

## VALIDATING THE YOUTH IDENTITY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR IDENTIFYING POST MILLENNIAL ONLINE IDENTITY AS THE FUTURE TALENT

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*Abstract. Post-millennial generation, a 72.8 million population, begins to enter the workforce and is considered entirely different in term of how they socialize with others compared to the previous generations. This generation has been growing up in the era of technology and social media. They got an impact on identity formation because internet access provides them to communicate with people from diverse cultures, countries, societies, and religions. The aim of this study to assesses the validity of the questionnaire of youth social identity among students. There are six youth social identity, namely relational identity, occupational identity, political identity, ethnic/religious identity, and stigmatized identity. The research employed a quantitative method to gain data. The results indicate the instrument is valid and reliable for assessing the youth social identity. The result shows that the youth presents their self as a person who has good achievement in their interest, proud to be part of social activities, and possesses good relationship among their friends or family. The findings can assist the employer to predict the identity of their future employee in order to create a policy in recruiting, managing, and developing them. Organizations should attempt to get a better understand about youth online identities, as they will be future talents*

*Keywords: youth identity; social media; post-millennial generation*

### INTRODUCTION

Post-millennial generation, a 72.8 million population, begins to enter the workforce and is considered entirely different compared to the previous generations. According to Poole (2016), this generation was influenced by the innovative acceleration of online and social media and as such obtain particular behavioral traits which need to be realized if organizations are going to employ them for future prosperity. According to Jill Walsh, cited by Harnish (2017), social media is undoubtedly altering how people mature and understand who they are, which means identity. Youth always have to manage the real-life that can be difficult for them because they are often trying to think about audiences they do not even know. The post-millennial generation possesses control over what information they allow to influence their self-identity. Buckingham (2008) was questioning whether online identities present the truth of identity than offline. Goodman (2016) argued that current social media has changed. Digital interactions seem like face-to-face meetings and vice versa. The “offline” and “online” identities have become less distinct.

Moreover, the social media can affect the users differently, depending on pre-existing conditions and personality traits in term of stress, mood, anxiety, depression, sleep, addiction, self-esteem, well-being, relationship, envy, and loneliness (Brown, 2018). The social media, used actively by the Post-millennial generation to express their feelings, express their opinions, and interact with people, influences the formation of their social identity. Social identity is no longer formed only because of real-world interactions, but can also be the interaction through social media. Social identity was first conceptualized by social psychologists Henri Tajfel and John Turner around 1970.

They explained that under certain conditions, social identity becomes more important than one’s identity. According to Curtin (2016), understanding social identity is fundamental to understanding our relationship with power and how we can work consciously and effectively with the power to create change. Social identity is defined as how individuals define themselves based on social roles played in society or social group membership (Priante et al., 2016). Nowadays, social identity does not only appear in the real world but also exists in a virtual world because of the emerging of many social media. The Post Millennial generation are seeking meaningful and fulfilling to increase the social identity through social media, their exposure to the technology to be successfully attracted in the digital world.

Considering Indonesia, the fourth most populated country in the world, possessing 143.6 million Internet users who are mostly 19-34 years old (49.52%) and social media in the second position (87.13%) which is the most used service (APJII, 2017; Bloomberg, 2017), it is urgently needed to discover how youth present their social identity through social media. There are some various thought about what identity is, and about its relevance to our understanding of young people’s engagements with digital media (Buckingham, 2008). Nowadays, the digital is seen to be creating the post millennial more open, more democratic, braver, and more innovative. Therefore, it is essential to study how youth present their social identity through social media since the understanding of this identity can help the organization to the formulate strategies in reaching out and attracting this post-

millennial generation. However, the tools for mapping the social identities presented in social media have not developed yet. Thus, this study attempts to develop a tool to measure youth social identity.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media are websites that provide individuals to do social interaction. It includes social networking sites, video sites, gaming sites, virtual worlds and blogs (the American Academy of Pediatrics, 2011). Social media is a new forum which makes people can share their idea, connect with, relate to, and mobilize for a cause, seek advice, and offer guidance. The existence of social media has eliminated the barriers to communication (Amedie, 2015). According to Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre (2011), social media could be categorized into seven similar functional blocks and one of them is an identity. Moreover, social media provides enormous information that can be accessed, even the quality and integrity of information should be considered.

Identity has many different contexts and for many different purposes, particularly in recent years. Possessing a sense of identity is important to exist as individuals, it is a development of well-being, to fit in with certain groups and cultures. Culturally specific assumptions, contained within a diverse range of interrelated practices (such as language, religion, sexuality, etc), mean that a person's identity is always a multi-dimensional conglomerate of many identities (Heaven, 2003). Identity is the awareness of individual uniqueness and unconscious efforts for continuity of experience (Erikson, 1968). In psychosocial development, Erikson (1968) figured eight stages which healthy individuals experience during their lives in forming identity. Each stage possesses a virtue which is the pleasant outcome of tightness between internal self and external environment within certain life stage challenges. The fidelity, the virtue for the fifth stage, could be achieved through successful navigation of the identity versus role confusion duality. Youth usually can pass this stage between the ages of thirteen and nineteen. This stage is considered crucial since this stage is an integration of previous stages and preparation for next stage. In the fidelity stage, the main developmental task is for youth to establish the identity. They attempt to find out whom they are while being confronted with many new roles and adult statuses, for example a first-year student who experiences the transition from senior high school to college in which they have to change life from having a great deal of parental input, support, and direction into living on his or her own and must engage internal motivation to reach goals. Karp, Holmstrom, & Gray (1998) reported a great deal of interpretive effort by high school seniors preparing to leave home for college, as they anticipate affirmation of some identities, creation of new identities, and discovery of unanticipated identities.

Social identity is a social psychological theory that was first introduced and developed by Tajfel and Turner (Treppe & Loy, 2017). The theory describes that individual creates a category of him/herself as part of various groups, for instance, a professional group, a fan base of a particular soccer club, and a group of specific interest. This theory cannot be separated from the self-categorization theory. People evaluate the groups in which they feel and belong to (in-groups) and groups in which they do not think of themselves as a member of (out-groups). Regularly people make a category, evaluate those groups (in-groups and out-groups), and compare their value to decide the worth of in-groups and out-groups. The self-concept of social identity is constituted by social categorization, group evaluation, and the value of the group. This theory has been widely utilized to explain media effects (Treppe & Loy, 2017). The relationship between identity and social practices is individuals use media production to construct online identities. The use of social media is primarily reflexive and essential for the way the current generation builds an online identity (Weber and Mitchell, 2008).

Deaux, Reid, Mizrahi, & Ethier (1995) categorized social identity into five, namely relational identity, occupational identity, political identity, ethnic/religious identity, and stigmatized identity. Relational identity is the integration of person-based and role-based, which means how role occupants portray their respective roles. It is also defined as the nature of role-relationship, which is constructed through relational with others. A role is basically relational and is mostly understood by referring to interdependent role networks. The relational identity that integrates the network of roles and roles of incumbents together into the social system (Sluss and Ashforth, 2007). Occupational identity is self-definition based on occupation, profession and career, individual vocations, avocations, interests, and hobbies (Priante et al., 2016). According to Hirschi (2012), positive occupational identity is related to both a sense of personal wellbeing and success in the workplace (Hirschi, 2012). Political identity can be seen from political affiliations, parties, and groups, as well as being a member of social movements or taking part in collective action (Priante et al., 2016). Smith and Silva (2011) mentioned that ethnic identity had been proved possessing positive personal disposition. Moreover, according to Marcia, Waterman, Matteson, Archer, & Orlofsky (1993), ethnic identity can provide a foundation of self-knowledge based on ample exploration and experience. Religious identity also serves as a powerful bond admit the vicissitudes of globalization, and one reinforced by ethical commitments embedded within a particular tradition. Stigmatized identity, according to Chaney, Sanchez, & Maimon (2019), was defined as social setting or environmental aspects that deliver the value of stigmatized social identities, such as gender, race, religion and sexual orientation through the assumption of addressee about what is really normal and what values are right in a particular area. Many people have concealable stigmatized identities that can be hidden from others and that are socially devalued and negatively stereotyped.

## METHODOLOGY

The research employed a quantitative method. There are 76 items that would be assessed the validity and reliability. Currently, there has been no questionnaire that measures the identity displayed by Youth through social media. The instrument was created by the authors and reviewed by a psychologist. Therefore, the study made a questionnaire that could become a measuring tool in the future. The questionnaire was developed based on the study of Deaux, et.al, (1995) titled parameters of social identity. They categorized social identity into five, namely relational identity, occupational identity, political identity, ethnic/religious identity, and stigmatized identity. Each identity is manifested in three aspects, namely cognitive, motivation, and behaviour in which these aspects form an identity. The questionnaire was distributed to the participant through Google form to students in colleges because they were considered entering the working world presently. Likert scale was used for each item. The data then was analysed using SPSS to assess the validity of each item and the reliability of each identity. Afterwards, those identities were calculated to identify the correlation among them.

## FINDINGS AND ARGUMENT

There were 235 participants in this study that consist of 105 males and 135 females. Their age is around 17-22 years old, mostly 19 years old. 53 participants spent more than 5 hours to use social media, 41 participants spent 4-5 hours to use social media, 62 participants spent more 3-4 hours to use social media, 45 participants spent 2-3 hours to use social media, 30 participants spent 1-2 hours to use social media, and 9 students spent less than 1 hour to use social media. The validity of each item is measured by employing SPSS. The results show that all items possessing score more than  $r=0.126$ , which mean the questionnaire is valid. The results of Cronbach's alpha were 0.89 for total score (17 items) of relational identity, 0.94 for total score (19 items) of occupational identity, 0.90 for total score (9 items) of political identity, 0.92 for total score (12 items) of ethnic/religious identity, and 0.91 for total score (8 items) of stigmatized identity. These values indicate that the reliability of each identity possessing adequate high internal consistency.

Table 1. Correlation Among Identities

		Relational	Occupational	Political	Ethnic	Stigmatized
Relational	Pearson Correlation	1	.643**	.566**	.459**	.512**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
Occupational	Pearson Correlation	.643**	1	.787**	.529**	.717**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
Political	Pearson Correlation	.566**	.787**	1	.532**	.682**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
Ethnic	Pearson Correlation	.459**	.529**	.532**	1	.590**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
Stigmatized	Pearson Correlation	.512**	.717**	.682**	.590**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 presents Sig. (2-tailed) among the identities  $0.000 < 0.05$  which means there is a significant correlation among those identities. The results of Pearson correlations are more than 0.126 ( $N=241$ ) from each identity that means there is a correlation among the identities.

Based on the data, the questionnaire is valid to be utilized as an instrument to measure the online social identity. More than half of the participants are actively using social media in their daily life. This confirms the assumptions about the post Millennials more attached to their devices than any other generation. They utilise technologies to increase the flexibility within the life.

The most dominant social identity displayed in social media is occupational identity with the highest mean = 2,914. The occupational identity describes passion/interest/interest/hobbies in specific fields into social media. Youth share contents that describe the work, career, and profession they have. It means that the youth tend to show their professionalism as students or show their hobbies are essential and can be their job. They also often show their achievement in social media. As research conducted by Wim Meeus (1993) who found that occupational identity was related to the school career. The study figured out that youth who perform well at school evince a stronger occupational identity than youth whose school performance is poor. Success in school minimizes status of insecurity in youth because it holds the promise of attractive future occupations. It encourages youth to become occupation-oriented. It means that they are ambitious in terms of occupation. It can be the basis for organizations to determine their talent if high occupational individuals will perform better in the organization. The second most dominant identity is political identity with mean = 2,708. Political identity in this study is based on organizational affiliation, groups, and members of social movements or taking part in collective action. According to Gentry (2018), political identity

centralizes on the individual and his/her internalization of a sense of self. It determines the individual social interactions and focuses on how individuals create their understanding of themselves and refine themselves according to the expectations of the outside world. The relational identity has a mean = 2.518 in the third dominant position. This identity describes the social role in social media by showing their relationship among their friend. It can be seen from the continuous shared content that describes relationships that have with other people, such as friends and family. A study of Chang and Johnson (2010) found that organizations can possess benefit by hiring employees with strong relational identities. In leadership position, a person who has strong relational identity can help off-set any performance loss. The following identity is stigmatized identity by mean= 2.493. This identity is based on stigmatization group membership, which is considered different from what society defines as normal according to social and cultural norms (Goffman, 1959). Compared to other identities have been mentioned, this identity is less-presented in social media. It is supported the finding that identity management, particularly stigmatized identities, represents a considerable challenge. This study discussed the issues around the decision to reveal a stigmatized identity by examining the potential consequences of “showing or not showing” the stigmatized identity. There still a tendency a people react disrespect, discrimination, and derogation towards those with a stigmatized identity, thus people must be vigilant in monitoring behaviors, attitudes, systems and structures towards those uncomfortable reactions (Fleet, 2012). The last identity is ethnic/religious identity, which has the lowest score of mean=2.043. This identity shows the importance of presenting the membership of a particular ethnic group/religion into social media. According to Bisin, Patacchini, Verdier, & Zenou (2010), ethnic/religious identity mostly formed as a cultural distinction mechanism. Kim and Gelfand (2003) stated that individuals with higher levels of ethnic identity have a capability in making a more positive socio-emotional conclusion regarding the nature of work-life in an organization, such as the organization’s treatment of employees and the relationships among employees. They also possessed higher job pursuit intentions when the organization contained a diversity initiative than when the organization without a diversity initiative.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed at validating the instrument for mapping the youth social identity presented in social media. Moreover, the results had implication for the understanding of youth social identity that can help the organization to the formulate strategies in reaching out and attracting this post-millennial generation. The results indicate the instrument is valid and reliable for assessing the youth social identity. There are 65 valid items that can be utilized to map the youth social identity presented in social media. The result shows that the youth presents their self as a person who has good achievement in their interest, proud to be part of social activities, and possesses good relationship among their friends or family. The findings can assist the employer to predict the identity of their future employee in order to create a policy in recruiting, managing, and developing them. Organizations should attempt to get a better understand about youth online identities, as they will be future talents. A number of limitations of this study need to be mentioned. The instrument was not particularly developed for certain media social whereas are a lot of social media used by youth that present distinctive identity. Thus, the recommendation for further study is the social media should be decided before conducting the study. Moreover, the results also have need of further measurement in a wider cultural context.

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