

Reception Analysis of Public's View of Gay Couples on @chiko_ingham's TikTok Account

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INTRODUCTION

Social media, especially TikTok, has become a wide space of expression for various groups, including the LGBT community. Through this platform, sexual identities—such as gay couples—gain visibility and openly share their lives. One example is the TikTok account @chiko_ingham, which showcases the daily life of a gay couple with a child and has sparked diverse responses from Indonesian society. This study examines public responses to such content and analyzes the influence of social, cultural, and religious factors. Using Stuart Hall's Reception Theory, it explores how audiences interpret the representation of gay couples in digital media.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS & OBJECTIVES

- This study explores both positive and negative responses of followers toward the content.
- It identifies the social, cultural, and educational factors shaping public perceptions.
- The main objective is to analyze how audiences receive and interpret gay couples' content on TikTok.

METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative method. Data were collected through non-participatory observation of @chiko_ingham's content and in-depth interviews conducted via TikTok direct messages (DM) with four informants.

THEORETICAL

Reception theory developed by Stuart Hall explains that the media communication process depends not only on the message produced by the creator, but also on how the audience interprets the message. Reception theory is used in this study because it focuses on how audiences interpret and respond to gay couple content on TikTok. This theory explains that each individual has a different understanding of media messages, depending on their social, cultural and educational backgrounds.

FINDINGS

The main results are divided into three categories of reception

- **Dominant Hegemonic Position** This is the response of TikTok users who fully accept and support the content of gay couples. They consider that everyone has the right to express their identity, and see this content as a form of diversity advocacy, and can educate the public about the importance of respecting human rights.
- **Negotiated Position** This is a group of users who show a moderate attitude. They recognize the right of gay couples to express themselves, but still have restrictions based on their cultural and religious values.
- **Oppositional Position** Users in this category reject the existence of gay couple content, and consider that it contradicts the religious, cultural and moral values of Indonesian society. and some feel that this kind of content has the potential to mislead children and adolescents who do not yet have a strong self-identity.

KEY INSIGHTS

Public responses to gay couples on TikTok vary—from strong support to moderate acceptance, and outright rejection. These responses are shaped by cultural, religious, educational, and digital environmental factors. TikTok serves as both a platform of expression for LGBT identities and a site of social debate. The @chiko_ingham account illustrates how non-traditional families appear in public space and trigger discussions on diversity and social acceptance in Indonesia.

RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION

This study provides deeper insights into how Indonesian society responds to gay couples on social media, particularly TikTok. It can serve as an academic reference in communication studies, digital media, and gender studies, as well as guidance for content creators, the public, and policymakers in addressing sexual diversity in digital spaces.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that public perception of gay couples on TikTok, especially @chiko_ingham, is diverse. Some see it positively as freedom of expression, others take a moderate stance based on social and cultural values, while some reject it as contrary to norms and potentially harmful for the younger generation. Cultural, religious, educational, and social factors strongly influence these views. This research not only portrays public reception but also opens broader discussions on social dynamics, acceptance, and challenges of gender diversity in the digital era.

