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The Use of Instagram Social Media in Shaping the Self-Image of Members of the Regional House of Representatives of North Sumatra Province

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ABSTRACT

In today's digital era, through the internet, people can easily obtain, manage, and disseminate information. Social media has developed very rapidly, and one of them is Instagram. People, especially young people, use social media as a place to showcase personal activities to the public. Likewise, legislative members utilize Instagram for political purposes, one of which is by portraying their self-image as members of the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD). This study aims to find out how the use of Instagram social media affects the self-image of DPRD members in North Sumatra Province. The method used is qualitative descriptive with purposive sampling technique. Based on the results of the data analysis conducted, it can be said that the informants examined in this study utilized the social media platform Instagram to shape their self-image as members of the North Sumatra Provincial DPRD. Instagram has become one of the means for members of the North Sumatra Provincial DPRD to develop their self-image by fulfilling the aspects of that self-image

INTRODUCTION

The use of social media as a means of communication has become a phenomenon in society today. The same goes for members of the regional legislative council (DPRD); they shape their personal image by showcasing their activities on Instagram. This has become a new strategy for legislators to attract the attention of constituents or the public, which impacts their positive self-image and increases the number of followers they have. In promoting themselves, their vision, and their mission, they need to be more creative, innovative, and understand the issues experienced by the public so that they no longer give or make empty promises. Members of the North Sumatra Provincial DPRD, as people's representatives directly elected by the public through elections to carry out their three functions, namely Legislation, Budgeting, and Oversight, exercising the 'use rights' of people's sovereignty, should, in making fundamental decisions, consult and listen to the voice of the people as holders of the 'ownership rights' of sovereignty. In addition to approaching, listening to the aspirations of the people, and communicating through recess activities, socialization, and work visits, current council members use the social media platform Instagram as a powerful and reliable means to shape their image. Everything they are doing and have done as representatives of the people can be showcased through Instagram's features, whether in the form of photos, videos, or stories, all of which can reflect all activities and actions taken as a means of shaping their self-image, and conversely, social media Instagram can become information for the public to see what their representatives are doing and working on, whether they are satisfied, and whether it has met the expectations of individuals in society in general. In the digital era like today, social media is developing very rapidly. With the internet, people can easily obtain, manage, and disseminate information. Every individual connected to a certain network can access the internet anytime and anywhere (Mulyono, 2021; Wijaya et al., 2016). Moreover, there are now social media platforms that are widely used by young people, turning someone's private space into public consumption. There is a shift where young people can easily share all their personal activities with other users through social media. This is how young people today shape their self-identity.

Social media is also utilized for political communication purposes, namely as a medium for political campaigns. Various methods are employed by legislative members to socialize themselves, their vision, mission, and programs to the public. This is where the role of political communicators is very crucial in determining the level of acceptability and electability of legislative members who are usually only known by the wider public. One strategy considered effective for marketing the vision, mission, or programs of legislative members is through social media. Social media is considered to have great power as a medium of political communication, as stated by Sulaiman, that the dynamics of political communication phenomena develop due to the support and power of social media in realizing democratization.

Instagram is a social media platform that allows users to upload photos, create feeds, post Instastories, use filters on photos, and also has likes and followers that can influence self-presentation (Hidayat & Lubis, 2021; Nasrullah, 2015). With the features that Instagram offers, individuals can use it for personal branding. The more people use Instagram, the greater the audience or public that observes or implements personal branding carried out by Instagram users. Building personal branding can be used as a way to increase a person's market value. Personal branding is the process of presenting a person's skills, personality, and character with their unique qualities to then become an identity (Mujianto et al., 2021; Rachmawati & Ali, 2018).

Instagram provides information updates quickly according to its function, as Instagram is an application that allows its users to share information in the form of photos or videos with digital filters applied and can be shared to various other social networks. Using Instagram is also very easy, by following and being followed by other users, making it easy for people to connect and interact with each other. . Legislators take advantage of this to build their personal brand by self-actualizing through Instagram. Instagram is intended to provide information and facilitate communication, but as it evolves, it can be used for self-actualization. A person's personality can be perceived positively or negatively through the photos or videos posted on Instagram (Fitriani, 2021; Shinta & Putri, 2020). Using Instagram for self-actualization will naturally shape the desired image. Nowadays, brands are not

only applicable to goods and services, but a person can also become a brand, which is attached to themselves, known as personal branding. Personal branding itself has the goal of attracting relationships, associations, and public expectations toward oneself. It is not only utilized by the general public, celebrities working in the entertainment industry, or public and corporate officials, but Instagram is also used by members of the legislature as a means of shaping their personal image.

From the description above, it can be said that the social media platform Instagram has become a new function of social communication in this Society 5.0 era, which requires us to be able to communicate not only through face-to-face interaction but also through communication technology, the principle of which is that communication technology complements face-to-face communication. Therefore, based on the aforementioned thoughts, the author is motivated to observe and further study this research.

METHODS

The research methodology used in this study is a qualitative descriptive approach. The principle of qualitative descriptive research is to explain critically and practically describe interaction phenomena within a society with the aim of seeking and finding meaning in its real context (Moleong, 2014).

Qualitative descriptive itself is a technique that depicts and interprets the meaning of the collected data by paying attention to and recording as many aspects as possible of the situation being studied at the time, thereby obtaining a general and comprehensive picture of the actual conditions (Moleong, 2014).

In this study, informants were selected using purposive sampling technique because this technique is a method of selecting informants or sources with a specific purpose according to the research theme, as these individuals are considered to have knowledge of the issues being studied and are able to provide information that can be developed to obtain data for the research (Arikunto, 2010).

The selection of informants as data sources in this study is based on the principle of subjects who meet the criteria, have mastery of the issues, possess data, and are willing to provide complete and accurate information. Informants acting as sources of

data and information must meet certain qualifications to become informants, and the criteria for informants are as follows:

1. Members of the Regional Representative Council (DPRD) of North Sumatra Province for the 2024-2029 period
2. Have an Instagram account in their own name
3. Use Instagram actively, meaning they post stories almost every day and many photos appear on their Instagram feed.
4. Have more than 10,000 followers

The data collected in this study are primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained from observations and interviews with members of the DPRD of North Sumatra Province who meet the criteria to be considered informants, as well as direct observations of the Instagram accounts of the DPRD members in North Sumatra who are chosen as informants. Meanwhile, secondary data is obtained through various sources such as books, journals, or relevant institutions.

Data analysis in this study was conducted by collecting data over a certain period. Then, the data was reduced for selection, focusing, simplification, abstraction, and transformation of the "raw data" found in written field notes. Next, data presentation was carried out to compile a set of information. Finally, conclusions were drawn.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the research results, it can be seen that in terms of self-image, awareness, actions, acceptance, and attitudes can be observed in conversations with the informants. Informant 1, Erni Sitorus, is aware of the importance of Instagram as a medium used for work purposes by sharing daily activities or actions, not just to pass the time or for photo archiving only. This means that the informant is aware of the importance of Instagram by taking actions such as uploading or sharing her activities to gain a positive self-image in front of her followers. Everything was done by the informant with self-acceptance, recognizing that weaknesses and strengths are part of themselves as a gift from the Creator, and the informant adopts an attitude of accepting and valuing their own existence. This can be seen by the author from the photos and videos posted by the informant as well as the informant's attitude in receiving positive comments as motivation for themselves. The

author sees that the aspect of self-image formation in the informant has been fulfilled.

Informant 2, Ajie Karim, is aware of the importance of Instagram as a medium for introducing himself, and also aware as a member of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) that he cannot always reach all areas of his electoral district to provide information about himself. Therefore, social media, particularly Instagram, functions as an extension of his efforts to convey information. Therefore, the informant takes actions to share their activities as a way to showcase themselves so that the public or society can get to know them better. The informant wants people to see them as someone flexible in interacting with the community. Through their posts, they also accept and show appreciation for others' opinions about them, which means that aspects of the informant's self-image formation are fulfilled.

Informant 3, Muhammad Rahmaddian Shah, is aware of the benefits of Instagram in introducing or showcasing himself and takes action by posting his activities, both in organizations and political parties, on Instagram. In uploading his activities, the informant also listens to suggestions and criticisms, which are forms of acceptance and reflect his awareness of his weaknesses and strengths, representing his personality and the self-image he wants to present. The author observes here that the aspects of self-image formation in the informant have already been fulfilled.

Informant 4, Meryl Rouli Saragih, is aware of the importance of Instagram because she enjoys the innovation offered by Instagram, with features more engaging and innovative than Friendster, Facebook, and Twitter at the time. The informant feels comfortable sharing stories and experiences, as well as sharing knowledge gained with friends and followers through her posts. This means that here the informant has an awareness of the importance of Instagram and takes real actions in shaping a good, fun, and educational self-image in front of followers or the public. Everything is done by the informant with self-acceptance and attitude through the posts they share, demonstrating good communication skills. The author here sees that the aspect of the informant's self-image formation has been fulfilled.

Informant 5, Ezra Palacheta Subianto, is aware that Instagram functions as a means to provide and receive various information and uploads photos and

videos about his activities as actions taken so that followers or friends can see his personality as a positive individual. The author also observes that the informant is willing to improve weaknesses and maintain strengths. This means that the informant's acceptance and attitude towards himself are quite good, indicating that the aspects of self-image formation have been fulfilled.

This study aims to find the answer to a problem, namely how the use of Instagram social media affects the formation of self-image of the members of the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) of North Sumatra Province. From the interview results, it can be seen that there are several needs that influence Instagram users, who in this study are members of the DPRD of North Sumatra Province actively using Instagram social media. These needs are as follows:

1. To prove that there is an information need that makes users form self-image. These include needs in using social media, understanding the purpose and function of using social media, the need for information through social media, and knowing the trends that are currently developing, all of which are related to the formation of self-image.
2. To prove that credibility has an influence on the formation of self-image, aspects such as self-confidence, the use of personal social media, and self-actualization are factors that shape a person's self-image.
3. To prove that there are social needs that shape self-image. Aspects such as the need for good relationships, ease of communication, exchanging information, and understanding the surrounding situations and conditions are factors that shape a person's self-image.
4. To prove that entertainment that relieves stress contributes to shaping self-image. Factors such as mental pressure, complaints, venting, thoughts, and entertainment are considered influential in the formation of self-image.

CONCLUSION

Instagram has become one of the means for members of the North Sumatra Provincial DPRD to shape their self-image. Members of the North Sumatra Provincial DPRD who actively use

Instagram use it to share information about activities related to their profession as public representatives. From the awareness aspect, all informants are aware of the self-image they want to convey, both in terms of physical and non-physical (image) aspects. From the action aspect, all informants have taken steps to develop their potential. The informants have been able to utilize their strengths to showcase them through their Instagram social media accounts. From the acceptance aspect, All informants have acknowledged both their weaknesses and strengths. This can be seen from the informants' posts, who prefer to showcase their strengths on their Instagram social media accounts. In terms of attitude, all informants have known how to appreciate both their weaknesses and strengths.

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