

TikTok Users' Perception of Natasha Surya's Personal Branding on Social Media

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Abstract. This study aims to find out the perception of Tiktok users towards Natasha Surya's personal branding on TikTok social media. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method to find data related to audience perception in seeing the success rate of Natasha Surya's personal branding and emphasizes more on the theory used to reach the conclusion stage, data collection through primary interviews with *Whatsapp media* and the content of Natasha Surya's account on TikTok. Data mining was carried out by means of open interviews. This study refers to Bernard Barelson's Theory of Perception in researching the perception of Natasha's personal branding. The results of the analysis show that Natasha Surya has succeeded in building a strong and effective personal branding perception on Tiktok through aesthetic, relevant, and inspiring visuals.

Keywords: Tiktok, Perception, Personal Branding, Content Creator, Natasha Surya

INTRODUCTION

Perception is the process by which individuals capture, interpret, and give meaning to information received through the five senses (Hakim et al., 2021). In everyday life, perception affects the way we understand the world and interact with others. In today's digital age, perception is not only limited to direct interaction, but also plays an important role in how we receive and judge information in the media, especially social media (V. K. daughter, 2023). The development of technology and social media has changed the way perceptions are formed and influenced. In an increasingly connected world, the positive public perception of an individual or brand on social media can increase successful efforts in building a refrigerated image

This is where personal branding is a strategic effort to form and maintain a self-image that is in accordance with individual or brand goals. However, the success of personal branding depends heavily on how the audience perceives the message conveyed (Jacobson, 2020). So that if the perception and response of the audience is positive in harmony with the image to be formed, then personal branding will be more successful, according to what the individual wants. On the other hand, if the perception formed is negative or inconsistent, then the personal branding efforts can fail (S. D. Putri & Azeharie, 2021). The formation of strong characters or characteristics in order to form the individual more easily known to the public, by forming personal branding. There is an important thing in building personal branding, namely by involving other people's thoughts and feelings. If understanding and managing audience perception is a key element in creating personal branding which is effective on social media. Good perception can increase trust, build strong relationships with audiences, and ultimately create a positive and sustainable image and be able to build strong relationships with other people's thoughts and feelings, so personal branding becomes strong and whole (McNally & Speak, 2004:14 in The 2020-2020-).

Efforts to build perceptions to form personal branding on social media, a figure *content creator* They are not always active in uploading on all social media, on the contrary, they tend to choose certain social media platforms to develop their personal branding in order to get attention, perception assessment from the audience so that it is not bad (Rachmawati & Nurhajati, 2019 in The 2020-2020-. Thus, the social media platform that is a means of forming personal branding that is carried out with the fastest development and is known around the world is the TikTok platform.

Tiktok is included in the category of social media platforms that allow its users to (Hidayatul

Mulyana Anisa, 2023)create, edit, and share short video clips with a duration of fifteen to sixty seconds (Winarso, 2021 in Dinata & Aulia, 2022:2). This platform also provides a variety of features and filters such as music, live broadcasts, stickers, video effects, voice changers, and tiktok captions

Based on this, Tiktok is one of the applications on social media that uses an algorithm on its main page, known as "*For You*" atau disingkat *FYP (For You Page)* (S. D. Putri & Azeharie, 2021). The Tiktok platform has claimed itself as the most downloaded platform, with 45.8 million downloads, surpassing the number of downloads from other popular apps such as Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Facebook Messenger (Ferira, 2022). The Tik Tok platform includes a Chinese social network and music video platform launched in September 2016 (Bulele & Wibowo, 2020). The Tiktok platform has been popular in 2021 – 2022, the average active users of Tiktok have spread all over the world, calculated in more than 150 countries so that this platform, although it was only projected in 2016 in China, however, the increase in the number of active users continues to increase every year in all countries in the world (Daniel Ruby, 2022 in Alifya et al., 2023:2).

In general, the type of Tik Tok platform is different from other social media platforms, that Tik Tok is a social media platform that stands out with a more spontaneous and natural style compared to YouTube and Instagram. Tik Tok users generally display daily activities, make parody videos of movies, or music clips with normal content themes. The character of Tik Tok content is characterized by its nature that prioritizes fun and entertainment, often containing educational and informative information, making it more than just an ordinary video. (Farid Ardiansyah, 2023)

The growing popularity of the Tiktok social media platform, making it an opportunity for individual Tiktok users known as "*Creator Content*", a content creator himself is a new profession in creating content, whether content in the form of images, writing, video, sound, or a combination of one to two materials at once, and each content creator itself must have a uniqueness that makes them different from other content creators (Zhazaretta & Gahardi, 2023). In addition, content creators also play a crucial role in creating and disseminating information through the Instagram social media platform, including in producing informative content. (Zhazaretta & Gahardi, 2023). This is a form of effort to maintain this content so that it remains known by Tik Tok users requires uniqueness and maintaining self-image or self-branding on Tiktok social media.

Natasha Surya who is a *Creator content* On the Tik Tok social media platform, which has been producing and publishing videos for quite a long time, it has inspired many Tik Tok audiences. Have 1.7 M followers (*followers*) and 625.7K Likes, by pioneering a tiktok account starting in 2017 in shanghai (Jauhariya et al., 2022).

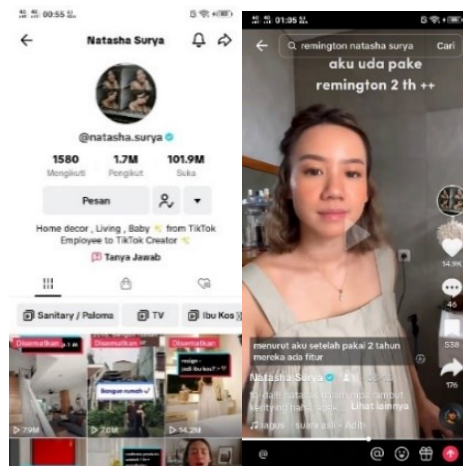


Figure 1. Natasha Surya's Tiktok Account Profile
Source: @natasha.surya Tiktok account, 2024

Starting his career as *Community Manager* Tiktok Indonesia. Vulnerable time working as an employee for 4 years at the Tiktok Indonesia company. Therefore, Natasha Surya is known as a passionate, knowledgeable, creative, authentic, and engaging individual when reviewing, it can be seen in the content video Natasha does not just review the product. Reviewing it with a communication process whose delivery affects and attracts attention (Hariyant, 2021). namely by Engineering *storytelling* which is typical of Natasha Surya, with personal branding that she forms through the way she dresses, speaks, language style, and attitude.

Natasha Surya's personal branding has been formed quite strongly, accompanied by its consistency from 2017 to 2024, as evidenced by the eight stages of personal branding that Natasha has made, namely Specialization (The law of specialization), Leadership (The law of leadership), Personality (The law of personality), Difference (The law of distinctiveness), Visible (The law of visibility), The law of unity, the law of persistence, and the law of goodwill. After the discovery of Natasha Surya's personal branding, the researcher immediately researched how the perception of the success rate of personal branding was by using Bernard Barelson's Perception Theory with indicators consisting of (Sensation, Attention, and Interpretation). Therefore, in this study, the researcher created an update that distinguishes it from similar previous research research, however, there are several previous studies that are used as a reference by researchers.

Previous research that is used as a reference in this writing consists of 4 reference journal articles. 3 domestic journal articles and 1 international journal article. First, a journal article entitled "personal branding content creator on Instagram social media" written by Debora Lois, Diah Ayu Candraningrum the media object used in Debora's research is the Instagram social media platform and the account they researched is engaged in fashion, skincare and makeup, while the media object of this research focuses on the platform on Tiktok social media with the presentation of natural content that is produced briefly and informatively, uses the "FYP" algorithm system in its main page. At the same time, the account that I researched leads to the field of education about home décor, life style which is very inspiring and not only creates content but the account reviews it with communication style techniques (Debora Loi, 2021)*story telling*, which is packaged in an inspirational and educational way. The two journal articles entitled "Tiktok as a personal branding media for Melinda Rohita" written by Farid Ardiansyah, Kukuh Sinduwiatmo are the results of data collection used in this study through documentation techniques, data collected in the form of words, images, photos and video recordings belonging to the account being researched and not using observation techniques, interviews with old followers and new followers, and focuses on personal branding in the field of communication style techniques in marketing products on Tiktok live streaming, while this study uses primary data interview observation techniques to ten Tiktok users and only focuses on the formation of personal branding in the field of reviewing products with communication style techniques (Farid Ardiansyah, Tiktok Sebagai Media Personal Branding Melinda Rohita, 2023)*story telling* on Tiktok video content. The three journal articles entitled "A case study of personal branding of content creators on the @Brojabrooo twitter account written by Dhanar Jabro Febiansah, Sudono Syueb (Ratnasari, 2020) The media objects used in Dhanar's research are through platforms on social media twitter, while in this study using media objects on the Tiktok platform with a focus on Tiktok users' perceptions of the formation of personal branding in the field of reviewing products with communication style techniques *story telling* on Tiktok video content.

The fourth journal article entitled "You are a brand: social media managers personal branding and the future audience" written by Jenna Jacobson, (Jacobson, 2020) The personal branding used in Jenna's research leads to career success through the formation of personal branding, how individuals

project curated brands for all unknown and unanticipated audiences in the future, emphasizing professional identity. Due to workplace uncertainty, social media managers have an "always in the job market" mentality, which is a driver of personal branding in their efforts to secure or retain a job. Meanwhile, this study focuses on the perception of Tiktok users regarding Natasha's personal branding process on the Tiktok social media platform. In this case, the researcher also has the goals and benefits of this research, as well as the achievements in writing this research.

Therefore, the researcher takes the perception of the audience of TikTok users as the subject in this study. The object of this study is the branding of @natasha.surya as the target of this perception, namely the personal branding of Tiktok content creators who have a track record in Natasha's success in building personal branding in her career on the Tiktok platform. So the reason why the researcher chose Natasha Surya's Tiktok account is of course because of the success of personal branding formed by Natasha, with after the formation of Natasha Surya's personal branding, the researcher wanted to know how the audience of Natasha Surya Tiktok users is perceived in the success of the formation of her personal branding on Tiktok social media. Moreover, the content on Natasha's Tiktok account excels in content that inspires many people, with the communication style used, which is storytelling "storytelling" By sharing stories about the world of work, education about home décor, inspiring life journeys. Therefore, there are several questions that Researchers investigate in depth about *Natasha Surya's personal branding perception on the TikTok social media platform*, by highlighting the questions asked such as how Tiktok users' perception responds to the formation of an image that is consistent with the identity that Natasha Surya has built, and whether the achievement of Natasha's personal branding success has been successful in the eyes of Tiktok users, examining the informant's perception of the uniqueness and characteristics that distinguish Natasha Surya's TikTok account from other accounts. This study focuses on how to perceive personal branding by using Bernard Barelson's Theory of Perception with indicators consisting of (Sensation, Attention, and Interpretation). It is hoped that the results of this study will not only provide benefits and references for the general public, but also provide valuable insights into the importance of personal branding in today's digital era, especially through TikTok, providing a practical view of the urgency of forming personal branding on social media platforms such as TikTok, which ultimately has a positive impact on a person's career journey.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method with the aim of analyzing the perception of the Tiktok user audience towards personal branding on the account @natasha. Surya. The object of this research is personal branding packaged through content produced by Natasha Surya on Tiktok, while the subject of the research is the perception of the audience of Tiktok users. The data collection technique was carried out through interviews with ten informants who had experience in using the Tiktok platform. The selection of these ten informants was carried out purposively, focusing on users who did not follow Natasha Surya but were exposed to their content organically through the "For You Page" or other interactions on Tiktok. In addition, observation techniques to understand how Natasha Surya builds and maintains her personal branding on the Tiktok platform through the perception of the Tiktok user audience. The interview was conducted through the Whatsapp platform, with categories of questions that included first experience and initial attraction, sensations and emotions, attention and attention factors, interpretation and meaning of content, personal connections and values, influence and change in views, and differences with other content creators.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the results of the data analysis above, which was carried out under the title "Natasha Surya's Personal Branding Perception on Tiktok Social Media", through the @natasha.surya account. The results of the research obtained through interviews with 10 informants, interviews were conducted through the Whatsapp platform to gain an in-depth understanding of Natasha Surya's personal branding perception on Tiktok social media, the informants involved in this study have diverse backgrounds, allowing a more comprehensive analysis of how Natasha Surya's personal branding is perceived by her audience. The main findings of this interview include three main aspects of sensation, attention, and interpretation. This research explores how audiences perceive their digital presence, how their attention is drawn by the content they create, and how they interpret the message conveyed through the content. The results of this analysis provide insight into the effectiveness of the personal branding strategy used by Natasha Surya and how it shapes the audience's perception of her on social media.

The results of interviews with 10 informants show various perceptions of Natasha Surya's personal branding on Tiktok, which are analyzed using three main aspects of Bernard Rielson's theory: Sensation, Attention, and Interpretation.

- A. Sensation : Sensory processes in this context refer to the way the brain receives and processes information through the Senses including sight, touch, smell, and taste. In this study, most of the stimuli received by the informants came from the vision system, which plays a central role in responding to the content generated by the Tiktok account @natasha.surya. Visually stimulated intensely by the visual stimuli presented in the content, the informants reported that they were interested and impressed by the aesthetics of the content, which was described as "aesthetic, minimalist, the tone of the video is very pleasing to the eye and harmonious, resulting in consistent feeds in a single color unit. In addition, the stability of shooting in the video is also a factor that improves visual quality, thus creating a professional and attractive impression. The informant also reported that Natasha's performance and expression in each content also contributed to the perception received by the informants. They consider Natasha to be a person who is always *Happy* and brings *vibe positive*, which is reflected in her facial expressions. This visualization not only beautifies the appearance of the content but also serves as a tool to convince the audience about the authenticity and attractiveness of Natasha's content. Thus, the visual appearance in Natasha's content not only plays a role in strengthening aesthetic appeal but also becomes a key element in building engagement from informants. Engaging visuals attract attention, create emotional connections, and reinforce the message you want to convey, thereby increasing audience engagement with the content being shown. This shows how important visual sensation is in the perception process, especially in the context of social media such as Tiktok, where visuals are one of the main components in attracting and retaining the audience's attention. From the questions "How would you describe the sensation or feeling you experience while watching Natasha Surya's content on Tik Tok?" and "Are there any aspects of Natasha Surya's personal branding on Tik Tok that make you feel connected to your personal values or interests? Explain." From this question, this sensation is included in the personal branding indicator "Personality (The Laws Of Personality) with Natasha Surya's personal characteristics or character that attracts attention, the emotional closeness felt by the audience.
- B. Attention: is a cognitive process that allows a person to focus on certain stimuli while ignoring others. In the process of perception, attention is very important because it determines the extent to which a person will process the information he receives. Attention is influenced by two main factors, namely biological factors, which are related to the brain's natural response to stimuli, and sociopsychological factors, which are related to interests, needs, and social contexts.

- Biological Factors: includes the brain's response to attention-grabbing stimuli. Based on interviews with informants, Natasha's storytelling in conveying content is one of the main elements that attract their attention. Natasha leverages visual and narrative abilities to create compelling storylines, from introduction to product promotion. This storytelling process is carried out in a smooth way, so that it is able to capture and maintain the attention of the informant. With the use of compelling visuals and structured narratives, the informant's brain is stimulated to focus on the content that Natasha delivers, especially when she is promoting a product or displaying *home décor*.
 - Sociopsychological factors: involve the influence of interests, needs, and social environment in determining what attracts a person's attention. In this case, Natasha managed to attract the attention of informants by connecting her content with their interests, such as *home décor* or a specific product that is being promoted. This interest not only sparks attention, but also creates deeper engagement with the content. The informant revealed that the desire to buy the product reviewed by Natasha arose because their attention was focused on the explanations and solutions provided in detail. By providing relevant and useful information, Natasha successfully utilizes sociopsychological factors to influence the attention of information, so that they are more open to the product recommendations presented. Overall, information attention to Natasha Surya's content on Tiktok is influenced by a combination of biological factors and sociopsychological factors. Engaging and structured storytelling triggers the brain's response, while connections with social interests and needs reinforce the focus and engagement of information. This allows Natasha to effectively influence the Tiktok audience and strengthen the personal branding she has built on the Tiktok social media platform. From the informant's answer above, this stage of the attention process is included in the personal branding indicator "Ter; ihat (The Laws Of Visibility) and "The Laws Of Distinctiveness" which are evidenced by the attention stage through how often Natasha Surya's content appears on the Tiktok feed, the existence of activities in building an online presence in the Tiktok user audience and the difference between Natasha and other content creators that provide more attraction for the Tiktok user audience.
- C. Interpretation: interpretation or interpretation is the most important process in perception because perception is a communication to group information, so that it has meaning for each individual. Interpretation is the stage of giving meaning to stimuli that have been received or felt by the sensory apparatus. From the results of the research conducted with ten informants, Natasha is considered a figure who not only provides information but also inspiration, especially in the topic of *home décor* and *parenting*, her content is considered very useful and able to provide new ideas for those who are interested in this field. Natasha is seen as someone who is able to convey in-depth and practical information, making her a source of inspiration for her audience. In addition, Natasha is perceived as an educational figure, especially for the younger generation who need new knowledge and insights. In each of her contents, Natasha not only reviews products, but also provides tips and shares her personal experiences. This provides more value, because informants feel that they are getting something more than just product information, they are gaining knowledge that is useful and relevant to their activities. Natasha is also considered to be able to influence the lifestyle of her informants. Her personal experiences shared in the content, such as parenting, her storytelling, minimalist lifestyle, provide an ideal picture for women in the future. His warm and meaningful delivery style makes his content easier to receive and appreciate by the audience, compared to his content creators. The informant also highlighted the aesthetic aspect of Natasha's content, which was considered very simple but full of meaning. An attractive visual display, combined with an inspiring delivery, creates its own appeal that is able to influence the

audience. This can be seen from how Natasha was able to 'hypnotize' informants to consider the product being reviewed, not only because of the quality of the product itself, but also because of the way Natasha conveyed it with confidence and warmth. Thus, the interpretation of Natasha Surya's content shows that she has succeeded in building a strong and influential personal branding. The content is not only informative but also inspiring, capable of educating, influencing lifestyles, and creating a strong emotional connection with its audience. This interpretation reinforces the perception that Natasha is an authentic and influential figure on the Tiktok platform, who is able to make her content a source of inspiration and reference for many people. From the informant's answer above, this stage of the interpretation process is included in the personal branding indicators "The Laws Of Unity" and "The Laws Of Goodwill" which is evidenced by the interpretation stage that Natasha has succeeded in having consistency between Natasha's personal values and the content she shares positively, the alignment of Natasha's image with the product or lifestyle promoted and Natasha getting a positive reputation in the eyes of the audience. The audience's trust in the products they promote is established.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study shows that Natasha Surya has succeeded in building an audience's perception of strong and effective personal branding on Tiktok through a visually captivating, informative, and inspiring content approach. The sensational process experienced by the informants is dominated by aesthetic and consistent visual appeal, which creates a positive and professional impression. Informants' attention is focused on subtle and engaging storytelling, as well as the relevance of the content to their personal interests, such as *home decor* and recommended products. In her interpretation, the informant sees Natasha as a *sosok* who not only provides information, but also inspires and educates her audience, especially in parenting and lifestyle topics. The emotional connection that Natasha builds between her and her audience strengthens their engagement with the content presented, showing that Natasha has managed to make her content an influential source of inspiration and reference on TikTok.

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