

Mapping the Parasocial Interaction Literature: A Bibliometric Analysis

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Abstract

The social and psychological impact of an increasing presence in the virtual world on the individual has become a subject of some investigation in recent years. One among the possible consequences of an online presence, parasocial interaction refers to the creation of quasi-relationship between users and online influencers. This study provides a comprehensive review of the extant research in the field of parasocial interaction. We use VOSviewer software to perform a bibliometric analysis of 283 peer-reviewed articles obtained from Web of Science database related to parasocial interaction. The investigation informs about the current publication trends and provides a quantitative review of the extant literature using bibliometric techniques: citation analysis, bibliographic coupling analysis, co-authorship analysis, co-citation analysis, and keyword co-occurrence analysis. The review identifies the impactful publications and keywords, influential authors and their collaborative ties, productive journals, countries, and author-affiliated institutions in the field of study. The analysis should further the understanding of the developments in this field along with its intellectual structure.

Keywords: Parasocial Interaction, Imaginary Relationship, Bibliometric Analysis, Bibliographic Coupling, Co-citation

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1. INTRODUCTION

Consumers are often sceptical about the authenticity of the claims made through traditional advertising and firm promotions. To overcome this challenge, marketers are increasingly attempting to employ non-traditional techniques such as the use of social media influencers who are likely to be perceived as more credible (De Veirman et al., 2017). Social media spokespersons exert their influence on their followers and have the potential to impact their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour. This influence can be stronger when the followers engage in an imaginary relationship- a parasocial interaction with the media persona. Parasocial interaction (PSI) is “an illusionary experience, such that consumers interact with personas (i.e., mediated representations of presenters, celebrities, or characters) as if they are present and engaged in a reciprocal relationship” (Labrecque, 2014, p. 135).

Parasocial interaction is a unilateral process in which the personae (celebrities or influencers) are recognized by the audiences (followers or consumers) during the former's performance, which leads to the creation of an imaginary relationship between both the parties in the minds of some audience members. The audiences could be users of media such as radio, television, and the various online platforms, whereas personae refer to the media figures including newscasters, celebrities, social media influencers, etc (Ballantine & Martin, 2005). These media personae use their personality, verbal and non-verbal skills, and media content to develop a fantasy of mutual association among their audiences (Ballantine & Martin, 2005; Hartmann & Goldhoorn, 2011). Though consumers have never actually met the celebrity, they still feel that they are being addressed directly and personally (Park & Lennon, 2004; Rihl & Wegener, 2019). It is this indirect interaction between both the parties that results in parasocial relationship wherein audience members feel that they are familiar with the persona just like their peers or even close relatives (Rubin & Step, 2000; Ballantine & Martin, 2005). Parasocial interaction is limited to the encounter between personae and audience, whilst parasocial relationship is the outcome of many such repeated encounters which surpasses any particular encounter (Dibble et al., 2016; Rihl & Wegener, 2019; Gregg, 2021). The phenomenon is intimate, mediated, non-reciprocal, irrational, actor-dependent, and has no possibility of further growth (Xiang et al., 2016).

This connection is similar to the social relations of viewers which get strengthened when they become more aware about the media personae and their lives (Xiang et al., 2016).

The studies on the concept of parasocial interaction have their origin in the domain of mass communication where it has been investigated (Dibble et al., 2016) to comprehend the relationship between viewers and persona and its impact on the responses of viewers (Kim, 2021). However, it has begun attracting the attention of marketers due to its persuasion effects on the consumers (Sokolova & Perez, 2021). It has been posited that parasocial interactions impact consumer brand decisions and purchase behaviour (Kim, 2020). These interactions forge a connection between followers and social media influencers which would not have been possible by other means (Daniel Jr et al., 2018). Consequently, parasocial interactions help marketers in better maintaining relationships between their brand and consumers in the present-day highly competitive scenario (Labrecque, 2014). Marketers have been leveraging for promoting their offerings among customers while developing their trust and loyalty in the brand (Yuan et al., 2021).

Studies on parasocial interaction are not just limited to television actors (Greenwood et al., 2008; Tian & Hoffner, 2010), radio hosts (Rubin & Step, 2000), and celebrities, but also extend to personae on social networking sites and other digital media (Rasmussen, 2018; Sokolova & Perez, 2021). Some literature reviews have also been conducted on this subject (Giles, 2002; Tukachinsky et al., 2020). But there is a dearth of studies employing bibliometric analysis in the domain of parasocial interaction between actors and viewers. This study conducts a bibliometric analysis to investigate the research elements and the associations among them (Donthu et al., 2021a; Gao et al., 2021) in the literature of parasocial interaction. “Bibliometric analysis summarizes the bibliometric and intellectual structure of a field by analysing the social and structural relationships between different research constituents (e.g., authors, countries, institutions, topics)” (Donthu et al., 2021a, p. 287).

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How have publications and citations on the subject of parasocial interaction evolved over time?

RQ2: Which are the most influential authors, affiliated-organizations, countries, references, journals, and articles in the area of parasocial interaction research so far?

The study enhances the extant knowledge on the phenomenon of parasocial interaction by providing bibliographic insights relating to research efforts in this domain such as impactful publications and keywords, influential authors and their collaborative ties, productive journals, countries, and author-affiliated institutions.

This paper is organized as follows: The next section of the paper elucidates the research methodology adopted, commencing with an outline of bibliometric analysis, followed by the data collection process and brief overview of bibliometric techniques used for the purpose of analysis. The next section explains the results obtained through bibliometric analysis. The paper ends with the conclusion of the study and its limitations.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Bibliometric analysis

The present study uses bibliometric analysis to examine the extant research in the field of parasocial interaction. Bibliometric analysis is a quantitative method used for integrating the existing scholarship in a field of study to provide a comprehensive and verifiable outlook to the researchers and practitioners (Gao et al., 2021). The basic objective of bibliometric analysis is “to depict the intellectual framework of a research field using various factors, such as papers, writers, journals, terms, and countries” (Gao et al., 2021, pp. 1668-1669). It provides useful information including that on the most impactful publications, influential authors, productive sources, etc., through maps in the form of network developed using data from bibliographic databases (Shah et al., 2021). Science mapping and performance analysis are the two prominent applications of bibliometric mapping (Gao et al., 2021; Donthu et al., 2021a, 2021b). Performance analysis informs about the progress of the field of study and the value addition provided by authors, organizations, journals, and countries to that field (Donthu et al., 2021a). It employs publication and citation-based measures (Donthu et al., 2021b). Scientific mapping

determines the conceptual and structural relationships among units of analysis such as sources, references, and documents (Donthu et al., 2021a). Scientific mapping involves techniques such as bibliographic coupling, co-citation analysis, and co-authorship analysis (Zupic & Cater, 2014).

2.2 Data extraction process

This study is based on data extracted from the Web of Science (WoS) database. An advanced search process was conducted on November 24, 2021 to collect data through Boolean query mentioned in Table 1.

Table 1: Search Criteria Applied

Database	Search String	Article Part Searched
Web of Science	("parasocial interaction" OR "parasocial relationship")	Title, Abstract, Author Keywords, and Keywords Plus

The relevant keywords were searched in the Title, Abstract, Author Keywords, and Keywords Plus fields of database documents. This yielded a total of 411 search records. These results were filtered on the basis of document type, language, and Web of Science category. Search records which were articles, review articles, and early access articles, in English, and in the categories of Communication or Business or Hospitality Leisure Sport Tourism or Management or Environmental Studies or Environmental Sciences or Psychology were included for further analysis. This led to the identification of 283 records. Full record with cited references of each of these articles was downloaded from this database in the form of a text document. Finally, 283 peer-reviewed articles were considered for bibliometric analysis.

2.3 Data Analysis

For the purpose of analysis, the data gathered was imported in VOSviewer 1.6.17 software. VOSviewer provides a graphical depiction of the networks showing associations between different research constituents in a comprehensible format, thus, helping in bibliometric analysis (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010).

The study analyzed the data of 283 peer-reviewed articles using five major techniques of bibliometric analysis, namely, citation analysis, bibliographic coupling analysis, co-authorship analysis, co-citation analysis, and keyword co-occurrence analysis. Citation analysis uses number of citations as the basis to determine the leading research article, journal, author, and institution in a specific field of study (Zupic & Cater, 2014; Gao et al., 2021; Donthu et al., 2021a). Bibliographic coupling analysis develops clusters of research constituent under study on the basis of number of references shared by them (Boyack & Klavans, 2010; Sepulcri et al., 2020). If the number of common citations between them is higher, the similarity between them will also be

higher (Zupic & Cater, 2014). Co-citation analysis identifies and presents associations between those two research articles that have been cited together in a common research article (Boyack & Klavans, 2010; Donthu et al., 2021a). Co-authorship analysis indicates collaborative ties among authors, countries, and institutions with regard to the researches undertaken by them (Zupic & Cater, 2014). Keyword co-occurrence analysis displays the links between keywords appearing in various publications related to the field of study and helps in identifying their frequency of joint occurrence (Sepulcri et al., 2020). Table 2 depicts the unit of analysis studied through each of the aforementioned techniques.

Table 2: Unit of Analysis Examined through Bibliometric Techniques

S.No.	Technique Employed	Unit of Analysis
1.	Citation Analysis	Documents, Authors, Countries, Sources, and Institutions
2.	Bibliographic Coupling Analysis	Authors, Articles, and Author-affiliated Institutions
3.	Co-authorship Analysis	Authors and Countries
4.	Keyword Co-occurrence Analysis	Author Keywords and Keyword Plus
5.	Co-citation Analysis	Cited Sources, Cited Authors, and Cited References

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

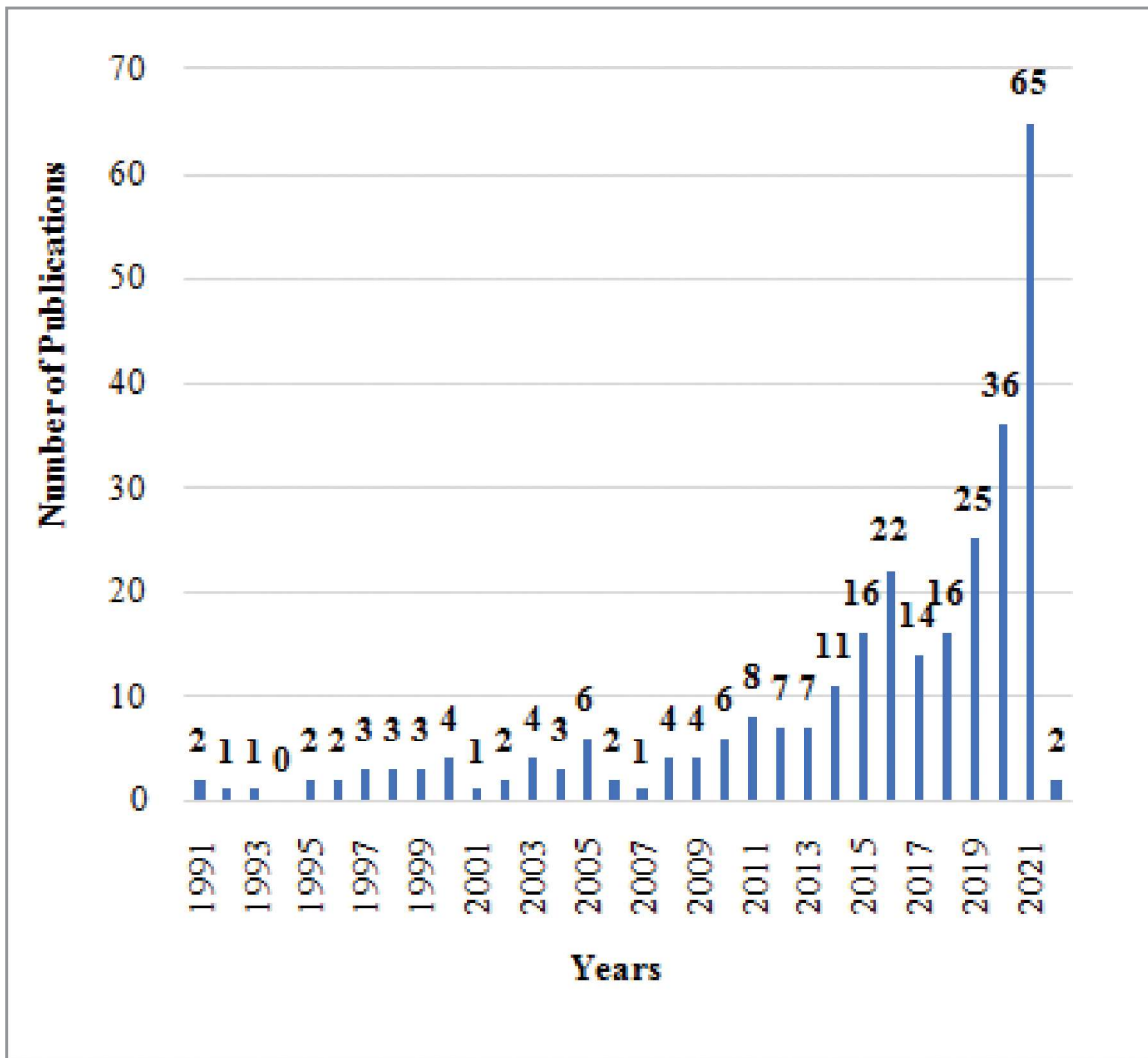
This section discusses the results of the bibliometric analysis based on the publication trends, citation analysis, bibliographic coupling analysis, co-authorship analysis, keyword co-occurrence analysis, and co-citation analysis.

3.1 Year-Wise Publication Trend

Figure 1 presents the publication trend of 283 peer-reviewed articles in the context of parasocial interaction based on the year of issue publication. It includes 1991 as the initial publication date of analyzed articles while the latest publication date of the forthcoming issue is 2022. The number of

publications is low in number till 2013, probably due to the novel nature of the subject. From 2014 onwards, there is an increase in the count of publications indicating the growing interest of scholars in this phenomenon. Though the number declines slightly during 2017-18, it gains impetus and increases to its maximum in the current year-2021. The publication count for 2022 reflects some forthcoming publications and is therefore currently a low count as the search process was undertaken during November 2021. However, considering the rising inclination of researchers and practitioners towards this field, we anticipate the existing trend to continue in 2022.

Figure 1: Number of Publications on Parasocial Interaction (1991-2022).



3.2 Citation Analysis

Citation analysis based on documents was conducted while keeping the minimum threshold of 50 citations

for each article. Consequently, Table 3 indicates the top 15 highly cited peer-reviewed articles wherein Moyer-guse (2008) leads with 535 citations followed by Vorderer et al. (2004) with 427 citations.

Table 3: 15 Most Cited Articles on Parasocial Interaction

Author	Article	Journal	Year	Citations
Moyer-guse, E	Toward a theory of entertainment persuasion: Explaining the persuasive effects of entertainment-education messages	Communication Theory	2008	562
Vorderer, P; Klimmt, C; Ritterfeld, U	Enjoyment: At the heart of media entertainment	Communication Theory	2004	427

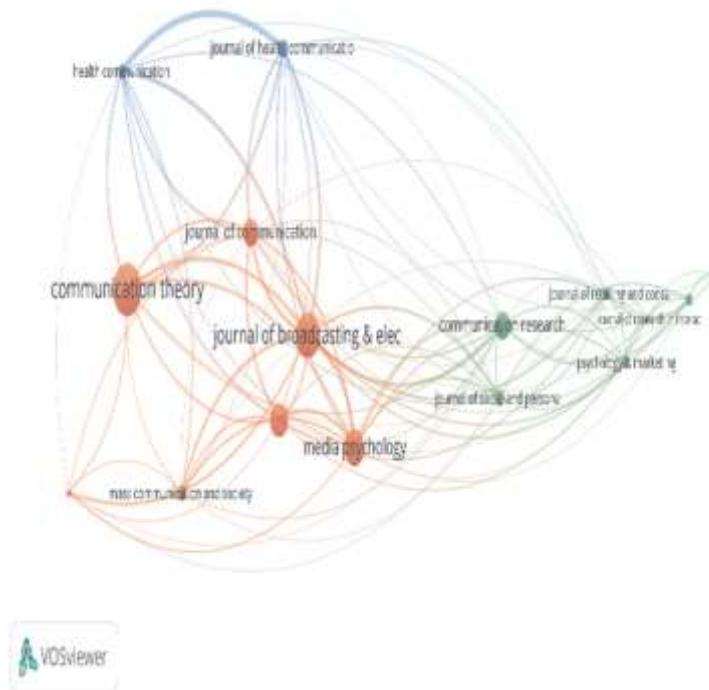
Giles, DC	Parasocial interaction: A review of the literature and a model for future research	Media Psychology	2002	421
Hoffner, C; Buchanan, M	Young adults' wishful identification with television characters: The role of perceived similarity and character attributes	Media Psychology	2005	353
Moyer-Guse, E; Nabi, RL	Explaining the Effects of Narrative in an Entertainment Television Program: Overcoming Resistance to Persuasion	Communication Theory	2010	343
Schiappa, E; Gregg, PB; Hewes, DE	The parasocial contact hypothesis	Communication Monographs	2005	305
Labreque, LI	Fostering Consumer-Brand Relationships in Social Media Environments: The Role of Parasocial Interaction	Journal of Interactive Marketing	2014	269
Hoffner, C	Children's wishful identification and parasocial interaction with favorite television characters	Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media	1996	264
Conway, JC; Rubin, AM	Psychological Predictors of Television Viewing Motivation	Communication Research	1991	175
Nabi, RL; Kremer, M	Conceptualizing media enjoyment as attitude: Implications for mass media effects research	Communication Theory	2004	174
Eyal, K; Rubin, AM	Viewer aggression and homophily, identification, and parasocial relationships with television characters	Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media	2003	163
Klimmt, C; Hefner, D; Vorderer, P	The Video Game Experience as "True" Identification: A Theory of Enjoyable Alterations of Players' Self-Perception	Communication Theory	2009	163

Kim, S	Audience involvement and film tourism experiences: Emotional places, emotional experiences	Tourism Management	2012	162
Basil, MD	Identification as a mediator of celebrity effects	Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media	1996	156
Murphy, ST; Frank, LB; Moran, MB; Patnoe-Woodley, P	Involved, Transported, or Emotional? Exploring the Determinants of Change in Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behavior in Entertainment-Education	Journal of Communication	2011	139

Citation analysis of journals of publications included in the bibliometric analysis has been explained in Figure 2. The map presents a network of 16 journals

with each journal qualifying the criteria of at least 20 citations and minimum five documents in the field of parasocial Communication Theory has the highest

Figure 2: Citation Analysis by Source



citation at 1521, followed by Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media with 1191 citations. Besides, until 2011, the phenomenon of parasocial interaction was extensively studied in the domain of communication, media, and psychology to investigate the connection between the celebrities on broadcast media and their audience. From 2012 onwards, the investigation on this topic began growing in the field of tourism and marketing management thus indicating the interests of researchers from other domains into this field. It is in the year 2020 and 2021, when the prominence of this phenomenon in various sub-domains of marketing

such as advertising and consumer behavior increased to a higher level as evident by the increasing number of publications in the journals related to marketing wherein the phenomenon of parasocial interaction has been studied to examine the influence of social media influencers on behavioral intentions of consumers.

The results of citation analysis by the authors are presented in Table 4. This informs about 14 authors who have met the threshold of minimum four documents in the area of study. It indicates that the

Table 4: Authors with Maximum Publications

Author	Articles	Citations
Myrick, JG	7	36
Hoffner, CA	6	159
Kim, I	6	59
Rubin, A	5	579
Cohen, EL	5	75
Basil, MD	4	458
Kim, Sangkyun	4	231
Tsai, WS	4	197
Brown, WJ	4	180
Eyal, K	4	156
Lee, E	4	153
Moon, H	4	20
Wang, S	4	20
Kim, KH	4	20

most influential authors are Alan M. Rubin with 579 citations and Michael D. Basil with 458 citations. Alan M. Rubin has contributed some of the seminal studies in this area which have elaborated the phenomenon of parasocial interaction.

Figure 3 presents the citation analysis of 14 author-affiliated organizations, each meeting the minimum

limit of five documents and 10 citations each. The leading author-affiliated organizations are Ohio State University, USA with 990 citations, University of Southern California, USA with 684 citations, and Kent State University, USA with 613 citations. Kent State University also has maximum links with other organizations (13 links).

Figure 3: Citation Analysis by Author-affiliated Organizations

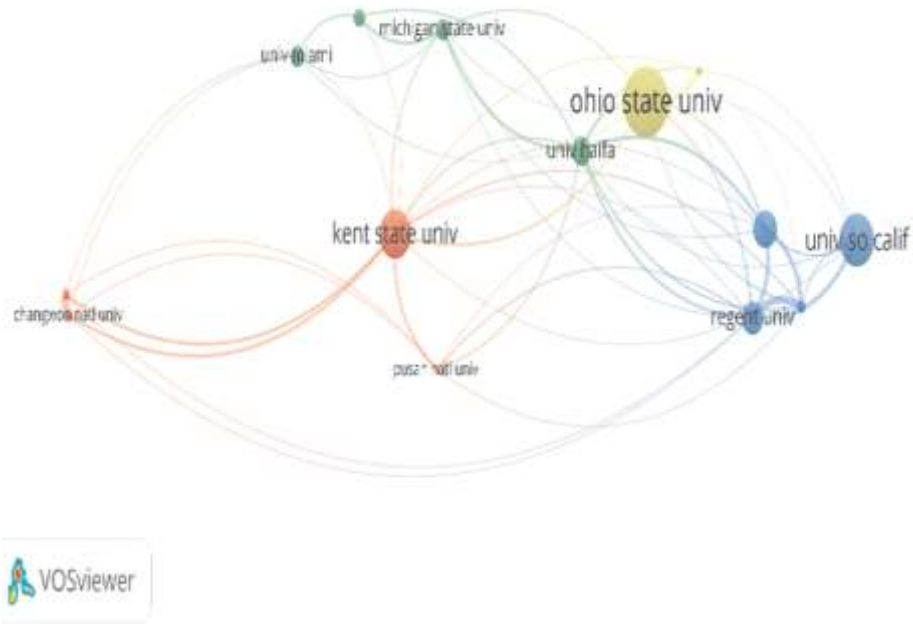
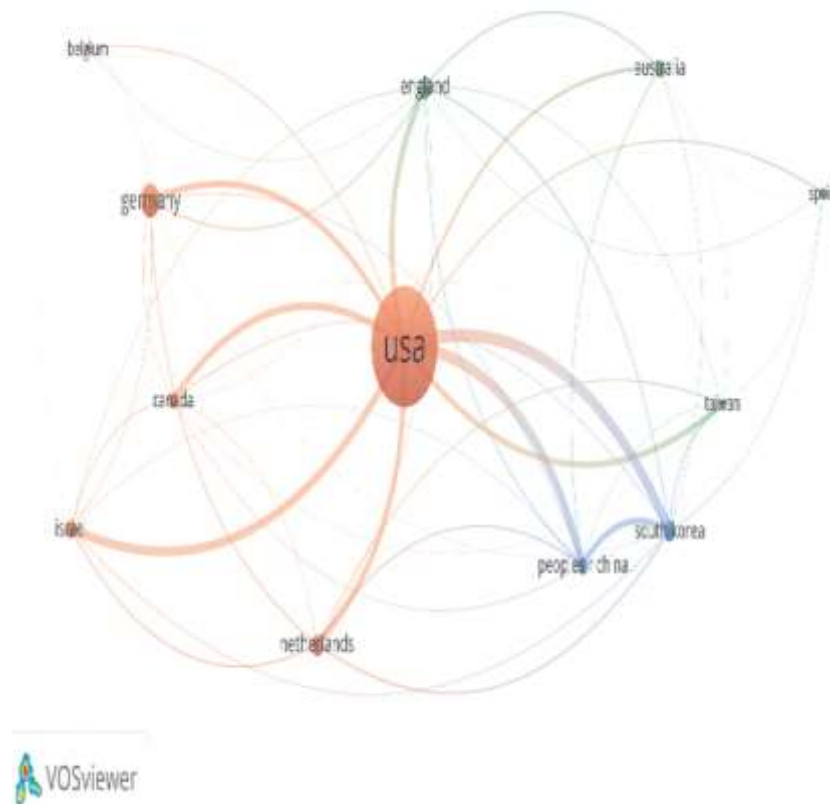


Figure 4: Citation Analysis by Countries

Citation analysis by countries is presented in Figure 4. The network demonstrates the citation links between 12 countries, with at least 10 citations and five documents from each country. The United States



of America has a huge count of 6543 citations to its credit, much higher than other countries. The country also has maximum number of links with other countries besides England (11 links).

3.3 Bibliographic Coupling Analysis

The study has undertaken bibliographic coupling analysis of selected peer-reviewed articles on the basis of authors, documents, and affiliated organizations within the field of parasocial interaction.

Figure 5: Bibliographic Coupling of Authors

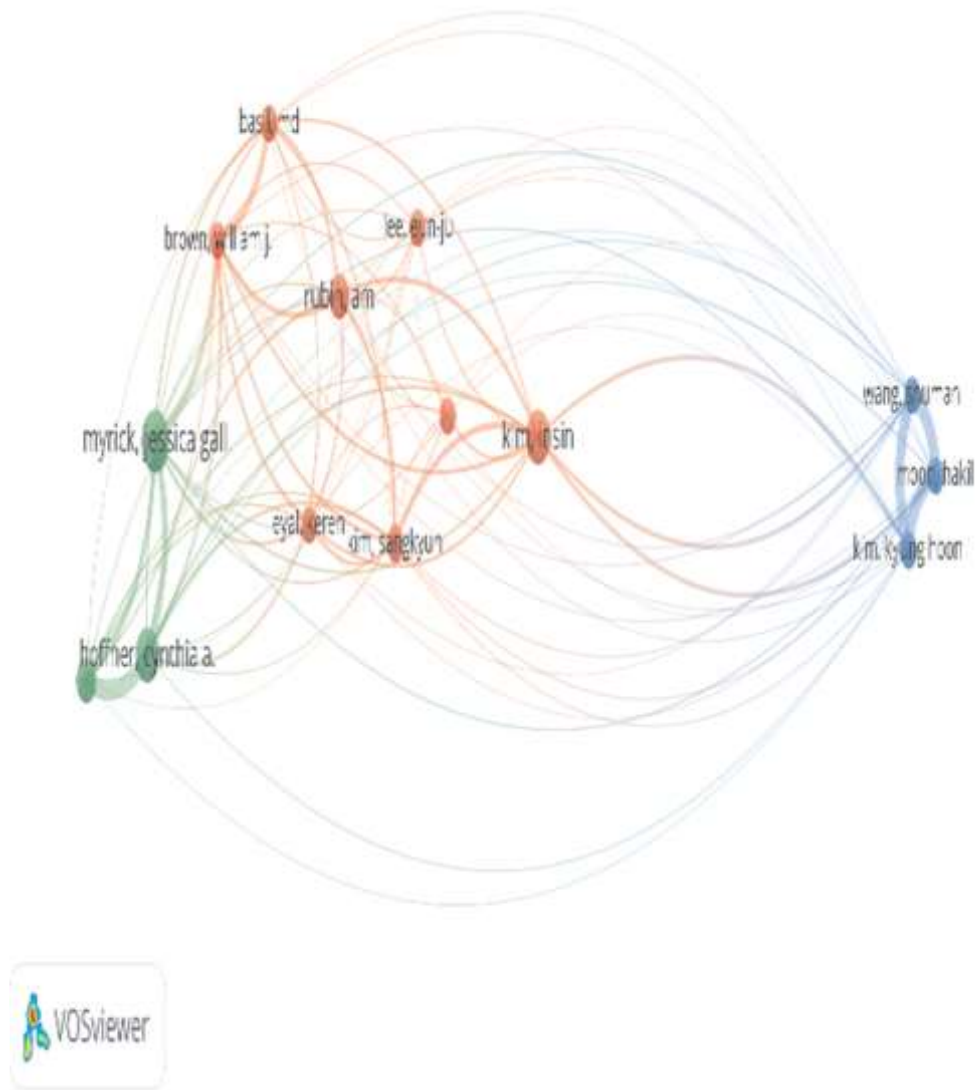


Figure 5 presents the bibliographic coupling of 14 authors out of the 548 authors of the 283 peer-reviewed articles, each of whom have qualified the minimum threshold of four documents and 20 citations per author. The coupling between Shuman Wang and Hakil Moon, Hakil Moon and Kyung Hoon Kim, and Shuman Wang and Kyung Hoon Kim is the strongest with maximum link strength of 377 in the entire map. It indicates that each of these

couplings share the highest number of references in their documents and this implies similarity of content studied by authors within a couple as well as within this cluster as a whole since these three authors are a part of Cluster 3 represented by the blue color. Cluster 1, in red color, is the largest one with the maximum number of authors, namely, eight and Cluster 2 is in green having three authors.

Figure 6: Bibliographic Coupling of Articles

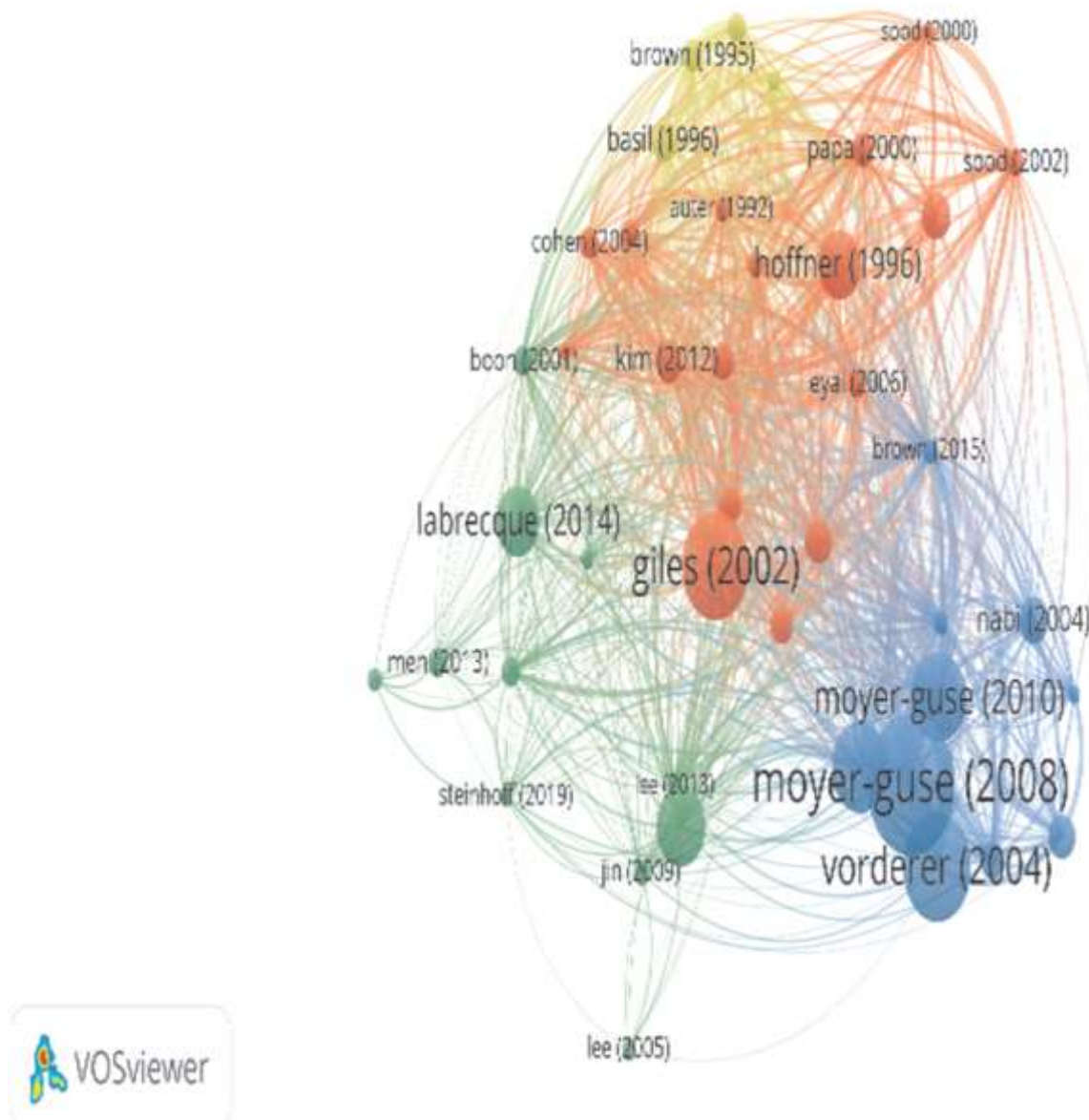


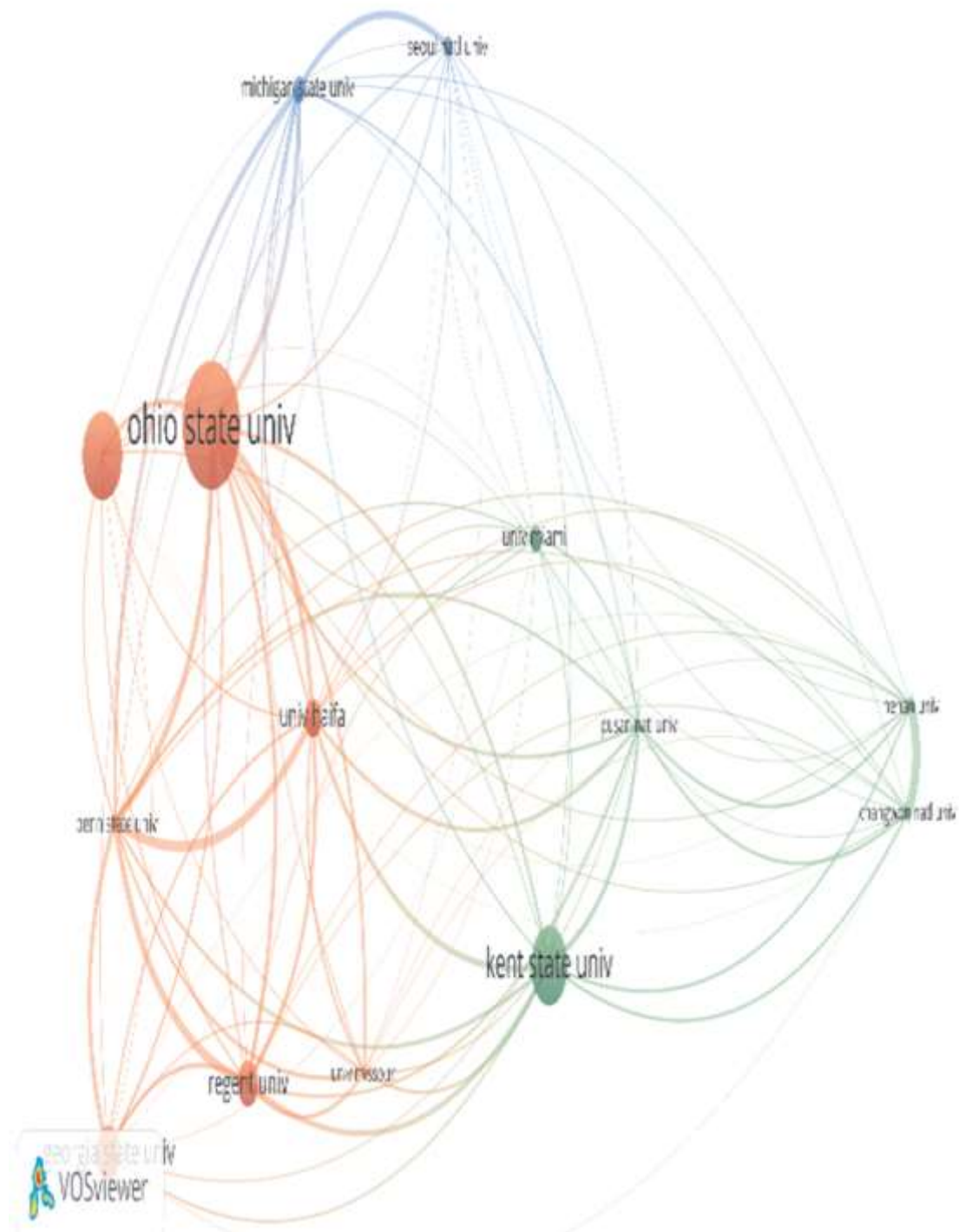
Figure 6 provides the bibliographic coupling of 42 articles with each having at least 60 citations. The coupling strength between “Toward a Theory of Entertainment Persuasion: Explaining the Persuasive Effects of Entertainment-Education Messages” by Moyer-guse (2008) and “Explaining the Effects of Narrative in an Entertainment Television Program: Overcoming Resistance to Persuasion” by Moyer-guse (2010) is the strongest in the network, followed by the one between “Young

Adults' Wishful Identification With Television Characters: The Role of Perceived Similarity and Character Attributes” by Hoffner (2005) and “Parasocial Interaction With Liked, Neutral, and Disliked Characters on a Popular TV Series” by Tian (2010). The analysis has resulted in the formation of four clusters, as indicated by the red, green, blue, and yellow color of nodes with seventeen, eleven, ten, and four articles, respectively.

Figure 7 presents the bibliographic coupling strength among 14 author-affiliated organizations where each organization has a minimum of five documents. Though the works of authors from Ohio State University have the highest citations, the coupling between Henan University, China and Changwon National University, South Korea is stronger due to

the maximum overlap of references of the studies conducted by the authors affiliated to these universities. Three clusters have been formed as a result of this analysis. Cluster 1 (Red) has seven organizations; Cluster 2 (Green) has five organizations; and Cluster 3 (Blue) has two organizations.

Figure 7: Bibliographic Coupling of Author-affiliated Organizations



3.4 Co-Authorship Analysis

This study has undertaken co-authorship analysis based on authors and their countries studying the field of parasocial interaction. Figure 8 provides a co-authorship network of 14 authors each having a minimum of four documents in the field of study. Only two clusters in the whole map, namely, red and green, present co-authorship links among the

authors. It indicates that the collaboration clusters between Hakil Moon and Kung Hoon Kim, Shuman Wang and Kung Hoon Kim, Hakil Moon and Shuman Wang, and Elizabeth Cohen and Cynthia Hoffner are the strongest with four publications each, co-authored by them together in the context of parasocial interaction.

Figure 8: Co-Authorship Analysis of Authors

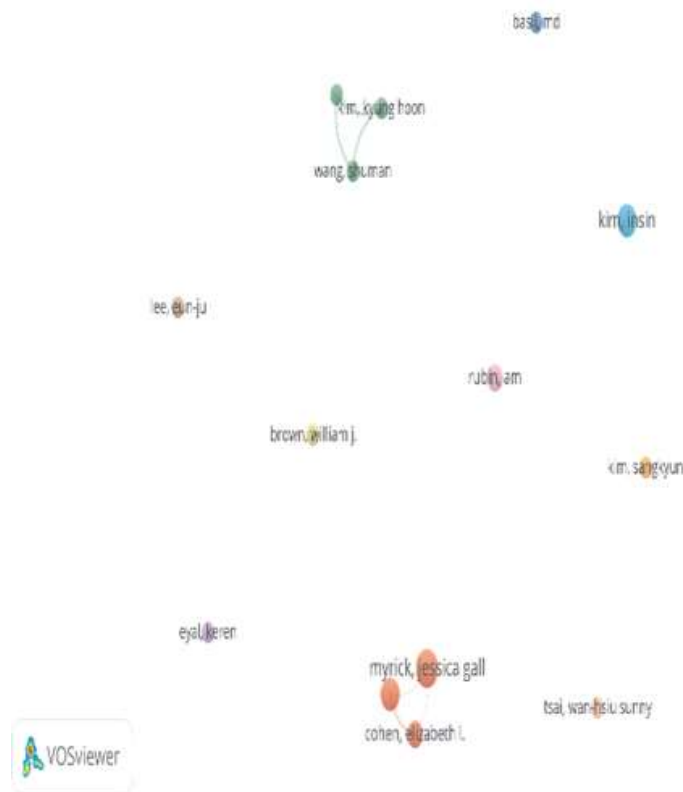
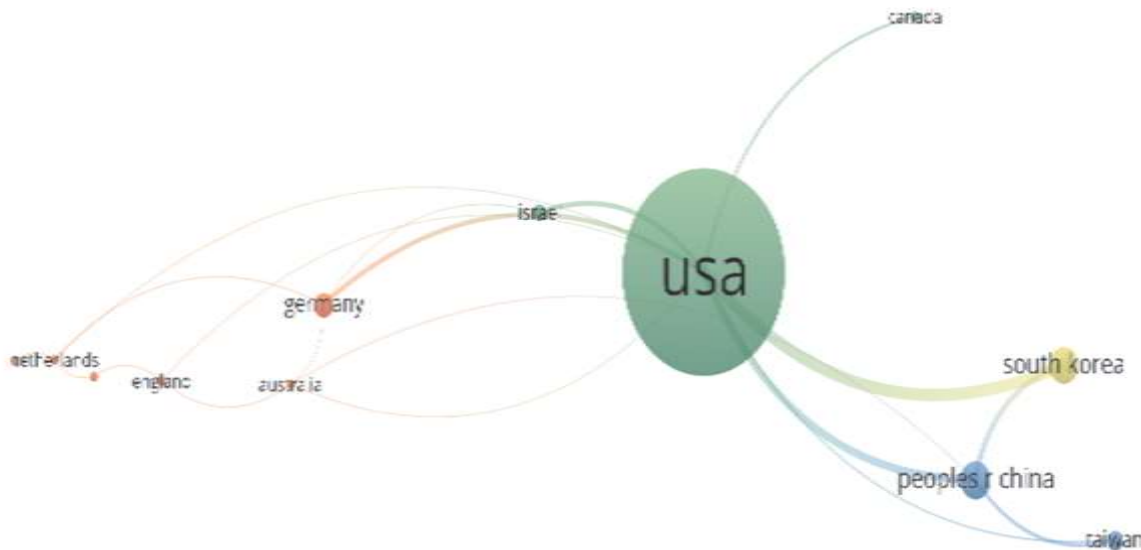


Figure 9 presents the co-authorship analysis among the countries of authors who have studied parasocial interaction. It indicates a network of 14 countries qualifying the threshold of at least five documents per country. The map indicates a robust collaborative connection between the United States of America

and South Korea with 12 documents, followed by the link between Peoples Republic of China and the United States of America with eight documents focusing on the phenomenon of interest. Besides, there are four clusters emerging from this analysis, namely, Cluster 1 (Red) consisting of six countries,

Figure 9 : Co-Authorship Analysis of Countries



Cluster 2 (Green) with three countries, Cluster 3 (Blue) with two countries, and Cluster 4 with one country only.

3.5 Keyword Co-occurrence Analysis

Figure 10 indicates close connections between 13 keywords, each of which has occurred a minimum of 25 times. The leading ten keywords are “parasocial interaction” (199 occurrences), “communication” (69 occurrences), “identification” (62 occurrences), “television” (53 occurrences), “media” (51 occurrences), “social media” (41 occurrences), “impact” (37 occurrences), “parasocial relationship” (32 occurrences), and “involvement” (29). The network also represents three clusters of keywords based on their co-occurrence frequency, namely, Cluster 1 (Red) with five keywords such as

“parasocial interaction”, “television”, and “media”, Cluster 2 (Green) with four keywords such as “involvement”, “news”, and “responses”, and Cluster 3 (Green) with four keywords such as “social media”, “communication”, and “parasocial relationship”. The salient keyword per cluster is “parasocial interaction” (Cluster 1), “identification” (Cluster 2), and “communication” (Cluster 3). In addition to this, the search term “parasocial interaction” has close connections with keywords “identification”, “communication”, “media”, and “television”. These clusters indicate that parasocial interaction has been studied in context of various media such as television, social media, etc., to investigate its influence on consumers' behavior towards the personae as well as the product, if any endorsed by them.

Figure 10: Keyword Co-occurrence Analysis

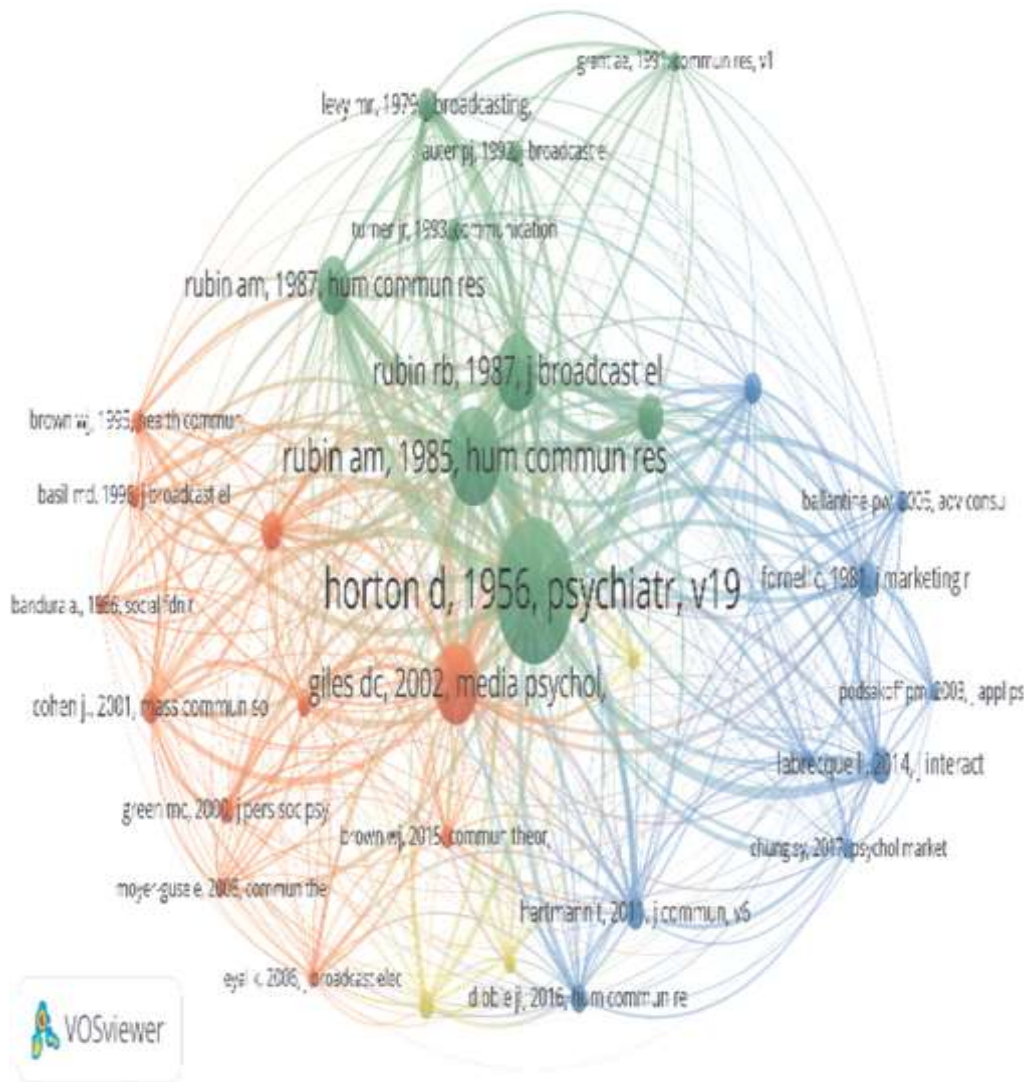


3.6 Co-citation Analysis

Figure 11 presents the co-citation analysis of 32 peer-reviewed articles, having a minimum number of 20 citations per cited reference. Among the various references, “Interaction in audience-participation shows” by Horton & Strauss (1957), “Loneliness, parasocial interaction, and local television news viewing” by Rubin et al. (1985), and “Parasocial Interaction: A Review of the Literature and a Model for Future Research” by Giles (2002) are the most

cited articles. Co-citation link between Horton & Strauss (1957) and Rubin et al. (1985) is strongest with 112 co-citations. It is followed by the couple of Rubin & McHugh (1987) and Horton & Strauss (1957) with 90 co-citations. The analysis led to the formation of four clusters, namely, Cluster 1 (Red) consisting of eleven references, Cluster 2 (Green) encompassing nine references, Cluster 3 (Blue) consisting of nine references, and Cluster 4 (Yellow) encompassing three references.

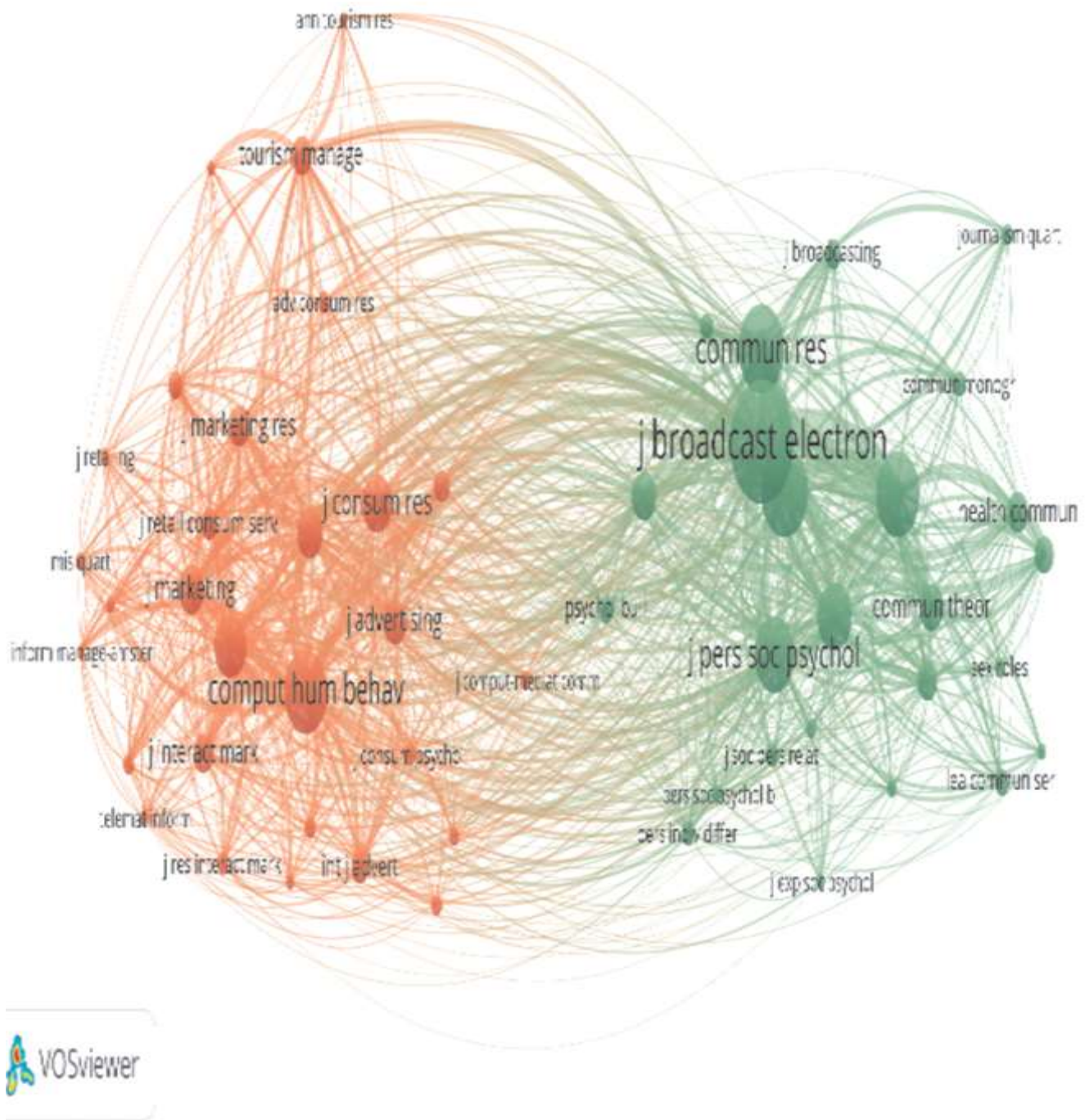
Figure 11: Co-citation Analysis by Cited References



Among the various journals cited by the articles that are a part of our analysis, co-citation analysis of 54 cited journals which have been cited a minimum of 50 times has been undertaken as indicated in Figure 12. Out of these 50 cited journals, Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media has maximum citations (646 times). In addition to this, Human Communication Research (445 times), Communication Research (426 times), Journal of Communication (409 times), and Computer Human Behavior (396 times) are the most productive journals that have added to the research on parasocial interaction. It implies that most cited studies on this phenomenon have been published in communications and media related journals. Besides these, there are some marketing and psychology related journals that have been extensively cited such

as Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Media Psychology, and Journal of Marketing. The analysis has resulted in the formation of two clusters, namely, Cluster 1 (Red) consisting of 29 cited journals which are majorly related to marketing and Cluster 2 (Blue) consisting of 25 cited journals which pertain to communication and psychology. The most cited ones belong to Cluster 2. The link between Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media and Communication Research is the strongest with 1540 co-citations, followed by connections between Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media and Journal of Communication with 1336 co-citations and Communication Research and Human Communication Research with 1087 co-citations.

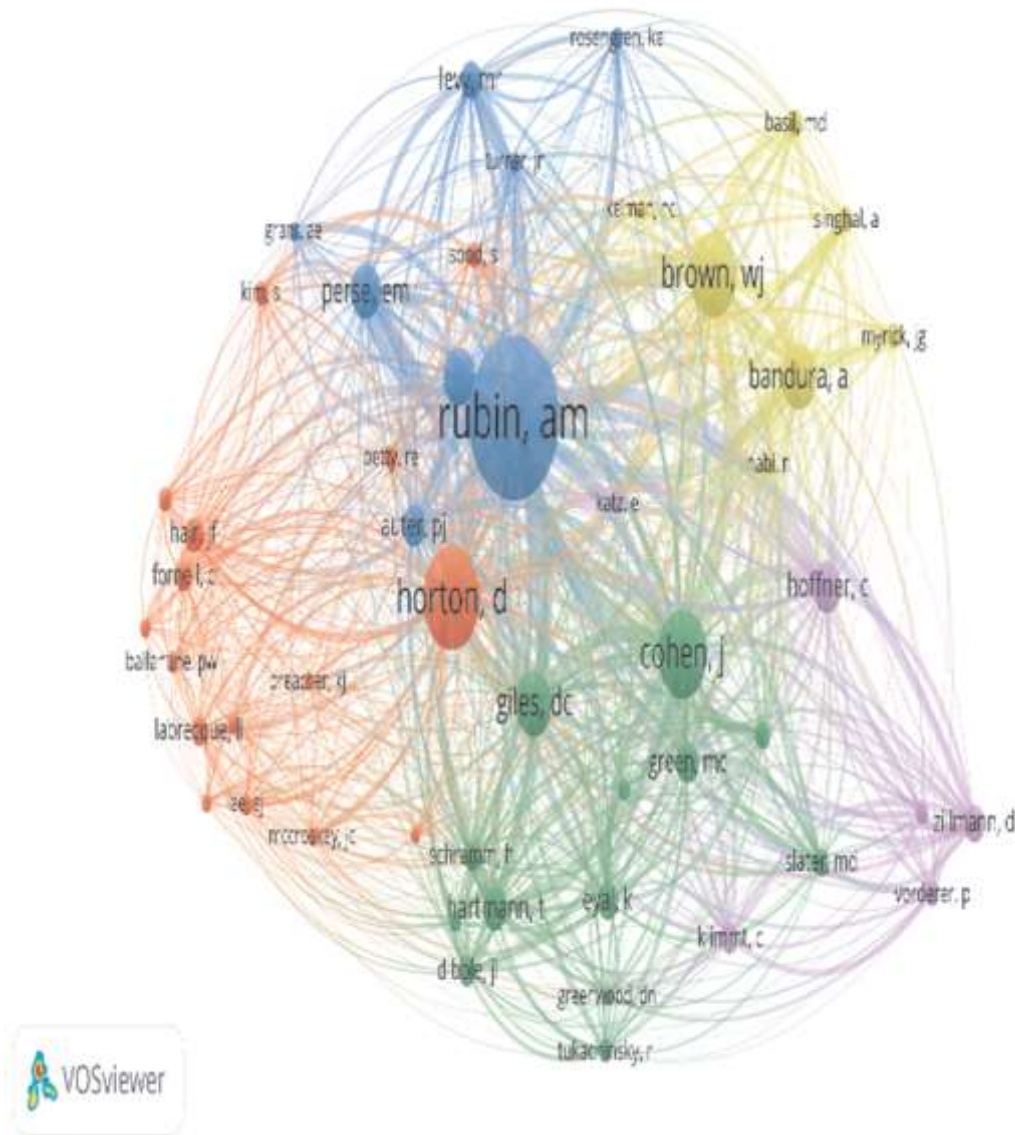
Figure 12: Co-citation Analysis by Cited Journals



The co-citation relationship among 50 authors were examined as they met the minimum threshold of 30 citations per author. The top five most cited authors on the basis of the studies included in our analysis are Rubin (383 times), Horton (226 times), Cohen (189 times), Brown (180 times), and Giles (134 times). Rubin and Perse are highly co-cited (368 times), followed by Rubin and Horton (346 times) and Rubin

and Cohen (270 times). Further, it led to the formation of five clusters, namely, Cluster 1 (Red) encompassing sixteen authors, Cluster 2 (Green) consisting of thirteen authors, Cluster 3 (Blue) with eight authors, Cluster 4 (Yellow) consisting of seven authors, and Cluster 5 (Purple) encompassing six authors.

Figure 13: Co-citation Analysis by Cited Authors



4. CONCLUSION

Parasocial interaction has been found to be influencing the purchase intention of consumers (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020), customer brand equity, and customer lifetime value (Yuan et al., 2016). It encourages consumers to view the posts of social media influencers and emulate their behavior (Gregg, 2021) and develop a positive image about the promoted offering in their minds (Jansom & Pongsakornrunsilp, 2021). Parasocial interaction causes customers to identify themselves with brand and perform citizenship behavior (Ye et al., 2021). It is capable of enhancing customer experiences not

only with the social media influencer but also with the product or service promoted by them, thus, adding to their satisfaction (Choi et al., 2019).

The study has examined the evolution of the field of parasocial interaction by analyzing 283 peer-reviewed articles, selected from Web of Science database through bibliometric techniques such as citation analysis, bibliographic coupling analysis, co-citation analysis, co-authorship analysis, and keyword co-occurrence analysis, using VOSviewer 1.6.17 software. The publication count increased from 2014 with a little downward fluctuation during 2017-18, after which it increased to its maximum in

2021. Initially, parasocial interaction was mainly studied in the area of communication and media to understand the connection between the celebrities on broadcast media and their audience. However, over the years the relevance of the topic has extended to other domains such as tourism and marketing. Since the past couple of years, it has gained prominence in the various sub-domains of marketing where it has been extensively used to study the impact of social media influencers on behavioral intentions of followers or consumers.

The most impactful publication is “Toward a theory of entertainment persuasion: Explaining the persuasive effects of entertainment-education messages” by Moyer-guse (2008) in which the author has reviewed literature on the effect of messages in the context of entertainment-education on audiences. The most influential author is Alan M. Rubin who has contributed by way of extensive insights and findings clarifying the concept of parasocial interaction. The most productive institution and country whose works have garnered highest citations are Ohio State University and the United States of America. The bibliographic couples of Shuman Wang and Hakil Moon, Hakil Moon and Kyung Hoon Kim, and Shuman Wang and Kyung Hoon Kim were powerful since they share maximum number of references within their respective couples. Bibliographic coupling of articles, namely, “Toward a Theory of Entertainment Persuasion: Explaining the Persuasive Effects of Entertainment-Education Messages” by Moyer-guse (2008) and “Explaining the Effects of Narrative in an Entertainment Television Program: Overcoming Resistance to Persuasion” by Moyer-guse (2010) is strongest, whereas amongst various author-affiliated organizations, coupling between Henan University, China and Changwon National University, South Korea is robust. Collaborative links between Hakil Moon and Kung Hoon Kim, Shuman Wang and Kung Hoon Kim, Hakil Moon and Shuman Wang, and Elizabeth Cohen and Cynthia Hoffner have been found to be strongest. Among the various countries, the connection between the United States of America and South Korea is more robust. The keyword “parasocial interaction” has strong connections with “identification”, “communication”, “media”, and “television” implying that this phenomenon has been studied majorly in context of media such as

television, social media, etc., to investigate consumer responses towards media personae and the offerings promoted by them. The studies by Horton & Strauss (1957) titled “Interaction in audience-participation shows” and Rubin et al. (1985) titled “Loneliness, parasocial interaction, and local television news viewing” have been cited together the maximum number of times. Articles published in *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media* and *Communication Research* have been co-cited often. Studies authored by Rubin and Perse have been cited together multiple times.

This study contributes to the extant literature in manifold ways. This is one of the few studies analyzing the field of parasocial interaction using bibliometric techniques. The study identifies the various keywords being used in this research field. It highlights the origin and development of research related to parasocial interaction in terms of categories of journals. The analysis also indicates the leading studies, influential researchers, and productive authors-affiliated organizations as well as countries of publications in this area. Future studies should investigate the specific factors leading to parasocial interaction with personae of particular social networking sites like Twitter, YouTube, etc (Ye et al., 2020). There is a dearth of longitudinal (Tran et al., 2019), experimental, and mixed-method studies in the present field of study. Further, a comparison can be drawn between viewers of different age groups and gender and between different types of celebrities/influencers with respect to the determinants and consequences of parasocial interaction (Labrecque, 2014). Besides, researchers can also explore different forms of parasocial interactions.

5. REFERENCES

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