Contribution of Self Concept Clarity to Online Self Presentation Among Users of Anonymous Accounts on Social Media

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Abstract.

Individuals have the chance to show themselves in a different way through online self presentation. When people have a clear self concept, they are more likely to express themselves online in a way that is consistent with who they are. People can experiment with their identities by using anonymous accounts on social media, which gives them more freedom to express themselves without worrying about unfavorable social reactions. The purpose of this study is to ascertain how self concept clarity affects people who express themselves online, especially those who use anonymous social media accounts. A quantitative approach to data analysis utilizing basic linear regression is the research methodology employed. 162 individuals who completed a Google Forms questionnaire made up the sample. The Self Concept Clarity Scale and the Presentation of Online Self Scale (POSS) were the scales employed in this investigation. With the regression equation $Y=80.154-0.757X$, the results demonstrate that self-concept clarity strongly contributes in a negative direction to online self-presentation by 19.4% ($R^2=0.194$, $p=0.000<0.05$). This shows that the more uncertain or low the clarity of an individual's self, the greater the individual's tendency to build a new image or persona so that the online self presentation behavior shown is higher.

Keywords: *Anonymous Accounts; Social Media; Online Self Presentation; Anonymous Account Users and Self Concept Clarity.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In this modern era with rapid technological developments, the internet has become a medium for individuals to interact. Referring to the results of a survey by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), internet usage in Indonesia in 2024 reached 221.5 million people, which is equivalent to 79.5% of the total population of Indonesia, which is 278.7 million people. In January 2024, data showed that there were 139 million people in Indonesia actively using social media [1]. There are many social media platforms used by individuals in Indonesia. Based on the latest report from We Are Social, WhatsApp reaches 90.9% of users, Instagram 85.3% of users, Facebook reaches 81.6% of users, TikTok 73.5% of users, Telegram 61.3% of users, and Twitter (now known as the X app) 57.5% of users [2]. Individuals can engage in activities across all fields on social media, including creating new identities. When using social media, individuals can manage their personal profiles, upload their thoughts and feelings, and upload and share photos or videos [3]. Individuals can choose what they want to display when using social media. Through social media, individuals can present themselves online [4]. Online self-presentation is carried out by individuals by expressing themselves in various activities on social media. When individuals share a post on social media, what is shared may not necessarily be true. Individuals will tend to edit their posts to make them look better in order to make a good impression. The greater reach of social media makes individuals feel the need to share posts that look aesthetically pleasing so that they can present themselves as attractive people [5].

An activity or effort made by individuals to explain themselves by presenting a good impression to others is called self-presentation [6]. The existence of various posts on social media creates pressure for some social media users. Individuals will think and start comparing their lives with those of others just by looking at the posts shared [5]. The pressure felt by individuals makes them present something that looks good even though what is presented is not their real situation. Behavior that presents a false self on social media can actually have an impact on poor mental well-being and can even lead to depression [5]. Online

self-presentation gives individuals greater control, allowing them to choose which parts of themselves to reveal and which to hide [7]. When individuals present themselves to impress others and for self-comparison, the self-presentation they show can be false [7]. Low self-presentation in individuals will cause negative thoughts about their physical condition and can affect their psychology [6].Online self-presentation gives people the opportunity to introduce themselves in a unique way; this can help them develop their sense of self and identity [3]. Self-concept is a description of oneself that includes one's desires, views, and perceptions [8] . A person's self-concept will determine how they view and evaluate themselves based on their strengths, weaknesses, and perceptions. According to Campbell et al. [9], self-concept clarity is a component of the self-concept structure. Self-concept clarity is a characteristic of a person's self-perception or self-concept. Self-concept clarity is defined as an individual's ability to define their own concepts clearly, concisely, consistently, and stably [5].

A person with low self-esteem will not be able to distinguish between their online identity and their real identity [10] .Fullwood et al. [11] conducted research to determine whether self-concept clarity can predict various types of online self-presentation in adolescents and to investigate the relationship between self-concept clarity and online self-presentation in adolescents. The study showed that there is a significant relationship between adolescents' online self-presentation and self-concept clarity. According to Fullwood et al. [11], adolescents with unstable self-concepts tend to describe idealized versions of themselves and express themselves in ways that are inconsistent between their online and offline selves [11]. Strimbu & O'Connell also conducted research on the relationship between self-concept and online self-presentation with a sample of young adults. This study found a relationship between self-concept and online self-presentation [10]. Social media users who are overly concerned with their self-presentation will have a negative impact on their tendency to lose their sense of identity [6]. Research conducted by Yang & Bradford Brown aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of how young people control their online self-presentation and its implications for their well-being. The study revealed that presenting oneself positively online is associated with a higher perception of audience support, in this case related to higher self-esteem. The online self-presentation of the younger generation has implications for their well-being [4].One unique phenomenon among social media users in Indonesia is the use of anonymous accounts.

The use of anonymous accounts in Indonesia is quite significant. Based on a report from Kaspersky, the social media platforms used by anonymous account users are Facebook (70%), YouTube (37%), Instagram (33%), and Twitter (25%) [12]. Anonymous account users can create or experiment with identities that would be impossible in direct interactions. Anonymity gives individuals greater freedom to express themselves without fear of the negative impact of social perceptions [13]. Anonymity can make individuals feel comfortable when interacting on social media, without worrying whether what they display aligns with their beliefs or their true selves. The higher the level of anonymity an individual has when interacting online, the more free and courageous that individual will be in expressing themselves [14]. Interacting anonymously makes individuals feel safe and comfortable presenting themselves online. This sense of security tends to allow individuals to choose which parts of themselves to reveal, whether their true selves or a different version. Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in conducting research on how self-concept clarity contributes to online self-presentation among users of anonymous accounts on social media. By obtaining a clear picture of self-concept clarity and online self-presentation, this study seeks to explore how self-concept clarity contributes to individuals who engage in online self-presentation, particularly those who use anonymous accounts on social media. The hypotheses measured in this study are: Ha: there is a contribution of self-concept clarity to online self-presentation among users of anonymous accounts on social media; Ho: there is no contribution of self-concept clarity to online self-presentation among users of anonymous accounts on social media.

II.   METHODS

Quantitative research methods were used in this study. Quantitative research involves the analysis of quantitative data (numbers) collected through measurement procedures and analyzed using statistical methods [15]. The purpose of this study was to determine whether self-concept clarity contributes to online

self-presentation among anonymous social media account users. In this case, it is clear that variations in one variable are related to variations in another variable based on the correlation coefficient [15]. The population used in this study is social media users. The sample used consists of anonymous social media account users. Purposive sampling was employed to select the sample. However, the criteria used in preparing the sample are as follows: using an anonymous social media account, using an anonymous account for more than one year, and using an anonymous account daily.

The scale used in this study is the Presentation of Online Self Scale (POSS) by Fullwood et al. [11], which has been used in previous studies by Latupeirissa & Wijono [6]. The Presentation of Online Self Scale (POSS) consists of 21 items

Table 1. Presentation of Online Self Scale

Aspect	Indicators	Item		Total
		Favorable	Unfavorable	
Ideal self	Individual efforts to present themselves ideally online	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9		9
Multiple self	Individual efforts to present themselves in different versions depending on the online situation they face	10, 11, 12, 13, 14		5
Consistent self	Individual consistency when presenting oneself both online and offline	15, 16, 17	18	4
Online presentation preference	Individual tendency to prefer presenting oneself online	20, 21	19	3
Total				21

The scale used in this study was the Self Concept Clarity Scale by Campbell et al. [9], which had been used in previous research by Fitri [16]. The Self Concept Clarity Scale (SCCS) consists of 12 items.

Table 2. Self Concept Clarity Scale

Aspect	Indicators	No. Item		Total
		Favorable	Unfavorable	
Knowledge components	Individual beliefs about one's nature, physical characteristics, role, self-worth, and personal goals	6, 11	1, 8, 9, 10	6
Evaluative components	Positivity of self-confidence, self-esteem, and individual views in self-evaluation		2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 12	6
Total				12

The data analysis technique used in this study is simple linear regression. The data analysis measures include prerequisite tests covering normality, linearity, and heteroscedasticity. Next, hypothesis testing was conducted to assess whether the coefficients obtained had an acceptable or unacceptable level of statistical significance. The tests conducted were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 25 software.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The respondents in this study numbered 162 people from various social media users who used anonymous accounts. All respondents filled out a questionnaire via Google Forms containing a self-concept clarity scale and an online self-presentation scale. Respondent data based on gender: 70 men (43.2%), 92 women (56.8%). Based on age: ranging from 15 to 36 years old, with the majority being 23 years old (13.6%), 21 years old (12.9%), 25 years old (12.3%), 20 years old (11.7%), and 22 years old (11.1%). Based on social media: Instagram 139 people (38.3%), TikTok 89 people (24.5%), Twitter 71 people (19.5%), Facebook 63 people (17.4%), Threads 1 person (0.3%).

After conducting the prerequisite tests (normality test, linearity test, and heteroscedasticity test), the following hypothesis test results were obtained:

Table 3. Research Hypothesis Test Results

R	R square	B	B (Constant)	t	Sig.
.441	.194	-,757	80,154	-6,211	,000

Table 3 shows that the R square value is 0.194, meaning that self-concept clarity contributes 19.4% to online self-presentation among anonymous social media account users. The significance value obtained is $0.000 < 0.05$. Based on the t-value, it is known to be -6.211 (indicating a negative direction) > the t-table

value of 1.974. Thus, it can be interpreted that self-concept clarity contributes to online self-presentation. Then, the value of B (constant) is 80.154 and the value of B/regression coefficient is -0.757 (indicating a negative direction). Thus, the simple linear regression equation can be formulated as follows:

$$Y = a + bX$$

Online Self Presentation $= 80.154 + (-0.757)$ Self-Concept Clarity

The constant value obtained is 80.154, which states that if self-concept clarity has a score of zero or is constant, then online self-presentation has a value of 80.154. Meanwhile, the regression coefficient (B) value is -0.757 (negative direction), which means that the direction of the contribution of the independent variable to the dependent variable is negative. Therefore, the higher the self-concept clarity, the lower the online self-presentation, and vice versa, the lower the self-concept clarity, the higher the online self-presentation. Based on the above explanation, the conclusion is that Ha is accepted and Ho is rejected. This study shows that self-concept clarity contributes to online self-presentation among users of anonymous accounts on social media. The simple linear regression equation $Y = 80.154 - 0.757X$ (negative direction) indicates that the higher the level of self-concept clarity, the lower the level of online self-presentation among users of anonymous accounts on social media, and vice versa. Although the data shows a significant value, the R square value is only 19.4%, which means that self-concept clarity has a 19.4% influence on online self-presentation, while the rest can be influenced by other factors, which were not studied in detail in this study.

Description of Online Self-Presentation among Anonymous Account Users

The descriptive data shows that the empirical mean of online self-presentation is 59.11, which is higher than the hypothetical mean of 52.2. This indicates that, in general, anonymous social media account users have a high level of online self-presentation. The categorization data shows that 59.3% of respondents are in the moderate category, followed by 38.3% in the high category, and only 2.5% in the low category. This finding is in line with the research by Fullwood et al. [11], which states that online self-presentation causes individuals to strive to present themselves in an ideal, multiple, inconsistent manner and to prefer online presentation. Anonymous account users will tend to feel more free to express themselves without their real identity, so that the impression they create will be more diverse, as if they were presenting different versions of themselves.

In this case, anonymous account users with an unclear self-concept will tend to show their ideal self, which is their desired self, or multiple selves, in other words, showing different versions of themselves on various accounts. This unclear self-concept encourages individuals to engage in inconsistent self-presentation behavior. The more uncertain individuals are about themselves, the more likely they are to edit, select, or even falsify their online identity to gain social validation. The most dominant social media platforms in this study were Instagram (38.3%) and TikTok (24.5%). Individuals tend to edit content to make it look aesthetic and attractive, which is in line with Saleh's research [5]. In this context, social pressure can be felt by individuals, where users of these anonymous accounts use them to experiment with new identities, avoid social norms, and seek approval from other users more broadly. However, high online self-presentation does not always have a positive impact, as it can lead to false or inauthentic self-presentation. This can ultimately cause social well-being issues such as depression due to social comparison.

Self-Concept Clarity Profile of Anonymous Account Users

Self-concept clarity shows an empirical average value of 27.81, which is lower than the hypothetical average of 30. This indicates that, in general, anonymous account users have a low level of self-concept clarity. In the categorization data, most respondents were in the moderate category (79%), followed by the low category (16%), and only a few in the high category (4.9%). These results show that the findings are in line with Campbell et al.'s definition [9], self-concept clarity is defined as a description of the level of clarity, consistency, and self-confidence that exists in an individual's self-concept. Individuals with low self-concept clarity will tend to have unstable self-confidence, making them prone to identity conflicts and attitude changes. The background section mentions that users of anonymous accounts, who often hide their true identities, may experience a loss of self-awareness and self-control. This is in line with research by Fullwood et al. [11], which found that adolescents with unstable self-concepts are more likely to present an

idealized and inconsistent image of themselves online. In this study, the research sample was dominated by those aged 20-25 years (approximately 50% of respondents), so age may contribute to low self-concept clarity because this period often involves identity exploration [10]. Social media use affects the decline in self-concept clarity in adolescents, with consistent negative effects over time. Additionally, social media significantly influences self-concept clarity negatively, especially in the context of identity development.

Contribution of Self-Concept Clarity to Online Self-Presentation

The negative contribution of self-concept clarity to online self-presentation indicates that individuals with high self-concept clarity tend to have low online self-presentation, and vice versa. This can be explained through the dynamics of the theory, namely that individuals with high self-concept clarity have a clear and stable self-concept so that they will be more consistent in presenting themselves both online and offline, without the need to create an ideal or multiple versions of themselves to seek recognition or approval [5]. Meanwhile, individuals with low self-concept clarity will use anonymity as a means of experimenting or presenting a false or ideal self to avoid social rejection, thereby increasing online self-presentation [11], [17]. The negative results also support similar research by Yang & Bradford Brown [4], which found that positive online self-presentation is associated with audience support, but that for users of anonymous accounts, this may be reversed into inauthentic presentation due to instability in self-concept. The negative contribution of self-concept clarity to online self-presentation implies that individuals who lack a strong sense of self-concept, in the context of this study, individuals who are easily swayed in their views of who they are or who do not yet have a stable sense of identity, will more often use social media as a means of forming an alternative self-image.

The results of this study are also in line with previous research by Fullwood et al. [11], which found a significant relationship between low self-concept clarity and more diverse and inconsistent self-presentation among adolescents. The lower the clarity of self-concept, the greater the desire to build an ideal self online. In this context, presenting different selves across different accounts is common. Similarly, research by Strimbu & O'Connell [10] shows that self-concept predicts online presentation preferences in young adults. However, in this study, the contribution was only 19.4%, indicating that there are other influencing factors such as self-esteem or self-awareness, which were not studied in depth in this study [6].The results of this study provide new insights into how anonymity on social media affects the psychological dynamics of individuals. The negative contribution of self-concept clarity to online self-presentation highlights the psychological risks of using anonymous accounts, such as loss of self-identity and its impact on mental well-being [5]. Individuals with low self-concept clarity may use anonymous accounts as a place to escape social norms, but this will actually worsen the instability of the individual's identity [14].

IV. CONCLUSION

This study has described the results and tested the hypothesis regarding the contribution of self-concept clarity to online self-presentation among users of anonymous accounts on social media. The following conclusions were obtained: (1) The analysis results show that the R square value is 0.194 or 19.4%, with a negative relationship (regression coefficient = -0.757; sig < 0.05), meaning that the contribution of self-concept clarity is 19.4%, while the rest is influenced by other factors that were not examined. (2) The hypothesis test results show that Ha is accepted, which means that self-concept clarity contributes to online self-presentation. (3) The results show that self-concept clarity contributes significantly in a negative direction to online self-presentation among anonymous social media account users, meaning that the lower the level of self-concept clarity, the higher the level of online self-presentation. In this case, the lower an individual's self-concept clarity, the greater the tendency for that individual to present themselves excessively, inconsistently, and ideally on social media.This study highlights the importance of building stable self-concept clarity in order to be able to appear more authentic and not get caught up in the pressure of social image when presenting or expressing oneself on social media.

For psychological interventions, these findings can be the basis for developing self-identity strengthening programs for social media users, especially individuals who often use anonymous accounts as a medium for interacting and expressing themselves. Individuals can reduce their dependence on inauthentic

online self-presentation, so that it does not have a negative impact on their social well-being.These findings answer the research objectives to describe both variables and their contributions, as well as provide a basis for the development of further interventions. The limitations of this study are that the sample was dominated by women and young people, so generalization is limited. The focus of the study was only on one factor (self-concept clarity), which, based on the results, was not a dominant factor, so it is possible that other factors may be more dominant. Furthermore, this study did not explore the specific motives for anonymity or differences between platforms. Measurement through self-report questionnaires, which are prone to bias, is also a limitation in studies that use Google Forms for data collection. The researcher suggests that future research should use a mixed-method approach (quantitative and qualitative) to explore the reasons behind anonymity, expand the sample to other age groups, and add mediator variables such as self-esteem, emotional regulation, or self-awareness as other factors that could make the research more complex.

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