



Exploring the Dynamics of “Pay Alter” as an Online Sexual Platform Among Filipino Youth

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Abstract

This study explored the dynamics of Pay Alter, an emerging online sexual platform used by Filipino youth, focusing on the lived experiences of male content creators and subscribers. The primary objective is to examine their reasons for creating and subscribing to Pay Alter, the terms, conditions, and negotiations involved in the exchange, and how they experience hyperreality in engaging to Pay Alter. Employing a qualitative phenomenological design, the study gathered data through in-depth interviews with five content creators and two subscribers, using thematic analysis to surface recurring patterns and themes. The findings reveal that while financial need is a common starting point for engagement, many participants also seek self-expression, sexual exploration, emotional connection, and even healing. Both creators and subscribers construct digital roles that blur the line between performance and authenticity, leading to complex experiences of hyperreality where digital intimacy feels deeply personal and emotionally charged. These results highlight how transactional online sexual interactions are shaped not only by economic factors but also by emotional needs and evolving digital identities. The study concludes that Pay Alter is more than a site of online sex work — it is a space where youth negotiate vulnerability, selfhood, and connection within the structures of a mediated and commodified digital culture.

Keywords: digital identity, Filipino youth, hyperreality, online sexual platform, Pay Alter

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Introduction

The advent of technology has profoundly transformed how people communicate, learn, work, and relate to the world around them. From global industries to personal relationships, digital platforms have created new spaces for interaction, intimacy, and self-expression (Nuegea, 2023). Among the most complex and controversial outcomes of this digital shift is the rise of cyber prostitution, a form of sex work mediated by online technologies, where sexual content or services are exchanged for money (Tawakal & Imelada, 2022). Compared to traditional sex work, cyber prostitution is marked by greater anonymity, mediated consent, and new dynamics of performance and power.

Within this emerging landscape, alter accounts, anonymous social media identities, have evolved into common spaces for sharing sexual content. What began as private or playful online personas has grown into an entire subculture. This includes *Exhibitionist Alter* (those who post original content), *Wholesome Alter* (passive viewers), and most notably, *Pay Alter*—where users monetize explicit content through direct payments, digital wallets, or subscription-based models (Piamonte et al., 2020). More than just a trend, *Pay Alter* reflects shifting ideas about labor, identity, and sexual expression in digital environments.

In the Philippines, the *Pay Alter* community has grown into a distinct online subculture, active across platforms like Twitter, Telegram, and Instagram. Filipino content creators—especially MSM (men who have sex with men), produce and sell erotic content, often engaging with anonymous subscribers seeking pleasure, emotional connection, or personal fantasy fulfillment. Despite its visibility, *Pay Alter* remains widely misunderstood and heavily stigmatized. Public conversations often stop at moral criticism, while academic research has yet to fully examine the complex and personal experiences, motivations, and emotional labor of those directly involved.

While existing literature has touched on alter culture in general, particularly within LGBTQ+ spaces (Piamonte et al., 2020), it had not yet deeply explored *Pay Alter* as a transactional, emotional, and performative space. Topics such as reasons for engagement, digital negotiations, privacy risks, and digital identity performance remained largely underexamined, especially from the lens of Filipino youth. The intersection of anonymity, emotional labor, and identity construction in a culturally conservative yet digitally connected society presented unique dynamics that demanded deeper inquiry.

This study addressed these gaps by exploring the dynamics of *Pay Alter* as an online sexual platform among Filipino youth. Specifically, it answered the following questions: What are their reasons for creating and subscribing to *Pay Alter*? What are the terms, conditions, and negotiations in creating and subscribing to *Pay Alter*? And how do they experience hyperreality in engaging to *Pay Alter*? Through a phenomenological approach, the study captured the lived experiences of male content creators and subscribers, revealing the economic, emotional, and performative dimensions of their participation.

The significance of this research lies in how it contributes meaningful knowledge both in the Philippines and across global contexts. On a global scale, it supports growing efforts to understand how young people experience digital intimacy and how online sexual transactions shape their emotions, relationships, and self-perception. Locally, it sheds light on how Filipino youth navigate the pressures of earning online, facing stigma, and forming emotional ties, within a society that still upholds traditional values. At the community level, this study offers valuable insights to educators, mental health professionals, and policymakers by bringing attention to the lived realities of a hidden yet growing population. In the end, this research demonstrates that *Pay Alter* is not merely a platform for adult content, it is a space where youth negotiate identity, reveal vulnerability, and seek connection in a fast-evolving digital world.

Methodology

Research Design

This study used a phenomenological design to understand the personal experiences of people involved in *Pay Alter*, including both content creators and subscribers. By focusing on their own words and perspectives, the research aimed to explore how they made sense of their online roles, emotions, and identities. The study allowed patterns and meanings to emerge from their stories. Through in-depth interviews and analysis, the research revealed the reasons, negotiations, and emotional labor behind their participation. This approach helped uncover how digital spaces like *Pay Alter* affect one’s sense of self, relationships, and emotional well-being.

Sampling Procedure

The study used snowball sampling to recruit participants from the *Pay Alter* community. It started with a known content creator who referred other individuals involved in producing and selling explicit content. Some of these creators also referred subscribers who were subscribed to their content. The inclusion criteria required content creators to be engaged in producing explicit material in exchange for money, while subscribers needed to be officially subscribed to these creators. This method helped the researchers reach a hidden population and collect meaningful insights from both sides of the platform.

Research Participants

Table 1. Profile of the Participants

	Participant	Sex	Gender Identity	Region	Number of Subscribers	Estimated Monthly Earning (for Content Creators) and Spending (for Subscribers)
Content Creators	A1	Male	Bisexual	Region III	50	₱7,500
	A2	Male	Straight	NCR	346	₱90,000
	A3	Male	Bisexual	NCR	51	₱50,000
	A4	Male	Bisexual	Region IV-A	54	₱20,000

	A5	Male	Bisexual	Region VII	32	₱5,000
Subscribers	S1	Male	Bisexual	NCR		₱1,000-1,200
	S2	Male	Gay	Region IV-B		₱500 - ₱1,000

The study involved seven male participants from the *Pay Alter* community in the Philippines — five content creators and two subscribers. Their gender identities varied: most identified as bisexual, one creator was straight, and one subscriber was gay.

Participants came from different regions including NCR, Region III, Region IV-A, Region IV-B, and Region VII. Content creators had between 32 to 346 subscribers and reported monthly earnings ranging from ₱5,000 to ₱90,000. One creator from NCR had the highest income and subscriber count. In contrast, the two subscribers typically spent ₱500 to ₱1,200 per month.

This difference reflects the creator-consumer dynamic and how identity and region shape digital engagement. Snowball sampling helped access this hidden population. Interviews continued until thematic saturation was reached.

Research Instrument

The primary instrument used in this study was a pair of semi-structured interview guides, one designed for *Pay Alter* content creators and the other for subscribers. These guides were crafted specifically for the study, based on the research objectives and emerging themes from the review of related literature. They were not adapted from existing tools, but were instead originally developed to suit the unique context of the research.

To ensure validity and reliability, the interview guides underwent content validation by experts in the College of Teacher Education. These experts reviewed the questions for clarity, appropriateness, and alignment with the research objectives, ensuring that each item would effectively capture the intended data without bias or ambiguity.

Research Procedure

After identifying participants through snowball sampling, the researchers contacted content creators and subscribers primarily through Telegram, based on referrals and visible indicators on social media profiles. Some content creators requested that the researchers subscribe to their content before continuing communication, following common norms within the *Pay Alter* platform. To build trust and ensure ethical engagement, the researchers subscribed to selected profiles.

For those who agreed to join the study, interviews were scheduled based on their preferred platform, either Zoom or Google Meet. Before each session, informed consent was obtained, explaining the study’s purpose, confidentiality, voluntary nature of participation, and the participants’ right to withdraw at any time. A semi-structured interview format was used to allow guided yet flexible conversations. All interviews were audio-recorded with permission, then transcribed and manually coded. This process supported the thematic

analysis of their reasons, negotiations, and identity performances within the *Pay Alter* community.

Data Analysis

The study used thematic analysis based on the six-phase process of *Braun and Clarke (2006)* to analyze the interview responses. First, the researchers became familiar with the data by reading the transcripts several times to fully understand the participants’ experiences. Next, they identified and highlighted important words, phrases, and ideas by coding the data. After coding, similar responses were grouped together to form potential themes that showed common patterns in how participants described their roles and experiences on *Pay Alter*.

These themes were then reviewed and refined to make sure they clearly represented the data. A thematic map was also created to show how the themes were related. Once finalized, each theme was given a clear name and definition to capture its main message. Lastly, the themes were analyzed and connected to existing research and theories. In particular, Goffman’s dramaturgical theory was used to understand how participants present themselves online. This process helped the researchers organize the data and gain deeper insights into the digital behaviors and identities of content creators and subscribers.

Ethical Considerations

All ethical standards for research involving human participants were observed. Before any data collection, participants gave their informed consent after being fully briefed on the purpose and nature of the research. Participation was voluntary, and they were informed that they could withdraw at any time without any consequences.

To protect participants’ privacy, all identities were kept confidential. Pseudonyms were used in transcripts and reporting to ensure anonymity. Data collected from interviews were stored securely, and access was limited to the research team only. The study complied with institutional guidelines and upheld the ethical principles of respect, confidentiality, and integrity throughout the entire research process.

Results/Findings

1. Reasons for Creating and Subscribing to Pay Alter

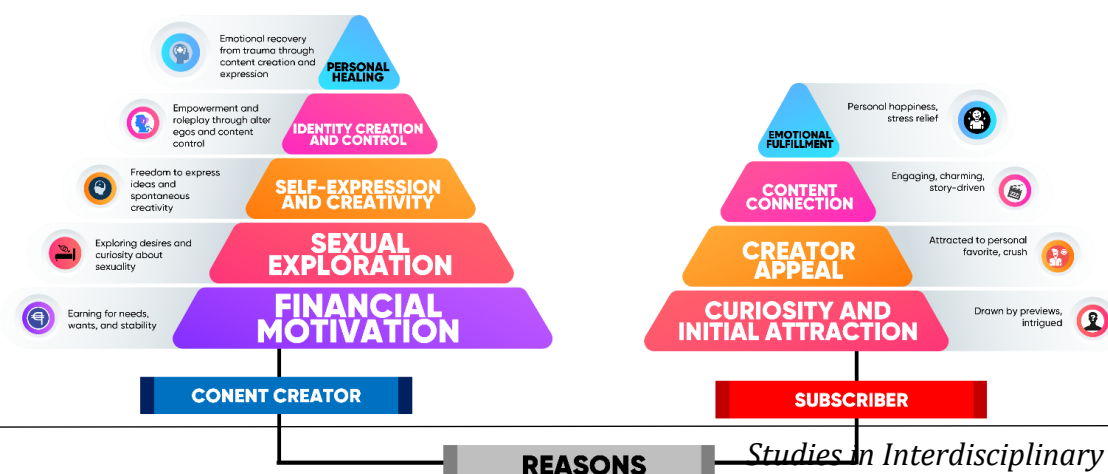


Figure 1. Hierarchal Reasons for Engaging in Pay Alter Among Content Creators and Subscribers

Figure 1 presents two pyramids that illustrate the reasons why Filipino youth participate in *Pay Alter*. One represents the content creators, and the other represents the subscribers. These reasons are arranged from the most commonly mentioned to the least, showing a journey that starts with basic needs or attraction and deepens into emotional and personal experiences.

Starting with content creators, the most frequently mentioned reason is financial motivation. Many entered the platform out of necessity, whether to earn for their daily needs, help with family expenses, or pay for school. A1 shared, “*Kapag humihingi ako ng pera or kailangan ko wala silang maibigay sa aken... pangdagdag allowance ko rin para sa school,*” while A4 said, “*Kasi di biro yung tuition, napakalaki kaya minsan kailangan ko talagang mag-earn.*” For these creators, *Pay Alter* was first and foremost a means of survival.

As they continued on the platform, sexual exploration became another key reason. Some creators discovered that the space allowed them to explore their own desires and curiosity about sex, which they may not have been able to do openly in real life. As A5 put it, “*What got me interested is of course the sex... and also the drive of my own sexual libido.*”

After this stage, many creators began to express themselves more freely. Self-expression and creativity became central to their participation. They enjoyed being able to share ideas, create content on their own terms, and build personas that reflected parts of who they are. A1 explained, “*Kung kahit ano lang na maisip ko... yun ang gagawin ko.*”

This creative freedom eventually led to identity creation and control. Some participants used *Pay Alter* to step into a version of themselves that felt stronger, more confident, or more in control than who they are offline. A3 shared, “*Kailangan ibang tao ako ‘pag nasa video,*” showing how they intentionally performed a different identity in the digital space.

At the top of the content creator pyramid is personal healing. While mentioned less frequently, it was deeply meaningful. Some participants described *Pay Alter* as a space where they could cope with past trauma and find emotional release through their content. For instance, A5 said, “*Ito ang paraan para makapag-heal ako mula sa mga pinagdaanan kong trauma.*” This shows that beyond income or pleasure, the platform can also serve as a tool for emotional recovery.

Meanwhile, subscribers follow a different path, although their engagement also deepens over time. Most begin with curiosity and initial attraction. They are usually drawn

in by previews or snippets on social media and become intrigued by the confidence or appeal of certain creators. As S1 described, *“Nakikita ko sa Twitter yung mga snippets... nakakaintriga kasi minsan yung creators super confident.”*

This curiosity often grows into creator appeal. Some subscribers develop preferences for specific creators who match their personal taste or fantasies. For them, the experience feels as if their fantasy is coming to life. As S2 shared, *“Isang creator na super pasok sa type ko... fantasy mo, nagkakatotoo.”*

As they continue watching, many subscribers begin to value content connection. They appreciate creators who are emotionally expressive, confident, and engaging in their delivery. This makes the content feel more authentic and story-driven. S2 said, *“Confidence nila at kung paano nila i-deliver... may kwento.”*

At the top of the subscriber pyramid is emotional fulfillment. For some, engaging in *Pay Alter* provides comfort, stress relief, and a way to escape daily pressures. It becomes a form of personal release and happiness. As S2 reflected, *“Way ko to para mag-unwind... explore ng fantasies.”*

In conclusion, both pyramids show that engagement with *Pay Alter* is not just about money or attraction. What begins as survival or curiosity can evolve into experiences of creativity, identity-building, and emotional connection. For many Filipino youth, *Pay Alter* is more than just a platform. It becomes a personal and layered space where income, desire, healing, and self-expression come together.

2. Terms, Conditions, and Negotiation in Pay Alter Interactions

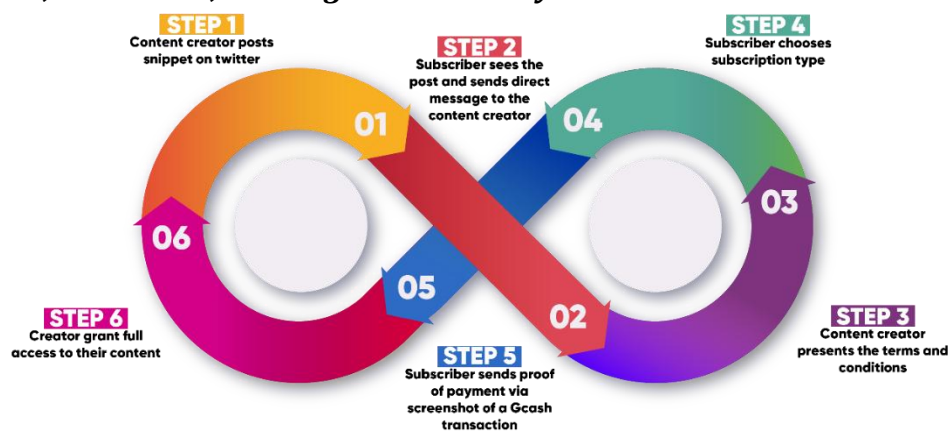


Figure 2. General Process of Engaging in Pay Alter: From Snippet Viewing to Private Access

Figure 2 illustrates the general process by which *Pay Alter* typically operates, beginning with the content creator. The process usually starts when a creator posts a teaser, often a short, two-minute video on platforms like Twitter. These snippets are designed to spark curiosity, offering just enough content to entice viewers into seeking more. Twitter is the preferred platform for this initial stage because it allows the free posting of sexually

explicit content without immediate censorship. Unlike Facebook or other mainstream social media platforms that impose stricter community standards and frequently ban explicit posts, Twitter provides creators with greater freedom to share provocative content and maintain visibility. As a result, most *Pay Alter* creators choose Twitter to publicly promote their services and expand their reach.

Once a potential subscriber encounters the teaser and becomes interested, they are directed to the creator’s profile, where they often find contact details—most commonly a Telegram link. From there, the subscriber sends a direct message, initiating a more personal and transactional interaction.

After contact is established, the content creator responds with their Terms and Conditions. These typically include payment options such as monthly subscriptions, one-time access, or lifetime membership. The subscriber selects a plan and is then asked to provide proof of payment, most often through a screenshot of a GCash transaction.

Only after verifying the payment does the content creator grant full access to their materials. These usually include exclusive videos or content folders delivered privately through Telegram. At this point, the subscriber gains entry into the space they were initially drawn to, completing a cycle that began with a single scroll on social media.

Though the entire process takes place in digital spaces, it is fundamentally shaped by human emotions and needs. It involves trust, curiosity, negotiation, and the quiet desire, for both creator and subscriber—to be seen, desired, and affirmed in a space that blurs the boundary between performance and authenticity, fantasy and emotional connection.

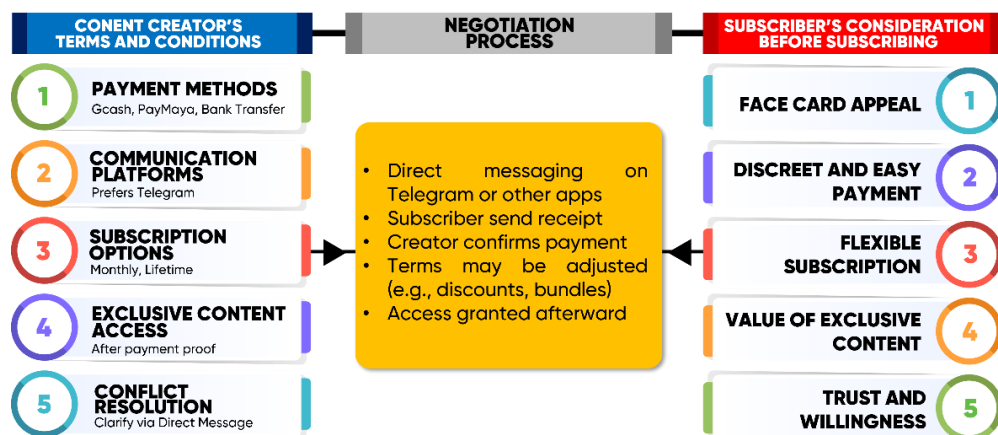


Figure 3. Integrated Flow of Terms, Conditions, and Negotiation between Content Creators and Subscribers

Figure 3 shows how *Pay Alter* works, not just as a platform, but as a space where two people with different needs meet halfway. On one side, you have the content creators who offer their content with set rules, and on the other side, the subscribers who think carefully before deciding to buy in. At the center of it all is the quiet, careful negotiation that makes the exchange happen.

Starting with the content creators, they act like online sellers, but what they offer is deeply personal. They begin by setting clear payment methods, usually through platforms like GCash or PayMaya for both convenience and privacy. As one creator noted, *“GCash and PayMaya are the primary modes I use because they’re fast and accessible to my subscribers”* [A1]. Another added, *“I use GCash for privacy. I also have one subscriber from another country who used bank transfer to GCash”* [A3], showing how these systems support both local and international transactions.

They also choose specific platforms for communication, with Telegram being the most preferred. *“I mostly use Telegram for communication and transactions”* [A2], one explained, highlighting its ease and security. From here, they offer a range of subscription conditions, like monthly or lifetime plans. *“I offer both monthly and lifetime subscriptions. Subscribers can upgrade to lifetime by adding the difference in price”* [A2], showing flexibility and customer consideration. Conflict resolution is also personal. *“I handle misunderstandings by communicating directly with my subscribers to clarify things”* [A2]. For creators, clarity and control are essential.

On the subscriber’s side, their decision begins with something simple yet powerful, physical appeal, or what some call “face card.” A subscriber expressed, *“Yung tipong crush ko yung creator... may direct access ka”* [S1], showing how attraction plays a big role in who they choose to follow.

Following this, subscribers also prioritize discreet and convenient payment methods. One noted, *“Gcash talaga. Ang dali lang at ang bilis ng transaction. Plus, medyo discreet”* [S1], revealing their need to keep transactions private. Subscription flexibility matters too: *“Gusto ko yung option na pwede akong huminto anytime, lalo na kung gusto ko magtry ng iba”* [S2]. Subscribers appreciate creators who make them feel valued *“Yung feeling na special ka kasi exclusive yung content, yun talaga ang nag-e-engganyo sa akin”* [S1]. And of course, discounts or promotions help in their decision: *“May mga creators na nagbibigay ng discount kung long-term ka mag-subscribe”* [S2].

At the center of the process is negotiation. Most of the time, it begins with a simple message. A subscriber might ask for prices or request exclusive content. If the creator agrees, the subscriber is asked to send a screenshot of the payment. Only then is access granted. One creator explained, *“Once they send the receipt, I forward the video or add them to the private Telegram channel”* [A1].

This negotiation space reflects mutual trust. The creator trusts that the payment is legitimate; the subscriber trusts that the content is worth the price. Despite the informal setting, both follow an unwritten code, be clear, be respectful, and honor the deal.

Altogether, the diagram shows that what looks like a quick transaction is actually built on emotion, privacy, attraction, and digital trust. It reminds us that behind every subscription is not just a transfer of money, but a moment of connection between two people navigating a shared digital space, both hoping to be seen, respected, and satisfied in their roles.

3. Hyperreality in Pay Alter Engagements

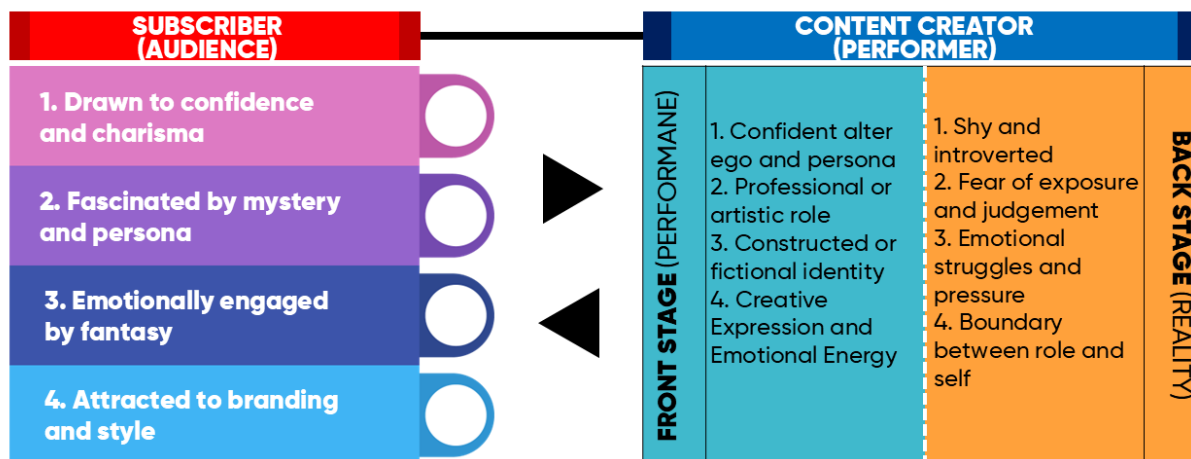


Figure 4. The Experience of Hyperreality in Pay Alter: A Dramaturgical Model of Online Identity Performance

Figure 4 reveal that both content creators and subscribers experience a blurring of the lines between reality and performance—what scholars call hyperreality. For content creators, *Pay Alter* becomes more than a job; it is a stage where they perform confident, bold, and often sexually expressive versions of themselves that differ from who they are offline. As A1 reflected, “*Online, mas outgoing ako at confident sa pag-present ng sarili, pero sa real life mas reserved ako.*” This shows how the online space allows them to inhabit a version of themselves that might feel impossible in their day-to-day lives.

On the front stage, creators take on confident personas that command attention. Many describe themselves as more energetic, assertive, and outgoing when online, in contrast to their reserved offline selves. A3 shared, “*Energetic sa video... pero mahiyain ako sa personal.*” Others present themselves as artists or professionals who carefully construct a brand. A2 stated, “*Gusto kong makita nila ako bilang artist.*” To meet audience expectations, they often create a character or persona: “*Mas persona po siya... kailangan kong mag-adapt sa gusto ng audience*” [A1]. Despite the performance, the platform still allows genuine emotional expression “*Enjoy ko yung creative freedom*” [A1] offering creators a rare outlet for their suppressed feelings.

Behind the curtain, on the back stage, creators return to their personal, often quieter selves. Many grapple with the pressure to maintain their online identity, even when it clashes with who they truly are. As A4 noted, “*Introvert ako sa totoong buhay pero sa alter ibang-iba.*” The fear of being exposed adds another layer of stress. A5 confessed, “*The challenge is fear of having my identity revealed,*” while A2 admitted, “*It hurts because they don’t know who I really am.*” To cope, they draw boundaries between the performance and their real lives.

“Nagse-set talaga ako ng boundaries,” said A1. Others rely on anonymity to speak more openly, like A5: “Anonymous ako kaya mas open ako sa online.”

At the same time, subscribers act as an audience, yet their role goes beyond just watching. They respond emotionally to what they see, forming attachments to creators’ personas. Some are drawn to charisma and confidence, but also appreciate moments of honesty. As S1 described, “Parang may performance talaga... pero nararamdaman mo din yung genuine side nila.” Mystery enhances the appeal “Mas okay sakin yung may mystery pa rin... parang mas exciting” [S1] and when fantasies are fulfilled, deeper loyalty often forms. “Kapag nabibigay nila yung hinahanap kong fantasy, mas nagiging loyal ako sa kanila” [S1]. The audience doesn’t just passively receive—they interact, respond, and influence the performance itself.

This leads to one of the most important insights of the study: the relationship between creator and subscriber is not one-sided. Like a stage performance shaped by both actor and audience, there exists a two-way arrow between the front stage and the crowd. Subscribers give feedback, support, or emotional reactions that influence how creators perform. In turn, creators adapt their personas, content, and tone based on what the audience desires or needs. This dynamic co-construction blurs the line between fantasy and reality even further. On *Pay Alter*, the performance is not owned by one side it is built and sustained by both.

In the end, hyperreality is not just about illusion it’s about emotion. Behind the curated posts and scripted content are real people navigating vulnerability, validation, desire, and identity. The digital stage may offer safety, anonymity, or power, but it also demands emotional labor and constant balancing. Through this back-and-forth between creators and subscribers, *Pay Alter* becomes more than a platform. It becomes a mirror, reflecting the hidden parts of both those who perform and those who watch.

Discussions

The study shows that *Pay Alter* is more than just a site for financial transactions. It is a space where people explore who they are, express hidden parts of themselves, and form emotional connections with others. This reflects Anthony Giddens’ idea of “Late Modernity and Intimacy,” where intimacy today is based more on personal choice and emotion than on traditional roles. Through *Pay Alter*, users are not just selling or viewing content. They are also finding meaning, comfort, and even a sense of identity.

For many content creators, the journey began with the need to earn money. Some used their earnings to pay for tuition or help their families, which aligns with studies on how digital sex work can support young people facing financial struggles (Brooks-Gordon & Vickers, 2022; Vaughn Hamilton et al., 2022). But over time, their reasons shifted. Many started to see content creation as a form of self-expression or emotional release, helping them cope with personal struggles. This supports research by Byron et al. (2024), who explained that online spaces can offer healing, especially for those who feel unseen in their daily lives.

As they continued on the platform, creators shared how they present different

versions of themselves. Online, they are bold and confident. Offline, they are often shy or reserved. This performance is explained well by Erving Goffman's theory, which says that people act differently depending on who is watching. Creators manage a public "front stage" and a private "backstage" identity. But this also brings emotional pressure. Some creators felt drained or afraid that people might discover their real identities. These feelings reflect the emotional burden discussed by Toubiana and Ruebottom (2022) and Easterbrook-Smith (2022).

On the other hand, subscribers often started with curiosity. They discovered creators through teaser videos on Twitter, which allows more freedom in posting adult content than other platforms like Facebook or Instagram (Rubattu et al., 2023). What began as curiosity sometimes turned into emotional connection. Some subscribers described their experience like being in a relationship, where emotional closeness became as important as the content itself. This supports Milrod and Monto's (2012) idea of the "girlfriend experience," where intimacy is part of the exchange.

Both groups experienced something called hyperreality. This is when online interactions begin to feel more real than offline life. Creators said they felt more confident and freer online. Subscribers described feeling strong emotional bonds. These experiences confirm what García-Iglesias (2019) and Veer and Golf-Papez (2018) found about how digital life can shape emotions and identity in powerful ways.

Although this study does not propose a new theory, it strongly supports existing ones. Giddens' and Goffman's ideas help explain why users behave the way they do and how they create meaning in online spaces. However, the study also has limits. It focused on a small group and only on one platform. Future studies could explore other platforms or examine long-term effects on users' emotions and identities.

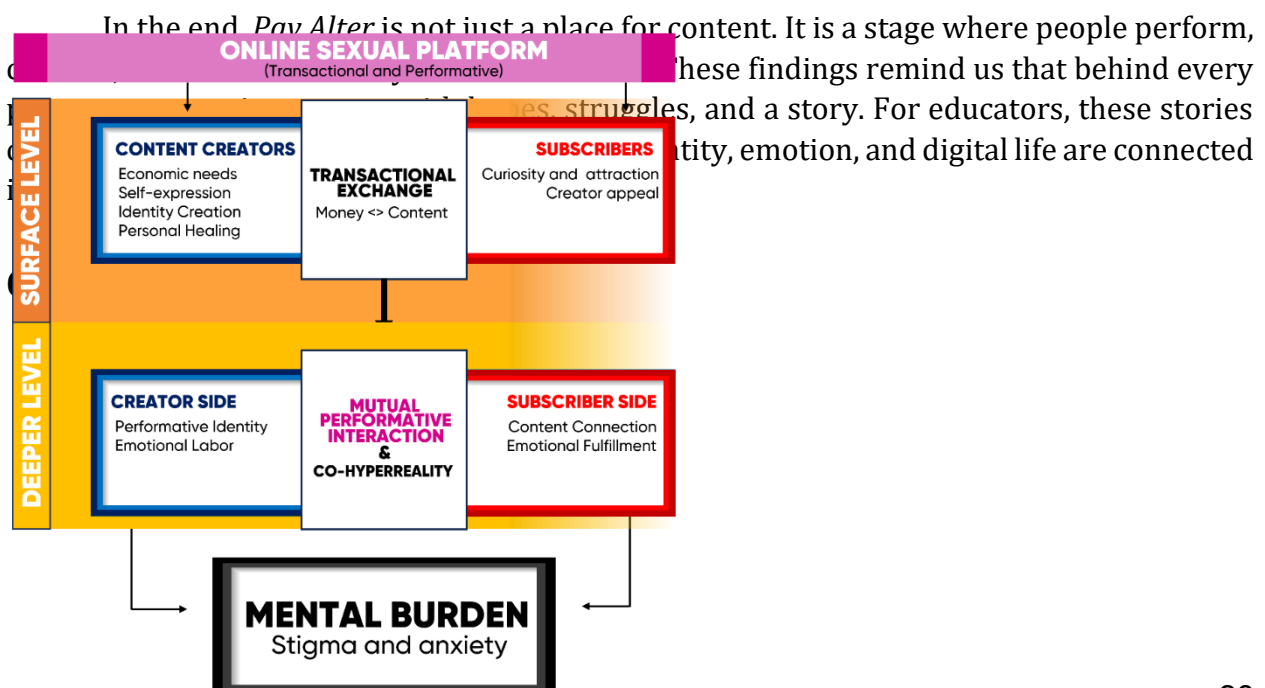


Figure 5. *The Dynamics of Pay Alter: A Cycle of Transaction, Performance, and Emotion*

Figure 5 illustrates the layered and evolving nature of *Pay Alter* as an online sexual platform. At the surface level, it presents a transactional exchange where content creators offer sexual content and subscribers pay to access it, guided by curiosity, attraction, and creator appeal. This is where negotiations happen—money in exchange for personalized digital experiences. However, the platform goes beyond this surface. As interactions deepen, content creators take on the role of performers, and subscribers become an audience. In this performative space, the relationship shifts from a simple buyer-seller model to one that is emotionally charged. Creators craft bold, confident personas while managing the emotional labor that comes with maintaining them, and subscribers form emotional attachments, finding intimacy and fantasy in the interaction. This leads to mutual performative interaction and co-hyperreality, where digital roles start to feel real and both sides influence one another’s behavior and engagement. At the core of this cycle lies mental burden, a quiet yet significant cost marked by pressure, expectation, and emotional exhaustion. Ultimately, *Pay Alter* is not just a site of digital sex work, but a deeply human space shaped by identity, emotion, and vulnerability.

Conclusion

This study found that young Filipinos join *Pay Alter* for different reasons—some content creators do it to earn money, express themselves, or cope with emotional stress, while subscribers are drawn to feelings of connection, control, or fantasy in a safe, anonymous space. Both groups follow their own set of rules, setting conditions and negotiating access through private chats and agreements. Over time, their roles become more than just online personas, as their digital performances start to feel real, a phenomenon known as hyperreality. These findings support theories by Goffman and Giddens, showing how online platforms shape how young people present themselves, form relationships, and deal with emotions. By focusing on their actual experiences, this research sheds light on an often misunderstood digital community. Future studies can explore the deeper effects of

these interactions, including the emotional and legal challenges that come with living part of one's life online.

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Conflicts of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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