



Parasocial Versus Public Figure on Tiktok Social Media: A Psychoanalytic Perspective

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Abstract

Social media has become a crucial part of everyday life, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, which has led to a shift towards virtual interactions. This research examines the parasocial relationship between fans and public figures on TikTok, focusing on Major Teddy Indra Wijaya, who is known for his popularity on TikTok as Mr. Prabowo Subianto's personal aide. Using a descriptive qualitative research design with a case study approach, this research involves in-depth analysis and careful observation of specific cases to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Data was collected through detailed observations and in-depth interviews with TikTok users who admire Major Teddy. The case study method allows for an integrative and thorough examination of the individuals involved. The data was analyzed using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic perspective, focusing on the concepts of Id, Ego, and Superego. The results indicate that individuals involved in parasocial relationships may experience negative impacts such as obsessive behavior and stress from negative comments by other users on the platform. These findings highlight the importance of understanding and managing parasocial relationships wisely to prevent potential psychological harm to the individuals involved.

Keywords: Parasocial Relationships, Parasocial Interactions, ID, Ego, Superego, Tiktok.

INTRODUCTION

In 2020, the world experienced a global COVID-19 crisis, this was officially declared by the WHO (World Health Organization), precisely on March 11, 2020, and this has become a widespread challenge for individuals throughout the world (Hua & Shaw, 2020). The government then issued a policy to stay at home with the aim of stopping the spread of the Covid-19 virus. This can limit space for activities outside the home by implementing social distancing, quarantine, PSBB (Large-Scale Social Restrictions), and even closing certain areas which results in

communication restrictions (Wulandari et al., 2021). With these communication restrictions, daily life has significantly transformed, with many activities shifting from physical interaction to virtual engagement. Virtual communication is naturally connected to the use of the internet as the primary medium for sending information and facilitating interaction (Fathurrohman et al., 2017). With this significant transformation, social media users are increasing, and as a result there is also an increase in dependence on communication technology, especially social media platforms such as TikTok (Gratia et al., 2022). Increasing dependence on social media will make users consume all forms of entertainment and information presented by social media, especially TikTok. The content presented can include news information, challenges, dance, lip-sync, tutorials, comedy, and so on.

The broad impact of current communication technology has reached various aspects of human life. Social media, nowadays, is considered a valuable tool for all groups, including political figures (Supriyanto & Muryanto, 2024). This has advantages and disadvantages. Smart use can generate positive support, but inappropriate use has the potential to damage the reputation of those involved in politics (Ansari, 2013). The use of social media during the 2024 political campaigns has become an unavoidable reality. According to the We Are Social report, in January 2023, Indonesia will have 167 million active users on social media platforms, this figure covers 60.4% of Indonesia's total population. The role of social media in the 2024 general election is increasingly important, especially among young voters (Rosidin et al., 2024). On average, social media use is quite significant among generation Z and millennial groups in Indonesia. According to the Statista report, the largest number of social media users in Indonesia are in the 25-34 year age group, followed by those aged 18-24 years.

Candidates use social media to campaign, for example, on the social media TikTok which is currently widely used by Indonesian people, social media content is divided into two categories, namely creative content and success team content, which displays the activities of candidate pairs (Qi et al., 2024; Schmid et al., 2024). These two types of content reflect the candidates' goals and intentions in their efforts to achieve victory in the election. Apart from functioning as a backdrop for political parties, identity politics greatly influences advertising creativity through this content. This approach attracts attention and builds personal branding efforts (Moekahar et al., 2022). The campaign was carried out on TikTok social media because it can cover all levels of Indonesian society. Apart from that, TikTok social media is the main means for voters to get to know the presidential candidates they will choose.

In this research, the author chose TikTok social media as a reference in obtaining all forms of information related to the research that will be conducted because TikTok social media is one of the most popular social media platforms, especially among the younger generation because it has content that is easy to consume in short video format, p. This makes it easier for users to consume content quickly, increases user interaction and engagement with sophisticated algorithms so that it can display content that matches user interests, increases engagement and makes users feel connected by creating content, through comments, direct messages and duet

features so that they can creating closer and more personal relationships with public figures. Apart from that, TikTok social media provides a broad platform for its users to express themselves through various challenges, trends and creativity that can trigger parasocial relationships.

Public figures those who are widely known by the public, either because of achievements in a particular field, professional success, or fame in the media, fall into the category of public figures (Devos et al., 2024). They often attract attention and have a significant impact in shaping views, social trends and cultural norms. The label "public figure" covers a wide range of influential individuals, from artists to celebrities (Sespiani et al., 2021).

Parasocial relationships with public figures are also explained in research by Adhara Suwanta and Novi Kurnia with the title "Parasocial Phenomena and Consumerism in Fandom (Case Study of Fan Parasocial Relationships and Consumerism in NCTzen Fandom in Indonesia)" with the aim of analyzing one-way relationships between fans who have growing and related to consumerism in the NCTzen fandom. The theory used is the concept of Parasocial Interaction by Horton and Wohl, which was further developed by Tuckachinsky and Stever. This research uses an interpretive approach through the case study method, by collecting data through in-depth interviews, social media observations, and related documents. The data was then analyzed using Knapp's relationship development concept. The results of this research show that interacting with public figures can form parasocial relationships characterized by the audience's perception of closeness to the public figure, often leading to feelings of closeness that are not reciprocated. The difference can be seen, namely in the use of different theories, this research also discusses consumerism in fandom, while this research discusses parasocial relationships on social media as well as the impact on fans' psychological conditions. The data obtained from this research was analyzed using Knapp's concept of relationship development. For this research, the data obtained will be analyzed using psychoanalytic theory by Sigmund Freud.

Based on all the forms presented on social media, each user can have a different point of view, opinion, or perspective about what they see on social media. From this phenomenon, parasocial relationships will be formed. Parasocial relationships or parasocial interactions according to (Yuksel & Labrecque, 2016), Social interaction through social media platforms makes it possible to express facial expressions, body language, and verbal cues in online communities. Parasocial relationships include unidirectional interactions between audience members and media figures. The main characteristic of parasocial interaction is its unidirectional nature, where the audience feels close to the media figure without any reciprocation, while parasocial relationships involve a deeper emotional bond with the media figure even though it remains unidirectional. (Pane, 2022)

Regarding parasocial interactions Mehrunnisa, Salma Hanan has conducted research with the title "Parasocial Interaction Between Idols and Their Fans." The aim of the research is to explore the basic understanding of parasocial interactions with SEVENTEEN members via social media, thereby creating a feeling of closeness to their most liked idols. This research uses a qualitative

research approach by collecting data through in-depth interviews and observations using the absorption-addiction theory explained by McCutcheon and Houran. The research shows that fans consistently form emotional connections with their idols and consider them to be significant individuals in their daily lives. When compared with this research, there are differences in the theory used.

Social media is the most influential forum in forming parasocial relationships. The persona displayed on social media can trigger someone to have an interest at a reasonable level that does not interfere with life and can disrupt normal life. Once this parasocial relationship has been formed fans feel like taking action to satisfy the feelings they experience and express their imagination in various forms, for example, sending personal messages via social media, commenting on every post of a public figure who is their idol or even creating content in the form of a short video of the idol with a status message. as if the fan has a close relationship with his idol.

Positive parasocial relationships may include closeness and friendship, while negative parasocial relationships may involve negative emotions such as hostility and hatred. Positive and strong parasocial relationships have the potential to develop into worship of public figures, while very negative parasocial relationships can show strong feelings of antipathy and hatred towards certain public figures (Astagini et al., 2017).

Regarding Parasocial Relationships on Social Media, it has been strengthened by Afitia Sagita and Donie Kadewardana in research entitled "Parasocial Relationships on Social Media (Study on Fandom Army on Twitter)". interviews with 5 (five) informants. This research uses Weaver's concept regarding the level of intimacy which has four factors, namely repeated interaction, high self-disclosure, high interdependence, and high emotional involvement. The main concern in previous research was the parasocial behavior of a fan community of BTS, a boy band from Korea, namely ARMY. When compared with this research, namely Parasocial Relations between Fans and public figures on TikTok Social Media. Psychoanalytic perspective with the subject, namely (Major Teddy) using qualitative research methods with a descriptive approach and conducting interviews with two informants, Bella and Bira. The social media platform used in the previous research above was Twitter, while in this research the social media TikTok was used.

On TikTok social media, many fans create short video content about Major Teddy Indra Wijaya, he is the personal aide of Mr Prabowo Subianto, the Indonesian presidential candidate. Born in Manado on April 14 1989, Teddy Indra Wijaya, also known as Major Teddy, comes from a Muslim family. He completed his secondary education at SMA Taruna Nusantara and continued his studies at the Military Academy, graduating in 2011. In addition, he attended training at Ranger School in the United States - a leading program of the US Army which aims to prepare graduates to serve in the Ranger Regiment to -75. As a Captain, he was awarded the ranger tab reflecting his outstanding qualifications as part of this elite force.

During his tenure at Ranger School, Major Teddy was part of a group of 412 students from the US Army and six international students representing Ukraine, Saudi Arabia, Germany, the Netherlands, Canada and Indonesia. After being promoted to First Lieutenant, Major Teddy served as assistant aide to President Jokowi before becoming personal aide to Mr Prabowo Subianto. His role as aide to President Jokowi lasted from 2014 to 2019 during the beginning of Jokowi's leadership (Novitasari, 2024).

Recently, his name has continued to rise and is searched for on various social media and also continues to get public attention, because of his handsome face with a dashing and alert body posture, this has attracted the attention of the public, especially women. Major Teddy Indra Wijaya is popular because he often appears in various TikTok videos during the campaign for candidate pair number 02, namely Prabowo-Gibran.

This research has a problem formulation, namely, what is the parasocial relationship with public figures on TikTok social media, what is the impact of parasocial relationships on psychological conditions. This research aims to determine parasocial relationships responding to public figures on TikTok social media, to determine the impact of parasocial relationships on psychological conditions.

METHODS

One form of descriptive qualitative research is research using a case study approach. This research method involves in-depth analysis and careful observation of specific cases, which can involve individuals or groups. Case study is a method used to gain an in-depth understanding of individuals by practicing it in an integrative and comprehensive manner. Researchers use this method to gather an in-depth understanding of the individuals being studied (Rahardjo & Gudnanto, Individual Understanding of Non-Test Techniques, 2013).

Case study data can be obtained from all parties concerned, in other words the data in this study was collected from several sources (Nawawi, 2005). A case study is a type of research that examines a limited system or one case or several cases that occurred in a certain period, by collecting comprehensive and detailed data from various trusted sources. According to Creswell (1988), data in case studies can be collected through interviews with informants, direct observation in the field, as well as analysis of existing documents, reports and audiovisual materials. (Default, 2017).

Researchers collected data by means of observation and interviews. Observations were carried out by searching for complex information on social media, especially on *Tik-Tok platform* and websites. Researchers conducted interviews with key informants who will hereafter be referred to as fans, namely Bella and accompanying informants who will also be referred to as other fans, namely Bira. The interviews were conducted to obtain information regarding the parasocial relationship that occurred with Major Teddy, who will hereinafter be referred to as a public figure, in social media TikTok. The analytical knife of this research uses the psychoanalytic

theory of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), regarding the personality system which focuses on the concept, (Id) the id influences a person's biological side to be able to give rise to impulsive thoughts without thinking about the consequences, (Ego) as a balance between the id and the world Real works with reason and influences a person's psychological side and (Super Ego) reflects moral values in the personality.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Parasocial Impulsiveness

This section will provide an explanation of the ID side of two fans who like a public figure. Parasocial impulsivity refers to Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, it can be seen that as the most basic system, the Id is like an instinct and only prioritizes the principle of pleasure (Aritonang & Heriyati, 2022). The id influences a person's biological side which can give rise to impulsive thoughts where this personality system tends to go ahead with what one wants without thinking about the consequences of the action.

The parasocial relationships that have been formed make fans feel deep admiration for the public figures they like. The attentive, alert, firm and agile personality these public figures show inspires and impresses them. His extraordinary achievements as the best graduate of the US Army Infantry School at Fort Benning, as well as various other achievements, further strengthen fans' respect and appreciation for this public figure.

An ID that prioritizes the principle of pleasure guides fans in carrying out impulsive actions, namely by creating a special TikTok account to share content about public figures they admire with the aim of expressing their likes and channeling their imagination regarding their likes with these public figures, without thinking about the consequences that will be received. at a later time.

Other fans are known to have carried out impulsive actions to prioritize their feelings of enjoyment by creating fictional scenario content without considering the rights to privacy and public image that will be formed, as well as the negative views of some people who think that this is too much.

Based on the statement above, it can be seen that both individuals are both impulsive in order to prioritize their feelings of pleasure and feelings of wanting to be connected or close to public figures they admire without thinking about the consequences that will occur in the future. The feeling of wanting to be close to idols can be a reason for fans to be impulsive (Fauziah, 2022).

Parasocial and Reality

Parasocial and reality which will be explained in accordance with the concept of Ego acts as a balance between the Id and the real world. It works with reason and influences a person's psychological side. This personality tends to follow the principle of reality to satisfy the demands of the Id but also tries to avoid negative consequences from society. The ego plays a role as a

catalyst in regulating and adapting the instinctive impulses of the Id, so that they suit the environment and convey them in the right way (Sanubarianto & Kembaren, 2020).

The Ego in the fan tries to balance the Id with reality, for example by resisting the urge not to hallucinate too deeply, such as the feeling of wanting to have a public figure he admires and returning to the reality that he is just a fan, the Ego personality system in the fan makes him realize that this is not may happen and will only lead to disappointment.

The Ego side of other fans can be seen in the way he creates fictional characters as partners for public figures in the Alternate Universe (AU) content he creates, instead of self-inserting or inserting his own personality into these characters. The fan's ego ensures that he is just a fan and content creator who creates content based on requests from fans of other public figures, and nothing more than that.

From the statement above, it can be seen that both fans have the desire to hallucinate with the feeling of wanting to own this public figure, but the Ego personality system within them tries to resist the urge to act and return to reality.

The Moral Role of Parasocial

Parasocial moral roles based on the Superego concept reflect morality in the personality, similar to conscience which differentiates between positive and negative values. The superego does not take reality into account because it is not involved in practical matters. The primary role of the Superego personality system is to control the drives of the Id and guide the Ego towards goals that are in harmony with moral values, pushing the individual towards perfection. As a mediator between Id and Ego, Superego has an important central role (Utami et al., 2022).

Content created by fans regarding public figures they admire is shared not only to satisfy their likes or channel it, but can also be used as motivation for young people who also like these public figures to be more enthusiastic about pursuing their dreams or continuing their education. higher level. The behavior of fans by creating content that also has the aim of motivating young people is included in moral values, because on the other hand fans are able to control impulsive thoughts and direct themselves to have goals that have moralistic values. "There are conscientia and ideal ich in the Superego, conscientia burdens a person with feelings of sin, while ideal ich gives a person a feeling of pride in himself (Ardiansyah et al., 2022).

Meanwhile, the superego side of other fans was not found, considering that these fans tend to fulfill their desires and pleasures in creating AU content that uses real public figures as characters, without permission from the relevant parties, which is an inappropriate action.

The conclusion of the three personality systems which are related to the behavior of the parasocial relationship between the two fans is that they both like the public figure but have different ways of expressing it. Apart from that, there are also differences regarding which personality systems are most prominent among them. The more prominent personality systems of fans (Bella) are Id and Superego, as has been explained, the Id personality system in fans has influenced their biological side by giving rise to their impulsive thoughts by creating special TikTok

accounts about public figures they admire and also creating content about their daily updates. or anything that concerns the public figure without thinking about the consequences that will occur, for the superego personality system in fans, by paying attention to moral values such as creating content that also has the aim of inspiring or serving as a role model for young people, while for other fans (Bira), Id's personality system is more prominent because he only prioritizes his feelings of pleasure.

DISCUSSION

Parasocial Relationships with Public Figures on Social Media

Researchers have conducted interviews with two informants, then the results of these interviews show how there is a development of parasocial relationships that neither of them is aware of. In the interview session that was conducted with the two fans, it can be seen that fans have liked the public figure since mid-December 2023. Starting from their curiosity about Mr. Prabowo Subianto's personal aide who is currently a hot topic of conversation on the internet, fans noticed that the timeline on his TikTok account full of content about these public figures so fans are starting to get interested. fans' impulsive interest in public figures when they first saw the public figure they admired in person when presidential candidate number 02 was on a visit to the city of Bengkulu. This fan is very impressed with the attentive, alert, firm and deft nature of this public figure, coupled with the various achievements he has. Fans feel happy when they see their idols in person and one of the goals of creating this content is so that other people also know about this public figure. In the eyes of fans, these public figures can be role models and encouragement for many young people to pursue their goals and dreams

For other fans, they started admiring the public figure since the beginning of February 2024, other fans also experienced the same thing, feeling attracted to the public figure after finding content related to the person they admired on TikTok. His interest arose because of the sweet, mature and responsible nature of the public figure. Twitter was abuzz with news about a public figure helping a female spectator who had fainted at a campaign event, receiving various responses, including from this fan. He admitted that he was shocked and jealous when he saw the public figure he liked carrying another woman, but was also proud of the public figure's quick and alert response. This fan creates AU (Alternate Universe) content on TikTok, writing stories involving public figures as characters. The nature of the public figure was changed to suit the author's imagination, with the WhatsApp chat concept where the public figure is in a relationship with a fictional character named Alin. The main motivation for fans to write AUs is requests from fans of other public figures on TikTok.

These two fans show how they are very proud of the achievements and accomplishments of the public figures they admire, which is a characteristic of Parasocial Interaction according to Galey Stever's Task Attraction, which refers to someone who admires other people because of the talents, skills and abilities they have (Fitri et al., 2024). Even though they like to hallucinate about having a close relationship with a public figure, fans try to instill in themselves to just admire them

so they don't get disappointed and hurt. Then, in response to viral news about a public figure helping a woman who had fainted and other news related to the public figure's personal life, fans assume that this is normal and there is nothing wrong with helping and always supporting whatever the public figure they admire does. However, other fans felt jealous when they found out about the viral news, but were still proud of the alert and deft attitude of the person they admired.

The Impact of Parasocial Relationships with Public Figures on TikTok Social Media

The parasocial relationship that exists between fans and public figures has shown an impact, since learning about the public figure the feeling of enthusiasm within him has increased. Apart from that, it can be seen that fans' admiration for public figures sometimes goes beyond reasonable limits, where these fans post things about public figures every few days, even posting them every day. This can be said to be obsessive behavior. This fan also admitted that he liked to hallucinate and felt like he had a close relationship or wanted to have that public figure. However, fans try not to hallucinate too deeply for fear of making themselves disappointed and hurt.

For other fans, after starting to admire public figures, he admitted that every time he carried out his activities, he started smiling when he remembered the public figures, as if to encourage himself to continue creating AU content which was also aimed at fellow fans on TikTok. However, creating this content also has negative consequences, it is not uncommon for some TikTok users who are not familiar with similar content to feel uncomfortable with what they see, and then make negative comments about the content they create. These comments were immediately deleted by this fan with the aim of keeping him mentally strong.

Based on the statement above, it can be seen that from the formation of parasocial relationships, there are impacts that will be felt by the fans. The impact can be positive or negative. An example of a positive impact is a feeling of enthusiasm and happiness when seeing or remembering a public figure you like, so that it can improve a person's mood at that time. Meanwhile, examples of negative impacts can arise from themselves or other people, such as changes in behavior that fans are not aware of which will later receive negative views from other people, which can affect their own mental condition.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis of the parasocial relationship formed between a fan (Bella) and another fan (Bira) and a public figure (Major Teddy), as well as its impact on the psychological condition of both, several things can be concluded. Fans (Bella) express their love for public figures through daily update content or anything related to public figures on TikTok, while other fans (Bira) focus more on creating fictional AU content that uses public figures (Major Teddy) as their characters. In the framework of psychoanalytic theory, both fans (Bella) and other fans (Bira) show impulsive behavior (Id) and restraint (Ego), but other fans (Bira) do not show behavior that has moral values (Superego) by becoming public figures. as a character or actor in the story and is made to have a

romantic relationship with an artificial character without considering the right to privacy. A fan (Bella) tends to experience the impact of her relationship with a public figure (Major Teddy), but is at risk of obsessive behavior, while another fan (Bira) experiences both impacts such as happiness as well as stress from bad comments given by people who don't like the public figure (Major Teddy) or don't like the AU content created by him. Therefore, it is important to continue to monitor and manage this impact by paying attention to the ethics of interaction on social media.

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