

## Qualitative Descriptive Study of Adolescent Virtual Identity Through Instagram Social Media at SMAN 1 Depok

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### ARTICLE INFO

*Keywords:* Virtual Identity, Instagram, Teenagers, Communication Theory of Identity

*Received :* 5, July

*Revised :* 17, August

*Accepted:* 20, September

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### ABSTRACT

The rapid proliferation of social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram has significantly impacted teenage behavior, particularly in terms of virtual identity creation. This study delves into how teenagers at SMAN 1 Depok utilize Instagram to craft their virtual personas, drawing on Michael Hecht's Communication Theory of Identity. Employing a descriptive qualitative methodology, including observation, documentation, and interviews, this research zeroes in on female students at SMAN 1 Depok. Utilizing Von Eckartsberg's phenomenological analysis, which encompasses data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing, the study identifies four distinct layers at which virtual identity is constructed: 1) The personal layer, evident in usernames and profiles across primary and secondary accounts; 2) The enactment layer, reflected in interactions like likes and comments from followers; 3) The relational layer, where usage of both accounts reveals different facets of identity—with the primary account showcasing a positive self-concept and limited identity disclosure, and the secondary account allowing for more open expression with selective friendships; 4) The communal layer, where identities are shaped within influencer or celebgram fan communities, with informants often swayed by prevalent lifestyles to gain acceptance. This research underscores the nuanced ways in which teenagers navigate their identities in the digital realm.

## INTRODUCTION

A person's identity is a part of himself that is used to introduce himself to others. Peers are an important way to learn virtual identities (Sari, 2024). Virtual identities regulate how much self-disclosure or shared projections users use to create new identities through internet media (Rachmadtullah et al., 2022; Turkle, 1994). Teenagers today have a need to communicate and express themselves on social media thanks to digital technology. This technology can help them organize themselves by providing a clear picture of who they are (Iswaratama, 2024; Nasrullah, 2022) If we talk about adolescent issues, we will find some characteristics inherent in adolescents. Because of stable emotions, great creative spirit, and the desire to become famous and famous. In the world of social media, getting attention and generating an image is part of self-existence.

These technological advances have changed many aspects of human life. Teens can find what they want easily. Information, fashion advancements, and unusual communication languages are the most sought after today. Teenagers also begin to be proud of themselves and follow foreign cultures that do not conform to the customs of Indonesia. Social media is one of the latest advances in information and communication technology today (Aditya, 2023).

One of the developments in internet technology is social media, or often called "social media". Social media is an online medium that allows people to participate, share, and develop ideas and ideas. They are then shared in the most common form across social networking networks. That being said, there are a lot of fun things that can be enjoyed by all social media users who are also interested in the content presented there (Arrahman & Nastainb, 2023). Other research results show that social media helps interact and turn communication into interactive discussions (Gani, 2020). The results of a survey conducted by the Indonesia Internet Operators Association (APJII) show that internet penetration in Indonesia will reach 78.19 percent in 2023, or 215,626,156 people out of 275,773,901 people living in the country (Permana & Sutedja, 2021). A social media that is trending among teenagers and is used to publish content such as profiles, activities, or even user opinions is instagram.

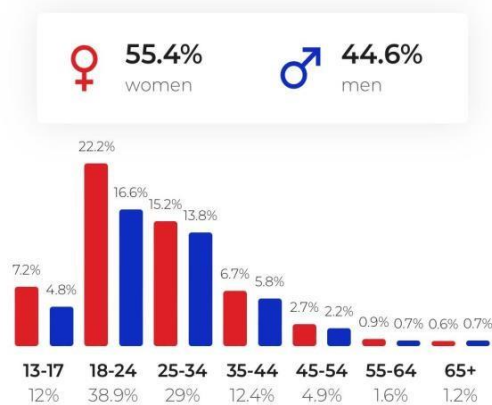


Figure 1. Instagram User Diagram

Based on Napoleon Cat data, there are 109.33 million Instagram users in Indonesia in September 2023. From the age, 38.9% of Instagram users are in the age group of 18-24 years old, 29% of users are in the age group of 25-34 years old, 12.4% of users are 35-44 years old, 12% of users are 13-17 years old, 4.9% of Instagram users are 45-54 years old, 1.6% of users are 55-64 years old. The remaining 1.2% are in the age group of 65 years and above. In addition, research shows that Instagram users are dominated by women, with 55.4%, compared to the percentage of male users in Indonesia, which is 44.6%. Teenagers are the most social media users. And lately some of the Instagram account users have turned out to have more than one account (Rizky, 2022). In addition to the main Instagram account (first account or real account) they also create a second account where users can show their identity without freedom and hindrance, or commonly called a second account. There are a number of studies on the use of Instagram.

The research was published by Hai.grid.id on April 22, 2018. This study was conducted on 300 adolescent respondents who had Instagram. The result was found that 46% of the teenagers had a second account on Instagram, and 60% of the second account was private, which means that the real identity of the Instagram user was not disclosed. The users of the second account are more female. Research by I Putu Hendika Permana and I Dewa Made Sutedja shows that the average second-account user is a teenage girl (Permana & Sutedja, 2021).

Adolescence lasts between the ages of 12 to 21 years for women and 13 to 22 years for men (Irawan & Nastasya, 2023). At this age, children are generally in high school. Those who sit in School spend an average of seven hours each day at School, almost a third of their time spent there. The environment at school has an impact on the growth of adolescents. However, seeing the current situation as the most users of social media, especially Instagram, this teenager almost spends his time a day to continue to be active on social media which can interfere with learning activities.

For example, at SMAN 1 Depok. The author chose SMAN 1 Depok as a research site because it is one of the public schools in Sleman that combines science and technology and religious learning and the school is a school that has a myriad of good achievements and there are no regulations prohibiting bringing mobile phones to school. In this case, it can distract students from studying because they are busy looking at incoming notifications and just looking at the status of friends, uploading photos, videos, and others on their mobile phones. Because seen in the use of Instagram among teenagers, it is more about how to use Instagram as a medium to see the virtual identity of teenagers. Where teenagers use Instagram social media as a place to manipulate and represent themselves. This can be seen from the name of the Instagram account that uses contemporary language by including a self-description in the Instagram bio. Adolescents also tend to display their identity as wise people in the writings that are uploaded, usually motivational sentences, criticism, opinions from personal experiences and social circumstances. There are also those who display their identity through uploading tourist visits to instagramable places and present themselves by following western culture, such as writing a biography as a fan of

Korea K-Pop and often uploading photos of Korean artists or foreign artists. Every individual, especially adolescents, constructs themselves by presenting themselves, so that the identity that emerges depicts what is actually a desire to meet the needs of social recognition (Sonia et al., 2024).

Identity in cyber culture is a complex construction of self. It has to do with the way we see ourselves, the stigma or how others view us, and how others see us. Features that appeal to teens teach about their social and even personal lives. The addition of new and exciting features on Instagram for teens supports online communication for teens. Teenagers have a lot of "followers" and follow other people's accounts because of their function as a medium for conveying information.

In interacting on the internet, there are three types of identities: real-life identity, pseudonymity, and anonymity. The first identity shows who the individual really is, whereas a person's real identity becomes blurred and even becomes fake in pseudonymous cases. However, in some cases, a person's true identity can be identified through representation. Finally, anonymous identity, also known as anonymous, is a new identity that no one can connect with. This research uses Michael Hecht's theory of identity communication. This theory focuses on the communicator and the question "who am I" will arise about the identity of a teenager on Instagram. Identity is often acquired through group efforts and interpersonal interactions, rather than individuals, as is the case in Asia. Identity is defined in Greece culture as something that is personal, and when a person perceives their identity to be different or conflicting with the identity of others, their identity is considered negative.

Based on the description above, social media, especially Instagram, has become an important part of teens' lives today. Therefore, Instagram has a significant role in identifying a teenager's online identity. Therefore, the author is interested in investigating —Adolescent Virtual Identity Through Instagram Social Media at SMAN 1 Depok.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Adolescent virtual identities are an important topic in the study of social media, especially in today's digital era. Instagram, as one of the popular social media platforms among teenagers, plays a significant role in the formation of virtual identities. Virtual identity refers to the self-representation that a person constructs and presents in cyberspace, which is often different from their identity in the real world. This study aims to understand how adolescents in SMAN 1 Depok form and manifest their virtual identities through Instagram.

Social Media and Virtual Identity Formation According to Boyd (2014), social media provides a platform where individuals, especially teenagers, can express themselves and experiment with various identities. Instagram, with features such as photo posts, videos, and stories, allows users to selectively present certain aspects of themselves, creating an identity that may differ from their real-life identity. This is in line with Goffman's (1959) theory of "self-presentation" in which individuals manage the impression they give to others in various social contexts.

**Instagram's Role in Teen Identity Formation** Instagram allows teens to present themselves in a variety of ways, including through visual aesthetics, the selection of posted content, and interaction with followers. A study conducted by Salim (2018) shows that teenagers often use Instagram to build an ideal self-image, by choosing to only show positive and aesthetic moments. This phenomenon is known as "selective self-presentation" which can affect the self-perception and virtual identity built by adolescents.

**Virtual Identity vs Real Identity** The difference between virtual identity and real identity is an important aspect in understanding how teens use social media. A study by Turkle (2011) shows that virtual identities are often a reflection of desires, aspirations, and experimentation that may not be possible in the real world. This can lead to significant differences between how teens perceive themselves online and offline.

**The Impact of Social Media on Adolescent Identity** The use of Instagram can have both positive and negative impacts on the development of adolescent identity. On the one hand, social media provides a space for teens to express themselves, find supportive communities, and gain recognition from peers. However, on the other hand, excessive use of social media can lead to problems such as anxiety, low self-esteem, and pressure to meet unrealistic social standards (Chua & Chang, 2016).

**The Impact of Social Media on Adolescent Identity** The use of Instagram can have both positive and negative impacts on the development of adolescent identity. On the one hand, social media provides a space for teens to express themselves, find supportive communities, and gain recognition from peers. However, on the other hand, excessive use of social media can lead to problems such as anxiety, low self-esteem, and pressure to meet unrealistic social standards (Chua & Chang, 2016).

**Conclusion** Virtual identities formed by teens through Instagram are a reflection of complex social, cultural, and psychological dynamics. This study will contribute to a better understanding of how adolescents use social media to shape their identity, as well as the implications of the practice on their personal and social development.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Researchers use a qualitative approach, meaning that the type of data is qualitative because the research subject studies phenomena such as behavior, perception, motivation, behavior, and others through narrative descriptions (Nasrullah, 2022). The descriptive qualitative case study method is centered on one case or phenomenon. This method usually leads to a research goal or focus directly on the core of the problem, allowing the researcher to gain a clear and integrated understanding of the problem.

This research uses a qualitative method, so all data collected is in the form of words, pictures, and not numbers. This is because all the data collected may be crucial to determining the research topic. Therefore, the research report contains data citations that show how the report is presented. Interview transcripts, photos, videos, personal documents, official documents, and field

notes can be a source of this data. This technique aims to see and understand the virtual identities of teens found on Instagram.

The subjects in this study, who will be asked for information or data related to the formation of virtual identities are adolescents who are active Instagram users at the 3rd grade level at SMAN 1 Depok. The object of the research focuses on virtual identities in Instagram social media.

The purposive technique, or taking informants based on considerations, is used to determine the subject of the study or informants. Purposive can mean purpose, intent, or use. Certain factors are individuals who are considered to have the broadest knowledge of the data required by the researcher. So that the recruitment of informants is based on the purpose.

This study collected four informants who met the following criteria: Informants as active Instagram users who often post photos or videos in their posts, Informants are 3rd grade students of SMAN 1 Depok, Users access Instagram on their phones or computers at least once a day, Instagram users who have used the platform for at least one year and have more than 500 followers, Informants have more followers than followers on Instagram.

The type of data used in this study is a primary data source is a data source that directly provides data to data collectors. The data collected, processed, and presented by researchers from the first or primary source, i.e. interviews and observations conducted to identify the virtual identities of adolescents on the social media Instagram.

Secondary data sources are data that support primary data sources. Secondary data obtained by researchers in the internet, books, articles, and several other sources that are used as supplements.

The data collection techniques used are observation, documentation and in-depth interviews. This interview process is carried out many times with the following criteria for the interviewed informants: (a) The informant is willing to be interviewed, (b) The informant is a student or student of SMAN 1 Depok, (c) The informant is an active user of Instagram social media, (d) The informant has at least 500 followers on Instagram, (e) The informant has more followers than the following on Instagram.

Data Analysis Techniques, Phenomenological analysis developed by Von Eckartsberg were used in this study. The following are the steps used to analyze data from phenomenological research such as data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawn.

## **RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

In the findings of this research data, the researcher will discuss the virtual identity of adolescents through Instagram social media at SMAN 1 Depok. This research was conducted using a descriptive qualitative method with the object being the virtual identity of adolescents through Instagram social media. Instagram can be known as a place to manipulate and represent oneself because of how informants use it. Everyone, especially teenagers, constructs their identity through the way they present themselves. The resulting identity shows what they really want to meet the requirements of social recognition.

This chapter will focus on what adolescents do in showing their virtual identities on social media, Instagram, related to the theoretical framework used by the researcher, and answering the formulation of the problem that has been formulated by the researcher. The results of the research that the researcher will present in the chapter on the results and discussion are obtained through the process of interviews and direct observation. The interview method was conducted face-to-face with several speakers including informant, informant, informant, and informant.

Informant 1 is a student of SMAN 1 Depok. The first informant was active and had an Instagram from 2018 when he was in junior high school. Informant 1 was active in using Instagram, that was his first account. Then when he entered high school and was in 2nd grade, he started to create an account for both. Since then, he has been active in using 2 Instagram accounts. But informant 1 tends to be active in using Instagram on his second account. In revealing his virtual identity, he is usually active in posting selfies, wefies, and video posts on his second instastory account. Posting selfies like this is only often done by Informant 1 on his second account. Meanwhile, in the first account, Informant 1 almost never posts a selfie photo. Informant 1 said that he feels more comfortable posting anything on his second account because the followers or followers on the account are only his close friends, so he feels more able to be himself and his friends.

Furthermore, Informant who is a close friend of Informant. Informant also has an Instagram account and is also a follower of the account owned by Informant. Informant first had an Instagram account in 2018 also when he was in junior high school. Then on his first account. And in 2020 when Informant was in high school and was in 1st grade, Informant started creating a second account on Instagram. Informant tends to be active in using his second account, it can be said that Informant is active in posting selfies through the instastory feature. In addition to posting selfies, Informant sometimes posts random photos on his feed feature. Random things posted by Informant usually contain quotes, or motivational words. Furthermore, Informant who is a close friend of Informant . Informant also has an Instagram account and is also a follower of the account owned by Informant. Informant first had an Instagram account in 2018 also when he was in junior high school. Then on his first account. And in 2020 when Informant was in high school and was in 1st grade, Informant started creating a second account on Instagram. Informant tends to be active in using his second account, it can be said that Informant is active in posting selfies through the instastory feature. In addition to posting selfies, Informant sometimes posts random photos on his feed feature. Random things posted by Informant usually contain quotes, or motivational words.

Next, the Informant is a student of SMAN 1 Depok who first had an Instagram account in 2016 and in 2019 the Informant followed the trend of creating a second account on Instagram. Informants are active in using Instagram, which can be seen when informants are active in posting selfie photos. As someone who wears a hijab every day, Dian tends to post selfies without wearing a hijab on her second account. Informants are sources who are quite active on their second

accounts, but unlike other sources, informants tend to share things that are only hobbies on their instastories and second account feeds. The informant has a hobby of drawing and taking pictures. Through his second account, he often posts pictures that he makes and photos that he takes himself. The informant uses the instastory feature to post his images, while the photos he takes of himself are posted on the second feed of his Instagram account. The informant also has a hobby or interest in K-pop, precisely in the boy group from Korea. Informants tend to use second accounts to post photos and videos from their hobbies towards K-Pop. The informant said he posted his hobby on his second account because he felt more comfortable uploading on his second account. Because the average follower from a second account is only friends he knows closely. The reason the Informant chooses the photo or video uploaded on the first account is because the Informant is afraid that others will feel uncomfortable if he uploads a lot directly on the first account.

Finally, the Informant who is an active teenager in the use of Instagram, the Informant has had an Instagram account since 2016, the Informant first got to know Instagram because he followed his friends. That's when his first account. The informant only has one Instagram account because the informant feels that one Instagram account has met his needs in social media. In revealing their virtual identity, Informants are usually active in posting selfies, wefies, and video posts on InstaStory such as their daily activities, such as hanging out at cafes, shopping with friends, and school activities. In addition to posting on instastory, Informants also post on the feed feature. Unlike instastories that only last for 24 hours, this feed is permanent. Photos and videos uploaded in the feed, will remain there until the account owner himself deletes them. This feed also has a comment and like feature. Where followers can interact in the form of commenting to the account owner through photos on his account. In addition to posting photos and videos of their own, Informants also often post about what is their hobby. The informant has a hobby, namely fond of music and Indonesia influencers who become brand ambassadors for food or skincare. Usually, to show their interest in the influencer, the informant is always poisoned to buy what the influencer promotes.

Based on the results of interviews with each informant, the use of Instagram social media has allowed informants to carry out socialization activities more easily and more widely. As is known, Instagram has a feature mainly for uploading photos or videos, which attracts the audience to have an account. By uploading photos or videos to Instagram, followers will comment and like the post, making the informant feel more confident. In addition, the large number of Instagram users makes many people, especially teenagers, create accounts to follow the trend.

Based on this information, it can be seen that there is a difference between first account and second account users on Instagram in empowering Instagram. Informants 1, 2, and 3 have a second account on Instagram, while informants only have one account. Adolescent girls tend to be active on their second accounts and keep their accounts private so that only the closest people can be trusted.

As the name implies, social media has a function to support the social interaction of its users. In this context, social media can be used to maintain or develop existing relationships and social interactions and can be used to make new friends (Yunita, 2023). Instagram is designed to display and share photo and video posts from its users.

From the exposure to the previously reviewed research, it was found that students tend to use second accounts rather than first accounts. They even kept their identities private and masked on Instagram. This is certainly contrary to Instagram's actual function, which is to present itself to its users. Therefore, by using an Instagram second account, it indirectly encourages teenagers to present themselves.

### *Discussion Analysis*

This study classifies four levels of virtual identity: virtual personal layer, virtual enactment layer, virtual relations, and virtual communal based on the identity of adolescents on Instagram. Thus, identity appears in the form of a virtual identity. The virtual identity of the research was obtained from four adolescent female informants at SMAN 1 Depok who actively use Instagram social media every day. Based on the results of research and observation of the Instagram accounts of informants, it can be seen that there are different levels of virtual identities of adolescents, as shown by the following:

#### *Virtual Personal Layer*

Identity at this level includes a person's feelings and views about themselves, who they are, and what a teenager really looks like (Idaman & Kencana, 2021). The virtual identities of teens at this level can be seen on their first and second Instagram accounts. Research shows that most teenagers, especially girls, have more than one Instagram account.

*"Yes, I have 2 accounts, because this 2nd Instagram account I use to follow my closest people. In the first account I used my real name and profile photo also used my own photo / sometimes blank, if in the second account I used a unique pseudonym and the profile photo used a funny photo" (Informant 1 as a student, interview on December 23, 2023).*

The results of the interview showed that the first account of the informant on Instagram showed their real name as the "code" of identity, as well as a profile photo that matched the photo of the informant's real face. Informants 1, 2, and 3 also have a second account on Instagram, but only the informant does not have a second account. Informants 1, 2, and 3 each use a second account with different pseudonyms according to their respective choices. Not just the account name, they also use other people's profile pictures as their personal identity, which is chosen based on their fun and passion for something, or even a photo of their idol artist.

*"The difference lies in my account name and profile picture. Because the first account has a more official name while the second account has a more random name, and the profile photo I use in the first account is important to aesthetic in making a profile photo while in the second account only random photos are often replaced, it can be artists, favorite animals, writings or my own selfie photos". (Informant 2 as a student, interview on December 23, 2023).*

From the results of the interview, the informant on the first account displayed the one that matched their real names and their respective photos. Meanwhile, in the second account, Informants 1 and 2 use a unique and funny photo and account name because of the informant's fun. The informant used a photo of himself as a child with an attractive and aesthetic name. For the informant to use his real name on his official account and not have a second account because the informant feels that only one Instagram account has met his needs in social media.

The identities of the informants in the first account can be seen from the posts of photos, images, and text that describe themselves by limiting positive activities, as shown in the image of the informant's post above. such as school activities that socialize with friends and share information about school activities and other activities. In the second account, they are more free to reveal their identity positively or negatively.

*"On the first account I often share photos of myself and videos of my writings. Meanwhile, in the second account I often post random things such as other people's disgrace and my own disgrace". (Informant 3 as a student, interview on December 23, 2023).*

Informants 1, 2, and 3 make posts on the second account because they can express their identity and emotions more freely. On the first account, most of the informants posted positive school activities, family activities, and selfies with their best expressions. On the second account, more informants posted activities expressing their freedom, such as stories about problems and conflicts in school, family, and society. The selfies posted are also not the best of them.

The results of the interview showed that there was a difference between the first and second accounts submitted by the informant because there was a difference in the background and purpose shown by the informant in creating an existing virtual identity. All informants do have differences in their virtual identities, first and second accounts, this still has different goals. This is in line with what Michael Hect said that when they understand their identity then they can do what they want with their new identity. This happens because in forming a virtual identity that they make, almost all of them make an identity that is certainly different from the things in their real identity, although this is still very difficult for teenagers to be able to create a virtual identity that is different from their own real self.

### *Virtual Enactment Layer*

At the virtual enactment layer level, people in the surrounding environment will gain knowledge about a person based on what they do, what a person has and how they act (Gusri et al., 2020). An informant's identity consists of other people's knowledge of themselves, which can be seen from the informant's followers' likes and comments on their Instagram posts. The self-image on the post is a further description of the informant's identity, which others will see and understand from that appearance. Such as posting my daily activities such as hanging out at a coffee shop with friends while nugas, going to the mall, posting wise writings and posting my best photos on my Instagram feed and on instastory (Informant 2 as a student, interview on December 23, 2023). Based on the interview above, the informant's posts focus on daily activities at school and outside of school, as well as interactions with friends and how their lifestyles are. Every informant is a teenager who actively uses Instagram social media and almost every day uses the InstaStory feature. They always post funny events that happen in their daily lives or school activities, including playing during school breaks with their friends.

All informants 1, 2, 3 and 4 are almost identical to each other. They upload photos or videos on Instagram and Instastory posts, showing their followers that they are good-looking, fun, entertaining, and smart. Although each informant differs in its nature, the core remains the same. Informants want to show themselves through their posts so that their followers will leave likes and comments.

*"Because if many people like or give positive comments on my posts, there I feel appreciated for my existence and make me more confident. With the positive response from my friends and followers, I am even more enthusiastic about displaying my best photos on Instagram". (Informant 4 as a student, interviewed on December 23, 2023).*

*"The feature that I like is the like feature. I like to post something if a lot of people like my posts. Because I think it is the essence that the post is good for others". (Informant 3 as a student, interview on December 23, 2023).*

Based on interviews from informants, according to informants, the more likes they receive on Instagram posts, the happier and happier they are because they are seen by others. The more positive comments on their Instagram features, the more confident they will be.

In the experience of informants, there is a process by which interaction with others on their Instagram account gives rise to an idea of themselves. This is also the case with the experience of informants where interaction with others on their Instagram account raises ideas that can motivate or encourage to do something about themselves that will be published on their Instagram account. In doing so, teenagers will usually receive a variety of responses from their environment. This can be seen from the way informants consider their actions when using Instagram's post feed feature. Information posted by informants on

Instagram conveys their virtual identities to others. Also, think about how his followers rate him and how they respond.

Thus, this second concept of identity communication is very clearly visible on Instagram social media because its complete features allow users to post anything. When it comes to self-existence and lifestyle, users can post anything they want regardless of whether it is true or fake. While showing off their existence and lifestyle, it was as if all of that was talking about comfort. The goal is simply to show the lifestyle identity that you want to show. When a post is liked and commented on well, users feel proud, and when it is liked and commented on a lot, users will feel satisfied and feel cared for by others.

### *Virtual Relations*

The relational layer is the part of who we are in relation to other individuals, and identities are formed as a result of our interactions with other individuals (Sinurat et al., 2022). The identity of the informant from the virtual relations stage is formed because of the interaction they have on Instagram. Self-identity is represented by the account owned. On the first account, they don't restrict friends (public friends are open), but on the second account, they limit the private feature, so they can only interact with people they consider trusting.

*"In the first account I open myself to be friends with anyone on Instagram, while in the second account I limit my friends (private). Because on my second account sometimes I share posts about the disgrace of my photos and my friends, so my second account is only people I trust and are closest to me". (Informant 3 as a student, interview on December 23, 2023).*

Informant Informant 3 in the interview above explained that the first account does not limit friends with anyone (public) for everyone, because on the first account a person usually rarely shares posts or makes instastories. In the first account, the informant becomes a wise person. Meanwhile, in the second account, not everyone is free to obtain information posted from the second informant's account. Because in the second account, only the closest people can be accepted by the informant and trusted by the informant.

*"On the first account I don't limit it (public) to everyone because there I rarely post photos or instastories. But if I limit it on my second account, because so many people on Instagram make stories as material for donations and share them with other friends to be their content for support." (Informant 2 as a student, interview on December 23, 2023).*

From the results of the interview, the informant limited his friendship to only the second account, because on that account the informants often shared activities or activities at school and outside of school, which could only be seen by people who were selected as followers of the informant.

"Sometimes I open the privacy of my first account when posting a twibbon, or event promotion, so sometimes I have to remove strangers who follow me. Especially in the second account, I limit it more, because in that account only the closest people I accept. To maintain my privacy, I don't like to be followed by many unknown people and lack confidence". (Informant 1 as a student, interviewed on December 23, 2023).

The reason informants private their second accounts is because of privacy and security. By privatizing an account, users can choose who can see their content and reduce the risk of personal information being widely spread on the internet. It provides complete control over the content posted, so users can maintain their online reputation. There are informants who share their moments to reach many people and there are also those who want to share them only with their circles. Not everyone is comfortable with the spotlight so they limit themselves not to get it. Social media is now unpredictable, it could be with your post going viral in just one click of the 'post' button. In order to avoid this, some people choose to make sure they are safe and comfortable.

Table 1. Informant's Instagram Account Data

<i>Instagram account</i>	<i>First Account (open public)</i>	<i>Second Account (private account)</i>
Informant 1	Follower : 1.298	Follower : 169
	Follow : 1.007	Follow : 176
	Post : 4	Post : 6
Informant 2	Follower : 768	Follower : 124
	Follow : 409	Follow : 147
	Post : 4	Post : 6
Informant 3	Follower : 1.556	Follower : 33
	Follow : 891	Follow : 109
	Post : 36	Post : 162
Informant 4	Follower : 3.653	Tidak ada
	Follow : 1.557	
	Post : 9	

The table above shows that informants on the first account only show fewer photo and video posts than on the second account posts. Meanwhile, informant 4 does not have a second account and only has one account to display posts in his virtual world.

*"Yes, because I only have one Instagram account, so I don't limit my friends (open public). But when I make an instastory I also limit it to the feature on Instagram which is close friend, with that feature I also choose the people closest to me to see the instastory that I share". (Informant 4 as a student, interviewed on December 23, 2023).*

Based on interviews with all informants, Information about the informant's virtual identity was seen when the informant was more open on their second Instagram account, which had hundreds of image and video posts. In addition, when informants are more open when posting instastories by using the close friend feature, in this feature informants can choose the closest people to see the instastory. It can be concluded that this is related to teenagers who are more free to show their identity to the people they choose in their Instagram friends.

#### *Virtual Communal*

By definition, communal identity is the way a group of people or communities view themselves as identities (Noels et al., 2020). Expressions of cultural identity shared through Instagram posts or feeds may contain cultural identities, as seen in the way users share communities or cultures through the act of liking, tagging and sharing (Holiday et al., 2022). In addition, Seibel explained that identity is a social product and is an important foundation for activities and ways of life. Therefore, one of the key features of Instagram that relates to the communal framework of identity is the ability to interact with others in a shared community (Witari, 2023). In this case, a person who has gone through the three stages above who initially only becomes a person who does not know what to do, begins to find out, and becomes part of a fan group, by adjusting himself as a member of an influencer fan group or celebrity.

When a person's identity is shaped more by the community than by individual differences in communication. The informant is an 18-year-old Yogyakarta teenager. Teenagers living in Yogyakarta are easily influenced by popular lifestyles. So, documentation is posted on their Instagram posts for their own existence. Influencers or celebrities have a great influence on Instagram users, especially teenagers. The interviewees I interviewed are well aware of this. They stated that they were inspired by or imitated the influencers or celebrities they liked in a positive way.

*"It's quite influential, I follow celebrity Azizah Salsha, she often promotes outfits, skincare and makeup that can be bought according to students' pockets and she often uses the latest features that are trending on Instagram. Because what is promoted by celebs is a good item and an affordable price. So I like to follow the fashion trends to buy what the celebrity has promoted". (Informant 4 as a student, interviewed on December 23, 2023).*

According to observations and interviews, the influence of influencers or celebrities is very influential on informants. The informants have influencers or celebrities they follow as inspiration. They apply it into their most recent dressing styles, photo poses, and Instagram features to stay on top of current trends. So it can be said that the existence of community clubs or influencers and celebrities that are followed will affect the lifestyle of the informant.

*"It's very big, because the influence of the celebrity can have a positive impact and motivation on me both in fashion and other fields. I follow Tasya Farasya's celebgram, because the content is interesting for girls to follow, she often makes makeup tutorial content, tutorials on how to wear outfits that are suitable for certain events, so that this content can help me in terms of learning how to make up and choosing the right outfit for formal and non-formal events". (Informant 2 as a student, interview on December 23, 2023).*

From the statement of Informant 2 regarding fashion trends, it can be influenced by the role models that each informant follows. Due to the influence of a community of influencer fans or celebrities who are followed by informants. So that when the influencer or celebrity posts or promotes an item, the informants will find out and immediately buy it, especially related to outfits and skincare. This is what is trending now in the virtual world of Instagram. Even now there is a new feature that makes it easier for informants to join as exclusive customers on Instagram influencers or celebrities, this feature only provides paying customers who can see the artist's or celebrity's posts. There artists and celebrities often upload activities and even share shoope links from the products they use.

*"I have a role model in dressing and posting something. I love kpop idols and also follow Fuji's fan club, and also I am an exclusive customer of Fuji's celebgram. Because every time I buy clothes or post something, I often look at my role model". (Informant 3 as a student, interview on December 23, 2023).*

From the results of the interview, the informant followed the fan community of one of the influencers and celebrities and became an exclusive customer in one of Indonesia's celebrities, Fujianti Utami. By joining the exclusive customer feature, informants know more about what is trending and celebrities so they follow the things shared to follow the trend and adjust themselves.

Based on the interviews of all informants, it can be concluded that the virtual identity of adolescents can be seen in the influencer or celebrity community group that teenagers follow, where a celebrity or influencer is considered to have a good reputation, so there is a desire to follow him and feel proud to do or imitate what his current role model is doing.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the results of the research and interviews, the conclusion of the research entitled —A Qualitative Descriptive Study of Adolescent Virtual Identity Through Instagram Social Media at SMAN 1 Depok is as follows.

First, the Virtual Personal Layer. In this study, there is a difference in how to use the first account and the second account as a place to represent the informant himself. Seen in the profile photo and real name on the informant's Instagram account. In the first account, the informant displays their real name and photo of their real face, while in the second account they use a pseudonym (unique name) and a photo of another person like the artist they idolize, which is based on the informant's fun and preferences.

Second, Virtual Enactment. Researchers found that the virtual identity of the informant is influenced by other people's knowledge of the informant's self on Instagram social media, such as the informant's followers' likes and comments on the displayed posts. Informants will feel happier and happier because their existence is recognized by others, the more likes they receive on their posts. In the same way as the comment feature, the more people who make positive comments, the more confidence the informant will grow.

Third, Virtual Relations. According to this study, the form of virtual identity of informants is seen in the use of both of their accounts. In the first account, adolescents only use a positive self-concept and limit the disclosure of their full self-identity, while in the second account, adolescents are more free to express their identity more openly, even though using pseudonyms and friends are restricted.

Fourth, Virtual Communal. Informants are formed in a larger group or community. In this study, the implication is that a person who has experienced the above three stages initially becomes a person who knows nothing, then starts to find out, and finally joins a fan group. Like informants are easily influenced by the lifestyle of celebrities and influencers. So, for self-existence, they record their activities on Instagram to be shown in their posts. Popular lifestyles associated with informants include their style of dressing, where to eat or tourist attractions, the poses they take in photos, and the use of the latest Instagram features make informants follow those trends to fit in.

## **ADVANCED RESEARCH**

Every research certainly has limitations. Limitations in the sense of research limitations affect the researcher's ability to explore the data being studied, the limitations of available data, or external factors of the research such as time and resource limitations. So further research is needed for the perfection of this research.

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