

The Construction Of The Identity Of The Members Of His Council Taklim *Ilal Jannah* Through Social Networking

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Abstract— The emergence of various types of social media such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp is no longer used by young people who have hobbies that are identical to just for fun. However, users of social media have entered into certain religious circles such as majelis taklim. The purpose of the study was to find out how the patterns of social media use in constructing identities carried out through social media by members of the Taklim assembly group. This study uses a qualitative approach using a constructivist paradigm that is descriptive. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation and literature studies. The results obtained are the formation of community identities carried out by its members through activities carried out starting from recitation, tahlil, and pilgrimage to the tomb. The photos and videos of these activities were then published by members of the assembly on the social media of their members. The formation of the identity of the assembly members is an instant way of forming the image of the assembly and aims to obtain new members of the recitation. The conclusion obtained from this paper is that the identity is not in a static condition but is liquid, it is constantly being constructed to fulfill the interests of the assembly and its members.

Keywords—*construction, identity, social networking*

I. INTRODUCTION

Social media users in Indonesia from year to year have always experienced a very drastic increase, especially nowadays social media is not only done through computers, but can be accessed through smart phones. Today almost all humans, from children to adults, have all used smartphones. According to a report provided by 'We are Social and Hootsuite', in 2018 internet users in the world at the end of 2018 were around 4 billion people, of which 3.8 billion in early 2017 [1].

This means that almost half the population in the world has used the internet. Hootsuite is a content management service site that provides online media services connected to various social networking sites such as Facebook, Youtube, Whatsapp, Fb Messenger, Weixin/Wechat, Instagram, Qq, Qzone, Douyin/Tiktok, Sina Weibo, Twitter, Reddit, Douban, LinkedIn, Baidu Tieba, Skype, Snapchat, Viber, Pinterest, and Line. Hootsuite regularly presents data and

trends that you need to understand the internet, social media, mobile and e-commerce behavior each year. Usually, Hootsuite publishes data and trends about the internet and social media at the end of the first month of each year.

In Indonesia, Indonesian internet users have reached 150 million, of which there are 143 million people in 2018. This means that internet and social media users in Indonesia have increased by 7 million in one year [2]. In the past, most social media users came from school children and students and associations of young people who had certain hobbies. They join then form a group, and in interacting with fellow members and not members using social media. These young people are a group of people who are still in a state of searching for identity and most have not found their existence.

Thus the emergence of social media was quickly used by these young people to express themselves. There is a study conducted by Harris Interactive and Teenage Research Unlimited where it was found that children aged 13 to 24 years spend more time online than watching television, this shows that children prefer to live in cyberspace to express themselves.

But nowadays, internet and social media users are no longer dominated by young children, but have also been done by parents who are members of taklim. This can be seen in some posts on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, religious activities that began to fill on the internet uploaded by parents of Taklim Majelis members.

This phenomenon of use is inseparable from the increasing number of social media available on the internet and can be accessed via smartphones. Social media that are currently popular are Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp. These three social media are the most widely used by internet users to interact, one of which is in shaping the identity of themselves and their groups. This is in accordance with what was conveyed by Graham Nichols Dixen who conducted research on 10 students who have a Facebook account, where they can form an online identity instantly. Thus the emergence of technology is able to encourage and provide space for each individual to construct themselves and their groups [3] [4] [5].

Finding and forming an identity is something that a person or group will do in cyberspace, because this cyber world is a bridge of interaction between individuals, groups and people outside themselves and their groups. This is done to get a legitimacy and recognition of the concept of self and the existence of a person and group. It is this identity that is a characteristic and differentiates it from people, other groups. Thus identity is an important aspect of self-concept.

Social media changes one's patterns in interacting and introducing themselves and their groups, thus the formation of this identity can be constructed according to the representation of themselves and their groups at that time, so that the identity of a person and group can always change depending on the context he will build. Identity is not something permanent, permanent and cannot change. Identity becomes an open thing to be reinterpreted, changed and utilized in social processes [6] [7].

According to Stuart Hall the development of the modern era has brought new changes and developments in transforming forms of individualism in which new conceptions of the individual subject and how that identity works in accordance with the changes [8].

Thus it can be known, that the emergence of a new identity constructed by a person is a trend of social dynamics in society. This change can occur for a long time, even just for a moment. This depends on the self-concept of a person and group in representing their existence in the real world and the internet world.

In the research conducted by Ratna Apriliasari it was found that in the process of constructing identity, someone made a selection of what social media would be used as a medium in constructing their identity. This is because the results of the identity construction effort will give birth to a prestige or as a form of elevating the prestige from another identity. Prestige is a form of resistance from his identity that was previously harmed [9].

It can be understood that in constructing identity, the media also influences a prestige obtained from someone. This identity construction arises because of an effort to further elevate this identity that it has from another identity. This is because there is a history that hurts the previous identity.

The selection of social media in constructing this identity was also seen in research conducted by Arisai Olga Hakase Pasaribu. Instagram is a media chosen by its informants in shaping their identity through various types of photos uploaded. This Instagram was chosen by them because according to a magazine in America because it was considered as a place to show off pride [10]

Research related to identity formation was also seen in research conducted by Fanny Hendro Aryo Putro, the result of which was that social media was used by students in forming identities in accordance with moods. So, the formation of this identity is a lot that is not in accordance with the original identity of the students because in forming this new identity, they use many names and guise identities [11]

The results of this study are the same as those conducted by Graham in research entitled Testing Identity, that many people can have two or more identities, because this identity is built on mood, and representation itself is expected to get the same impression for him from people interacting on

social media that is. So, this identity is not static but changes according to the condition of the person and group.

Based on the background presented, this study aims to find out how the patterns of social media use in constructing identities carried out by members of the Taklim *Ilal Jannah* assembly group.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach, namely by describing the processes, meanings and situations underlying the construction of identity through social media by informants of the Taklim *Ilal Jannah* members. This research was conducted for 6 months from December 2018 to May 2019. Data collection techniques of this study were through participation in observations, interviews and literature studies. The data analysis technique of this study uses a constant comparative technique wherein the results of interviews with the informants are then categorized according to the research objectives. The results of this analysis are then integrated into a coherent explanation.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The history of the establishment of Taklim *Ilal Jannah*

This Assembly of *Ilal Jannah* is the most recent assembly among the other *Taklim* assemblies located in Kampung Kelapa Bojong Gede, Bogor. There are a number of *Taklim* assemblies who have long stood up first. In this area, some assemblies not only function as a place to gain knowledge, such as learning to read the Qur'an, reading yellow books (Islamic texts), and listening to religious lectures. However, some assemblies are interpreted by several members as a medium to interact with fellow villagers who are not yet familiar, so that from several assemblies they hold social gatherings for their members, so in addition to increasing faith in Allah SWT, the role of taklim is also a place to connect with fellow human beings [12]

At the beginning of the establishment of the Assembly *Ilal Jannah* only amounted to 5 people, and consisted of people who still live in one RT (neighbourhood) only. To increase the number of members, the recitations that they hold every Friday night are located alternately from house to house of the members. This is intended to attract the attention of other residents so that they are interested and join in the study and also so that the members of the assembly know each other's houses, because most of the members of this recitation comprise parents who have worked, so the intensity of meeting with villagers is not intense. This technique turned out to be successful because within a month the number of members grew to reach more than 30 people.



Picture 1
Taklim Ilal Jannah members

These *taklim* activities in each week are the recitation of *tahlil* and *tahmid*, the sending of prayers to the spirits of the family members, and the religious lecture concludes with questions and answers about religion. It also holds a commemoration of the 'Birthday of Prophet Muhammad SAW' every year by inviting some speakers from outside and also inviting worshipers and the wider community. This activity can then attract the sympathy and interest of the wider community to gain religious knowledge at this Taklim. Of the several new worshipers, there are members from *Taklim* who have long stood up first. The reason for the relocation of the pilgrims was that it turned out they objected to the '*arisan*' activity in *taklim*, because their purpose in entering *taklim* was to study religious knowledge only.

However, this *Taklim Ilal Jannah* is only 2 years running because in May 2018 it broke up and most of its members agreed to form another *Taklim*. In November 2018 some members of *Ilal Jannah* revived this. But the members at that time were only a few. The activities carried out by this are still the same namely, recitation of *tahlil*, religious lectures, reading the Qur'an, and there is one new activity, namely pilgrimage to the tomb. The general public still cannot distinguish between the new members of the recitation and the members of the *Taklim Ilal Jannah* recitation, so that contestations are formed indirectly between the members of the *Taklim Ilal Jannah* and the new *taklim* formed due to the dissolution of *Taklim*, each member wants to give their own identity to the community general to get to know them more correctly. This is in accordance with what was stated by Ratna in her research that the construction of this new identity was a resistance because there was someone who injured his previous identity.

Social media chosen by members of the Assembly *Taklim Ilal Jannah* to form identity quickly is Instagram, Facebook and WhatsApp. The formation of identity through social media reflects the reason this member learns the science of religion, namely to get blessings that can make his life happy world and the hereafter.



Picture 2
Posts of *Taklilal Jannah* members on social media

According to Goofman in his book entitled 'The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life', states that each person basically does construction on themselves by showing themselves (self performance). However, the appearance of the self is basically formed or to meet the wishes of the audience or social environment, not from the self and not also created by the individual itself. So that the identity that emerges is a description of what actually becomes a desire and to meet the needs of social recognition, '*a performance can be defined as the sum of activity of a given participant which seeks to influence the audience in any way.*' [8]

Wood and Smith state that identity is '*a complex personal and social construct, consisting in part of who we think ourselves to be, how we wish others to perceive us, and how they actually perceive us*', so self-construction carried out by *taklim* members is an individual effort in shaping self-image and organization so that the surrounding environment or the general public accepts the existence and has the same perception or view as the individual [13].

The identity construction carried out by members of the *Taklim Ilal Jannah* through social media is by uploading photos and videos of the activities carried out by these members, both those that are routine on Friday evenings and other times of the night.

In addition, several members also posted photos and videos of the activities of the neighborhood (RT) WhatsApp group. Photos, videos of this activity besides *syi'ar*, also invited RT (neighborhood) members to participate in their recitation activities on Friday night. This is one of their communication strategies in an effort to attract people to be interested and become a members of their assemblies.

IV. CONCLUSION

The construction of identity through social media is the construction of themselves and their groups by presenting themselves (self performance) in every personal and group activity through uploading photos and videos and text through the application of WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram. This identity formation occurs because of the contestation between organizations with each other so that one organization establishes a new identity in accordance with environmental conditions and needs at that time. Thus the formation of identity through social media shows that this identity is liquid, and can be formed instantaneously so that the general public can accept and have the same perceptions as individuals and organizations.

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