

THE ROLE OF SELF-ESTEEM IN SOCIAL MEDIA SELF-PRESENTATION AMONG EMERGING ADULTS: EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS FROM INSTAGRAM USER BEHAVIOR

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effect of self-esteem on social media self-presentation in emerging adulthood Instagram users. The subjects of this study were men and women aged 18-25 years in Karawang Regency. The determination of the subjects was carried out using a non-probability sampling technique, especially convenience sampling, totaling 204 respondents. This study uses a quantitative method, the data collection technique in this study is using the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES) to measure self-esteem and the Self Presentation on Facebook Questionnaire (SPFBQ) to measure self-presentation on social media. The data analysis technique used is simple regression. The results of this study show a $p \text{ value} = 0.447 > 0.05$, namely H_0 is accepted and H_a is rejected, meaning that self-esteem does not have a significant effect on self-presentation. This finding indicates that self-presentation on Instagram in emerging adulthood is not influenced by self-esteem, but is likely influenced by other factors such as social pressure, peer influence, or motivation to form an ideal self-image. Therefore, further studies considering mediation or moderation variables are suggested to understand more comprehensively the relationship between self-esteem and self-presentation of social media users in this generation.

Keywords: self-presentation, self-esteem, emerging-adulthood, instagram

INTRODUCTION

The development of technology in the world today is happening very rapidly and fast. This is marked by the emergence of various digital platforms by providing innovative features with various benefits. One of the most popular of technological developments is social media (Humbertus et al., 2022). According to the Data Reportal (2024) report, Indonesia has around 139 million social media users as of January 2024. Social media is an online tool that allows users to communicate and initiate interactions across space and time. Social media has evolved in many forms, including Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, and more. Among these platforms, Instagram is one of the most popular social media platforms by the public. Based on reports from We Are Social and Meltwater (2024), Indonesia ranks fourth in the world in the number of Instagram users, with a total of 99.4 million users.

Instagram has become an intense conversation in various age groups. Although Instagram can only allow users aged 13 and older to use Instagram, the 18–25 age group or known as emerging adulthood is a very active user. According to Arnett (2000), emerging adulthood is a transition period to adulthood in which individuals are forming their self-identity, setting life goals, and building more complex social relationships. In this process, social media is often used as a means to express oneself and expand social networks (Afrilia, 2025). However, the use of social media in this phase also gives rise to the urge to display an attractive self-image. This statement is also in line with Dewi (2020) who states that individuals in the emerging adulthood stage tend to want to look attractive in the eyes of others. DeLamater and Myers (2015) explained that self-image displayed on social media is often ideal self-image or imagined self, which is a self-image that has been modified to look better than its original condition. According to Arifah et al (2023), social media can be a tool to show others "who I am" to many people. So each individual will manage how they feel on social media. The way to control other people's views and other people's interpretations of oneself is also called self-presentation. DeLamater and Myers (2015) define self-presentation as a conscious or unconscious effort made by individuals to regulate their self-image when it meets their expectations in

social interaction. Oxford dictionary (in Rozika & Ramdhani, 2016) defines self as an interpretation of "your own nature; your personality" then the meaning of the Indonesian translation, self is interpreted as self while the meaning of presentation is "the act of showing something or giving something to somebody" so the conclusion of the meaning of self-presentation can be concluded as an action to show one's view of others. Meanwhile, according to Michikyan et al. (2014), self-presentation includes three forms: real self, ideal self, and false self. The ideal self is the way an individual interprets himself according to the desires or expectations of himself or others. Real self is the way a person realizes himself as he is, while false self is the way an individual describes himself or herself differently from the original. The results of the research of Michikyan et al. (2014) show that individuals in emerging adulthood usually often display real self compared to other forms. However, individuals with weak self-perception or low self-esteem tend to display false selfs on social media. In positive self-presentation, individuals will make a good impression on others, by providing positive traits and reducing negative appearances according to Human et al, (in Putri, 2022).

Self-presentation can be affected by a variety of factors. According to Baumeister (in Latupeirissa & Wijono, 2022), these factors include: high self-confidence and self-awareness, extraversion, other-directedness (an individual's ability to adapt to the environment), self-esteem, and social anxiety. In this study, the focus factor is self-esteem. According to Nastiti et al. (2018), self-presentation is done by individuals to form and strengthen self-concept, which is then expected to receive feedback from others to increase self-esteem. Rosenberg et al. (1965) explain that self-esteem is an individual's overall assessment of himself, which includes two main aspects: self-acceptance and self-respect. Research by Yang and Brown (2016) entitled "Online Self Presentation on Facebook and Self Development During the College Transition" states that self-presentation on social media is positively related through the support response from the audience, which can ultimately increase an individual's self-esteem. Baumeister (in Putri et al., 2022) mentioned that individuals with high self-esteem tend to appear ambitious and confident, sometimes even exaggerating their achievements in order to gain recognition. On the other hand, a person with low self-esteem will be more careful when presenting themselves, to avoid the risk of social embarrassment or rejection.

Based on this description, it can be concluded that social media, especially Instagram, has an important role in the formation and delivery of individual self-image during emerging adulthood. The phenomenon of self-presentation that occurs in the use of social media is closely related to the self-esteem factor. A person who has high or low self-esteem displays different tendencies in displaying their self-image on social media. Therefore, it is important to further research how self-esteem affects self-presentation in Instagram users among emerging adulthood, in order to understand the psychological dynamics that occur in social interactions in the digital space.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative method, the data analysis carried out is statistical with the intention of testing the hypothesis that has been determined (Sugiyono, 2018). The variables that were the focus of this study included self-esteem (X) and self-presentation (Y). The population in this study is emerging adulthood aged 18-25 years who live in Karawang Regency. The sampling method in this study is non-probability sampling, according to Sugiyono (2018) non-probability sampling is sampling where it does not provide the same opportunity or opportunity to be sampled. Sampling in this study is by convenience sampling technique, according to Siregar (2017) convenience sampling is a sampling technique based on the ease of the researcher, namely those encountered by chance, are seen as suitable and can be a source of data that is adjusted to the criteria determined by the researcher. This study used 204 respondents determined from the Cochran formula, the Cochran formula according to Sugiyono (2018) is commonly used when determining the size of the research sample whose population is unknown.

In this study, there are two scales that will be used by researchers. The first is Self Presentation on Facebook Questionnaire (SPFBQ) by Michikyan et al., (2014) to measure self-presentation with seventeen items that are favorable, the researcher modified the standard scale by replacing social media "Facebook" with social media "Instagram" is used to match the title of the research. Data collection techniques use the Likert scale, the likert scale is a method of scaling attitude statements that uses the

distribution of responses to basis of determination (Azwar, 2017). The likert scale form in the Self Presentation on Facebook Questionnaire (SPFBQ) is in the form of multiple choice with five answers chosen by the respondents, namely SS (strongly agree), S (agree), N (neutral), TS (disagree), STS (strongly disagree). Second, the Indonesian version of the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES) adapted by Alwi & Razak (2021) to measure self-esteem with eight items that have five favorable items and three unfavorable items, the likert scale on this scale uses four alternative answers, namely SS (strongly agree), S (agree), TS (disagree), STS (strongly disagree).

Before carrying out the research, the researcher carried out the preparation stages of the research measuring tool, including the translation of the scale on the self-presentation scale, expert judgment on the self-presentation scale to three experts, the readability test on the self-presentation scale and the trial (try out) on the self-presentation scale and the self-esteem scale. The results of the validity test of seventeen items of self-presentation showed valid results ($aiken'v > 0.5$). The results of the reliability test from the self-presentation scale are 0.875 and from the self-esteem scale of 0.881 which means that the results are reliable. Furthermore, item analysis was carried out to see the discriminating power of the item using the corrected item-total correlation technique, a corrected item-total correlation value of > 0.3 out of the seventeen items on the self-presentation scale was obtained and a corrected item-total correlation value was obtained > 0.3 out of eight self-esteem scales which means that all items on both scales are worth using. After the data was collected, a simple regression analysis was carried out to test the hypothesis in this study. The purpose of this simple regression analysis is to find out how the influence of one independent variable on one variable is bound to a relationship model in the form of a straight line (linear).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic data is displayed first to provide an overview of the study respondents. Demographic data contains data about Instagram usage.

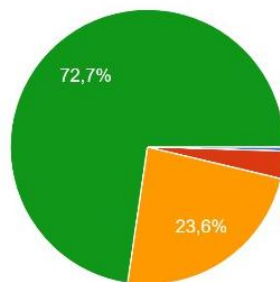


Figure 1. Instagram User Demographic Data Results

Based on figure 1 above, it can be seen that the respondents in this study used *social media* for less than 1 year as much as 0.5%, 1-3 years as much as 3.2%, 4-6 years as much as 23.6% and more than 6 years as much as 72.7%, of the above data dominated by Instagram users for more than 6 years.

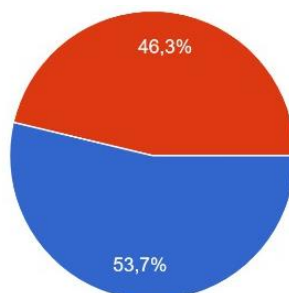


Figure 2. Instagram Usage Demographic Data Results

Based on Figure 2 above, it can be seen that 53.7% of respondents dominate having private Instagram accounts and 46.3% are public.

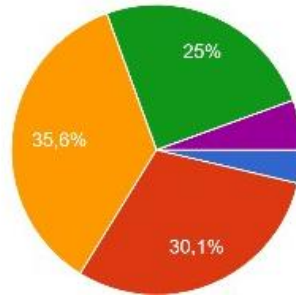


Figure 3. Instagram Usage Demographic Data Results

Based on figure 3 above, it can be seen that 3.7% chose not to be active at all, 5.6% very active, 25% active, 30.1% quite active and the most dominant was to choose neutral, which was 35.6%.

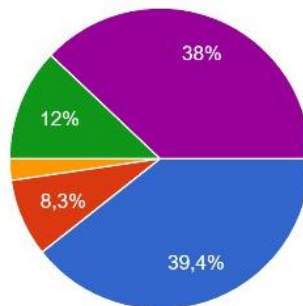


Figure 4. Instagram Usage Demographic Data Results

Based on figure 4 above, 2.3% chose the main purpose of using Instagram to follow celebrity/influencer accounts, 8.3% viewed the content of friends/family, 12% increased the number of followers, 38% for entertainment (videos/memes) and the most dominating was sharing personal moments as much as 39.4%. In this study, an assumption test was carried out, namely the normality test and the linearity test. According to Ghozali (2016) If the sigification value (Sig.) is greater than 0.05, then the data is normally distributed. On the other hand, if the significance value is less than 0.05, the data obtained is not normally distributed. The following are the results of the normality test calculation using the help of SPSS version 26 for windows software:

Table 1. Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		RES_1
N		204
Normal Parameters, b	Mean	0
	Std. Deviation	8.99455
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	0.067
	Positive	0.067

	Negative	-0.039	
Test Statistic			0.067
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.027c	
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)			0.306
Point Probability			0

Source: SPSS Output

Based on the normality test in Table 1, the test was performed using *the one-sample kolmogorov-smirnov test* on non-standardized residuals. The results showed an *ASAPP SIG* value of 0.027 (< 0.05), which indicates that statistically the data is not normally distributed. because of these results and considering the large sample size ($n = 204$), used the *exact sig value*. 0.306 (> 0.05) as a more accurate reference. *Exact sig* was chosen because it is more suitable for large samples and is not as conservative as *asymp sig* so it is concluded that residual data is practically normally distributed. Thus, the assumption of normality in linear regression is fulfilled.

Table 2. Linearity Test

ANOVA Table							
		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
Self-presentation * Self-esteem	Between Groups	(Combined)	1483.99	20	74.199	0.906	0.58
		Linearity	47.209	1	47.209	0.576	0.449
		Deviation from Linearity					
			1436.78	19	75.62	0.923	0.555
	Within Groups		14986.3	183	81.892		
Total			16470.3	203			

Source: SPSS Output

Based on the results of the linearity test in table 2, it shows that the significance value *of deviation from linearity* is 0.555 ($p > 0.05$). This shows that there are no significant deviations from the linear relationships between the variables tested, so it can be concluded that the relationships between the variables meet the assumption of linearity.

Table 3. Table of Coefficients

Coefficients					
Type	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	55.579		3.677	15.117	0
Self-Stuart O'T	-0.113		0.148 -0.054	-0.762	0.447

Source: SPSS Output

From the data in table 3, the t-value for the *self-esteem* variable = -0.762 which means that the *self-esteem coefficient* does not differ significantly from zero. Sig. (*p-value*) = 0.447 greater than 0.05 means

that it is insignificant, so it is concluded that H_0 is accepted and H_a is rejected, meaning that there is no influence between *self-esteem* and *self-presentation*. After a simple regression analysis test, the researcher also categorized the results *self-esteem* and *self-presentation* of research respondents.

Table 4. Categorization of *Self-Esteem Scale* Score (N= 204)

Standard Deviation	Categorization	F	Percentage
$X < 43.8$	Low	26	12,75%
$43.8 < X - 61$	Keep	151	74,02%
$X > 61.8$	Tall	27	13,24%
	Sum	204	100%

Based on table 4, the majority of respondents 74.02% were in the category of *medium self-esteem*, as many as 12.75% had low *self-esteem* and 13.24% had high *self-esteem*. The conclusion is that most of the individuals of *emerging adulthood* age in this study have a moderate level of *self-esteem*, which reflects a fairly stable level of acceptance and self-esteem, but has not reached optimal or very low levels.

Table 5. Categorization of *Self-Presentation Scale* Score (N=204)

Standard Deviation	Categorization	F	Percentage
$X < 20.13$	Low	27	13,24%
$20.13 < X - 61$	Keep	150	73,53%
$X > 28.65$	Tall	27	13,24%
	Sum	204	100%

Based on table 5, most of the respondents 73.53% were in the medium category in terms of *self-presentation*. Respondents with high and low *self-presentation* amounted to 13.24%. The bottom line is that most respondents present themselves moderately or moderately on Instagram—not overdoing it in shaping their self-image, but also not overly restrained. This could indicate that they are relatively realistic or adjust *their self-presentation* depending on the social situation.

This study aims to determine the influence of *self-esteem* on *social media self-presentation* on *emerging adulthood* of Instagram users. The hypothesis test was carried out with a simple regression test which aimed to see the influence of *self-esteem* on *social media self-presentation*. The results of the simple regression hypothesis test showed a sig value of 0.447 ($p > 0.05$), this result showed that H_a was rejected and H_0 was accepted, which means that there was no effect of *self-esteem* on *social media self-presentation* in *emerging adulthood* Instagram users. This finding is in contrast to the research conducted by Øverup et al. (2015) who found that *self-esteem* is an important factor for *self-presentation*. Individuals with low *self-esteem* do *self-presentation* to promote themselves to further improve their self-impression.

The results of this study that have no influence can be explained through several possibilities. One of them is that *emerging adulthood* is a stage of identity development, in which individuals actively explore and adjust themselves to various social roles (Arnet, 2000). In this context, *the self-presentation* carried out may be more influenced by other factors such as *self-monitoring*, *social comparison*, or the level of *social media* use, social conformity, peer influence (Baumeister, in Latupeirissa & Wijono, 2022). In addition, these results that do not have a good significance can also be caused because *self-presentation* has a multidimensional, multidimensional form that has more than one psychological aspect that affects how a person presents himself online (Michikyan et al., 2014). This is in line with the statement of Kim and Lee (2011) who stated that *the self-presentation strategy* in the online environment is essentially is multidimensional, involving verbal and visual cues as well as interaction behaviors.

In addition to the possible influence of *external* factors and variable multidimensionality, the results of this study show that there is no significant influence between *self-esteem* on *self-presentation* can also be influenced by the uneven distribution of data in the variable category. Another study that is in line with

the results of this study is the study conducted by Ramadhani and Ningsih (2021) with a significance value ($p > 0.05$) and shows that there is no contribution of *self-esteem* to *self-presentation* in adolescent Instagram users. In addition, Amanda (2022) also found that there was no significant relationship between *self-esteem* and *self-presentation* in early adult women who used Instagram in the city of Bandung. Similar findings were found in the study of Serimbing (2024), which showed that *self-esteem* does not directly affect *self-presentation*, but is influenced by mediating variables such as *social comparison*.

Based on the results of the categorization test, it was known that most of the respondents were in the category of *medium self-esteem* of 74.02% and *medium self-presentation* of 73.53%. This distribution imbalance causes low variation between data, thereby reducing the *statistical power* in detecting the relationship between variables. This is in line with the opinion of Tabachnick & Fidell (2013) who stated that low variation in independent or dependent variables can hinder the detection of significant influences, even though the actual relationship may exist. Furthermore, Sugiyono (2018) also emphasized that deviations in data distribution or abnormal or homogeneous data distribution can affect the validity of statistical test results, especially in linear regression models that are sensitive to classical assumptions. In this context, the dominance of respondents in one category of values (e.g. medium) can make regression models not capture sufficiently varied linear relationships.

CONCLUSION

If viewed from the results of data analysis, it can be concluded that self-esteem does not have a significant influence on self-presentation on Instagram social media in individuals who are in the emerging adulthood stage. These findings suggest that although self-esteem is theoretically believed to play a role in the formation of social identity and behavior, in fact there are many other factors that may be more dominant in influencing self-presentation, such as social conformity, peer influence, social media addiction levels, or motivation to build an ideal self-image. Therefore, the researcher recommends further studies involving mediating or moderation variables such as social comparison, social anxiety, or narcissistic tendencies to better understand the mechanisms of the relationship between self-esteem and self-presentation behavior on social media. The research conducted by the researcher also emphasizes the importance of a multidimensional and integrative approach in understanding the psychological dynamics of the emerging adult generation in the digital era.

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