



## Research Article

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# The Phenomenon of Trance Content on Youtube Study of CyberPsychology and Interpretation of the Quran

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## Abstract

*This article looks at the reality that exists on Youtube regarding the amount of trance content being watched. This attracts the attention of the author the main factor why netizens make content trance to watch. A large number of Youtube content enthusiasts make writers think that trance content is used by Youtubers to seek profits with so many viewers. Some of the author's findings on several Youtube channels present trance shows and have hundreds of thousands to millions of subscribers. This phenomenon shows that Indonesian netizens like a lot of trance shows. The research method used by researchers is qualitative through a netnography approach. In addition, the reason the author chose the netnography approach is that it is to study cybernetics space from textual information to study culture and netizens. Based on the author's findings, there are 3 characteristics of trance content on Youtube channels that are widely watched, namely: criminality, treatment of patients, and culture. Meanwhile, netizens' responses were mixed regarding trance content on Youtube, such as: not believing, providing support, praying for psychics, happiness, and bullying.*

**Keywords:** Trance, Youtube, CyberPsychology, Quranic Interpretation

## 1. Introduction

Trance is one of the phenomena that are widely found in Indonesia, it is inseparable from the cultural and religious contributions adopted. Some people think trance is something unique because many arts and cultural rituals have elements of trance (Bickel, 2020; Hardwick, 2014). By and large, in the scientific literature of philosophy, anthropology, culture, and psychology, trance (folie a deux) from the French language means "entrance". Trance is a subconscious phenomenon characterized by fainting, lack of consciousness, and control (Relic, 2020). One of the uniqueness of trance in some communities of people in Indonesia such as Javanese Abangan circles, trance is a symbol that builds permanent solidarity between humans and the holy. Trance becomes a symbol of mystical rituals and how man finds unity in the world and opens up about his purpose in life in an integral part of the human world (Mahattama Banteng Sukarno, 2020). Not only in Javanese society in the cosmology of the Hakka Chinese in Singkawang all human beings have a close personal relationship with the natural cosmos connected by the Tao (way). The spirit that is thought to bring something to life adds strength to man. For example, lifeless objects are made by humans but can have power if they are filled with spirits. Likewise, shamans (Tathung) have greater power than before when the body is

entered by a spirit that has power (M. Ikhsan Tanggok, 2015).

The examples presented are only a small part of the trance phenomenon in Indonesia. In fact, in other countries, social problems such as trance are widely believed to be other forces that control oneself, such as on the continent: Africa, East Asia, Europe, and America (Goodare & McGill, 2020; Saijirahu Buyanchugla, 2020; Schmidt, 2016; Valente-Quinn, 2020; Vivod, 2020). Some research data shows that individuals in trance are often forms of autonomous personality, namely: 1) Neuroscientists and psychiatrists view trance as a formation of the subconscious and evidence of individual pathology; 2) In trance-viewed society evidence of communication with the spirit and therefore evidence of the spiritual world (Charet, 2015). Therefore, in terms of trance psychology, it is called Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID), which is when individuals have two identities in the same individual. (de Oliveira Maraldi et al., 2021:2-3; Laycock, 2015:110). There are social changes both in technology and the structure of society that occur in the era of globalization where information is easily accessible. The trance that previously could be watched live at this time trance can be watched through new media such as Youtube. According to Chau (2010) there is currently an explosion in the public to media content sharing websites such as Youtube. This Website combines media production and distribution with social networking features and makes Youtube an ideal place to create, connect, collaborate and circulate. Therefore, with everyone being able to watch and share videos on Youtube, it makes people interested and makes it a new medium for watching information and news. This makes a lot of Youtube content that is a hoax that can be watched by all ages from children to adults. Through Youtube, it is difficult to distinguish which content is original and which is classified as a hoax. Therefore, many use new media such as Youtube for content that deceives the general public, such as trance content on Youtube. As the author explained earlier, a trance which is a psychological symptom and the presence of spirits entering the human body (traditional beliefs) turned into entertainment on Youtube. In fact, through trance content, many parties take advantage of the large number of viewers who subscribe.

Seeing this phenomenon why are people interested in trance content on Youtube? Of course, this must be answered through in-depth research regarding the number of Youtube users who subscribe to trance content. Based on research shows that in general in Indonesia, active users of social media in 2020 were around 160 million users, or 59% of the total Indonesian population. Among social media, Youtube is the most famous social media platform with 88% access by internet users aged 16 to 64 years in Indonesia (Maulana Faris et al., 2020). The main reason for making social media users interested in using the Youtube platform is because this social media focuses on video content. In fact, its users can watch live broadcasts as well as create their own videos (Burgess & Green, 2018). In addition, there is an algorithm on Youtube that can track user activity against videos watched, related to their likes, dislikes, or subscriptions (Alvarado et al., 2020). Likewise with videos related to trance content the more often someone opens a video, there will be many videos that appear trance content on the homepage of Youtube users. However, the interesting thing here is that trance which is a psychological disorder and spiritual disorder in some societies has become a commodity of video content that is widely watched by Youtube users.

Many people who claim to be shamans and claim to be *ustadz* (religious experts) become YouTubers or content creators who create content just to go viral, have a large audience, and get personal benefits economically. Moreover, Youtube does not have an age limit for accessing it, so it is not surprising that both children and teenagers also watch trance content displayed by Youtubers. Of course, this will have an impact on the psychologically of youtube users or viewers themselves which can affect feelings, behaviors, and feelings when watching trance content. At least some studies have shown data that content on Youtube affects a person's psychology. Chen (2017) classifies Youtube videos into six categories of emotions, namely: happiness, fear, sadness, disgust, anger, and surprise. In addition, users aged 15-30 are facing hateful content related to gender, ethnicity, political views, terrorism, religion, and extremists increasingly through the Youtube platform and are increasingly accessible (Muhsin Yesilada & Stephan Lewandowsky, 2022). Youtube content that is watched will affect a person's emotions and this happens a lot when a user makes a comment on the video being

watched and resulting in bullying (Alhabash et al., 2015:521). On Youtube social media, various video content can be easily accessed according to the tastes of each user. In fact, in Indonesia, content with mystical and trance topics is widely watched. So, it is not surprising that many shamans or *ustadz* create Youtube content with mystical elements such as trance. For example, the research was conducted (Moh Muslimin, 2021) by examining a video of one of the *ustadz* which displays magic on his Youtube channel. This is interesting when supernatural worlds such as magical and mystical that are supposed to be done behind closed doors and are secretly are now becoming a common spectacle.

Seeing this phenomenon, the author is interested in research related to content that displays trance on Youtube. Moreover, Indonesia is one of the largest Youtube users in the world, so it is not surprising that netizens in Indonesia are targeted by the idea of post-truth. As is known post-truth is a condition in which facts are defeated by emotions as well as individual beliefs (McDermott, 2019). Every watch on Youtube will certainly affect the user's psychology or distorted feelings when watching Youtube content. Such characteristics can be identified in cyberpsychology where individuals interact and are influenced by technology (Connolly, 2016). It is not impossible, watching trance content on Youtube will cause mental health disorders and even result in social anxiety. The fundamental question for trance content on Youtube is whether it is a fact or just limited to acting and limited to content?. Smith's research (2018) says that there are many forgeries in the spiritualist community when summoning spirits in the content of the videos created. Therefore, some Indonesians who consider trance part of the practice of cultural and religious beliefs are currently changing from a mainstream culture that acts as an important component of trance-themed paranormal content (Hill, 2011). Through this paper, the author will look for data related to research questions, why are Indonesian netizens interested in trance content on Youtube?; How is the cyberpsychology of Indonesian netizens when watching trance content on Youtube?; Finally, how trance and psychotherapy are reviewed in the Qur'an?.

## 2. Research Methods

The research method used by researchers is qualitative through a netnography approach. Netnography or ethnography on the internet is a relatively new qualitative methodology by adapts ethnographic research techniques to study the culture of a community through interaction on the internet (Sajjadian et al., 2018). The reason why the author chose the netnography approach is that it is to study cybernetics space from an informed textual to study culture and netizens (Holt & Sanson, 2014). In using social media such as Youtube netizens form and embody the values, customs, and beliefs that shape behavior. In addition, in conducting this study, the author followed according to ethical standards in netnographic research conducted, namely: Honesty, transparency; Confidentiality, anonymity, privacy; Feedback (Konerding et al., 2021; R. Kozinets, 2019). The procedures carried out by the authors in this study are planning and identifying research targets, data collection, analyzing and interpreting data, research ethics, and member checks (Ido Prijana Hadi, 2020).

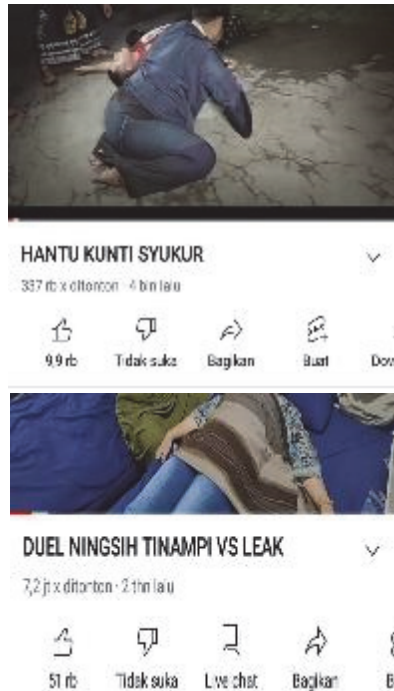
## 3. Findings and Discussion

### 3.1 Types Of Trance Content On Indonesian Youtube Channel

In this paper, the author sees the reality on Youtube related to the amount of trance content that is watched. This attracts the attention of the author the main factor why netizens make content trance to watch. A large number of Youtube content enthusiasts make writers think that trance content is used by Youtubers to seek profits with so many viewers. Some of the author's findings on several Youtube channels present trance shows and have hundreds of thousands to millions of subscribers. This phenomenon shows that Indonesian netizens like a lot of trance shows. So, it's not surprising that many content creators suddenly become psychics and summon spirits by inserting them into

someone's body to get subscribers and a large number of viewers.

A large number of viewers of trance shows on Youtube is inseparable from the collective belief system of people in Indonesia who believe in the world of *ghaib* and mystical (Asra et al., 2020; Handoko & Green, 2020; Herrmans, 2021). Shamans and the supernatural in the era before the internet and social media were secretive and could not be witnessed in person. The emergence of social media and new media changes the form of a person's spectacle, thus affecting his belief in religion and the supernatural. However, the audience of the trance consciously witnessed the spectacle that contained a fictional narrative. (Walsh Pasulka, 2016). Some youtube channels that the author searched for that aired trance scenes were watched by many Indonesian netizens and have even aired many videos of trance. Here are some examples of the author's findings on a Youtube channel that airs trance scenes.



**Picture 1:** Trance scene in Youtube content

**Source:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGsUvT4j4a8> ;  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWMofMOcSLI>

Based on the image presented, it shows a lot of viewers in the content of the Youtube channel. The trance content presented various factors of trance, both called jinns who often interfere with a person's body and jinns who come to fight psychics. In addition, in both youtube channel content, they call jinn and communicate through a religious approach. The shaman uses a verse in the Quran to perform treatment on the patient or dispose of the genie that is in the patient's body. In addition, the author in this case gives examples of trance with other motives, namely:



**Figure 2:** Trance scene of summoning spirits and genies in Youtube content

**Source:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XoszEN8xfU> ;  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L\\_fNDtofjwo&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_fNDtofjwo&t=1s)

Of the two images that the author presents, only a few examples of the many kinds of trance content on the Youtube channel. However, the motives and purposes of creating content with a trance narrative vary from youtube channels. At least, the author divides some characteristics of trance content based on motives, namely:

1. Criminal Cases

Some youtube content is searched by search writers to show content to solve some of the criminality problems that exist in Indonesia, for example, murder cases. The Youtube content that the author found was when there was a murder in Subang, West Java, where in that case it killed a child and a mother. Many content creators want to solve the murder case by calling the spirit of the victim of the murder. shamans in Youtube content communicate with spirits and ask about the chronology of the murder that occurred. Not a few, the Youtube channel, whose audience was originally only around one thousand to three thousand before airing the murder case, rose to one hundred thousand to 300 thousand viewers. In this case, the author is of the view that trance scenes are commercialized for the benefit of increasing the number of viewers

2. Patient therapy and treatment

Based on the author's search, many Youtube channels air related to *ruqyah* and therapy for patients who often get jinn disorders. Psychics on the Youtube channel use verses from the Quran in healing patients. The psychics who do the treatment are not only men but even many women. The trance scene in this category was carried out in front of the community and was witnessed by many people. Content with therapy to patients who are in a trance of at least one million to seven million who watch trance content that heals patients from genie disorders. In addition, the author also found several Youtube channels that feature

scenes of trance dramatized with blood, jinn sightings, supernatural objects, and fights between psychics and patients in a trance.

### 3. Culture

The trance content that many netizens watch is through cultural performances in Indonesia. Some cultures in Indonesia where they show trance scenes are part of local wisdom. In trance scenes in culture occur in the audience and the cultural performers are shown. Most trance cultural audiences occur spontaneously while cultural actors go through a ritual process and summon spirits to be inserted into the body that will perform cultural performances. Based on the search of the author of trance content in the cultural performance, it was watched by 500 thousand to 3 million. This shows that trance affects the number of viewers on the Youtube channel based on netizens' comments on the content show.

One of the reasons for a large amount of trance content on Youtube is because it is supported by netizens who watch, like, and respond through comments. Therefore, in psychology, one of the factors of netizens watching trance content is because they get pleasure from feelings of tension. When the psychic is able to treat the patient and is able to defeat the genie then the negative influence felt by netizens turns into euphoria and the tension ends. The pleasure in watching trance content comes from the level of negative effects formed during watching trance scenes (Martin, 2019). The excitement felt in the fear of watching trance content is a physiological change in netizens such as increased alertness, muscle tension, and increased heart rate are part of the fear that will become pleasant (Bantinaki, 2012). In addition, the attractiveness of the trance content there are at least 3 factors, namely: 1) human curiosity towards a frightening, threatening subject; 2) the mixing of emotions of fear and excitement in the brain; 3) the ability to safely study one's own emotions and dangerous situations in the context of trance content (Nummenmaa, 2021).

Therefore, the psychological factor that makes a person feel a happy sensation when watching the end of the trance to create content with the theme of trance will always exist in Indonesia. However, it should be in creating possessed content that a content creator must be able to educate the public through spectacle and not to seek popularity. Like trance content that wants to solve a criminal case, don't make various opinions in society while the case is still not revealed. In addition, trance content creators who have elements of lies must provide a narrative that the show is just entertainment. Such things in the author's view are very important for educating the public. So that trance is not only related to the mystical but there is a psychological factor of a person when a trance occurs. Thus, trance content prevents people from over-arguing opinions and admiration for psychics who can include genies in a person's body.

### 3.2 Netizens' Response in the Comment Section of Trance Impressions on Youtube

Youtube is changing the way individuals obtain information, explore, and expand relationships with others in ways that have been unthinkable until recently (Harrad & Banks, 2016). Every watch on Youtube will certainly affect the user's psychology or distorted feelings when watching Youtube content. Such characteristics can be identified in cyberpsychology where individuals interact and are influenced by technology (Connolly, 2016). Cyberpsychology is a field of psychology that deals with the way humans use the internet. Through the internet network, everyone can mediate socialization in diverse communities, cognition, work, entertainment, playing games, shopping, photos, music, and others. (Voiskounsky, 2013). Through cyberpsychology will be able to identify a person's behavior and character through the media he uses, for example in Youtube media which provides facilities for a person to comment, share, like and dislike. The presence of this feature makes someone will express their opinion in a show on Youtube.

In practice according to Parsons (2019) cyberpsychology studies the neurocognitive, affective, and social aspects of the human being that interact with technology and the affective computing aspects of the human being. The cognitive-based cyberpsychological framework studies related to,



motivation, behavioral outcomes, intentions, and impacts of using offline and online technologies. Based on the author's search of netizens' comments on trance shows on Youtube, at least there is a psychological influence, namely positive and negative emotions. The comments of these netizens are adjusted to the characteristics of the trance content, namely: criminal cases, therapy of patients, and trance in culture. In the trance content in criminal cases, the majority of netizens support the psychic and give prayers for the psychic to be able to solve the case. Of the 706 comments that the author searched for almost 100% gave comments with positive emotions.

Meanwhile, in the content of the trance of therapy towards patients, it is diverse both positive and negative comments. The author found positive comments when psychics cured patients who were bullied by jinns in public places and watched by many people. While the trance that was aired closed and watched by only a few people the content varied from 870 comments that the author browsed some of the responses of netizens varied from, who did not believe, gave support, prayed, were happy, bullied, and cursed. However, almost 90% of netizens' comments were positive towards the content presented and gave support to the paranormal. For trance content in the culture of the 400 comments that the author searched for almost 100% provide support, be entertained, and happy. No negative comments were found against trance in the culture displayed both feeling fear, sadness, and disgust.

Some of the trance content that the author searches indicated is only limited to acting. However, netizens' comments on the content provide support and assume that the content is original and factual. This is a phenomenon of Indonesian netizens who easily believe and assume that the trance did occur. When viewed from the theory of entertainment in Grizzard & Francemone (2020) the media is the main factor in Indonesian netizens' interest in trance content due to several assumptions. First, consuming entertainment is an autotelic experience in the form of an experience or activity that has a purpose in the audience's experience. Netizens want to form opinions or learn new things that can be applied in their lives, for example, in treating trance with the *ruqyah* method. Second, the motivation of netizens is more intrinsic than extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is the motivation that comes from within the individual to watch trance content. Third, the consumption of trance content is functional. In this case, the function of trance content for netizens in Indonesia is sociological and psychological. The sociological function has to do with meeting social needs and causing social ties in the form of, historical, and religious stories, which can unite individuals. While psychological functions, trance content can meet psychological needs, such as: providing distractions, reducing stress, and obtaining enjoyment by meeting psychological needs. Fourth, trance is content to seek pleasure and avoid pain. Through trance content, netizens will avoid depression which results in physical symptoms, fatigue, and changes in psychomotor activities (Sami & Naveeda, 2021).

Moreover, the supernatural world is something that is believed in Indonesian society to make the lack of ratios and logical reasoning by Indonesian netizens distinguish between false trance content and facts. On the one hand, the presence of trance content confirms the epistemology of Indonesian society regarding the understanding of the supernatural in Indonesia and being part of daily life (Rusdiarti, 2018). In addition, trance content describes the features of a character-based narrative that leads to enjoyment. Affective responses to trance content characters give rise to emotional responses such as tension, empathy, and counter empathy. The self-efficacy of the audience in trance content makes one always watch the trance content and the previous content strengthens the response to watch the next trance content and the freedom of action allows netizens to choose the spectacle according to their own tastes (Cummins et al., 2012).

### 3.3 Trance and Psychotherapy in Review of the Qur'anic Verses

From the Islamic religious perspective, trance is a supernatural mental illness caused by jinn disorder. One of the concepts in Islam of jinn is a real being that forms a world other than that of humans that can cause physical and mental harm to humans (Khalifa & Hardie, 2005). Psychiatric symptoms caused by jinn disorders in Muslim beliefs there should be medical anthropological research into the

transcultural and transdiagnostic aspects experienced psychotic symptoms of Islamic patients. In treating the symptoms of jinn disorder should be a necessary religious counselor in the treatment and removing the genie from one's body (Lim et al., 2015:27). Regarding the belief of Muslims in jinn disorders that result in psychiatric disorders, at least it is influenced by the theological foundation, namely the Qur'an. the author shows some verses of the Qur'an regarding the disturbance of the genie to man in the following table:

**Table 1:** Verses on Jinn Interference in the Quran

| No. | Verses and Surah        | Position   | The verse about jinn disturbance                                                                                                         |
|-----|-------------------------|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | QS. Al-Baqarah: (275)   | Madaniyyah | allażīna ya`kulūnar-ribā lā yaqumūna illā kamā yaqumullażī yatakhabbatuḥusy-syaiṭānu minal-mass.                                         |
| 2.  | QS. Al Mujadallah: (10) | Madaniyyah | Innaman-najwa minasy-syaiṭani liyaḥzunallazina amanu wa laisa biḍarrihim syai`an illa bi`iznillah, wa `alallahi falyatawakkalil-mu`minuḥ |
| 3.  | QS. An-Nahl: (99)       | Makkiyah   | Innahuu laisa lahuu sulṭaanun `alal laziina aamanuu wa `alaa Rabbihim yatawakkaluun                                                      |

The three verses of the Qur'an explain the mental disturbances to man both from the man himself and from jinns and demons. In surah al-Baqarah, verse 275 explains that there is an ability of demons and jinns to possess and interfere with adam's descendants to interfere with his psyche. This shows that demons and jinns can also change form when penetrating the human body. Its main purpose in disturbing man is to mislead and forget Allah (Sakat et al., 2015:545). Surah al-Baqarah verse 275 most Islamic scholars accept the view that jinns can possess humans (Dein & Illaiee, 2013:291). Therefore, the author views surah al-Baqarah verse 275 in Islamic theology states that jinn enters the human body and causes mental disorders such as possession even to the point of madness. The jinn disorder is caused by the individual himself as well as outside interference such as magic. As for the translation of the surah Al-baqarah, it is: "Those who consume interest cannot stand (on the Day of Resurrection) except as one stand who is being beaten by Satan into insanity." The meaning of standing in the verse suggests that the genie can rule the human body including moving it (Alhusban et al., 2021).

In Surah Al Mujadallah verse 10 explains that satan disturbs man not only by possessing the body but also by the psychology of human deeds. This is by the word of Allah in surah Al Mujadallah verse 10, which means:

*"Indeed, the secret talk includes the (deeds of) Satan, that the believers may be grieved, while (the talk) is not the slightest calamity to them, except with God's permission. And to God should the people of faith rely on".*

From the explanation of the verse, it shows that when man conducts secret talks and gives rise to sinful deeds, what man does is a prompting from satan. Therefore, the Quran asserts that human thoughts and actions can be controlled by demons except for people of faith (*iman*) and *tawakkal*. Faith (*iman*) and *tawakkal* are part of the dimension of taqwa, which is love for Allah (Nazam et al., 2022). human beings who are spiritually close to God in Islam will be spared from the disturbance of demons and jinns this is reinforced in the Quran surah An-Nahl verse 99 which means:

*"Indeed, there is for him no authority over those who have believed and rely upon their Lord."*

Both verses show that in Islamic theology demons and jinns will not be able to possess the human body and the human mind when a person has faith (*iman*) and *tawakkal* in Allah. In addition, the Quran gives orders to humans to always have faith to avoid the interference of demons and jinns. In addition, in Islam, there is also a method of healing a person who is disturbed by demons and jinns



such as possession. The treatment of the Ruqyah method is carried out using verses from the Quran and supported by biomedical (Oparin, 2020:10). The treatment of possession by the Ruqyah method and using verses of the Quran is supported in surah al-Isra verse 82 which means:

“And We derive from the Qur'an (something) that is the antidote and mercy for the believer, while for the one who is zalim (the Qur'an it) will only add to the loss”.

In the view of Wahbah al-Zuhay; in al-Tafsir al Munir mentions that the letter *jar 'min'* in the verse indicates the meaning (*li al-tab'id*), that is, some verses of the Quran become bidders, such as surah al-Fatihah and verses of *shifa'* (Sharifah Norshah Bani Syed Bidin, 2011:109). To prevent the interference of jinns and demons one can draw closer to Allah by reading verses from the Quran and *dhikr*. However, the requirement to use this approach is to have sincerity and seek refuge in Allah (Rassool, 2021). It is believed to be able to treat the human soul (*qalb*) from the interference of demons and jinns. However, in curing possession a Muslim must also distinguish between pathological and religious issues. Therefore, medical and psychological treatment is also necessary for the healing of a person who is experiencing possession.

#### 4. Conclusion

This research highlights the phenomenon of trance content that is widely watched by netizens on Youtube channels in Indonesia. The motives and purposes of creating content with a trance narrative are different in each Youtube channel. The author found 3 characteristics of trance content on Youtube channels that are widely watched, namely: criminality, treatment of patients, and culture. When viewed from an Islamic religious perspective trance is a supernatural mental illness caused by jinn disorder. One of the concepts in Islam jinn is a real being that forms a world apart from humans that can cause physical and mental harm to humans. However, nowadays it is easier for people to trust something based on emotions and feelings, including on social media. The response of netizens is mixed regarding trance content on Youtube, such as: not believing, providing support, praying, being happy, and bullying. Moreover, trance content on Youtube makes people trust and support the content. In fact, trance content is only limited to acting and seeking popularity and economic gain and in its creation, there is no mystical force or a real trance event.

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