



THE BEHAVIORAL PHENOMENON OF FRIEND WITH BENEFIT OF ALTER BASE @FWBSMG ON TWITTER

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ABSTRACT

The emergence of alter ego accounts on Twitter triggers a new phenomenon called "friend with benefit," known as FWB. This phenomenon arises because there is a place to share information and communicate with each other. This FWB behavior is mushrooming on social media with an alter ego account, a second account aimed at seeking FWB, and a means of more unrestrained self-expression. This study aims to describe the FWB phenomenon, identify the forms of FWB behavior, and determine how the alter ego's motives account for FWB behavior. The method used in this research is qualitative content analysis with a qualitative approach. The method obtained is based on observations of @FWBSmg tweet content, interviews, and document review. The results of this study indicate that the FWB phenomenon carried out by alter ego accounts on Twitter is carried out because they want to find satisfaction both sexually and emotionally. Not only that but FWB is also conducted to find friends to chat and hang out with. The results of this study also show that the alter ego account is used as a second account to search for FWB and that the pattern used by the alter ego in searching for FWB on Twitter is also supported by the alter base community named @FWBSmg. Alter ego accounts send menfess with the gender terms "M" for male and "F" for a female when looking for FWB. They are also sending menfess photos by covering their faces with stickers; which is done to hide their real identities in public.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of social media creates a new communication style for interacting remotely. Humans are often inseparable from communication activities because this is one of the basic human needs to socialize with others. Currently, social media is often one of the alternative media for people to communicate and seek information. One of the social media that is widely used today is Twitter. Based on

research from Statista, Twitter users in Indonesia are the largest in the world with 18.45 million active users as of January 2022 (Annur, 2022; Ostic et al., 2021).

Now, Twitter has become one of the most popular social media for students in Indonesia. The use of Twitter among Indonesian students has led to a new phenomenon with the presence of alter ego accounts, a term for Twitter users who express themselves in that do not match their personalities in the real world. The motive for using an alter ego account is based on the freedom to express more comfortably in the virtual world or social media without worrying about their identity being spread (Saifullah & Andir, 2018; Hassan et al., 2022).

The behavior of using alter ego accounts on Twitter often makes various expressions in the form of tweets or posts that violate Indonesian norms, such as pornographic content. Uploaded content also creates a new phenomenon on Twitter with the term FWB or friends with benefits. FWB is a term that refers to sexual relations freely with friends without involving emotions or feelings (Scott & Rivera, 2014). Based on research conducted by Scott and Rivera, the motives of FWB are avoiding drama, avoiding commitment in relationships, and wanting easy access to free sex (Scott & Rivera, 2014; Liang et al., 2021). In addition, this phenomenon of FWB behavior often arises from various FWB base communities on Twitter. The FWB community on Twitter is a place for Twitter users to find a partner because they believe the page is an alternative medium to achieve their goals and fulfill their desires.

From the results of researchers' observations on August 30, 2022, on Twitter, the largest FWB forum in Indonesia is held by the @FWBESS account with a total of 224.1 thousand followers. @FWBESS is a page that dominates and is quite popular among alter ego account users on Twitter. In addition, based on the researcher's observations, tweets or posts made by @FWBESS are the most active of several other FWB pages. However, the @FWBESS account is seen very broadly because it does not specify a particular region in the sense that every Twitter user from other regions in Indonesia can send their tweets on that page, in contrast to the @FWBSmg Twitter page, which is devoted to alter ego users in the Semarang City area. From the observations of researchers on September 6, 2022, there were 17.7 thousand followers of the @FWBSmg account itself.

Twitter, which was originally intended as a social media to establish further user interaction, has turned into a place of outlet for sexual needs among teenagers. Observing this FWB phenomenon, the researcher assumes that Twitter social media, moreover, has an alter ego platform that gives its users the opportunity to have free biological relationships, and this is a serious problem and deviates from the prevailing norms in Indonesia. Clearly, friend-with-benefit behavior violates the norm and can be subject to criminal sanctions as stated in ITE Law Article 45, Paragraph 1, which states that this law can criminalize someone who intentionally and without rights distributes, transmits, or makes electronic information accessible with content. Violating immorality such as pornography can be imprisoned for a maximum of six years or a fine of a maximum of one billion rupiahs (Indonesia Government, 2008).

The presence of the FWB base account was also followed by many alter ego accounts on Twitter. FWB accounts will be called popular if they are able to present and realize what their followers want. One of the famous and big FWB accounts in Semarang City is @FWBSmg. In this case, @FWBSmg, as a forum for alter ego accounts, has tried to perpetuate friend-with-benefit behavior for its followers on Twitter, even though it is clear that behavior that violates norms such as FWB is prohibited in Indonesia and can be subject to criminal penalties by applicable law.

Based on the explanation of the background above, it can be seen that the phenomenon of "friend with benefits," which is being massively spread on Twitter among teenagers, is terrible. A research problem can be drawn, from this: "What is the meaning of "friend with benefit" among alter ego accounts on Twitter?", "What is the form of friend-with-benefit behavior by alter-ego accounts on Twitter?", "What motivates alter ego account users to do friends with benefits?". From the formulation of the problem, the research objectives can also be made to find out the meaning of "friend with benefit" among alter accounts on Twitter, explain the form of "friend with benefit" behavior among alter accounts on Twitter and find out the motives for "friend with benefit" behavior among alter account users on Twitter.

From the results of the researcher's observations, there are several previous studies related to the themes that the researchers adopted in this study. The first study was written by Jesse Owen and Frank Fincham in 2009 and was entitled "Effect of Gender and Psychosocial Factor on "Friend with Benefits" Relationship Among Young Adults". The method used was a quantitative research method with a focus on the factors causing FWB. In addition, this study involved both male and female participants. The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that cause FWB in men and women (Chen & Lin, 2019). The results of this study indicate that 54.3% of men engage in FWB behavior, which is influenced by psychological

factors, alcohol, and relationship behavior, while 42.9% of women report that FWB is associated with a positive rather than a negative relationship. Not only that, but women are also often involved in FWB because they are influenced by alcohol.

The second study was conducted by Christina, Scott, Belinda, and Irma in 2011 and was entitled "No Relationships, No Emotions, Just Sex": Exploring Undergraduates' Sexual Decision-Making in Friend with Benefits Relationships". The method used is a quantitative method with a self-report survey method only at one university. The purpose of this study was to explore the decision to have sex in a relationship. The results of this study indicate that both men and women are motivated to initiate FWB, while women tend to set a rule during FWB to avoid excessive attachment while men do not. The factor of alcohol use did not involve the occurrence of FWB.

The third study was conducted by Saifullah and Ernanda in 2018 entitled "Manajemen Privasi Komunikasi Pada Remaja Pengguna Akun Alter Ego di Twitter". The method used in qualitative descriptive research, explains the phenomenon of alter ego owners on Twitter with communication privacy management theory. The purpose of this study is to describe the phenomenon of alter-ego accounts on Twitter. The findings of this study are that Twitter is not only a medium of communication but also a means of self-expression without boundaries, moreover, privacy in content is also disseminated for public consumption. Regarding privacy communication management, this alter ego account still considers the content to be uploaded into the public space even though their identity will not be known.

The fourth study was conducted by Fitrianingrum, Rafli et al. in 2021 entitled "Fenomena Pencarian Partner Casual Sex Relationship Menggunakan Aplikasi Kencan Daring Tinder di Masa Pandemi COVID-19". The method used is qualitative, which focuses on describing the phenomenon of casual sex during the pandemic through the Tinder dating application. The findings of this study indicate that there were a large number of massive uses of the Tinder application during the pandemic because it is based on boredom, therefore, Tinder is another alternative to relieve boredom by looking for a non-binding sexual partner.

The fifth study was conducted by Ratnasari Ramadhani Sjam in 2021 entitled "Fenomena Friends with Benefit di Kalangan Mahasiswa Kota Makassar". The purpose of this study was to describe the FWB phenomenon among students in urban communities. This study uses qualitative methods, and the results illustrate that the phenomenon of friends with benefits among students in Makassar City is commonplace and not something bad.

The sixth study was conducted by Hesadiwana and Syafrini in 2022 entitled "Motif Penggunaan Akun Alter Ego di Media Sosial Instagram Pada Remaja Kota Padang". The goal of this research is to discover how and why people use alter ego accounts on social media. This type of case study research uses a qualitative approach. According to the findings of this study, the use of alter ego accounts on Instagram is used for negative reasons in order to allow users to express themselves more freely.

Referring to the previous studies, it can be seen that there is no similarity with this research, so the research on the effect of a post on Twitter on friend-with-benefit behavior is original, which is expected to increase theoretical and practical knowledge in academics and professional practitioners.

a. Twitter

Twitter is a microblogging-based social media where users can share photos, videos, or text. For the text feature, Twitter limits its users to only 280 characters, which are called tweets. Another feature that can be found on Twitter is the direct message feature, where users can send messages privately and directly to other Twitter users. The latest feature that has just been developed by Twitter is space, a feature like a group phone where all users can join other users' real-time conversations. The space feature that Twitter has is also limited on the condition that users must have 1000 followers with a public account.

b. Alter Ego

Alter ego is an alliance that is known on the internet when someone hides his identity by creating an account that is not in his name (F, Johansson, 2013; Kim, 2014).

c. Friend With Benefit

A Friend with benefits is a relationship that has various types of intimacy. Some of these relationships are based on sexual desire (Owen, 2011). This relationship is also just looking for intimacy and pleasure without any emotional connection from either party.

d. Sexual Desire

The condition in which a person has motivation and interest in an object is known as sexual desire. This interest becomes the desire to perform a sexual activity (Regan, 2006). Many indicators affect sexual desire, namely imagination and the results of seeing something with fantasy.

METHODS

The type of research used in this study is research with a qualitative approach that explores the phenomenon of FWB behavior on @FWBSmg, an alter account on Twitter. The method used in this study is a qualitative content analysis method. Research with qualitative content analysis methods is used to reveal the basic meaning of a text through attention and understanding of the content (Atkinson, 2017). A qualitative approach is a method that helps gain insight into the process of constructing meaning (Atkinson, 2017). This study attempts to provide a description and explanation of the phenomenon of friend-with-benefit behavior on the @FWBSmg alter base account on Twitter.

Sampling in this study is needed for interviews with informants who are involved in FWB behavior using alter ego accounts on Twitter. The sampling technique used is a purposive sampling technique with 1 alter ego Twitter user aged 20.

The data collection technique was carried out by interviewing the informants through distributing an online questionnaire using a Google form, observing @FWBSmg content on Twitter, and also document review. In-depth interview techniques were used with informants to get more information about this FWB phenomenon. Observations in this research show the FWB phenomenon among alter ego accounts that follow the @FWBSmg base account on Twitter. Meanwhile, the document review technique was carried out to complement the findings from interviews with informants and also from observations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Phenomenon of Friend with Benefit Behavior on Twitter

This friend-with-benefit (FWB) phenomenon is based on a link from the altered @FWBSmg account base. This phenomenon is usually found among "alter account" users on Twitter who hide their real identities to express themselves more freely and without shame when spreading immoral and pornographic content. This can be seen from one of the tweets posted by the alter base account @FWBSmg on September 23, 2022.

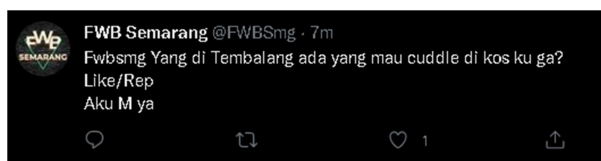


Figure 1. One of the tweets on alter base @FWBSmg

Source: Screenshot of the researcher via @FWBSmg account

In the figure above, it can be seen that this FWB phenomenon often begins with a search through an alter base account sent via direct message by an alter account on Twitter. The sentence, "...mau cuddle di kos ku ga?" indicates that the sender intends to find a partner only to cuddle or cuddle in his boarding house with a view to the sender's pleasure. In the FWB world, the sender will embed their gender as well as their age; for example, the words "Aku M ya" can be seen at the end of the tweet in the screenshot above, indicating that the sender is a male.

Moreover, the FWB phenomenon has also become a trend among alter egos because they have a platform. As the researcher found, on the @FWBSmg account, to be able to send menfess or tweets on their alter base account, users must comply with all existing rules as stated. as shown in the image below:



Figure 2. *The rules of @FWBSmg on Twitter*

Source: Screenshot of the researcher on September 23, 2022, via @FWBSmg account

Figure 2 shows that in order to send menfess on an alter-base account, one must adhere to existing regulations, such as those requiring image censorship (see Figure 3) because users in the FWB world must conceal their identities. This can be seen in one of the tweets from men fees on the @FWBSmg alter base below.

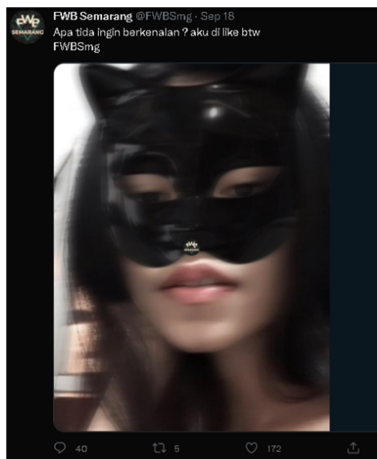


Figure 3. *A Photo of on of the Alter Account*

Source: Screenshot of the researcher via @FWBSmg account

Not only that, but this alter base account is also fertile because it is managed by admins. Especially for menfess senders, they can become paid premium customers with various benefits, such as getting the auto-follow back that the @FWBSmg alter base account on Twitter offers to their followers.

2. Forms of Friend with Benefit Behavior on Twitter

From the findings of FWB behavior from the findings of the researchers, this can be seen from the screenshot of the @FWBSmg menfes post on Twitter.



Figure 4. *The form of a tweet from the alter on the forum @FWBSmg*

Source: Screenshot of the researcher via @FWBSmg account



Figure 4. *The form of a tweet from the alter on the forum @FWBSmg*

Source: Screenshot of the researcher via @FWBSmg account



Figure 6. *The form of a tweet from the alter on the forum @FWBSmg*

Source: Screenshot of the researcher via @FWBSmg account



Figure 7. The form of a tweet from the alter on the forum @FWBSmg
Source: Screenshot of the researcher via @FWBSmg account

In Figure 4, the alter ego sends a tweet to invite fellow FWBs to join him for clubbing (tipsy). This behavior is common among FWBs because they seek pleasure in activities such as gathering, telling stories, and having fun, like clubbing at a discotheque. Figure 5 is also a form of FWB behavior called "love care", namely the behavior of hugging and kissing in a naked state. Figure 6 and Figure 7 are also included in FWB behavior where the perpetrator feels bored or needs someone to accompany him. However, these FWB actors also often seek out and invite others to become their FWB partners within a certain period of time, like dating.

3. Motives of Alter Ego Users to Make Friends with Benefit

Because the content of this alters ego account is confidential and private, the motive for using it as a second media account on Twitter has a specific purpose, such as carrying out FWB behavior.

In an interview conducted on Sunday, September 25, 2022. The researcher found a source who has an alter ego account named @defyurtype who is currently 21 years old and is a woman who is willing to be questioned about the motives for using an alter ego account on Twitter, while he mentioned that he has been following the @FWSmg alter base on Twitter since last June 2022, he also said that he had been involved in FW behavior, the reason he expected when following the @FWBSmg alter base was to find friends in Semarang. The owner of the alter ego account, named @defyurtype, stated that the reason for FWB was because of his satisfaction, such as making friends and being sexually and emotionally satisfied. As for the activities carried out when he met FWB, he had just walked, hung out, hugged, and had sex. Based on the interview above, it can be concluded that the alter ego account @defyurtype is the second account that he uses to find friends with benefits at @FWBSmg.

CONCLUSION

From the results and previous discussion, research on the phenomenon of a friend with benefit behavior on the @FWBSmg alter base on Twitter, it can be concluded that the use of social media such as Twitter makes it easier for people to access friend with benefit behavior with strangers they meet on Twitter. This is also reinforced by the various motives that underlie this alter ego account to do so, such as self-gratification, looking for friends, and looking for sex partners. Many accounts of this alter ego carrying out the action anticipate being able to engage in free sex without feeling like they are fulfilling their sexual desires. Cuddles and hugging are the most common activities they encounter during FWB.

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