
TRANS-PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIP ON TIKTOK LIVE SHOPPING: A NETNOGRAPHY STUDY OF STREAMERS AND AUDIENCES INTERACTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Social media live shopping has grown rapidly and become common in Indonesian e-commerce since 2020. The development of live and real-time interactions between streamers and audiences establishes trans-parasocial relationships. The relationship is an extension of the parasocial concept, where this seemingly reciprocal relationship occurs between streamers and their audience. This study aims to explore the processes and patterns of forming trans-parasocial relationships between streamers and audiences during TikTok Shop live shopping sessions in Indonesia. This study employs a qualitative method with a netnography study conducted during TikTok Shop live session and post-session comments on X/Twitter. The data include verbal statements from the streamers and audiences on the chat sections, as well as the audience's posts with keywords related to streamers on platform X/Twitter. Based on data categorization analysis, this study identifies five aspects of the formation of trans-parasocial relationships; (1) building proximity, (2) engaging in self-disclosure, (3) addressing personal acquaintances, (2) receiving audiences' responses, and (5) creating a reciprocal interaction. The proximity between streamers and audiences can be virtually built by both parties by incorporating conversations about topics rather than products during live sessions. The formation of trans-parasocial relationships leads the audience to keep watching TikTok live shopping and could become a strategic online marketing communication method.

KEYWORDS *Trans-parasocial, live shopping, TikTok, streamer, audiences, marketing communication*

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INTRODUCTION

Social media has been widely used to search for products or service information and become a digital transaction platform, including TikTok Shop (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2018). The growing use of live streaming on social media has increased the popularity of this feature as a tool used by brands to boost sales (Liao et al., 2023). According to a survey of audiences in Indonesia, 69% choose Shopee Live as the most frequently used live streaming feature, followed by 25% for TikTok Live, 4% for Tokopedia Play, and 2% for LazLive (Vedhitya, 2023). This feature of live streaming is known as live shopping, which at the same time can be used for shopping. In an online shopping session, audiences or consumers can watch the streamers or sellers selling their products in real-time virtually from their own smartphones (Rainer, 2023).

Live shopping in Indonesia has two main approaches: one through e-commerce platforms which are based on product searches like Shopee Live and Tokopedia Play, and the other through social media platforms introduced by TikTok Live, which is content-based oriented for transactions (Anestia, 2023). Shopee Live is designed to provide an interactive shopping experience for consumers, attracting audiences who already have an intention of purchasing products in real time through the live feature. Meanwhile, TikTok Live, developed by TikTok as a social media app, primarily focuses on being a medium for creative content, with the main goal for audiences being entertainment (Purwanti, 2023). The TikTok Live feature, linked with the Shop feature launched in April 2021 in Indonesia, has rapidly expanded. TikTok Shop achieved a Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) of 5% or approximately IDR 40.1 trillion in 2022 (kumparanBISNIS, 2023).

The live streaming feature in social commerce is conducted in real-time and involves interactive communication between audiences as consumers and streamers or hosts who conduct the live sessions. Live shopping heavily relies on streamers who introduce products and communicate with the audience (Liao et al., 2023, 4). The advantage on the streamers' side lies in their ability to show their face, setting environment, and persona, thereby forming interpersonal interactions and offline sales techniques in the online space between streamers and audiences as viewers (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2018). Live streaming in social commerce brings presence and interaction that can enhance the shopping experience, reduce consumer doubts, and increase trust levels (Hajli, 2015). The authenticity of streamers enhances the intimacy of interaction between audiences and streamers (Liu et al., 2021). The combination of entertainment in conversations provided by streamers and the capability to buy in real-time is effective in creating purchase intention (Khanam, 2018). The entertainment provided by streamers can include jokes about products, discussions about products, or other conversational topics that enhance interaction

between streamers and audience viewers. This helps audiences become aware of and remember the products or brands offered by streamers (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2018).

Direct communication participation between audiences and streamers can enhance social interaction and increase viewing time intensity. After audiences form a dependency relationship on figures in live streaming, this can refer to the formation of parasocial relationships (Ballantine & Martin, 2005). Parasocial relationships are similar to social relationships but are not visibly strong or tangible (Chen et al., 2021). Parasocial relationships have been widely utilized as strategic instruments by marketers, where this relationship model can provide benefits for marketing performance (Reinikainen et al, 2020). Thus, the formation of parasocial relationships is indeed advocated by marketers to create a commodity between audiences and performers.

In previous research on parasocial relationships, there is the formation of advanced interaction relationships through social media, which differs from traditional media, where performers can also initiate interactions with audiences and retain an impression of intimacy to create reciprocal relationships (Abidin, 2015). This advanced relationship is different from the concept of parasocial, which tends to be one-way with traditional media factors that lack interactive facilities between audiences and performers simultaneously. Within advanced interaction in relationships built through social media that supports hyper-reality between audiences and performers, the concept of trans-parasocial was discovered.

Parasocial relationships are defined as face-to-face interactions between audiences and performers in media such as television, radio, or film (Horton & Wohl, 1956). In the media, these performers engage with audiences by employing communication that appears as if it were face-to-face. Performers greet audiences as if in a personal conversation between them and the audience (Giles, 2002). The way of giving and receiving dialogue in this seemingly interactive manner is what constitutes parasocial interactions (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Moreover, parasocial relationships are defined as the illusion of audiences interacting with personas within the media as if they were present and engaged in a reciprocal relationship (Labrecque, 2014). These parasocial relationships refer to the connection between audiences and performers that extends beyond the brief exposure to the performance (Kim et al., 2022).

Parasocial relationships are considered one-sided, not mutual, even though audiences may perceive themselves as having established interpersonal connections with the character personas portrayed in the media (Lim et al., 2020). In the concept of parasocial relationships, the connection is formed from the audience's side because they understand the performer personally, but the performer cannot reciprocate that understanding towards the audience (Escalas & Bettman, 2017). This relationship has limitations on the interactivity between the performer and the audience.

The existence of parasocial relationships between audiences towards streamers can influence loyalty by deepening perceptions of intimacy and reducing uncertainty (Labrecque, 2014). Five categories of antecedents to parasocial interaction found

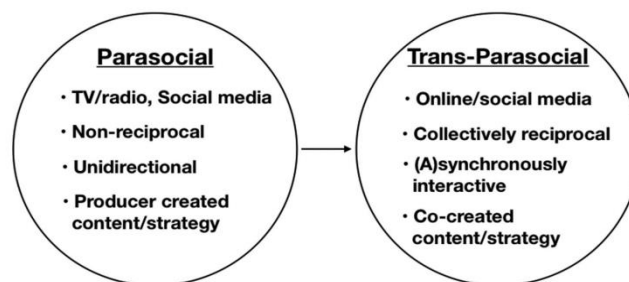
through literature review include the first category: the personal interest of audiences in media personalities. Personality traits that are pleasant and appealing to people, such as friendly eye contact and behavioral cues (Goldhoorn & Hartmann, 2011). This social attraction, where performers appear as friends, is a more significant factor than physical attractiveness (Rubin & McHugh, 1987). The second category of antecedents is the presence of cognitive motivation among audiences, as they tend to choose streamers who provide information that is relevant and useful to them (Quan et al., 2020), And audiences will follow streamers when they feel a sense of closeness with them (Kim & Kim, 2018). Audiences show purchasing intent and a positive impact on the brand promoted by streamers who appear credible (Sokolova & Kevi, 2019). In live-stream shopping, parasocial interaction also enhances consumer-brand interaction (Sanz-Blas et al., 2019). The third category concerns behavioral responses, where audiences respond to performers as if they have a personal relationship, such as greeting or addressing them as if they were their personal acquaintances (Giles, 2002). The fourth category is about audiences' affective motivation, where interaction with streamers provides audiences with satisfaction in fulfilling their desire for entertainment and socialization (Chung & Cho, 2017). The final category concerns the quality of information provided by streamers. Consumers reduce uncertainty about streamers when they receive detailed information (Quan et al., 2020).

The evolution of media with the emergence of social media has spurred new studies on the concept of parasocial relationships. In a relationship, when individuals first meet, decisions about what type of relationship will be formed, such as no relationship, friendship, or close friendship, are often made in less than an hour (Nalini et al., 2000). The initiation of relationship formation has five aspects in its process according to Ellen S. Berscheid. The first aspect is attraction, referring to the individual's impulse towards others, which can be based on physical appearance, personality traits, or shared interests. The second aspect is proximity, where individuals tend to prefer forming relationships with others they frequently encounter. The third aspect is similarity, as an individual is attracted to forming relationships with others who share similarities with them. The fourth aspect is reciprocity because reciprocal interaction involves shared feelings and mutual responses. The fifth aspect is self-disclosure, the role of self-disclosure is deepening the relationships. By sharing personal feelings, thoughts, and experiences with others, individuals foster trust and intimacy, which are essential components of close relationships (Berscheid & Regan, 2005).

After a relationship is formed, various individual and interpersonal factors contribute to the development of that relationship (Campbell et al., 2019). Individual factors that lead to the formation of friendships include personality (i.e., warmth, kindness), communication skills, attractiveness, and sense of humor. Communication factors include similarity, mutual liking, and openness between parties (Campbell et al., 2018).

Trans-parasocial relationships that occur on social media imply a reciprocal relationship through the imagined intimacy formed by audiences and performers (Lou,

2021). In this context, reciprocity is defined as the mutual desire of both parties to give and engage with each other to form interactions (Li et al., 2018). The interaction between audiences and streamers on live streaming platforms can occur bidirectionally. Thus, the two-way communication interaction between audiences and streamers and the relationships formed are no longer "one-sided" (Reinikainen et al., 2020,). Therefore, this relationship represents an advancement from the one-sided parasocial relationship with its limited interactivity. Lou (2021) proposes a new theory regarding two-way parasocial relationships, termed "trans-parasocial relationships," defined as reciprocal relationships that occur collectively and interactively in a synchronous manner, co-created between audiences and performers/streamers (Lou, 2021).



Source: Lou, 2021

Figure 1 Key Characteristics of Parasocial and Trans-Parasocial Relationships.

The current interaction on social media between performers and audiences involves performers actively and periodically responding to comments, questions, or requests from audiences in an interactive model (Lou, 2021). Live streaming facilitates the formation of trans-parasocial relationships by providing opportunities for audiences to interact in real-time (Kim et al., 2022). Therefore, the reciprocal trans-parasocial relationship between streamers and audiences becomes a more appropriate concept to explain the two-way relationships occurring today (Kim et al., 2022).

The method of live shopping in e-commerce and social media platforms opens a new chapter in the retail business world by transforming the retail environment. This trend is gaining momentum in Indonesia alongside the strengthening digitization era, offering a new shopping experience. Previously, in e-commerce buying practices, the question-and-answer process could only be done through text in message conversation forums with the seller. Buyers could only rely on review features to see real photos or videos of the products (Sari & Ika, 2023). Live shopping involves live streaming video to showcase products, interact with consumers, and purchase products in real-time (Kim et al., 2023). This is a shopping experience that consumers did not previously have in e-commerce practices. The COVID-19 pandemic has been one of the driving factors behind the popularity of live shopping due to limitations on face-to-face interactions between audiences as consumers and sellers. This gap can be bridged by live features accessible through consumers' personal devices (Aspirasi, 2022).

TikTok, a video content-based application originating from the Chinese company ByteDance, officially launched the TikTok Shop feature in April 2021 in Indonesia, being one of the pioneering countries outside China (Llewellyn, 2023). Indonesia is noted as the second country with the largest number of TikTok users after the United States, with a total user base of 99.79 million as of July 2023 (Riazaty, 2023). With Indonesia's population reaching 278.8 million in 2023 (Rizky, 2023), it demonstrates a quite significant penetration of the platform in Indonesia. In its third year of operation in Indonesia, TikTok, through its Live Shopping feature, achieved sales worth Rp 107 billion (Sanusi, 2023). The live shopping feature is utilized by sellers, both independent sellers and sellers from official brands. Sellers often use limited-time discount coupons during live sessions to attract audience attention in the initial stages. Subsequently, the live streamer's main task is to capture the audience's attention to ensure they continue watching the live broadcast (Ren, 2021).

In the method of trading through live shopping, some streamers function as both sellers and hosts or hosts who host live events on their accounts. Streamers are divided into two types: hosts who go live independently to promote products or services from their own stores, and streamers employed by official brands as employees tasked with promoting the brand's products. There are three dimensions of the salesperson's communication style: task orientation, self-orientation, and interaction orientation (Seth, 1976). The method of trading through live shopping provides the advantage of interactivity, where audiences can interact virtually directly with the seller through their respective devices. Therefore, the orientation to be discussed regarding streamers as a salesperson is interaction orientation. Communication styles oriented towards interaction can be manifested in the form of streamers engaging in two-way communication with audiences and providing explanations to audiences as potential buyers (Liao et al., 2023).

Salespersons who are oriented towards interaction with audiences demonstrate that they are friendly, warm, and approachable individuals through verbal and non-verbal interactions to enhance physical and psychological closeness (Darian et al., 2005). The process of interaction and dialogue that occurs live between audiences and streamers in a conducive manner promotes closeness between streamers and audiences (Corrêa et al., 2020).

Several studies on live streaming were conducted related to the proximity between streamers and audiences discuss the building of parasocial relationships through flow theory (Liu et al., 2021; Min & Tan, 2023), *streamers* as research subjects (Liu et al., 2023), and the impulsive buying behavior (Seruly & Koentary, 2023), which mostly conducted in China, Taiwan and surrounding regions. Previous research focuses on one aspect, which is the audience's or streamer's side, while trans-parasocial relationships are formed due to a reciprocal interaction between audiences and streamers. The reciprocal interaction patterns in live shopping between streamers and audiences is still lack of research, particularly in Indonesia. Therefore, this study explores the trans-parasocial relationships on TikTok Shop from influencer streamer (1) Tya Ariestya (independent influencer streamer for MSMEs), (2) Jil Gorden

(independent streamer for MSMEs), and (3) Somethinc brand streamer (streamer employed by the brand). By comparing independent streamers MSMEs and streamers employed by official brands, thus forming trans-parasocial relationships, this study proposes a research question: how are the processes and interaction patterns between streamers and audiences in live shopping in the formation of trans-parasocial relationships?

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative method with a netnography study on digital footprints regarding the research subject (Kozinets, 2019). The subjects of this study are audiences and streamers from three streamer, namely streamer Tya Ariestya (an independent influencer streamer for local SMEs), Jil Gorden (an independent streamer for local SMEs), and Somethinc brand streamer (a streamer employed by the brand). The data collected are publicly available data accessible via the internet.

The researcher focuses on data consisting of verbal interactions by the streamer during live streaming sessions on TikTok Live, audience interactions through the comment section during live shopping broadcasts held by the streamer, and text posts by audiences on Twitter/X social media using the keywords "live shopping", "live" followed by each streamer's keyword, "entertainment" followed by each streamer's keyword, "addressing name as a personal acquaintance's keywords from each streamer" followed by each streamer's keyword. The researcher eliminates data that falls outside the specified criteria, such as informational content uploaded by streamers on TikTok accounts, whether the content informs about live streaming session schedules or other information

Audience posts on platform X/Twitter are considered to represent audience sentiment without being planned by the researcher, ensuring unbiased conversation outcomes. The keywords "live" and "live shopping" represent the general interest of audiences in each brand's live events, while the keyword '*hiburan*' (entertainment) is chosen to represent the intensity of audience interest in each brand's live events and is not limited to buying and selling activities only, addressing name as a personal acquaintances keyword for each brand is selected to represent audience conversations regarding the formation of trans-parasocial relationships. The data collection period includes the live broadcasts of each brand from December 2023 to January 2024, watched randomly. Data collection for posts on platform X/Twitter includes posts up to January 31, 2024. This research is conducted in a closed manner, both from audiences and streamers.

Data from each brand of streamers will be categorized based on type and data collection with examples as follows:

Table 1 Sample Categorization of Data Collection

Research Subject	Type of Data	Source	Brand	Date of Collecting Data	Data Finding
Streamers	Verbal	Live streaming	Somethinc	27 December	Addressed the audiences with

Audiences	Text	video The comment section in a live-streaming session	Somethinc	2024 27 December 2024	'bestie' Audiences do not address the streamer as a 'bestie', audiences focus on promotion and product only.
Audiences	Text	The comment section in a live-streaming session	Jill Gorden	27 January 2024	Showing closeness with streamers by commenting 'Kak Jill please stay healthy'
Audiences	Text	Searching on X/Twitter with the keywords 'live' and the brand name	Tya Ariestya	28 January 2024	No audiences uploaded any posts relevant to keywords except for news accounts informing that Tya Ariestya is currently selling on TikTok Shop live

Source: Research Result, 2024

From the collected data, the researcher will categorize the data according to the research subjects, namely streamers, and audiences, as shown in the table above. This data is categorized to analyze and investigate aspects of relationship formation, attraction, closeness, similarity, and reciprocity from both parties in the process and patterns of interactions that occur. The researcher also conducts data triangulation in this study. Data triangulation is performed by collecting data from various sources, including verbal expressions of live streamers during live streaming sessions, audience comments during live streaming sessions, and posts on X/Twitter with the predetermined keywords, to strengthen the research data results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The observation of three streamer brands was taken for two months (December 2023-January 2024) by watching their live-streaming sessions on TikTok Live. Besides, the observation included the verbal expressions of streamers and the text comments made during each streamer's live streaming sessions, as well as searching for tweet posts made by the audiences. All streamers have the same goal in conducting Live sessions on TikTok, which is to sell products. The result of the streamer's aspects is described as follows:

**Table 2. The Formation of Relationships by Ellen S. Berscheid
Streamers Perspective**

	Streamer Tya Ariestya	Streamer Jil Gorden	Streamer Somethinc
Attraction	The intention of selling products.	The intention of selling products.	The intention of selling products.
Proximity	The live sessions focus on sales, with no intimacy with the audiences.	The streamer shows closeness with the audience by discussing various things, including	The live sessions focus on sales, with no intimacy with the audiences.

		personal matters.	
Similarity	It cannot be assessed.	It cannot be assessed.	It cannot be assessed.
Reciprocity	The streamer addresses herself as if a personal acquaintance to the audience, as 'Ibu kos' (landlord). There is no special address to the audience.	The streamer addresses the audience as if they are her personal acquaintances calling them ' <i>adik kak Jil</i> ' (Jil's younger sibling).	The streamer addresses the audience as if they are her personal acquaintances calling them 'bestie' (best friend).
Self-Disclosure	There is no conversation related to self-disclosure.	The streamer discloses her thoughts, family members, personal activities, and responds to audiences her personal preferences.	There is no conversation related to self-disclosure.

Source: Research Results, 2024.

The streamers attracted the audience to sell products, but not all streamers build a connection with the audience since they focus solely on sales and continuously promote products during the live sessions. Similar categories cannot be assessed during the live streams, but some streamers build reciprocity by creating nicknames that address themselves as if they are the audience's personal acquaintances. Only streamer Jil Gorden showed self-disclosure during the live sessions, unlike other streamers.

**Table 3 The Formation of Relationships by Ellen S. Berscheid
Audiences' Perspective**

	Audiences' Tya Ariestya	Audiences' Jil Gorden	Audiences' Somethinc
Attraction	The audience is attracted by watching live-streaming sessions.	The audience is attracted by watching live-streaming sessions.	The audience is attracted by watching live-streaming sessions
Proximity	No closeness with the streamers, audiences focus on commercial transactions by asking about the products.	The audience shows closeness by giving comments beyond the products in the form of affection.	The audience does not show further closeness with the streamers, audiences focus on commercial transactions by asking about the products.
Similarity	It cannot be assessed.	It cannot be assessed.	It cannot be assessed.
Reciprocity	The audience addresses the streamer with 'Ibu kos' (landlord).	Audiences address the streamer as if she is a personal acquaintance calling her 'kak Jil'	Audiences did not address the streamer the same way, they did not call the streamer with any terms as if the streamer

		(Sister Jil)	was a personal acquaintance
Self-Disclosure	There is no conversation related to self-disclosure.	Audiences ask questions regarding the streamer's personal preferences and build affection	There is no conversation related to self-disclosure.

Source: Research Results, 2024.

The streamers and audiences show mutual attraction based on the purpose of buying and selling products on the virtual platform. The audience's proximity is shown through comments that not only focus on the products but also the streamer. The similarity among audiences cannot be assessed, but audiences show reciprocity with the streamers by calling them nicknames as if they are personal acquaintances. Only the streamers from the official brand Somethinc do not show any of this. For streamers with whom the audience shows proximity, those audiences also build self-disclosure by asking personal questions and developing affection towards the streamers.

Interactive conversations show closeness between audiences through text in the comment column and verbal expressions by the streamer. It occurs with discussions beyond the topic of products, such as reminders to rest, showing affection, and conversations about other daily matters. These conversations happen with a streamer who engages in self-disclosure by discussing personal life, such as activities, family, and opinions.

The way these three streamers address their audiences as if their personal acquaintances varies. Streamer Tya Ariestyia uses terms that focus solely on herself, referring to herself as 'ibu kos' or landlord, without using special terms for her audience. In contrast, the streamer from Something calls the audience 'bestie' or best friend, although this term is not reciprocated by the audience. Meanwhile, Streamer Jil Gorden refers to her audience as her younger siblings, using 'adik kak Jil,' and they in turn call her 'kak Jil' or sister Jil

The observation was also conducted on the audience posts on the X/Twitter platform using the predetermined keywords for each brand. From these observations, the findings were as follows:

Table 3 Categorization of Audience Sentiment Post Data

Keywords	Streamer Tya Ariestyia	Streamer Jill Gorden	Streamer Somethinc
Live	There is no relevant post	The audiences post various types of tweets like want to watch live of the streamer, miss to watch, or currently watching	There is no relevant post
Live shopping	No post was found	No post was found	Audiences post testimonial satisfaction

			of purchasing the products through live shopping on TikTok brand because they get good promo and bonus products.
Hiburan (entertainment)	No post was found	The audience uploaded testimonial posts stating that watching these live streams is entertainment for them	No post was found
Terms of address as if a personal acquaintance	There is no relevant post	The audience uploaded testimonial posts stating that watching the live streamer, the audience feels affection in the relationship	There is no relevant post

Source: Research Results, 2024.

In the search for audience posts on the X/Twitter application, no relevant posts were found regarding streamer Tya Ariestya using the four predetermined keyword categories. Therefore, no audience sentiment data indicates that watching the live session is entertainment or an expression of a trans-parasocial relationship between the streamer and the audience. Meanwhile, for streamer Somethinc, audience satisfaction posts were found in watching the live shopping sessions by the brand due to receiving discounts and bonuses when shopping. However, no posts were found for the Somethinc brand with the keyword ‘entertainment’. Additionally, no relevant posts were found from the audience with the keyword ‘terms of call as if personal acquaintances’ in the keyword ‘bestie’ as data to indicate the formation of a trans-parasocial relationship.

For streamer Jil Gorden, no posts were found expressing audience satisfaction related to purchases or shopping with the keywords ‘live’ and ‘live shopping’. However, data were found in audience sentiment posts expressing that watching Jil Gorden's live streams is an entertaining and anticipated activity. Posts were also found from audiences responding with the term ‘adik kak Jil’ and discussing the reciprocal trans-parasocial relationship that occurs during live streaming sessions.

Moreover, it is found that streamers who tend to focus on buying and selling activities during the live sessions, verbally urge audiences to make purchases during the live sessions with special discounts or bonuses. This situation does not have a trans-parasocial relationship with their audiences. All three streamers understand marketing strategies by attempting to establish closeness with audiences through behavioral responses such as using specific terms of address as if a personal acquaintance, but not all streamers achieve a reciprocal relationship. In a trans-parasocial relationship, audience responses to interact with streamers can strengthen emotional bonding, increase the amount of time spent watching streamers, and enhance audience loyalty

(Kim, Liu, & Chang, 2022), which audiences eagerly await moments to watch streamers like Jill Gorden. Audiences who form trans-parasocial relationships show purchase intentions and are more likely to buy products recommended by performers (Kim, Liu, & Chang, 2022), this aspect cannot be assessed in this research.

Streamer Jill Gorden receives reciprocal behavioral responses and forms closeness with audiences due to conversations of self-disclosure outside of product topics during live sessions, which provide entertainment for the audiences. According to a previous study, self-disclosure can strengthen the emotional bond with the audience, where audiences feel a sense of openness and tend to feel more connected (Carter, 2022). These conversations occur reciprocally between both parties and happen collectively, synchronously, and collaboratively between audiences and streamers, aligning with the concept of trans-parasocial relationships outlined by Lou. The interactive, collective, and reciprocal communication process built in the live shopping medium is perceived by these audiences and shared as experiences through sentiment posts on X/Twitter. Interactions regarding trans-parasocial relationships that occur during live shopping become anticipated experiences for the audiences, serving as entertainment during leisure time and fulfilling the affection towards a virtual persona they desire.

CONCLUSION

The method of selling through live programs is becoming increasingly common in Indonesia, and within this current competition, streamers must find various ways to attract audiences to continue watching. The most common method is to offer special discounts or bonus rewards if purchases are made during the live broadcast. Sellers give discounts, bundled packages with special gifts, and free shipping offered during live broadcasts to boost sales within the app. However, besides competing to offer discounts, streamers employ various methods to keep audiences watching and to compete with other streamers selling similar products.

The approach between streamers and audiences to form pseudo or para-social relationships is often employed as a marketing strategy. The creation of this relationship leads audiences to believe they have a connection with the streamers, prompting them to continue seeking out performers to stay connected. However, in the development of scientific studies on para-social relationships, the discovery of trans-parasocial relationships has emerged with the evolvement of digital technology, where the relationship occurs reciprocally. Both streamers and audiences feel they have a connection with each other, supported by the interactivity of the live platform.

The creation of trans-parasocial relationships should be considered as one of the marketing strategies between brands and audiences. The formation of trans-parasocial relationships arises from the closeness between audiences and performers based on mutual feelings. Streamers can establish closeness with audiences through conversations that not only focus on products but also incorporate entertainment and discussions about everyday life, as well as responding to audience comments beyond just products. Streamers can also address the audience as if they are personal

acquaintance and conduct self-disclosure conversations to foster relationships. This closeness can transcend transactional relationships, with audiences eagerly anticipating and seeking out performers to fulfill the sense of closeness in the relationship. Thus, when the target audience may consider switching to competitors due to price wars between brands, audiences can still watch streamers they perceive as close and have a trans-parasocial relationship with them.

This study has limitations regarding data due to the observation conducted based on digital data, thus there is a possibility of missing data on posts on platform X/Twitter and data that were not captured from live shopping sessions that were not watched by the researcher during the data collection period. Therefore, this research could be further explored using other data collection methods.

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