

## Analysis of Generation Z Communication Identity in Novo Club Online Community Members

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### ABSTRACT

**Keywords:** communication identity, generation Z, online community, social media.

Generation z in Indonesia has a high interest in joining online communities or groups. Through online communities, Generation Z can interact via digital media or directly with people who have similar interests. So, it will be easier for them to show their identity. However, several irresponsible parties take advantage of Generation Z's enthusiasm by exploiting their creative ideas. In this way, there is a potential that the identity that one wants to show and develop cannot be achieved. Therefore, a community needs to support Generation Z in forming the identity that its members want. This research aims to analyze the communication identity of Generation Z who are members of the Novo Club online community. The research method used is a qualitative approach using interviews and observation as data collection methods. The research results show that the communication identity that Novo Club members want to show is very diverse, including being an innovator, and the positive characteristics of Generation Z. They show their identity through social media or in person, through their style of speaking and dressing.



### Introduction

In the era of Society 5.0, the phenomenon of the existence of online communities or groups of Generation Z is quite high in Indonesia. This is based on data from Kominfo in 2021, which states that the number of communities in Indonesia reaches 395 thousand. The development of online communities in Indonesia shows that online communication behavior in Indonesia is quite high. Where users can interact with communities or groups that have similar interests through social media (Nam, 2021). By having similar interests, young people can communicate online by exchanging ideas with their peers. By joining online communities, it is easier for young people (Generation Z) to express their identity. In addition, young people will also feel that their identity is recognized or validated (Rubin, Scanlon, Cechony, & Chen, 2021). However, excessive use of social media can lead to dependence on online media, and hinder identity formation. Because this makes an individual compare his life with others. This causes Fear of Missing Out (FoMO)

behavior, which is not wanting to be left behind by others. Based on survey data (Kaloeti, Kurnia S, & Tahamata, 2021) in (Aresti, Lukmantoro, & Ulfa, 2023), 64.6% of Generation Z experience fear of missing out (FOMO) on social media.

Research data shows that 40% of Generation Z want the same identity, namely wanting to be considered an organizational activist (Mansur, 2014). This phenomenon shows the stigma of the previous generation against Generation Z, namely in *kumparan.com* Generation Z is considered not serious in living life. They have tried to participate in positive activities, such as by participating in online communities.

However, after Generation Z carried out these activities to achieve the desired identity, some irresponsible parties took advantage of the moment. This is based on data found by researchers in a post on @perempuanberkisah's Instagram account on October 22, 2023, that there are cases of fraud and exploitation in the online community. In the post, it was said that there were hundreds of victims. In addition, the majority of victims are under the age of 18, including Generation Z. The exploitation carried out is related to the working time of its members who must be ready for 24 hours, including on holidays. So, the creative ideas they put out are misused by them.

Based on the previous presentation, it shows that there is a potential that the identity desired by Generation Z when joining the community, cannot be achieved. Therefore, the researcher wanted to see what kind of identity Generation Z wanted to show or get when participating in online communities. This research on communication identity needs to be carried out because identity is a link between individuals and society, and social activities such as following the community, can also form self-identity.

Related to this, many Generation Z online communities in Indonesia can form a Generation Z identity, one of which is the Novo Club online community. In a *liputan6.com* article, the CEO of ParagonCorp said that Novo Club was established to prepare the young generation to become innovative, collaborative, and characterful future leaders. In connection with what was conveyed, the Novo Club community wants its members to be able to manage a good communication identity by having an identity that is in line with the community and can provide innovations that are also beneficial to the community.

Referring to the explanation above, the researcher wants to see how the problems related to the communication identity of Generation Z exist in Novo Club community members, which are seen through the context of the personal layer and the attachment layer. Because, with the existence or popularity of the community among Generation Z, will the community be able to meet the expectations of Novo Club community members when they have joined the community? In addition, the researcher also wanted to see if the communication identities owned by its members would match the identities owned by the Novo Club community. This is also related to the data that 50% of Generation Z expectations want to be seen as a leader, namely with characteristics that are communicative, innovative, courageous, and others. Which is also in line with the communication identity owned by the Novo Club community.

Previous research (Mansur, 2019) said that in the formation of the identity or self-concept of Generation Z, social media consumption patterns have a significant influence. In research (Nam, 2021), social media allows Generation Z to connect in communities with similar interests, thus strengthening their identity. Being a member of a community can also affect lifestyle, as well as the style of dress in daily life (Hidayat and Hidayat, 2020). Based on previous research, the researcher found that previously there had been no research that examined communication identity analysis, in members of the online community of Generation Z. What's more, the object of this research is an online community called Novo Club, which has more than 35,000 members. This online community is a community that is followed by Generation Z. So, this shows that a lot of Generation Z want to have an identity as a member of a community or organization.

The researcher uses the identity communication theory of Michael Hecht. Through this research, it can be known that 2 out of 4 layers of communication identities are from online community members. So, based on the explanation that has been presented, the researcher will find out how the communication identity of Generation Z who is a member of the Novo Club online community.

In this study, members of the Novo Club online community are young people who belong to Generation Z. According to Santrock, in 2018 (Alfaruqy, 2022) Generation Z is a generation born from 1995 to 2010. Generation z is very tied to technology because all needs depend on technology, such as accessing or seeking information (Hisan, 2022), as a medium of education or learning (Nurzaman et al., 2023) and so on. According to Apaut, 2021 (Arum, Zahrani, & Duha, 2023) with technology, Generation Z will be more able to do many activities at one time or multitask when compared to the previous generation. However, Generation Z is also seen as having weaknesses, such as a lack of expertise in verbal communication or real-world communication. In addition, Generation Z is also seen as a generation that likes something easier or instant (Adityara & Rakhman, 2019). However, according to Elizabeth, 2015 in the book "Raising Children In the Digital Era" (Adityara & Rakhman, 2019) several characteristics of Generation Z are considered positive, including:

1. Having great ambitions to succeed, so Generation Z can plan their lives to achieve their goals. The goal can be in a high job position or become a person who can influence others (Afifah, Anjani, Ks, & Ap, 2021).
2. The love of freedom, which is essentially the Z generation likes freedom. Such as freedom of expression, freedom of opinion, freedom of choice, and other freedoms
3. Confident, Generation Z often feels proud of the behavior they do. Thus, Generation Z is considered more capable of knowing themselves (Mukhlis et al, 2022). In addition, Generation Z can take advantage of social media to share their achievements with others.
4. Likes details, because Generation Z is considered a critical generation when it comes to thinking. So that when a problem arises, they will think about it carefully (Putri & Yanzi, 2020).

5. The desire to get recognition, namely Generation Z wants their social identity to be recognized by others (Rubin et al., 2021).

## Research Methods

In this study, the researcher will use a qualitative method to analyze the communication identity of Generation Z as members of the Novo Club community, using the theory of identity communication according to Michael Hecht. Based on this, there is a compatibility between the theory and the method used, because the qualitative method is a method that is suitable for theories that are in the sociocultural tradition such as identity communication theory. The approach in this study is a case study approach, to find out in detail how the communication identity of Generation Z in Novo Club community members is.

The object of the research was regarding the identity of communication in the Novo Club online community. Meanwhile, the subject of the study was a member of the Novo Club online community. In this study, the determined informants are the main informants and supporting informants. The main informants consisted of 4 members of the Novo Club community who had felt an identity gap. Meanwhile, the supporting informants consisted of 2 resource persons who did not follow the community.

The data collection method uses interviews and observations. Through interviews, the researcher asked several questions to the informants related to the focus of the research, namely about communication identity based on 2 (two) layers in identity communication theory according to Michael Hecht, which focuses on the context of the personal layer and the enactment layer. Meanwhile, through observation, the researcher will observe the appearance shown by the informants, either directly or through their social media. This can help researchers in expanding research data, related to the communication identities of Novo Club members shown through social media.

## Results and Discussion

In this section, the researcher will connect the results of the interview with Michael Hecht's theory of identity communication, which explains how an individual expresses his or her identity through a "code" or symbol. Communication identity can be seen through four concepts or layers. The layer consists of a personal layer, an enactment layer, a relational layer, and a communal layer. In addition, in this section, the researcher will also triangulate the data by comparing the results of interviews between the main informant, namely Novo Club members as Generation Z who actively participate in the community, and supporting informants, namely Generation Z who are not actively participating in the community. The main informants include Resti Ratna Anjani (main informant 1), Imam Mursid Istiqomah (main informant 2), Salla Salika (main informant 3) and Radhinal Satrio (main informant 4). Meanwhile, the supporting informants, among others, are named, Lulu Khafiyyani Azka (Supporting Informant 1) and Endah Firly Choirunissa (Supporting Informant 2). To strengthen the results of the data obtained, the

researcher will also observe the Instagram social media of the informants, to see how they show their identities through social media.

Based on the results of the interviews obtained, the goal highlighted by the four main informants is to expand their relationships, to make it easier to get a job, and to be successful in the future. This is because the Novo Club online community is under the auspices of PT. Paragon Technology and Innovation, is one of the major beauty industry companies in Indonesia. The results of the analysis or discussion of the data that have been obtained, by the researcher will explain as follows.

### **Personal Layer**

The communication identity of Generation Z of Novo Club online community members can be seen through the personal layer that they have a communication identity that corresponds to several positive characteristics of Generation Z according to Elizabeth T. Santosa (Adityara & Rakhman, 2019). Among them are the characteristics of being a confident person. By having a confident attitude, their communication skills or abilities are increasing. This can be seen through the informant's ability in public speaking, and becoming a master of ceremony (MC) in one of the projects organized by them as members of the Novo Club.

The members also have positive characteristics of Generation Z, namely having ambitions to succeed. Such as showing their identity as a good leader when they volunteer as a vice chairman in a "group project" when they dare to handle a class in elementary school (SD) to carry out a project called an English club, and also when they take the initiative to become someone more active among other members. In addition, they also show their identity as someone who can think critically and solutions. This is shown when they try to find the core of the problems that occur in their group, as well as think to find the best solution so that the problems that occur can be solved properly.

Based on the characteristics and attitudes that the informants have, it can be seen that they have an identity as student or Generation Z who has high ambitions to succeed. This is of course also accompanied by their identity as members of the Novo Club online community, which is shown through social media and when meeting other people in real life. One way is to upload content in the form of photos or videos on their social media, then they make it a Highlight on Instagram. In addition, they also showed their identity as a member of the Novo Club to others, by mentioning the @Novoclub.id account on their personal Instagram bio. This can certainly expand their relationships, and make Novo Club members connect. The use of social media is also by several characteristics of social media as said by Nasrullah (Kurnia, Johan, and Rullyana, 2018), namely for networking, sharing, and information.

To triangulate the data, the researcher also conducted interviews with two informants who did not follow a community. In contrast to the results of the analysis related to the identity owned by Novo Club members as Generation Z. Supporting informants lack a sense of confidence or attitude when communicating with others, either on social media or in person. They think that even though they are not feeling confident, they will be able to pretend to be confident when communicating with others online. This

is also due to the lack of direct implementation of interpersonal communication with newly introduced people. Unlike members of the Novo Club online community who are trained to communicate with new acquaintances, even in large numbers.

Supporting informants have an identity that is by the characteristics of Generation Z (Nurhuda, 2021), namely net-journalistic, where they tend to share content related to information or personal experiences more often. On the second Instagram account, they often share their daily activities in more detail than on the first account. Thus, the use of social media is more focused on the use of social media as Information and Interaction. In addition, in the use of social media, supporting informants feel that they do not want to miss trends that are being talked about by others. So it causes a feeling of fear of missing out (FOMO). This is also stated in the journal according to (Sachiyati, 2023), which says that the main factor that causes the Fomo attitude is due to a person's fear when missing a trending event.

### **Enactment Layer**

Showing identity through the style of dress is carried out by the informants. Among them is showing their identity as a relaxed person, by using comfortable and simple clothes in their daily lives and also through social media. The clothes they wear are also not very formal, so they can avoid identity as someone who is rigid. In addition, they show their identity as someone who is educated, by wearing neat and polite clothes. Then, to show identity as someone active in a community can also be shown by dressing in uniforms from the Novo Club community. The style of dress that the informants showed, was also shown by them through their personal Instagram social media. Thus, it can be said that they utilize social media in various types that exist, as mentioned in (Liedfray, Waani, & Lasut, 2022). Among them is for photo/video sharing, where they share their photos and videos on Instagram social media, and show how they dress.

In addition to being seen through the style of dress, the speaking style can also be a "symbol" to show the identity of communication, whether shown through social media or in person. Members of the Novo Club online community show their identity as someone easy to socialize and mingle with, using polite language. In addition, they also like to start an interaction with new people. At the beginning of an interaction, a communicator who is always on the initiative to start a conversation is needed. Especially if communication is carried out through digital media that has a lot of noise or distractions. Therefore, good communication skills are needed, so that messages can be conveyed, and communicators can understand what the communicator is saying. So, in interpersonal or group communication, communicators can provide feedback, and an interaction occurs that makes it easier for them when they are in the online community.

The communication identity of Novo Club members shown through their speaking style is as someone friendly, friendly, and also able to lead other members. In addition, they also have an identity as someone who is expressive. This was shown by members of the Novo Club online community when communicating online. This identity is shown by the use of emoticons or emojis, which are considered to be able to express the feelings of a communicator and communicant.

In addition to emoticons, Generation Z also considers that the use of capslock or not in writing can give different meanings. This is because they consider the use of capslock to maximize their way of conveying emotions, energy, and also feelings felt when sending a message through social media. But of course, there are still Generation Z who are not too expressive and only speak as necessary or directly to the point.

To triangulate the data, the researcher also conducted interviews with two informants who did not follow a community. The informant considered that the use of emoticons could be used as a manipulation of feelings. This is because when sending a message through social media, the recipient cannot see directly how the communicator shows the expression. Meanwhile, Firly feels that the use of emoticons is indeed important so that he can become someone more expressive when speaking through social media. However, he feels less confident if he uses too many emoticons because he is afraid of disturbing the recipient of the message (communicator). In addition, they feel that the use of emoticons is indeed important, however, they feel less confident if they use it too much, because they are afraid of disturbing the recipient of the message (communicator).

## **Conclusion**

Based on the research question that the researcher has explained in the previous chapter is related to the identity of Generation Z who are members of the Novo Club online community. Based on the results of research conducted by researchers through interviews and observations, it can be concluded that their identity is also by several characteristics of Generation Z that are considered positive. Such as being confident, having ambitions to succeed, loving modesty, and liking details so that they can think critically, as well as digital and information. Generation z cannot be separated from digital technology. However, members of the Novo Club community can use social media as a positive tool. Such as for interacting (Interactivity), providing Information (Information), improving networks (both social and professional networks), and is used to disseminate (sharing) related to useful experiences or content. In addition, the communication identity shown by the members of the Novo Club community is dominated by someone active in the organization, so that they can expand their relationships and potential so that they can work in a good industry. Therefore, having a good communication competency strategy is very much needed by Generation Z when they are active or active in a community. This is important to have so that they can know how to show the identity of the communication correctly.

Meanwhile, the identity of Generation Z who do not join a community is more of someone who focuses on only one thing, such as focusing on academics, lectures, and relationships they feel that there are enough because they have friends or acquaintances from elementary school (SD) to college. So, their ambition to succeed is only fixated on campus academic results, or do internships, as recommended by their campus. Then, they also use social media more to share or show daily activities (daily life).

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