

Transforming passion into positive impact: a positive psychology based study of rational fandom communication design

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Abstract. Fan culture is a prominent social phenomenon among young people. Unregulated fandom behaviors cause online conflicts, while traditional preaching style guidance often triggers audience resistance. This study aims to develop public interest communication design for rational fandom based on positive psychology. Methods: Combined with fan culture field observation and interview materials, this research transforms abstract positive psychology theories into portable star chasing guidance cards and leaflets, and carries out onsite distribution practice. Results: The neutral, nonpreaching communication product reduces fans' defensive psychology and helps transmit rational fandom ideas; nevertheless, one-off offline practice faces limitations including fragmented reading, insufficient visual emphasis of core information and lack of long-term intervention effects. Conclusions: Fandom passion carries positive potential. Positive psychology oriented public interest communication can guide internalisation of rational fandom concepts. Future practice should optimise text visual layout and build online-offline joint long-term intervention mechanisms to improve fandom ecological environment.

Keywords: positive psychology, rational fandom, public interest communication, fan culture, communication design

1. Introduction

Fan culture has become a visible social phenomenon among contemporary young people. Interest in idols can give fans emotional comfort and motivation [1], but unregulated fandom behavior can also lead to online conflict, emotional over-investment, and other social risks [1]. In this context, promoting rational star-chasing has become an important issue in public communication and youth-oriented social intervention. Even so, many existing popular science campaigns rely on rigid moral warnings and do not turn psychological theory into accessible, audience-friendly communication products that connect with ordinary fans [2, 3].

This research examines how fandom enthusiasm can be directed toward positive effects through public interest communication design based on positive psychology [4]. The focus is on turning psychological knowledge into concrete publicity materials, rather than treating fan enthusiasm as something that should simply be criticized [4]. Drawing on field investigations and interview materials related to fan culture, this study looks at actual difficulties within fandom communities. It also brings together ideas from social innovation design, health communication, and visual communication design to consider how theoretical concepts can be expressed in public-oriented language and how visual design may shape audience cognition [5, 6].

Rather than following moral persuasion alone, this paper asks how communication design can make psychological ideas usable in everyday fan settings. That is the main point. It explains why rational star-chasing needs public interest communication with a social advocacy function, then analyzes how publicity products translate positive psychology theories and research findings into concrete communicative content, and finally discusses both the value and the practical limits of these products in encouraging prosocial fan behavior [6]. The study also draws several conceptual boundaries. Knowledge transmission is not the same as behavioral change. Attractive design does not ensure effective communication. Promoting rational fandom does not deny fans' genuine affection for idols, but tries to improve fan culture rather than remove fandom passion altogether [1].

This essay builds its argument from the practical problems found in fan culture and the communication needs connected to them. On that basis, it examines how positive psychology can be translated into public interest communication design for rational star-chasing [4], while also considering the value, real-world effects, and possible directions for improving these communication practices.

2. The practical issues and communication demands in fan culture

The sharing of values also has a role here. Fans often hope to promote what they see as the positive qualities represented by their idols. These emotional and psychological needs are, in most cases, ordinary and understandable parts of social life. Through idol chasing, fans may gain emotional comfort, build social circles with people who have similar interests, and pursue an ideal personality they admire. This pattern is common among many young people today. In itself, these needs are not destructive or harmful. In fact, the various contradictions, conflicts, and disputes within fan groups often do not stem from the act of "loving and supporting idols" itself, but rather from the distorted and inappropriate ways in which fans attempt to fulfill their underlying needs. Nevertheless, under the combined influence of the current online ecological environment and the commercial capital operations in the entertainment business circle, the methods adopted by many individuals to satisfy their emotional and social needs have undergone serious alienation and deviation. Cyberspace facilitates the gathering of large numbers of fans with identical ideologies and emotional orientations, which in turn accelerates the emergence and intensification of the phenomenon of "group polarization [7]". For the sake of online traffic, commercial profits, and economic gains, capital forces deliberately incite rivalry, comparison, and competition among different fan groups, inducing fans to express their affection and loyalty through confrontational behaviors and excessive monetary spending. This process has gradually distorted the originally benign and positive emotional appeals of fans.

Meanwhile, the algorithmic mechanisms of online platforms further amplify the exposure and visibility of confrontational and conflicting content, leading to the formation of a simplistic, black or white criterion of judgment within fan communities. The positive emotions derived from loving and supporting idols are thus entangled and coerced into the fierce game of traffic competition, and the original intentions of emotional

expression and social interaction within the fan community are gradually replaced by the single goal of gaining more traffic and gaining an upper hand in fan wars. The legitimate and appropriate ways of satisfying spiritual needs have gradually evolved into improper and even harmful behaviors, giving rise to numerous chaotic phenomena such as invasive behaviors of sasaeng fans, intense group antagonism, verbal attacks and online harassment, excessive consumption driven involution, as well as malicious competition and slander between different fan groups.

From this perspective, it can be seen that many problems plaguing fan culture are rooted in the lack of positive guidance and appropriate channels for emotional release. Positive psychology emphasizes the return to positive emotional experiences and the reduction of confrontational emotional catharsis [8]. To some extent, positive psychology also focuses on the promotion of individual self-growth and the cultivation of a sound sense of group belonging [9].

But, the persuasion and guidance in traditional regulatory models are mostly conducted in an interrogative and preaching manner, which focuses excessively on criticizing and denouncing various undesirable phenomena in fan circles while frequently ignoring the genuine spiritual and emotional needs of fans. Some simplistic external constraints are likely to trigger resistance and rebellious psychology among fan groups, making it difficult to achieve intrinsic transformation at the conceptual and ideological level. External admonitions, warnings, and restrictions can only restrain the superficial behaviors of fan groups, but fail to alter their deep-seated ideologies and effectively channel the accumulated emotional appeals of fans. When fans can not find reasonable and appropriate outlets for their normal needs for emotional expression and a sense of belonging, even if undesirable behaviors are forcibly suppressed, conflicts and confrontations will still recur repeatedly in other forms. Therefore, relying solely on verbal advocacy and preaching is far from sufficient to reach and influence the majority of fans. On the contrary, promotional materials and visual carriers can integrate psychological theories into tangible and perceptible media forms, thereby providing effective guidance for fan groups to adopt correct and rational ways of communication and expression in the online space.

3. How positive psychology concepts can be translated into marketing design

Starchasing is now a common hobby among many teenagers. Many young people follow celebrities, watch their shows, and collect related products. Yet starchasing has two sides. It can give teenagers motivation and enjoyment, but blind starchasing can also lead to problems such as wasting money, reducing study time, and forming distorted values [10]. For this reason, our practical activity uses positive psychology to guide teenagers toward rational starchasing. We designed creative publicity cards to present both the advantages and the risks of starchasing, and to show young people how healthy hobbies can be formed.

Positive psychology pays attention to building positive thinking patterns, reducing unhealthy behavior, and supporting personal growth [11]. Starchasing education in schools is often presented in a serious and formulaic way, and many teenagers do not respond well to long talks or textbook-style instruction. So we changed psychological ideas into small, portable guidance cards made for teenage readers. The format mattered. Compared with longer written materials, these cards are easier to read, more direct, and better suited to everyday use.

The card design centers on three main areas: the value of positive starchasing, the harm caused by blind starchasing, and practical ways to keep starchasing within reasonable limits.

One part of the cards records the positive side of starchasing. Many celebrities work hard to reach their goals. They practise repeatedly, deal with setbacks, and continue despite pressure. For teenagers, such public

figures can become encouraging role models. When students feel tired of studying or begin to lose confidence, this kind of positive starchasing may give them fresh motivation. It can encourage them to set goals, strengthen self-discipline, and keep a more active attitude in daily life. In this sense, the cards connect starchasing with the kind of emotional support discussed in positive psychology [12].

Another part points out the negative effects of blind starchasing. Some teenagers spend too much pocket money on peripheral products. Some use study time to watch live streams or short videos, and this can gradually affect their daily schedule. A few also develop jealousy, anxiety, or a habit of constant comparison through starchasing. These are real problems. They can affect learning, everyday life, and mental health. On the cards, we used simple language and brief reminders so that students could recognise these patterns in themselves and notice when starchasing had gone too far.

The most practical part of the cards is the section on rational starchasing shaped by positive psychology.

Each card includes short and concrete advice. For example, we encourage students to learn from an idol's work ethic instead of paying attention only to appearance. We suggest putting study arrangements first and keeping starchasing in the position of a relaxing hobby, rather than letting it take over daily life. We also remind teenagers to think independently and avoid following others blindly. These suggestions are simple, but they point to a clear goal: helping teenagers form healthier values and more stable interests

During this social practice activity, we sorted out relevant psychological ideas and then turned abstract content into visual card designs. This took some adjustment. At first, the psychological terms were too complex for the card format, so the wording had to be simplified several times to keep the meaning while making the text easy for teenagers to accept. Because of this, the final design presents mental health education in a less rigid and more approachable way. Students can put the cards in pencil cases or schoolbags and read them when needed. If confusion or emotional conflict appears during starchasing, the cards can offer immediate and understandable guidance.

Combining positive psychology with starchasing education is a practical and meaningful attempt. It allows teenagers to see that starchasing is not entirely negative, but that it needs limits, judgment, and self-control. The card design developed in this activity aims to make that message easier to accept in daily life.

In later work, we plan to refine the design further, add more targeted psychological guidance, and improve how the content matches teenagers actual habits and concerns.

4. Analysis of the effects and limitations of rational fandom public welfare communication

4.1. Practical value of the public welfare communication materials

The promotional material achieves effective information spreading while avoiding audience resistance. Fan communities are highly cohesive groups with strong emotional bonds [13]. They tend to be sensitive to outside criticism. Traditional educational or judgmental approaches often trigger defensive reactions, and can even cause resentment. Our materials avoided this problem by using a neutral and friendly tone [14]. They were delivered in the form of leaflets and small knowledge cards at the event venue. No harsh or critical language appeared anywhere. This gentle strategy greatly increased fans' willingness to accept the information. Most onsite fans voluntarily received the materials after simple guidance. A number of participants started browsing the content immediately after receiving them. This response shows that the design is approachable and easy to engage with, which effectively lowers the barrier for information intake.

The design process successfully turns abstract academic theories into popular and understandable expressions. We took core concepts from psychology, sociology, and communication studies—parasocial relationships [15], information cocoons [16], and group polarization [7]—and explained them in plain language within the leaflet. We avoided technical terms that might confuse readers. At the same time, we included real examples of fan behavior and the positive side of rational starchasing, such as charity projects, thoughtful content discussions, and knowledge sharing, rather than impulsive spending or online arguments. This approach helps connect academic theories to fans' everyday experiences, so that the knowledge does not feel too abstract and disconnected from reality. In addition, we left a reflection section at the end of the leaflet with openended questions. This interactive arrangement moves away from traditional oneway knowledge delivery. It encourages audiences to think independently and form their own views, rather than just passively receiving information [17].

The onsite distribution behavior itself carries important symbolic meaning. Promoting rational fandom at fan activity venues has value beyond the direct reading effect of the materials. The public presence of positive and reasonable communication sends a clear signal: fandom culture is a social phenomenon that deserves rational discussion and proper guidance, rather than being simply denied or condemned. This helps ease the longstanding tension between fan groups and the outside public, reducing mutual stereotypes and prejudice [18], and creating a more open atmosphere for future communication and cooperation between different sides.

Although onsite reading time was short due to the busy event setting, visualized and wellorganized information can still remain in audiences' implicit memory. In later daily situations—when facing impulsive buying decisions, joining online disputes, or getting involved in extreme group behaviors—fans may unconsciously recall the guidance and rational strategies recorded in the leaflet, achieving spontaneous selfrestraint in their actions. While this subtle and longterm effect cannot be measured through immediate data, it is still an important part of public welfare communication evaluation that should not be overlooked.

4.2. Limitations of on-site communication effects

Despite the full completion of material distribution in terms of quantity, onsite observation reveals obvious shortcomings in actual absorption and transformation. Many participants merely collected the materials casually or out of politeness. A small number even threw them away directly after receiving them. This shows a clear gap between information delivery and genuine understanding. The main limitations are summarized below.

Firstly, fans in crowded and energetic event settings are often distracted by social activities and environmental noise. They have limited willingness and mental energy to process unfamiliar information. Some paragraphs in our leaflet were too long and used relatively formal language. This caused many people to miss the key points after a quick glance. The reading time fell far shorter than we expected. This suggests that future designs should shorten text blocks and improve information hierarchy to suit fast browsing habits.

Secondly, the visual design fails to balance aesthetics and information efficiency. Although the overall layout looks delicate and the colors are pleasant, the key viewpoints and core guidance are not visually highlighted with enough emphasis [19]. During quick and casual browsing, decorative elements tend to overshadow the practical information. This means that visual beautification does not actually serve readability or effective absorption, and may even distract readers from the main content.

Thirdly, shortterm offline activities cannot form sustainable intervention effects. Onetime onsite communication only generates temporary cognitive stimulation. The shallow impression formed in a single activity fades quickly after the event ends. To turn shortterm cognitive resonance into stable, longterm

behavioral change, it is necessary to add followup measures such as online interactions, community engagement, and periodic checkins, so that the impact can be maintained over time [20].

Overall, this practical intervention verifies the feasibility and positive value of mild public welfare communication in fandom culture governance [21]. The neutral and interactive design effectively avoids audience resistance and realizes positive value output. Nevertheless, there remains a clear gap between passive information reception and active behavioral correction. Currently, there is still room for improvement in terms of attention capture, visual optimization, and sustainable communication.

5. Conclusion

This paper focuses on the widespread fan culture among contemporary young people and examines public welfare communication design and practical approaches for rational fandom from the perspective of positive psychology [22]. In the context of new media, it first looks at changes in fan identity and the psychological needs behind fandom, including emotional expression, group belonging, and value sharing [23]. It argues that disorderly forms of star chasing, such as fan conflicts and irrational consumption, do not come directly from fans' affection for idols. They grow out of distorted ways of meeting psychological needs under the joint influence of platform algorithms and entertainment capital [23, 24]. Traditional preaching-style guidance tends to ignore fans' emotional needs, and it often triggers resistance instead of reflection [25, 26]. For that reason, public welfare communication needs forms that fans can see, handle, and relate to in everyday settings.

To address this issue, the research turns abstract ideas from positive psychology into portable star-chasing guidance cards. The design includes three core modules: the positive power of rational fandom, the negative consequences of blind star chasing, and practical suggestions for healthy star chasing. Rather than relying on rigid moral instruction, the cards present theory in plain, youth-friendly language and visual form, so that teenagers can understand and apply healthier ways of appreciating idols in daily life. That shift matters. The later on-site distribution of leaflets and knowledge cards provides some support for the practical value of this relatively gentle public welfare communication model. A neutral and friendly tone helps reduce fans' defensive reactions and improve their willingness to take in the information [26]. When sociological and psychological ideas were explained through real fan cases, the content connected more easily with daily fan experience instead of staying at an abstract level. Offline publicity at fan activities also, to some extent, reduced mutual prejudice between fan groups and the wider public, while leaving a continuing but indirect reminder for audiences to restrain impulsive fandom behavior.

Still, the field observation also showed the limits of this one-time offline practice. The activity sites were noisy, which made reading fragmented and shortened the time people spent with the material. In addition, the visual layout did not fully resolve the tension between decorative elements and key information, so some guidance content was less noticeable than intended. A single round of offline distribution is also unlikely to produce stable intervention effects on its own. Information could be received, but that did not easily turn into active behavioral change.

Taken together, the study suggests that fandom passion has positive potential [22, 27], and that public welfare communication design based on positive psychology can guide young people toward internalizing rational star-chasing ideas instead of depending only on external behavioral control [22]. At the same time, the results from this practice indicate that communication form affects whether guidance is accepted. For later practice and related research, designers could further adjust text length and visual hierarchy to fit fast reading habits, make the key guidance content more visually prominent, and develop a longer-term online-offline communication mechanism through community interaction and follow-up popularization of relevant

knowledge. Continuous revision of communication forms and intervention methods may help release the constructive side of fandom culture and support young people in forming healthier views of entertainment and daily life.

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