

COMMUNICATION PATTERNS AMONG K-POP FAN GROUPS IN THE DIGITAL AGE (A STUDY OF THE TREASURE MAKER PEKANBARU SOCIAL MEDIA GROUP)

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ABSTRACT

The development of digital technology has created new spaces for interaction that encourage the formation of fandom communities through social media. One active community in Pekanbaru is Treasure Maker (Teume), a fandom of the K-Pop boy group Treasure that uses Instagram and WhatsApp as its main communication platforms. This study aims to identify the group communication patterns of the Treasure Maker Pekanbaru community in the digital era. The research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving administrators, active members, and passive members selected purposively. Data analysis uses Communication Network Theory with the indicators of density, centrality, and pattern of ties. The findings show that the community applies a hybrid communication pattern, combining centralized and two-way communication. Administrators act as the center of the communication network, active members contribute to two-way interactions, while passive members mainly receive information. This communication pattern enables the Treasure Maker Pekanbaru community to effectively disseminate information, maintain member connectedness, and strengthen its existence in the digital era.

Keywords: *Communication Patterns, Social Media, Communication Group, Treasure Maker*

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's digital era, popular culture is highly sought after by many people, especially in Indonesia. Popular culture is a culture that is subconsciously formed by the community, allowing it to be widely accepted and adopted in society (Ardia, 2014). One example of popular culture that has successfully captured attention in Indonesia is South Korean popular culture, often referred to as the Korean Wave. This phenomenon is the driving force behind the entry of Korean Pop, or K-Pop, into Indonesia. K-pop is an abbreviation of Korean Pop, referring to popular music originating from South Korea. Korean music encompasses various genre elements such as hip hop, electronic, and R&B, combined with visual and aesthetic styles presented by idols in the form of bands, boy groups, girl groups, and soloists, neatly packaged (Sakinah, 2022). With these elements, K-Pop has gained a growing fan base in Indonesia. These fans are called fans or K-Popers. Reportedly, many of them have built idol fan communities commonly referred to as fandoms. Fandom is a cultural convergence that exercises power over its community and the media associated with it (Amalia, 2022).

One of the rapidly growing K-Pop fan communities in Indonesia is the Treasure Maker fandom (known as Teume), a fanbase of the boy group Treasure from YG Entertainment. In Pekanbaru City, this fandom actively builds interactions through the Instagram account @treasuremaker.pku and WhatsApp groups as the main communication media. Their activities are not limited to sharing content about idols, but also include streaming activities, support projects, and offline events such as watch parties and Fan Gatherings. Through these activities, fandom members form a strong and dynamic social network in the digital world. The use of

the name Treasure Maker has a deep meaning, namely depicting fans as the parties who create and play an important role in shaping the success of the Treasure group. In other words, fans are considered part of the creation (Treasure). Although the Teume fandom community was only established in 2020, communication within it has developed very actively, especially through digital media (Koreaportal.com, 2022). However, what is interesting about this study is the difference in the level of participation between members in communication.

Some members are seen actively discussing and disseminating information, while others are more passive or known as silent readers. This difference creates variations in group communication patterns, such as who acts as the information center (admin), how messages flow between members, and how digital media such as Instagram and WhatsApp shape the communication structure of the community. This dynamic shows that communication in the digital era is not only one-way, but also collaborative and participatory. As part of the initial observation, researchers conducted direct observation of the activities of the treasuremaker.pku Instagram community in September 2025, this observation was carried out to strengthen the research background and provide a real picture of the communication patterns that occur in the community. Researchers also documented screenshots of several posts from the comment column which showed differences in the level of participation between members, some members actively responded and participated in disseminating information, while other members appeared to only be observers (silent readers). In addition, researchers found discussions in the comment column regarding activities carried out by the community, but if seen again, Instagram social media functions more as the main platform for disseminating information, such as event project announcements, multi-fandom activity promotions, and posts about idols.

I. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Communication process

The communication process is a complex process and involves several basic components, including the sender of the message (source), the recipient of the message, the media or channel used to convey the message, the language code or symbols in conveying the message, the context or situation in which the communication occurs and feedback from the recipient to the source.

B. Communication Patterns

Communication Patterns are a form of depiction of various communication processes that are interwoven and mutually show the relationship between one component and another. Within a group, the existence of interactions within the communication process allows a pattern to occur because it acts as a framework that can regulate how information flows, decisions are made, and relationships between members are formed. Without a clear communication pattern, a group will have difficulty achieving their goals. There are five types of communication patterns most commonly used in groups (Aprini, 2014):

a. Circle Pattern

Communication patterns or networks are only connectors the initial and final links of a chain communication network.

b. Wheel pattern

The wheel structure has a clear leader, namely the one his position in the center. This person is the only one who can send and receive messages from all members.

c. Y letter pattern

The Y pattern or structure is relatively less centralized compared to with a wheel structure, but more centralized than the pattern other.

d. Chain Pattern

The chain pattern or structure is the same as the circle structure except that only the most remote members can communicate with just one person.

e. All Channel Pattern

The pattern of all channels or the total channel pattern is almost the same as circle structure in the sense that all members are equal and all have the same power to influence other members.

1. Group Communication

Communication that occurs in a group usually involves several individuals in it and cannot be separated from a communication process that is one-way or two-way, between one group member and another directly. Michael Burgoon and Michael Rufner stated that group communication is face-to-face communication carried out by three or more individuals in order to achieve the desired purpose or goal such as sharing information, self-maintenance or problem solving so that all members can develop the personal characteristics of other members accurately.

2. Fan Communication

Fan communities typically exchange messages about their idols. These fans share information to learn more about their idols, moving from those who don't know to those who do, and those who already know becoming increasingly dependent on consuming information. Fans often spend hours in front of their computers discussing their favorite subjects, leading to excessively obsessive behavior called stalking, a term used to refer to unwanted, obsessive attention from an individual or group (Nurudin, 2019).

3. Digital communication

digital communication is the process of conveying messages through digital technology-based media, such as the internet, social media, and instant messaging applications, where communication takes place interactively, participatory, quickly, and globally. In other words, this theory emphasizes that digital media is not only a technical channel, but also a social space that influences the way humans communicate and build self-identity. If traditional communication focuses on face-to-face communication, then modern communication is now dominated by digital platform-based interactions such as Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok, and Twitter (X), Leung assesses that digital technology creates a new communication ecosystem with characteristics

4. Social Media

In today's digital era, social media has become a key pillar of the global communication system. As a crucial element in communication science, social media has fundamentally changed the way people convey, receive, and respond to information. Social media is a concrete manifestation of communication transformation in the digital age. As a modern communication medium, social media not only expands the reach of information but also changes communication patterns and styles in society.

5. Instagram

Instagram is an image- and video-based social media platform that allows you to share moments in visual form. It's an internet-accessible social network that facilitates the sharing of narratives through digital photos. With a focus on engaging image content, Instagram is a place where you can upload photos and videos, share stories and unique perspectives on everyday life.

6. WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a cross-platform instant messaging application for smartphones that allows users to send and receive messages like SMS without using credit, but rather an internet connection. With WhatsApp, you can send messages using other applications, including text, audio, document files, photos, and videos. Furthermore, WhatsApp status is one of its most commonly used features. These features demonstrate WhatsApp's efforts to improve its

services. These features are tailored to user needs, making communication more efficient and enjoyable (Hamdan Yuwafik, 2020).

7. Communication Network Theory

According to Bavelas & Leavitt (1948-1951) This theory examines how the structure of communication networks within groups affects the speed of information flow, the effectiveness of decision making, and the satisfaction of group members. Bavelas and Leavitt argue that each group has a certain communication pattern that determines the direction, intensity, and distribution of messages among members. This structure forms what is called a communication network, which describes who communicates with whom and how big a person's role is in disseminating information. Through their experimental research, they identified five main forms of communication networks, namely the wheel pattern, the chain pattern, the Y pattern, the circle pattern, and the all-channel pattern. There are several important indicators in analyzing network structures:

A. *Density*(Network Density)

Describes how closely connected members are within a communication network. The higher the density, the more frequent interactions and information exchanges occur among community members. A dense network indicates active and open communication, while a sparse network indicates limited interaction and a slower flow of information.

B. *Centrality*(Centralist)

This indicates the extent to which a member occupies a central position in a communication network. Members with a high degree of centrality are typically primary sources of information, liaisons between other members, or influential figures in the community. This can be measured by how often an individual is contacted or referred to by other members in the communication process.

C. *Pattern of Ties*(**pattern of member interest or attachment**)

Relationship patterns describe the direction and form of communication within a network. These can be one-way, two-way, or multidirectional. This pattern also determines whether communication is centralized, with information originating from a single primary source, or whether it is distributed, with each member having an equal opportunity to disseminate information.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- a. This study employed a qualitative approach. This approach was chosen because it focused on an in-depth understanding of a social phenomenon, namely group communication patterns in the digital era within the K-Pop fan community "Treasure Maker Pekanbaru."
- b. The study method was used to allow researchers to comprehensively explore the communication processes, interactions, and group dynamics that occur both in digital media and in offline community activities. This research not only describes phenomena but also interprets the meaning behind the interactions and communication patterns that occur.
- c. Descriptive research uses data collection methods such as interviews, observation, and document analysis to obtain the necessary information. Data obtained from descriptive research is typically analyzed using descriptive techniques such as descriptive statistics, tables, and graphs (Rusdi 2022, p. 40).
- d. The research method used by the author is field research, which involves directly going into the field to observe, interact with, and collect data directly from a research

subject. This ensures that the information and data obtained are valid and in accordance with reality.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the questionnaire data analysis, it was found that 75% of surgeons at Banten Regional General Hospital have implemented the principle of preventive legal protection through comprehensive informed consent. Seventy-five percent of respondents also provided additional explanations when discrepancies were found between surgical results and the initial plan, demonstrating an awareness of the importance of information transparency as a means of preventing disputes. This practice aligns with the provisions of Law No. 17 of 2023 and Minister of Health Regulation No. 290/2008, which emphasize the obligation of physicians to provide complete information regarding diagnoses, procedures, risks, and alternative medical treatments. By fulfilling this informative obligation, physicians not only protect patients' rights but also build a strong preventive legal defense.

The author will address the research problem formulation related to the communication patterns of the Treasure Maker Pekanbaru community in the digital era. This research was conducted using qualitative methods through in-depth interviews with parties directly involved in community activities, as well as collecting supporting data relevant to the research focus. This data is used to assist the author in understanding and analyzing the communication patterns formed within the Treasure Maker Pekanbaru community.

In the initial stages of the research, the author conducted observations by observing the activities of the Treasure Maker Pekanbaru community through digital media, specifically the Instagram account @treasuremaker.pku and the community's WhatsApp group. This observation was conducted to see how interactions and information exchange take place between community members in the digital space. During the research process, the author received an excellent response from the Treasure Maker Pekanbaru community, demonstrated by the informants' openness in providing information and willingness to participate in the research.

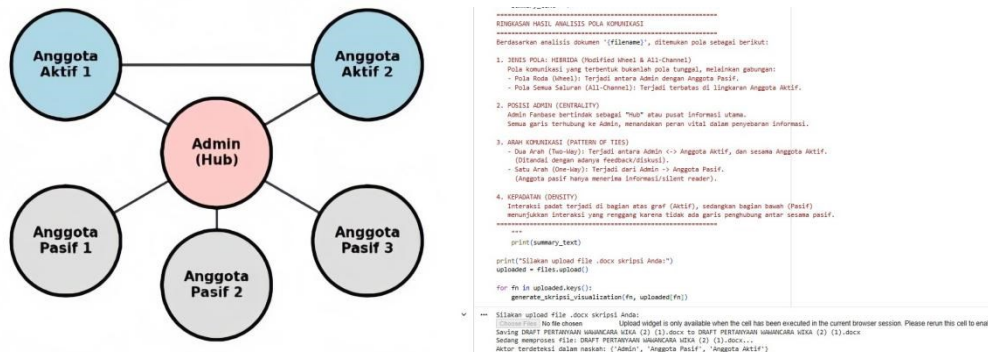
The informants in this study consisted of the Treasure Maker Pekanbaru community admin and active members, with a total of three informants, as listed in the table in the previous chapter. To obtain a clearer and more in-depth picture, in the next section the author will present the results of interviews that have been conducted with informants, which are then analyzed to answer the formulation of research problems related to group communication patterns in the Treasure Maker Pekanbaru community in the digital era. There are several questions that will be compiled from 3 indicators, namely Density, Centrality, Pattern of Ties. And about the Dynamics of Digital Communication Patterns.

These three important indicators in Communication Network Theory are the basis of a study to conduct observations and interview stages, to each informant and even research subjects. Then Communication Network Theory which includes three main indicators, namely density (network density), centrality (centrality), and pattern of ties (pattern of relationships), as well as the dynamics of the use of digital media Instagram and WhatsApp which require interaction between members in order to continue to survive and become a living community (Wenger, et al. 2002) in (Prasetyawan, 2018). The data analysis process is carried out with a computational approach that adopts the working principles of big data, namely processing data systematically to find the communication patterns that are formed. This process begins with uploading interview documents in docx format into the system.

The document is then read as raw data containing all information about conversations and interactions between individuals within the community. Next, the system performs a text extraction process to identify the actors involved in the communication, such as admins, active

members, and passive members. This identification is done by recognizing keywords, roles, and the context of the interactions that appear within the document. Through this stage, the system begins to understand the basic structure of communication, specifically regarding who is interacting and how those relationships develop. The data, originally in text form, is then transformed into a more organized structure, namely a communication network.

Based on the research conducted, it can be concluded that the K-Pop fan community Treasure Maker Pekanbaru implements a hybrid communication pattern in communicating between members in the digital era. As shown in the image below:



In this network, each individual is positioned as a node, while interactions between individuals are represented as connecting lines (edges). This transformation allows the system to analyze communication relationships in greater depth, as interaction patterns are easier to observe in network form than in narrative text.

Once the communication network is established, the system analyzes the characteristics of the existing relationships. This analysis includes measuring the degree of centrality to identify the most dominant actor in communication, analyzing the direction of communication to determine whether interactions are one-way or two-way, and measuring network density to understand the intensity of relationships between members. The analysis shows that the administrator plays a dominant role as the center of communication, with active members engaging in two-way interactions.

Based on the analysis, the system then classified the communication patterns that emerged. It found a combination of a centralized (wheel) communication pattern, where the admin serves as the information center, and a distributed (all-channel) communication pattern, where members actively interact with each other. This combination was then identified as a hybrid communication pattern, indicating that the communication structure within the community is not a single entity, but rather a combination of several patterns.

In the final stage, the system automatically generates a summary of the analysis results, including the type of communication pattern, the actor's position in the network, the direction of communication, and the level of interaction density. This summary serves as the basis for drawing research conclusions, as it summarizes the entire data analysis process

IV. CONCLUSION

This hybrid communication pattern is characterized by the fanbase admin acting as the primary hub for information dissemination, while community members still have the opportunity to interact, discuss, and share their opinions through digital communication media. This communication pattern is illustrated in the illustration of the Treasure Maker Pekanbaru community's communication patterns in the digital era.

The communication patterns formed within the Treasure Maker Pekanbaru community in the digital era exhibit characteristics of a hybrid communication pattern, a combination of

the wheel and all-channel patterns. This pattern is characterized by the admin's role as the center of the communication network with a high degree of centrality. The admin serves as the primary liaison in the community's communication network, particularly in conveying important information such as activity announcements, idol-related information, and community rules and policies. The high centrality of the admin indicates that the continuity of information flow within the community is highly dependent on the admin's role as the primary liaison. On the other hand, active members play a crucial role in strengthening the community's communication dynamics. Active members not only receive information from the admin but also engage in two-way communication through discussions, providing feedback, and exchanging information with other active members. This interaction creates a more open and participatory communication space, enabling stronger emotional and social engagement among members. The presence of active members is a key driver in maintaining ongoing interactions and strengthening social cohesion within the community.

Meanwhile, passive members, or silent readers, tend to act as recipients of information without actively participating in the communication process. Although not directly involved in discussions, passive members remain part of the community's communication network and receive information through channels provided by the admin. This passive member role demonstrates that the community is still able to reach various levels of member participation within the same communication network.

Based on the density indicator, the communication network density within the Treasure Maker Pekanbaru community shows uneven levels. Relatively high interaction density occurs among the admin and active member groups, characterized by frequent communication and intense inter-actor connectivity. Conversely, the passive member group has a lower network density due to minimal interaction among passive members. This difference in density reflects the existence of a hierarchical communication structure within the community.

Judging from the pattern of ties indicator, communication patterns within the community include both one-way and two-way communication occurring simultaneously. One-way communication occurs from the admin to passive members, while two-way communication occurs between the admin and active members, as well as between active members. This combination of relationship patterns creates a flexible and adaptive communication network that meets the needs of the community in the digital age.

Overall, the hybrid communication model implemented allows the Treasure Maker Pekanbaru community to continue operating effectively in disseminating information, maintaining connections among members, and strengthening a sense of togetherness and community presence amidst the development of digital technology. This model demonstrates the community's ability to adapt to digital media as a social interaction space that supports the ongoing survival of the fandom community.

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