



## Formation of Self-Identity of Generation Z Through Instagram Social Media Amongst Students

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### ABSTRACT

Technological progress is accelerating causing changes in various things. One of the impacts of technological advances is the rapid use of the internet. Talking about the internet, of course, it is very closely related to social media, Instagram for example. Instagram is one of the social media platforms that is currently loved by the public. Many active users on Instagram use this platform as a medium of personal or business information. This study aims to find out how much influence Instagram has on the formation of self-identity that occurs in Generation Z in Communication Science Students FISIP Gunung Jati University, after knowing and using Instagram as a place to build self-identity. This was triggered by Generation Z who flocked to use Instagram as a place to build their identity. The Instagram application is also one of the applications that is popular with Generation Z because it has many interesting features in it. Generation Z often accesses Instagram features, causing them to experience changes in terms of attitudes, behavior, and even language. The method used is qualitative research, in this study using the type of qualitative research initiated by Sugiyono (2014) in (Kristanto, 2018) that the qualitative research method is a method based on the philosophy of post positivism used to examine the condition of an object that is natural rather than experimental. Data collection techniques are combined, data analysis is inductive/qualitative and qualitative research findings emphasize meaning rather than generalization. The conclusion of the results obtained from this study is that generation Z in using Instagram is meant to be in intense use. The motive shown by generation Z is the formation of self-identity by performing selves. They have certain goals that will ultimately affect the formation of their Self-Identity.

## 1. Introduction

Identity is a quite influential part of self-concept. Self-concept is not just a descriptive picture, but also an assessment of ourselves. Self-concept includes what we think and what we feel. Forming one's identity on social media is easier with the support of electronic technology. The presence of digital

technology is now one of the facilities that supports the needs of generation Z in communicating and encourages generation Z to express themselves on social media.

One of the most important tasks in the formation of generation Z is resolving the identity crisis, so that it is hoped that a stable self-identity will be formed in generation Z. Generation Z is the generation that people usually call the generation of internet users. Usually Generation Z uses social media more to connect with other people, this generation is often involved with technology and uses gadgets quite often so it is classified as an innovative generation.

In the current era, Instagram social media is widely used by several groups, from adults to young people to the elderly. Based on the results of observations, it appears that quite a lot of FISIP Communication Science students use the social media Instagram. Gunung Jati University is located in Cirebon City, precisely on Jl. Raya Youth Canal No. 1 A, Sunyaragi Cirebon City. On average, many Communication Science students nowadays use Instagram social media to find their identity.

The large number of generation Z who use Instagram social media, especially as a means for people to express themselves, has attracted the attention of researchers to study late adolescents at the FISIP Communication Study Program, Gunung Jati University. There was previous research researched by (Nurfalah, Farida., et al, 2020: 12) that students' self-identity models on Instagram social media at Swadaya Gunung Jati University were introduced and strengthened by their self-concept. The results of other research, (Rakanda, Damas Rambatian, 2020) found that photos uploaded on Instagram by teenagers have their own concept and the influence of the surrounding environment is one of the factors that influence teenagers in forming their self-identity, one of the indicators of which is the existence of the informant through the number of likes (likes) or the number of followers (followers). The informants were mostly inspired by influencers in terms of fashion and processing photos. The contents of the informant's Instagram feed contain photos of himself and his existence is an important thing for teenagers, especially on Instagram social media. Teenagers will see their whereabouts, along with their existence on Instagram social media.

## **2. Method**

This research uses qualitative or naturalistic methods because it is carried out in natural situations. Sugiyono (2013) explains that qualitative research methods are research methods used to examine the natural conditions of objects. The data collection technique was carried out using triangulation (combination), data analysis was inductive, and the results of qualitative research emphasized meaning rather than generalization with the informant selection technique used purposive sampling among FISIP students at Swadaya Gunung Jati University. The key informants were Communication Science Study Program students level 1 and 2 FISIP Swadaya University Gunung Jati. The supporting informants were students from the final year Communication Science Study Program, FISIP, Swadaya Gunung Jati University and students outside the FISIP Communication Study Program, Swadaya Gunung Jati University.

Data collection techniques are observation, interviews and documentation. The data analysis technique is to collect the data first, then reduce the data, concentrate and simplify the data that has been received in the field, then present the data for later verification, namely drawing conclusions based on the data that has been received in the field. The theory used is Identity Theory according to Manuel Castells, (2010) in (Nurfalah, Farida, 2021:13).

## **3. Results and Discussion**

In this chapter, the research will describe data from research results regarding the problems that have been formulated in Chapter 1. The results of this research were obtained using in-depth interview and observation techniques with informants as a form of searching for data and documentation directly in the field which the researchers then analyzed.

### 3.1. Observation and Interview Results

#### 3.1.1. Legitimizing Identity (legitimize identity)

Legitimizing identity is an identity that is built in society because of the existence of tools that build that identity for other social actors. According to the results of observations, the author concludes that self-identity requires recognition of oneself by a group. Legitimizing identity consists of recognizing one's identity, identity as a source of meaning and achievement recognized by a group

##### 3.1.1.1. Recognition of Self-Identity

As a result of observations and interviews, the author states that recognition of one's identity is quite necessary to form a self-identity. This recognition can support the formation of self-identity because every individual needs this recognition to process the formation of self-identity within themselves.

##### 3.1.1.2. Identity as a Source of Meaning

As a result of observations and interviews, the author states that identity as a source of meaning can support each individual to have their own characteristics to form their own identity.



**Figure 1.** Photo uploads of key informants regarding identity as a source of meaning

According to the results of the researcher's interview with Said, Said prefers to upload posts to his Instagram account according to his character. As in the photo posts uploaded by Said, he often uploads photos of his clothing style.

This is because the characteristics that each individual has are different from other individuals, this is what makes each individual have characteristics that are different from other individuals so that this can support each individual to have their own characteristics to form their own identity. Apart from conducting interviews with 1st year students of Communication Science FISIP Gunung Jati University, the author also conducted interviews with final year students of Communication Science FISIP Gunung Jati University as follows:

"In my opinion, identity is the characteristics or identity that can distinguish one individual from another individual, so that no individual is exactly the same as another individual"



**Figure 2.** Upload a photo of the Supporting Informant's identity as a source of meaning

According to the results of interviews conducted by researchers with Puput, Puput more often uploads photos of landscapes or phenomena that he thinks are good to immortalize than uploading photos about himself. Because for Puput, this is the difference between himself and other individuals.

### 3.1.1.3. Achievement Recognized By A Group

As a result of observations and interviews, the author states that self-identity can be recognized by a group. Because this can support each individual to get recognition from every other individual for what he has achieved because the recognition received by other groups can have a quite good impact in forming his own identity because this recognition is needed by each individual in forming his own identity, especially on Instagram.

### 3.1.2. Resistance Identity (identity defense)

Resistance identity *is* the identity placed by certain social actors where the assignment of this identity is carried out under conditions of pressure due to domination to the point that it gives rise to resistance and forms a new identity that is different from most members of other social groups. As a result of observations, the author concludes that the process of forming one's identity is not all about one's attitudes that are accepted and given by other groups, can be recognized and one can find out later whether it will influence the formation of one's identity or not. Resistance Identity consists of the Persistence of Self-Identity, Not All Attitudes Are Recognized by the Group and the Influence of Forming Self-Identity for a Community.

#### 3.1.2.1. Persistence of Self-Identity

As a result of observations and interviews, the author states that the process of maintaining self-identity is to support each individual in maintaining the self-identity that has been formed since the beginning of the formation of their self-identity. This is because maintaining self-identity can be a reminder so that each individual can maintain a self-identity that has strong principles that differentiate it from other individuals.

#### 3.1.2.2. Not All Attitudes Are Recognized By Groups

As a result of observations and interviews, the author states that not all attitudes can be recognized by other groups. Because each individual can determine the formation of their self-identity from the start,

they will have their own characteristics which cannot then be forced on other individuals just to gain recognition about themselves.

### 3.1.2.3. The Influence of Forming Self-Identity for a Community

As a result of observations and interviews, the author states that the influence of groups in the formation of self-identity is caused by each individual who lacks principles in forming his or her identity and interacts with the group quite often which results in the influence of a group.

### 3.1.3. Project Identity (new identity formation project)

Social actors in their search for identity try in such a way to form a new identity with their various efforts. As a result of observations, the author concludes that individuals achieve their identity through achievements obtained through construction that occurs through transformations related to social groups. Project Identity consists of Achievements, Project Identity Obtained on a Cultural and Individual Basis in Building Identity and Transforming Identity with Social Group Position

#### 3.1.3.1. Achievement

As a result of observations and interviews, the author states that achievement is achieved through self-identity. Because each individual can support the achievements that have been made in forming his or her identity so that each individual can understand more about himself, both in understanding his nature, character and knowing the strengths and weaknesses he has.

#### 3.1.3.2. Project Identity Obtained Cultural Base

As a result of observations and interviews, the author states that how Project Identity was obtained was due to a cultural basis. Because every individual can realize the culture that forms his or her identity by reflecting that culture.

#### 3.1.3.3. Individuals in Building Identity and Transforming Identity with Social Group Position

As a result of observations and interviews, the author states how individuals build and transform identities with social groups. Because it can support each individual to participate and change attitudes to influence change.

### 3.2. Factors Inhibiting Generation Z's Self-Identity Formation

Based on the results of interviews, the inhibiting factors for the formation of self-identity in Generation Z are the impact of the surrounding environment, such as family factors that overly regulate a teenager's growth and development, such as limiting the scope of a teenager, regulating the choices a teenager wants, thus making teenagers feel they lack value. -values and beliefs. The generation that grew up with sophisticated digital technology will cause Generation Z to experience barriers to identity formation related to high dependence on technology, such as excessive use of social media, in this case Instagram, or lack of direct interpersonal communication skills.

### 3.3. Efforts to Overcome Barriers to the Formation of Generation Z's Self-Identity

Generation Z has an openness in accepting views and thought patterns, causing them to easily accept diversity and different views on one thing. However, the impact is then difficult to define itself. The self-identity that is formed often changes based on various things that influence how they think and behave towards something.

Based on the results of the interview, the effort to overcome obstacles to the formation of generation Z's self-identity is by increasing positive activities without closing themselves off from the surrounding environment and for families or parents to be more supportive of things that a teenager is already doing and doing without limiting things. which has been done by teenagers so that a teenager can reach a decision on his own and can increase his self-confidence which has been formed from the start, such as being firm in making his choices, life goals and values that have been formed. As well as limiting the time you use Instagram social media, avoiding use at certain hours, turning off.

#### 4. Conclusions

Generation Z's self-identity formation, idSelf-identity is greatly influenced by the experiences and motivations of each individual and each individual has different experiences and motivations. Experience itself arises from various interactions of individuals with their environment.

Formation of Self-Identity using Instagram Social Media, Generation Z who actively use Instagram social media will take action to construct themselves, based on the perceptions of the people around them regarding themselves. In creating a self-image through the social media Instagram, Generation Z is very critical in forming their identity. Generation Z is thinking about how to create a self-image that will have a good impact on their social life in cyberspace. Existence is important for generation Z, especially on Instagram social media. Generation Z will see its existence, along with its existence on Instagram social media.

Factors inhibiting the formation of generation Z's self-identity at Swadaya Gunung Jati University, what FISIP students feel is the impact of the surrounding environment, especially the family, which makes Generation Z experience obstacles, namely because parents limit the scope of what Generation Z can do because most parents regulate the choices and desires that Generation Z wants. . This is the main factor inhibiting the formation of self-identity among FISIP students at Swadaya Gunung Jati University.

Efforts to overcome obstacles occur in the formation of self-identity in addition to guidance from parents and the social media community, an Instagram user can make their own prevention efforts such as limiting the time they use social media, avoiding use at certain times, turning off notifications, and doing activities with family or friends. Apart from that, the role of authorized institutions in monitoring internet use must provide more protection against content or news that has a negative influence on the development of the self-identity of social media users.

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