formed through such means influences consumers of their music to derive personal satisfaction from purchasing K-pop-related merchandise, attending fan meeting events, and supporting album sales of their favorite artist/group. Naturally, this concept relates to a “disposable culture,” because excessive purchase ultimately results in the disposal of products, thus leading to substantial environmental impacts. The present study examined K-pop fans' excessive consumption and their opinions on its implications on the environment. Overall, findings revealed that despite awareness of the excessive nature of their consumption patterns, most fans engaged in purchasing an average of 14 albums of their favorite artists. Primary motivators of this behavior included expression of loyalty to the K-pop group, collecting memorabilia such as posters and photocards that accompany the actual album, and increasing changes of participating in fan events. Respondents' recommendations to reduce the environmental impact of excessive production and disposal of products were also linked to fulfilling these motivations without having to purchase physical albums. These findings suggest possible policy implications and marketing strategies to minimize resource waste and alleviate the disposable culture. One major avenue is for companies to utilize fan loyalty to support environmental awareness rather than using it as a method to merely increase sales and profits.

**Keywords:** K-pop, disposable culture, carbon emission, fan loyalty