

# The Level of Parasocial Interaction on the X Account @JKT48

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the level of parasocial interaction on the X account @JKT48. Public relations is a management function that seeks to build and maintain beneficial and positive relationships between an organization and its public. The social media account X @JKT48 serves as a concrete example of how digital public relations are utilized to foster emotional closeness, intimacy, and interactive behavior between the idol group and its fans. The method employed is a quantitative research approach, involving the distribution of an online questionnaire to the account's followers. Data analysis was conducted by measuring three indicators of parasocial interaction: perceptual-cognitive, affective, and behavioral. The results show that the affective indicator has the highest mean value of 0.9, followed by the perceptual-cognitive indicator at 0.89, and the behavioral indicator at 0.86. These findings suggest that JKT48 fans have a strong emotional attachment to the group. The study concludes that the level of parasocial interaction on the X account @JKT48 is high across all three indicators, with the affective indicator being the highest.

**Keywords:** *Parasocial Interactions; JKT48; Public Relations; Digital Public Relations; Parasocial Relationship.*

## INTRODUCTION

Public Relations (PR) serves as a fundamental management function that aims to build and maintain mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its publics. Cutlip (2007) defines PR as a strategic effort to foster understanding and cooperation, while Harlow (1976) emphasizes its role in facilitating communication channels that lead to trust and collaboration. This foundation is echoed by Broom and Smith (Armeyanti & Pramana, 2022), who highlight PR's crucial role in shaping organizational perceptions. In essence, PR acts as both a source and a channel of information (Fullchis & Shinta, 2018), requiring practitioners to possess strong communication skills to maintain effective stakeholder relationships (Haryono, 2023).

The development of communication technologies has transformed the traditional landscape of public relations. What was once a practice reliant on mass media has now evolved into Digital Public Relations, where digital platforms such as websites and social media play a central role (Permatasari & Soelistiyowati, 2021). According to Alexander (2016), digital PR offers new, dynamic channels for audience engagement, brand building, and real-time communication. Practitioners must adapt to these changes by mastering interactive platforms that allow organizations to connect directly with their audiences (Haryono, 2023). Watkins (2017) and Tong and Chan (2020) further assert that social media not only facilitates communication but also helps in building emotional intimacy and trust between organizations and stakeholders.

In line with this digital transformation, a growing body of research has begun to explore how parasocial interaction (PSI)—a concept first introduced by Horton and Wohl (1956) manifests in online environments. PSI refers to one-sided emotional relationships in which audiences feel connected to media figures despite the absence of real reciprocal interaction. These relationships can foster empathy, admiration, and loyalty toward celebrities or brands (Perbawani, 2021; Maiorescu, 2017). Schramm and Hartmann (2008) provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing PSI, categorizing responses into three domains: perceptual-cognitive, affective, and behavioral. These indicators form the basis for measuring the depth and intensity of fan engagement in this study.

A relevant case study of parasocial interaction in the digital era is JKT48, an Indonesian idol group managed by IDN Media. JKT48 maintains a significant presence on X (formerly Twitter), where it has amassed over 4.9 million followers (as of February 2025). Despite platform policies that restrict direct replies to fans, JKT48's content strategy has proven effective in sustaining fan engagement and emotional closeness (Natio & Paramita, 2020). Notably, this connection is illustrated by events such as the Sousenkyo 2024, in which fans contributed over IDR 18 billion in support of their favorite members—an expression of intense loyalty and dedication (Wulandari et al., 2023). These behaviors reflect deep parasocial bonds facilitated by the group's digital PR efforts.

The central research question of this study is: To what extent does parasocial interaction occur on JKT48's X social media account? This question seeks to measure the intensity and nature of PSI among followers of @JKT48, using established theoretical indicators. The primary objective of this research is to quantitatively assess the level of parasocial interaction experienced by followers of the @JKT48 account on X, specifically through the perceptual-cognitive, affective, and behavioral lenses proposed by Schramm and Hartmann (2008).

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through the perceptual-cognitive, affective, and behavioral lenses proposed by Schramm and Hartmann (2008).

This study carries both practical and academic significance. Practically, it offers insights into how parasocial interaction can flourish even in the absence of direct interaction, highlighting the power of social media to maintain fan engagement. Academically, it contributes a novel perspective to public relations literature by integrating parasocial theory into the realm of strategic communication, particularly within the context of celebrity branding and entertainment PR an area that remains underexplored in the Indonesian research landscape.

The scope of this study is defined as follows: it employs a quantitative descriptive method, focuses on the parasocial interaction stimulated by content posted on @JKT48's X account, and surveys followers aged 20–30 years old through online questionnaires. By narrowing the demographic and platform, this research aims to deliver precise insights into how parasocial bonds are formed and maintained in the digital age.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Public Relations*

Cutlip (2013) defines public relations (PR) as a management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its public. According to Hairunisa (2015) as cited in Armayanti (2022), public relations is an activity that aims to build and maintain good relationships with the surrounding community, particularly those related to the organization's or company's operations. This is done to ensure that no party feels disadvantaged. A PR practitioner must be able to establish effective communication so that the planned objectives and activities can be successfully implemented. PR is considered successful when it is able to create, build, and develop relationships (Rumanti, 2002).

According to Elvinaro and Soemirat (in Prihadi, 2020), public relations functions to maintain and foster good relationships between an institution and the public. Its main role is to build and strengthen these connections. Bertrand R. Canfield (in Prihadi, 2020) outlines three key functions of public relations: serving the public interest, maintaining good communication, and emphasizing strong morals and behavior. In essence, public relations aims to establish and connect organizations with their public.

### *Digital Public Relations*

Digital Public Relations (Digital PR) refers to PR activities that utilize online platforms to manage reputation, enhance organizational image, and build public understanding (Permatasari et al., 2021). Alim (2024) describes Digital PR as a dynamic and ever-developing field that leverages digital technology to engage the public effectively, manage relationships, and disseminate information. Alexander (2017) argues that digital

communication strengthens relationship building, while Grunig (in Alexander, 2017) emphasizes that interactive digital platforms allow PR practitioners to build deeper connections both internally and externally.

Social media enables direct interaction between organizations and the public, fostering a sense of community (Watkins, 2017). Studies by Men and Tsai (2012, 2014) reveal that social media engagement increases audience commitment, trust, and satisfaction. Today, platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and X (formerly Twitter) are widely used for PR purposes, helping organizations reach broader audiences and distribute information more efficiently (Kardini et al., 2023). Consequently, PR practitioners must evolve with these tools to build relationships, influence public perception, and manage dialogue with their audiences (Haryono, 2023).

### ***Parasocial Relationship***

Parasocial relationships (PSRs), first introduced by Horton and Wohl (1956), refer to one-sided emotional bonds formed between media personas and audiences, initially observed through television. Viewers often feel a sense of intimacy and familiarity with these figures, despite never having met them (Stever, 2013). PSRs fulfill emotional and social needs, particularly among individuals experiencing loneliness or insecurity (Cohen, 2014; Forster, 2023). These relationships, although imaginary and non-reciprocal, are considered normal as long as they do not replace real-life interactions (Perbawani, 2021; Forster, 2023). PSRs can range from casual admiration (entertainment-social) to obsessive behaviors (borderline-pathological) and are further classified into parasocial friendship (PSF) and parasocial love (PSL), with the latter involving emotional or even romantic attachment (Tukachinsky, 2010). With technological advancement, PSRs have extended into digital media, especially social platforms like Facebook and X (formerly Twitter), where interactions vary depending on the medium, a phenomenon termed “transmediated PSRs” (Wellman, 2021; Foster, 2023).

### ***Parasocial Interaction***

Parasocial Interaction (PSI) refers to the process in which audiences engage with media figures through cognitive, emotional (affective), and behavioral responses. According to Schramm and Hartmann (2008), this interaction is categorized into three main dimensions, each consisting of several sub-indicators that describe how individuals experience a sense of connection with media personas, such as celebrities or public figures.

The perceptual-cognitive dimension involves the mental processes through which fans perceive and understand their idols. In this stage, fans pay attention to the information presented by the media figure, interpret their actions and situations, and connect these with their own previous experiences. They also form evaluations of the persona and their behavior, anticipate future behaviors, and may even develop a perceived relationship with the persona. Sub-indicators under this dimension include: attention allocation, comprehension of the

persona's actions and situations, activation of prior media and life experiences, evaluation of the persona, anticipatory observation, and construction of a perceived relationship with the persona.

The affective dimension refers to the emotional reactions of media users toward their favorite personas. These reactions can be both positive and negative, often influenced by the media figure's achievements, behavior, or public image. Fans may experience emotions such as sympathy, empathy, or even emotional contagion, where the feelings expressed by the persona are mirrored by the audience. This emotional engagement deepens the perceived connection and can make the parasocial relationship feel more personal and intense.

The behavioral dimension focuses on the tangible actions that fans take as a result of their cognitive and emotional connections with a media figure. These behaviors might include liking or sharing posts, commenting on content, or following the media figure closely on social platforms. Behavioral responses can be expressed through nonverbal cues (such as gestures or facial expressions when consuming content), verbal or para-verbal engagement (such as writing comments or discussing the figure with others), and intentions to engage further with the persona's content or public appearances.

Labrecque (2014) describes parasocial interaction as a vivid and seemingly authentic experience in which audiences feel they are communicating directly with a media persona, even in the absence of actual two-way interaction. With the rapid development of digital technology, PSI is increasingly observable through textual interactions such as social media posts and comments, which allow fans to continuously engage with media figures in a highly interactive online environment (Watkins, 2017).

### ***Social Media***

Social media is a platform that allows individuals to socialize online by sharing content, news, photos, and more with others (Taprial & Kanwar, 2012). Social networking sites commonly referred to as social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are platforms used to publish content, including activity profiles or even personal opinions (Nasrullah, 2014). The function of social media in public relations (PR) is to assist PR professionals in delivering information more effectively. Through social media, information can be disseminated on a broader scale, reaching a larger audience. Social media also plays a vital role in helping PR build relationships with the public. PR practitioners use social media to communicate messages and foster public trust in an institution or organization (Alper, 2024). Each social media platform has its own unique features that can be optimized by PR professionals to support the development and maintenance of public relationships (Alper, 2024).

### ***X***

X, formerly known as Twitter, is a social networking or social media and microblogging service founded by Jack Dorsey in 2006. The core concept of Twitter was to allow users to post short messages known as tweets. On July 24, 2023, Twitter was officially

rebranded as X following its acquisition by Elon Musk. Smart and strategic use of Twitter represents an innovation that facilitates the work of public relations (PR) professionals within companies or organizations. Holtz (1998) stated that communication has been profoundly transformed by the advantages of online media. X can contribute significantly to PR efforts in building and maintaining relationships with the public (Alper, 2024). In addition to relationship-building, X can also assist PR in managing ongoing crises. The platform allows companies, institutions, or brands to demonstrate transparency and accountability to their audiences. Tweets can also serve as official statements or press releases that may be used by the media.

## METHODOLOGY

This research applies a quantitative descriptive approach to explore the level of parasocial interaction on the X social media account @JKT48. Descriptive quantitative research is appropriate for this study because it focuses on measuring phenomena using numerical data without manipulating variables. The researcher utilized an online survey method to collect data, distributing questionnaires through Google Forms. This platform was selected due to its accessibility and efficiency in reaching a broad number of respondents, particularly fans of JKT48 across Indonesia.

The subject of this research is the followers of the X account @JKT48, while the object is the parasocial interaction that occurs between the fans and the content posted by the account. The total population consists of 4.9 million followers, but due to practical constraints, the sample size was limited to 100 respondents. The sample was determined using the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error, allowing the researcher to generalize the results with a reasonable degree of accuracy. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, a non-probability method that selects participants based on specific criteria in this case, being an active follower of @JKT48 and aged between 20 to 30 years.

Data were gathered exclusively through online surveys. The questionnaire included demographic questions and a set of items measuring cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses to @JKT48's posts, based on the parasocial interaction model by Schramm and Hartmann (2008). The survey ensured the respondents met the study criteria before proceeding with the full set of questions. The collected data provided insights into how followers cognitively engage with the content, emotionally connect with the idols, and act behaviorally in response to JKT48's digital presence.

For data analysis, the study employed the Guttman scale, a cumulative scale used to assess binary responses (yes/no). Each response was coded with a score of 0 or 1, allowing for straightforward quantification of parasocial interaction levels. The class interval method was applied to categorize the scores into two levels: low (0–0.5) and high (0.5,1–1). This allowed the researcher to determine whether the interaction was strong or weak across the three main indicators: perceptual-cognitive, affective, and behavioral. The simplicity and

clarity of this analysis method made it suitable for identifying patterns within the data collected from a large and diverse fanbase.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To collect data, the researcher distributed questionnaires to several JKT48 fanbases across Indonesia. A total of 100 participants were successfully obtained and served as the sample for this research. After reaching a total of 100 respondents, the researcher conducted tests to assess the validity and reliability of the instrument.

In the validity test, the researcher applied the Guttman scale method to evaluate whether the research instrument effectively measured the concept of parasocial interaction. The analysis resulted in a reproducibility coefficient of 0.93 and a scalability coefficient of 0.75 both surpassing the minimum thresholds of 0.90 and 0.60, respectively. These results confirm that the questionnaire items are valid, consistent, and capable of distinguishing varying levels of parasocial interaction among respondents. For the reliability test, the same method was used, producing a reliability coefficient of 1.00. This perfect score indicates that the instrument is highly consistent and dependable when used with similar populations. With both validity and reliability criteria met, the research instrument can be considered both accurate and trustworthy, ensuring that the data collected on parasocial interaction through the X account @JKT48 can be analyzed with confidence.

Table 1.1. Results of the Mean Score for Each Indicator

NO	Indicators	Mean	Category	Mean Total	Final Result
1	<i>Perceptual-cognitive</i>	0,89	High	0,9	High
2	<i>Affective</i>	0,9	High		
3	<i>Behavioral</i>	0,86	High		

Source: Processed by the researcher

After completing data collection as well as validity and reliability testing, the researcher calculated the mean score for each indicator. This calculation aimed to identify which of the three indicators had the highest and lowest mean values. According to the table above the average level of parasocial interaction on the X account @JKT48 is 0.9, which falls into the high category according to the class interval calculation. Among the three indicators, the affective indicator recorded the highest mean score at 0.9. This suggests that respondents have a strong emotional attachment to JKT48, even though their interaction is limited to viewing the group's posts on the X platform. The second highest score comes from the perceptual-cognitive indicator with a mean of 0.89, indicating that the emotional closeness is

supported by perception, knowledge, and understanding. These results show that cognitive elements such as attention, comprehension, and evaluation play an important role in forming strong parasocial connections

The behavioral indicator had the lowest mean score at 0.86, although it still falls within the high category. This indicates that while fans may not always express their attachment through observable actions (e.g., commenting or mimicking behaviors), the overall parasocial bond remains strong. The affective processes that fans experience are often preceded and supported by cognitive engagement. As Klimmt (2006) explains, the indicators in parasocial interaction are interconnected and influence each other emotions often emerge as a result of earlier perceptual and cognitive processes, strengthening the depth of the one-sided relationship formed through digital content.

The research findings indicate that the level of parasocial interaction on the X account @JKT48 is relatively high. This study employed three indicators to measure the level of parasocial interaction: perceptual-cognitive, affective, and behavioral. Among these, the affective indicator recorded the highest average score (mean = 0.9), suggesting a strong emotional attachment between fans and JKT48.

### *Perceptual-cognitive*

The Perceptual-Cognitive indicator refers to the cognitive processes through which individuals pay attention to, understand, evaluate, and become familiar with their idols. This indicator essentially measures the extent to which an individual knows and understands their idol, as well as how they perceive them. This indicator consists of six sub-indicators: Attention Allocation, Comprehension of Persona's Actions and Situation, Activation of Prior Media and Life Experience, Evaluations of Persona and Persona's Actions, Anticipatory Observation, and Construction of Relations Between Persona and Self.

Table 1.2. Perceptual-cognitive

NO	Sub-Indicator	Question	Percentage
1.	<i>Attention allocation</i>	Do you often see uploads from the X @JKT48 account?	99%
2.		Do the X @JKT48 account uploads attract your attention?	98%
3.		Do you often pay attention to JKT48 members on the X @JKT48 account?	98%
4.	<i>Comprehension of</i>	Do you get the latest information about JKT48 on the X @JKT48 account?	99%

NO	Sub-Indicator	Question	Percentage
5.	<i>persona's action and situation</i>	Do you find out the reasons behind the decisions made by JKT48 through @JKT48 X account?	79%
6.	<i>Activation of prior media and life experience</i>	Have you ever compared your life experiences with JKT48 members uploaded on X @JKT48 account?	70%
7.		Have you ever compared your achievements or accomplishments with JKT48 members uploaded on @JKT48's X account?	77%
8.	<i>Evaluations of persona and persona's actions</i>	Does the X @JKT48 account inform you of aspects that you like about JKT48?	100%
9.		Does the X @JKT48 account inform you of aspects that you dislike about JKT48?	76%
10.	<i>Anticipatory observation</i>	Do you follow the updates on @JKT48's X account to know the activities that JKT48 will be doing?	99%
11.	<i>Construction of relations between persona and self</i>	Do JKT48's posts on @JKT48's X account influence your decision towards JKT48?	92%
12.		Do you follow @JKT48's X account because you feel you have similar values with JKT48 members?	82%

Source: Processed by the researcher

The perceptual-cognitive indicator follows closely behind with a mean score of 0.89. This indicator explores fans' perceptions and understanding of their idols. As fans are continuously exposed to information about JKT48, particularly from the X account, their knowledge and awareness of the group deepen. The frequency and consistency of this exposure enhance the fans' perceptual understanding of the group. This indicator consists of six sub-indicators, namely: Attention Allocation, Comprehension of the Persona's Actions and Situation, Activation of Prior Media and Life Experience, Evaluations of the Persona and the Persona's Actions, Anticipatory Observation, and Construction of Relations Between the Persona and the self.

In the perceptual-cognitive process, fans' understanding of their idols increases as they receive more information about them. Question no. 8 "Does account X @JKT48 inform the aspects you like about JKT48?" got the highest percentage of all questions, which is 100%. So it can be concluded that all respondents feel that the X @JKT48 account provides information that they like about JKT48. In addition, it can also be interpreted that all

respondents know what aspects they like about JKT48. This indicates that the respondents already know and know about JKT48 in depth, and make cognitive evaluations to find out the aspects they like and dislike from JKT48. Evaluating idol behavior or actions is a process of evaluations of persona and persona's actions, which is one of the sub-indicators of perceptual-cognitive indicators. Assessments of what they like and dislike about the idol can arise from experiences while idolizing their idol (Wardani, 2021).

Question 6 "Have you ever compared your life experiences with JKT48 members uploaded on the X @JKT48 account?" has the lowest percentage of 70%. The context of this question is that the researcher wants to know whether the respondents have compared their life experiences with JKT48. Comparing life experiences is included in the Activation of prior media and life experience sub-indicator in the perceptual-cognitive indicator.

According to Dibble, Hartmann, and Rosaen (2016) Activation of prior media and life experience is a cognitive process where individuals perceive their idols based on the experiences they have had. Fans can get to know their idols more deeply when they know about the experiences their idols have had. The similarity of life experiences can be a strong foundation for parasocial interactions that occur. This means that respondents rarely compare their life experiences with JKT48 when they see posts on the X @JKT48 account. This result is also supported by the concept of the X @JKT48 account which more often uploads information and announcements, so there is very little opportunity for respondents to compare their life experiences with JKT48.

The frequent updates shared by JKT48 through their X account encourage fans to direct their attention to content related to the group. As fans are continuously exposed to these updates, they develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of JKT48. When a fan starts following their idol's social media account, they will continuously receive information about the idol's activities and upcoming events. This exposure fosters the fan's cognitive understanding of their idol, which in turn leads to a sense of closeness with them (Nuria et al., 2017).

The communication carried out by JKT48's public relations (PR) team focuses on building mutually beneficial relationships between the group and its fans. In practice, JKT48's PR applies the relationship management theory, which emphasizes fostering connections between an organization and its public (Nauli & Wardasari, 2022). According to Kriyantono (2014), several key principles define this theory: PR focuses on building relationships with the public, these relationships aim to bring mutual benefit to both the organization and its audience, and effective relationships enhance understanding between both parties.

The communication strategy used by JKT48 through the X account @JKT48 is a clear example of how the group works to build such relationships. The communication also serves to benefit both the fans and JKT48. The information shared helps fans stay updated on JKT48's activities. As of June 7, 2025, the @JKT48 account has consistently posted daily updates and announcements, averaging 2–3 posts per day. This frequency ensures that

followers of the account are constantly informed about the group’s activities.

The communication on the X account @JKT48 exemplifies how JKT48 attempts to build such relationships. The communication strategy aims to provide mutual value by informing fans about upcoming events and updates. As of June 7, 2025, the account actively posts daily, with 2–3 updates per day. This consistent communication ensures that followers stay informed about JKT48’s activities and maintain engagement.

The use of social media also reflects JKT48’s adoption of digital PR practices. In the era of rapid internet development, PR practitioners are required to utilize all available communication channels, including social media. X was chosen as the platform because it is where JKT48 fans gather and engage in discussions. It serves as a stage for fans to express their dedication to the group (Ramadhan & Yuliana, 2023). The use of X is therefore well-aligned with the behavior of the target audience, who prefer expressing themselves through this platform. Through the perceptual-cognitive process, fans begin to learn about and understand JKT48. This understanding then influences the affective and behavioral stages. The process of understanding is largely shaped by PR practices, which construct messages and consistently publish content through the X account. As fans gain a deeper understanding of the group, emotional attachment tends to follow (Hanan, 2021).

### *Affective*

The Affective indicator refers to the emotional aspect an individual has toward their idol. In the context of parasocial interaction, affective represents the emotional bond that connects an individual with their idol. This indicator includes three sub-indicators: Sympathy/Antipathy, Empathy/Counter-Empathy, and Emotion Contagion.

Table 1.3: Affective Indikator

NO	Sub-Indicator	Question	Percentage
1.	<i>Sympathy/ antipathy</i>	Do you like JKT48 because of their posts on the X @JKT48 account?	92%
2.		Do you dislike JKT48 because of its posts on the X @JKT48 account?	96%
3.	<i>Empathy/ counter empathy</i>	Do you feel sad when you know bad news about JKT48 that is shared on @JKT48's X account?	99%
4.		Do you feel that JKT48 members who violate the Golden Rules should receive appropriate sanctions, based on the information on @JKT48's X account?	98%

NO	Sub-Indicator	Question	Percentage
5.	Emotion contagion	Can the posts on @JKT48's X account affect your mood?	93%
6.		Can the posts on @JKT48's X account motivate you to become a better person?	95%

Source: Processed by the researcher

The *affective* indicator recorded the highest percentage score compared to the other two indicators. This finding suggests that respondents have a strong emotional attachment to JKT48, even though their interactions are limited to viewing posts on the X account @JKT48. Interestingly, the high level of emotional attachment does not influence fans' judgment when a member violates the rules they still expect appropriate disciplinary action to be taken.

When fans have a strong emotional bond to their idols, they not only appreciate the idol's work or performance, but also consider the idol as an important part of their lives (Amesz & Candranigrum, 2025). This can be seen through their emotional reactions when receiving negative or positive news related to their idols. Amesz and Candraningrum (2025) said that positive news about their idols can make fans feel more excited and motivated. Meanwhile, negative news can make them feel anxious and sad. This statement is in line with the results of the research that the researchers conducted, which can be seen through table 4.9 in question no. 3. Based on table 4.8, it can be seen in question no. 3 "Do you feel sad when you find out the bad news about JKT48 that is shared on the X @JKT48 account?" got a percentage of 99%. This means that almost all respondents also feel that they feel sad when the X @JKT48 account uploads unfavorable information about JKT48. The sympathy/antipathy sub-indicator refers to the feelings of liking or disliking that fans have toward their idols (Schramm & Hartmann, 2008). The empathy/counter-empathy sub-indicator refers to how fans experience the same feelings as their idols when the idols go through certain events. A high level of empathy toward the idol makes fans feel emotionally close and creates a special bond with the idol (Cahyani & Purnamasari, 2019). The process of developing empathy is a continuation of an individual's cognitive process toward their idol. When an individual knows and understands their idol, empathetic feelings are more likely to arise, especially when they find out that the idol is going through a difficult situation (Chung & Cho, 2017).

Through this table, it can be seen that although question no. 1 has the lowest percentage value, it is still at a high level for the level of parasocial interaction that occurs. These results indicate that the X @JKT48 account is one of the factors that make them like JKT48. The low percentage in this question is also influenced by the content on the X @JKT48 account, which is dominated by announcements or information. So that there are

very minimal aspects that can connect emotionally between fans and JKT48.

This strong affective parasocial interaction cannot be separated from the role of public relations (PR) in establishing an intense and transparent relationship with the fans. PR plays a crucial role in fostering parasocial interactions by delivering values and messages transparently. Public relations (PR) plays a key role in communicating messages to fans, especially during times of crisis. In this context, the crisis refers to situations where a member of JKT48 is involved in a violation or misconduct. PR is responsible for managing the crisis in a way that protects the image of JKT48. PR contributes significantly to the formation and maintenance of a positive public image (Maiorescu, 2017). In such situations, PR must be able to provide clear explanations to fans to prevent the spread of misinformation and to minimize negative impact on the group. Transparency is essential during a crisis (Maiorescu, 2017). Fans have the right to be informed about the actions JKT48 intends to take in response to the incident.

Open and consistent parasocial engagement can help mitigate negative impacts during times of crisis (Maiorescu, 2017). This is evident when rule violations occur—fans still demand firm consequences for the member involved, while also hoping that the individual learns from their mistakes and grows into a better person. The quality of the relationship and the depth of parasocial interaction become especially critical when the idol faces a crisis or controversy (Maiorescu, 2017). Such a relationship would not exist if parasocial interactions were not properly maintained. Emotional involvement with an idol can be deeply felt, even without direct communication or physical encounters (Rojek, 2015). At the heart of parasocial interaction is the fan's ability to feel emotionally connected to their idol (Rojek, 2015).

This emotional attachment (affective) is particularly evident when fans express sadness upon hearing negative news about JKT48, such as a member's graduation or health issues. These reactions fall under the empathy/counter-empathy sub-indicator, highlighting that parasocial relationships are formed not only cognitively but also emotionally (Klimmt, 2006). Moments like graduations often lead to parasocial breakups, wherein fans experience emotional loss (Eyal & Cohen, 2006).

### ***Behavioral***

The Behavioral indicator refers to an individual's behavioral responses toward their idol. These responses may include physical actions such as gestures, facial expressions, or behaviors, as well as verbal and nonverbal expressions. This indicator also addresses an individual's intentions or desires to take certain actions related to their idol. It consists of three sub-indicators: Nonverbal Behavior, Verbal Behavior, and Behavioral Intention.

Social media platforms offer features that support the occurrence of parasocial interaction. X, as one of these platforms, provides features that make it easier for fans to respond to what their idols post. These features include like, retweet, and reply (Wardani &

Kusuma, 2021). The convenience offered by these features can make fans feel a sense of closeness to their idols (Wardani & Kusuma, 2021)

Table 1.4: Behavioral Indicator

NO	Sub-Indicator	Question	Percentage
1.	<i>Nonverbal behavior</i>	Have you ever copied the expressions or poses of JKT48 members shown on the @JKT48 X account?	81%
2.		Have you ever used emojis to express your feelings in the comment section of @JKT48's X account?	74%
3.	<i>Verbal behavior</i>	Have you ever written a response in the comment section uploaded by @JKT48's X account?	82%
4.	<i>Behavioral intention</i>	Would you like to repost @JKT48's posts on your X account?	93%
5.		Do you have the desire to give a "like" to @JKT48 account X uploads?	100%

Source: Processed by the researcher

The behavioral indicator refers to individuals' behavioral responses toward their idols. These responses can include physical actions such as gestures, facial expressions, or behaviors, as well as verbal and non-verbal actions. This indicator also covers individuals' intentions or desires to act toward their idols. Within this indicator, there are three sub-indicators: nonverbal behavior, verbal behavior, and behavioral intention.

X, as one of these platforms, offers features that allow fans to easily respond to the content posted by their idols. These features include likes, retweets, and replies (Wardani & Kusuma, 2021). The accessibility and simplicity of these tools help fans feel a sense of closeness and connection with their idols (Wardani & Kusuma, 2021).

X, as a social media platform, offers features such as likes, retweets, and replies that allow fans to interact with their idols' content (Wardani & Kusuma, 2021). These easy-to-use features foster a sense of closeness between fans and their idols (Wardani & Kusuma, 2021). Survey results indicate that respondents most frequently expressed a desire to like posts from the @JKT48 account. It can be seen that question no. 5 "Do you have the desire to give a 'like' to the @JKT48 X account upload?" Has the highest percentage of 100% compared to other questions. This question is used to measure the behavioral intentions sub indicator. This

sub indicator discusses the behavioral intentions of fans to do something to their idols (Wardani & Kusuma, 2021).

This liking that has grown first encourages them to more easily and spontaneously give “like” to every upload published by the account. This is also supported by their deep understanding of JKT48 (cognitive) and the emotional attachment between respondents and JKT48 (Ramadhan & Yuliana, 2023). When fans see a post from JKT48, they already possess prior knowledge and emotional attachment, prompting them to engage. Respondents also preferred to use nonverbal communication in the reply section such as written responses over simple emojis when reacting to JKT48's content.

Question 2 “Have you ever used emojis to express your feelings in the comment section of account X @JKT48?” has the lowest percentage of 74%. The question was used by the researcher to measure the nonverbal behavior sub-indicator of the respondents towards the posts on the X @JKT48 account. In the context of this question, the researcher wants to know whether the respondents use emojis as their communication tool to convey feelings to their idols. Emoji is one form of non-verbal communication that exists on social media. Emoji can be used as a symbol to represent their feelings towards a post (Bakhtiar, Sukamto & Pramono, 2022).

Based on this data, it can be interpreted that emojis are not a tool that respondents use to show their expressions or opinions. Emoji cannot fully replace direct nonverbal messages, especially in digital communication (Bakhtiar, Sukamto & Pramono, 2022). Fans will be more likely to write their opinions directly in the replay column as can be seen in table 4.9 the question “Have you ever written a response in the reply column on @JKT48 account X uploads?” has a higher percentage of 82%. It can be interpreted that respondents tend to prefer to convey their opinions verbally rather than nonverbally. Giving responses in the reply column is one form of verbal communication that fans do to their idols.

Technological advancements have enabled highly personalized and direct communication. Organizations now have the ability to communicate with their publics more efficiently and cost-effectively through various digital platforms (Bourne, 2022). PR practitioners must take advantage of these developments to build and maintain relationships. Social media, in particular, serves as one of the most accessible digital PR tools. JKT48's consistent communication through its X account exemplifies the practice of digital PR. However, one contributing factor to the relatively lower parasocial interaction in the behavioral indicator is the lack of personalized communication and the frequent use of formal, rigid language. This may reduce fans' sense of intimacy, making their interaction feel less personal and ultimately limiting the strength of parasocial bonds compared to the other two indicators. All three indicators are interconnected. Through perceptual-cognitive processes, fans seek and absorb information about JKT48. This understanding evolves into emotional closeness (affective), which then manifests in behavioral responses such as mimicking styles or following the group's activities (Wardani & Kusuma, 2021).

## CONCLUSION

The research concludes that the level of parasocial interaction between JKT48 and their followers on the X platform (formerly Twitter) is high across all three measured indicators: perceptual-cognitive, affective, and behavioral. Among these, the affective indicator reflecting emotional responses was found to be the strongest. This suggests that fans of JKT48 develop a deep emotional attachment to the group through their interactions on the platform, despite the lack of direct two-way communication.

The high score in the perceptual-cognitive dimension shows that followers pay close attention to JKT48's activities, understand the content they share, and relate it to their own experiences. Meanwhile, the behavioral indicator, though slightly lower, still reflects consistent fan engagement, such as commenting, sharing posts, or mimicking expressions shown by members.

This study highlights the effectiveness of digital public relations strategies employed by the JKT48 Operation Team (JOT), which successfully foster a strong sense of connection and loyalty among fans through their X account, even under restrictive interaction rules (e.g., not replying to fans' comments). This study also emphasizes the vital role of JKT48's public relations in maintaining communication with fans, especially during times of crisis. Well-established parasocial relationships can help mitigate negative impacts, provided that the information shared is transparent and open (Wahid, 2024).

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Future studies could examine parasocial interactions using other digital platforms like Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube to see how social media influences fan engagement. Future studies could explore parasocial relationships on JKT48's other social media accounts, using either qualitative or quantitative approaches. This study employed a quantitative method, which limits the ability to explore deeper psychological motivations. JKT48's PR team should maintain and enhance their digital communication strategies. Despite limited interactions, they have succeeded in building strong fan connections, suggesting room to optimize content delivery for sustained engagement.

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