



Second Account Instagram as Gen Z's Self Identity: A Study of Cultural Phenomenon of Self-Expression

Ika Nugraha¹, Andi Vita Sukmarini¹, Muhammad Yusuf¹

¹Program Magister Ilmu Komunikasi Fakultas Pascasarjana Universitas Fajar Makassar



*Corresponding Author: Ika Nugraha

Article Info

Article history:

Received 18 October 2023
Received in revised form 9 November 2023
Accepted 24 December 2023

Keywords:

Second Account Instagram,
Gen z, Self-Identity, Self-Expression

Abstract

This study aims to determine how gen z in Kabupaten Maros uses a second Instagram account as a self-identity in a study of the cultural phenomenon of self-expression. Using a qualitative research method with descriptive analysis. A total of 5 informants interviewed came from gen z in Kabupaten Maros. The results of the study explain that informants have various reasons and goals in using Instagram, as well as how they distinguish between primary and secondary accounts. The majority of informants started using Instagram to stay connected with friends and get the latest information. Instagram functions as a platform for communicating and following social trends. This shows that Instagram is not just social media, but also a tool for building and maintaining social relationships in the digital era. The conclusion of the research results shows that the use of second Instagram accounts among gen Z in Kabupaten Maros functions as a tool to express themselves, maintain privacy, and build more intimate social relationships. This phenomenon reflects changes in the way gen Z builds self-identity and interacts in the digital era, where privacy and freedom of expression are very important. Social and cultural factors that encourage gen z in Kabupaten Maros to create and use second Instagram accounts are peers, freedom of expression, social media culture and the need to maintain privacy.

Introduction

Gen Z or commonly referred to as Generation Z is a generation born in 1997-2012. It is known that the population of Indonesia is dominated by Gen Z (Databoks, 2023). Survey results show that in 2023 the number of Gen Z will reach 47 million people or equivalent to 24.30% of the total population of Indonesia. Gen Z is said to be a generation that prioritizes prestige in fulfilling their lifestyle rather than the benefits obtained for the future (Dewa A., I Gede A., 2023).

Gen Z has experienced the development of social media that has come and gone such as Facebook in 2004, YouTube in 2005, Twitter in 2006, to Instagram in 2010, along with their growth, so it is not surprising that social media has become a part of this generation's life every day (Stahl & Literat, 2023; Giray, 2022; Twenge, 2023). Based on the data, the majority of Instagram users are generation Y aged 25-34 years as much as 71% of the total population of Instagram users, followed by Gen Z aged between 18-24 years (Hazzam, 2022; Mahmoud et al., 2021). With the use of social media by Gen Z today, many new things have been created such as creating a second account on social media or commonly called a second account, especially on Instagram. Gen Z is known as a generation that since childhood has been familiar with information technology, especially the internet which has become a global culture, good at using gadgets and one of the generations that is able to do several activities at the same time (multitasking) such as running social media using a cellphone, then browsing using a PC and

listening to music using a headset, Gen Z mostly does activities related to cyberspace (Putra, 2016). From a different perspective, Gen Z is a generation that is dependent on the internet, especially social media, they like popularity, collecting followers and likes on their uploads on social media. The average time spent consuming social media is around 6 to 7 hours per day, while 44% of them check social media almost every hour (Liu et al., 2022; Islam et al., 2021).

A study conducted by Mahmudah et al. (2023) explored how adolescents in Indonesia use social media to form self-identity. The study found that platforms such as Instagram and TikTok are used by adolescents to express themselves, explore interests, and build a desired self-image. However, social pressure to display a perfect life often causes stress and anxiety among adolescents.

Self-identity is an important thing that every individual must have. This image refers to something that is owned, understood and placed in their social life. Erikson argues that in adolescence the main goal of all development is the formation of self-identity (Gunarsa, 2009; Saputro, 2018; Rahman, 2021). Erikson then explains that what is meant by self-identity is an identity that concerns the "existential" quality of the subject, which means that the subject has a distinctive personal style. Therefore, self-identity means maintaining, 'a style of one's own individuality' (Rahman & Shah, 2015; Rahma, 2013; Rahman, 2021). According to Erikson (Desmita, 2005; Rahman, 2021), self-identity is generally formed after an individual has successfully passed through the identity crisis they experienced during adolescence. An adolescent who successfully completes his task in facing an identity crisis will form a stable self-identity at the end of his adolescence.

The formation of self-identity is influenced by various factors originating from outside oneself or the environment (Muzakki & Nurdin, 2022; Fachrunisa & Riyono, 2023). The development of the era and technology greatly influences how a teenager goes through his crisis. The fact that occurs in Indonesia, teenagers can access existing technological developments such as the internet, transportation, and communication tools that are inseparable from everyday life. This technology makes it easier for teenagers to find role models who can influence the determination of their identity standards of hope. (Novianti, 2014) stated that the formation of identity depends on the opportunities, hopes, and freedoms that individuals have.

Within self-identity there is also a self-concept where Self-concept is an individual's perception and assessment of themselves, which includes identity, values, and beliefs (Palenzuela et al., 2022; Maoz et al., 2022). In the context of communication, self-concept plays an important role in how a person interacts with others. Understanding who we are and how we see ourselves influences the way we convey messages, interpret information, and interact in various social situations.

The communication process not only involves sending and receiving messages, but is also closely related to how individuals understand themselves in a social context. Self-concept can shape a person's communication style, which includes the level of self-confidence, how to express opinions, and the ability to listen. For example, individuals with positive self-concept tend to be more confident in communicating, which in turn improves the quality of social interactions.

In today's digital era, where social media plays a dominant role in human interactions, self-concept is also influenced by external factors, such as peer influence and social norms. Social comparisons that often occur on these platforms can affect a person's self-image, thus impacting the way they communicate with others.

The importance of understanding the relationship between self-concept and communication has attracted the attention of researchers in various fields, including psychology,

communication, and education. This study aims to dig deeper into how self-concept affects interpersonal communication and how individuals can develop a positive self-concept to improve the quality of their social interactions. By understanding the role of self-concept in communication, it is hoped that individuals can be more aware of the impact of their views of themselves in social relationships, and be able to optimize the way they communicate in various contexts.

The formation of self-identity is also inseparable from how to express oneself. Self-expression is one way to express feelings without using words or sentences. Self-expression can be done in various ways such as smiling, frowning and frowning. Apart from the social environment, expressions of envy are also often used on social media, one of which is the second Instagram account. Most teenagers today express themselves or express themselves on their second account in the form of pictures or videos.

Self-expression in communication is also an important aspect of human interaction, allowing individuals to express their thoughts, feelings, and identities. In a social context, communication not only functions to convey information, but also to build relationships, form communities, and develop understanding between individuals.

Along with the development of technology and media, the way people express themselves has changed. From verbal to non-verbal communication, and now with the existence of digital platforms, self-expression has become more diverse and accessible. In an increasingly connected world, individuals can use various channels, such as social media, blogs, and videos to share personal experiences and views.

This process allows them to reach a wider audience, creating space for dialogue and reflection. In this context, it is important to understand how self-expression can influence personal and social identity, as well as the role it plays in shaping individual narratives in an ever-evolving society.

The development of the era and technology greatly influences how a teenager goes through his crisis. The fact that occurs in Indonesia, teenagers can access existing technological developments such as the internet, transportation, and communication tools that are inseparable from everyday life. This technology makes it easier for teenagers to find role models who can influence the determination of their identity standards of hope (Rahman, 2021). (Novianti, 2014; Rahman, 2021) revealed that identity formation depends on the opportunities, hopes, and freedoms that individuals have. In line with the development of the technological era, the use of social media has become something that is close to all levels of society. The use of social media can be found everywhere. Social media with the most users are Facebook with 3 billion users, YouTube with 2.5 billion users and Instagram with 2 billion users.

However, this study only focuses on Instagram social media. The number of Instagram users in Indonesia reached 90,183,200 users which is equivalent to 31.6% of the total population in Indonesia. The majority of Instagram users in Indonesia are women with a proportion of 54.2% with the largest demographic age of Instagram users in Indonesia, namely 25 to 34 years old, amounting to 36,000,000 people. In addition, the number of differences based on male and female gender is in the age range of 18 to 24, where women are 12,600,000 more people. This can be seen from the growth of around 600,000 people in the productive audience on Instagram.

Instagram social media has become one of the world's leading platforms for sharing visual content. Launched in 2010, Instagram was initially designed as a simple photo-sharing application. However, over time, the platform has evolved into an interactive space that allows users to share images, videos, and stories in real-time. Instagram's success is driven by its intuitive interface and engaging features such as photo filters, Stories, and IGTV, which make

it easier for users to express themselves and connect with others. With over a billion monthly active users, Instagram has created a diverse global community where individuals, influencers, and brands can interact with each other.

In Indonesia, Instagram has become an important part of everyday life, especially among the younger generation. Many people use it not only to share personal experiences but also as a platform for business and marketing. In this context, Instagram serves as an effective tool for building identity, establishing social relationships, and creating economic opportunities. Given its broad impact, understanding Instagram and its role in modern communication becomes increasingly relevant.

The intensive use of social media by Gen Z has a significant impact on the formation of their identity and social interactions. According to research conducted by Valkenburg and Piotrowski (2017), social media can be a tool for identity exploration and self-expression, but it can also have negative consequences such as pressure to always look perfect and social anxiety. There is a motivation behind the formation of a person's social identity, namely Positive distinctiveness which is often motivated by the self-esteem of group members, this means that low self-esteem will encourage group identification and intergroup behavior, with group identification self-esteem will also increase because the individual's motive for carrying out social identity is to provide positive aspects for themselves, for example increasing self-esteem related to enhancement (Hogg & Vaughan, 2011). This study highlights that social media provides a platform for Gen Z to experiment with their identity, but also increases the risk of negative social comparison and anxiety about appearance. Therefore, in this era, many generations, especially Gen Z, express themselves without thinking about social anxiety through their second Instagram account. Second Account Instagram is a second account created anonymously by Instagram social media users. Second account on Instagram is a new thing that is done by many people, they do it because they have a specific purpose and on average those who do it are women (Lyngdoh et al., 2023). Regarding Instagram at UPN, East Java, that students who have a Second Instagram Account are due to insecurity or lack of confidence when using their main account. The use of a second account on Instagram tends to be used for self-disclosure. Second account, also known as Finstagram where each user certainly has different motivations from each other in using the account, but the majority or most of them want to get the freedom to express themselves and avoid cyberbullying. By using a second Instagram account, users feel free to express themselves without thinking about building a good image on social media. Instagram second accounts, or second accounts, have become a common practice among social media users. With the increasing use of the platform, many individuals choose to create more than one account for various purposes. Second accounts are often used to separate different aspects of a user's life, such as maintaining privacy, sharing more specific content, or expressing particular interests.

This phenomenon reflects the need for users to adapt to the existing social and digital complexities. many people create a second account to share personal moments with close friends, while the main account is used for public or professional purposes. In addition, second accounts are also often used by influencers and content creators to manage different audiences, such as for niche content or collaborative projects.

As more people are active on social media, understanding the use of these second accounts is important. This not only shows a change in the way individuals interact and construct their identities online, but also illustrates how platforms like Instagram serve as multifunctional spaces for self-expression.

Many users create second accounts to separate different aspects of their identity. For example, they may have one account for personal content and another for professional purposes or specific hobbies. This allows them to express themselves in a more focused and contextual way. Second accounts give users the freedom to showcase different sides of their personality. Someone might use their primary account to share everyday moments and a second account to express more niche interests, such as art or sports.

Second Account Instagram users often use second accounts to maintain privacy. By limiting the audience on their second account, they can share more intimate content without worrying about scrutiny from strangers or professionals. In an ever-changing digital world, having a second account can help users adapt to different social norms. They can interact with different communities and audiences without being tied to one static identity. Second accounts also play a role in the formation of a more complex online identity. Users can create richer and more diverse narratives about themselves, reflecting different experiences and perspectives.

Second Account Instagram has an influence on Gen Z in expressing their identity and expressing themselves freely without building an image so that Gen Z is more active on social media through Second Account Instagram. In a study conducted by (Sri et al., 2023) students of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Jember used a second Instagram account as a form of expressing themselves freely according to themselves, such as posting photos or videos of their daily activities, posting hobbies, likes and complaints. This second account is likened to the back stage for students of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Jember, while the first account is the front stage. As part of South Sulawesi, Maros Regency has seen a significant increase in social media usage, especially Instagram, among the younger generation. Data shows that Instagram has become a primary platform for Gen Z in Indonesia to express themselves, and Maros Regency is no exception to this. Focusing on Maros Regency provides a more specific picture of how the region's evolving social media habits and behaviors reflect broader trends in Indonesia.

Gen Z in Maros Regency, like in other regions in Indonesia, is a highly active age group on social media. Based on the latest data, the majority of Instagram users are young people aged 17-27 years, who are included in the Gen Z group. In Maros Regency, as an area with a relatively large young population, this study can provide deeper insights into how Gen Z in the area utilize Instagram, especially second accounts, to build their self-identity.

The phenomenon of using second Instagram accounts for self-expression and identity management among Gen Z in Maros Regency is highly relevant. Teenagers and young people in Maros Regency often face high social and image pressures on social media. The use of a second account allows them to freely express themselves without fear of judgment or pressure from their followers on the main account. This provides a safer space to express their personal side, including sharing more personal interests, hobbies, or feelings.

Research on the use of a second Instagram account in Maros Regency has the potential to provide invaluable insight into the phenomenon of digital culture at the local level. By focusing research on this area, researchers can identify unique behavioral patterns that may not be seen in more general research at the national level. This will enrich the literature on social media use and identity formation among Gen Z, especially in areas with unique social and cultural dynamics.

Methods

The approach used in this study is Qualitative. Qualitative research is an approach in research that aims to understand human phenomena in their context in depth and holistically. This approach uses non-numerical data, such as interviews, observations, to explore meaning,

patterns, and social relationships. In this study, the researcher acts as one of the research instruments that plays a role in collecting and analyzing data. The presence of the researcher in the research process as a participant observer where the researcher participates in the environment being studied while also observing and recording behavior or interactions. In this case, the researcher is actively involved but still maintains a distance to observe the phenomena that occur. In addition, the presence of the researcher is also known by the informant. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan di kabupaten Kabupaten Maros. The selected informants were Second Account Instagram users aged 17-27 years and residing in Maros Regency and Second Account Instagram Users who indicated individuals with active second accounts. These criteria were selected after the researcher conducted observations and surveys first. To identify the second account of Instagram users, it can be done through their main account bio. Some users include the name of the second account by including a link, which when clicked, will directly direct to the profile of the second account. Primary data in this study consisted of interviews, observations, and documentation. The interviews were conducted with 9 informants, observations were conducted starting a few days before the interview until the research process was completed by observing the behavior and interactions of informants on their second accounts, and documentation was taken from screenshots or screen shoots of Instagram posts of second account users and during interviews either directly or via video call. Secondary data from this study are previous studies that discuss the use of social media and self-identity, including studies that examine the phenomenon of second accounts among the younger generation.

Results and Discussion

Cultural Phenomenon

Instagram is one of the media that has an impact on the lives of all groups, the use of Instagram can provide advantages and disadvantages depending on how to use it. Even now, almost all social media users have Instagram and this does not recognize age and generation limits. Some people start creating Instagram accounts when they first have a smartphone.

Gen Z's decision to have a second account on Instagram is often influenced by social environmental factors and close friends. Several informants stated that the urge to have a second account arose because of the influence of friends or because they felt more comfortable sharing personal things in a more private space, which could not be accessed by the general public. This can be seen from the interview excerpt with informant 1 about what influenced them to create a second Instagram account:

"Yes, as far as I remember, my friend suggested creating a second account so that I could share my daily life."

Knowing from the interview excerpt above, Informant 1 revealed that their decision to create a second account was influenced by advice from friends. Their friends suggested creating a second account so that they could be freer to share their daily lives. This shows that the influence of friends can play an important role in encouraging someone to have a second account, because the friend may feel the benefits or convenience of using a second account and want this informant to feel it too.

In contrast to informant 1, informant 2 said the following during the interview:

"When I had a second account on Instagram, it was not influenced by anyone, it was purely my desire and this was really my own motivation."

Informant 2 stated that their decision to create a second account was not influenced by anyone else, but rather a personal desire. This shows that for Informant 2, the decision to create a

second account was purely driven by themselves, indicating a sense of personal need to have a more private space on social media.

Meanwhile, informant 3 also said that:

"One of the influences on me creating a second account was my friends because I saw that with a second account, they were able to express themselves freely."

Informant 3 explained that their decision to have a second account was influenced by their friends. They saw that their friends could express themselves freely through a second account, which inspired them to create a similar account. This shows that social interaction and observation of the behavior of close friends can also be factors that encourage someone to create a second account, especially if they see their friends enjoying the freedom to share.

Added interview excerpt from informant 4 as follows:

"For the creation of a second account, it is true that friends are very influential in my decision, they want to share stories where I also want to continue at that time, I did not have a second account so they felt not free and so did I so I took the initiative to create a second account. "

Almost the same as informant 1, Informant 4 also revealed that their friends were very influential in the decision to create a second account. Friends feel freer to share stories on their second account, and this makes Informant 4 feel uncomfortable because they do not have a second account. Finally, they decided to follow in their friends' footsteps and create a second account so they can feel the same freedom. This shows how the influence of friends can create a sense of social need and encourage someone to make similar decisions.

Informant 5 also added that:

"No one influences me to use a second account because of myself."

Similar to informant 1, Informant 5 stated that their decision to use a second account was not influenced by anyone, but rather their own personal choice. This shows that some people make the decision to have a second account without any external pressure or influence, but rather based on their personal needs or desires to have more space to share.

In the decision to create a second account, there are many influences that allow someone to create a second account, be it the influence of the environment, global culture or social media trends. In interviews with informants, most revealed that social media trends and global culture had a certain influence on their decision to have a second account. Several informants felt that this habit developed in response to the desire to express themselves more freely or as part of the increasingly popular social media phenomenon among their friends. It can be seen from the interview excerpt from informant 1 as follows:

"For me, so far I follow trends, for example TikTok trends or Instagram trends on my second account, likewise my friends usually upload trending videos or photos to follow the trend on their second account."

Judging from the interview with informant 1 above, Informant 1 admitted that they follow trends on social media, such as TikTok and Instagram, especially in using a second account. Their friends also tend to follow the same trend by uploading videos or photos related to certain trends. This shows that the use of a second account is not only influenced by personal desires, but also by global cultural movements that occur on social media, where users feel compelled to participate in the phenomenon of popular trends. Informant 2 also said that:

"I feel that global culture can influence me in managing my second account but it does not change my original identity that my second account is myself and for influences"

outside of that I consider it an additional feature that makes my second account more interesting."

Meanwhile, Informant 2 acknowledged the influence of global culture in managing the second account, but emphasized that their personal identity was maintained. They saw the influence of social media trends or features as something that complements their second account, but not as something that changes who they really are. This shows that despite the influence of global trends, they still maintain their authenticity in their second account, using additional features only to make their account more interesting.

Furthermore, Informant 3 added that:

"I feel that the second account is a global trend because in the second account people can express themselves without limitations and coercion from anyone."

According to Informant 3, the second account is considered part of a global trend, where the second account provides space for its users to express themselves without limitations and without pressure from others. This indicates that they see the phenomenon of the second account as something that is closely related to the freedom of expression that is increasingly popular among many people, especially in the context of a more open and flexible social media culture. Quoted from the interview with informant 4 as follows:

"For the trend, maybe if you look or observe now, each of your friends has a second account and I think that is already a cultural influence or social media trend like that."

Informant 4 felt that the phenomenon of the second account could be part of the influence of global culture or social media trends that are now widely followed by their friends. They noted that more and more friends have second accounts, which is a sign that this is a social trend that is increasingly widespread. This shows that a second account is not just a personal choice, but part of a larger social phenomenon, where people feel compelled to follow the growing trend in society.

Informant 5 also added that:

"For the use of second accounts, many of my friends use second accounts because there they can express themselves more openly."

Informant 5 added that they saw their friends using second accounts as a means to express themselves and be more open. This also reflects the influence of global culture where people use second accounts as a platform to share more about their personal lives in a freer and more unrestricted way.

The influence of global culture and social media trends play a major role in an individual's decision to have a second account, especially among informants' friends who follow social media trends. Nevertheless, each informant emphasized that despite external influences, they strive to maintain their personal identity on their second account, and use it as a platform for freer self-expression.

Self-Identity

Instagram is a social media that is widely used to create self-identity, either for image building or to be yourself. Some Instagram users create accounts with various purposes and reasons. Quoted from an interview with informant 1 as follows:

"I started using Instagram in 2017. With the aim of finding out about my friends who I rarely meet, I can usually find out about them through Instagram stories."

Informant 1 revealed that he started using Instagram in 2017 with a relatively simple purpose, namely to stay connected with friends who he rarely meets. In this case, Instagram functions as a tool to monitor the news of his friends, especially through the Instagram Story feature which allows direct and real-time sharing of information.

This illustrates the use of Instagram which is more social and practical, where social media is not only used to build self-image or personal branding, but more to maintain social relationships with others. The use of Instagram as a means to "find out news" shows that for some people, this platform also functions as a communication tool that helps them maintain ties with their social environment, despite time or space constraints.

Next, quoted from the interview with informant 2 as follows:

"I used Instagram for the first time in 2017. The reason I use Instagram is to get information about my surroundings or what is happening in the world at the moment, I also use Instagram to build communication with people who are far away from me or find new friends."

Informant 2 revealed that he started using Instagram in 2017, with the main goal of getting information related to things happening around him and in the world in general. This shows that Instagram for informants is not only a tool for social interaction, but also as a means to follow news developments or important events.

In addition, informant 2 also stated that Instagram is used to build communication with people who are far away from him. This reflects Instagram's function as a bridge to maintain social relationships with friends or family who are separated by distance. Not only that, informants also use Instagram to find new friends, which shows that this platform functions as a space to expand social networks, both in personal and professional contexts.

It can be seen that the use of Instagram by informant 2 tends to be more multifunctional, where in addition to being a medium for obtaining information, it also plays a role in strengthening communication and expanding social circles.

Added interview excerpt from informant 3 as follows:

"I started using Instagram in 2014. The main reason I use Instagram is because Instagram is one of the trendiest social media among teenagers and also from Instagram, we learn a lot of news both domestically and abroad."

Informant 3 started using Instagram in 2014, which shows that he has followed it since the beginning of the development of the social media. The first reason expressed by informant 3 was his interest in the popularity of Instagram, which at that time was one of the trendiest social media among teenagers. This shows that the use of Instagram is also influenced by social factors, where being part of a trend among peers or social groups is one of the motivations for joining the platform.

The second reason mentioned is Instagram's function as a source of information, where the informant stated that through Instagram, he can find out various news, both domestically and abroad. This shows that Instagram is not only used for entertainment or social purposes, but also as a means to get information and keep up with world developments.

It can be seen that the use of Instagram by informant 3 reflects two main aspects: as part of a social trend among teenagers and as a medium to obtain relevant and up-to-date information from various parts of the world.

Informant 4 also added in his interview as follows:

"I used Instagram in early 2017. The main reason was because at that time many of his close friends or environment were already using Instagram so I was also interested in making one."

Informant 4 started using Instagram in early 2017, and the main reason given was because at that time, many of his close friends or social environment were already using Instagram.

Informant 4's statement reflects a phenomenon that often occurs among many people, namely the use of social media influenced by the surrounding social groups, be it friends, family, or the neighborhood. Informant 4 felt interested in joining Instagram because he saw that the use of this platform had become commonplace among the people around him. In other words, the reason for creating an Instagram account was more driven by the desire not to miss out on trends and to be able to continue interacting with friends in his social environment.

Interview excerpt from informant 5 as follows:

"In 2016. The reason I use Instagram is because Instagram is more updated than other applications and I have fomo."

Informant 5 started using Instagram in 2016, and one of the main reasons was because Instagram was considered more "updated" or always provided more recent information compared to other social media applications. This shows that informants consider Instagram as a fast platform in presenting the latest news or content.

Informant 5 also mentioned that he felt "FOMO," which refers to the feeling of fear of missing out on information or important moments shared by others on social media. FOMO is a psychological phenomenon that is common among social media users, where someone feels the need to follow current trends or activities so as not to feel isolated or left behind.

All informants have more than one Instagram account, with most having two accounts, and one informant having three accounts. The main reason they created a second account was to separate their personal life from their public life, maintain privacy, and provide space to share content more freely without the influence of a wider audience. The second account is a place to share with family, close friends, or just to express yourself without limits.

Instagram users who have more than one account have limitations or differences in managing or running their accounts, such as in their first account they are more closed and in their second account they are more open. Quoted from an interview with informant 1 as follows:

"The main account is more for sharing public life, then the second account is for sharing personal life."

Understanding from the interview quote above, informant 1 uses the main account to share public life, while the second account is used to share personal life. In other words, the main account focuses more on things that can be seen by many people, while the second account is more private and limited.

Informant 2 said in the interview that:

"The first account I use to build my branding in front of the public and share my experiences with many people, while the second account focuses on my personal activities which are more private and can only be accessed by a few of my close friends or my family."

Informant 2 uses his main account to build branding and share experiences with the public, so this account is more open to many people. Meanwhile, the second account is more focused on personal activities that are more private and can only be accessed by close friends or family.

Furthermore, an interview with informant 3 is quoted as follows:

"The difference between the second account and the first account that I use is the first in terms of friendship where on the first account I have many friends, whether they are distant friends, close friends, close and distant relatives, close and distant family and friends that I have known while on the second account I have a more private friendship, namely only my closest friends and my closest relatives, while the second difference is in terms of posts where the first account posts are public or for the general public while on my second account it is private where there are many things that do not have to be published to the general public and I prefer to publish on the second account."

While Informant 3 on his first account, there are more friends, be it close friends, distant friends, relatives, and other acquaintances. While on the second account, there are only close friends and core relatives. His first account is also used for public content, which is open to the general public, while the second account is more private, for things that do not need to be published to the public and are only shared with certain people.

Informant 4 also said that:

"The difference between the first and second accounts is in terms of following, maybe the first account is wider while the second account only has close friends or family."

The first account of informant 4 has more followers, which can include many people from various circles. While the second account is more limited, only followed by close friends and family.

Furthermore, an interview with informant 5 is quoted as follows:

"The difference is in the followers, if the second account is more for those who are close while the first account is for all circles, all friends."

While informant 5's account is only followed by close people, such as friends or family. In contrast, the first account is more open to all groups, including friends from various backgrounds.

The main account tends to be public and is used to share content with a wider audience, such as friends, acquaintances, colleagues, or even people you just met. This account is also often used to build a personal image or branding. Meanwhile, the second account is more personal and limited, only accessed by close friends, family, or core relatives. Content shared on the second account is usually more private and not intended for public consumption.

Instagram users also have their own way of describing themselves on social media, either by way of imaging or showing their real state. The informants explained the difference in how they describe themselves on the second account compared to the first account. On the second account, they tend to show the personal and intimate side of their lives, while on the first account, they focus more on public image and interaction with a wider audience. Quoted from the interview with informant 1 as follows:

"Usually on the second account I upload my videos about what or where I am or photos of my food and then I give words about the food, while on the second account I only upload edited photos, photos of food that do not have an explanation about the taste of"

the food, where I eat it with whom, the point is on the first account I only upload edited photos and not too much information."

On the second account, informant 1 is freer to share daily activities, such as uploading videos or photos about what they are doing, such as eating or being somewhere. This informant also provides additional explanations about the food they consume, for example mentioning the taste of the food or the place to eat, which shows a more open personal side. On the main account, informant 1 only uploads edited photos and avoids providing excessive information about the experience or background of the photo. This shows that the main account is more selective and does not include too much personal information.

Informant 2 also said that:

"The way I describe myself is by often showing my daily life, my hobbies, what I like, then the fun and unique things about myself."

Informant 2 described himself on the second account by often sharing his daily life, hobbies, and personal interests. They also share things that they consider fun and unique about themselves, so that the second account functions as a space to share more personal and authentic aspects. Although not explicitly explained, it can be concluded that on the main account, the information shared is more focused on the general image and may not be as deep or as much as on the second account.

Furthermore, informant 3 also said:

"On the first account I am more closed and sort out what I post and what I will convey to the public, while on the second account I am more expressive, open and more emotional about what I will convey on the account."

Informant 3 described the second account as a more expressive, open, and emotional space, where they can share anything without too much selection. On the main account, they are more limited in sharing content, with more selection of what is posted, especially because of the larger and more public audience.

Informant 4 said that:

"The way I describe myself on the second account is maybe I am more random or freer than the first account which only shows specific things while on the second account the point is broader or freer."

On the second account, informant 4 feels freer and more random, without strict limitations. They can share more things without paying too much attention to a particular structure or purpose. On the main account, the content shared is more focused and often more specific, with a more careful selection of what is posted.

Furthermore, quoted from the interview with informant 5 as follows:

"On the second account I don't need to think about other people, I post whatever I like, but on the first account I am easily influenced by other people's comments so I have to choose what good content I will post on my first account."

Informant 5 feels free to share anything without having to pay attention to other people's views. They can be more spontaneous and not affected by comments or judgments from other people. On the other hand, on the main account, they feel more influenced by other people's comments, which makes them more careful in choosing the content to be posted, so that the content is more carefully selected and considered.

The second account tends to be used to share things that are more personal, expressive, and open, without paying too much attention to public judgment. Users feel free to express themselves and share everyday moments, hobbies, or even emotional outpourings. The main account focuses more on sharing selected, edited, and more structured content, with more attention to the public image and how the content is received by a wider audience.

Using a second Instagram account can also affect a person's identity, depending on how the person forms their identity on their Instagram account.

Most Instagram users feel that there is a significant difference between the identity they display on the second account and the main account. This difference is generally caused by privacy reasons and the need to express themselves more freely on the second account, while the main account is used more to share public content that is more controlled and open to many people. It can be seen from the interview quote above by informant 1 as follows:

"So far there is only a slight difference in identity in the first account and second account, I made the difference so that it is not easily obtained by people I know or people who are not close to me."

From the interview quote above, it is known that Informant 1 stated that there was a slight difference in identity between their first and second accounts. The difference was made to maintain privacy and so that the second account is not easily accessed by people who are not close to them. This shows that although they do not make major changes to their identity, they want to have boundaries between the private and public worlds. This reflects the main purpose of the second account, which is to provide a more private space.

Informant 2 also said the following:

"Of course, for the first and second accounts it is true that there are differences in identity for the first account I display my identity with a name and clear photo and for the second account I use a pseudonym and a pseudonym photo to give the impression of privacy to the second account."

Then Informant 2 mentioned that they intentionally made a clearer distinction between identities on the two accounts. On the first account, their identities are displayed with real profile photos and real names, which give a public and open impression. Meanwhile, on the second account, they use pseudonyms and pseudonyms to maintain a private impression and avoid being recognized by unwanted people. This reflects that the second account is designed as a place to express themselves more freely and with higher control over the audience.

Furthermore, informant 3 also said that:

"There is no significant difference between the first account and the second account, it's just that on the first account my personal data identity is more complete than on the second account."

Informant 3 revealed that there was no significant difference in their identities between the first and second accounts. However, they noted that on the first account, their personal data was more complete, indicating that the first account was used to share more open information. Meanwhile, the second account was used more for more selective content. This shows that although the differences in identities on the two accounts are not too striking, the second account is still used more carefully in terms of sharing personal information.

Quoted from the interview with informant 4 as follows:

"Personally, I think the difference in identity in question may only be about posts because I think for posts that are not for everyone to share or are not shown to everyone, I am more inclined to the second account, because if the first account I feel there are too many new people so I feel insecure and not too comfortable when many people see it."

Informant 4 felt that there was a more obvious difference in terms of posts on the two accounts. They tended to post content that was more personal or did not want to be shared publicly on the second account, because they felt more comfortable with the limited audience on that account. On the first account, which was more open to many people (including new people who were not yet known), they felt less comfortable sharing more personal content. This shows that privacy and security are the main considerations in choosing the type of content shared on both accounts.

Informant 5 also added that:

"I don't think there is a difference"

Informant 5 stated that they did not see any difference in identity between the first and second accounts. This could indicate that they don't feel the need to separate their personal identities, or perhaps they feel that both the first and second accounts can express themselves openly without the need for major restrictions.

Self-Expression

In general, the difference in identity between the second account and the main account is more related to the level of privacy and personal security. Some informants tend to make quite clear differences, such as using a pseudonym or a more private profile photo, while others prefer not to make many changes to their identity. However, there is a general consensus that the second account functions as a more controlled and private space, while the first account is more open to a wider audience.

Second account users also have a variety of different and freer posts depending on the moments they want to capture and show publicly. Quoted from an interview with informant 1 as follows:

"On the second account I usually upload things like going out with friends and my girlfriend, work life sharing personal life problems but not like over sharing."

On the second account, informant 1 usually uploads content related to personal life such as activities with friends or girlfriends, as well as work activities. In addition, informant 1 also shares personal problems, but not excessively (over sharing). This shows that the second account is used to share more personal and intimate moments without revealing too many details of life.

Informant 2 also said the following:

"On my second account, I mostly post about my daily life and I also post about food and movies that I like and artists or music tastes that I like."

On the second account, informant 2 mostly posts about daily life, including food, movies, and music tastes that they like. This informant also shares about artists or things that they are interested in. The second account here is used as a platform to share things related to hobbies and personal tastes. Furthermore, informant 3 also said that:

“Usually what I post on my second account is like the problems that I experience, there are also some complaints that I vent on the second account and also some archived videos that I upload on the second account.”

Informant 3 uses the second account to share personal problems, often in the form of personal complaints or reflections. Some archived videos are also uploaded as a form of memories or personal collections. This shows that the second account is used as a place to vent feelings or share more intimate personal moments.

Quoted from an interview with informant 4 as follows:

“For the second account, I usually post things that I think are funny or things that I can record but can only be seen by close friends or family.”

On the second account, informant 4 more often posts funny things or recordings of activities that they consider interesting, but only for a limited audience, such as close friends or family. This shows that the content shared on the second account is more casual and personal, with the aim that only certain people see it.

Informant 5 also said that:

“Personally, I don't like kpopers, so the posts on the second account are more often about everyday life.”

Informant 5 uses the second account to post about everyday life, with an emphasis on their daily activities. This informant avoids topics that they don't like (such as K-pop), and prefers to share about aspects that are more personal and closer to their lives.

On the second account, the informants tend to share more intimate and limited personal things. The posts they share are usually related to their daily lives, social activities with friends or family, personal stories, or certain hobbies and interests that are more personal. The second account serves as a freer space for them to express themselves without having to worry about judgment from the wider public.

The use of second Instagram is also very important in terms of how to choose content to post on the second account, depending on their level of privacy and personal interests. They are freer to choose content that reflects their daily lives or more personal things that only certain people, such as close friends or family, want to see. Quoted from an interview with informant 1 as follows:

“Usually when I'm out with friends, if there's something to talk about and it's not to be shared, I don't make a story, but for example if I'm just eating or on the road, talking about things that can be consumed or shared on the second account, I usually make a story at that time.”

Informant 1 chose not to share all the moments they experienced. If they were with friends and talking about something personal or they didn't want to share, they would choose not to make a story. However, for lighter moments such as eating or daily activities that are acceptable to the public, they would share stories on the second account. This shows that the selection of content on the second account is based on whether the content is suitable to be shared more freely without violating privacy. Informant 2 also said the following:

“The way I choose content to post on my second account is based on my needs or seeing the similarities in hobbies that I have with my friends who are followers on the account so that the content can be a place to discuss and exchange information.”

On the second account, informant 2 chooses content based on the similarities in hobbies or interests that they have with their friends or followers on the account. The content shared tends to be interactive, which can be a place to discuss or exchange information about things they like. This shows that the content chosen for the second account aims to strengthen social relationships and share more relevant experiences with those closest to them.

Furthermore, quoted from the interview with informant 3 as follows:

"I only choose a few videos or content that appears as well as some personal videos and photos that I and my friends do, whether it's on vacation or gathering events and others."

Informant 3 chooses to post personal videos and photos related to special moments, such as on vacation or gathering with friends. The selection of content places more emphasis on memorable things or more personal moments involving people close to you.

Social and Cultural Factors

In the increasingly developing digital era, the use of social media, especially Instagram, has become an integral part of the daily lives of Gen Z. One striking phenomenon is their tendency to create a second account. Social and cultural factors play an important role in encouraging this generation to take this step. From the influence of peers who encourage freedom of expression to the need to create a safe private space, these elements contribute to Gen Z's decision to use a second account as a means to express their identity and experiences more authentically.

This can be seen from the interview excerpt with informant 1 about what influenced them to create a second Instagram account:

"Yes, as far as I remember my friend suggested creating a second account so that I could share my daily life"

The excerpt above shows that advice from friends is the main factor that encourages informants to create a second account. In a social context, peer influence is very strong, especially among the younger generation. When friends around them have second accounts and feel the benefits of using them, informants feel encouraged to follow in their footsteps. This creates a social norm where having a second account is considered common and expected.

Informants also mentioned that the purpose of the second account is to "share everyday life." This reflects the social need to share experiences and stories with others. In a culture that is increasingly connected through social media, sharing moments from everyday life becomes a way to build relationships and connections with others. The second account provides a more private space to share things that they may not want to display on their main account.

The phenomenon of second account use is also influenced by the broader social media culture, where many users, especially among Gen Z, feel that having more than one account is normal. This creates an environment where individuals feel more comfortable exploring different aspects of their identity and sharing experiences in a more flexible way.

Informant 1's decision to create a second account on Instagram was influenced by a combination of social factors, such as peer influence, as well as the need to share and express themselves in a more private space. This reflects the complex dynamics between individuals and their social environment in the context of social media use.

Furthermore, informant 3 said:

"One of the influences that influenced me to create a second account was my friends because I saw that with a second account, they were able to express themselves freely."

Informant 3 stated that their friends played a major influence in the decision to create a second account. This shows that close social relationships and interactions with friends can encourage individuals to follow the same behavior. When their friends use a second account to express themselves, informants feel inspired to do the same, creating a kind of social norm within their group.

The phenomenon of using a second account is also influenced by the broader social media culture, where having more than one account is common, especially among the younger generation. This culture creates an environment where individuals feel more comfortable exploring various aspects of their identity and sharing experiences in an easier way.

Social and cultural factors that encourage Gen Z in Maros Regency to create and use a second Instagram account to express their identity include peer influence, the need for freedom of expression, and a social media culture that supports identity exploration.

Gen Z is often influenced by the behavior of their friends. If many of them have a second account, other individuals tend to follow suit. Having a second account allows them to share experiences and get support from friends, creating a sense of togetherness in the community.

A second account provides an opportunity to express themselves without the pressure to maintain a perfect image. This allows them to share more authentic sides of themselves. Gen Z is often in the process of self-discovery, and a second account allows them to explore various aspects of their identity without fear of judgment.

The use of a second account is trending among the younger generation, creating an environment where it is considered normal and accepted. Social media provides a platform for sharing various types of content, and a second account allows users to distinguish between more private and public content.

By having a second account, Gen Z can control who sees their content, maintain privacy and limit the audience for more sensitive or personal content. The second account can serve as a shield from social judgment, where they feel freer to share without fear of consequences from followers on the main account.

The results of this study and previous studies show that a second Instagram account functions as a tool for self-expression. Users feel freer to share personal experiences and express their identity without the pressure to maintain a perfect image.

This study shows that the use of a second Instagram account among Gen Z in Maros Regency functions as a tool for self-expression, maintaining privacy, and building more intimate social relationships. When compared to previous research by Wattimena et al. (2022) also found that a second account is used as a space for expression for the millennial generation, where they can express themselves more freely. This study and previous studies show that a second account functions as a platform for self-expression, although the current study focuses more on Gen Z and the local context in Maros Regency.

Gen Z in Maros uses a second account to distinguish between public and private identities, where the main account is more public and the second account is more private. And previous research by Putri et al. (2023) shows that self-identity can be built through a second account on Instagram, where various identities are presented to viewers with different characteristics. Both studies highlight the importance of identity differences between primary and secondary

accounts, but my study provides deeper insight into how Gen Z in Maros constructs their identities in a local context. The use of secondary accounts allows Gen Z to express themselves more freely and intimately, sharing personal experiences without fear of public judgment, similar to the study conducted by Herna & Annisa (2023) which found that secondary accounts are used to form interpersonal relationships through self-disclosure. My research and previous research show that secondary accounts function as a space for sharing experiences and expressing oneself, but the current study places more emphasis on freedom of expression among Gen Z.

The results of this study and previous studies show that peer influence or what can also be called social factors are important factors that encourage Gen Z to create a second account. Close friends are often a source of inspiration and motivation for individuals to follow in their footsteps in using a second account.

This study and previous studies emphasize that the need to express themselves freely is the main driving factor. Gen Z feels that a second account provides a space to share their experiences and identities without pressure from a wider audience.

The results of this study and previous studies both note that the social media culture that supports the use of a second account is a significant factor. Among Gen Z, having more than one account is considered common and accepted.

However, this study focuses more on Gen Z in Maros Regency, providing insight into how culture and social interactions in the area influence Gen Z's decision to create a second account. Previous studies may not provide a specific local context, more general in nature. This study also identifies deeper cultural factors, such as social norms that support freedom of expression and the influence of local culture that encourages the use of a second account. Previous studies may not have emphasized these factors specifically.

Conclusion

The use of second Instagram accounts by Gen Z in Maros reflects how individuals build their identities through the symbols they choose in social interactions such as photos, videos, or captions. In this context, symbols such as photos, videos, and captions function as tools to express themselves and build meaning according to the theory used, namely the symbolic interaction theory which focuses on users who create their identities through posts using symbols (photos, videos or captions). From the results of research and interviews with several informants, it can be concluded that the use of second Instagram accounts among Gen Z in Maros Regency functions as a tool to express themselves, maintain privacy, and build more intimate social relationships. Second accounts give users the freedom to share personal moments without worrying about public judgment, and allow them to be more connected to themselves and those closest to them. This phenomenon reflects changes in the way Gen Z builds their identity and interacts in the digital era, where privacy and freedom of expression are very important. 2. Social and cultural factors that encourage Gen Z in Maros Regency to create and use a second Instagram account are peers as one of the main drivers, where individuals feel compelled to follow in the footsteps of their friends who already have a second account, freedom of expression, social media culture and the need to maintain privacy. Social identity theory explains that individual identity is formed through membership in social groups. In Maros, Gen Z is heavily influenced by their close friends in the decision to create a second account. When many friends have a second account, individuals feel compelled to create a second account so as not to be left behind by their friends, creating a social norm where the use of a second account is considered common and accepted.

References

- Fachrunisa, R. A., & Riyono, B. (2023). Human Nature in Self-Identity Construct: A Meta-Ethnography Study. *Buletin Psikologi*, 31(1).
- Giray, L. (2022). Meet the centennials: Understanding the generation Z students. *International Journal of Sociologies and Anthropologies Science Reviews*, 2(4), 9-18. <https://doi.org/10.14456/jsasr.2022.26>
- Gunarsa, S. D. (2009). *Psikolog perkembangan anak dan remaja*. Gunung Mulia.
- Hazzam, J. (2022). The moderating role of age on social media marketing activities and customer brand engagement on Instagram social network. *Young Consumers*, 23(2), 197-212. <https://doi.org/10.1108/YC-03-2021-1296>
- Herna, H., & Sari, A. A. (2023). Komunikasi Dalam Pengembangan Hubungan Antarpribadi Melalui Second Account Instagram. *WACANA: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Komunikasi*, 22(2), 272–282. <https://doi.org/10.32509/wacana.v22i2.3111>
- Hogg & Vaughan. (2011). *Social Psychology*. London: Prentice Hall.
- Islam, M. S., Sujan, M. S. H., Tasnim, R., Mohona, R. A., Ferdous, M. Z., Kamruzzaman, S. K., ... & Pontes, H. M. (2021). Problematic smartphone and social media use among Bangladeshi college and university students amid COVID-19: the role of psychological well-being and pandemic related factors. *Frontiers in psychiatry*, 12, 647386. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsy.2021.647386>
- Liu, M., Kamper-DeMarco, K. E., Zhang, J., Xiao, J., Dong, D., & Xue, P. (2022). Time spent on social media and risk of depression in adolescents: a dose–response meta-analysis. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 19(9), 5164. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19095164>
- Lyngdoh, T., El-Manstrly, D., & Jeesha, K. (2023). Social isolation and social anxiety as drivers of generation Z's willingness to share personal information on social media. *Psychology & Marketing*, 40(1), 5-26. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21744>
- Mahmoud, A. B., Hack-Polay, D., Grigoriou, N., Mohr, I., & Fuxman, L. (2021). A generational investigation and sentiment and emotion analyses of female fashion brand users on Instagram in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Journal of Brand Management*, 28(5), 526. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41262-021-00244-8>
- Mahmudah, S. M., Rahayu, M., & Prasetyo, K. (2023). Virtual identity in the use of Tiktok for youth in Jakarta, Indonesia. *Bricolage: Jurnal Magister Ilmu Komunikasi*, 9(2), 209-218. <http://dx.doi.org/10.30813/bricolage.v9i2.3916>
- Maoz, E., Gorbunov, I., Danino, E., & Zerahia, M. (2022). An honest cheater: perception of self-concept, academic and clinical dishonesty among nursing students. *Nurse Education Today*, 114, 105406. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2022.105406>
- Muzakki, Z., & Nurdin, N. (2022). Formation of student character in Islamic religious education. *EDUKASIA: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran*, 3(3), 937-948. <https://doi.org/10.62775/edukasia.v3i3.219>
- Novianti, E. (2014). Manajemen asuhan keperawatan potensial pembentukan identitas diri remaja dengan pendekatan model health promotion di kelurahan Katulampa Bogor Timur. *Jurnal Keperawatan Widya Gantari*, 1(1), 17-34.

- Palenzuela-Luis, N., Duarte-Clíments, G., Gómez-Salgado, J., Rodríguez-Gómez, J. Á., & Sánchez-Gómez, M. B. (2022). International comparison of self-concept, self-perception and lifestyle in adolescents: a systematic review. *International Journal of Public Health*, 67, 1604954. <https://doi.org/10.3389/ijph.2022.1604954>
- Putri, F. S. E., Khumayah, S., & Nurfalah, F. (2023). Formation of Self-Identity of Generation Z Through Instagram Social Media Amongst Students. *IMAGINARY*, 2(1), 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.51353/jim.v2i1.814>
- Rahman, R H, Ardhini, M, Dika, M I, Nahla, N, Zulmi, R. and Andi, A. (2021). Pembentukan Identitas Diri Pada Kpopers/ *Motvia Jurnal Psikolog*, 4(1), 18-31. <https://doi.org/10.31293/mv.v4i1.5188>
- Rahman, Z. A., & Shah, I. M. (2015). Measuring Islamic spiritual intelligence. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 31, 134-139. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2212-5671\(15\)01140-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2212-5671(15)01140-5)
- Saputro, K. Z. (2018). Memahami ciri dan tugas perkembangan masa remaja. *Aplikasia: Jurnal Aplikasi Ilmu-Ilmu Agama*, 17(1), 25-32.
- Sri Devi Januarifka Fitria, Diah Firlia Khumairoh, & Halimatuz Zahro. (2023). Penggunaan Media Sosial Pada Second Account Instagram Mahasiswa FISIP Universitas Jember: Perspektif Dramaturgi. *Mandub : Jurnal Politik, Sosial, Hukum Dan Humaniora*, 1(4), 188–199. <https://doi.org/10.59059/mandub.v1i4.613>
- Stahl, C. C., & Literat, I. (2023). # GenZ on TikTok: the collective online self-portrait of the social media generation. *Journal of youth studies*, 26(7), 925-946. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2022.2053671>
- Twenge, J. M. (2023). *Generations: the real differences between Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Boomers, and Silents—and what they mean for America's future*. Simon and Schuster.
- Wattimena, G. H. J. A., Ramadhani, Y. D., & Marsetio, M. (2022). Second Account Instagram sebagai Ruang Ekspresi Generasi Milenial. *Jurnal Pewarta Indonesia*, 4(2), 212–222. <https://doi.org/10.25008/jpi.v4i2.119>