



HOW GENERATION ZOOMERS REPRESENT THEMSELVES THROUGH SECOND INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS? LESSONS LEARNED FROM ACEH, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

This study explores using "second accounts" on the Instagram platform as a medium of self-expression among the Zoomer generation in Lhokseumawe City, Aceh Province, Indonesia. The research involved ten individuals from various areas of Lhokseumawe. Primary data were collected through observations and interviews, while secondary data were obtained from literature reviews. Data analysis was conducted using the Interactive Data Analysis (IDA) Model. The findings indicate that using second accounts has emerged as a new trend among Zoomers in Lhokseumawe. Second, account holders use Instagram Stories to express their identities and share personal narratives. Unlike primary accounts, which typically construct a curated public image, second accounts are more private and allow users to be selective about who can view their content. This privacy enables users to express themselves more freely and authentically.

INTRODUCTION

The second account on Instagram often reflects a different side of the user compared to the main account. It typically has a distinct username and features simpler, more personal content, such as emotional expressions or personal reflections. This account is not intended for self-branding purposes, allowing the user to be more selective about who can view their activities. In contrast, the main account is used to present an idealized version of the self, showcasing more polished content such as moments with friends or a partner. This account usually attracts a broader and more general audience (Amelia, 2022).

As of February 2023, the number of Instagram users in Indonesia reached 106.7 million, accounting for 38.2% of the total population, with the majority (53%) being women. The largest user group consists of individuals aged 18-24 years (40.3 million), where women dominate with 18.7 million users. This data indicates that this age group actively uses Instagram to engage in online interactions. According to a survey by NapoleonCat (2023), Instagram users in Indonesia are predominantly female.

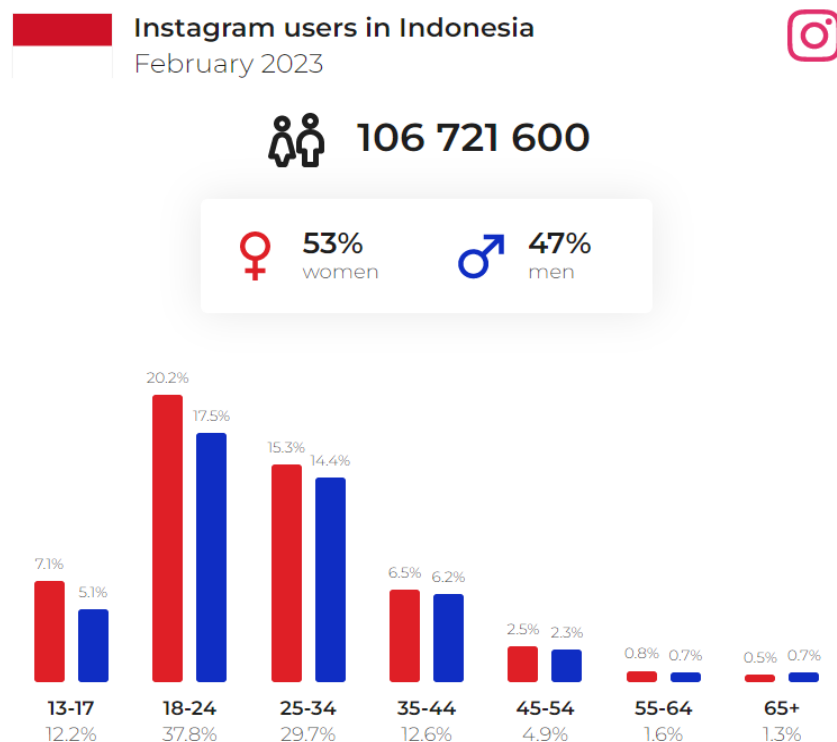


Figure 1. Graph of Instagram Users in Indonesia by Gender

Preliminary observations conducted by the researcher with members of Generation Z in Lhokseumawe revealed that the use of second Instagram accounts is driven by a desire for more freedom and comfort in self-expression. Content that cannot be shared on the first account is often posted on the second account. One of the main motivations is to avoid negative responses from other users. In this context, impression management is primarily performed on the first account, which serves as the "front stage," while the second account, functioning as the "backstage," requires no such management. As a result, users feel they can be their authentic selves through the second account.

The researcher observed several second Instagram accounts belonging to Generation Z informants in the city of Lhokseumawe. The findings indicate that individuals have diverse reasons for using a second account. This suggests that, if explored further, the motivations behind the use of second Instagram accounts may continue to evolve, giving rise to more complex variations. A noticeable difference lies in the type and quantity of content posted: second accounts often contain more posts than first accounts. Additionally, first accounts typically have more followers than second accounts. A preliminary survey with several informants in Lhokseumawe revealed that second account users feel more confident sharing their activities on Instagram, while limiting their followers and following lists to people they know personally—placing greater emphasis on privacy.

In the context of second account usage on Instagram among Generation Z in Lhokseumawe, the concept of self-presenting reflects a phenomenon in which individuals intentionally portray themselves differently on their second accounts. In this setting, self-presenting refers to efforts to express a more authentic identity—one that is free from the pressures of social norms and more aligned with their personal reality. This is done to represent a different facet of the self across multiple accounts. This phenomenon is explained through the lens of dramaturgy, a theory introduced by symbolic interactionist sociologist Erving Goffman. The researcher applies the dramaturgical perspective because it is considered relevant to social

media phenomena, particularly on Instagram, where individuals manage and construct their self-image (Amanda, 2019).

This study employs Erving Goffman's dramaturgical theory to analyze how individuals present themselves differently on their first and second Instagram accounts. It explores how users—particularly members of Generation Z—construct a more authentic identity, free from the pressures of social norms, through their second accounts. The research focuses on examining self-presentation in the backstage context and its contribution to the broader literature on the role of social media in self-image construction. Accordingly, this study investigates how Generation Z in Lhokseumawe utilizes second Instagram accounts as a medium for aspiration and self-representation. It also explores the strategies they employ in positioning their self-presentation on these second accounts, with particular attention to Instagram Stories as a primary tool for self-expression.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The second account on Instagram, often referred to as a "fake account," allows users to express themselves freely without concern for negative comments, due to its typically private settings (Rizky, 2022). Meanwhile, Instagram functions as a photo-sharing platform, serving as a vast personal gallery and global social network that is free to use, equipped with editing features to enhance photo appearance (Enterprise, 2014). The phenomenon of second accounts reflects a duality of roles in the virtual world, where dramaturgical theory can provide valuable insights into how individuals manage their identities in digital environments.

The dramaturgical approach, popularized by Erving Goffman in his book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), compares social interaction to a theatrical performance. Goffman viewed individuals as actors presenting themselves in social "performances," where roles and characters are enacted in everyday interactions (Mutia, 2017). In his perspective, the self is not an intrinsic entity of the individual but rather a product of social interaction. Goffman's dramaturgy emphasizes the importance of managing self-presentation to reach mutual understanding in social interactions, and distinguishes between the

presented self and the socialized self, drawing inspiration from Mead's concept of the "I and Me".

Ramon Griffero, a Chilean theater practitioner, further developed dramaturgical theory in the 1990s by emphasizing the importance of space in theater. Griffero introduced the concept of Space Dramaturgy, which involves stage elements such as the body, sound, music, lighting, and objects, rather than just focusing on text. He rejected the notion that theater is merely a literary representation and advocated for the abstract use of stage space to create unique visuals and narratives. This concept includes the "Poetics of Text" and the "Poetics of Space" to create cohesive theatrical works (Griffero, 2022).

The development of dramaturgical theory is further elaborated by Magda Romanska. Romanska views dramaturgy as a key element in modern theater and various performance forms, including opera, dance, multimedia, film, and robotics. She highlights the role of dramaturgy in a global context through cross-cultural collaboration, information management, and the use of social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter to create performances and expand the boundaries of traditional performing arts. Romanska sees dramaturgy as a bridge between classical theater and experimental performance forms, and crucial in addressing technological and social changes (Romanska, 2015).

Finally, the dramaturgical theory in the context of social media is explored by Katalin Trencsenyi and Bernadette Cochrane. Katalin Trencsenyi examines the global perspective of dramaturgy by exploring the differing approaches across cultures in presenting and interpreting stories on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. She emphasizes how visual aesthetics, narrative structure, and artistic approaches vary across different cultures. On the other hand, Bernadette Cochrane investigates how cultural identities from Australia and Southeast Asia are interpreted in social media and how these cultural elements are reflected in content and understood by audiences from different cultures. Both scholars provide insights into how cultural diversity is reflected and interacts within social media, as well as the influence of dramaturgical approaches on the

presentation and understanding of stories in the digital environment (Trencsenyi, 2014).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study is a qualitative research aimed at exploring the self-expression of adolescents and young adults in Lhokseumawe, Aceh, Indonesia, on the social media platform Instagram. Creswell (2014) states that qualitative research is an investigative process that explores social or human issues by constructing a holistic picture, analyzing textual data, and conveying the informants' perspectives within their natural context. One qualitative approach that is highly prevalent in sociological studies is the phenomenological approach. This approach is used to understand the meanings of various events within a specific context from the researcher's perspective, allowing the researcher to observe and deeply comprehend the subject. Phenomenology emphasizes the subjective aspects of human behavior, where the researcher seeks to understand how individuals make sense of events in their lives. The core of this approach is to capture the processes and interpretations occurring within human interactions, in line with Weber's concept of *Verstehen*, which refers to empathetic understanding of the thoughts and feelings of others. Phenomenologists strive to view the world from the perspective of the subjects being studied (Salim, 2012).

The data collection methods used in this study include participant observation through the observation of Instagram social media, in-depth interviews with 10 selected informants, and documentation of the informants' activities through screenshot features on mobile phones. Data analysis was conducted using the Interactive Data Analysis (IDA) model, which involves data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Positioning self presenting through second account

In the backstage, individuals act according to their personal needs and display more authentic behavior. According to Goffman's dramaturgy, the world is a stage where people perform their roles. In the context of second accounts among

Generation Z in Lhokseumawe, they present themselves more authentically and position themselves differently in this backstage setting.

a. Selection of followers and following

The informants are very attentive to how they select and filter their followers on their second accounts. For example, Diva, a Generation Z from Hagu Selatan, Banda Sakti, does not restrict gender on her first Instagram account, but on her second account, she only allows women to follow her.

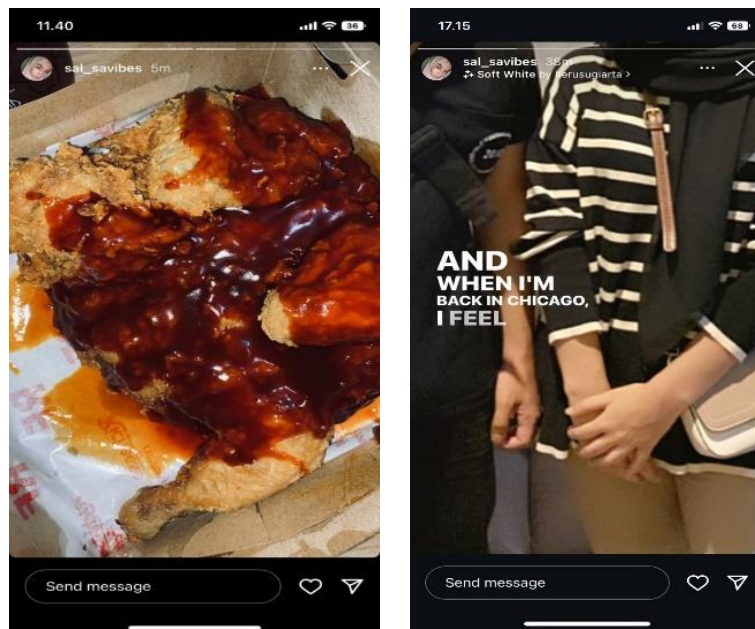


Figure 2. Second account owner Diva Salsabilla account with username (sal_savibes)

Diva Salsabilla, through her second Instagram account (@sal_savibes), frequently posts food pictures, such as Richeese chicken, to share her love for culinary delights. In an interview on January 25, 2024, Diva explained that she also posts pictures of her boyfriend on her second account because she does not want her romantic life to be known by people she does not know. Diva created a second Instagram account specifically for female followers, allowing her to post content without a hijab, given that most of her followers on her first account wear hijabs. This second account is also used to share personal content, such as food and photos of her boyfriend, in order to maintain privacy and avoid negative comments. This decision has helped Diva feel more comfortable expressing herself according to her preferences and values.

The same applies to the next informant, Cut Dinda Salsabilla, a Generation Z residing in Cunda, Muara Dua District. On her first account, she does not set the account to private because she is a 2023 North Aceh Tourism Ambassador. The freedom on her first account, where everyone can see her activities, makes her cautious when posting anything.



Figure 3. Second account owner Cut Dinda Salsabilla with username (onlyndhaa)

The screenshot above aligns with the interview results, where in this context, Cut Dinda Salsabilla is without a hijab, and this is presented on her more private account, the second account. This is a strategy to maintain an official image on her main account while allowing for personal expression on the account with a more limited audience. As a Tourism Ambassador, Dinda faces challenges in expressing herself on social media, especially when sharing selfies without a hijab, which might not align with her public image. Therefore, she uses her second account to share content considered less formal, with followers chosen selectively, primarily close friends. This creates a safer and more controlled environment, allowing Dinda to express herself freely without worrying about negative comments.

Raufa Niska uses her second account to express herself more freely and share content that is considered less important or formal. She refers to this account as a "trash account," where she can post photos with friends without having to filter them, unlike her first account, which is more formal and has more followers. By limiting the number of followers on her second account, Raufa creates a

comfortable space to share content without worrying about expectations or reactions from her first account's followers, reflecting a greater freedom of expression.

Feni Meisari, a Generation Z residing in Banda Masen, Banda Sakti District, also limits the followers on her second account to freely do whatever she wants. According to her, on the second account, she can express herself freely without fear. Feni Meisari limits the number of followers on her second account to create freedom of expression, allowing her to post content without a hijab and share more personal daily activities. On her first account, which has more followers, she does not feel comfortable sharing such content. By controlling access on her second account, Feni creates a safer and more controlled environment where she can share spontaneous content without worrying about negative consequences or unwanted comments.

However, this is different from the next informant, Humaira, a Generation Z residing in Keude Aceh, Banda Sakti District, who created a second account with the purpose of posting about her child's activities. According to her, her first account already has many followers, and she feels concerned about potential undesirable outcomes if she frequently posts about her child.



Figure 4. Humaira's second account owner account with username (mzyshzmahyra)

Humaira uses her second Instagram account with the username @mzyshzmahyra to share photos of her child, reflecting joyful moments in her

personal life. She feels safer and more comfortable sharing this content on her second account, as its followers consist only of close acquaintances. This is done to maintain her family's privacy and avoid potential risks that may arise if similar content were posted on her first account. The second account creates a more controlled space for Humaira to share personal moments without worrying about responses from unknown users.

b. Use of a unique username

A username on Instagram is a unique identity used by each user. On the second account, informants often choose a username that differs from their first account to reflect the distinction in how they position themselves. For example, Diva Salsabilla uses the username @sal_savibes on her second account to show a different personality compared to her first account. Diva Salsabilla uses her first Instagram account with the username @divasalsabilla to present a calm and introverted side of herself. To express a more cheerful and eccentric side, Diva created a second account with the username @sal_savibes. This second account becomes a space for Diva to showcase the "underside" of herself, including the funny and wild side that does not align with the image presented on her main account. Using two accounts with different usernames allows Diva to express various aspects of her personality in a more comprehensive way.

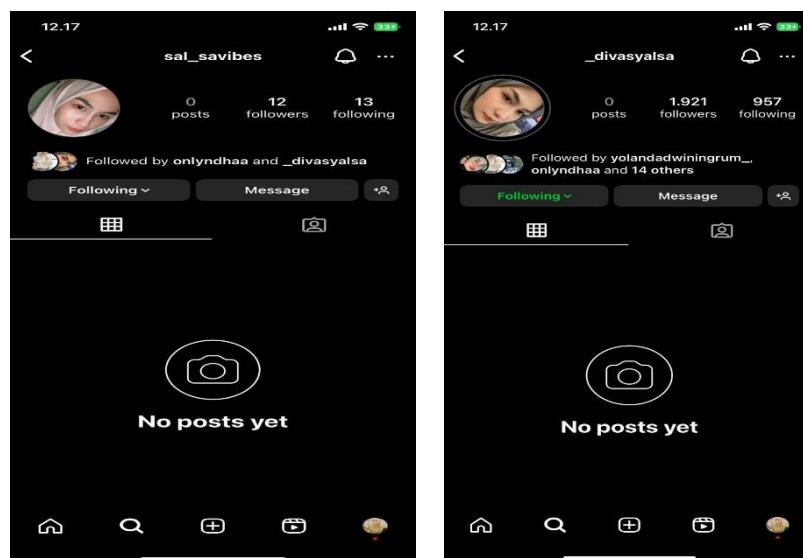


Figure 5. Differences in the names of the first and second Instagram accounts
Differences in the names of the first Instagram account and the second account

Diva Salsabilla utilizes two separate Instagram accounts to express distinct facets of her personality. On her primary account (@divasalsabilla), she presents a calm and introverted persona. In contrast, her secondary account (@sal_savibes) serves as a space where she expresses a more cheerful and eccentric side—creating room for uninhibited expression and playful behavior that may not align with the image portrayed on her main account. This strategy enables Diva to showcase a more comprehensive representation of her multifaceted identity, maintaining consistency between interview narratives and the visual cues captured in her Instagram profiles.

Cut Dinda Salsabilla operates two Instagram accounts with different usernames for privacy-related purposes. Her primary account (@cutdindasalsa) uses her full name, while the secondary account (@onlyndhaa) features a surname known only to those in her close circle. The primary motivation behind the second account is to enable discreet browsing or "stalking" without being recognized—particularly to observe the activities of an ex-partner or specific individuals. The use of a lesser-known surname in the second account adds a personal and exclusive touch, while also ensuring a sense of privacy and security during such activities.

Reisa Azuhra manages two Instagram accounts with different usernames to maintain privacy and flexibility in communication, particularly in the context of online shopping. Her primary account (@reisaazuhra) uses her real name, while the secondary account (@maricha_cacaaa) is used to interact with online shops without revealing her identity or financial status. This secondary account allows Reisa to inquire about products and prices freely, without concerns about judgment or pressure from sellers—providing her with a sense of comfort and autonomy in her online shopping practices.

c. Second account as a means of self-expression

The Zoomer generation, raised in the digital age, utilizes social media—particularly Instagram—as a primary channel for self-expression. Among its features, Instagram Stories (Instastory) is especially popular for sharing visual content such as images and short videos. In the city of Lhokseumawe, Cut Dinda Salsabilla, a representative of this generation, frequently uses the Instastory feature on her

secondary account (@onlyndhaa) to express herself. This illustrates how members of Gen Z engage with the platform to share messages and narratives in a spontaneous and visually driven manner.

Interview findings with Cut Dinda Salsabilla, the user of the secondary account (@onlyndhaa), reveal several key points. Cut Dinda tends to use the Instagram Stories feature more frequently than the main feed on her secondary account, indicating that Stories serve as her primary mode of engagement on the platform. She uses Instastory daily to share everyday moments, taking advantage of its temporary nature, which allows content to be contemporary and non-permanent. Notably, she does not use filters or editing apps such as Remini for her Stories, emphasizing the ease of sharing moments without complex editing—unlike posts on her main account, which typically require greater attention to detail. This use of Instastory underscores its significant role in facilitating spontaneous self-expression, creating a more comfortable and authentic atmosphere for the user.

The next informant, Raufa Niska, with the username (@koyohangat), also shared insights regarding her use of Instastory as a medium for self-expression.

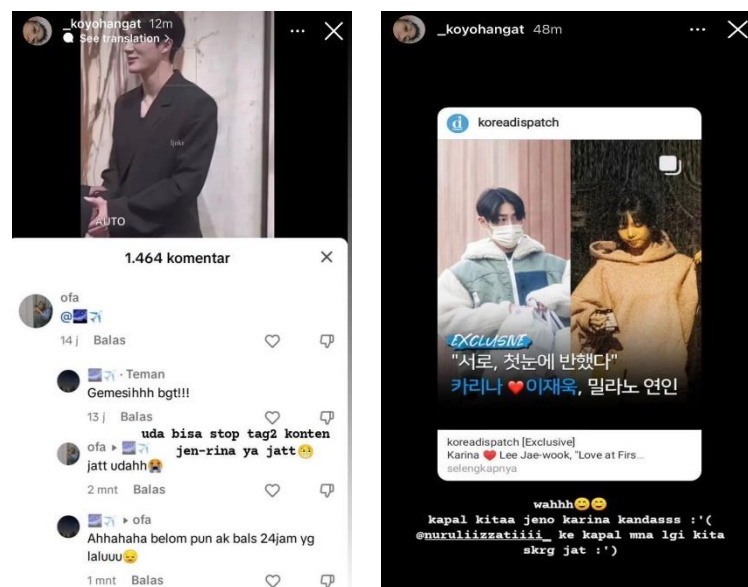


Figure 6. Raufa Niska's second account with username (_koyohangat)

A screenshot from Raufa Niska's account illustrates her use of Instastory to express admiration for Korean "oppa" figures and K-pop culture. Raufa frequently shares content related to this interest through Instastory, creating a tone that is both

personal and spontaneous. The interview findings confirm that Instastory allows her to freely express her enthusiasm for Korean idols, highlighting how this feature is utilized by members of the Zoomer generation to creatively share personal interests and everyday moments with their communities.

Nurliza, with the username @nuggetcoklat, uses the Instastory feature on her secondary account to express various aspects of her personal life, including daily activities and romantic experiences. A screenshot shows Nurliza posting a video call with her romantic interest along with captions reflecting her emotions—content shared only with her closest friends. Interview findings reveal that Nurliza chooses Instastory for the privacy and control it offers over personal information, helping her avoid unwanted public attention. The use of Instastory on her secondary account allows Nurliza to express emotions and intimate moments more freely and comfortably. Overall, this reflects how members of the Zoomer generation in Lhokseumawe use Instastory to share spontaneously and authentically while maintaining their privacy.

4.3 Second account backstage

Dramaturgical theory explains social interaction as analogous to a theatrical performance on stage. The “backstage” refers to a space where individuals conceal aspects of themselves that they do not wish to present to the public. Erving Goffman argues that people generally attempt to hide certain elements of their identity from the audience. Typically, not everyone has access to a person’s secondary (or “second”) account. This aligns closely with Goffman’s notion that not all individuals are granted access to an actor’s backstage. This is evident in the characteristics of the secondary accounts of the informants in this study, where access is restricted, and only selected individuals are allowed entry with the user’s permission.

In the interview findings regarding the use of secondary Instagram accounts as a backstage by the Zoomer generation in Lhokseumawe, a behavioral pattern emerges that reflects Erving Goffman’s dramaturgical concept. Goffman’s theory portrays the world as a stage, where individuals perform roles according to social scripts in everyday life. Behavior in the backstage reflects one’s authentic self, as it is not subject to the norms and expectations that may prevail in the front stage.

Considering the growth of digital participation, netizens include individuals who are active in using and interacting through digital platforms, such as social media, forums, and other applications. They contribute through comments, content creation, or various online activities.

Citizens exist in the real world, where as members of a nation, individuals have rights and responsibilities toward their country and society. In the digital era, active engagement in the virtual world can be seen as an evolving form of citizen participation.

Goffman refers to the backstage as a space where individuals can shed their social roles and interact without the need to maintain a public persona. It is a private space where the "authentic self" emerges. In the context of online interactions, netizens and citizens on social media and digital platforms often function as a "backstage" where they can share personal moments, thoughts, and experiences without the pressure or strict expectations of the public.

Informants such as Diva, Cut Dinda Salsabilla, Reisa Azuhra, and others selectively choose followers for their secondary accounts to fulfill personal needs and express themselves without social pressure. For instance, Diva and Dinda restrict followers based on gender to create a freer space for sharing personal content, such as posts without hijab and less formal information. These restrictions also help them maintain their public image and privacy, especially for Dinda, who is a Tourism Ambassador. Goffman suggests that individuals perform and present themselves according to specific situations. The informants consciously select roles and representations in the backstage in accordance with their personal needs and desires (Muliana, 2023).

Meanwhile, Reisa, Feni, Raufa, Liza, and Risqan use their secondary accounts to share content that is less formal or relevant compared to their primary accounts. They select followers from among their closest circle to create a more relaxed and private environment. The restriction of followers and privacy settings on these secondary accounts reflects their efforts to manage self-image and control impressions, in line with Goffman's concept of "impression management." Humaira, in particular, uses her secondary account to protect her family's privacy and create

a safer space for sharing personal moments without the risk of negative responses from strangers. The concept of the secondary account as a free zone aligns with Goffman's idea of the backstage as a space where individuals can shed societal expectations and norms that are present on the front stage.

Syahril Muhammad Faris, with only five followers on his secondary account, demonstrates a strict approach to privacy, allowing him the freedom to share everyday moments without concern for public reaction. This reflects Goffman's concept of the "backstage," where individuals maintain privacy and personal image without the pressure of social expectations.

The informants limit their followers and select close friends for their secondary accounts, reflecting an awareness of roles and self-presentation in line with Goffman's theory. They adjust content to meet personal needs and manage their audience by considering lifestyle, social norms, and privacy policies. The Zoomer generation in Lhokseumawe uses this strategy to create a space that aligns with their values and needs. The gender restrictions and selection of close friends for secondary accounts demonstrate a focus on social and cultural context, reflecting efforts to create a more private, pressure-free environment. This approach is consistent with Goffman's theory of roles and social representation, allowing self-expression without public expectations. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, limiting followers and those followed to close individuals fulfills the need for intimate social relationships and support. This creates a more exclusive digital space that supports the need for intimacy and interpersonal security within the online environment.

The use of unique usernames in secondary Instagram accounts by the Zoomer generation in Lhokseumawe reflects a strategy for managing online identity and privacy. Different usernames allow them to express different aspects of themselves on the digital backstage, free from social expectations. In this way, individuals can create a more personal digital identity that aligns with their needs. In this context, unique and creative usernames on secondary Instagram accounts serve more than just an identification label. The pseudonyms or abbreviations used help protect privacy and the real identity, while also creating a more controlled backstage.

By choosing usernames that are difficult to guess, users can maintain privacy and security of personal information, as well as limit access to content. This also allows them to share moments anonymously and avoid unwanted scrutiny or judgment. The choice of usernames in secondary Instagram accounts by the Zoomer generation in Lhokseumawe reflects various goals, including self-expression, privacy, and creativity. Some informants, like Diva, use usernames that reflect a more relaxed and humorous side of their personality, while others, like Dinda and Syahril, choose usernames that are hard to recognize to protect privacy and identity security. These unique usernames help them create a more personal digital identity and protect their activities from unwanted observation.

The selection of usernames in secondary Instagram accounts by the Zoomer generation in Lhokseumawe reflects various considerations. Some informants, like Reisa and Yeni, choose different usernames to facilitate communication without revealing their real identity, increasing comfort in online interactions. Informants like Raufa and Risqan use creative and unique usernames to enhance their accounts' appeal and showcase a distinctive personality. Additionally, Humaira and Nurliza choose usernames that align with the theme or content of their accounts, such as a focus on children or favorite foods, indicating that usernames also reflect the thematic specifications of the account.

The use of unique usernames on secondary accounts reflects how individuals design their digital identities with creativity, separate from their primary accounts. Unique usernames serve various purposes, such as:

Table 1. Unique username destination

Creative Expression and Personal Identity	Unique usernames reflect interests, hobbies, or personal aspects that individuals wish to highlight.
Separation of Identity and Interests	Separating identity and interests from the main account to maintain privacy or manage different aspects of life separately.
Exploration of Different Identities	Providing the freedom to explore different aspects of one's personality or to be more liberated online.

Source: Data analysis, 2024

The selection of usernames by the Zoomer generation in Lhokseumawe reflects their strategy in building identity and managing privacy in the digital world. Unique usernames allow them to express aspects of themselves that may not always be visible on their main accounts. Thus, the choice of username is not just a technical aspect, but also a reflection of their efforts to creatively and personally build, express, and protect their identity. In the context of username selection in social media among the Zoomer generation in Lhokseumawe, Erving Goffman's dramaturgical theory offers valuable insights. Goffman views social interactions as performances on stage, with two key concepts:

1. Front Stage: Here, individuals perform roles that align with social expectations and public norms.
2. Backstage: Here, individuals can reveal more authentic personal sides, free from public pressure.

The selection of unique usernames for secondary accounts reflects the Zoomer generation's efforts to separate their public identity from their private side, maintain privacy, and express themselves in a freer and more creative manner. The choice of a unique username for secondary accounts reflects the backstage concept in Goffman's dramaturgical theory. Here, individuals can express aspects of their personality that do not align with the expectations of their main account, or front stage. Unique usernames that are not directly linked to the real identity allow users like Diva, Feni, and Nurliza to showcase their eccentric or creative sides without social pressure. The main account, with usernames directly tied to their real identities, functions as the front stage, where they adhere to social norms and general expectations. The choice of different usernames for secondary accounts, as done by Dinda and Syahril, reflects backstage in Goffman's theory. The secondary account allows them to engage in activities such as stalking or commenting without direct exposure on the front stage or main account. With pseudonyms or unique names, they create privacy protection. Overall, the use of these usernames is a strategy for managing image and identity on social media, in line with the front stage and backstage concepts in Goffman's theory.

4.4 Choosing instastory as a means of self-expression

Instastory, launched in August 2016, has become a crucial element in the Instagram user experience, particularly among the Zoomer generation in Lhokseumawe. This feature allows users to share everyday moments in a temporary and spontaneous manner, with content lasting up to one minute and disappearing after 24 hours. Instastory emphasizes creativity through tools like stickers and filters, as well as direct interaction through polls and live video. This feature facilitates self-expression, storytelling, and social connectivity, without requiring elaborate aesthetics.

The use of Instastory by the Zoomer generation in Lhokseumawe reflects a creative adaptation to Instagram's features, particularly in terms of self-expression through visual storytelling and the spontaneous sharing of everyday moments. Cut Dinda Salsabilla considers Instastory to be the primary platform on her secondary account due to its convenience and the temporary nature of the content, which doesn't require complicated editing. Meanwhile, Reisa Azuhra and Yeni Maulina use Instastory to archive their daily moments without the concern of being perceived as "over-posting" if shared on their main accounts. They acknowledge Instastory as a freer space for sharing without pressure. Additionally, Risqan and Nurliza emphasize that Instastory offers them greater freedom and privacy, enabling more natural self-expression and allowing for more comfortable handling of personal issues.

Overall, Instastory among the Zoomer generation in Lhokseumawe has become a primary medium for authentic and spontaneous self-expression. This feature is not only used as a platform for sharing everyday moments but also as a tool for conveying more personal emotions and activities, while still considering the need for privacy and control over the information shared. The use of Instastory as a means of self-expression in Lhokseumawe can be linked to Erving Goffman's dramaturgical theory, which describes social interactions as performances on stage. Goffman's theory provides a profound understanding of how individuals manage impressions, perform roles, and construct social identities through their interactions in daily life.

In Goffman's terminology, our daily lives can be likened to a social stage divided into "front stage" and "back stage." The main Instagram account functions as the front stage, where individuals interact with a wider audience and tend to consider aesthetics, visual impressions, and social norms. In contrast, the Instastory on a secondary account serves as the back stage, where individuals feel freer and more authentic, expressing moments without being overly concerned about aesthetic aspects.

According to Goffman's impression management concept, individuals actively manage how they want to be seen by others. The use of Instastory by users such as Cut Dinda Salsabilla and Nurliza shows how they choose this platform to express emotions and daily moments more personally. The choice to use a secondary account as a privacy space reflects their efforts in controlling the impressions and image they wish to project to a specific audience. Goffman viewed society as a stage where social interactions take place, and Instagram, through the Instastory feature, becomes a platform for the Zoomer generation to present themselves. As actors, they select stories, photos, and videos to present to their audience, according to the prevailing social norms. Instastory also offers a balance between privacy and self-expression due to its temporary and non-permanent nature. For example, Nurliza uses Instastory on her secondary account to share personal aspects, such as relationship matters, to avoid discomfort that may arise if shared on her main account. By linking the use of Instastory to Goffman's theory, it is evident that social media functions as a stage where individuals actively manage impressions and shape social identities. Instastory is not only a tool for self-expression but also allows users to control the perception they wish to project to the world. The use of Instastory as a means of self-expression in Lhokseumawe can also be associated with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which identifies five levels of human needs. The following is how this is connected:

Table 2. Five levels of human needs in instastory

No.	Needs	Explanation
1	Needs for Social Interests	Instastory has become a platform for users to express themselves and fulfill

		their social needs. For example, Reisa Azuhra and Yeni Maulina use it to collect and share everyday moments while simultaneously building social bonds with their audience.
2	Esteem Needs	Instastory helps fulfill the need for esteem and prestige by allowing users to post aesthetic moments that can boost their self-worth. Feni Meisari refers to her second account as the "backstage," indicating that Instastory is used for self-expression without visual pressure, while still seeking recognition from others.
3	Need for Social Connection and Acceptance	The use of Instastory reflects the need for social connection and acceptance. Users like Humaira share personal and aesthetic moments, such as time spent with their children, sunset views, or food photos, to express themselves while also interacting with their audience, thus creating social bonds and a sense of belonging.
4	Need for Self-Expression	Instastory directly fulfills the need for self-expression in a more spontaneous way. Informants like Cut Dinda Salsabilla and Risqan use Instastory more frequently than feeds to share daily stories, taking advantage of the contemporary and ephemeral nature of the content.

5	Need for Privacy and Control	Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory can be linked to the need for privacy and control, where Instastory provides a more private space for users like Nurliza. By using Instastory on a secondary account, individuals can manage and limit the personal information they share, maintaining control over what is disclosed in the online world.
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Source: Data analysis, 2024

The use of Instastory fulfills various needs in Maslow's hierarchy, including self-expression, social connection, esteem, and recognition. On secondary accounts, Instastory also provides greater control and privacy, allowing users to feel safe and psychologically protected. In this way, Instastory supports their psychological well-being in the digital environment.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that Generation Z in Lhokseumawe City strategically utilize second Instagram accounts to manage their self-presentation by carefully selecting followers, following, and unique usernames to create a controlled space that aligns with their preferences. They tend to use the Instastory feature as the main tool for spontaneous and free self-expression, sharing daily moments and personal stories online. Instastory effectively meets psychological and social needs in accordance with Maslow's hierarchy, such as the need for social connection, recognition, and privacy maintenance. Based on these findings, the "Spontaneous Digital Identity" emerges as a new concept, highlighting the importance of spontaneous and authentic interaction in the formation of Generation Z's digital identity, as well as the vital role of privacy in shaping their identity on social media.

This study still requires further strengthening to validate the concept proposed by the author. The research is limited to the phenomenon observed in

Lhokseumawe City, Aceh, Indonesia. Future studies could examine other regions with similar or different population groups to test the assumptions of this concept.

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