



# Personal Branding Male Beauty Influencers on Tiktok in Indonesia (Virtual Ethnographic Study on Tiktok Account @azkhategar391 @ibrawrrrr @maharajasp8)

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## ABSTRACT

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The presence of social media provides the freedom to upload and share things that users want, such as promoting brands. One of the social media platforms that can be used is Tiktok. The presence of Tiktok makes it easy for influencers to build personal branding, one of which is for male beauty influencers. Beauty influencers have become a profession associated with women, even though the makeup is now also done by men. In Indonesia, beauty influencers are a non-majority profession for men, their emergence is often considered deviant and unusual. Azkha Tegar, Ibra, and Putu Maharaja are some of the male beauty influencers in Indonesia. To survive and gain trust, male beauty influencers must have value and uniqueness, which can be formed through social media's right personal branding strategy, especially on TikTok. This research aims to find out how Azkha Tegar, Ibra, and Putu Maharaja build their personal branding as male beauty influencers on Tiktok social media. This research uses virtual ethnographic methods. The results of this research show that using Tiktok provides a platform for Azkha, Ibra, and Maharaja to strengthen their personal branding, build closeness with their followers, and express themselves creatively. Social media such as TikTok is important in building personal branding and facilitating and expanding individual social interactions.

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## 1. Introduction

Social media gives its users the freedom to upload and share what their users want. Social media on the internet has different character facilities (Nasrullah, 2017). One form of new media using internet-based social media is Tiktok. Tiktok is an application that is quite popular and has many users. According to research data (Kemp, 2023) shows that active users of the Tiktok application in Indonesia will increase by 109.9 million in 2023.

The Tiktok application is a social media means of self-expression for its users, which involves conducting live streaming and uploading stories, photos, and videos (Novalina et al., 2021). However, now, Tiktok can also be used to carry out marketing activities by various industries. In the Tiktok application, a company or seller can sell or promote their products through their profile or through other people. Usually, sellers or companies ask for promotions from people with personal branding that matches the classification desired by the seller or company.

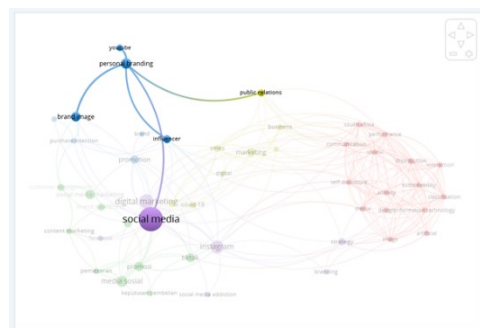
Having personal branding is a big attraction on various media platforms, especially on the Tiktok application. When discussing personal branding, our name is the brand we carry (Suryatmaja & Astawa, 2022). Almost everyone can now say that he has a personal brand. In personal branding, a person will form their own image by displaying various content on their social media accounts.

Everyone competes to build personal branding according to their expertise and interests (Hou, 2022). There is no exception to those who are called celebrities on social media or commonly known as Influencers.

An influencer is a public figure with many visitors and followers or has a number which is of course also significant and all things which are more about influencing the people who follow them (Angellice & Irvan, 2022). Influencers are present with the capacity that they have to influence Influencer followers in many fields through the content they create, one of which is in the field of beauty, which is usually known as a beauty influencer. The beauty influencer profession is often identified with female figures. Even though the majority of beauty influencers are women, in fact the use of makeup is not only done by women. Men are also starting to use makeup in their daily lives and on social media such as Tiktok (Angellice & Irvan, 2022). At first, the content created was only about men's grooming, such as hair styling and shaving. However, as development progressed, these men started making product reviews and even makeup tutorials (Octavianus & Oktavianti, 2022). With this phenomenon, the term male beauty influencer emerged.

Male beauty influencer is a term for a man who creates content, photos and videos, about the beauty world (Agustina, 2022). These male beauty influencers combine masculine and feminine physical characteristics in their makeup appearance at the same time. The existence of male beauty influencers has been exploited by the world beauty industry in its marketing communications activities. Beauty influencers in Indonesia are still a non-majority profession for men. However, now men have emerged who work as male beauty influencers. Even though they are still inferior in number to female beauty influencers. Due to their non-majority presence, male beauty influencers need to build their personal branding well to compete with female beauty influencers

In this research, researchers chose male TikTok beauty influencer accounts, namely Azkha Tegar @azkhategar39, Ibra @ibrawrrrr, and Putu Maharaja @maharajasp8. As male beauty influencers, they build their branding through one of their social media platforms, TikTok, to be recognized and remembered for their respective styles and characteristics. There is Azka Tegar with the Tiktok account owner @azkhategar39 who currently has 10.9 million followers and 206.3 million likes. The content uploaded is makeup in the form of tutorials and transitions. Next, there is Ibra with the Tiktok account owner @ibrawrrrr who currently has 1.2 million followers and 31.7 million likes. The content uploaded includes tips and tricks, education, and makeup transitions. Apart from that, Putu Maharaja has the Tiktok account @maharajasp8, which currently has 576.4 thousand followers and 15.3 million likes. The uploaded content concerns beauty skincare, tips and tricks, tutorials, and skin care education. In order to see the novelty of research regarding the Personal Branding of Male Beauty Influencers, a supporting tool was used, namely VOSviewer software. The database used is within the last five years (2019-2023) with search results from Harzing's Publish or Perish software or application. Enter the keyword "Personal branding on Social Media" and get 960 out of 1000 papers. The VOSviewer visualization results can be seen in Figure 5 with the visualization mapping "co-occurrence (title and abstract fields)" and Network Visualization.



**Figure 1.** Network Visualization on co-occurrence

Through network visualization mapping, personal branding items have nothing to do with beauty, male, and Tiktok among influencers. Of the 960 papers obtained, several studies specifically explain personal branding on social media.

Research conducted by (Ramadini, 2022) used qualitative methods with an interpretive paradigm. This research explains that Yudhistira's personal branding strategy has authenticity and a clear vision, a code of behaviour and morals, is consistent, focuses on one area, has relevance, is considered credible and recognized, highlights uniqueness, has visibility, is well-known to followers and clients, has the tenacity and maintain your existence by paying attention to your character and being who you are. This is in line with Rampersad's eleven criteria for authentic personal branding, and from the strategy implemented and Yudhistira's uniqueness, he gained the trust of the female audience on Instagram in the beauty field. Research conducted by (Ishihara & Oktavianti, 2021) used a qualitative approach with a case study method. This research explains that being an influencer requires understanding the concept of personal branding. The concept used in this research is personal branding, which was coined by Peter Montoya, namely, specialization, leadership, personality, difference, visibility, unity, steadfastness, and good name. Of these eight concepts, the Tiktok account owner @veliaveve is very well used to create personal branding on social media. From these key studies, a gap or novelty was found in this research, namely that there is still relatively little research that discusses male beauty influencers on social media Tiktok using a virtual ethnographic approach. So, this research is important to research.

## 2. Method

This research uses a qualitative approach. According to Steven Dukeshire and Jennifer Thurlow (2002) in (Sugiyono, 2020). Qualitative research deals with non-numerical data, as well as collecting and analyzing narrative data. Meanwhile (Sugiyono, 2020) said that qualitative research is a method based on postpositivism or interpretive philosophy, used to examine the condition of natural objects. Holistically and using descriptions in words and language, in a special natural context and by utilizing various natural methods (Moleong, 2016). The researcher chose qualitative research to obtain data and information extracted to describe the personal branding of Azkha Tegar, Ibra, Putu Maharaja on the TikTok social media account

The research method used in this research is virtual ethnography. According to (Nasrullah, 2022), ethnographic methods are used to reveal the visible and invisible reality of computer-mediated communication between entities (members) of virtual communities on the internet. Virtual ethnography also reflects on the implications of mediated communication on the internet. There are different levels of analysis that will be used in this research using the virtual ethnography method (Nasrullah, 2022).

**Table 1.** Virtual Ethnographic Levels of Analysis

Level	Objek
Media space	Media device structure and appearance are related to technical application procedures.
Media archive	Content and aspects of text meaning as cultural artifacts
Media object	Interactions that occur on social media and communication that occurs between community members through comments and forums
Experiental Stories	Motives, effects, benefits related online and offline in the form of recommendations.

The data collection technique used in this research is non-participant observation (observation) or virtual (online) by simply looking at, recording and observing objects via the TikTok accounts of Azkha Tegar @azkhategar391, Ibra @ibrawrrrr and Putu Maharaja @maharajasp8. Furthermore, data from documentation was obtained through video posts on TikTok's social media. Literature studies can be obtained through books, scientific journals, articles, and other publications that are considered relevant to the object of study raised by the author so that it can support the implementation of research.

### 3. Result and Discussion

#### 3.1. Results

**Media Space**, this level can reveal how the content of Azkha Tegar, Ibra, and Putu Maharaja is in the process of publishing content and the graphic aspects of the media display. The focus of the data collected is not just looking at the appearance in the content footage of Azkha Tegar, Ibra, and Putu Maharaja but also looking at the procedures of the cyber media. One of the cyber media that Azkha Tegar, Ibra, and Putu Maharaja use is the Tiktok application.

TikTok can be an effective promotional tool, which allows the dissemination of information without requiring high costs and great efforts and can be done quickly. Therefore, Tiktok presents many influencers who can achieve popularity in cyberspace and the real world. Like the Tiktok accounts @azkhategar391, @ibrawrrr, and @maharajasp8, they built their branding by uploading videos on Tiktok and then became known to many followers as beauty influencers. A social media platform such as TikTok allows you to create, edit, share, discover and watch short vertical videos from a few seconds to 10 minutes by offering a variety of content that is very diverse in terms of creativity, including music, singing, dancing, challenges, lip sync, and others. In this case, @azkhategar391, @ibrawrrr, and @maharajasp8 present beauty content in a short and easy-to-understand format.

They use a comments column feature to provide a forum for interaction and feedback between the account owner and his followers. Apart from that, there is a use of hashtags are often used in all their content on the @azkhategar391 account, namely hashtags #barbiecianjur and #gayadirumah; on the @maharajasp8 account, they use hashtags like #kerajaanglowing, #skincareviral, while on the @ibrawrrr account they rarely use them. Hashtag on the video he uploaded. They use the Tiktok application as a medium to channel their respective hobbies. Their account is public, so anyone can access, browse, and enjoy the content they create. This is different from personal accounts, which are sometimes kept private, so you have to wait for approval from the account. Tiktok uses a follow system, where Tiktok users press the follow button on the account profiles @azkhategar391, @ibrawrrr, and @maharajasp8. Tiktok users who follow their account will easily see the latest content on the Tiktok home page.

**Media Archieve**, in this research, the media documents viewed are video content created by three male influencers to build personal branding with an appearance that is different from men's. The beauty influencers are, Azkha Tegar with the Tiktok account @azkhategar391, Ibra with the tiktok account @ibrawrrr, and Putu Maharaja with the tiktok account @maharajasp8.

Some differences make each account unique to brand itself to the public. Specifically, the content uploaded by Azkha Tegar is makeup transformation. Azkha Tegar has created many makeup works with various themes, namely makeup looks, makeup tutorials, makeup reviews and beauty routines. He often dresses himself like a woman to make his face more feminine. Not only that, he is also good at imitating the make-up of several public figures which makes his face look similar to them. Examples of public figures imitated by Azkha Tegar can be seen in her uploads, namely Maha Lini, Syahrini, Ayu Ting Ting, and many other public figures. Even though most of his TikTok content is about women's make-up, several times he has also shared videos with his real appearance as a man.

For example, researchers took 2 of their contents with more than 1 million views. First, a content video with 2.6 million views is entitled "Recreate Makeup Mahalini Wedding look". The video is packaged using a sound widely used by other content creators, namely "Bermuara" from Rizky Febian and Mahalini. The vocals displayed are structured starting from applying makeup to her facial skin using foundation, moving on to her eyebrows, eyes and finally applying lipstick on her lips. In the final touch, he showed the transition of the makeup he had made, namely the makeup of the public figure Mahalini. Next is video content with 1.4 million views entitled "Vibes #Ceoofangkatalis". The video presented is a recreation of the makeup when he first started creating content. The volume used is combined with reviewing makeup brands. He explained in detail the colours, uses, and brands that are good to use.

The makeup transformations he creates often use bright colours. He dares to experiment with various bold colour palettes, giving a fresh impression to the face. Apart from that, his content is unique in choosing titles that seem funny in some of the content, namely, 'Makeup Meets Mio Mirza',

'Makeup Meets Mayor Teddy', 'Makeup Nyoblos' and other titles. The use of music in the videos he uploads always follows TikTok trends. On the other hand, there is a male beauty influencer named Ibra. She often uploads video content about makeup videos and skincare in the form of tips and tricks, education and transitions. The difference with the video uploaded by the Tiktok account @azkhategar39 is that Ibra's makeup has the characteristics of bold makeup with makeup and traditional clothes that represent Indonesia. He also showed transitions in makeup tutorials for each region using colourful and eccentric makeup from various customs, for example, Balinese, Riau, Papuan, North Sulawesi, and many more that he created with his creative ideas.

For example, researchers took 2 of their contents with more than 1 million views. First, video content has 10.7 million views, 1.3 million likes, 19 thousand comments, 83.1 thousand saves, and 23.3 shares. The concept used in this video is makeup with the theme "Minangkabau Cultural Heritage". Inside, there is various makeup from tribes in Minangkabau. Combining bright colours like red, yellow, green, pink and white makes the visuals look much more beautiful. Second, video content with 9.3 million views, 1.2 million likes, 5.8 thousand comments, 85.2 thousand saves and 52.1 thousand shares. This video has a unique concept to promote a brand. This video was edited very well so that it can be seen that there are two different actors in the video, but only Ibra plays the role. This video uses the concept of scary makeup. One person is seen in the mirror wearing horror makeup. Meanwhile, one person in front of the mirror shows the brand he is wearing.

Next is a male beauty influencer named Putu Maharaja. She is a beauty influencer who uploads videos about beauty skincare, tips and tricks, tutorials, and skin care education. The characteristic of his account is that he is famous for his unique slogan "Welcome to the glowing kingdom". Apart from that, another unique feature is in the uploaded video section. In the video, he is known as "the great king" who always wears head make-up, namely his trademark crown. He also explains each product with the concept of "honest reviews" combined with genuine humour and a quirky impression. Maharaja often provides education to his followers, including how to care for skin, heal from acne, get clean skin, and review and recommend beauty products.

**Media object**, Researchers used observations on videos uploaded by @azkhategar391, @ibrawrrr, and @maharajasp8 to see user interactions. In this research, researchers found communication on the Tiktok account pages @azkhategar391, @ibrawrrr, and @maharajasp8. This communication occurs when each Tiktok account posts the latest video content, which can be accessed and seen by followers or non-followers. The communication comes from the text and context in the comments column feature in the Tiktok application. The account owner interacts by replying to comments from followers. There are comments from followers on the Tiktok account @azkhategar391 such as "Sis, try Volly makeup", "Sis Tegar is really cool", "Really beautiful", "I really want to do makeup with Sis Tegar". From some of these comments, they are interested in discussing the contents of the video uploaded by Azkha Tegar and then giving their opinions in the comments column. Often Azkha Tegar replies to comments from his followers. Apart from that, there were comments from followers from the Tiktok account @ibrawrrr such as "impressive!!", "Tutorial for making Arabian makeup, sis, I tried it but couldn't do it", "can the results be that good, sis?", "This is what I've been waiting for". These comments show appreciation and support, and often ask Ibra about makeup tips and tricks.

Furthermore, there were comments from followers from the Tiktok account @maharajasp8 such as "When will your launching lip finally find you?", "Skincare recommendations that are safe for acne-prone and acne-prone skin", "Sis, if sunscreen makes keris skin good, what product do you use?" Through comments, there is an activity asking questions about tips and tricks for using Skincare. Apart from that, there are comments of support and appreciation on every post uploaded by Azkha Tegar. An interesting thing happened in the comments column, where a heart (love) sign was created with the Maharaja's characteristic colour, purple, which indicates liking the comment that was made.

**Experiential Stories**, Researchers connect real life (offline) with virtual life (online) at this level. From this, it can be seen that everything that is uploaded has a specific aim and purpose, and has both desired and undesired impacts on the user. In uploads, there are comments and interactions in the comments column that show the real life conditions of users. Like the video uploaded by @azkhategar391 with the concept of an Arabic makeup tutorial. The post received comments like "I've done it too", "When I get married, I want to do makeup, Sis Tegar". Apart from that, the video uploaded by @ibrawrrr with the concept of cosmetic brand reviews. The post received a response

from the comment "I also use this skintific cushion, the coverage is really real". Next, there is an upload from the @maharajasp8 account with the concept of a video review of skincare products. The post received a response to the comment, "I really like the Maharaja's explanation." This is the impact of watching various videos that they have uploaded. This describes a real incident experienced by his followers. The nature of social media which can be accessed anytime, anywhere, and by anyone with internet network access makes messages very fast. Therefore, the beauty content posted by @azkhategar391, @ibrawrrr, and @maharajasp8 can be easily accepted by many people and spread quickly so that the content can be useful among many people, especially followers of their accounts.

### 3.2. Discussion

In analyzing the media space level, this level describes from a technological perspective how media devices on the internet apply and have rules (Nasrullah, 2022). The beauty content production process carried out by influencers @azkhategar391, @ibrawrrr, and @maharajasp8 involves careful planning and strategic use of platform features. To achieve this goal, it is important to pay attention to how developing social media platforms work (Ikhwan, 2022). When choosing a video concept, they don't just choose a concept. However, they also consider the growing popularity and trends among TikTok users. They sometimes follow music or makeup models that are going viral. They utilize TikTok's creative features such as visual effects, filters, and background music to enhance the visual appeal of their content. This selection shows that they understand the importance of relevance and contextualization in attracting audience attention to the Tiktok application. The video editing process is also an important part, where they try to produce the best visual quality. Using relevant hashtags is also an important strategy in their production process to increase content visibility and reach a wider audience. Using these hashtags shows their understanding of utilising the platform's features to achieve their content goals. In this way, social media provides benefits for them by increasing the reach of communication and content to people with the same interests (Ningrum, et al., 2021 ).

This shows that the use of Tiktok by @azkhategar391, @ibrawrrr, and @maharajasp8 can provide their understanding of how to utilize the platform's features to achieve their content goals. They also build each personal brand they have created with different approaches and strategies. They are trying to maintain their branding as male beauty influencers on Tiktok social media. In media document level analysis, this level is used to see how the content as a text and the meaning contained therein are produced and distributed through the internet and social media (Nasrullah, 2022). They often use unique strategies. The characteristics of the videos they upload create a strong personal branding identity. Using a visual approach that is attractive and different from others can effectively increase the attractiveness of each account. This is by Peter Montoya's statement regarding the Laws of Personality, namely that a strong personal brand is built with an authentic personality and appears unique.

The content uploaded by @azkhategar391, @ibrawrrr, and @maharajasp8 varies greatly. They often follow popular trends on TikTok. For example, using sounds that are currently widely used, or makeup themes that are frequently uploaded. That way, it is easy for them to go viral. The content uploaded is not only about transformation makeup, they often create content that educates the audience about tips and tricks for using makeup properly and correctly, as well as information on the correct use of skincare. Their content is entertaining and always accompanied by humour, which tends to be of interest to followers. Their content shows that they focus not only on aesthetic, viral, and audio aspects but also on knowledge aspects. They are trying to make TikTok a platform for learning and sharing knowledge about makeup, cosmetic, and skincare brands, to provide wider benefits for Tiktok users (Priatama et al., 2021). This finding confirms that social media content is a medium for entertainment and a tool for forming identity issues in cyberspace.

In analysing the media object level, this level reveals the activities and interactions of users or between users (NAs. Research data can come from texts in cyber media. Accounts @azkhategar391, @ibrawrrr, and @maharajasp8 carry out communication and interaction patterns through the Tiktok application with followers, it works effectively because there is reciprocity from both parties. They answer almost all the comments that followers give to Azkha, Ibra, and Maharaja. Their followers always answer questions from Azkha, Ibra, and Maharaja in the comments column Tiktok. Comments can be in the form of words or emoticons only. The comments are of various types. Some comment on the content, some comment for the account owner, and there are also those who ask questions about

tips and tricks. This is by research by Hine (2000) in (Nasrullah, 2022) conducting interactions on social media or the virtual world which suggests that a person's interactions on the internet can be in the form of text or emoticons that express forms of expression of happiness, sadness or anger so that they can be understood more easily.

The videos uploaded by the Tiktok accounts @azkhategar391, @ibrawrrr, and @maharajasp8 have various responses and interactions from their followers. Pros and cons responses that emerged from the interaction. The openness of their Tiktok account means anyone can see the comments. Many of their followers expressed admiration and appreciation for the uploaded content. Their content has provided inspiration and information for most of their followers regarding makeup models, skincare and makeup and skincare brands. This illustrates that @azkhategar391, @ibrawrrr, and @maharajasp8 have succeeded in attracting Tiktok users' attention, especially those who like beauty. This interaction also reflects the strong and trusting relationship between @azkhategar391, @ibrawrrr, @maharajasp8 and their followers.

In the experience level analysis, this level bridges the virtual world (online) with the real world (offline). In particular, we are looking at and revealing the underlying motives of users in utilizing and publishing content on Tiktok media. What happens in the network (online), also influences the real world (offline) (Nasrullah, 2022). This is based on a statement from Christine Hine in (Nasrullah, 2022) that what happens on the internet is not much different from what happens in the real world. The personal branding carried out by @azkhategar391, @ibrawrrr, and @maharajasp8 through uploaded videos has the impact of changing the way viewers view the stereotype of male beauty influencers. The benefits that arise can be seen from the followers' responses from the comments column feature, where on average they comment positively. This creates a better perception of the beauty influencer profession carried out by a man. The content they upload significantly influences their followers and can reach anyone who has a Tiktok account, even though some followers do not know Azkha, Ibra, and Maharaja directly. By uploading their videos, viewers feel inspired and have real information. The Tik Tok algorithm, which strengthens the visibility of content that gets lots of interactions, also plays an important role in spreading beauty content, establishing Azkha Tegar, Ibra, and Maharaj as influential beauty influencers in the digital world.

#### 4. Conclusion

This research reveals that social media platforms, especially TikTok, have revolutionized the way messages about beauty are delivered and form the personal branding identity of a male beauty influencer. Azkha Tegar, Ibra, and Maharaja use this platform to reach a wider audience, especially those who love beauty. They create interesting and relevant content and combine it with beautiful colour, and visual and musical elements. It's not just beauty content that they create, more than just entertainment, the content produced by Azkha Tegar, Ibra, and Maharaja also provides informative knowledge about the world of beauty. They interact directly with followers, creating a more immersive and participatory experience. The video content they upload has a moral message relevant to everyday life. The interactions on this platform create benefits that enable followers to learn and find out about the phenomenon of male beauty influencers more openly and informally. TikTok shows that social media has great potential to expand the personal branding of an effective male beauty influencer in the digital era. Their success in attracting attention and motivating many people to learn and follow shows that their content has provided benefits on social media and can form a more dynamic and inclusive personal brand. For further research, it is recommended to explore other social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, or Facebook to understand variations in the concept of beauty across various platforms.

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