

# Instagram's Users Behavior and Communication Identity

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**Abstract** -- Instagram has become a communication trend among UIN Sunan Kalijaga students. Most of students have an Instagram account as a means of interacting and connecting with their colleagues as well as those outside of campus life. The presence of Instagram has also provided a new space for the emergence of communication identity in student life. The world of social media that cannot be separated from visual construction gives another kind of identity. The qualitative method used to examine this phenomenon was carried out by a focused group discussion (FGD) and online observations on Instagram on 12 students who had at least 2 years Instagram account. Four layers communication identity showed by the students. Personal layer, enactment layer, relational layer and communal layer cannot separated each other. The informants exhibited their layer as part of their other layer. Norms as part of personal layer used to guide what the students do and don't in instagram. The students of UIN Sunan Kalijaga studied showed that the communication identities they got from their surroundings cannot separated from their online behavior on social media.

**Keywords**--- *Communication Identity, Instagram, Online behavior, Social Media, UIN Sunan Kalijaga student*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Identity is one of popular issues for discussion and study that has been present and developed for several decades. The consciousness that identity brings influence in various aspects of life makes the discussion of this phenomenon never lose its appeal [1]. Experts interested in this study in various disciplines also offer a number of concepts and

approaches to provide a more complete understanding of identity [2].

In the context of the study of communication disciplines, the study of identity presents three domains of study which include social identity, cultural identity, and communication identity [3] that are intertwined in reality that cannot be separated from one another [4]. The thoughts and actions of each individual become an integral part of the identity that is present in the dynamics of the interaction that is built. The internal influence of yourself and the environment that surrounds it is a factor that cannot be ignored. Identity does not stand alone. It can only be understood when faced with another party outside of itself. Even discussions about identity are important when juxtaposed with the presence of others [5].

When we give considerable attention to identity, we are faced with the discovery and development of the internet world that gives new space for how identity is presented in real and digital social realities [6]. The new media space followed by the presence of social media, not only adds to the characteristics of the identity display, but also provides an opportunity for the presence of an identity loaded with construction, whether intentional or not [7]. Identity gets new play space or at least additional space so that identity appears increasingly diverse in the form of text-audio-visual and audiovisual. Identity is also no longer just seen as something inherent in the individual but rather a thing that is present full of breadth of interpretation and meaning [8]. Therefore, expecting a single picture of identity will only lead us astray in the breadth of perspective that can be offered. Identity should be understood in its multiple perspectives to prevent

us from deceiving the real interpretation. At the level of individuals and groups, identity also moves dynamically. Different role contexts in the environment that are not the same, make each party need to always adjust their identity. This situation cannot be avoided because identity is present in symbolic meanings through the process of our social interaction [9]. Identity is a social object that full of meaning.

Awareness of the meaning of identity as an object that is controlled by the subject, often makes the appearance of oneself not fully representing themselves. Various ways are worked by individuals to be a part of their social existence [10]. Dramatization as an effort for existence is part of the awareness of cultural identity that has a big contribution in everyone. Identity does not present itself, but it is the result of interaction with the cultural environment [11]. Culture as an element of identity formation is often not fully realized by the owner of the identity because he has interacted with him for a long time [12]. This slow-moving process of interaction presents an internalization that is free from coercion.

In situations where the identity originating from within meets with the surrounding reality, internal values are sometimes faced with demands that are not ideal. Individual attitudes and actions no longer fully reflect self-worth. Identity negotiation to achieve the convenience of social interaction leads individuals to continually adjust themselves [13].

Discussion of identity is not only at the point of self, social and culture. The meeting points of social interaction in life make the discussion of this space as something different. Jung and Hecht called it a communication identity [14]. At these crossing points they offers the idea of 4 layers in individuals to sharpen the idea of communication identity. The four layers consist of the personal layer, enactment layer, relational layer, and communal layer. Personal layer is related to the concept of self that is owned and how a person sees himself. Enactment layer is related to the things that are said, done and how someone acts in certain situations and conditions. Relationship layers relate to messages sent and received by someone when he interacts with other people. Communal layer is a layer that appears when someone identifies himself as part of a group or organization when interacting with others [15]. The communication identity of each individual can vary in each layer. It can also be back and forth between layers one to the other. Especially when we try to associate the personal layer and communal layer. Some of the communal environments that are given (unavoidable), cannot be selected and determined, will force individuals to accept what has become a communal agreement. It may be possible for an individual to reject, but communally he cannot refuse. He was forced to choose to behave in the same way as desired by his communal environment.

This paper based on research questions that give attention to how the behavior of UIN Sunan Kalijaga students, owners of Instagram accounts in displaying their communication identities on social media. The purpose of this study was to see how the layers of identity communication were presented by the informants.

## II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a constructivist paradigm that views the social phenomena of behavior using Instagram and identity of communication as something that is constructed and interpreted by humans based on their historical and social background [16]. Internal and external factors in the subjects studied received attention as they should. Descriptive analysis is used as a research method to show symptoms of existing phenomena [17]. The data and information obtained are then interpreted so that they can be understood. Research informants are students of UIN Sunan Kalijaga who have had an Instagram account for two years or more. This research was conducted from February to June 2019.

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### A. *Communication Identity on the Personal Layer*

The twelve informants who became informants of this study indicated that as individuals, they cannot escape from the beliefs and values formed by their environment. Social media does not mean forming a new identity or other identity that is different from what is believed in real life. The resource person sees herself as a person who needs to be obedient to what her parents advise and the socio-cultural values of his community in real digital life. A careful attitude in getting along also made her activate the private mode in the friendship relationship that was built on Instagram. So she can monitor who is friends with her.

*"If on Instagram, we want to keep our privacy private, so many features. If it's on Instagram, if it's on Facebook, it's not. Now, if on Facebook, it's actually a copy of Instagram." (Pandawa and Kammala)*

Not only friendships are filtered by the speakers, various messages that are considered vulgar and unethical are also blocked by them because they are seen as not in line with the values they adhere to. Through blocking these immoral messages, they hope that they will not receive similar messages. They are also not provoked to access further visuals that are vulgar in nature and display the genitals that occasionally appear on their accounts. Sometimes some unwanted messages make it into their account so the resource persons choose to just leave it or block it.

*"Messages that we feel are vulgar and unethical are limited by blocking these messages through the 'filter'*

*facility. So we don't get that kind of shipment anymore." (Afif, Pandawa and Nahla)*

As citizens of social media who have digital awareness, the speakers see themselves as individuals who have awareness when uploading various messages. The words, images, audio-visuals presented in each account are processed in such a way that they have been considered. Not uploading things that are socially negative in eastern terms, is something that is consistently pursued. Personal digital sources become individuals who are not separate from real life in their daily lives. Digital identity in personal layers is interpreted as an extension of identity in real life.

#### *B. Communication Identity on the Enactment Layer*

Enactment of sources on Instagram can be seen in uploads and responses to messages uploaded by other parties. The upload of speakers can be in the form of visual images, words, audio and audio-visual. All speakers use Instagram to display more images or photos with various variations. Images or photos can have meaning that can be interpreted more broadly.

*"There are three or four things that we uploaded on our instagram account, namely: picture, image Alay, videos and the words." (All Participants)*

The words uploaded describe things that relate to the thoughts and feelings of the resource person about the phenomena of life that are seen or felt. The words of contemplation are also often raised to indicate the process of contemplation in the meanings that are built.

*"I am one of the students who likes to write good captions. For example, what is the story of my activities with my rather poetic languages." (Firda and Firman)*

The photo or picture displayed by the majority presents a photo of the owner of the account, whether he/she is alone or with friends or family. The audio video is more often displayed on the 'story' feature. The resource persons also often upload photos that interest them such as photos about nature or the environment or their favorite animal.

Other uploads can be in the form of forwarding messages originating from other parties. The resource person felt that the message needed to be continued because it had useful values for the others.

The resource layer's enactment on Instagram is a space that moves from self-contemplation, and narcissism to the dissemination of information that is felt to be beneficial to others. The resource person feels the need to take part in building a good and useful Instagram digital environment.

#### *C. Communication Identity on a Relational Layer*

Communication identity at this layer can be seen in the interaction between account owners and other parties who respond to uploading account owners online. Chat or

conversation between accounts that appear between account owners and other parties in a visualized manner can be seen through the comments feature.

*"Before using Instagram, we communicate using the Facebook application. But after trying and getting to know Instagram, we feel this application is more exciting to help us connect with each other. Uploading photos is also easier than composing words." (Nahla, Rifki, Sadila and Triska)*

Resource persons tend to build further conversations with other account that they already know. Conversations seem to be more fluid when they occur with those who are already known by the informant. The form of conversation can be flattery and jokes. The quality of jokes is increasing when both parties are more familiar with each other. It can even be a blatant message. Not to insult but to show intimacy with each other. Those who are already familiar, rarely use blasphemy as an insult.

In an unknown account, the resource person tends to take a more secure attitude in responding to whatever appears. Some informants choose not to respond to the direct messages that they received. Relational layer showed more socially than personally.

#### *D. Communication Identity on the Communal Layer*

Communal level communication on this Instagram social media resource person can be seen in participating in groups that represent groups such as classmates' accounts, alumni accounts and community accounts based on hobbies or issues. In these communal accounts, there are at least two identifiable sources of online behavior. First, being a passive communal member where the resource person doesn't send a lot of messages, even just to respond to the "Like" message of another party in a group account. Second, being an active communal member where resource persons often share the messages they make into the shared account.

Being in a communal space gives more awareness to the informant that he/she needs to be more careful in sending and responding to messages. Even though the communal space account means that there are similarities in certain aspects of each member, the resource person realizes that the space is also a space that contains very diverse account owners. Therefore maintaining messages so that they do not develop offends other parties, is necessary to avoid. Active resource persons also showed that they were always up to date on the issues being discussed and raised.

On the other hand, the resource person avoided sending messages that were not in demand by communal members. The communal identity layer of informants are indicated by the obedience and respect of the consensus that is built within the group. Several reasons caused the speakers to maintain their participation in communal accounts such as to maintain friendship, get the latest information, seek inspiration and

expand the network. The pleasure, satisfaction and benefits gained from membership in communal accounts also contribute to the added value so that the resource person remains a member to date.

*"Instagram helps me stay connected with my friends, find out the latest information, give inspiration and at the same time express my ideas. I can also shape my self-image as I want. Therefore I consider the message that I made well before I uploaded." (Firman and Iin)*

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Communication identity on the behavior of Instagram account users among Sunan Kalijaga UIN students is displayed in four layers of identity as stated by Hecht. Resource persons indicate that Instagram social media space is not a separate space from real life. Having an Instagram account is more an extension of self-identity that has begun in social identity. of Values and morality factors are still carried in each layer of communication identity space on Instagram account.

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